

1. Establishment and Purpose

The VCCC Alliance Health Equity Advisory Group was established as an initiative of the Strategic Program Plan 2020-24 Health Equity Program. Reducing the evidenced disparities in cancer outcomes requires an intersectional approach that is carefully targeted and focused on strategic action and process. The Equity Advisory Group will provide high-level expertise to the Program and to VCCC Alliance members on the development and implementation of strategies to maximise the contribution of the alliance to address the structural marginalisation and institutional factors that sustain cancer - related health disparities in Victoria.

2. Roles and responsibilities of the Equity Advisory Group

The Equity Advisory Group – with support from, and in collaboration with, the Health Equity Steering Group and VCCC Alliance Health Equity Program Manager will provide expertise and advice to guide equity analysis, drive and develop a VCCC Alliance cancer equity framework, and shape activities to address inequities through the alliance programs to future initiatives as opportunities arise.

(a) Scope

The role of the Equity Advisory Group is to provide expert advice related to:

- Co-design of a cancer equity framework and related 'living' resources in multiple modalities to support VCCC Alliance programs
- Scoping work to map the planes of inequity and existing initiatives across members and other organisations, including countries with analogous population diversity and history
- Development of recommendations for a focused program of work within the VCCC Alliance remit and its evaluation
- Identification and prioritisation of key barriers to equity key across alliance membership
- Support and inform evaluation of equity-focused initiatives
- Ongoing development of the VCCC Alliance Health Equity Program, including new models of equity practice, when opportunities arise.

The VCCC Alliance will be responsible for operationalising the expert advice provided by the Equity Advisory Group.

(b) Governance

The Equity Advisory Group will report to the Equity Steering Group during the life of the current Strategic Program Plan (2021-2024). During the final 12 months of the Strategic Program Plan, a review will be undertaken to scope membership and efficacy. Based on this review, the most effective governance mechanism through which the VCCC Alliance receives expert equity advice.

3. Period

The Equity Advisory Group will be convened in Q4 2021 for a maximum period of three years to coincide with the term of the VCCC Alliance Funding Agreement and the duration of the program. In the event that recruitment for new members takes place during this period, effort will be made to ensure broad diversity across the membership.

4. Membership

The VCCC Alliance values diversity, supports and promotes equity and broad representation on its committees and requires representation from consumers in the design of new initiatives. The VCCC Alliance engages consumers in collaborative methods; all initiatives are inclusive of a range of consumers and recognition is given to a diversity of consumers' needs and aspirations through a range of roles.

In order to ensure a breadth of expertise, membership will be drawn from diverse populations, broader than immediate operational requirements. To ensure diverse voices, the EAG will seek external expertise from consumers from priority populations from time to time.

Where existing expert advisory groups exist for certain populations, reciprocal membership and other engagement mechanisms will be considered.

Members of the Advisory Group will have high-level equity related expertise. At a minimum, the Advisory Group may comprise:

- At least one of the Co-Chairs of the Health Equity Steering Group
- Members with contemporary understanding of health equity and experience in the co-design and implementation of initiatives to address inequities
- Members with specific expertise related to key groups or topics identified for priority action
- Representatives from the following: Cancer Research Advisory Committee; the Cancer Education and Training Advisory Committee; Cancer Consumer Advisory Committee; relevant VCCC Alliance portfolio heads; relevant alliance staff
- Consumer representatives

The Advisory Group, in consultation with the Health Equity Program Co-Chairs can recommend co-option of relevant experts as required. The Advisory Group also has authority to consult and engage non-committee members on an ad hoc basis as it considers necessary.

The VCCC Alliance Health Equity Program Manager will provide support to and attend all Advisory Group meetings.

5. Chair

The VCCC Alliance Equity Advisory Group will be chaired by a candidate as nominated by the Health Equity Steering Group.

6. Conflicts of Interest

Written declarations of conflict of interest (COI) and Confidentiality Undertaking will be submitted on appointment to the Equity Advisory Group and as any new conflict is identified, using the VCCC Alliance Conflict of Interest Declaration Form. Records will be kept by the Program Manager, and declarations will be discussed at the next Steering Group meeting.

7. Quorum

Quorum is designated as 50% of members present plus the Chair or Co-Chair appointed delegate. Any group member who gives prior notice of their inability to participate in a meeting will be provided with the opportunity to contribute advice on key matters, either by telephone or email, prior to the meeting.

8. Meetings

a. Frequency

Meetings will be held on an as needed basis and approximately every 2 months initially.

b. Agenda and papers

Agenda and papers will be distributed by the Program Manager team for each Advisory Committee meeting at least one week prior unless there are extenuating circumstances.

c. Minutes

Minutes of meetings will be distributed to members of the Advisory Committee, during the period in which they are active, as a draft by email within 7 days after each meeting. Minutes will be approved at the subsequent meeting.

9. Reporting

The Equity Advisory Committee will report, through at least one of the Health Equity Program Co-Chairs, to the VCCC Alliance Health Equity Steering Group.

10. Review

The Advisory Group will continue to monitor its performance against the scope and responsibilities outlined in the Terms of Reference.

11. Contact/Program Manager

- Contact and Secretariat: VCCC Alliance Health Equity Program Manager
- Contact: vijaya.joshi@unimelb.edu.au

Approved by: Kalinda Griffiths

Date: 10 August 2022