



Therapy Focus

Customer Reference Group Terms of Reference

Last reviewed: September 2021
Due to be reviewed: September 2023

1. Charter

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

2. Definitions

The term **Customer** refers to:

- a. a person who has applied for or is receiving a service provided by Therapy Focus;
- b. a partner or family member of, or a carer or advocate for, a person who has applied for or is receiving a service provided by Therapy Focus; or
- c. an external stakeholder of Therapy Focus.

3. Purpose

- 3.1 The Customer Reference Group provides a valuable customer perspective regarding planning, implementation, and delivery of services by Therapy Focus and inputs to the policies that define and improve those services.
- 3.2 The Reference Group is a mechanism to enable a partnership between customers and staff with a focus on improvement and planning.
- 3.3 The Reference Group exists to:
 - a) strengthen the relationship between Therapy Focus and its customers; and
 - b) provide effective interaction between customers and Therapy Focus to provide information to the organisation to better understand customer preferences and plan to meet current and future needs.

4. Principle

At Therapy Focus, we value customer participation to improve quality and ensure our 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 customers to express their views on Therapy Focus' services and to engage with each other;
- 5.2 advise on customer perspectives of contemporary policies, especially as they impact the person and the people around them to monitor the services and make recommendations that address:

- good practice
- concerns
- unmet need

5.3 disseminate information from Therapy Focus to the broader community; and

5.4 inform and advise Therapy Focus on issues raised by customers 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.

6.2 The number of members will be six to twelve.

6.3 The CEO will invite expressions of interest and will appoint members based on demonstrated value to the organisation aims.

6.4 The composition of the Reference Group will, as much as possible, reflect the range of customers who are recipients of Therapy Focus' services

6.5 Members will be:

- a) people receiving services from Therapy Focus; inclusive of parents, carers and guardians of customers; and
- b) other people associated with customers receiving services (e.g., teachers, Local Area Coordinators) providing that no more than 3 members from this category are appointed by decision of the Reference Group.

6.6 All members are equal partners, and their individual knowledge, skills and views are recognised and valued.

6.7 Members will not act in the special interest of their own family member or group(s) with which they have an affiliation.

6.8 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 Executive will ensure that decision making processes are clear to the Reference Group.

7.2 The views of the Reference Group will be given consideration prior to any final decision. However, final decision-making rests with the CEO.

7.3 The CEO will:

- a) provide timely, relevant, and accurate information;

- b) respond to issues, questions, and concerns;
- c) arrange for appropriate Therapy Focus staff to attend meetings as required; and
- d) be open and transparent with information and how decisions are made.

7.4 The CEO may choose to delegate this authority to any member of the Executive team, at their discretion.

7.5 The CEO or Executive delegate will:

- a) manage the meetings of the Reference Group to ensure meetings are productive;
- b) help focus members on the purpose of the Reference Group; and
- c) if Executive delegate, liaise with the CEO to monitor progress of recommendations.

8. Role of members

8.1 Each member will:

- a) convey their aspirations and concerns for Therapy Focus' services, without personal bias;
- b) relay feedback and concerns received from others in their networks on the operations of Therapy Focus' services;
- c) review and comment on information provided at meetings and offer feedback and recommendations as appropriate;
- d) provide advice on methods for effective consultation;
- e) disseminate service-related information through their networks;
- f) forward information to Therapy Focus from community networks; and
- g) always maintain confidentiality.

8.2 Where members have a concern about other members, the business of the meetings, or their own membership, they should raise the concern with the CEO or delegated Executive.

8.3 All members of the Reference Group maintain eligibility to stand for election as a director as per the Constitution.

9. Meetings

9.1 Attendance expenses will be paid to members at a rate set by the CEO.

9.2 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.

9.3 Reference Group members may attend meetings in person or by electronic means.

9.4 A quorum will be at least three of the members.

9.5 Members should determine their own agenda. The agenda and relevant papers will be distributed to members at least ten business days before the meeting.

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

10. Access

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

11. Reporting

The CEO will inform the Board of recommendations made by the Reference Group, as appropriate and will feedback to the members any resulting developments.

12. Review

This document should be reviewed on a biennial basis to ensure that its contents remain appropriate.

The Executive Manager, Experiences Hub is responsible for the deployment, implementation, modification and review of this policy.

A copy of the Customer Reference Group Terms of Reference will be available on Therapy Focus' website www.therapyfocus.org.au

13. Related documents

- Feedback Management Policy
- Feedback Management Framework