

**CONSUMER
AND
COMMUNITY
ENGAGEMENT
STRATEGY
2026-2029**



**Central West Hospital and Health Service Consumer
and Community Engagement Strategy 2026–2029**

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MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR AND CHIEF EXECUTIVE

We would like to pay our respects to the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, traditional custodians of the land and waterways across the Central West region of Queensland.

We acknowledge Elders both past and present, and extend that respect to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples from Bidjara, Iningai, Wangan/Jagalingou, Guwa/Koa, Kuungkari, Mithaka, Pitta Pitta/Wangkamana, Wankamalda, and Wangkangurru/Yarluyandi.

We are pleased to share with our community the Central West Hospital and Health Service Consumer and Community Engagement Strategy for 2026-2029. The strategy is more than words on a page; it was co-designed with our consumers, local organisations and staff, and clearly sets out what we will do to improve our community's health experience and health outcomes over the next three years. It is clear, it is measurable, and it holds us accountable for what we will deliver.

We know that healthcare works best when consumers, families and communities are actively involved. When you help design services, make decisions and plan your care, services are more responsive, collaborative and centred on your needs.

The strategy strengthens our commitment to partnering and building stronger relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to provide care that is culturally safe and respectful, and builds on our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Workforce and Community Health Plan for 2025-2028.

The strategy also connects with our wider plans, including our Strategic Plan for 2025-2029 and Staff Engagement Strategy for 2026-2029. Together, these guide how we work with our consumers, communities and staff to improve health services and outcomes across the Central West.

We thank the many consumers, community members, organisations and staff who helped develop this strategy.

Our commitment is to listen, communicate clearly, and engage in ways that meet the needs and expectations of our communities. We want your voice to be heard, respected and valued in how care is planned, developed and improved.

We will continue to create opportunities for you to share your experiences, give feedback, and help shape the services you use. Your insights help us understand what we are doing well and where we can do better.

This strategy is for you. It shows our commitment to partnering with consumers at every level of Central West Hospital and Health Service to deliver inclusive, accessible and high-quality care for our community.



Board Chair
Jane Williams



Health Service Chief Executive
Anthony West

OUR VISION

CENTRAL WEST HOSPITAL AND HEALTH SERVICE (CENTRAL WEST HHS) IS A TRUSTED, RESOURCEFUL AND DEPENDABLE PROVIDER OF QUALITY, FAR-REACHING HEALTHCARE ACROSS OUR WIDESPREAD, DIVERSE COMMUNITIES.

OUR PURPOSE

TO IMPROVE HEALTH AND WELLBEING ACROSS OUR REMOTE COMMUNITIES THROUGH TIMELY ACCESS TO RELIABLE HEALTH SERVICES.

OUR VALUES

We care about people

We champion safety and quality

We act with integrity and accountability

We are a capable and confident workforce

We strive to improve



OUR CONSUMERS AND COMMUNITIES



ABOUT THIS STRATEGY

At Central West HHS, we believe that listening to consumers and communities is essential to providing safe, high-quality healthcare.

When people are involved in co-designing services, making decisions, and planning their care, services become more responsive and person-centred. This leads to better health experiences and outcomes.

Central West HHS is committed to communicating and engaging in ways that meet community needs. We want to create meaningful opportunities for people to share their views, give their feedback and be involved in shaping how we deliver health care.

This approach aligns with the National Safety and Quality Health Service (NSQHS) Standards (second edition), Standard 2, the Aged Care Act 2024, and the Australian Charter of Healthcare Rights.

The Consumer and Community Engagement Strategy is supported by a range of connected strategies and plans. It should be read alongside the Central West HHS Strategic Plan, Staff Engagement Strategy, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Workforce and Community Health Plan and Health Service Plan. Together, these documents guide how we work with consumers, communities, and staff to improve health services and outcomes across the Central West.



CULTURALLY SAFE, INCLUSIVE AND ACCESSIBLE

Engagement is welcoming, respectful and culturally safe, with consumers supported as equal partners in their care and shape improvement to services.

PERSON-CENTRED AND RESPECTFUL

Communication and engagement is respectful, lived experience is valued, active listening is practiced, and involvement of carers and support people is encouraged.

TRANSPARENT AND ACCOUNTABLE

Feedback pathways are clear and easy to access. Outcomes are shared, for example through 'You said, we did'.

OUR CONSUMER ENGAGEMENT PRINCIPLES

SAFE TO SPEAK UP

People feel safe to share experiences and ideas, with privacy and confidentiality assured.

PARTNERSHIP AND CO-DESIGN

Consumers, carers, families, communities and partner organisations are involved in designing, reviewing and improving services and information.

CLEAR AND ACCESSIBLE COMMUNICATION

Information about services is easy to find and understand, written in plain language and shared across multiple channels, supporting consumers to make informed decisions about their care.

