

Position Statement - Remuneration and reimbursement of consumers.

Health Consumers Queensland (HCQ) recognises that engaging and partnering with health consumers is an activity aligned with National Safety and Quality Health Service (NSQHS) Standard 2. It is also an activity built on a foundation of partnership, respect, dignity, inclusiveness, and improvement.

The aim of this position statement is to ensure all health consumers, particularly those with the greatest health needs, have the ability to share their experiences to shape and change the health system without experiencing financial barriers to participation. As such, HCQ recommends that consumers invited to engage and partner with health services should be remunerated for their contribution and reimbursed for expenses.

To gain the maximum benefits of consumer engagement at a strategic level, health service providers are likely to seek consumers who have:

- knowledge of the health care system e.g. effective models of care, up-to-date evidence, what other services are doing, state and national reforms, etc.
- experience as consumer representatives.
- connections to broader consumer and community networks, to share current users' experiences and needs, wider than just their own personal experience.
- Consumers who are able to represent the health experiences and needs of diverse and priority groups of people in our communities.

Health services may seek consumers to be engaged in ongoing, regular, high-level committees but also seek input from consumers and carers in other ways, such as attending one-off focus groups and/or reviewing health related information etc.

Consumer remuneration and reimbursement rates effective 1 July 2024

Consumer representatives engaged for **ongoing, regular, high-level committees** e.g. Safety and Quality, Consumer Advisory Committees etc.

\$234 per meeting 4 hours and under
\$469 per meeting over 4 hours
These two rates incorporate pre-reading and travel time

Consumers engaged in less formal ways e.g. a single focus group, a one-off review of patient brochures or letters etc.

\$50 per hour
If health service requires face to face attendance for less formal consumer representation/participation, then ATO travel rates should be paid in addition to the hourly

rate. [Cents per kilometre method](#) | [Australian Taxation Office \(ato.gov.au\)](#)

Travel, Meals and Allowances

At times, a health service may request consumers to undertake long distance travel* for a face-to-face event or to participate in activities that require them to be away from their usual place of residence overnight. For long distance travel and overnight accommodation, HCQ recommends that health services make bookings and pay for travel, accommodation, and meal allowances in alignment with the circumstances of travel requested. Travel requirements, payments and reimbursements should be discussed with consumers prior to engaging them in representative activities.

**Long distance travel is difficult to define, however it can be referred to as a journey that requires an individual to travel a significant distance, usually driving for three or more hours for a single journey or undertaking airline travel.*