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Government

ACT Health

Consumer, Carer and Community Representative Reimbursement

Policy Statement

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Policy Statement

The time and effort of consumer, carer and community representatives who partner with the ACT Health Directorate (ACTHD) is valued and respected. Consumer, carer and community representatives provide an important balance to the views of health care professionals, service providers and industry, contributing to a health system that better reflects the needs of all stakeholders.

This policy relates to the process by which the ACTHD will manage reimbursement to consumer, carer and community representatives engaged to participate in ACTHD convened meetings, working groups, employee selection panels and the delivery of education.

This policy and the associated procedure applies to all ACTHD staff involved in the management of meetings, working groups, delivering education, and employee selection panels which partner with consumer, carer and community representatives. This policy excludes external individuals who are volunteering for the ACTHD in any other capacity.

Consumer, carer and community representatives will be reimbursed by way of an allowance to cover reasonable costs associated with attendance at ACTHD convened meetings.

Purpose

Consumer, carer and community representatives provide key insights into program, service and policy development and delivery. They provide the consumer's perspective using their experiences and expertise to guide decision makers. Consumer, carer and community representatives may have been trained in advocacy and representation and are typically appointed by the representative's organisation based on their interest, experience and availability. Additionally, independent community members may be engaged to provide a consumer or carer perspective based on their area of expertise.

This policy defines the processes by which the ACTHD will manage reimbursement to nominated consumer, carer and community representatives engaged to participate in ACTHD facilitated meetings or other formal activities.

Scope

This policy applies to all ACTHD staff who are involved in the organisation and management of meetings, working groups, Committees, delivering education, and employee selection panels that partner with consumer, carer or community representatives.

The associated procedure and forms attached to the policy ensure consistent application across the ACTHD.

There are two primary types of consumer, carer and community representatives who may be engaged to participate in ACTHD related meetings, working groups, employee selection panels and the delivery of education:

- Consumer, carer and community representatives that are nominated by a consumer, carer and community organisation.
 - These representatives are engaged through an organisation to provide a broad consumer perspective which may or may not represent the views of their organisation's constituents. For the purposes of this procedure, a consumer, carer and community representative is an individual that is not also employed by the nominating organisation.
- Independent community members, carers or consumers who are recruited to provide a specific viewpoint, lived experience or expertise.
 - They are generally not affiliated to any of the formal representative organisations.

The process and approach are the same for both categories, although the insights and experience of those individuals and their roles on various committees will be different.

Consumer, carer and community representatives are entitled to be reimbursed for any out-of-pocket expenses incurred as a result of their role as a representative. It is not a payment for time/hours 'worked', but rather, a consideration which ensures that they are compensated for any costs they incur when participating in this work.

The pro-rata nature of the payment is indicative of additional costs which may be incurred with additional time required, for example parking, or internet access. The representative is not required to provide receipts to ACTHD to access reimbursement.

Reimbursement covers reasonable out-of-pocket costs associated with attendance at a meeting. This is not reimbursement of consumer time. Reasonable costs include:

- Travel costs including fuel, parking fees and public transport
- Costs involved with providing care to another dependent person, e.g. childcare
- Paper, toner/ink and photocopying
- Phone calls, Internet Service Provider (ISP) charges

For the purpose of this policy there is a standard reimbursement rate of \$75.00 per meeting of two hours or less, or pro-rata as specified (see 'Definition of Terms' below). For meetings longer than two hours, a pro-rata rate of reimbursement is to be provided in half hourly increments.

Reimbursement for reasonable travel costs does not include taxi fares. If there are exceptional individual circumstances that require the representative to travel by taxi, approval must be obtained from the relevant Executive by way of a written Minute. Taxi vouchers are to be supplied to the consumer at least a week in advance of the meeting by the secretariat of the relevant committee.

Where a Chair/Committee/meeting organiser would like to provide reimbursement that differs from this Procedure, an exemption is to be sought from the Director-General by way of a written Minute, authorised by the relevant Executive.

Incentives may be offered for consumer participation in activities not covered by standard reimbursement. For example, participation in focus groups. This will be dependent on the activity type and funding available for the activity. It is expected that when engaging consumers, carers and community representatives in focus groups that information provided to consumers about participation in these activities will include information about whether and what participation support applies. This is determined by the relevant Executive authorising the work.

Roles and Responsibilities

There may be a requirement to outline the roles and responsibilities of positions or groups.

Position	Responsibility
ACT Health Directorate	<p data-bbox="719 757 930 786"><u>Reimbursement</u></p> <p data-bbox="719 813 1385 958">The meeting’s Chair/Organiser are responsible for ensuring that the consumer, carer, and community representative is reimbursed appropriately and efficiently.</p> <p data-bbox="719 985 1369 1205">The meeting’s secretariat is responsible for ensuring that the necessary paperwork is completed and submitted at the beginning of a consumer representative’s tenure, and after each meeting to ensure that reimbursement is processed.</p> <p data-bbox="719 1232 1374 1377">The meeting's secretariat is responsible for communicating with the consumer representative the requirements of the ACTHD around reimbursement.</p> <p data-bbox="719 1404 1342 1550">The meeting’s secretariat and chair are responsible for resolving any issues with reimbursement that a consumer representative has.</p> <p data-bbox="719 1630 967 1659"><u>Relevant Executive</u></p> <p data-bbox="719 1686 1369 1877">The relevant Executive is responsible for ensuring that decisions made under this policy are within their financial delegations and as such only an Executive with appropriate financial delegation is able to give approval under this policy.</p>

Consumer, carer, and community representative

Confidentiality

Where necessary, a “Declaration of Confidentiality” form should be completed by the consumer, carer, and community representative. In addition, it is appropriate for the Chair of a meeting to identify confidential matters as they arise during the meeting. Meeting papers which are confidential/not for distribution should also be clearly marked as such.

