



# Consumer and Community Engagement Strategy 2020–2025

Yorke and Northern Local Health Network

April 2021



**Health**  
Yorke and Northern  
Local Health Network



## **Acknowledgement**

We acknowledge the Aboriginal Custodians of the Land and Waters within the Footprint of the Yorke and Northern Local Health Network.

We respect their spiritual relationship with their country and acknowledge their cultural beliefs are an important focus of the past, present and future.

We acknowledge Elders and emerging leaders. We also pay respect to the cultural authority of Aboriginal people from other areas.

## About the Consumer and Community Engagement Strategy

The Consumer and Community Engagement Strategy (the Strategy) highlights the value and importance of the consumer voice and continuing to partner with our consumers and members of the community. Safe feedback and engagement opportunities are an important aspect of the strategy.

By engaging with consumers and community at every level of the organisation, the Yorke and Northern Local Health Network can develop and deliver genuine consumer-focused health services. By fostering consumer and community engagement, whether it be formal or informal, we will ensure we continue to develop health services that are equitable, accessible and sustainable, resulting in improved health outcomes influenced by the people we care for.

The Strategy has been developed by the staff and consumer representatives on the Operational Consumer and Community Engagement Committee. The work group is a diverse group of individuals, representing consumers, carers, community members, Aboriginal/Torres Strait Islander people, Health Advisory Councils and leaders with experience across a broad range of service delivery areas including mental health, community health, acute care, aged care, NDIS. The work group were supported by the Consumer and Community Engagement Board Committee.

The Strategy is specific to the Yorke and Northern Local Health Network and is underpinned by the following SA Health Policy Directives:

- SA Health Consumer, Carer and Community Engagement Strategic Framework 2021-2025
- Framework for Active Partnership with Consumers and Community
- Partnering with Carers
- Guide for Engaging with Aboriginal People

The Strategy supports the Yorke and Northern Local Health Network Strategic Plan 2020-2025 and Governing Board Priorities and should be considered along with the Yorke and Northern Local Health Network Clinician Engagement Strategy.

A Consumer and Community Engagement Plan will support the Strategy by providing guidance to ensure that consumers and members of the community have the opportunity to participate in all aspects of the health service, from their own individual health care needs through to health service planning and design at a local unit, service and organisational level.



## **John Voumard**

### **Governing Board Chair, Yorke and Northern Local Health Network**

It is my pleasure to introduce the inaugural Consumer and Community Engagement Strategy for the Yorke and Northern Local Health Network.

The Yorke and Northern Local Health Network Consumer and Community Engagement Board Committee has led the development of the Strategy, which has involved consultation and collaboration with staff, consumers, the community and key stakeholders.

Consumer and Community Engagement is not new. Our health services have been involving consumers and the community for many years. The aim of this strategy is to reflect a culture that promotes a collaborative, integrated and authentic approach to engaging consumers and the community.

The voices of our consumers and community are integral to ensuring the development of health services that are equitable, accessible and sustainable, resulting in improved health outcomes. These voices ensure we deliver safe, high quality, contemporary health services, based on local involvement, ideas and innovation.

The Yorke and Northern Local Health Network Governing Board is committed to ensuring that genuine engagement with our consumers and communities is embedded into our culture and is sought at every opportunity to guide the development, implementation and improvement of our health services.

On behalf of the Governing Board, I extend sincere thanks to all who have been involved in the development of this Strategy. We recognise the extraordinary opportunities presented by listening to the ideas of our consumers and communities, and embrace the value this provides.



## **Roger Kirchner**

**Chief Executive Officer,  
Yorke and Northern Local Health Network**

The Yorke and Northern Local Health Network understand that if we genuinely engage with our consumers, carers and community, we can build better services tailored to the needs of our community.

The Consumer and Community Engagement Strategy will build on our existing consumer engagement systems and create new ways to work with our consumers, carers and the community to ensure we continue to keep our consumers at the forefront of our service design and delivery.

During the development of this Strategy, our consumers highlighted the importance of being kept informed and valuing the consumer voice and inclusion in decision-making processes. This Strategy guides how we will enhance consumer involvement across our health service, and further embed the engagement principles into our culture at all levels.

