

HEALTH CONSUMERS' COUNCIL

Appointment to National Committees: Policy for Health Consumers' Council Staff

Background

The Health Consumers' Council staff deal with consumer issues constantly and are aware of many of the barriers that people face in the Australian health system. The Health Consumers' Council staff have built up experience and knowledge over the years of Health Consumers' Council existence and may be in a unique position to participate as consumer representatives on national committees.

There are two ways that this may occur

1. Consumer Health Forum requests that a member of Health Consumers' Council staff have their name put forward for consideration for a particular national committee. It is Department of Health and Ageing policy that three names will go forward to CHF Consumer Reps Sub-Committee and a decision is then made. The successful person is then advised.
2. The Consumer Health Forum monthly newsletter lists the consumer representative positions available at a national level. Very occasionally (perhaps twice in the past 5 years) a Health Consumers' Council staff member has indicated an interest in nominating for such a committee. Once again, with the permission of the Executive Director, the name and details would go forward for consideration by CHF Consumer Reps Sub-Committee. A decision is then made by CHF on the merits of each candidate.

Policy Position

The Health Consumers' Council Board recognises the value gained in having staff participate in national decision-making committees as consumer representatives. This value is important for professional development and training for staff and increasing the Health Consumers' Council network of contacts. Where the person being appointed is the Executive Director, permission must be sought from the Chair or Deputy Chair. The Board wishes to be advised of all appointments as they occur.

Sitting Fees

Some national committees pay sitting fees to consumer representatives. When a member of the Health Consumers' Council staff is appointed to a national committee where a sitting fee is paid, the Board retains the right to decide whether the sitting fee is retained by the Health Consumers' Council staff member or contributed to the Health Consumers' Council. Each individual case will be judged on its merits. Refer Financial Management and Reporting Policy.

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