Community Engagement Framework

2005 – 2010

Children, Youth and Women’s Health Service
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1. FOREWORD

Broadening the consumer and community's involvement in health planning and policy decision-making is an important priority for the Children, Youth and Women's Health Service (CYWHS). This imperative supports the South Australian Government's health reform agenda. It is one of the foundations of a primary health care focused system.

The Board recognises that our consumers- children, young people, women, their parents and families and community members have a right to have a say on the issues and directions of our Service and that we are accountable to them. We believe that engaging our consumers and the community will contribute to a more accessible and effective health service and improve health outcomes for our consumers. While we have a long history of consumer and community engagement, we have a unique opportunity to broaden the range of methods we use to facilitate participation, especially for children and young people and those traditionally marginalised by mainstream health services.

This Community Engagement Framework demonstrates our determination to provide opportunities for children, young people and women and their families to be involved in a positive way with the Children, Youth and Women's Health Service. I commend it to you.

Hon Carolyn Pickles
Chair Board of Directors
Children, Youth and Women's Health Service
2. From the Chief Executive

The Children, Youth and Women’s Health Service was formed on 1 July 2004 as part of the South Australian Government’s’ commitment to improving the state’s health system.

Our new Service brings together Child and Youth Health and the Women’s and Children’s Hospital. Both Child and Youth Health and the Women’s and Children’s Hospital have long and proud histories of consumer and community engagement and participation initiatives, providing a strong foundation for the development of this Framework.

In order to understand and respond to our consumers and community we need to support, encourage and facilitate meaningful participation in CYWHS. We know that by involving consumers and community in health care, we can improve the safety and quality of our services, improve health outcomes for individuals and the community, utilise our resources more effectively and ensures services are more accessible. We will achieve this by providing a range of opportunities for children, young people, women and community to participate in planning, implementation and evaluation of our services. We also recognise the importance of ensuring that our staff has the skills and knowledge and support necessary in working effectively with consumers.

We value our consumers and community. We are in a unique position to continue working in partnership with children, young people, women and community groups, and developing mechanisms and approaches that assist them to participate meaningfully in the health service. We will ensure our consumers are better informed about their health care and the health system generally and that we work together in the development of appropriate services and programs to meet the needs of our diverse populations.

The Community Engagement Framework provides us with an overarching structure for community and consumer participation within the organisation and demonstrates our commitment to achieving our vision that is:

*The best health for South Australia*

*In providing excellence in health care and improved health for children, young people and women, we will build the foundations for a healthy and vibrant South Australia.*

CYWHS Strategic Plan 2005-2010

Heather Gray  
Chief Executive  
Children, Youth and Women’s Health Service
3. About Children Youth and Women’s Health Service

Our Mission

The Children Youth and Women’s Health Service is South Australia’s leading provider of health services for children, young people and women. We work in partnership with our clients and their families, the community and other service providers to promote, maintain and restore health.

We seek to provide the best possible health care for our clients and the community and we work to prevent illness and improve health and well-being across South Australia.

Our Guiding Principles

A number of key guiding principles, which specifically articulate our commitment to consumer and community participation, underpin our strategy, planning and services. This are-

- Multiple strategies are required to improve health outcomes. These include providing quality and accessible health services, building healthy public policy, improving social and emotional environments, developing supportive communities and developing people’s personal skills and knowledge to support health.
- The needs of our patients and clients come first in the decisions we make.
- Working in partnership with our clients and their families and with other service providers leads to better outcomes.
- The community has a right to a safe and responsive, effective and well-coordinated health system and the right to participate in the design, coordination and evaluation of health services.
- Our staff play a critical role in the provision of quality health care for the community.

