



Community Reference Group communique

M2 / 2021

The Community Reference Group met online.

The Chair welcomed members to the meeting and acknowledged the traditional custodians of the lands where members were located for the meeting and paid their respects to Elders past, present and emerging.

Data strategy

Mr Chris Robertson and Ms Deborah Brown briefed the Group on work done to review Ahpra's Data Strategy to ensure it aligns with the 2020-25 NRAS Strategy. Mr Robertson described the consultation process underway and spoke to key focus areas that impact the wider public safety communities, including practitioners, the public, and health entities.

Members provided some initial comments around data security and whether there is scope to link to existing sites that rate health practitioners and agreed to provide further feedback out of session.

CEO update

Mr Fletcher updated the Group on joint work with the Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care on the consumer health complaints system. Mr Fletcher noted the joint partnership is a first and is focused on how we work together as a system with consumer and health complaints organisations for consumers and patient safety.

Members highlighted the notifications report in the written CEO update and noted the annual increase in notifications received and queried whether Ahpra does any work to consider notifications that may occur in future, and any likely changes in patterns. Members noted that the survey data indicates that practitioners are more likely to be satisfied with the notifications process than notifiers. Mr Fletcher responded that two main things can affect satisfaction; timeliness and clear reasons for regulatory decisions, and that this is especially so with no further action outcomes. Mr Fletcher also noted the importance to keep focusing on ensuring people are in the right place for their concern and the outcomes they are seeking.

Review of English language skills registration standard

Ms Helen Townley and Ms Jane Motley joined the meeting to brief the Group on National Boards (excluding the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Practice Board of Australia) preliminary consultation on the review of the English language skills registration standards, and to seek their feedback.

Members commented that it was good to see the work progressing and discussed issues that give rise to difficulties in communicating.

Supporting professional practice

Ms Rachel Griffith spoke to the Group on work to progress the *Supporting professional practice strategy* which aims to explain how the National Scheme will contribute to improved safety and quality of healthcare by supporting professional practice and taking regulatory action when it is required, to protect the public.

Ms Griffith outlined work that has commenced on the collaborative project with the Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care (ACSQHC) which will focus initially on improving the information available to consumers about consumer health complaints processes in Australia.

Members commented favourably on the project including noting the interest in mapping issues from the consumer perspective.

Workshop: draft revised Terms of reference and CRG workplan

Revised Terms of reference

The Group confirmed their proposed new name Community Advisory Council.

Members discussed and agreed changes to the revised Terms of reference and agreed to provide the revised Terms of reference to the National Executive and Agency Management Committee.

CRG workplan

Ms Rachael Davies outlined developments made to the workplan since the Group's March meeting which incorporate feedback provided from members out of session and noted that changes made illustrate a clearer connection with the 2020-2025 National Scheme Strategy's engagement and implementation plan.

Members agreed that the workplan should also refer to progressing initiatives that address improvements around community awareness, access and engagement with Ahpra notifications processes.

Senate Inquiry – CRG response

Mr Nick Lord briefed the Group about the Senate inquiry into the administration of registration and notifications by Ahpra and related entities under the Health Practitioner Regulation National Law.

The Group discussed their draft submission and agreed that they felt strongly that the inquiry is focused on practitioners' grievances and lacks reference to public safety and protection. Members identified several additional issues and agreed that they would indicate that they are available to speak with the Senate Inquiry Committee.

Accreditation policy direction

Ms Helen Townley updated the Group on Ahpra's work to implement Policy Direction 2021-01, to establish a new independent accreditation committee and sought members' feedback on the proposed terms of reference and a nomination for the position of consumer/community representative on the new committee.

Notifier Support Steering Committee

Ms Annette Chivers updated the Group on the Notifier Support Steering Committee meeting from late April noting there was a robust discussion about the plan to employ two social workers to support notifiers making complaints about sexual boundary violations. The Group discussed the proposal and Ms Chivers advised she would raise their feedback with the Steering Committee.

Accreditation Liaison Group

Mr Hamza Vayani updated the Group on the Accreditation Liaison Group meeting reporting that he has raised with the ALG whether curriculum content design is viewed through the consumer lens.

Consumer Association of South Australia

Ms Kym Ayscough and Ms Susan Biggar sought the Group's advice on how Ahpra might best continue to engage with the Consumer Association of South Australia (CaSA) on issues that CaSA had raised with Ahpra in 2020. Members noted that the engagement with Ahpra to date and suggested that Ahpra ensure CaSA is on all relevant stakeholder lists to ensure that if CaSA wishes to respond on any specific consultations or issues, they continue to have the opportunity.

Mark Bodycoat

Chair
Community Reference Group

Community Reference Group