OUR PLAN FOR CONSUMER AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Our objectives	What we will do	How we will measure it
Enhance community and consumer communication and engagement	1.1 Strengthen our communication channels so information is easy to understand, is up to date and reaches our consumers and communities.	1.1 Increase reach across existing social media platforms (e.g. Facebook, LinkedIn). Increase channels and mediums used to reach the community (e.g. SMS, website, email, print, local networks).
	1.2 Attend and hold regular in-person events to connect with our community and to share key updates.	1.2 Increase the number of health-related community events attended and held each year, and participation numbers.
	1.3 Review and improve our public facing website, so that posted information is clear, simple, accurate and easy to find.	1.3 A website review completed 12 monthly, improvements made, and accessibility checks done.
	1.4 Involve consumers in planning discussions, committees and common interest groups to ensure services reflect community needs.	1.4 Increase consumer representatives on committees and working groups. Maintain committee register of consumers.
	1.5 Review and improve information we give consumers, families and carers to ensure it meets health literacy standards and considers cultural differences and diversity.	1.5 Every three years review of all consumer facing content to ensure accessibility and readability, including number of cultural resources produced incorporating material specific to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. New materials pass plain language and accessibility checks 90% of the time.
Support and empower consumers to share their feedback and improve how we collect and learn from feedback	2.1 Make it simple for consumers to share their experiences, including giving feedback, ideas, compliments and complaints through 'Have your say'.	2.1 Increase in the number of consumer feedback instances received.
	2.2 Strengthen our feedback process, so consumers know their experience is heard and acted on.	2.2 Evidence that consumer feedback is acknowledged and leads to change, including publication of results and improvement actions. Percentage of feedback responded to within required timeframes.
	2.3 Ask consumers about their experience with the feedback process, ensuring the feedback process is simple, responsive, and easy to use for everyone.	2.3 Improvement in consumer satisfaction with the feedback process.

OUR PLAN FOR CONSUMER AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT (CONTINUED)

Our objectives	What we will do	How we will measure it
Strengthen and support our Consumer Advisory Networks (CAN) to ensure community voices are heard	3.1 Build the capability of CAN members to support service accessibility and improve health outcomes in their local community.	3.1 The percentage of CAN members who complete Health Consumers Queensland training.
	3.2 Refresh CAN membership to reflect local diversity, including induction and training.	3.2 Annual membership recruitment cycle completed. Year-on-year membership increase of 10%, with an overall target of 5% of the town's population or 50 members, whichever is lower. 90% more of members inducted and training complete.
	3.3 Promote the annual CAN meeting calendar across multiple channels.	3.3 Annual CAN calendar and meeting notices published. Three or more channels and mediums used to promote CAN meeting calendar.
	3.4 Provide administrative support so CANs can operate well, and stay connected to their communities.	3.4 Secretariat support provided. Meeting papers provided more than five days prior to CAN meetings. Attendance rates at CAN meetings. Number of CAN meetings held.
	3.5 Formalise CAN involvement in strategic planning and service improvements by implementing governance arrangements that clearly define the purpose, roles and expectations of CANs.	3.5 Formalised CAN structure embedded within Central West HHS Board and Executive governance.
Make our way of working truly centred on consumers, families and communities	4.1 Promote an organisation-wide culture that values working with consumers and communities and supports staff to see consumers as equal partners in their care.	4.1 Encourage staff to complete Health Consumers Queensland training and participate in organisation-wide Person Centred Care training.
	4.2 Publish regular communication, sharing stories from across Central West HHS, including the implementation of the Consumer and Community Engagement Strategy.	4.2 Regular publication of stories across various mediums.
	4.3 Develop an engagement process for involving consumers in co-design, planning and commissioning of services across Central West HHS.	4.3 Engagement process developed and published and evidence of use by more than 80% of relevant projects.
	4.4 Establish a dedicated consumer and community engagement resource to strengthen capability, coordination, and consistency across Central West HHS.	4.4 Appointment of dedicated consumer and community engagement resource.

"FACEBOOK POSTS ABOUT UPCOMING CLINICS ARE GREAT"

"I ENJOY HEARING GOOD NEWS STORIES IN THE MEDIA"

"IT'S GOOD WHEN YOU ATTEND COMMUNITY EVENTS, SUCH AS SHOWS AND FIELD DAYS, AND OFFER HEALTH CHECKS AND HEALTH PROMOTION"



WHAT WE HEARD



"I WANT TO KNOW MY FEEDBACK IS GOING TO BE USED TO MAKE THINGS BETTER"

"WHEN I'M LISTENED TO, I FEEL RESPECTED AND PART OF MY CARE"

"I WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU MORE REGULARLY, INCLUDING TIMELY INFORMATION ON CLINIC CHANGES OR CANCELLATIONS"





HOW YOU CAN ENGAGE WITH US

TALK TO US
*** ON THE PHONE, ON EMAIL OR ***
ANYWHERE WITHIN OUR CLINICS
AND FACILITIES.

SCAN ME



Give feedback
and ideas through
'Have your say'.

Phone: 07 4652 8013 • **Email:** cw-feedback@health.qld.gov.au

Website: www.centralwest.health.qld.gov.au/about-us/contact-us/feedback-form

In writing to: Quality and Safety Unit, Central West HHS, PO Box 510, Longreach Qld 4730

Complete surveys or patient experiences questionnaires when offered.

Participate in our Consumer Advisory Networks (CANs). For more information, visit www.centralwest.health.qld.gov.au/about-us/join-a-group-or-other-activity

Join us on Facebook by searching Central West Hospital and Health Service.