Engaging with our communities

Consumer and Community Engagement Strategy
Acknowledgement of Traditional Owners

Darling Downs Health respectfully acknowledges the Traditional Owners, both past and present, of the region we service.

For further information please contact:
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Welcome

Each day we provide access to trusted health care to every person who comes through our doors. The people in our communities are at the heart of everything we do. It’s why we are constantly improving our services, looking for new opportunities and transitioning from patient-centred care to having consumers at the forefront of their care.

We want the consumer of our services to be well-informed, to be consulted when decisions are made, and genuinely partner with the people who use our services to find out what is important to them and how we can provide services into the future.

From admission to our emergency department, to when it’s time to go home, we need to integrate consumer and community involvement in every aspect of the health journey to make sure our services are relevant and meet the growing, changing needs of the people across our region.

This strategy is an important part of the care we provide – it ensures we have a strong framework to be responsive and it guides us to optimise the valuable contribution our consumers and communities make.

Thank you to all of consumers, local businesses, community members and government agencies who regularly contribute their time to making our services better. We look forward to becoming the healthiest region in Australia – with consumers at the heart of our services.
Darling Downs Health profile

Each year we see over 150,000 people through our emergency department, have over 220,000 people attend outpatient appointments, perform over 11,000 surgeries and have over 3,000 new Australians born in our hospitals. All of this over an area of approximately 90,000 square kilometres and across 4 local government areas.

We have 280,000 people living across our health service area with 4.9% of these being Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. 32% of our community are obese with 30.9% in the lowest quintile of socioeconomic disadvantage.

There are over 5,000 staff in our health service providing consistent, compassionate, connected healthcare to the Darling Downs region with Darling Downs Health being one of the largest employers. We have an important role in making sure we continue to invest in the next generation of medical professionals with partnerships established between the health service and several universities to provide clinical experience.

Darling Downs Health is also the site of the Cunningham Centre which is Queensland Health’s largest and most established Registered Training Organisation involved in training and education.
OUR VISION

Caring for our communities - *healthier together*

OUR VALUES

**COMPASSION**

We engage with others and demonstrate empathy, care, kindness, support and understanding.

**INTEGRITY**

We are open, honest, approachable, equitable and consistent in everything we do.

**DIGNITY**

We treat others with respect, display reasonableness and take pride in what we do.

**INNOVATION**

We strive to know more, learn more and do better.

**COURAGE**

We respectfully question for clarity, have the strength to act and embrace change for the better.
Engaging our Communities

Consumer and community engagement is at the heart of the work we do at Darling Downs Health to make sure people have input into their health journey. Partnering with consumers is one of the pillars of our strategic plan (engage) and the National Safety and Quality Health Service Standard 2. Our values are consumer-centred and align with the vision for our health service – Caring for Communities, Healthier Together.

The elements of consumer and community engagement can be linked to the Darling Downs Hospital and Health Service (2015) Strategic Plan 2016 – 2020 and the HHS’ values:

- **Compassion** – We engage with others and demonstrate empathy, care, kindness, support and understanding.
- **Integrity** – We are open, honest, approachable, equitable and consistent in everything we do.
- **Dignity** – We treat others with respect, display reasonableness and take pride in what we do.
- **Innovation** – We strive to know more, learn more and do better.
- **Courage** – We respectfully question for clarity, have the strength to act, and embrace change for the better.

This strategy highlights our commitment to genuinely partner with consumers, carers, and the broader community to build meaningful relationships through engagement.

Purpose of engaging with our communities

Engagement with our consumers, carers, and the community is essential to improving health outcomes and building high-quality healthcare.

No one understands the consumer experience better than consumers themselves. They are a valuable partner to support the work we do in planning, designing, delivering, and measuring the success of health services.

The purpose of engaging with our communities is to make sure our services are meeting their needs.

**What do we do well?**

**What can be improved?**

We will give consumers a voice and empower them to share in decisions that affect them and help build a health service in genuine partnership.

