



Partnering with consumers Framework



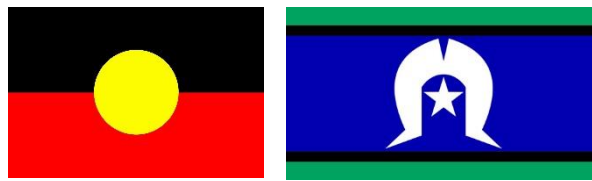
**Barwon
Health**

Acknowledgement of Country and Traditional Owners

We, Barwon Health, acknowledge the Traditional Owners of the land, the Wadawurrung people of the Kulin Nation.

We pay our respects to the Elders past, present and emerging.

We thank the Traditional Owners for custodianship of the land, and celebrate the continuing culture of the Wadawurrung people acknowledging the memory of honourable ancestors.



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Message from the Board Chair and Chief Executive

On the partnership agreement and the power of partnering with consumers

Partnering with consumers is embedded within Barwon Health and embraces all forms of engagement of consumers, community and carers in our health service.

The Barwon Health Strategic Plan – Future Ready 2020-2025 was developed in consultation with our community, consumers, partners and supporters and underpins the Barwon Health Partnering with Consumers Framework. The framework is aligned with Barwon Health’s vision that ‘by 2050, everyone in our community enjoys the best health and wellbeing in Victoria’ and is linked to our first strategic priority to ‘deliver best care’ with a focus on person centred care. Partnering with consumers is central to achieving these commitments and strategic outcomes.

Our community is diverse, including First Nations People with connections to place that stretch back over many generations, and new arrivals from overseas. We are committed to ensuring that we partner with these communities to ensure our services, facilities, and most of all the attitudes and practices of our workforce, recognise and accommodate diversity including; age, ability, race, national or ethnic origin, immigrant status or skin colour, sex, pregnancy, marital or relationship status, family responsibilities, breastfeeding, religious beliefs and practices, sexual orientation, gender identity or intersex status.

We are proud to share outstanding examples of how we partner with consumers, from incorporating consumer voices in the design of our new mental health hub, to sharing consumer stories to enhance our clinical education. We are equally proud to commit to improving our performance in consumer engagement over the next three years. We are committed to transforming how our consumers and communities experience care in our organisation and through our services. This framework reflects partnership with our consumers, their families, carers and our community. It shapes our way forward to not only meet the Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care’s standards but also achieve excellence in consumer partnership.

The Barwon Health Partnering with Consumers Framework has been developed with input and consultation from a broad range of stakeholders with special acknowledgment to our Community Advisory Committee who have been major contributors in its development. We invite all consumers, staff and members of our South West Region community to join with us in embedding consumer voices into everything we do at Barwon Health.



Hon. Lisa Neville
Chair



Frances Diver
Chief Executive

Partnering with Consumers context

The purpose of this framework is to explain the different ways we partner with consumers to make sure consumers are involved in the way care and health services are provided. Our Partnering with Consumers Framework has been developed based on Victorian and national policy.

Barwon Health's strategic context

The Partnering with Consumer Framework is directly aligned with Barwon Health's vision that 'By 2050, everyone in our community enjoys the best health and wellbeing in Victoria' and our purpose to 'provide best care, every person, every day, so that everyone feels better'. Partnering with consumers is central to achieving these commitments and strategic outcomes.

National context

Barwon Health's Partnering with Consumer Framework addresses the *Australian Safety and Quality Framework for Health Care's* vision of person-centred care for all Australians. The National Safety and Quality Health Service (NSQHS) Standards informs actions needed to achieve this. Of these, Standard 2 'Partnering with Consumers' is integral to recognising diverse types of consumer partnerships and emphasises that they are central to ensuring responsiveness to consumer needs, input and to enable the best possible health outcomes for consumers. The four criteria for the NSQHS Partnering with Consumers standard are:

- Clinical governance and quality improvement systems to support partnering with consumers;
- Partnering with patients in their own care;
- Health literacy;
- Partnering with consumers in organisational design and governance.