Yorke and Northern are renowned for its strong, close-knit communities, and I look forward to seeing the enhancements to our health services, as a result of improved engagement, over the next five years and beyond.



We will keep consumers informed and engage them in their care.



## **Glenise Coulthard AM**

**Chair, Yorke and Northern Local Health Network  
Consumer and Community Engagement  
Board Committee**

The Yorke and Northern Local Health Network is committed to working in partnership with all our consumers, carers, staff, volunteers and key stakeholders. Working closely with our Aboriginal Experts by Experience, Mental Health Lived Experience representatives, Community Networks, Volunteers and Health Advisory Council members, ensures we are on a journey together to develop a consumer focused and culturally responsive and inclusive health service for all our consumers.

We acknowledge the contribution consumers and the community can make in improving health services, including planning, designing care and service evaluation. We recognize that when everyone is treated with dignity and respect, and encouraged to participate and collaborate in their own healthcare that mutually agreed actions occur and build on better health outcomes for everyone.

We commend the Yorke and Northern Consumer and Community Engagement Strategy as a key foundation document, along with the National Safety and Quality Health Service Standards, inclusive of the six Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander actions, as these will provide leadership and guidance to ensure community and consumer engagement is embedded into our organisational systems.



## Our Consumers

Consumers are anyone who receives healthcare or is involved in the planning and delivery of our services. Consumers may also be referred to as; clients, patients, residents, carers, advocates, next of kin, friends and relatives.

## Our Diverse Community

We will identify our community stakeholders and engage with them. e.g. Local Government; service clubs; community organisations; schools and volunteers.

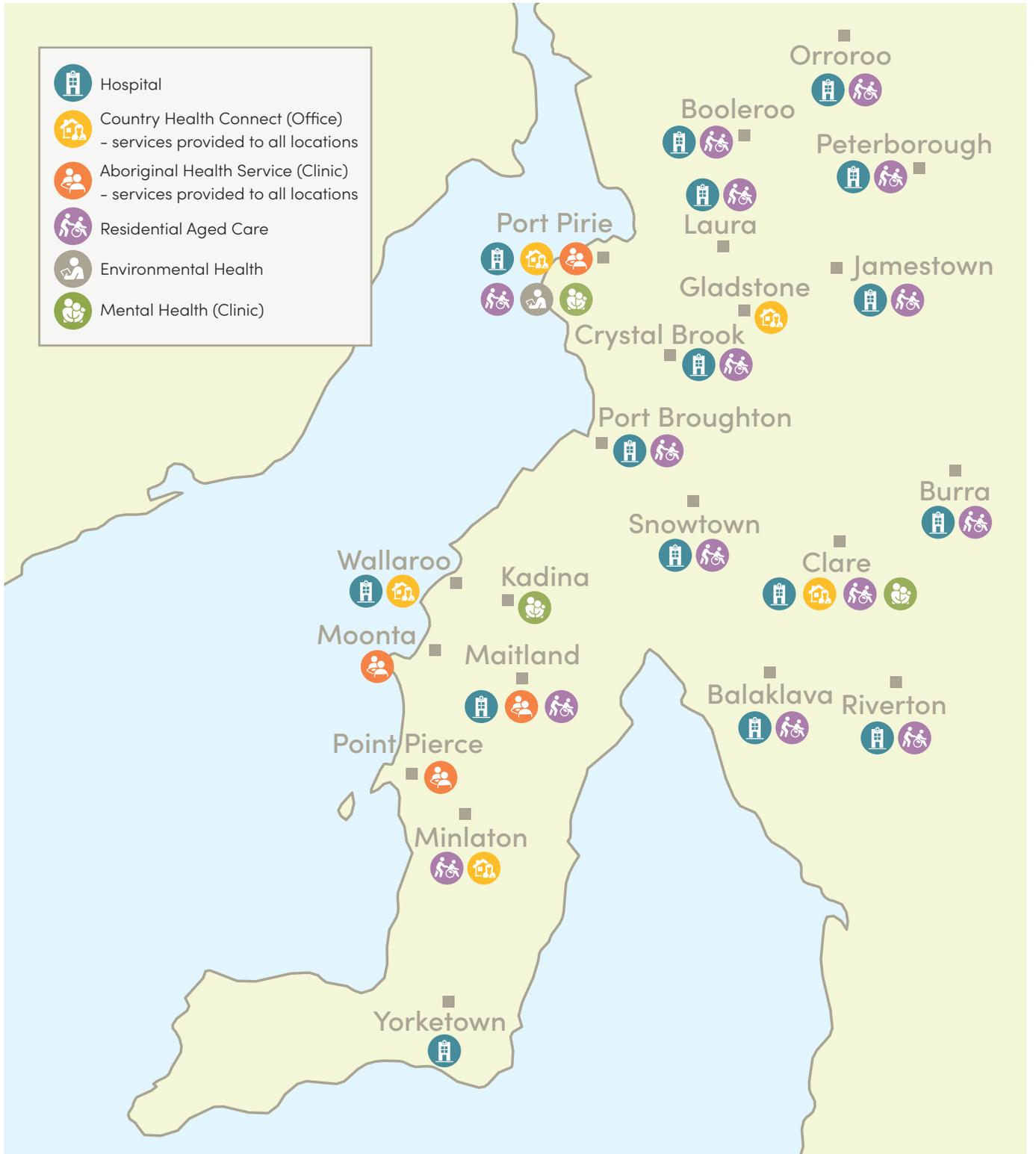
## About the Yorke and Northern Local Health Network

