



Community Advisory Committee

Terms of Reference: April 2023

1. Background

- The Community Advisory Committee (the Committee) is established to provide advice and direction to the Board of Directors Ambulance Victoria (AV) to assist the Board in carrying out its community engagement and participation responsibilities, and its statutory requirements within the context of Australian and Victorian health legislation and AV policies and frameworks.

2. Purpose

- The Community Advisory Committee is appointed to ensure the voices of the Victorian community is heard, understood, and integrated across the work and services of Ambulance Victoria (AV).
- Members are our communities' advocates, and their experience and contributions are highly valued by the Board and the organisation.
- Members advise the Board on issues directly impacting the community, to ensure all Victorians have equitable access to safe, effective, and timely care – regardless of where they live or who they are. They also provide guidance on community needs and impacts when AV changes policies or services, and how we can improve our community planning and engagement.
- The Committee participates in AV's strategic planning, and annually reports to the Board on how well we have delivered against our Consumer and Community Engagement Plan.

3. Role and responsibilities

- The Committee's role and responsibilities are directly reflected in its annual work plan, which includes a variety of activities to ensure the voice and needs of the community are prioritised by the organisation.
- Members especially provide AV with advice on the diverse needs of our community, including but not limited to:
 - rural and regional Victorian communities
 - culturally and linguistically diverse groups, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders, the homeless, refugees, those impacted by domestic or family violence etc.
 - groups who may find it difficult to communicate with paramedics as part of their care experience, or who have special access needs either in their own homes or within our ambulances.
- From discussions held at each quarterly meeting, the Committee will provide advice to the Board (via the CAC Chair) on priority areas for action relating to the availability, accessibility, and effectiveness of community feedback options, as well as any specific community sentiment that the Board should be aware of.
- The Committee will provide a report to the Board once per year on how well AV has delivered each part of the Community Engagement Plan, and how a particular project or improvement plan can be improved for those it is designed to benefit.



- Members are active and engaged participants in facilitating two-way communication opportunities between AV and key community groups and networks and provide advice to the Board (via the Chair) and the Executive team on areas of improvement identified in these processes.
- The Committee is a key participant in AV's strategic planning processes.
- Maintain oversight of relevant AV policies and procedures.
- Members will be directly involved in reviewing AV's Annual Quality of Care report to ensure the views and experience of the community are appropriately reflected in the publication.
- Receive reports and exchange information with relevant AV committees and groups including, but not limited to other Board Sub Committees, best care committees, staff reference groups.
- Provide advice and receive reports as required for relevant programs and projects.
- Assist in the development and ongoing monitoring of key performance indicators for service quality and accessibility.
- Observe and comply with information outlined in the Committee's Orientation Manual, in particular the AV code of conduct and communications protocol.
- The Committee is advisory only and does not have the executive powers to commit the Board or management to the implementation of its recommendations.

4. Membership

- The members of the Committee will be appointed by the AV Board with the majority being independent and representative of the diverse mix of residents across Victoria:
 - a) Independent Members up to nine (9).
 - b) AV Board Directors up to three (3).

Members will:

- Not be health practitioners or people currently or recently employed or engaged in health service provision unless approved by the Board.
- Be aged 16 years or over.
- Be provided with an induction and access to mentoring support upon their appointment.
- Receive a sitting fee and reimbursement of travel and parking costs incurred by participating in meetings of the Committee or related advisory and reference groups.
- A member may not hold any business or other relationship that, in the opinion of the Board, materially interferes with the exercise of their judgement as a member of the Committee.
- The AV Board shall appoint one member of the Committee to be the Chair. The Chair may be either an AV Board Director or independent representative.
- The Committee's AV Director membership and Chair appointment will be reviewed at least annually by the Remuneration and Nominations Committee, with any change recommendations to be submitted to the Board for approval.
- External community members may be invited to a meeting by the CAC Chair or at the request of the Executive, to support discussions on a particular issue.
- The Chair is to ensure that the independent membership is representative of the diversity of the community.
- The Chair will also undertake an annual performance and contribution review of all independent members each year. This will include a review of attendance.
- Aligning with the Board's Governance Policy, members are expected to attend all meetings (with the minimum set at 75%).