Victorian context

Safer Care Victoria's *Partnering in Healthcare Framework* outlines ways to achieve change, and better care and outcomes for consumers, using a partnership and consumer participation approach, focusing on five key domains:

- Personalised and holistic;
- Working together;
- Shared decision-making;
- Equity and inclusion;
- Effective communication.

A note on language: A **consumer** is a person who has used, or may use, Barwon Health services. This includes patients, resident's clients and their family, friends and carers.

Consumer Advisors are members of our community who advocate for consumers and the community by participating in various initiatives and providing advice to Barwon Health.

Our community

The Barwon Health community includes the population of the Colac Otway Shire, the Golden Plains Shire, the City of Greater Geelong, the Borough of Queenscliff and the Surf Coast Shire.

The estimated population of our community is 360,795 people. Our population is forecast to grow by 12 per cent to 405,638 people by 2031.*

The diverse local community includes approximately 4,488 First Australians* and additional new arrivals from around Australia and overseas. Geelong has warmly embraced migrants who have not only established thriving communities in the region, but also extended a heartfelt welcome to refugees from around the world. We employ over 8,600** nurses, doctors, allied health professionals and support staff who are also members of our community.



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Our services

Barwon Health is one of the largest and most comprehensive regional health services in Australia, providing care at all stages of life and circumstance.

As a regional health service, we provide tertiary referral services across the Barwon South Western Region.

We provide a comprehensive range of health services, including acute care (medicine, surgery, women's health, paediatrics, emergency and specialist clinics), mental health, alcohol and other drug services, primary care, community health, rehabilitation, aged care, geriatric medicine, palliative care and hospital in the home.

We provide health promotion programs that aim to improve the health and wellbeing of the population.

As a major teaching hospital, we have relationships with Deakin University, LaTrobe University, the Gordon (TAFE) and other tertiary education providers, including the University of Melbourne and Monash University. We provide teaching and training for all health professionals across all disciplines, at all career stages.



BARWON HEALTH FACILITIES

1. Corio Community Health Centre
2. Barwon Health North
3. McKellar Centre
4. Mental Health, Alcohol and Other Drugs (MHAOD) Community Hub
5. University Hospital Geelong
6. Newcomb Community Health Centre
7. Belmont Community Health and Rehabilitation Centre
8. Community Rehab Facility (CRF) and Prevention and Recovery Care (PARC)
9. Alan David Lodge
10. Barwon Health Surf Coast (Future)
11. Torquay Community Health Centre
12. Angelsea Community Health Care

* <https://forecast.id.com.au/g21-region>

** 2021/22 Annual Report

Statement of Commitment to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families and communities

Barwon Health is committed to improving the health and experiences of First Nations peoples accessing our health service. Barwon Health recognises the rights of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples are central to their health and social and emotional wellbeing. These rights include the right to make decisions on matters that affect their lives and communities, and the right to access safe and culturally responsive health care, free of racism and inequity.

Barwon Health's vision to improve health and wellbeing outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people is to close the unacceptable and ongoing health gap that still exists between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians and non-Indigenous Australians, and to commit to partnerships and shared decision making to address this inequity.

The Partnering with Consumers Framework reflects Barwon Health's values and the desire to collaborate with the local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community to ensure participation and engagement in all aspects of the health journey will be equitable, collaborative and culturally appropriate. Our relationship with the local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples will be built on Barwon Health's values of compassion, respect, commitment, accountability and innovation.

The Wurri-Ki Ngitj Aboriginal Gathering Group is made up of both internal and external stakeholders who work collaboratively in developing culturally appropriate strategies to address access, needs, issues and interests of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in current and future work plans. The primary purpose of this group is:

- To ensure frameworks and systems are in place for the delivery of culturally sensitive care to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.
- For Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff to provide the Wurru-Ki Ngitj (to speak together) Aboriginal Gathering Group with views, needs and interests of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people within the Barwon region in relation to gaps in service delivery.
- For Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff to provide the Wurri-Ki Ngitj (to speak together) Aboriginal Gathering Group with advice, context, input and feedback on providing culturally appropriate health care to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

Key elements of the Partnering with Consumers Framework will be implemented through the eight cultural safety domains of the Aboriginal Cultural Safety Plan. This annual plan is informed by the National Safety and Quality Health Services Standards (NSQHSSs), and is underpinned by the Department of Health and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural safety framework and the findings of the Koolin Balit Evaluation Improving the Cultural responsiveness of Victorian public health services.