As a regional Local Health Network, we are responsible for the delivery of public hospital services and residential aged care for SA Health. Under the banner of Country Health Connect, we offer a range of in-home and community-based services to older people, people living with disability, children and carers. We also provide community mental health services across the region. Our hospital and community health locations are identified on the map on the following page.

Our community includes those that may use our hospitals for emergency, surgical or midwifery care or our community and allied health, aboriginal health, mental health, environmental health services, offered in clinics or in home support. They may also stay in our residential aged care facilities. They could be permanent residents or people visiting our area.

### A snapshot:

- Total population in geographical catchment area = over 75,000 people.
- 5.6% are aged over 65 years.
- 2.7% identified as Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander and 2.8% speak another language other than English at home.
- Just over 1,600 staff and almost 200 volunteers.
- Over 32,000 Emergency presentations and 374 Babies born in our hospitals in 2019/2020.





## Our Purpose

We are committed to genuinely engage with and listen to our consumers and the community when delivering, planning and evaluating our Health Services.

## Our Aim

The Consumer and Community Engagement Strategy will guide ways to engage consumers and people in our community to ensure they have the opportunity to be involved in all aspects of the health service.

By developing diverse engagement opportunities for communities our local health network serves, we can learn and understand their needs and how we can deliver improved consumer-focused health services.

## Our Values

Our values were created using a co-design approach where the Operational Consumer and Community Engagement Committee members worked together to identify the most valued best practice for engagement in health care.





## Our Goals

- Create opportunities to encourage consumer participation and partnership to develop better consumer-focused health services.
- Be innovative, flexible and inclusive and design our engagement methods to reach everyone, including vulnerable people in our communities.
- Empower consumers to be partners in their own health care and encourage and support feedback at every opportunity.

## Our Priorities

- Embed partnering with consumers into our culture.
- Involve consumers to contribute to how services look and feel.
- Keep consumers informed and engaged with all aspects of the service.
- Encourage consumer feedback at every opportunity.



We will work together with our consumers and the community when planning their care.

## Our Plan

### We will embed partnering with consumers into our culture.

Our staff will work together with consumers and the community in the planning of care, service delivery and evaluation of health services.

#### How will we do it?

- We will acknowledge and value consumers and community experience to improve and better design our health services.
- We will enhance consumer partnership opportunities to ensure the consumer voice is at the forefront of organisational decisions.
- We will apply the consumer and community engagement values during staff recruitment and engagement processes.
- We will embed consumer and community engagement practice as part of staff orientation into the organisation.
- We will actively engage with our Health Advisory Councils

#### How will we know we have achieved it?

- Consumers will be represented on governance committees, interview panels and in staff training.
- Consumer representatives on our community networks and registers will have increased.
- Consumer involvement, outcomes and achievements will be regularly reported as a result of consumer contribution.
- Training opportunities will be available for consumers, carers and community members to support their involvement to engage with the service.
- Partnering with Consumer training compliance rates will increase to above 80%, the existing target.



