



Consumer Engagement Framework
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1. Introduction

'Putting Consumers Front and Centre in All That We Do' is the first of six strategic priorities endorsed by the COORDINARE Board in 2017. This Consumer Engagement Framework outlines COORDINARE'S approach.

COORDINARE aims to:

- ▶ Ensure that consumers and carers have every opportunity to be active participants in health care and not just sources of endorsement or information.
- ▶ Support a health system capable of delivering health outcomes that are informed by, and matter to, consumers.

1.1.1 Definition

Consumer engagement refers to:

'Participation in formal or informal planning, delivery, implementation, and evaluation of all activities associated with health and mental health services (voluntary or paid), as well as in all processes which affect the lives of consumers and carers, through sharing of information, opinions, and decision-making power'.

COORDINARE'S definition of consumers includes:

- ▶ a person who accesses a health service, or their nominated representative or representative with legal authority
- ▶ a carer, family member or advocate
- ▶ a group of consumers or consumer organisations
- ▶ a member of the community

1.1.2 Why engagement is important

Consumer engagement is at the core of a person-centred health system. It provides an avenue to gain an improved understanding of the health system, including what is working well and what is not, and to organise care to meet the needs of consumers and thereby improve health outcomes.

Vulnerable populations are at greater risk of poor health outcomes, including those with low socio-economic status (unemployed, low income, low education), Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, culturally and linguistically diverse communities, and refugee communities.

Engagement gives consumers the opportunity to:

- ▶ Have their needs understood and concerns heard
- ▶ Contribute as experts through their lived experience
- ▶ Participate in the decision-making process to drive improvement.

COORDINARE listens and involves people as active participants and values their lived experience to understand the needs of local communities and how people prefer to use and access services. This assists to:

- ▶ Design better connected models of health care
- ▶ Leverage available service providers to meet needs
- ▶ Coordinate linkages across the health care sector.

1.2 Background to COORDINARE

COORDINARE commenced on 1 July 2015 as the South Eastern NSW Primary Health Network. Its catchment comprises of the Illawarra Shoalhaven and the Southern NSW Local Health Districts covering more than 55,000 sq km and including more than 700 General Practitioners (GPs), 196 General Practices, numerous allied health providers and 150 aged care sites.

COORDINARE improves health outcomes for local people through three core functions:

1. Health system integration

COORDINARE works closely with the two Local Health Districts in South Eastern NSW and other providers in the region to connect services, securely share consumer information, and improve the consumer journey, as well as jointly identify needs and plan service responses.

2. General Practice Support

COORDINARE works with General Practice and other health care providers on quality improvement and accreditation; cultural awareness and competency; workforce development; digital health systems; person-centred care and best practice service delivery models.

3. Commissioning

COORDINARE commissions new models of care co-designed by working with consumers, providers and communities to meet the prioritised health needs as identified through a population needs assessment process.

2. Framework objectives

2.1 COORDINARE'S framework

COORDINARE is committed to work effectively with consumers, learn from past consumer experiences, foster consumer enablement and to involve consumers in the design, implementation and monitoring of person-centred approaches to health care in south eastern NSW.

The objectives of this framework are to:

- ▶ enable better planned and more informed policies, projects, programs and services
- ▶ facilitate effective collaboration and knowledge sharing
- ▶ create opportunities for consumer input and co-design
- ▶ involve consumers across the commissioning cycle
- ▶ continuously improve consumer engagement strategies.

2.2 Integration with COORDINARE'S other frameworks

2.2.1 COORDINARE Quality Management Framework (QMF)

Effective consumer engagement is part of COORDINARE'S Quality Management Framework. The QMF is the overarching framework for all COORDINARE'S frameworks and policies. The Quality Management Framework enables better planned and informed policies, projects, programs and services. It ensures COORDINARE'S commitment to continually examine how effectively it is operating and identify opportunities for improving overall performance. (See supporting document D).

2.2.2 COORDINARE Clinical Governance Framework (CGF)

CGF supports safe and high-quality consumer outcomes through clinical leadership and accountability. The aim is to commission and support primary health services that are both safe and effective. Good clinical governance is fundamental to a culture of continuous improvement and consumer safety. (See supporting document E).

