HealthANSWERS PARTNERSHIP
Consumer Engagement Strategy

Why HealthANSWERS involves consumers
Consumer involvement means that the research
- is more likely to be relevant to community needs
- delivers better health outcomes
- delivers greater public awareness of research findings

How HealthANSWERS involves consumers
HealthANSWERS brings the consumer perspective to research by
- engaging consumers as researchers, advisers and participants, and
- drawing on consumer and community organisations’ knowledge and insight.
Consumers on any committee or research team are treated as *equal members* and their *experience and contributions are respected*.

Where HealthANSWERS involves consumers
Consumers are involved in *all levels* of the research
- Governance
  - Strategic
  - Project specific
- Research projects
  - Design
  - Implementation
  - Data interpretation
  - Translation of findings
  - Dissemination of findings
- Research participants

How HealthANSWERS supports consumer involvement
Consumer as researchers and advisers
- Arranges training for consumers to become involved in research
  - Person-centred approach to health care delivery & research
  - The research process
  - Using research to bring about change
  - Using consumer stories effectively
  - Safe story telling
  - Privacy and confidentiality
  - Code of Conduct
• Formally inducts consumers into their roles
• Nominates a contact person for each project and committee, someone who is available to facilitate involvement, answer questions, and provide support
• Reimburses consumers appropriately to support their involvement
• Provides resources in a form that is accessible to individual needs (e.g. large print, paper copies, computer screen readers)
• Arranges meetings
  o at times that are convenient for the consumer (e.g. standard work hours may preclude some consumers' participation)
  o at venues that are accessible (e.g. available parking, wheelchair access to buildings, rooms and facilities, hearing loops)
• Provides interpreters and translators, when needed

**Consumer and community organisations**
• Partners with Health Care Consumers’ Association to ensure that all research reflects appropriate involvement of consumers and respect for the consumer perspective
• Identifies the relevant community organisations when undertaking work on a new topic or project, and seeks to engage them, as appropriate

**Consumers as participants**
• Always communicates in plain English
• Provides a summary of the outcome of each project to all research to participants