## **We will involve consumers to contribute to the look and feel of our services.**

Health Services will have a welcoming, caring environment and culture.

### **How will we do it?**

- We will listen to and value consumer feedback to assist us to identify gaps and opportunities for improvement.
- We will involve our consumers and our communities in new service projects or planning opportunities.
- We will involve consumers and our communities in the evaluation of health service programs and environments.
- We will promote access to our health services to consumers and our communities.

### **How will we know we have achieved it?**

- Consumer feedback will increase, and any feedback initiated improvements will be identified and promoted.
- Consumer and community feedback and improvements will be reported and showcased to the consumers and/or community.
- Consumer recommendations will be captured in service plans, models of care and project plans.
- Aboriginal Health Impact Statements will be embedded into every new strategy, policy or project.

## We will keep consumers informed and engaged.

We will provide clear and accessible health information to support consumers and community to understand and be informed about their care and services provided.

### How will we do it?

- We will provide health information that is clear, accessible and tailored to meet the diverse needs of our communities.
- We will consistently market and promote our services and engagement opportunities, using technology and mediums suitable and accessible to our communities.
- We will prioritise vulnerable consumers and communities, ensuring all groups are heard and represented during engagement practices.
- We will provide training and support to staff to ensure a strong consumer focus in all aspects of the service.
- Staff will use plain language when engaging with our consumers and communities.
- Interpreter and Translation services will be readily available to those requiring assistance.
- Health Advisory Councils will be actively engaged and communicate with their communities, and provide feedback to the Governing Board.
- Consumer information and resources will be reviewed by consumers and made available across a variety of mediums.

### How will we know we have achieved it?

- 100% of new consumer publications will be reviewed by our consumers or consumer representatives. The consumer engagement icon will be added to the publication to identify that this has occurred.
- We also strive to ensure that our existing consumer publications and resources have been reviewed by our consumers. Our consumer representative committees/groups will aim to review at least one publication at each meeting or 12 a year.
- The Yorke and Northern Local Health Network Website will be reviewed annually by our consumer representative groups.
- 100% of all health units will have consumer information available in hard copy, as well as access to interpreter and translation services.
- The Yorke and Northern Local Health Network Facebook Page will continue to promote new and up to date information weekly. With YNLHN Specific information also shared on the YNLHN website.



We will involve consumers to contribute to the look and feel of our services.

## **We will encourage consumer and community feedback at every opportunity.**

We will provide feedback opportunities to all consumers accessing our health services.

### **How will we do it?**

- Our staff will actively seek feedback from our consumers and community at every opportunity.
- We will invite feedback from consumers and our communities by providing informative and easy to understand information.
- We will support consumers and community members to provide feedback in a variety of ways that are accessible and appropriate, to ensure the provision of feedback is as easy as possible.
- We will provide more opportunities to capture consumer feedback and we will ensure this feedback is reported and actioned.
- We will provide consumers and communities with feedback about any outcomes.
- We will positively promote the outcomes of consumer and community feedback.
- We will educate staff on the importance of capturing and actioning consumer feedback.

### **How will we know we have achieved it?**

- Increase in different feedback opportunities reported throughout the Local Health Network.
- Reported increase in consumer feedback across all sites.
- We will increase the number of Consumer Experience Surveys distributed and received from inpatients, residents and community health consumers.
- Consumer feedback actioned with in recommended key performance indicator timeframes.
- Consumer feedback reported monthly at each health unit Quality Risk and Safety Operating Committee, Consumer Representative Committee, Governing Committee and Board Committees.
- Consumer feedback outcomes promoted in Yorke and Northern Local Health Network newsletter annually.
- Staff education sessions on Consumer feedback and Safety Learning System available annually.