2.2.3 COORDINARE Results Framework (RF)

The Results Framework maps the key results COORDINARE aims to achieve against each of the priorities in its Strategic Plan. It includes indicators and key achievements for achieving meaningful, systematic and equitable consumer engagement across the whole of health sector, with consumers and providers as equal partners. (See supporting document F).

2.2.4 COORDINARE Commissioning Framework *(See supporting document G)*

COORDINARE'S commissioned services are required to meet a quadruple aims approach comprising:

- ▶ Improved health outcomes
- ▶ Better consumer experience
- ▶ Enhance provider satisfaction
- ▶ Increased value for money.

COORDINARE seeks engagement with consumers through all stages of the commissioning cycle.

When developing commissioning initiatives, COORDINARE considers service users' experiences of specific conditions, health care services and how they navigate care pathways.

Even after commissioning decisions are made, people's experiences of care services remain a key component in informing the quality of, and access to commissioned services and COORDINARE involves consumers in the evaluation and re-design of commissioned services.

3. COORDINARE'S strategy

3.1 Consumers are at the front and centre

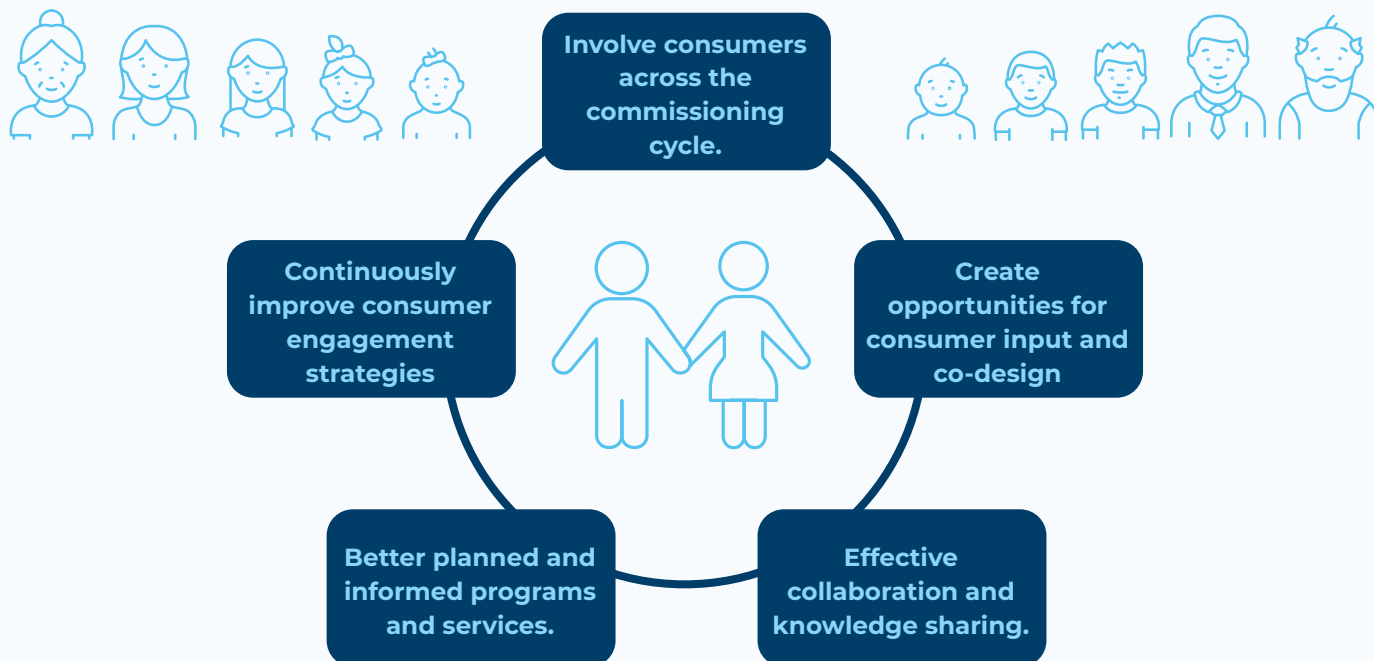
COORDINARE'S strategic priority is to put consumers front and centre in all that it does. (See supporting document A). This includes all stages of COORDINARE'S operations and planning, as evidenced in COORDINARE'S Guiding Principles (See supporting document B) and COORDINARE'S Business Model (See supporting document C).

