



Community Reference Group Communique

M1 / 2021

The Community Reference Group met online.

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

CEO update

The CRG welcomed Mr Martin Fletcher and noted his verbal and written updates.

Mr Fletcher thanked Patricia Hall, Hamza Vayani and Kate Griggs for their plenary presentations at the NRAS Combined Meeting, noting the sharing of their personal stories helped to demonstrate our commitment to communities and cultural safety and set a good standard for the event.

Ms Kate Griggs noted the importance of the National Code website, Mr Fletcher agreed that a community representative would be a welcome addition once the substantive work starts.

Ms Lisa Whop noted the roll-out of the Moong-moong-gak cultural safety training program, Mr Fletcher confirmed that it will be delivered to all Ahpra staff and also to all board and committee members and the Community Reference Group.

Workshop: CRG & Agency Management Committee workshop outcomes, draft revised Terms of Reference, draft community engagement workplan, and succession planning

Members noted the outcomes and recommendations from the Agency Management Committee (AManC) and CRG co-design workshops and discussed in detail proposed revisions to the CRG Terms of Reference.

Mr Mark Bodycoat, Ms Kate Griggs and Mr Hamza Vayani outlined the discussion and proposals from the co-design workshops. Mr Bodycoat explained that the AManC wish to strengthen the connection between the two groups, in pursuit of both Ministerial Policy Direction 2019-02 and to ensure there is opportunity for an unfiltered connection between the two groups.

Ms Anita Rivera led the Group through the proposed changes to the Terms of Reference, with discussion focusing on strengthening the community voice within the National Scheme and on the suitability of the CRG membership to ensure it is fit for purpose.

Members noted agreement between AManC and CRG that the Terms of Reference should raise the focus of the CRG work to a strategic National Scheme level and strengthen the link between the CRG and AManC. Members agreed to the proposal to formalise the link between the CRG and AManC with a representative from the CRG attending an AManC meeting regularly to highlight any new or significant community issues and to discuss the Group's workplan.

Members agreed with the proposal, made in response to the increasing volume of consultation input sought from the CRG, that they be empowered to convene subcommittees to provide input into National Board standards, codes, guidelines, policies, publications and other specific issues.

Succession planning

The Group had a robust discussion about its membership composition and best arrangement for Chair, agreeing to propose a co-Chair arrangement.

Mr Nick Lord and Ms Payal Singh sought advice from the Group about whether they consider the current membership representation reflects the broader community and responds to Ministerial Policy Direction 2019-02. The Group agreed with the proposal to broaden its membership to seek representation from the wider Australian community, better representing its diversity.

Members also agreed at least two positions should be available for persons who identify as an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Person.

Notifier support services

Ms Susan Biggar outlined to the Group a proposal to introduce a notifier support service for notifiers of sexual boundaries violations.

Members highlighted that it will be important to define the boundary between victim support service and this type of service and also queried whether an alternative would be to build capacity within existing external services. Ms Biggar advised that the proposal is about providing support to help the notifier navigate the process not about providing psychological support. Members noted that it will be important to ensure the notifier doesn't get confused about who has carriage of the notification.

Targeted consultation on tranche 2 amendments to the National Law

Mr Nick Lord outlined that a targeted consultation on the tranche 2 amendments to the National Law is underway and advised that NRAS Review Implementation Project Team is seeking CRG input. Mr Lord highlighted relevant amendments and members agreed to provide their input out of session.

Understanding no further action outcomes in notifications

Mr Matthew Hardy updated the Group on developments in understanding no further action outcomes in notifications, explaining why the number of no further actions goes up each year in terms of number and proportion. Mr Hardy highlighted that Ahpra is increasingly able to use data to understand the story behind the high number of no further action decisions by National Boards, and that we are getting more targeted and deliberate in identifying what requires a regulatory response.

Members queried how many of the Ahpra recommendations for no further action are taken up by National Boards, Mr Hardy responded that it fluctuates very little with 89-91% of the recommendations made taken up and that where an outlier is identified we consider whether there is a risk that needs looking at or if we need to engage with the committee (decision maker) about their decision making.

Supporting professional practice strategy

Ms Rachel Griffiths and Ms Jaclyn Kennedy, Managers Strategic Policy, introduced the Group to the newly developed *Supporting professional practice strategy*, which 'explains to the public, practitioners and our stakeholders in the patient safety system how we will contribute to our goal of safe and professional health practitioners for Australia'. Ms Griffiths and Ms Kennedy explained that the strategy is in an early consultation phase and welcomed the Group's feedback out of session.

Regulatory guide – new chapter on procedural fairness

Dr Jamie Orchard spoke to the Group about a new chapter to be added to the Regulatory Guide, in response to some questions raised about procedural fairness. Dr Orchard welcomed members' feedback on content and readability out of session.

Mark Bodycoat

Chair
Community Reference Group

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