



# Role Description

Role Identification			
Role Title:	Consumer Advocate		
Direct Reports	Not Applicable	Indirect Reports:	Not Applicable
HRIS Position Number:		Effective Date:	May 2022
Location:	Coburg/Preston/Fawkner Merri Health Sites OR online		
Delegation of Authority:	Refer to Delegation of Authority Policy		
Organisational Context			
Divisional:	People & Communications		
Program:	Consumer Participation Register	Unit:	Community Engagement
Role Summary			
<p>As a Consumer Advocate you can use your unique story to help us improve our services and system, and help us to better understand the needs of consumers. We will support you with this and want to involve you when we make decisions for our communities. Each consumer advocate brings to the role, diverse knowledge and experience based on their life experience, employment history and interests. And we acknowledge that consumers are experts in their own experience.</p> <p>A Consumer Advocate is a consumer, carer or family member, who agrees to provide advice to improve health services at Merri Health and beyond. You may use your own experiences and views, and that of other consumers. You have the opportunity to take part in decision-making, projects, events or committees. You can also lead a range of activities like designing, testing or reviewing forms/handouts, policies, and even services.</p> <p>The Consumer Advocate role is a <b>volunteer</b> role.</p> <p>Your details are stored in the Consumer Participation Register (CPR) in line with the National Privacy Principles &amp; Merri Health’s Privacy and Consent Policy and Procedure.</p> <p><u>Definition:</u></p> <p><i>Consumer refers to a current or previous user of any Merri service. This includes the immediate family/carers where they are directly involved in the interaction between Merri and the service user. For example, the legal guardian of a young child accessing child related services at Merri.</i></p>			



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*Carer* refers to someone who provides care and support whether paid or unpaid to another person

*Consumer Advocate* refers to a person with current or past lived experience who has formally joined Merri's Consumer Participation Register. They have taken up a specific role to provide advice on behalf of consumers, with the overall aim of improving our delivery of health care.

*Community* in this context refers to people who use services delivered by Merri, people who live, work or study in the areas where Merri delivers its services, as well as partners and stakeholders within those areas.

## Role Accountabilities

### Opportunities for Involvement

Depending on your interest and availability, you can:

- Share your experiences with Merri Health services
- Give feedback on/review our services, policies, materials, programs, practices and/or sites
- Provide advice to Merri Health teams
- Join our *Pilot* Consumer Advisory Committee (we recruit for this separately)
- Take part in surveys, forums, focus group discussions, other committees, reference groups
- Help review written content, for example flyers, brochures or handouts
- Help review our sites and practices to make sure they're accessible and inclusive
- Help plan community forums and groups on health and wellbeing
- Add value to planning, program development and other decisions
- Attend or present at conferences, workshops, events and trainings
- Share ideas about your initiative/ passion project – our team may be able to support you with ideas on how to bring them to life
- Meet other consumer advocates (for example, at morning teas, get togethers etc.)
- Suggest training and development needs for Consumer Advocates and/or Merri employees
- Take part in co-design sessions



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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Be involved in opportunities to lead or be a part of other working groups, where appropriate</li></ul> <p><b>Other accountabilities</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Follow Merri Health’s Consumer Advocate Code of Conduct at all times.</li><li>• Ensure compliance with all relevant legislation, funding guidelines, service standards and contractual obligations.</li><li>• Ensure that the affairs of Merri, its clients, and employees remain strictly confidential and are not divulged to any third party except where required by law. Such confidentiality shall extend to the commercial and financial interests and activities of Merri.</li></ul>
<p><b>Safety and Risk</b></p>	<p><b>Occupational Health &amp; Safety (OHS)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• All Consumer Advocates have a duty to take reasonable care for the health and safety of themselves and others affected by their actions at work, and to comply with Merri Health’s OHS Frameworks.</li></ul> <p><b>Physical requirements</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Involves a high level of seated tasks, requiring a low level of physical activity and alternation between seated and standing positions.</li><li>• Incorporates computer-based activities</li></ul> <p><b>Quality &amp; Risk</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Be proactive in risk identification, notification and management.</li><li>• Comply with Merri Health’s policies and procedures</li><li>• Participate in quality improvement activities</li></ul> <p><i>Merri Health is an equal opportunity employer and committed to ensuring a safe environment for children and young people. We encourage individuals of diverse backgrounds including but not limited to those from the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander, Culturally and Linguistically Diverse, the LGBTIQ+ communities and those living with a disability to join our workforce.</i></p>



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<b>Capabilities</b>	All Consumer Advocates are expected to align their behaviours and utilise capabilities in line with our organisational values and the level of responsibility of the role.
<b>Key Selection Criteria</b>	
<b>Essential</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Minimum 12-month commitment (this can involve regular and irregular involvements).</li><li>• Used Merri Health services (you or a family member).</li><li>• Be 18 years of age or over.</li><li>• A friendly demeanour, patience and a willingness to interact with a range of people from diverse backgrounds including but not limited to people from; Cultural and Linguistically Diverse backgrounds, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander, LGBTIQ+ communities, children and older people, socially disadvantaged and/or isolated or who have a physical or intellectual disability or mental health issue.</li><li>• Be able to reflect the needs and interests of a broad range of Consumers and communities.</li><li>• Be able to talk about the potential issues that confront consumers, families and carers who receive services from Merri.</li><li>• Demonstrate respect for all and respectful interactions.</li><li>• Willingness to engage with the group, participate in activities and share feedback and opinions</li><li>• Comfortable communicating constructively in a group setting.</li><li>• Comfortable to constructively express ideas and feedback</li><li>• Participate in all relevant induction and training programs</li><li>• Let us know if you wish to change the nature of your contribution (e.g. hours, role)</li><li>• Be open and honest in your dealings with us and let us know if we can improve our Consumer Advocate program and the support that you receive.</li><li>• Behave and respond in line with our Code of Conduct</li></ul>
<b>Desirable</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Previous advocacy or volunteering experience</li><li>• Lived experience as (yourself, family or others you know):<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander;</li></ul></li></ul>



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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ are a member of one or more of the LGBTIQ+ communities;</li> <li>○ are from a culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) background;</li> <li>○ speak a second language;</li> <li>○ have a disability or chronic health condition; or,</li> <li>○ live in regional, rural and remote areas.</li> <li>○ have/had a mental illness</li> <li>○ are or have been a carer</li> <li>○ people experiencing socio or economic disadvantage</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Have an understanding of the healthcare experiences of people who are             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Socially or economically disadvantaged</li> <li>○ Have chronic or complex health conditions</li> <li>○ From culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) backgrounds</li> <li>○ People with disability</li> <li>○ Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander</li> <li>○ Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Intersex, Queer (LGBTIQ+ people)</li> </ul> </li> <li>● Have established links with Consumer or Community groups</li> <li>● Demonstrated experience on a committee at the organisational or governance level</li> <li>● Demonstrate a basic knowledge of the Australian health/welfare care system</li> </ul>
<p><b>Checks, Licences and Registration</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● National Police check/International Police Check</li> <li>● Statutory Declaration</li> <li>● Working With Children check</li> <li>● Reference Checks</li> <li>● Consumer Advocate Code of Conduct</li> <li>● Immunisation – Category C (Influenza) OR Opt out Declaration</li> <li>● Covid Vaccination (fully vaccinated- includes booster)</li> <li>● Consumer Advocates complete training</li> </ul>



**Merri** Health

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***I have read and understand this role description and agree to the terms and conditions as outlined.***

Consumer Advocate Name:			
Consumer Advocate Signature:		Date:	

*Last document review: 15 July 2022*