As a commissioning entity, COORDINARE'S approach to consumer engagement is not the same as that of a direct service provider. COORDINARE'S consumer engagement activities involve:

- ▶ Creating opportunities for people to tell their stories and be listened to, and by understanding these lived experiences - advocating and influencing for place based change.
- ▶ Creating opportunities for consumers and providers to problem solve together.
- ▶ Developing consumer and provider leadership capacity in the primary care sector to champion changes required.
- ▶ Improving consumer representation across all aspects of the organisation's work - creating opportunities for participation both at a system and a service level.
- ▶ Planning and co-designing services with consumers to ensure commissioned services are tailored and responsive to their needs, preferences and choices.
- ▶ Assessing and monitoring consumer experience of care and working together to make improvements across the whole of health system.
- ▶ Working with commissioned service providers to include reporting of consumer experience as a quality improvement indicator across all commissioned services.
- ▶ Supporting the primary care sector to empower consumers in decisions regarding their own health care through targeted education and providing resources to develop consumer health literacy, self-management skills and patient activation strategies.

Consumer Participation

Putting consumers front and centre in all that we do.



Our Approach

KEY INDICATORS OF PROGRESS AND SUCCESS

	<p>Build Consumer Engagement</p> <p>Access to a broad range of consumer perspectives with lived experience that reflects and is inclusive of the diversity of our region.</p>	<p>1.1 A 20% annual increase in Friends of COORDINARE</p> <p>1.2 Consumer advisor network reflects the demographics and diversity of our region</p> <p>1.3 Consumer experience and opinions are collected quarterly through consumer health panel surveys with findings fed back to participants</p>
	<p>Develop Consumer Toolkit</p> <p>Support consumers to participate meaningfully and effectively across the organisation.</p>	<p>2.1 Consumers understand their role as a partner with COORDINARE to plan, implement and evaluate health programs and services.</p> <p>2.2 Number of consumers advisors trained each year</p>
	<p>Build Capacity</p> <p>Embed comprehensive consumer participation processes and practices across the organisation.</p>	<p>3.1 Clear organisational procedures for engaging consumers are streamlined and followed</p> <p>3.2 Consumer engagement data is monitored and reported across the commissioning cycle</p>
	<p>Share Consumer Stories</p> <p>Ensure consumer stories are shared to understand access and outcomes of care.</p>	<p>4.1 Consumer stories provide qualitative data to understand service gaps and health outcomes</p> <p>4.2 Collected consumers stories contribute to decision making and funding investment</p>
	<p>Consumer Empowerment</p> <p>Supporting people to access, understand and use health information and services to benefit their health and improve their health literacy.</p>	<p>5.1 Measurable engagement with a range of resources designed to improve people's ability to access, understand and use health information and services</p> <p>5.2 Health professionals understand and use the Teach back method to close the communication gap between the message intended and the message understood</p>
	<p>Promote Reconciliation</p> <p>Implementation of the Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan in partnership.</p>	<p>6.1 The Innovate RAP implementation plan is completed</p> <p>6.2 COORDINARE staff and other relevant stakeholders have access to a range of webinars to raise awareness about important issues</p>

3.2 Consumer engagement is supported

COORDINARE supports consumer engagement through the following enablers:

3.2.1 Governance

COORDINARE's governance structure includes a Community Advisory Committee (CAC). The CAC advises the Board on a range of strategic opportunities for targeted engagement and communication with consumers and local communities including:

- ▶ Providing considered approaches to determining and responding to health system issues and inefficiencies within local communities, from a consumer perspective.
- ▶ Recommending effective approaches to ensure consumer/ community consultation and feedback is available and fit-for- purpose throughout the commissioning cycle.
- ▶ Identifying approaches to effectively capture, measure and understand the patient experience and then apply this information to influence quality and system improvement.
- ▶ Considering strategies to assist consumer navigation of the health system through, for example, health literacy initiatives, patient self-management approaches and/or system input for care coordination more broadly.
- ▶ The Committee may also be asked to actively consider relevant strategic issues emerging across GP Clusters and other clinical networks and/or community groups.

