

Making space for all the voices

The NWMPHN Community Participation Plan

Health equity demands that all communities can influence decisions that impact them. Optimal outcomes demand many voices participate in planning, developing and evaluating health services.

To achieve this, North Western Melbourne Primary Health Network frames engagement through its Community Participation Plan. Following extensive consultation, this plan has been reviewed, renewed and refreshed for 2023-26. The review was completed in consultation with our community council, other community members and staff.

A renewed focus on broad, sustained consultation has so far produced:

- a **345 per cent** increase in People Bank members since 2019, to **178 people**, many from CALD backgrounds.
- **1600+** community participants engaged in our Health Needs Assessment **2022–25**.

Our plan acknowledges that input takes many forms, with multiple types and levels of stakeholder engagement, including:

- NWMPHN community and clinical councils, and expert advisory groups
- People Bank
- Resident surveys
- Follow-up interviews
- Workshops, webinars and focus groups
- Tender evaluation panels
- Feedback passed on from service providers
- Feedback direct to NWMPHN

It commits the organisation to focus on collaboration and co-design, including developing:

- Strengthened internal governance to embed community participation in our commissioning.
- A dashboard for monitoring community participation.

The process highlighted **5 key discoveries:**

Staff engagement is important across all stages of design and implementation.

Embedding community participation into NWMPHN's work requires senior leadership team support.

Community participation needs to be embedded into business processes for all stages of our work.

Having a designated lead or champion to coordinate and drive implementation is important.

Engaging the community in the development of the plan ensured a partnership approach.



NWMPHN vision:
A healthy community,
a healthy system

Our community participation goals:

- Building meaningful relationships and trust with our communities.
- Ensuring our programs and services, shaped by our communities, are safe, accessible and sustainable.



How we will achieve our goals:

- Ensure that culturally responsive and inclusive community participation is included in all parts of the commissioning cycle.
- Build our capacity to collaborate with communities to co-produce programs and services.
- Support a network of participants who are engaged with the organisation and are reflective of communities.
- Increase the capacity of NWMPHN staff to engage meaningfully with communities.
- Promote the importance and value of culturally responsive and inclusive participation to key stakeholders including service providers and community members.



The review process involved a stepped approach over several months:

November-December 2022

Planning and determining the approach and scope

January-February 2023

Review of current state

March-May 2023

Develop draft and seek feedback

June-July 2023

Finalise design and share with stakeholders

For more information

Contact comms@nwmpnhn.org.au or visit nwmpnhn.org.au



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