Our Strategic Goals

CYWHS Strategic Plan for 2005-20010 identifies six main strategic goals. The Community Engagement Framework will provide direction and support to work collaboratively with consumers and community to achieve the goals. The Strategic goals are:

1. Contribute to the population’s health and well-being.
2. Improve opportunities to prevent illness and improve health.
3. Improve the health of Aboriginal children, young people and women.
4. Address health inequalities.
5. Support specialist services for the state.
6. Ensure quality and integrated health care services.
4. INTRODUCTION

The Children, Youth and Women’s Health Service (CYWHS) recognises that meaningful involvement of consumer and community in health services will result in improved health outcomes, increased accountability, improved safety and quality and improvement and sustainable services.

Both Child and Youth Health and the Women’s and Children’s Hospital have long histories of community engagement and participation initiatives, providing a strong foundation for the development of this Framework.

We know that successful consumer and community participation strategies provide our region with information about the impact of services on consumers and their lives. It enables the region to focus on the needs of particular population groups and gives communities a greater sense of “ownership” over their health and the wider health system.

Many of our consumers are children and young people, so we will need to ensure that our methods and mechanisms for participation are flexible, developmentally appropriate, culturally sensitive and inclusive. We also will need to provide appropriate training and resources and actively support their participation.

We recognise that in order for communities to participate meaningfully, they need to have access to information and resources they need.

5. PURPOSE OF THE FRAMEWORK

The Children, Youth and Women’s Health Service (CYWHS) Community Engagement Framework, provides a strategic focus for consumer and community participation in the region. The framework is for Executive, senior managers and service providers and aims to build on the initiatives and strategies currently employed by the CYWHS.

The Community Engagement Framework will provide further opportunities for children young people, women and the community to contribute to planning, development, delivery and evaluation of health services. The Framework outlines the core components designed to enable the integration of community engagement across all levels of our Service.

6. DRIVERS FOR COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

South Australian context

The current environment of health reform in South Australia provides our Service with an opportunity to re-evaluate how we plan, deliver and evaluate our services, to improve health outcomes. Engaging women, children and young people and
community in our Service is an effective way of doing this. Supporting our work in this endeavour are key South Australian documents outlined below.

The Generational Health Review
The South Australian Government commissioned the Generational Health Review (GHR) in May 2002, which concluded that the current health system was not sustainable, and presented a strong case for change.

The Generational Health Review recognised the importance of consumer and community participation in improving health outcomes and maintaining high quality and effective health services, and called for a greater focus in this area. The report stated:

“Participation is important…..In all businesses talking to one’s customers is a basic principle of operation. It is no different for Health”.

First Steps Forward
The Government's First Steps Forward document (2003) outlined the SA Government’s commitment to increasing community participation including a requirement for Regional Health Services to establish more comprehensive community participation strategies for the community to have a say.

Department of Health - Draft Consumer and Community Participation Principles and Framework for Action
The Department of Health Draft Consumer and Community Participation Principles and Framework for Action is designed to guide the activity of the Department of Health, consumers and consumer organisations, organisations providing services, metropolitan regions and country regions in the area of community engagement. This document is awaiting approval from the Minister. As a health region, the CYWHS has range of responsibilities to deliver within the Framework.
The responsibilities of the regions within this Framework are attached (Appendix One).

**CYWHS Health Service Agreement**

The Health Service Agreement (HSA) between the Children, Youth and Women’s Health Service and the Minister for Health outlines what the CYWHS will deliver in relation to consumer and community participation and the timeframes within which they should be delivered. This is detailed in Schedule 4 of the HSA under *Organisational Development* stating that the CYWHS will “provide greater opportunities for the community to have a say in the operations of the health system”.

The Priorities for Action are:

1. The Service improves and expands mechanisms for community participation
2. The Service demonstrates community participation in service and health planning.

The Indicative Deliverable for 2005/06 is “Demonstrate that the needs and views of consumer and community, including the views of Aboriginal people, have been taken into account in the planning”.

7. **WHAT IS COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**

Community engagement is an overarching term used to describe a wide range of consumer and community participation and engagement strategies and initiatives.

Community Engagement in CYWHS is the process of working collaboratively with children, young people and women and the community to improve health services and health outcomes for individuals and the community.

