

Attachment 20.

Life Without Barriers

National Carers Consultation Group

Structure and Purpose

**WE
LIFE WITHOUT BARRIERS
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Championing opportunity for all

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STRUCTURE & PURPOSE



Terms of Reference

Life Without Barriers believes that foster carers hold a unique service delivery perspective and can provide valuable insights from this direct practice role. Life Without Barriers has an interconnected system of three-tiered forums at National, State and Regional levels which provide opportunities for carers to participate in policy and program development, service development and review, piloting of projects, and to represent critical issues for carers.

The National, State and Regional Reference Groups have the following purpose and responsibilities:

Purpose:

- Provide forums for foster carers to contribute to the development and enhancement of Life Without Barriers' services;
- Provide forums for foster carers to communicate with LWB at a National, State and Regional level, about service delivery matters which affect their ability to provide care to our clients;
- Provide mechanisms to refer matters to Senior level Management about service delivery trends, issues and innovations;
- Provide a vehicle for Life Without Barriers to inform carers about organisational and service delivery changes, developments and issues.

Responsibilities:

- Work in partnership to develop solutions;
- Remain solution focused and provide constructive input;
- Keep the best interests of children and young people as a primary consideration when discussing issues or recommending changes to services;
- Represent the views and position of all carers and advocate for appropriate policy, structural and operational responses to meet their needs.
- Complaints, case issues and individual concerns are not within the scope or role of these communication and consultation bodies.

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Membership

The Carer Reference Groups are open to all carers within LWB. However, depending on the size of the State/Region, it may be impracticable to meet with all carers at the one venue, and Carer representatives may be required. Other people may be invited to address the meeting at the discretion of the Chairperson, as agreed to by the group.

Selection of Members

Carers may be given the opportunity to submit an expression of interest to fill the roles each financial year, or may be invited by direct request of the relevant Manager to fill the roles at Regional levels. This decision process will be once a year and the Carer representative/s will be appointed for a one year period.

Select the representatives based on:

- Ability to represent all carers in the region and effectively articulate their needs;
- Consideration of the range of backgrounds and cultural heritage of carers in that region;
- Consideration of the range of carers, primary, respite, specialist, generalist;
- Availability to attend the 4 forums each year;
- Ability to participate without disruption to current placement/s and within current resources;
- Capacity and motivation to provide feedback;
- Current involvement with LWB;
- Experience and expertise.

Sitting members are eligible to resubmit at the end of their 12 month term and their nomination will be considered along with all new nominations.

If, for unexpected reasons, a representative is unable to continue in the role, the Chairperson must conduct an nomination and selection process to replace the representative. It is recommended that contingency members are determined at the start of each year in preparation for any emergencies.

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Frequency of Meetings

The meetings will occur quarterly. All meetings are to be face to face. The venue for face to face meetings will be at an area or regional office, or a suitable venue. The meetings are chaired by the Operations Manager with secretariat arranged by the Operations Manager. Consultation with this group by mail, email, online or video link may occur outside of scheduled sessions as determined by the Operations Manager.

Agenda

A standing agenda will include the following;

- Previous minutes;
- Tabling of National, State and Regional matters with relevance to carers;
- Tabling of policies, programs, projects and services which require input from carers;

The Chairpersons will make the final decision about agenda items and guests.

The proposed agenda items will be forwarded to all parties prior to each session.

Minutes

- The minutes are to be taken by a nominated person each meeting.
- The minutes are to be distributed to all participants within two weeks of the date of the meeting.
- The minutes will be forwarded to the coordinator of each forum for distribution to all carers, SOCs and other relevant team members.
- All actions will be allocated for follow up and progress.