Diversity and inclusion

We are committed to our services being inclusive, safe and free from discrimination, by partnering with consumers who represent diverse communities, when we plan, develop, design and deliver services.



This is demonstrated in the way we work with our culturally and linguistically diverse community. There are many communities and people in our region whose languages, ethnic backgrounds, nationalities, religions, health beliefs, social structures and customs differ from the majority. This is demonstrated by the approximately 16% of people living in our community who were born overseas and 10% of our community that use a language other than English at home. * The top 10 languages spoken by members of our community, other than English, are Mandarin, Italian, Punjabi, Croatian, Filipino/Tagalog, Greek, Macedonian, Spanish, Hindi and Arabic. *

We seek to be culturally responsive in the way we partner with consumers from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds by integrating culture into the delivery of health services to improve consumer health outcomes.

* <https://forecast.id.com.au/g21-region>

How we partner with consumers

We partner with consumers to actively participate in our healthcare system to support care that is safe, high quality and meets people's needs. Partnerships vary from engagement in health literacy, through to being appointed to key governance committees.

Direct care

Barwon Health supports consumers to be equal partners in their care. Key consumer services and training for staff are provided by the following areas:

- The Aboriginal Health Unit;
- The Disability Liaison Office;
- The Language Services Department;
- Organisational Development Unit.

This equips staff to provide a safe and respectful environment for consumers to receive the treatment and care they need. Understanding consumer's physical, cultural and social characteristics is key to identifying what makes a positive difference to their health, wellbeing and safety.

The **Written Information Simply Explained** or **WISE Program** supports the organisation improve its' health literacy environment by reviewing information written for consumers. Consumer Advisors representing a vast array of characteristics and experiences meet once a fortnight to conduct reviews. Documents range from patient information leaflets about a health condition or a service, to patient experience surveys, flyers promoting programs and much more!



The following tools and processes are used to support consumers to partner in their healthcare with Barwon Health staff:

- Australian Charter of Health Care Rights;
- Care planning;
- Shared decision-making;
- Participation in substitute decision-makers;
- Informed consent;
- Information for consumers reviewed by consumers;
- Promotion of the National Relay Service;
- Welcome to Ward boards;
- Patient Communication boards;
- Knowing How We're Going boards.

Service level

Barwon Health recruits and supports Consumer Advisors to participate in committees, working groups and projects. It is through these opportunities that they contribute to decision making and work in partnership on service design, delivery and quality improvement. Linkages are created with community-based organisations to help us connect with minority and marginalised consumers and communities.

Consumers also provide feedback through the Consumer Liaison Office. Consumer experiences are captured through surveys, audits and incidents. This data is used to improve the safety and quality of the care delivered by Barwon Health. It is a key component in the planning, implementation and evaluation of quality improvement activities, and education and training material for Barwon Health staff.

We also use our website, social media platforms, print media, and advocacy activities to facilitate interaction with consumers. This interaction is at the inform level of participation which often leads to higher levels and stronger partnerships with consumers.

Jai Roberts was involved as a Consumer Advisor in the Heart Failure Collaborative and the Cardiovascular Ambassador programs. Jai reviewed existing and evolving patient resources and provided valuable insights into the information that has helped him manage his chronic health condition.

Jai is a member of the Steering Committee that oversees Heart Failure projects at Barwon Health.

“Together with members of the executive, managers and clinicians he is working toward developing ongoing, sustainable improvement of Heart Failure services within Barwon Health, as we work toward delivering the best care possible for our consumers.”