*It is a powerful vehicle for bringing about environmental and behavioural changes that will improve the health of the community and its members. It often involves partnerships and coalitions that help mobilise resources and influence systems, change relationships among partners, and serve as catalysts for changing policies, programs, and practices.* (Fawcett et al., 1995).

Consumer and community participation in health refers to the contribution of consumers, carers and communities to health policy planning, evaluation, management and service delivery. Specifically, it is about children, young people and women and their families who “use health services and who have a say about how their own health is maintained and how health services are provided to them and others”.

Consumer and community participation in health occurs at a number of different levels and is often described in terms of a continuum, ranging from low levels of participation to high levels of participation. CYWHS will undertake community engagement strategies that include participation at many levels, depending on the issue and area of work. (See Appendix 2 for more details)
Participation takes different forms. **Consumer** participation refers to individual’s role in planning and managing their own health care. **Community** participation refers to the involvement of individuals or representatives of a community or representatives of community groups in planning, implementing and evaluating the provision of health services to their community.  

8. **BENEFITS OF CONSUMER AND COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION**

There is consensus in the literature that engaging and supporting the empowerment of consumers and the community in health decision making and action is a critical element in providing equitable safe and quality health care, services and programs.

**Improved health**

Consumers and community participation in health care may improve health outcomes. In fact, emerging research shows that participation itself improves health outcomes for participants through more appropriate and better treatment options, which in turn produce better outcomes.

*The results of a study by Bechel, Myers and Smith show that the hospital units that were more patient-centred were associated with statistically significant better outcomes than those that were less patient-centred. The authors define patient-centred care as involving the patient in treatment decisions; increasing patient communication with providers and patient understanding of what to expect from treatment plans, recovery, and aftercare; and involving family members in care. They also address the cost implications of patient-centred care.*

The Consumer Focus Collaboration, 2001, *The evidence supporting consumer participation in health*

**Improved services**

Communities are often the best source of knowledge and information about community health needs and health solutions. Tapping into this information and engaging the community, results in more effective policy development.

Service planning can significantly benefit from combining the expertise and experience of health service providers and planners with the experience of consumers who are most aware of the end result and satisfaction of service delivery. Consumers experience health service delivery and can provide unique insights perspectives of the impact services have on them and their lives.

Participation by community can result in services that are more responsive to the needs of consumers.

Engagement of traditionally marginalised groups will assist our Service in overcoming barriers in relation to access. One of the CYWHS strategic goals is to “improve the
health of Aboriginal children, young people and women”. One of our priority areas is
expanding community involvement and developing partnerships with Aboriginal people
and communities.

In Australia, the development of community controlled health services to
facilitate access to culturally appropriate services to Aboriginal people has in
effect delegated control to communities themselves to shape and deliver
health services to meet their needs.

*The Consumer Focus Collaboration, 2001, The evidence supporting consumer
participation in health*

**Quality improvement**
Health care accreditation programs within Australia have standards relating to
consumer participation and consumer rights because involving consumers in health
care leads to improved services and outcomes. The Children, Youth and Women’s
Health Service is committed to the continual internal review and improvement of
organisational structures, processes, outcomes

**Increased accountability**
The CYWHS is accountable to the Minister for Health, the Government of South
Australia and the South Australian public. By engaging communities in the governance
and decision making of our health service we will be more accountable.

**Effective decision-making**
Informing and engaging the community will assist us in making decisions that reflect
community needs.

**Increased community capacity**
The building of capacity within communities will contribute to the long term sustainability
of our health service and the whole health system.

9. WHOM DO WE ENGAGE?

The CYWHS Community Engagement Framework in inclusive of individual consumers
and their families, groups of consumers, specific communities and the general
community. We acknowledge and value the diversity of children, young people and
women and the community and that we will employ multiple strategies that are
inclusive and flexible in order to engage with them.