**This strategy will look at how we:**

1. Communicate information to the Darling Downs Health community.
2. Seek information, involvement and collaboration from the community with the focus of informing our decision-making.
3. Co-design services and communications that meet the needs of our consumers.
When we engage

Patient and consumer partnerships take many forms and at many different levels. Darling Downs Health will seek to engage consumers when:

» Developing a new consumer publication (fact sheets, brochures, forms)
» Evaluating a service or model of care
» Designing or reconfiguring a ward, waiting room or facility
» Planning a new initiative, project or community event
» Recruiting staff in key positions as part of a recruitment panel
» Forming a committee or working group.

How we will use feedback

As a health service we are committed to not only gaining insight into our opportunities for improvements, but also to closing the loop and showing consumers where their feedback has made a difference.

Feedback from consumers will be used to:

» Inform the way we provide care
» Identify improvement areas
» Change the way we communicate our health service information
» Evolve our health service to meet future needs
» To recruit and retain the staff who live our values
» Measure satisfaction of our services
» Improve patient experience
» For consumer-to-consumer communications
» Continuously improve how we consult with our communities.
Stages of engagement

The International Association for Public Participation has been used by large organisations for a long time to improve the practice of participation and stakeholder engagement across the world. Darling Downs Health will use their five pillars Inform, Consult, Involve, Collaborate, and Empower as a model to make sure our health service is shaped by the people who use our services.

![Inform, Consult, Involve, Collaborate, Empower](image)

**passive → active**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Points of Influence – Participation Goal</th>
<th>Inform</th>
<th>Consult</th>
<th>Involve</th>
<th>Collaborate</th>
<th>Empower (Consumer-led)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Provide stakeholders with balanced and objective information to assist them in understanding the problems, alternatives, opportunities and/ or solutions.</td>
<td>To obtain stakeholder feedback on analysis, alternatives and/ or decisions.</td>
<td>To work directly with stakeholders throughout the process to ensure that stakeholder concerns and aspirations are consistently understood and considered.</td>
<td>To partner in each aspect of the decision including the development of alternatives and identification of the preferred solution.</td>
<td>To place final decision-making in the hands of stakeholders.</td>
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</table>

**How to Engage – Promise to the Public**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Inform</th>
<th>Consult</th>
<th>Involve</th>
<th>Collaborate</th>
<th>Empower (Consumer-led)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>We will keep you informed.</td>
<td>We will keep you informed, listen to and acknowledge concerns and provide feedback on how stakeholder input influenced the decision.</td>
<td>We will work with you to ensure that your concerns and aspirations are directly reflected in the alternatives / options developed and provide feedback on how your input influenced the decision.</td>
<td>We will look to you for direct advice and innovation in formulating solutions and incorporate your advice and recommendations into the decisions to the maximum extent possible.</td>
<td>We will implement what you decide.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Bringing consumers on the health journey

To make sure we take consumers on the journey, we need to make sure we educate, encourage genuine partnerships with our consumers, and build a consumer engagement experience based on mutual inclusion, transparency and respect.

This strategy will give a framework for:

» Involving consumers, carers and the community in planning, delivery and evaluation of services
» Building channels of communication and engagement between our facilities/services and the consumers and communities they serve
» Making sure local communities are well-informed about local and wider health service issues and priorities
» Developing transparency and accountability in decision-making and evaluation.

Our outcomes:

- Engage - our diverse communities
- Collaborate - with our many stakeholders
- Lead - continuous improvement in engagement practices
- Maintain - effective communication and accessible information
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Our current engagement activities</th>
<th>Inform</th>
<th>Consult</th>
<th>Involve</th>
<th>Collaborate</th>
<th>Empower</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Advance Care Yarning app</td>
<td>✓</td>
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<tr>
<td>Clinical handover at the bedside</td>
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<td>✓</td>
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<td>Community displays/stalls</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Complaints and compliments</td>
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<td>✓</td>
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<tr>
<td>Consumer feedback system</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
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<tr>
<td>Community representatives at Darling Downs Health Board meetings</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
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<td>Darling Downs Health Advisory Groups</td>
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<td>Darling Downs Health Board events</td>
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<td>Darling Downs Health Board meetings</td>
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<tr>
<td>Darling Downs Health Committees</td>
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<td>Darling Downs Health facilitated events</td>
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<tr>
<td>Digital media – website and social media</td>
<td></td>
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<td>✓</td>
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<td>✓</td>
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<tr>
<td>Feedback on Darling Downs Health planning documents</td>
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<tr>
<td>Focus groups</td>
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<td>✓</td>
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<td>Healthier Together magazine</td>
<td></td>
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<td>✓</td>
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<td>Information brochures</td>
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<tr>
<td>Informed consent</td>
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<td>✓</td>
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<tr>
<td>Interagency meetings</td>
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<tr>
<td>Memorandum of Understanding with key partners</td>
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<tr>
<td>Point of Care consumer surveys</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td>✓</td>
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<tr>
<td>Presentations by Darling Downs Health staff</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
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<tr>
<td>Publications and printed material</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Satisfaction surveys</td>
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<tr>
<td>Site meetings and tours</td>
<td></td>
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<td>✓</td>
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<tr>
<td>Site-specific signage</td>
<td></td>
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<td>✓</td>
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<tr>
<td>Staff participation in State-wide and national Councils, Networks, and Committees</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Traditional media – newspapers, television, and radio</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Strategic Deliverables

Engage our diverse communities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stage of engagement</th>
<th>What</th>
<th>How</th>
<th>When</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Involve</td>
<td>Increase opportunities for consumers to get involved</td>
<td>A consumer group at every hospital</td>
<td>December 2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consult</td>
<td>Diversify communication channels to improve the health literacy of our communities</td>
<td>Survey our communities to find out how they would like to be communicated with</td>
<td>December 2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inform</td>
<td>Encourage diversity of consumers on consumer advisory groups</td>
<td>Increase advertising and visibility of consumer group outcomes and encourage participation</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Involve</td>
<td>Map the consumer journey</td>
<td>Environmental scan of all communications received at each touch point along the consumer health journey</td>
<td>December 2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inform</td>
<td>Communications that are tailored to meet the needs of diverse communities</td>
<td>Rollout of rebranded collateral and evolution of the brand to appeal to target markets that are culturally-appropriate</td>
<td>December 2019</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Strategic Deliverables

**Collaborate with our many stakeholders**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stage of engagement</th>
<th>What</th>
<th>How</th>
<th>When</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Involve</td>
<td>Strengthen our partnerships and relationships across the region</td>
<td>Increased participation of stakeholders in engagement activities</td>
<td>December 2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consult</td>
<td>Undertake joint initiatives, projects and events in collaboration with stakeholders</td>
<td>Increased number of collaborative events and initiatives across the Darling Downs Health region</td>
<td>December 2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inform</td>
<td>Share information with stakeholders with the aim to increase health promotion</td>
<td>Increased joint health promotion activities</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Strategic Deliverables

### Lead continuous improvement in engagement practices

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stage of Engagement</th>
<th>What</th>
<th>How</th>
<th>When</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Empower</td>
<td>Increase the capacity for staff and consumers to give greater input into health service collateral</td>
<td>Training for all consumers to provide meaningful feedback as part of their role in Consumer Advisory Groups</td>
<td>January 2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Involve</td>
<td>Develop, evaluate and improve existing policies, procedures and guidelines to support partnerships with consumers</td>
<td>A policy, procedure and strategy document that outlines how we partner with consumers</td>
<td>December 2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collaborate</td>
<td>Ask for feedback on how we can improve consumer and community engagement each year</td>
<td>Embed check-up pulse survey capacity for Consumer Advisory Groups to provide feedback each year and report these findings back to the organisation</td>
<td>June 2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Empower</td>
<td>Close the loop with consumers when they provide input</td>
<td>Use of the Health Service Plan to incorporate consumer-led feedback on services into the future and report each year on changes made</td>
<td>June 2021</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Strategic Deliverables**

