



Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Communities Health Advisory Group

Terms of Reference

The Terms of Reference reflect the key role and function of the Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Communities Health Advisory Group (Advisory Group).

Context

The Australian Government is committed to improving health equity for people from culturally, ethnically and linguistically diverse (CALD) backgrounds and to learning from the experiences of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Advisory Group was established to provide the Department of Health and Aged Care (the department) with advice on the experience of CALD communities in relation to the COVID-19 pandemic, to improve health outcomes and mitigate the health impact of COVID-19 for people from multicultural backgrounds.

Building on the collaborative partnership forged throughout the pandemic with CALD communities, the Advisory Group has been extended and its remit expanded to provide advice and recommendations across the Health and Aged Care portfolio to improve health and wellbeing outcomes for people from CALD communities.

1. Role

The Advisory Group is a key engagement mechanism to provide a coordinated approach to multicultural health and wellbeing in the department.

The Advisory Group will provide a two-way communication channel between Government and CALD communities and provide expertise, advice and recommendations to shape culturally safe and appropriate policy and communications to improve health outcomes for people and communities from CALD backgrounds.

While the Advisory Group is to advise on matters in line with the department's priorities and to achieve area-specific outcomes, its agenda will be led by the communities it represents and its workplan will be developed and agreed with members.

2. Term

The Advisory Group has been extended to 31 December 2023 and will be subject to a review at that time.

3. Membership

Membership will include experts and representatives from various backgrounds including:

- Department of Health and Aged Care
- Department of Home Affairs
- a range of bodies representing the diverse and unique needs and experiences of the multicultural community
- public health and medical experts
- civil society organisations
- state and territory governments (as observers).

Member organisations will also represent any auspiced bodies aligned to their organisations. Other parties may be co-opted onto the Advisory Group, as required, for ongoing membership or specific timeframes, at the invitation of the Chair.

4. Governance

The Advisory Group will be chaired by the First Assistant Secretary, Population Health Division, and will report to the Deputy Secretary, Primary and Community Care Group. The Advisory Group may provide information and advice to any area of the department or associated Health committee as required.

Secretariat services will be provided by Preventive Health and Food Policy Branch.

5. Meeting schedule

Meetings will occur quarterly, held via videoconference.

6. Meeting protocols

Care will be taken to schedule meetings to maximise attendance of Advisory Group members.

Notice of any meeting of the Advisory Group shall be given in writing as soon as possible, and where possible not fewer than five working days *before the day of the meeting*.

The distribution of agenda papers and meeting outcome notes are to be prepared by the Secretariat.

All decisions are to be recorded in the meeting outcome notes, including any *relevant background information*.

7. Proxies and Observers

Should Members wish to nominate a proxy to attend a meeting on their behalf or an observer to attend a meeting with them, it is essential to advise the Secretariat ahead of the meeting to seek the Chair's agreement. Proxies and observers will be required to complete the Confidentiality, Conflict of Interest, Privacy and Secrecy Deed Poll.

Given that the membership will be expert, only reasonable and equivalent proxies may be nominated.

8. Conflict of interest

All members of the Advisory Group will declare all existing or potential conflicts of interest and stand aside when the majority of Advisory Group members consider the conflict of interest may have undue influence on the members' *ability to remain impartial*.

9. Record keeping

At the end of the term of the Advisory Group, the department will store a copy of the documents and records generated by the Advisory Group.

10. Confidentiality

Advisory Group members may be invited to publicly share information on matters before the Advisory Group, however, it will be clarified at the time on whether information is confidential for Advisory Group purposes only, or if information is to be shared more broadly.

VERSION

1.5	Endorsed by members 22 March 2023	Secretariat
-----	-----------------------------------	-------------