3.2.2 A dedicated Executive role

The Director Consumer Participation is responsible for ensuring that consumer engagement is achieved by:

- ▶ Enhancing meaningful consumer engagement and experience across all aspects of planning and strategy development, service design, commissioning and evaluation.
- ▶ Installing consumer participation as 'a business as usual' approach.
- ▶ Developing both individual and organisational approaches to consumer engagement.
- ▶ Sponsoring the Community Advisory Committee.

3.2.3 Consumer participation team

The consumer participation team enables consumer participation across the organisation. The team consists of a Manager, an Identified Aboriginal Community Engagement consultant position and a Program Officer. The team's focus is to develop systems and processes to support consumer engagement in a coordinated way and contribute to improved organisational capability by defining and establishing consumer centric systems. Specific outputs aim to:

- ▶ contribute to an organisational culture where consumers are put front and centre in all that we do.
- ▶ support increased staff skills and capability in consumer engagement.
- ▶ support an evidence informed approach to planning consumer engagement.
- ▶ ensure opportunities for consumer input to inform the work of the organisation.
- ▶ contribute to a robust monitoring and reporting approach, with agreed indicators, to inform results.

3.2.4 A Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) and cultural protocols

COORDINARE's RAP includes practical actions to build strong and respectful relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. This includes direct actions to understand and progress reconciliation and opportunities within COORDINARE as well as in the communities in which COORDINARE operates. (See supporting document H).

COORDINARE has developed Aboriginal Cultural Protocols that assist its staff to understand and learn from Aboriginal cultural practices. In this way staff become allies for and with local Aboriginal Custodians and communities in respectful and culturally sensitive ways. (Refer to supporting document I).

3.2.5 Internal policies, procedures and guidelines

COORDINARE's policies and procedures support effective consumer engagement. Examples include:

- ▶ Privacy Policy
- ▶ Paid Participation Policy
- ▶ Population Health Data & Information Sharing Policy
- ▶ Conflict of Interest Policy
- ▶ Media Policy
- ▶ Data Breach Prevention and Management Policy.

3.3 COORDINARE’S model of consumer engagement

COORDINARE places a high value on partnerships, collaboration and facilitating meaningful consumer participation. It welcomes and encourages active participation across the commissioning cycle. COORDINARE uses an adapted version of the IAP2 Spectrum of Public Participation (www.iap2.org.au) as its model of consumer engagement. (See Figure 1). The IAP2 assists to select the level of participation that defines the public’s role in any public participation process.

Participation will depend on:

- ▶ COORDINARE’s goals
- ▶ COORDINARE’s time frames
- ▶ COORDINARE’s resources



Figure 2: Matrix - how to target consumers given interest and influence levels

There are five IAP2 Spectrum levels of participation:

- 1. Inform**

Information is a one-way exchange and occurs for the purpose of conveying facts, and decisions, and enhancing knowledge and understanding to inform decision-making and support engagement.
- 2. Consult**

Consultation involves two way exchanges and is used to find out what consumers and communities think about an issue, their perspectives, and ‘lived’ experiences of health system policies, programs and services. Consultation provides consumers and communities with an opportunity to share views, needs, interests and aspirations from their perspective and to use these to enhance policies and services and increase acceptance of a decision or initiative.
- 3. Involve**

Involvement is about shared decision making in planning, delivery and evaluation of health services, programs and policies. Consumers and COORDINARE jointly own the processes and outcomes. This may occur on an ongoing basis, a single health issue, a range of health issues or on policy matters.
- 4. Collaborate**

Consumers work together with COORDINARE and other stakeholders to develop solutions and initiatives and decisions are made within specified guidelines.
- 5. Empower**

Consumers make decisions within specified guidelines and the decisions are then implemented.

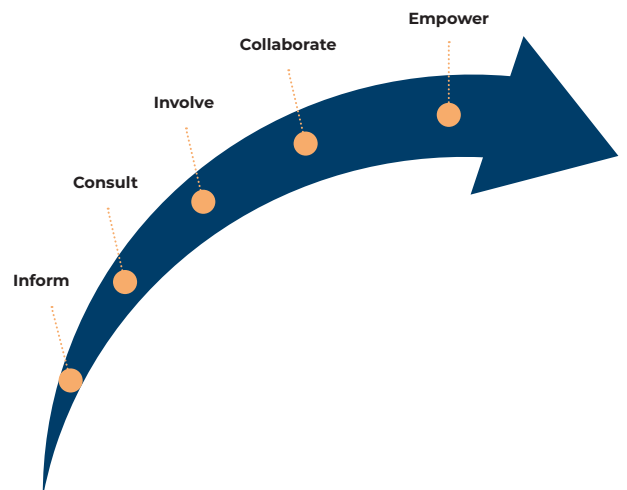


Figure 1 IAP2 Spectrum of Engagement

3.4 Applying the model

Table 1 identifies the current approaches that COORDINARE uses to engage with consumers.

