

Dementia Expert Reference Group

Terms of Reference

Approved: 17 March 2022 – December 2022

Purpose

The Dementia Expert Reference Group will provide expert insight and feedback to the Department of Health concerning dementia related information, research and initiatives to support monitoring and continuous improvements of dementia policy, programs and activities.

Governance

The Dementia Expert Reference Group will work in close partnership with the Department of Health.

Role and Function

The Dementia Expert Reference Group (the Reference Group) is a consultative and advisory body that will provide expertise and advice to the Department of Health on the development, implementation and evaluation of dementia policy and initiatives. This includes measures introduced by the Government following the 2021-22 Budget and in response to the Aged Care Royal Commission into Quality and Safety. The Reference Group may consider a broad range of dementia-related issues, including clinical care, psychosocial services and supports, workforce and training, and behaviour supports, in order to bring a range of perspectives to each of these aspects of dementia policy. The Group will also serve an engagement function, whereby the Department can inform and update members about dementia specific policy and programs.

The Dementia Expert Reference Group's role and functions may include:

- To inform and provide advice about dementia policy development, implementation and evaluation.
- Provision of feedback on the evaluation outcomes and impact of Australian Government-funded dementia programs to assist in monitoring and continuous improvement of these programs.
- Provision of advice and recommendations in response to requests from the Department on specific topics or about particular policy or implementation issues.
- To identify and update the Department and other members on trends, initiatives and evolving issues related to dementia research, dementia care and training that should inform future policy and program management.
- Share information and evidence with the Department and other members to foster collaboration and support alignment and integration of dementia policies, programs and reform measures.
- Provide different expert perspectives on dementia policies and programs.
- Identify risks, and provide advice about potential mitigation strategies, which have the potential to impact the delivery of dementia specific policies, programs or other activities.
- Consider other matters as referred by the Chair of the Dementia Expert Reference Group.

The Reference Group has no formal decision-making authority.

The Reference Group complements mechanisms for stakeholder engagement, including those to engage with people living with dementia and their carers. The Reference Group is not intended as a mechanism to enable broader engagement with stakeholders in dementia policy and programs.

Membership

Members are invited as individuals with specific experience and expertise, and not as representatives of organisations they may be employed by, or in an advocacy capacity.

The Assistant Secretary of the Dementia, Diversity and Design Branch of the Australian Government Department of Health, or delegate, is the Chair of the Dementia Expert Reference Group.

Regular Observers/Advisers

The Chair may invite non-members to observe and/or advise the Group as required.

Quorum

There will be no quorum for meetings to take place. The most convenient time for a majority of members will be considered when scheduling meetings.

Members have been chosen for their personal skills and expertise. Therefore, proxies will not be required / permitted.

Meeting Operation

Meeting Frequency, Duration and Form

The Chair of the Group, in consultation with members, will determine the frequency and duration of meetings. It is expected the Group will meet quarterly for the next 12 months, with an additional meeting in the first quarter to finalise the terms of reference and discuss forward agenda. Meetings will be conducted by video/teleconference. The first meeting will likely take place in November 2021 (date to be confirmed), with a second meeting in early 2022.

Papers may be circulated outside scheduled meetings, and individuals may be contacted as needed on a reasonable basis between meetings.

Members will be advised at the outset of meetings where discussion and information from meetings is suitable for sharing. Members, however, will not be considered spokespersons for the Department.

Sensitive or confidential information or discussions will be explicitly called out ahead of meetings, or at the time, to indicate the status of such, and information will not be attributed to any particular individual

Secretariat

The Department of Health will provide the Secretariat for the Group. The meeting agenda and any papers or discussion points will be circulated prior to meetings. Key actions and outcomes arising from the meetings will be circulated by the Secretariat as required.

Conflict of Interest

Members will be required to complete a conflict of interest declaration. Members will be required to declare any interest in specific topics of discussion prior to or at the commencement of meetings.

Terms of Reference

The Terms of Reference will be agreed by the Group at the first meeting for a period of 12 months in the first instance and reviewed thereafter as required.