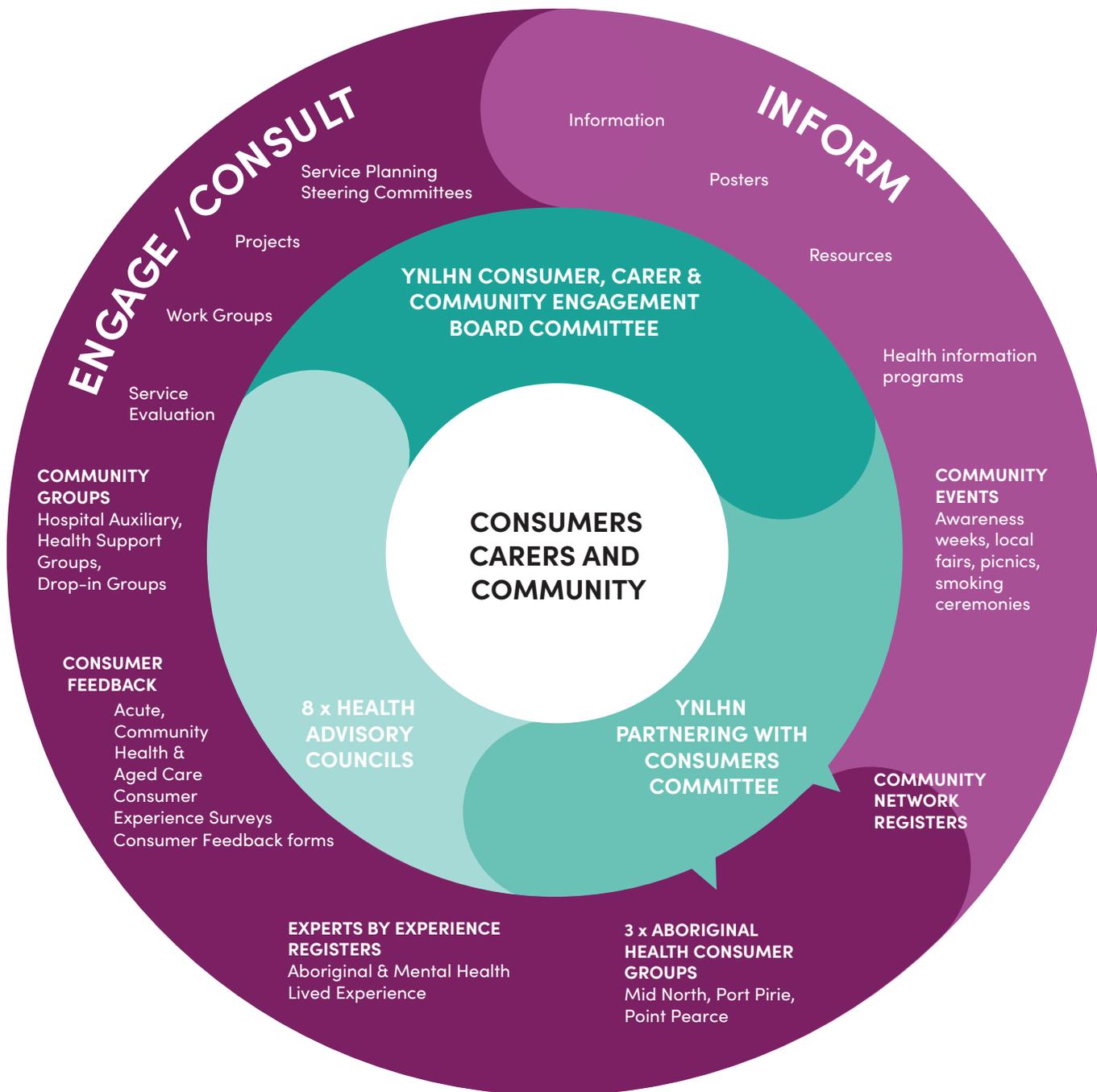
## **How we currently engage**

An overview of our current engagement opportunities is identified on the following page; these will continue to evolve over time to become a valuable tool to consider as consumer and community engagement strategies are implemented.

### **We work closely with our diverse consumers and health care partners.**

We know that the people we need to engage with are diverse, not only in culture and language, but also in age, mental health, disability, care needs, life experiences and capacity.

Different people engage differently, therefore we will use the tools identified on the following page to ensure that we provide a range of methods when engaging with diverse consumers. We will strive to expand and improve strategies and will continue to develop the partnerships we have with a variety of services and agencies that work with community members who are at risk of being marginalised, face challenges accessing services, or have poor health outcomes.