Alistair McKinnon
Nurse practitioner candidate

The Barwon South West Public Health Unit, established a project of **Continuing Support for Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Communities for Vaccination and Beyond**, led by the team of Sara Bonnici, Prof Eugene Athan and Caroline Poynder, to prioritise vaccination of people most at risk of COVID-19 or at risk of slow uptake due to language, culture or other barriers to access.

The same approach is now being used to ensure continued engagement with these communities on other future health areas such as thunderstorm asthma, long COVID-19, monkeypox, COVID-19 antivirals, monkeypox, emergencies and Buruli Ulcer.

Kaw Rawee from the Karenni community said before getting her vaccine, she was “excited that she will get protection but also a bit nervous.”



Co-designed services

The Model of Consumer Involvement explains how Barwon Health involves Consumer Advisors in the governance, design, measurement and evaluation of its services.

Consumers co-designed the Moorabool Street Mental Health Hub in Geelong.

Leah Ingles represented the perspective of a group of 30 consumers with lived experience in mental health to inform the interior design of the clinical environment to a warm, welcoming home-like space where people want to come in and can feel safe

“My moment of amazement was when we were reflecting on what we had (started with) to what we ended up with, which was a whole lot of squares and a jail-like feel and we’ve moved into curves and inviting spaces and waiting spaces.”

Leah Ingles
Consumer Engagement Officer



Community Health Bicultural Workers

We employ **Community Health Bicultural Workers** to work with individuals and communities with whom they share similar cultural experiences and understanding. They are part of a primary care multi-disciplinary team who focus provision of consumer focused holistic care to those from newly arrived communities.

The Bicultural worker will consult with community and support health service access or health information in relevant languages in culturally appropriate ways.

Bicultural workers are also advocates for communities providing feedback about barriers, challenges and discrimination faced by their communities and advocate for change.

“The Bicultural worker will use their cultural knowledge or lived experience to negotiate and communicate between communities and Barwon Health programs; acting as a conduit, they facilitate mutual understanding of stakeholder’s interests and needs.”

Carol Mioduchowski
Manager, Barwon Health North



LGBTIQA+ Palliative Care Toolkit

Our Palliative Care Toolkit for LGBTIQA+ people was co-designed with a consumer advisor group of more than 40 LGBTIQA+ people. The purpose of the Toolkit was to make thinking and talking about end-of-life decisions easier, including identifying values, support, and planning. LGBTIQA+ inclusive practice project officer Jen Walsh said the idea for the toolkit came from conversations with a team of local Consumer Advisors that identified a lack of representation of the LGBTIQA+ community in medical brochures or documents. "This leads people to believe that a palliative care service like ours might not be safe for people of diverse gender identities or sexualities," she said. "By creating this toolkit, we aimed to remove that barrier in order to help people feel more comfortable accessing palliative care."

"I have never truly seen myself in a 'medical' resource until now. This toolkit feels like it was designed for someone like me. I'd feel comfortable picking up a copy and working through it in my own time. A document like this makes me think that Barwon Health truly sees me and realises that my needs are different than other patients." – **Queer woman, 70 years old**



System level

Consumer Advisors

Consumer Advisors are recruited to partner with Barwon Health in governance, planning and policy development. Key opportunities include the Board Community Advisory Community Advisory Committee, the Board Safety, Quality and Clinical Governance Committee, the Consumer Experience and Clinical Governance Committee, and the eight National Safety and Quality Health Service Standard Committees.

Committee Structure

Barwon Health's established committee structure supports governance and quality improvement in partnering with consumers and includes:

Community Advisory Committee

Our Community Advisory Committee (CAC) is Chaired by a Board Director and Co-Chaired by a Consumer Advisor. The CAC includes a membership of three Board Directors and ten Consumer Advisor members, whose role it is to represent and

advocate for the community; engage with the community to understand their needs and their experience with the health service; advise the Board on health service development, planning, quality improvement and patient and family experience; advise the board on mechanisms for community involvement; and advise the Board on the effectiveness of Barwon Health in translating community engagement into practice.



The Community Advisory Committee is a committee of the Barwon Health Board. This group advises the Board on issues relevant to consumers of our community.