**Individual Consumers of our Service**
Individual consumers of our services include, children, young people, women, partners
carers and families It also includes those who may be directly or indirectly use or be
affected by our services in the future.

Consumer and Community are used to mean either consumer or community or both.
**Consumer and Community Groups**

Consumer and community groups are consumers and community members forming together in groups for a variety of reasons and include people:

- Living in the same geographic area and concerned about a common issue such as service in rural communities
- Sharing the same health condition or experience, such as children with cystic fibrosis
- Voicing the concerns and interests of population groups such as young people, women from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds

**Community**

Our community includes our strategic partners and collaborators and members of the broader South Australian population who benefit from health services. They are also taxpayers and citizens who ultimately pay for services and to whom the government is accountable.

**CYWHS Volunteers**

CYWHS Volunteers are people who support CYWHS health services and children, young people and women by undertaking defined tasks of their own free will and do so in an unpaid capacity other than out of pocket expenses.

**“Friends”**

CYWHS “Friends” is made up of two Friends groups - namely Friends of CYH and Friends of WCH. They are incorporated associations of community members who support CYWHS through a range of activities including fundraising, parenting support and other services.

Diagram 1 Categories of Consumer and Community Engagement
10. GOVERNANCE ARRANGEMENTS THAT SUPPORT COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT IN CYWHS

CYWHS Board of Directors endorsed the CYWHS Consumer and Community Participation Foundation Policy, which outlines key principles of community engagement. (Appendix 3) The Community Engagement Framework builds on this policy and guides our actions. The Framework outlines the principles and establishes the key action areas and strategies, which provide a reporting structure. The reporting against key strategies at both an operation directorate level and Regional level will assist in fostering a consistent approach to community participation, contribute to monitoring and form part of the Performance Agreement reporting for the Region.

Diagram 2 CYWHS Community Engagement Governance Structure
(Adapted from Central Northern Area Health Service)

CYWHS will review the current Peak Consumer and Community Advisory Group (PCCAC) membership and role to ensure it is able to “provide advice on strategies to
support, encourage and facilitate meaningful community participation in the planning and provision of health services.” We will ensure the membership reflects the diversity of the consumers and community of the health service. Community participants will be recruited using a variety of mechanisms including nominations by agencies, in response to advertising in the press and from the CYWHs Consumer Register for two years. All the community participants will have an interest in the areas of women’s health, children’s health, and young people’s health. They will bring their individual consumer perspective and will be able to take issues back to their wider constituency or advise us on strategies to achieve wider participation. A community participant with appropriate skills and support will chair the PCCAC.

Specific population Advisory groups will be established which will focus on particular groups such as women, children and young people, Aboriginal people, friends and volunteers. These advisory groups will have a broader community base and will be sub groups of the PCCAC and provide reports to the PCCAC on a regular basis. Consumer and community participants will be recruited for two years.

Consumer and community participation at the local level will depend on the nature and length of various projects and working groups. Community participants will be recruited depending on the nature and range of skills and experience required.

The Executive Director Strategic Development and Management will be responsible for ensuring regional coordination of community and consumer participation with input from the service delivery directorates. They will attend meetings of the PCCAG and will provide regular reports to Chief Executive, Executive and the Board.

The Executive Directors of Acute Services, Population, and Primary Health Care Directorates will oversee the implementation of the Framework within their directorates including regular reporting to the Executive against Key Performance Indicators, which will be established annually based on the Key Action Areas.

Appropriate resources, training and support will be provided to the PCCAC and other consumer and community advisory groups.

11. Resources and Workforce Development

Appropriate resources and staff development will be provided to support the implementation of this framework.