## How will we know if the Strategy is effective?

We will continually assess engagement activities by evaluating and seeking feedback from consumers, carers and the community to review the Strategy and the outcomes achieved. This will ensure that the Strategy will continue to improve and suit the ever-changing needs of our communities.

The Strategy ensures that embedding partnering with consumers in our culture will ensure active communication with consumers, our communities and staff.

We will actively listen, learn, respect and respond to feedback from our consumers and the community.

We will measure our engagement activities, evaluate the outcomes and consider improvement strategies that better meet the needs of our consumers and communities. These include;

- Reporting our consumer engagement strategies and improvements initiated as a result of consumer feedback to the Minister of Health and Wellbeing via the YNLHN Annual Report, which is also published on the SA Health Website.
- Ensuring the availability of consumer experience surveys in our hospital inpatient, aged care facilities and community service settings.
- Using the Safety Learning System (SLS) to capture consumer feedback.
- Ensuring reports are provided to each health unit and relevant governing committees.
- Ensuring regular, planned evaluation of collaboration and engagement opportunities undertaken by our Health Advisory Councils, with outcomes reflected in their annual reports.
- Undertaking planned surveys to monitor our consumer representatives experience on committees, including Health Advisory Council members and all governance committee members annually.
- Providing regular reports against the defined Key Performance Indicators in this strategy to measure its effectiveness.
- Regularly reviewing this Strategy to ensure it continues to be relevant and appropriate.
- Developing evaluation criteria to ensure the opportunities for engagement have been successful, real and meaningful.



## Closing the loop

- We will identify how and when we will report back to clients, our communities, residents, staff, and the organisation about our engagement activity.
- We will be honest and transparent.

The Strategy will be monitored and reported on by the Yorke and Northern Local Health Network Consumer and Community Engagement Operations Work Group through the Yorke and Northern Local Health Network Operational Consumer and Community Engagement Committee.

Regular reports will be provided to the Yorke and Northern Local Health Network Governing Board.

The Yorke and Northern Local Health Network Governing Board will formally review the Consumer and Community Engagement Strategy every three years.



We will encourage  
consumer and  
community  
feedback at every  
opportunity.

## Where the Strategy fits in our overall plan

Engagement and participation will be included in key policies and as part of planning processes and evaluation.

The Strategy should be considered in line with the following documents:

### Yorke and Northern Local Health Network

Yorke and Northern Local Health Network Strategic Plan  
Yorke and Northern Local Health Network Governing Board Priorities  
Yorke and Northern Local Health Network Clinician Engagement Strategy  
Yorke and Northern Local Health Network Reconciliation Plan

Continue to embrace the South Australian Health Advisory Council Partnership Framework and the Country Health SA Aboriginal Community and Consumer Engagement Strategy

### SA HEALTH

SA Health Consumer, Carer and Community Engagement Strategic Framework 2021-2025  
A Framework for Active Partnerships with Consumers and the Community  
Guide to Engaging with Consumers and the Community  
Consumer and Community Advisory Committee / Group Guideline and Toolkit  
SA Carer Recognition Act (2005) Partnering with Carer Policy Directive  
SA Health Consumer, Carer and Community Feedback and Complaints Strategic Framework  
SA Health Guide for Engaging with Aboriginal People

### NATIONAL

Charter for Health and Community Services  
National Safety and Quality Health Service Standards. Standard 2 Partnering with Consumers  
NSQHSS user guide for services providing care for people with mental health issues  
NDIS (National Disability Insurance Scheme) Practice Standards  
Aged Care Standards

## Conclusion

The Yorke and Northern Local Health Network values consumer and community engagement and understands that genuine engagement is essential in producing health services tailored to the needs of our communities.

This Strategy builds on existing consumer engagement systems already in place across the YNLHN and SA Health. It will assist us to continually improve in this ever changing environment, not only in relation to consumer participation and the provision of information but also to build on services provided by working in partnership to make decisions across all levels of the organisation.

The Strategy will be continually evaluated and adapted to suit as new priorities are identified.

## For more information

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 This document has been reviewed and endorsed by Yorke and Northern Local Health Network consumers and the community.



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