In Attendance:

- AV Staff (as determined by the Chief Executive)
- Through the Chief Executive, other AV staff or parties external to AV may be invited by the Committee Chair to attend any meeting of the Committee or part thereof, as a resource or in an advisory capacity.
- Non-members of the Committee may be asked to withdraw for all or any part of any meeting.

5. Terms, Vacancies and Remuneration

- Members are appointed for a term of up to three years, with a maximum of nine continuous years.
- In exceptional circumstances external members may, with the approval of the Board, be reappointed beyond nine continuous years subject to Committee composition requirements.
- The Board should endeavour to ensure no more than one (two?) member should leave the Committee pursuant to rotation in any one year.
- The Board must appoint a person to fill a vacancy in the membership within three months of the vacancy arising.
- The Board may, upon advice from the Committee Chair, terminate the appointment of any member of the Committee at any time.
- Community Representatives appointed as members of the Committee will receive the sitting fee approved by the Board and reimbursement for travel and parking costs associated with attending Committee meetings.

6. Meetings and Quorum

- The Committee will meet a minimum of four (4) times a year. Additional meetings may be called by agreement with members.
- The Chairperson of the Committee will convene each meeting with the support of the sponsoring Executive and Secretariat.
- All decisions of the Committee shall be determined based on a quorum and that shall comprise at least 50% of the membership. In any instances of a tied vote, the Chairperson of the Committee shall have a casting vote.

7. Committee Minutes

- Proceedings, findings, and recommendations of all Committee meetings are minuted.
- The Committee secretariat will arrange for minutes of meetings to be kept which will be reviewed firstly by the Committee Chair, followed by all members.
- Minutes of the meeting will be distributed to the Chair within five (5) working days of the meeting and to the residual members thereafter.
- Minutes are approved by the Committee at its subsequent meeting.

8. Reporting to the Board

- All minutes of meetings will be shared with the AV Board.
- The CAC Chair will report outcomes or recommendations to the AV Board after each Committee meeting.



- The Committee will receive from the Chief Executive or his/her nominated delegation any documentation as may be required by the Committee from time to time.
- Following discussion with the Board and management, the Committee will approve an annual work plan to identify the key areas that will be considered in the Committee meetings.

9. Secretariat

- Secretariat services will be provided to the Committee to assist the Chairperson, sponsoring Executive and Secretariat to develop agendas, papers, and the Committee calendar.
- Members wishing to place items on any agenda must notify the Chair. Late agenda items will be tabled at the discretion of the Chair.

10. Out of Session Papers

- Items may be managed out of session where an item is urgent and must be considered before the next scheduled meeting. Any item that needs to be considered out of session will be managed in the following ways:
 - a) The member putting forward the urgent matter with the Chair.
 - b) The Chair or their nominated party will collate members' responses and prepare for approval.
 - c) The final decision in respect to the item will be entered into the minutes of the next Committee meeting.

11. Conflicts of Interest

- Committee members must fully disclose any conflict of interests prior to or at a Committee meeting.
- The Committee will determine whether there is a conflict of interest and require the absence of that member from the meeting while the matter is being considered and prohibit the member from taking part in a decision of the Committee; and
- Any conflict of interest must be documented. Where members are deemed to have a real, or perceived conflict of interest then the member may be excused from the Committee deliberations on the issue where a conflict of interest exists. This decision resides with the Chairperson.
- The Chairperson will notify the AV Board about any conflicts of interest.

12. Confidentiality

- Matters discussed at the Committee meetings must be treated as confidential. The members can only disclose information for the purpose of advising the AV Board.
- Members are responsible for ensuring that the individual confidentiality and privacy of consumers and community members and their issues, as discussed within meetings, is maintained.
- Information relating to AV services development and management should not be provided to the public unless agreed by the Chair and Executive Sponsor. Provision of such information will be agreed should it be deemed to be in the public interest.

13. Performance Reviews

- The Chair will ensure that the Committee undertakes an internal performance and effectiveness review each year, including but not limited to, its contributions against the annual work plan - with the results reported to the Board thereafter.

14. Review of Terms of Reference



- The Committee will review annually its terms of reference and make recommendations for change to the Board via the Executive Sponsor and Chief Executive.