12. Monitoring and Evaluation

Community Engagement strategies will be monitored and evaluated.
## 14. Appendix 1 OUR KEY PERFORMANCE AREAS AND DELIVERABLES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Our key areas of performance are…</th>
<th>We are committed to…</th>
<th>We will do this by…</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Developing our policies and strategic plans to support Community Engagement</td>
<td>Integrating and implementing the Community Engagement Framework across the Children, Youth and Women’s Health Service</td>
<td>Providing training for all staff on Community Engagement and the Framework</td>
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<td>Developing Community Engagement Plans within all directorates which includes strategies to address the needs of children, young people and women</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Establishing structures to support Community Engagement at directorate levels</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Integrating the principles of Community Engagement within all internal policies and plans</td>
<td>Ensuring all Executive Directors review and adapt relevant policies.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Establishing Community Advisory Groups</td>
<td>Establishing Community Advisory Groups (CAG) with a focus on our populations that will feed into an organisation wide Peak Consumer and Community Advisory Group (PCCAG)</td>
<td>Establishing a main, organisation wide PCCAG that will integrate community views in the planning, development, delivery and evaluation of our services, policies and programs</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Enable the CAG and PCCAG to provide information to the Board of Directors on behalf of the community.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Our key areas of performance are…</td>
<td>We are committed to…</td>
<td>We will do this by…</td>
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<tr>
<td>Developing our workforce to support the integration of Community engagement across our Service</td>
<td>Integrating Community Engagement as a key area of performance management</td>
<td>Ensuring that Community Engagement is incorporated into all staff performance management processes</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Improving staff recruitment and selection and involving consumers in the process as appropriate</td>
<td>Integrating knowledge, skills and experience of Community engagement within processes for recruitment and selection of staff</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Improving staff orientation and training</td>
<td>Integrating Community Engagement into the staff orientation package</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Providing ongoing staff training about aspects of Community Engagement</td>
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<tr>
<td>Improving our service planning and development processes to integrate community engagement</td>
<td>Developing strategies to enable Community Engagement and involvement in service design</td>
<td>Developing divisional Community Engagement plans with multiple strategies for engagement of our populations including children, young people and women.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Involving Community members in the development of new models of health care</td>
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<td>Developing guidelines to encourage and support staff to implement Community Engagement strategies</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Developing strategies for traditionally marginalised groups to be involved in Community Engagement activities</td>
<td>Involving members of the community in our Service who represent the diversity of our population eg age range, geographic areas and cultural backgrounds and disability.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Our key areas of performance are...</td>
<td>We are committed to...</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Developing strategies for children and young people to have a voice in the region</td>
<td>Developing appropriate mechanisms and strategies that are inclusive of children and young people and support their meaningful participation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Improving the quality of our Service through Community Engagement strategies</strong></td>
<td>Developing and integrating processes for community involvement in accreditation</td>
<td>Providing multiple strategies for consumers and community members to contribute to accreditation including feedback mechanisms and focus groups</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ensuring the Service remains updated and aware of best practice in the area of Community Engagement</td>
<td>Developing links and networks with other health services, community and consumer groups and ensuring supporting the Community Participation Network</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Allocating resources to enable and support Community Engagement in our Service</strong></td>
<td>Allocating resources for staff to implement community engagement strategies</td>
<td>Appointing a coordinator to manage the implementation of the Community Engagement Framework across the CYWHS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Reimbursing and remunerating community members for their involvement</td>
<td>Allocating resources and recognising staff time allocated to Community Engagement activities</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Allocating resources to support children and young people to participate in meaningful ways</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Resourcing Community Advisory Committees</td>
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<td>Our key areas of performance are...</td>
<td>We are committed to...</td>
<td>We will do this by...</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Building the capacity of the community to participate in our Service</strong></td>
<td>Providing access to information</td>
<td>Establishing links with consumer and community networks</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Establishing systems for providing information to community about the CYWHS</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Utilising technology to provide the community with information about their health and the CYWHS</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Providing training and support</td>
<td>Providing induction and ongoing training for new members of the community participating in our Service</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Providing appropriate training and support to young people to assist them to participate in meaningful ways</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Monitoring and evaluating our Community Engagement strategies</strong></td>
<td>Developing systems for collecting data about community engagement</td>
<td>Undertaking a biennial audit of Community Engagement strategies</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Developing an organisation wide consumer and Community Participants Register</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Developing indicators to measure the effectiveness of community engagement strategies</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Our key areas of performance are...</td>
<td>We are committed to...</td>
<td>We will do this by...</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ensuring we have accountable processes for implementing Community Engagement strategies</td>
<td>Ensuring accountability to the community</td>
<td>Providing Directorate reports on the activities and outcomes in relation to Community Engagement for inclusion in the CYWHS Annual Report</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td></td>
<td>Developing a process for the Board of Directors to communicate with the Peak Consumer and Community Advisory Group and the Population Community Advisory Groups in relation to major strategic changes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ensuring accountability to the Government</td>
<td>Reporting on Community Engagement achievements through the Health Service Agreement with the Minister</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Appendix 2  Levels of Participation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Degree of control</th>
<th>Participants’ action</th>
<th>Illustrative mode</th>
<th>Examples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>Has control</td>
<td>CYWHS asks community to identify the problem and to make all the key decisions on goals and means. Willing to help community at each step to accomplish goals</td>
<td>Aboriginal health services developed by Aboriginal community in response to identified problem/issue</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Delegated power</td>
<td>CYWHS identifies and presents a problem to the community, defines the limits and asks community to make a series of decisions, which can be embodied in a plan it can accept</td>
<td>Development of culturally appropriate services such as the Thebarton Midwifery Outreach Program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Plans jointly</td>
<td>CYWHS presents tentative plan subject to change and open to change from those affected. Expect to change plan at least slightly and perhaps more subsequently.</td>
<td>Peak Consumer Advisory Group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Advises</td>
<td>CYWHS presents a plan and invites questions. Prepared to modify plan only if necessary.</td>
<td>Consumers involved in working groups and part of project teams, focus groups</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Consultation</td>
<td>CYWHS promotes a plan and seeks to develop support to facilitate acceptance of the plan.</td>
<td>Consumers involved in the development of health related information, focus groups, surveys</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Receives information</td>
<td>CYWHS develops a plan and announces it to the community. The plan is expected to be endorsed</td>
<td>Consumer Rights and Responsibilities, Consumer Complaints</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Community not involved.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix 3 CYWHS Consumer and Community Policy

