

Centacare Consumer Advisory Committee

Terms of Reference

11 December 2025



1. Purpose

Centacare is committed to engaging with its clients, and the parents and carers of clients, at every level of the organisation including through its client representative body known as the Centacare Consumer Advisory Committee ('the Committee').

The Committee is established to provide a consumer voice and perspective to the Centacare Quality Safety and Client Committee (QSCC). The QSCC is a committee of the Centacare Council, Centacare's primary governing body. The aim of the Committee is to advise Centacare on strategies to enhance consumer and community engagement and participation.

The Committee also operates as Centacare's 'Consumer Advisory Body' for aged care services for the purposes of the *Aged Care Act 1997* (Cth) (the Aged Care Act) and the *Accountability Principles 2014* (Cth). Consequently, the Committee fulfils the statutory Consumer Advisory Body role under the Aged Care Act and provides broader consumer engagement advice across all service streams, including NDIS and community services. In accordance with these requirements, Centacare must:

- offer at least once every 12 months to care recipients and their representatives the opportunity to establish or join a Consumer Advisory Body;
- consider any feedback and written reports provided by the Committee when making decisions relating to the quality of care; and
- provide written advice to the Committee outlining how the governing body considered that feedback.

For Centacare's NDIS services, the Committee forms a key mechanism for meeting the NDIS Practice Standards relating to participant voice, person-centred supports, feedback and complaints, and governance and operational management.

These Terms of Reference set out the principles for the operation and administration of the Committee.

2. Roles and Responsibilities

- 2.1. The primary responsibility of the Committee is to provide the QSCC members (on behalf of the governing body) with the consumer perspective in relation to planning, monitoring and improving the delivery of services. The Committee will maintain a distinct Aged Care consumer advisory function with separate agenda items and reporting to meet legislative requirements, while also advising on organisation-wide consumer engagement strategies. This will include feedback and suggestions in a variety of topics, including, but not limited to:
 - 2.1.1. provide consumer insights, lived experience, and feedback on service quality, communication, access, cultural safety, and the experience of care;
 - 2.1.2. identify trends, issues, or systemic themes affecting consumers;
 - 2.1.3. make suggestions for service improvement, co-design, and consumer engagement;
 - 2.1.4. provide written reports at intervals agreed with the QSCC;
 - 2.1.5. provide additional feedback at any time on matters affecting the quality of care or the consumer experience.
- 2.2. The Committee will have an advisory role. Advice received from the Committee will be provided for information to the QSCC for consideration but is not binding. The QSCC may request that this information be further provided to the Centacare Council, Centacare Directors and Centacare Services Leadership Group for consideration as required.
- 2.3. The Committee may provide feedback and written reports about the quality of services to Centacare's governing body at any time and at least as requested. The governing body will consider this input when

making decisions relating to the quality of services and will advise the Committee in writing how such input has been considered.

- 2.4. Centacare operational committees and working groups may further choose to seek advice from the Committee via request to the QSCC.

3. Reports and Governing Body Responses

- 3.1. The Committee will ordinarily provide written reports to the governing body once per year, or more frequently if requested. Reports may address consumer feedback, emerging themes, suggestions for improvement, and observations about the experience of care.
- 3.2. The governing body will consider such reports/feedback when making decisions on quality of care and will provide written advice to the Committee about how the feedback was considered.

4. Membership

- 4.1. Committee members are required to have a genuine interest in the provision of high-quality and safe care. They are also required to uphold the Centacare values, and possess appropriate skills and experience to discharge their responsibilities as defined by these Terms of Reference.
- 4.2. Members must meet the standards of a fit and proper person, demonstrating integrity, honesty and ethical conduct. To uphold best-practice governance, Centacare will conduct background checks on prospective members. These checks may include a National Police Check, insolvency and bankruptcy screening, reference verification and confirmation of identity and eligibility.
- 4.3. Membership will consist of the following:
 - 4.3.1. A QSCC member, who acts as the Committee chair; and
 - 4.3.2. A minimum of five and a maximum of 10 members who reflect the diversity of those who access Centacare Services. Membership will include consumer representation for aged care and may include additional representatives for other service streams to support the broader remit of the Committee. Diversity across the aged care, disability and community services will be prioritised.
- 4.4. The following people are ineligible for appointment:
 - 4.4.1. Current staff members of Centacare; and
 - 4.4.2. Anyone who serves as a member on a Centacare Council or Committee (other than the Chair).