The consumer representative is responsible for the completion of the initial paperwork which provides their details for reimbursement, and for keeping those details up to date should they change.

The consumer representative is responsible for alerting the committee secretariat and chair in the event of any issues with reimbursement. They may raise these through their endorsing organisation.

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Exemptions

Where a Chair/Committee/meeting organiser would like to provide reimbursement, which differs from this Policy, an exemption is to be sought from the Director-General by way of a written Minute, authorised by the relevant Executive.

Records Management

It is the responsibility of each Division/Branch of ACTHD to ensure appropriate records are generated from the requirements of this procedure. Each Division/Branch of ACTHD is responsible for the filing and storing of the records in accordance with the *Territory Records Act 2002*.

It is important that records associated with Consumer, Carer and Community Representative Reimbursement are collectively gathered within a shared reporting mechanism. It is the responsibility of each Division/Branch of ACTHD to ensure the Project Code of **26968** is utilised correctly on the Accounts Payable Invoice Cover Sheet.

Evaluation

Outcome Measures	Method	Responsibility
What will be measured to determine achievement – has the policy purpose occurred?	How will this be done?	Who is responsible for evaluation?
Reasonable costs associated with attendance at ACTHD meetings are reimbursed to consumer, carer, and community representatives.	<p>A copy of the policy and procedure is supplied to all new representatives.</p> <p>Upon acceptance of the offer to receive reimbursement, appropriate levels of reimbursement are paid to the representative within the correct timeframe.</p>	Service/program managers are responsible for monitoring compliance to these two performance measures through an annual audit and will report audit results to the Head of their Division within one month of the audit's completion.
Number of individuals reimbursed across ACTHD	Number of reimbursements will be tracked by the use of a collective Project Code.	This is monitored by the policy area managing the Reimbursement policy and procedure.

References and Related Documents

Legislation

- *Financial Management Act 1996*
- *Territory Records Act 2002*

Supporting Documents

- Consumer, Carer and Community Representative Reimbursement Procedure
- Canberra Health Services Consumer, Carer, and Community Representative Reimbursement Policy 2020
- ACT Health Directorate Management Framework, Control Plan and Policy
- ACT Health Directorate Director-General's Financial Instructions
- Statement by a supplier, Australian Tax Office (accessed 15/07/2021)
<https://www.ato.gov.au/forms/statement-by-a-supplier-not-quoting-an-abn/>

Definitions

Term	Definition
Activities:	<p>In this context, activities refer to all non-clinical ACTHD events that consumers, carers and community representatives may be asked to participate in. These may include meetings, committees, forums, and workshops where direct input is sought.</p>
Consumer, Carer and Community Representative	<p>Consumer, carer, and community representatives may be trained in advocacy and/or representation and are selected and endorsed by an advocacy or community agency to represent the views and interests of health consumers. For the purpose of this policy, consumer, carer, and community representatives also include “independent community members” who are either consumers or carers and have been invited to a meeting.</p>
Delegate	<p>A Delegate is an individual who holds a function or power designated to an occupant of a position providing authority to manage public monies efficiently and effectively on behalf of the Director-General.</p>
Meeting	<p>For the purpose of this policy, a meeting is defined as an activity where a person is formally engaged by ACTHD in their capacity as a consumer, carer, and community representative. Examples include, but are not limited to, committee meetings, selection panels, inductions, and meetings convened by organisations contracted by ACTHD. Meetings may be in person or online.</p> <p>However, this policy does not include high-level committees such as ministerially appointed councils and committees.</p>
Pro-rata payment	<p>A pro-rata amount of reimbursement is provided to representatives when the duration of a meeting is longer than two hours. This pro-rata rate of reimbursement is to be provided in half hourly increments. For example:</p> <p>A meeting of two hours and fifteen minutes duration</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$75.00 for the initial two hours + • \$18.75 for the fifteen minutes (provided in 30 minute increments) =

- \$93.75 is how much reimbursement the representative will receive.

A meeting of three hours duration

- \$75.00 for the initial two hours +
- \$37.50 for the second hour (half of \$75) =
- \$112.50 is how much reimbursement the representative will receive.

A meeting of four hours and thirty minutes duration

- \$75.00 for the initial two hours +
- \$75.00 for the second two hours +
- \$18.75 for the thirty minutes (quarter of \$75) =
- \$168.75 is how much reimbursement the representative will receive.

Reimbursement

For the purpose of this policy, a reimbursement has the same definition by which the Tax Office defines as an allowance. A payment is an allowance when a person is paid a definite predetermined amount to cover an estimated expense. It is paid regardless of whether the recipient incurs the expected expense. The recipient has the discretion whether to expend the allowance.

Version Control

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1.0	1/07/2019	DGD16-018
2.0	November 2021	

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