**Maintain effective communication and accessible information**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stage of engagement</th>
<th>What</th>
<th>How</th>
<th>When</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Involve</strong></td>
<td>Increase the accessibility of information for our communities</td>
<td>Redevelopment of the Darling Downs Health website to be fully accessible and responsive across devices</td>
<td>June 2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Collaborate</strong></td>
<td>Enhance the accessibility of health information</td>
<td>A reach of at least 100,000 views each month on Darling Downs Health content on social media</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Consult</strong></td>
<td>Improve health information</td>
<td>Re-development of all consumer-facing content in the Darling Downs Health brand writing style guide to ensure accessibility and readability</td>
<td>June 2021</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Inform</strong></td>
<td>Improve disability accessibility of Darling Downs Health information</td>
<td>Closed captions for all videos, adherence to vision impaired accessibility readers for online content, and podcasting for health information</td>
<td>June 2021</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


**Governance**

The Board through the Health Service Chief Executive and the Executive Team has accountability for the development and implementation of the Consumer and Community Engagement Strategy.

To support consumers and/or carers to fulfil their partnership role on committees and advisory groups, the Darling Downs Health will provide orientation and ongoing training.

* Examples include the Rural Patient Safety & Quality Committee, Toowoomba Hospital Patient Safety & Quality Committee (S &Q), Mental Health Division S & Q Committee and the Toowoomba Hospital Management Committee

** DD & WM PHN = Darling Downs and West Moreton Primary Health Network
Making sure we are on track

Consumer and community engagement activities will be consistently monitored, evaluated, and reported to the Darling Downs Health Board and Executive. Evaluation of the impact and success of this Strategy will include:

1. Reporting on consumer and community engagement activities each month to the Board and Executive

2. Evaluation of the Consumer and Community Engagement strategy at the end of each year.

3. Maintaining accreditation requirements in relation to Standard 2: Partnering with Consumers, National Safety and Quality Health Service Standards, National Mental Health Standards and Aged Care Standards.

4. Surveying of relevant consumer representatives, consumer groups, and key partnering organisations to encourage feedback and opportunities for improvement.

Consumers engaged
- 130 consumer representatives registered across DDH
- 120 consumers engaged in 47 committees across the Darling Downs Health region, including 57 consumer advisory groups and networks
- 12 hospital auxiliaries operating in 12 communities
- Issue specific project working groups, including:
  - diabetes model of care
  - nurse navigator aged care
  - NDIS reference group

Activities
- Use of social media channels such as Twitter, Facebook, YouTube, Instagram and Pinterest to connect with over 687,000 consumers and community
- Consumer tested, reviewed and updated patient information brochures
- Closing the Gap Indigenous Health Expo in March 2017
- Partnered with Primary Health Network and local organisations on consumer engagement events/initiatives - Mental Health Week event, Aged Care Expo and Health Check PitStop

Accredited
- In April 2017 achieved and met with merit in Partnering with Consumers - Standard 2

Good governance
- Health service governance structures ensures inclusion and engagement of consumers and community members, including a consumer and community engagement strategy, consumer engagement policy, consumer feedback procedure and consumer publication management procedure

Patient experience
- A variety of patient experience surveys have been made available to all patients
- Our patient experience outcomes are in the top half of Australian public hospital results, with our rural hospitals rating highest in caring

Areas of focus
- Increased consumer representation in key committees and major projects
- Consumer Council established in February 2016

Patient feedback
- 2015/16: 3172 compliments, 1900 complaints
- 2016/17: 3560 compliments, 1651 complaints
- 2017/18: 3176 compliments, 1712 complaints
- 96% of complaints resolved within the state-wide benchmark of 80% in 35 days

Education and training
- New consumer representatives are provided orientation packs upon commencement
- Consumer representatives have participated with staff in Health Consumer Qld combined training and annual forums