



PARENT REFERENCE GROUP TERMS OF REFERENCE

LAST REVIEWED: MARCH 2017

DUE TO BE REVIEWED: MARCH 2019



1. CHARTER

Working together to provide professional therapy services, the Reference Group will operate in a spirit of cooperation with management.

2. TERMS OF REFERENCE

The terms of reference for the Parent Reference Group are set out in this document.

3. PURPOSE

The Parent Reference Group provides a valuable parent/carer perspective with regard to planning, implementation and delivery of services by Therapy Focus and inputs to the policies that define and improve those services.

The Reference Group is a mechanism to enable a partnership between families and staff with a focus on improvement and planning.

The Reference Group exists to:

- Strengthen the relationship between Therapy Focus and Parents/Carers
- Advice management on areas for improvement to achieve better outcomes.

4. PRINCIPLE

Participation is widely valued as a tool to improve quality and ensure accountability - ensuring services are appropriate, accessible and responsive.

5. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The aims and objectives of the Reference Group are to:

- 5.1. provide a forum for other parents/carers to express their views on Therapy Focus' services and to engage with each other
- 5.2. advise on parent and carer perspectives of contemporary policies, especially as they impact the person with a disability and their families monitor the services and make recommendations that address:
 - 5.2.1. good practice
 - 5.2.2. concerns
 - 5.2.3. unmet need
- 5.3. disseminate information from Therapy Focus to the broader parent/carer community
- 5.4. inform and advise Therapy Focus on issues raised by parents and carers and advocate on their behalf

6. MEMBERSHIP

- 6.1. This Reference Group is appointed by the CEO and is responsible to the CEO. It has no authority to make decisions or to implement actions on behalf of the Board
- 6.2. The number of members will be eight to twelve

- 6.3. The CEO will invite expressions of interest from members and friends of Therapy Focus and will appoint members on the basis of demonstrated value to the organisation aims
- 6.4. The composition of the Reference Group will, as much as possible, reflect the range of families/children who are recipients of Therapy Focus' services
- 6.5. Members will be:
 - 6.5.1. Parents and Carers of Children receiving services through the Children and Youth Services Division
 - Chair must be from this category
 - 6.5.2. Other people associated with the support of children receiving services (eg teachers, Local Area Coordinators)
 - No more than 3 members from this category with appointments by decision of the Reference Group
- 6.6. The members will appoint the Chair, who will hold demonstrable facilitation skills
- 6.7. The term of appointment is two years. Members may serve a maximum of two terms of two years each, however this may be extended on a case by case basis in consultation with the CEO.
- 6.8. All members are equal partners and their individual knowledge, skills and views are recognised and valued
- 6.9. Members will not act in the special interest of their own family member or group (affiliated with)
- 6.10. Members will identify any conflict of interest to the Reference Group should it arise

7. ROLE OF THE THERAPY FOCUS BOARD AND EXECUTIVE

- 7.1. The Board will ensure that decision making processes are clear to the Reference Group
- 7.2. The views of the Reference Group will be given due consideration prior to any final decision. However, final decision making rests with the CEO as delegated by the Therapy Focus Board
- 7.3. The CEO will:
 - 7.3.1. provide timely, relevant and accurate information
 - 7.3.2. respond to issues, questions and concerns
 - 7.3.3. arrange for appropriate Therapy Focus staff to attend meetings as required
 - 7.3.4. be open and transparent with information and how decisions are made

8. ROLE OF THE REFERENCE GROUP CHAIR

- 8.1. The Reference Group Chair will:
 - 8.1.1. manage the meetings of the Reference Group to ensure meetings are productive
 - 8.1.2. help focus members on the purpose of the Reference Group
 - 8.1.3. liaise with the CEO to monitor progress of recommendations
- 8.2. The Reference Group Chair may be invited by the Board to fill a casual vacancy as a parent representative Director

9. ROLE OF MEMBERS

- 9.1. Each member will:
 - 9.1.1. convey their aspirations and concerns for Therapy Focus' services, without personal bias
 - 9.1.2. relay feedback and concerns received from others in their networks on the operations of Therapy Focus' services
 - 9.1.3. review and comment on information provided at meetings and offer feedback and recommendations as appropriate
 - 9.1.4. provide advice on methods for effective consultation
 - 9.1.5. disseminate service related information through their networks
 - 9.1.6. forward information to Therapy Focus from community networks
 - 9.1.7. maintain confidentiality at all times
- 9.2. Where members have a concern about other members, the business of the meetings, or their own membership, they should raise the concern with the Chairperson of the Reference Group in the first instance. Should the matter remain unresolved, the member may raise it with the CEO who will confer with the Chairperson of the Reference Group in order to resolve the matter.
- 9.3. All members of the Reference Group maintain eligibility to stand for election as a Director as per the Constitution

10. MEETINGS

- 10.1. Attendance expenses will be paid to members at a rate set by the CEO
- 10.2. The Reference Group will meet at least four times a year or more frequently as required. The schedule of meetings will be agreed in advance
- 10.3. Reference Group members may attend meetings in person or by electronic means
- 10.4. A quorum will be at least three of the members
- 10.5. Should the Chairman be absent from a meeting, the members present will choose one of their number to be Chairman for that particular meeting
- 10.6. Members should determine their own agenda. The agenda and relevant papers will be distributed to members at least ten business days before the meeting

- 10.7. If a member is absent from more than three consecutive meetings without sound reason, their position may be considered vacant

11. SECRETARY OF THE MEETING

- 11.1. The CEO will appoint a secretariat for the Reference Group
- 11.2. The secretariat, in consultation with the Chair, will prepare and send notices of meetings and agendas, and accurately minute the decisions of the Reference Group
- 11.3. The secretariat will table all correspondence, reports, and other information relevant to the Reference Group's activities and operations

12. ACCESS

- 12.1. Requests for administrative support, advice and access to organisation data to inform recommendations can be made to the CEO and will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

13. REPORTING

- 13.1. The secretariat, upon approval by the Reference Group Chair, will forward to the CEO minutes of meetings and details of recommendations for consideration.
- 13.2. The CEO will inform the Board of recommendations made by the Reference Group and will feedback to the Chair of the Reference Group any resultant developments.

14. REVIEW

- 14.1. This document is to be reviewed no less than every two years by the Board and Reference Group to ensure it remains consistent with the Reference Group's purpose and responsibilities.
- 14.2. Proposed amendments to the terms of reference will be given due consideration by the Board.
- 14.3. A copy of the Parent Reference Group Terms of Reference will be available on Therapy Focus' website www.therapyfocus.org.au