



*Working together
for healthy communities*

About the Community Advisory Committee (CAG)

The Inner South East Partnership in Community and Health (ISEPICH) is a Primary Care Partnership (PCP) that covers the three Melbourne local government areas of Glen Eira, Port Phillip and Stonnington. ISEPICH has 53 member health and community support organisations and covers a catchment area of an estimated 330,000 residents.

There are 30 Primary Care Partnerships in Victoria, funded by the Victorian Department of Health. The PCP program has two key aims, to:

- Improve the experience and outcomes for people who use primary health care services;
- Reduce the preventable use of hospital, medical and residential services through a greater emphasis on health promotion programs and by responding to the early signs of disease and/or people's need for support.

Types of services involved in ISEPICH include hospitals, community health, local government, home and community care (HACC), RDNS, GPs (through Divisions of General Practice), aged care, disability support, mental health and homelessness services.

The health service system can be very complex. ISEPICH supports the active participation of consumers, carers and the broader community. Community voices help keep services grounded and aware of the needs of the community and about issues in using services. For community members, participation in ISEPICH can improve their understanding about health and available services, empower them as service users and support them in advocating for change and service improvement.

The ISEPICH Vision:

To improve the health and wellbeing of the inner south east community through working in partnerships, with a commitment to equity and inclusion.

ISEPICH values:

- Building strong and effective partnerships through relationships that are built on trust and mutual respect;
- Addressing the social determinants of health, acknowledging that social factors, including inequality and exclusion, are contributors to ill health and poor wellbeing;
- Leading, influencing and advocating for best practice service planning and service provision;
- Integrated population health planning and health promotion;
- Building the capacity of the Partnership to respond to community needs;
- Improving the coordination and integration of services;

- Improving support, treatment and care for people with chronic conditions;
- Facilitating the active participation of consumers, carers and community members;
- Cultural sensitivity and valuing diversity in all its forms;
- Ongoing and open evaluation, monitoring and reporting on what we do; and
- Dissemination and use of evidence including evidence of effectiveness (what has worked and what has not, both in this community and in others).

ISEPICH Decision Making

An Executive Committee of 15 people is responsible for overseeing the strategic directions and management of ISEPICH. Twelve people are drawn from member agencies and three are community members serving on the CAG and ISEPICH Committees:

- Community Advisory Group (CAG)
- Service Coordination & Chronic Disease Advisory Group (SCIDM)
- Health Promotion Steering Committee (HPSC)

The HPSC and SCIDM Committees each have two community representatives, and community members are also encouraged to participate in working groups.

For an overview of the ISEPICH organisational structure and membership, go to: <http://www.portphillip.vic.gov.au/isepich-brochure-june2011.pdf>

The ISEPICH Community Advisory Group

Purpose

The ISEPICH Community Advisory Group is established by and reports to the ISEPICH Executive.

The group's primary aim is to provide informed consumer, carer and community perspectives on health, wellbeing and related issues raised by members of the group, or matters referred to the Group by the Executive and other Committees or Working Groups.

It is also intended that the CAG be a supportive setting for community members to:

- learn more about factors that determine health and wellbeing;
- further their understanding about what services are available and how the health systems work; and
- develop confidence and skills in accessing and using services, advocating for improvements, and supporting others to access services.

Membership

Membership of the CAG can consist of up to 12 people but it works well with 9 members. Members need to be residents of Glen Eira, Port Phillip or Stonnington, and equal representation from each local government area is sought. The CAG aims to represent the diversity of the community.

The term of appointment will be initially for up to three years. Members are encouraged to serve a minimum of 12 months.

Roles and Responsibilities

Members need to:

- ❑ Be able to work as part of a group, be constructive, and able to attend day-time meetings at least once a month. *In 2011 CAG meetings are held the second Tuesday of the month, 10.45am 12.30 pm, at the St Kilda Town Hall.*
- ❑ Be interested in health issues and community wellbeing, and
- ❑ Have an interest in improving the provision of health services and health promotion programs.

Members of the Community Advisory Group will:

- ❑ Be respectful of each other and seek to understand different points of view.
- ❑ Ensure to the best of their ability that the group is well informed about issues relevant to community health and wellbeing.
- ❑ Seek to increase their knowledge of the health and wellbeing issues affecting the community, including issues affecting high needs and disadvantaged groups
- ❑ Provide feedback to the Executive, Working Groups and individual member agencies about programs and services, health issues, illness prevention and health promotion
- ❑ Maintain links with other relevant consumer/community networks and groups

New members will be provided with information, both written and verbal about the PCP Program, ISEPICH and specifically about the role and expectations of CAG members. Training and support is available to CAG representatives. This is negotiated with individual members and with the group as a whole.

Honorarium

CAG members receive a \$45 honorarium for attendance at meetings. The honorarium is an acknowledgment that meaningful participation by community members in ISEPICH activities takes time, commitment and can incur personal financial expense. It is not a 'wage' or hourly rate. CAG members are often required to read relevant information prior to meetings and may be involved in follow up activities.

Comments from members about the value of being on the CAG:

- *Feeling heard and being supported*
- *Using my skills*
- *Sharing ideas about how to improve things for others*
- *Advocating for change*
- *Being involved*
- *Learning from each other*
- *Putting ideas into action*
- *Making a difference*
- *Getting things done*
- *Helping others.*

Further Information:

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