



Accessibility Plan

Purpose

This Accessibility Plan sets out how the Network supports equitable access to its activities, governance, advocacy and engagement work as a consumer-led peak body. Accessibility in this context focuses on ensuring that consumers can participate safely, meaningfully and effectively in the Network's work and influence.

This Plan supports the Network's commitment to human rights, social justice, diversity and inclusion, and continuous improvement.

Scope

This Plan applies to all Network activities, including governance and Board participation, consumer engagement and consultations, advocacy and representation work, communications, events, partnerships and organisational operations.

Principles

The Network's approach to accessibility is guided by the following principles:

- Consumer leadership and lived experience expertise
- Equity of access and participation
- Trauma-informed and recovery-oriented practice
- Cultural safety and respect for diversity
- Flexibility and responsiveness to individual needs

- Continuous improvement based on feedback and learning

Accessibility Focus Areas

1. Physical Access

The Network commits to reducing physical access barriers by:

- Using accessible venues for meetings, forums and consultations, including step-free access and accessible toilets where available.
- Considering location, transport options and safety when selecting venues.
- Offering remote participation options where physical attendance may be a barrier.
- Asking participants about access requirements in advance and making reasonable adjustments.

2. Information and Communication Access

The Network commits to accessible information and communication by:

- Using plain language in written and verbal communications where possible.
- Providing information through multiple channels, including online platforms, email and community networks.
- Making alternative formats available on request, such as large print or electronic formats.
- Maintaining a website that aims to meet accessibility standards and is navigable for users with assistive technologies.

3. Digital and Remote Access

The Network commits to inclusive digital engagement by:

- Offering online meeting options that support captioning and phone dial-in where possible.
- Providing clear instructions and support for accessing online platforms.
- Being flexible when technology creates a barrier to participation.

4. Cultural and Language Accessibility

The Network commits to culturally safe and inclusive practice by:

- Applying its Cultural Capability Framework across engagement and advocacy activities.
- Working in ways that respect Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities.
- Adapting engagement approaches to meet cultural needs, including location, timing and method of engagement.
- Being responsive to language needs and exploring supports where required.

5. Financial and Practical Barriers

The Network recognises that cost and practical constraints can limit participation. The Network commits to:

- Providing reimbursements and other supports in line with organisational policy where participation involves significant time or costs.
- Being flexible about meeting times and formats to support participation.

6. Emotional and Psychological Safety

The Network commits to trauma-informed practice by:

- Creating safe and respectful environments for engagement.
- Being clear about roles, expectations and boundaries.
- Supporting choice, control and self-determination in participation.
- Responding appropriately to distress or safety concerns.

Identifying and Responding to Access Needs

The Network uses a range of mechanisms to identify and respond to access needs, including:

- Registration and demographic questions about access and support requirements.
- Direct conversations with consumers and participants.
- Feedback, complaints and suggestions.

Where barriers are identified, the Network will make reasonable efforts to address them within its resources and role as a peak body.

Monitoring, Review and Improvement

Accessibility is monitored through:

- Consumer and stakeholder feedback.
- Review of participation patterns and engagement outcomes.
- Staff and Board oversight of accessibility issues and risks.

Identified issues and improvement actions are recorded and reviewed as part of the Network's continuous improvement processes.

Governance and Review

The Board has oversight of this Plan. The Plan is reviewed periodically, informed by consumer feedback, changes in community need, and emerging best practice.

This Plan is publicly available and promoted through the Network's communications.