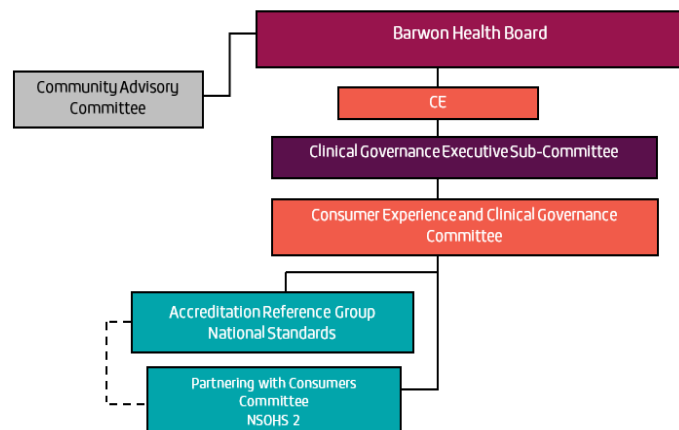
Board Quality, Safety and Clinical Governance committee

Our Board committee, accountable for quality, safety and clinical governance, includes two Consumer Advisor members. This committee oversees the translation of our Clinical Governance Framework into practice.

“We start every meeting with a consumer story, de-identified, and poignant, to really make conscious of the magnitude of accountabilities”.

Partnering with Consumers Committee

Our Partnering with Consumers Committee oversees the translation of the Partnering with Consumers Standard into practice. The committee Chair is a senior clinical leader and the Deputy Chair is a Lived Experience Consultant. The Partnering with Consumers committee works closely with the CAC to ensure the CAC members have all the information they need to provide advice to the Board.



Wurru-Ki Ngitj works collaboratively in developing culturally appropriate strategies to address access, needs, issues and interests of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in current and future work plans. The group is made up of both internal and external stakeholders with relevant expertise and experience in the Aboriginal Health sector.

Training for partnering with consumers

The Consumer Advisors are supported to undertake training with Safer Care Victoria; The Health Issues Centre; Consumer Health Forum; Lived Experience Australia; Centre for Mental Health Learning Victoria.

Policies, procedures and guidelines

The Barwon Health policy, procedure and guideline framework is used as a guide for the development, implementation and monitoring of partnering with consumer related documents.

Risk management

Our risk management framework and procedure provides guidance on how to apply consistent and comprehensive risk management processes, including risks associated with partnering with consumers. Risks can be identified, monitored and managed through reporting processes.

Barwon Health had the support of local Elders, respected people and community members in the planning and development of the **Koorie Birth Suite** at University Hospital Geelong. Barwon Health is committed to Aboriginal self-determination and we are privileged to have had the development of the unit identified and directed by the Aboriginal community. The Koorie Birth Suite adds a further dimension to care, providing a symbolically spiritual connection to Wadawurrung land and Aboriginal culture, paying our respects to the Traditional Custodians of this land on which Barwon Health operates today.



Our **Perineal Infiltration and Episiotomy learning GROW module** came about from a project to reduce the incidence of obstetric anal sphincter injury (OASI).

We worked with a consumer who had experienced an OASI. She shared her story in a 7-minute video that we show at the beginning of the learning module.

Hearing the consumer voice sets the scene for the magnitude of importance of this education to our clinicians's practice.

Our plan – 2023 to 2025

Standard 2 Partnering with consumers provides an outline for the development of a Partnering with Consumer plan. This is based on four key criteria that reflects our intention to partner with consumers so that meaningful consumer partnerships continue to develop and improve our health services.

Principle criteria	Initiative
Clinical governance and quality improvement systems to support partnering with consumers	Expand, engage and further support Consumer Advisors.
	Endorse the 'Partnering with Consumers – A progress report for our community' as a means of monitoring and reporting on <i>implementing strategies to improve the processes for partnering with consumers</i> to the Barwon Health community.
	Work in partnership with consumers to incorporate their views and experiences into training and education for the workforce.
	Review the consumer involvement reporting measures.
	Improve systems to enable consumer feedback that allows for the collection and reporting of Patient/Carer reported Experience Measures (PREMS/CREMS), Patient Reported Outcome Measures (PROMS) and qualitative consumer feedback for example Care Opinion.
	Establish a recognition process for Consumer Advisors to recognise and thank them for their valuable contributions.
	Monitoring governance systems to ensure that all Partnering with Consumers risks are entered onto the Risk Management System.
	Undertake a regular audit of Informed Consent that includes consumer questions and a review of the consent form in the medical record.
	Collaborate with the Aboriginal Health Unit to support achievement of the actions set out in the annual Cultural Safety Plan.

