



REPRESENTATION ON COMMITTEES POLICY

Introduction

This policy is intended to promote optimum effective community participation in the committees of other government or non-government organisations, and is intended as guidelines rather than as any legally binding contract. Committees may have a range of objectives including democratic participation, collection of information and ideas, or garnering community support for organisational actions and policies.

Interpretation

For the purposes of this policy:

A **representative** is a person who is put forward by *Cancer Voices SA* to represent it on another organisation's committee.

A **nominee** is a person put forward by *Cancer Voices SA* to sit on another organisation's committee in an individual (rather than representative) capacity.

A **collaborator** is someone appointed to a committee independently of *Cancer Voices SA* but voluntarily representing *Cancer Voices SA* views or reporting back to it.

A **committee** shall be taken to include a board, council, working party, task force, selection/interview panel, appeal tribunal or any other formally constituted group of individuals assisting with an organisation's operation.

Cancer Voices SA committee includes the Executive committee *Cancer Voices SA*.

For consideration by other organisations seeking representatives/nominees

1. The following preliminary information is sought from any organisation seeking any representative or nominee from *Cancer Voices SA*:

- The objectives and terms of reference for the committee.
- The time, date, frequency and venue of planned meetings.
- Expertise and/or experience required for the committee.
- Duration of the appointment.
- Duration of the committee (i.e. limited time or indefinite time period).
- Provision for sitting fees, travel, accommodation, other expenses (child or elder care, copying/printing, postage, email, telephone etc.).
- An estimate of reasonable preparation and follow up times for committee meetings.

- The expectations of the representative or nominee, including confidentiality requirements, and capacity to report back to or represent *Cancer Voices SA* views.
- Details of any provision for deputies or proxy voting or participation.

2. *Cancer Voices SA* prefers that the organisation offer training and support to representatives/nominees where appropriate, either on a voluntary basis prior to the person taking up their position, or as soon as practicable after the person commences in the position. Refresher courses are also sought where appropriate to the effective ongoing functioning of the committee.

3. The organisation should provide the representative/nominee with any current strategic plan, work plan, budget, policy, review or other key documents that guide the work of the committee. The organisation should also provide the representative/nominee with access to past committee agendas and minutes where relevant to current business, or where sought by the member for background purposes.

4. Organisations are encouraged to ensure that at least two patient/carer representatives or nominees are invited onto a committee. Where this is not feasible, consideration should be given to having a second person attending in a non-voting deputy, learning or mentoring role.

5. *Cancer Voices SA* prefers that the committee operates according to the following principles, by which committee members are:

- Treated as equal members of the committee.
- Provided with clear information on how the committee normally operates and makes decisions, and whether such process can be debated and altered.
- Able to ask for clarification and more information (especially if scientific/technical terms, acronyms or jargon are used).
- Given all relevant documents and an agenda for each meeting with enough time to read, understand and consult with the supplying organisation and other relevant patients, carers or community members before the meeting.
- Given fair opportunity to speak and listened to by the rest of the committee.
- Able to disagree with the rest of the committee and have this recorded.
- Able to abstain from voting on a particular issue.
- Able to talk to others about information from the committee and its deliberations and processes except where privacy laws apply and/or confidentiality must be respected.
- Expected to declare a conflict of interest on a particular matter before the committee.
- To respect confidentiality requirements wherever appropriate.

- To receive equal remuneration/sitting fees, reimbursement for all out of pocket expenses (travel, accommodation, child or elder care, copying/printing, postage, email, telephone etc.), with a minimum expectation of receipt of remuneration/reimbursement in compliance with government guidelines.

Selection by *Cancer Voices SA*

- Except where a request is made as a matter of urgency, any request for a representative or nominee to a committee of another organisation will be circulated to the full membership of *Cancer Voices SA*, with indication of a person on the *Cancer Voices SA* committee to contact for further details or nomination of interest.
- Where a request is made as a matter of urgency, the matter shall be decided by the *Cancer Voices SA* committee with reference to this policy, and to a list of people with particular skills, availability or interests kept by *Cancer Voices SA*. To this end *Cancer Voices SA* membership application forms shall include a space for members to volunteer such information, and requests will also be made in occasional *Cancer Voices SA* circulars.
- Where a request to serve on another organisation's committee is made to any member of the *Cancer Voices SA* committee either in an individual or representative capacity, that member will first discuss it with the *Cancer Voices SA* committee.
- Where a person(s) nominate(s) interest in a board or committee, the *Cancer Voices SA* committee will look at:
 1. Which person has in their view the best experience, skills or qualifications for the board or committee.
 2. Which person is best able to devote the necessary time or commitment to that board or committee.
 3. Whether that person is already on another board or committee.
- The above 3 factors may be determined by interview, telephone discussion, letter, email, or other appropriate means and the *Cancer Voices SA* committee may delegate to one or more of its number to this end.
- Any complaints about selection or subsequent operations of a representative or nominee are to be made in writing to the *Cancer Voices SA* committee which will determine the matter as appropriate, taking into account the principles of natural justice.

Duties of representative or nominee

- The chosen representative or nominee to the board or committee should sign an undertaking to comply with this policy to the best of their ability.
- The representative or nominee undertakes to participate in the work of the committee in good faith; provide as much notice as possible of any intention to resign, inability to attend meetings or otherwise fulfil a task to which they have agreed; to attend the majority of meetings of the

committee, and if unable to do so over the course of one year, make an offer to the *Cancer Voices SA* committee to resign.

- The representative or nominee will keep a selected *Cancer Voices SA* committee member informed about the general nature of business under consideration by the committee at regular intervals (as determined by frequency of meetings, e.g. twice a year in the case of four or more meetings a year, annually for less frequent meetings).
- A brief report on matters of significance will be provided by the representative/nominee at least annually. This may be written, or verbal by attendance at a *Cancer Voices SA* committee meeting (with prior notice to ensure time is available for any discussion).
- The representative or nominee will attend and discuss with the *Cancer Voices SA* committee any matters they believe are likely to be of major significance (where possible giving prior notice to ensure time is available for any discussion).
- The representative or nominee will wherever possible consult with any other appropriate group to canvass views or proposals on individual or general matters.
- Representatives or nominees with other sources of income may (at their absolute discretion) choose to donate part or all of their remuneration towards the activities of *Cancer Voices SA*
- Representatives or nominees will owe a paramount duty to the purposes of the committee as determined pursuant to any relevant law.
- Where *Cancer Voices SA* asks a representative or nominee to raise a matter on the committee they will do their best to do so, but may decline to do so with reasons.
- Where a representative or nominee is significantly at variance with the *Cancer Voices SA* committee on more than one matter over a period of a year, and attempts are made to reach compromise or consensus without success, the representative or nominee of *Cancer Voices SA* will offer to resign notwithstanding that they may hold the position by right as an individual.
- When the representative or nominee has served a term on the board or committee they will consult with *Cancer Voices SA* committee as to whether they should be available/seek re-appointment, notwithstanding that they may hold the position by right as an individual.
- Where a *Cancer Voices SA* member is appointed to a committee independently of *Cancer Voices SA*, they may nevertheless choose to comply with the above policy in whole or part, but being a collaborator in this way imposes no obligations and does not confer any status as a *Cancer Voices SA* official or representative.

Comments or suggestions on improving this policy are welcomed by the Cancer Voices SA committee at any time.

Name _____

Address _____ p/c _____

Telephone _____ Mob. _____ Fax _____

Email _____

Board or committee _____

I undertake to comply with the above policy to the best of my ability.

Date _____

(signature)