Other methods of participation may evolve over time.

Table 1: Methods of consumer participation

When considering how to engage with consumers, If a consumer has:	Consumer engagement goal		Method of participation (for example)
Limited interest Limited influence	Inform	Seek to provide balanced, objective, accurate and consistent information to assist consumers to understand the organisation, the initiatives, the issues and the alternatives, including opportunities and/or solutions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fact sheets Letter box drop Newsletters/bulletins/circulars Media release, radio, newspaper, television On-Site display Website updates Public presentations
High interest Limited influence	Consult	Seek to obtain input from consumers throughout the various stages of the commissioning cycle - needs assessment, planning, prioritising, implementation and evaluation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Survey and opinion polls Focus groups Interviews Online forum Social media (Blog, Facebook, YouTube, Twitter etc.) Aboriginal Community yarning circles Community Connect website Friends and Mudji's of COORDINARE
Limited Interest High Influence	Involve	Seek to work directly with consumers throughout the process to ensure their concerns and needs are consistently understood and considered.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Workshops Focus groups Advisory Committees Commissioning Assessment Panels Aboriginal Community yarning circles Consumer training opportunities
High interest High influence	Collaborate	To partner with consumers including the development of alternatives, decision making and identification of preferred solutions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participatory funding and reporting Reference groups Co-design projects Participatory decision-making
	Empower	To place final decision making in the hands of the consumer.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community Facilitation Advocacy Local governance Joint planning

4. Continuous improvement

Continuous improvement in approaches to consumer participation is important. COORDINARE undertakes continuous monitoring & evaluation of its consumer engagement and participation mechanisms including through understanding both the reach and scope of consumer engagement across organisational activities. Monitoring, measuring and evaluating consumer partnerships, through mechanisms such as recording consumer experience and ensuring two-way communication flow and feedback loops, are vital to ensure that the partnerships are meeting the needs of the community and consumers. COORDINARE's Consumer Participation Team (see 3.2.3 above) is responsible to drive continuous improvement in consumer engagement across the work of the organisation.

The team creates opportunity to hear and include a diverse representation of views. It works toward supporting individuals through training to have the skill and or confidence to participate.

The approach is adaptive, flexible, and creative in methods of engagement, and mindful of the need to embed culturally appropriate and trauma informed approaches across the work that we do.

Consumer Engagement data is monitored and reported six monthly to executive.

5. Future directions

Participation will only remain successful if we continue to listen and respect each other as equal contributors to the participation process. Going forward we aim to build trust and openly evaluate and learn from our actions. COORDINARE will continue to listen to the needs of consumers and proactively work together with people to jointly effect change. Whilst continuing to consult on what the structural options for ongoing engagement with consumers will look like, COORDINARE will continue to make sure the way it partners with consumers is underpinned by the principle outlined in this framework, developed in consultation with the Community Advisory Committee.

6. Supporting documents

- A. COORDINARE's Strategic Priorities
- B. COORDINARE's Guiding Principles
- C. COORDINARE Business Model
- D. COORDINARE Quality Management Framework
- E. COORDINARE Clinical Governance Framework
- F. COORDINARE Results Framework
- G. COORDINARE Commissioning Framework
- H. COORDINARE's Reconciliation Plan
- I. COORDINARE's Aboriginal Cultural Protocols

7. Version history

Date	Version No.	Lead Author	Approved by	Reason for update
Aug 2016	1	Jo Risk	D Kitcher	Original
Jan 2019	2	Jo Risk	D Kitcher	Review
Jan 2020	3	Jo Risk	D Kitcher	Update and align with new frameworks
Jan 2023	4	Jo Risk	D Kitcher	Review