CYWHS Consumer and Community Foundation Policy includes the following key principles:

1. As part of the South Australian health system be accountable to the public for the delivery of health services and consumers have the right to know, understand and access information about health system performance, quality and safety and to expect transparency in management of the health service.

2. Provide opportunities, information, resources and support for consumers, including those with special needs, to have input into policy development, priority setting, planning, delivery and evaluation of health services, including the delivery of individual care.

3. Operate in ‘partnership’ with consumers and the communities - at an individual level; this means that decisions are made by staff and consumers jointly where appropriate; and processes exist to facilitate this to happen;
   - At the broader level: this means communities will participate in the identification of needs, planning and priority setting.
   - Volunteers will be provided with information about any changes and involved in planning processes.

4. Provide women, children and young people and volunteers with opportunities to determine and influence methods of participation appropriate to their needs and circumstances.

5. Implement a range of consumer participation methods appropriate to different situations.

6. Ensure consumers and volunteers understand their role and responsibilities and are clear about their involvement and are given feedback on the outcomes of their input and of decisions made.

7. Ensure staff understand the role and responsibilities of consumers and volunteers and ensure processes are in place for the management and support of volunteers.

8. Ensure consumer participation is conducted ethically and participation strategies will be culturally relevant and developmentally appropriate, and will aim to encourage participation from a broad range of consumers, including those groups who are most disadvantaged in terms of health outcomes, to ensure that services are accessible and relevant to their needs.

9. Evaluate and document participation activities and provide feedback to participants and other interested parties.

10. Reimburse consumers and volunteers for any “out of pocket” expenses incurred because of their assisting the CYWHS.
References

4. Fawcett et al, 1995
8. Ibid