Principle criteria	Initiative
Partnering with patients in their own care	Embed the shared decision making procedure and partnering with patients in the health service.
	Embed the use a comprehensive care plan that is based on regular discussions and checking in with the consumer about their goals of care to ensure care and treatment is in alignment with the consumer's values and preferences.
	Develop increased use of patient stories in the various forums to share individual, personal stories in the health system.
	Undertake an organisation-wide quality improvement project to involve consumers in shift handover, bedside handover and transitions of care handover as ways to facilitate shared decision making.

Principle criteria	Initiative
Health literacy	Develop a Partnering with Consumers webpage, on the Barwon Health website, to enable us to engage with and share information with our community.
	Promote awareness of interpreters, for consumers and staff.

Principle criteria	Initiative
Partnering with consumers in organisational design and governance	Enable and integrate consumer involvement and co-design of key projects and service delivery e.g. the Barwon Women's & Children's development.
	Undertake a full assessment in partnership with consumers of information consumers receive, and can access, across the continuum of care, to ensure it is consistent and of value to consumers. This includes, but is not limited to, information consumers are provided in correspondence, information consumers are given on admission and discharge, and information consumers have access to on the Barwon Health website.
	Grow our Consumer Advisor community.
	Further develop processes, in response to feedback, on advertising, recruiting, on-boarding and orientation of Consumer Advisors.
	Develop relationships with local communities to promote interest, and enable access, for people representing diverse groups, and vulnerable people, to become involved as Consumer Advisors.
	Develop systems to make access to Consumer Advisors easy and efficient for staff.
	Ensure extensive Consumer Advisor involvement in the design and operation of research, including Clinical Trials, undertaken at Barwon Health.

References and links to publications and resources

Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care, National Safety and Quality Health Service Standards, Second Edition, 2021.

<https://www.safetyandquality.gov.au/publications-and-resources/resource-library/national-safety-and-quality-health-service-standards-second-edition>

Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care, Australian Charter of Health Care Rights.

[Australian Charter of Healthcare Rights | Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care](#)

Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care, User Guide for Health Service Organisations Providing Care for Patients from Migrant and Refugee Backgrounds.

[NSQHS Standards User guide for health service organisations providing care for patients from migrant and refugee backgrounds | Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care](#)

Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care, Health Literacy: Taking action to improve safety and quality, 2014.

<https://www.safetyandquality.gov.au/publications-and-resources/resource-library/health-literacy-taking-action-improve-safety-and-quality>

Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care, Review of key attributes of high-performing person-centred healthcare organisations, 2018.

<https://www.safetyandquality.gov.au/publications-and-resources/resource-library/review-key-attributes-high-performing-person-centred-healthcare-organisations>

Barwon Health Strategic Plan

<https://onepoint.barwonhealth.org.au/news/Publications/Strategic%20Plan%202020-25.pdf#search=strategic%20plan>

Charter of Aged Care Rights

<https://www.agedcarequality.gov.au/consumers/consumer-rights>

Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

<https://www.un.org/development/desa/disabilities/convention-on-the-rights-of-persons-with-disabilities.html>

Safer Care Victoria, Partnering in healthcare: A framework for better care and outcomes.

[Partnering in healthcare framework 2019 WEB.pdf \(safercare.vic.gov.au\)](#)

Victorian LGBTIQ+ Strategy

<https://www.vic.gov.au/victorian-lgbtqi-strategy>

Community population and profile

<https://profile.id.com.au/g21-region/speaks-english>

Care Opinion

<https://www.careopinion.org.au/opinions>