5. Appointment

- 5.1. Expressions of Interest (EOIs) may be lodged at any time by anyone wishing to join the Committee; however, appointments will ordinarily occur following the annual recruitment cycle unless a vacancy arises.
- 5.2. Centacare management will assess applications against the selection criteria and provide recommendations to the Chair of the QSCC for approval.
- 5.3. Centacare will issue an annual invitation to all aged care recipients (and their representatives) to join the Committee or establish a Consumer Advisory Body, as required under the Aged Care Act (see also paragraph 5.7 below).
- 5.4. Members are appointed for a term of up to two years and may be reappointed for up to two consecutive terms, with flexibility to support continuity and representation.
- 5.5. Members may retire at any time.

- 5.6. The Chair may remove a member at their discretion, including (but not limited to) where required for operational, conduct, or governance reasons.
- 5.7. Aged care recipients may independently establish their own Consumer Advisory Body. Where such a body is formed, Centacare will engage with it in accordance with the Aged Care Act.

6. Selection Criteria

- 6.1. Applications for membership will be considered in line with the following criteria:
 - 6.1.1. Current or recent experience of the services provided by Centacare either as a client, parent or carer of a client.
 - 6.1.2. Lived experience as an aged care consumer, NDIS participant, carer or family member.
 - 6.1.3. An interest in promoting high-quality and safe care in Centacare.
 - 6.1.4. Ability and willingness to attend and contribute actively to committee meetings.
 - 6.1.5. Willingness to adhere to the relevant legal, ethical and confidentiality frameworks.
 - 6.1.6. Ability to recognise and respect the experiences of fellow Committee members.
 - 6.1.7. Ability to provide insights from personal experience without disclosing private information of others.
 - 6.1.8. Willingness to engage respectfully and constructively in meetings.
 - 6.1.9. Ability to demonstrate integrity, reliability and suitability for the role, with no criminal convictions or adverse financial history which would compromise their ability to serve responsibly.

7. Member responsibility

- 7.1. Members will be required to:
 - 7.1.1. attend meetings called, as required, unless otherwise agreed with the Chair;
 - 7.1.2. read and consider meeting papers and other relevant material provided between meetings;
 - 7.1.3. act honestly, with integrity, and in the best interests of care recipients and Centacare when performing their role;
 - 7.1.4. maintain confidentiality and privacy in accordance with Centacare policies and any confidentiality agreement they sign; and
 - 7.1.5. comply with Centacare's Code of Conduct and declare and appropriately manage any conflicts of interest.

8. Meetings

- 8.1. The Committee will meet at least once per year or as required.
- 8.2. Meeting dates will be set at the commencement of each year.
- 8.3. Meetings will be conducted face-to-face or by Microsoft Teams.
- 8.4. Meeting agendas will include a clearly marked section for Aged Care consumer advisory business to ensure compliance, alongside broader consumer engagement topics.
- 8.5. Centacare will provide reasonable adjustments, remote access options, interpreters, or communication supports as required to enable participation.

