*Insert your logo here*

**Joining a committee or panel**

**What should you consider?**

*Consumers can play an important role in assisting researchers, clinicians and educators to better understand the lived-experience of cancer. From being involved in research to guiding decision-making, consumer perspectives provide a unique source of knowledge.*

*This checklist can be customised for a prospective consumer joining a panel or committee.*

**Remember that your contribution matters, and you matter.**

**Considering whether you would like to be involved**

* There is strong leadership and support for consumer engagement demonstrated by the people you have contacted or been contacted by.
* You can see that consumer participation has been considered across the development, implementation and evaluation of the project and not just an added extra.
* Your role is clearly defined and you understand what the project team is looking for.
* It is an area that you value and have an interest in.

**Considering whether you would like to commit**

* You have the time available to contribute in the role as defined.
* You have allowed for the time you will need to put in behind the scenes in preparing for meetings (reading papers, liaising with the project managers to raise queries).
* You are prepared to do further background reading and attend training or seminars that will provide you with important knowledge to assist you in contributing your views.
* For committee roles, there are Terms of Reference for the committee in place and you understand the scope and nature of the role as best you can prior to commencement.

**Considering what your views are about cancer?**

* You have thought about diversity and representation and the nature of your personal experience and its limits.
* You have considered what your point of view is and your ability to consider consumer needs and interests beyond your own personal story.
* Think at the level of the cancer or general community (depending on the role and focus of the project area). Are there groups in the community you relate to who can help broaden your understanding?

**Once appointed, you are well informed of the commitment**

* You are provided with general orientation information to enable you to understand and participate in the project:
  + Information about the organisation (overview, vision, mission, links to a strategic plan).
  + Practical considerations: access to the building; parking; meeting locations; sitting fees that apply for this role as relevant; form for completion to enable reimbursement of expenses.
  + Key contacts – primary contact person and others, for example Committee Chair, Group leader, Consumer Engagement Manager/Coordinator they may liaise with.
  + How do you ensure your confidentiality is protected?
  + How do you raise a concern or grievance that might arise from your engagement?
  + Resources are available to support you to actively participate

**Once appointed, you are supported to actively participate**

* You received specific orientation information about the role and project you are involved in:
  + Program overview
  + Role description (for consumer representative roles)
  + Terms of Reference (for committee roles)
  + Deciphering the jargon – list of common abbreviations, glossary of key terms if necessary
  + Recommended background reading
  + Upcoming learning opportunities relevant to the program(s) e.g. Symposium, conference
  + People available for the questions you might ask about the program objectives, committee membership, timeframes, expectations
* You have developed a good working relationship with the:
  + Other consumers involved in your project
  + Team members
  + Chairs and senior team members.
* You feel supported to participate in the way that you need - training needs, conversations, communication preferences (email, phone), preferences for receiving documentation (mail, email, Dropbox), connection with consumer peers, flexibility re: hours of engagement.
* The project manager sets clear intentions with you of how you will work together. What can they expect from your involvement and what do you need from them?
* The project manager provides the opportunity for briefings before meetings and to debrief after meetings as you need.
* The project manager checks in on you periodically – the workload, challenges, learning and support needs.
* You have an opportunity to connect with other consumers to share information and experiences – tips, strategies, resources and a chance to debrief and seek advice as needed to optimise your contribution.

**Your contribution is valued and acknowledged**

* You are valued for your contribution and routinely thanked for your time, effort and expertise.
* You are encouraged to apply for reimbursement for any out-of-pocket expenses and the payment of sitting fees (if appropriate) to the role.
* When you contribute, you hear the outcome of the initiatives that you have been asked for contribution.
* You feel heard and respected by the:
  + Other consumers involved in the project
  + Team members
  + Chairs and senior team members
* You are treated as an equal partner with an important contribution to make.
* Your feedback is routinely sought.
* What is working well and what is not working so well? What can be improved? Do you feel heard and respected? Are you treated as an equal partner?
* You receive feedback on your contribution from the committee Chair or project team members.