

**FACT SHEET**  
for day procedure  
services

# Involving consumers in governance, design and performance-monitoring activities

Day procedure services provide a range of specialised health services or procedures. As a day procedure service, your interactions with consumers may be brief, especially if they come in for a one-off procedure that does not require significant follow-up. This may make it challenging to involve consumers in higher-level organisational activities.

Providing care that responds to consumers' needs is a requirement of the National Safety and Quality Health Service (NSQHS) Standards, as part of the Clinical Governance Standard and the Partnering with Consumers Standard. Engaging with consumers also makes good business sense. Consumers have a unique perspective that can help you to identify risks and opportunities for improvement, to optimise the way you provide services.

This fact sheet describes how you can enhance consumers' involvement in governance, design and performance-monitoring activities.

## Partnering with consumers

The partnerships you form with consumers, and the information and perspectives they contribute, will depend on how closely they interact with your service. Understanding this can help you choose strategies that are useful and achievable for your organisation and your consumers.

There is no single approach to establishing effective partnerships that will work for all day procedure services. You need to find the approach that best suits your organisation. To do this, think about:

- The current context of your service
- The opportunities that exist
- How to make the best use of available resources.

The next step to forming your approach is thinking about the different types of consumer groups, how you can engage with them to gather information and what this information can tell you.

**The people with the most involvement in your service** (such as your patients, their families and carers) can suggest ideas about how your organisation operates by telling you about their experience of your systems and processes. You can engage with these consumers and gather information using:

- Conversations in your waiting rooms
- Pre- or post-procedure surveys
- Compliments and complaints platforms
- Follow-up phone calls.

**Your network group** may offer an opportunity to gain access to consumers that you may not normally engage with. These consumers can still provide insight into your structures, policies and processes, including governance and design, as there are likely common elements across services. You could engage these consumers in a structured activity, such as an annual focus group.

**Consumer representatives or community members** can provide an important, though more general, consumer lens and perspective. Even if they have not had direct experience of your service, you can include them in your governance structures. They can help to review consumer resources and information, and offer consumer stories and experience to shape professional development for your workforce.

**Connecting with consumer organisations** at the national and state and territory level can help you identify and partner with consumer representatives or community members. [My Community Directory](#) can help you find community information as well.

## Involving consumers in governance and design

Consumers can contribute to health service planning and development. Strategies to help you involve consumers in organisational governance and decision-making include:

- Incorporating consumer stories into your governance and leadership meetings to keep consumers' needs and perspectives in mind – for example, you could start each meeting with a consumer's experience story or invite a consumer to speak at meetings
- Including consumers as part of your governance group or strategic planning team
- Establishing a consumer advisory group that meets to provide advice and input into your formal governance group
- Gathering consumer feedback on the governance and leadership of the service, and the safety and performance of the services provided.

## Involving consumers in performance monitoring

Consumers can make important contributions when you are reviewing the safety and quality of your performance and systems. You could engage with consumers by:

- Including them on your governance groups or performance review teams
- Involving consumers when reviewing incidents and complaints, safety and quality audits, infection control reports, clinical practice reviews, and patient feedback about their experiences and outcomes
- Seeking their advice about which quality improvement areas they consider most important
- Including consumers on auditing and monitoring projects and initiatives
- Collaborating with consumers and the local community to identify the topics, format and frequency of reporting on safety and quality performance
- Providing different ways for consumers to access safety and quality performance reports, such as:
  - having printed copies in your waiting room and information on your website
  - giving in-person updates at focus groups and forums
  - repurposing existing communications such as newsletters for the general consumer and community population.

## Strategies to cover multiple actions in the NSQHS Standards

Where possible, the strategies you use should build on pre-existing structures and relationships, and be broad enough to help meet more than one action in the NSQHS Standards. Your approach can be flexible, as long as it is in line with the actions and their purposes. For example, you could address the requirement to involve consumers in the governance of the organisation (Action 2.11) and in the review of safety and quality performance (Action 1.8) by:

- Engaging a consumer on the board, executive, or safety and quality committees
- Creating a consumer advisory group or critical friends group, and including operational planning and performance review as agenda items at meetings
- Holding an annual forum with patients, health consumer representatives and representatives from condition-specific support groups to discuss issues and seek feedback
- Using online and waiting-room surveys to seek advice about quality improvement priorities and future service directions.

If your organisation is finding it challenging to identify consumers to engage with or participate in governance, design and quality improvement activities, try contacting your [state-based health consumer organisation](#). These organisations typically offer services to help you find consumer representatives tailored to your needs.

Other similar health services may also provide opportunities to learn, so discussing strategies for consumer partnerships with your peers can also be useful.

## Questions?

Find more information about the NSQHS Standards and supporting resources at [safetyandquality.gov.au/nsqhs-standards](https://safetyandquality.gov.au/nsqhs-standards)

You can also contact the Partnering with Consumers program team at [mail@safetyandquality.gov.au](mailto:mail@safetyandquality.gov.au)