9. Confidentiality and Privacy

- 9.1. Before being appointed, members will be required to sign a confidentiality undertaking in a form approved by Centacare.
- 9.2. Members of the Committee who come into contact with, or have access to, confidential information have a responsibility to maintain the privacy, confidentiality and security of that information. In particular, members must not disclose confidential information obtained in the course of Committee business except where required or permitted by law or where expressly authorised by Centacare.
- 9.3. The proceedings of the Committee are deemed to be confidential and all members will comply with the confidentiality policies of Centacare.
- 9.4. Members and observers acknowledge their responsibility to adhere to legal and ethical confidentiality frameworks and maintain confidentiality of all information that is not in the public domain.
- 9.5. Members must not disclose identifiable information about other care recipients or participants. Members should draw only on their personal experiences or general observations.

10. Conflict of interest

- 10.1. To meet ethical obligations, the Committee members must declare at each meeting any conflicts of interest whether actual, potential, apparent or appear likely to arise, and manage those in consultation with the Chair. This may relate to a position a member holds external to the organisation or to the content of a specific item for deliberation.
- 10.2. Members must take reasonable steps to avoid actual, potential or perceived conflicts of interest and to comply with any directions of the Chair regarding the management of such conflicts.
- 10.3. Declaration of conflicts of interest must be listed as a standing item in the agenda.
- 10.4. The Chair may request a member to absent themselves from the relevant part of the meeting or the entirety of the meeting in the event of a potential or actual conflict of interest.
- 10.5. The Secretariat will record any declaration of conflicts of interest applicable to that meeting in the minutes of the meeting.
- 10.6. When appointed, members must complete a Conflict of Interest Declaration and must update it straight away if anything changes that could create a conflict.

11. Meeting procedures

- 11.1. Meetings will be conducted in accordance with the annual schedule approved by the Chair and any additional meetings convened as required.
- 11.2. The Chair may designate another QSCC member as interim Chair, in case of their absence.
- 11.3. The Secretariat shall distribute the agenda and minutes from the previous meeting in advance of a scheduled meeting.
- 11.4. The agenda shall include the following items:
 - 11.4.1. Present and apologies;
 - 11.4.2. Approval of minutes from the previous meeting;
 - 11.4.3. Update from Executive Director or delegate; and
 - 11.4.4. Action plan and general business decided by the Chair and the Committee.

11.5. The Secretariat will ensure meeting papers are prepared in plain English and accessible formats where required.

11.6. The Committee may invite stakeholders to meetings as guests to participate in discussion.

11.7. The Committee will be supported by Centacare as Secretariat.

12. Quorum

12.1. The quorum shall be a majority of appointed members (not including staff invitees).

13. Invitees

13.1. The Centacare Executive Director and Director Quality Risk and Governance will attend meetings. Other relevant members of the Centacare or AOB leadership teams may attend meetings as requested by the Committee or the Chair.

14. Chair responsibilities

14.1. Scheduling meetings and notifying members;

14.2. Inviting external stakeholders to attend meetings when required by the Committee;

14.3. Guide the meeting in accordance with the agenda and time available;

14.4. Ensure discussion items end with a decision, recommendation, action or defined outcome, a person accountable for the action and a completion timeframe;

14.5. Review and approve the draft minutes before distribution; and

14.6. Report to the QSCC at the next scheduled QSCC meeting.

15. Secretariat responsibilities

15.1. Prepare agendas and issue notices for meetings, attaching all necessary documents requiring discussion or comment to the agenda;

15.2. Distribute the agenda and papers a minimum of 3 business days prior to the meeting;

15.3. Take notes of proceedings and prepare minutes of the meeting;

15.4. Ensure discussion items have a decision, recommendation action or defined outcome, a person accountable for the action and a completion timeframe recorded;

15.5. In consultation with the Chair, distribute draft minutes to Committee members in the week after the meeting to enable members to complete any tasks assigned to them, prior to the next meeting; and

15.6. Maintain appropriate records of membership, meetings, reports, and correspondence between the Committee, the QSDC, and the Centacare Council in accordance with Centacare's record-keeping policies and the legislative requirements for Consumer Advisory Bodies.

16. Remuneration

16.1. This is a voluntary appointment. All reasonable expenses incurred in travelling to the meetings will be met or reimbursed by Centacare.