



Australian Government

Office of the Administrator
Territory of Christmas Island
Territory of Cocos (Keeling) Islands

Indian Ocean Territories Health Service Community Advisory Committee

Terms of Reference – 1 August 2024

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Table of Contents

Table of Contents	2
Terms of Reference	3
1.1 Document Purpose	3
1.2 TOR Overview	3
1.2.1 Role	3
1.2.2 Scope	3
1.2.3 Objectives	3
1.3 Membership	3
1.4 Governance	4
1.4.1 Code of Conduct	4
1.4.2 Declaration of Interest	4
1.2.8 Grievance & Complaints	4
1.5 Roles and Responsibilities	5
1.5.1 Chair	5
1.5.2 Members	5
1.5.3 Secretariat	5
1.5.4 The IOTHS	6
1.5.5 IOTHS Governance Advisory Council	6
1.5.6 The Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications and the Arts	6
1.6 Meetings	6
1.7 Reporting requirements	7

Terms of Reference

1.1 Document Purpose

In 2019, following a review of the former Christmas Island and Cocos (Keeling) Islands Health Advisory Groups, the Indian Ocean Territories Health Service (IOTHS) Community Advisory Committee (CAC) was established, with Terms of Reference aligned with the Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care's 'Partnering with Consumers' Standard. Through partnering with consumers the IOTHS can better understand the healthcare needs of our community. In 2024, following a short lapse in the CAC, the Committee was reinstated with these revised Terms of Reference. The CAC operates under these Terms of Reference.

1.2 TOR Overview

1.2.1 Role

The Community Advisory Committee is a voice for the community

The CAC ensures the community has a voice in the design, delivery, measurement, and evaluation of health systems and services in the Indian Ocean Territories (IOT). Advice from members informs the development of initiatives to target local health issues, communication strategies for the initiatives and continuous improvement in service delivery, including adjustments to healthcare policies and programs. Diversity of thought is welcome and all opinions will be listened to respectfully.

1.2.2 Scope

The CAC will operate within the scope of the Objectives. It will provide advice within the framework of the existing IOTHS budget, infrastructure, and facilities, and Service Delivery Arrangements.

The CAC is not a decision-making body and will not make purchasing, spending, or clinical decisions, nor provide advice on governance, financial, staffing, and medical matters.

1.2.3 Objectives

The CAC will:

- provide a forum for the community to advise the IOTHS on the design, delivery, measurement and evaluation of systems and services
- be a conduit of information between the IOTHS and the community, including delivering community views to the IOTHS on priority areas of focus, emerging needs and risk, and
- advise the IOTHS on effective strategies to seek community comment on particular health issues and communications strategies relating to health matters.

1.3 Membership

The Administrator of the Territories of Christmas Island and the Cocos (Keeling) Islands will chair the CAC. Membership of the CAC will comprise six representatives of the community, or up to a maximum of ten

representatives at the discretion of the Chair, with a preference for equal representation from Christmas Island and the Cocos (Keeling) Islands.

The Chair will seek expressions of interest from the community and will take into account:

- Gender diverse representation from each territory;
- The representation of the diversity of local languages; and
- The representation of a broad range of age groups from each territory
- The community member's ability to reflect on and present community issues

Members will commence their terms on the date of their appointment by the Administrator and will serve a period of 24 months. Members are able to be reappointed for a single further 24-month term at the discretion of the Administrator. Vacancies in membership are to be filled via an expression of interest process.

The Director of the IOT Administration and/or the IOTHS Health Services Manager will attend CAC meetings in an ex-officio capacity to provide factual and contextual advice.

Experts in particular fields of medicine, healthcare, and wellbeing may be invited to provide advice to inform or contribute to discussions of the CAC.

Participants may attend meetings via teleconference or video link.

1.4 Governance

The CAC will operate within the governance structure of the IOTHS. It will sit alongside the IOTHS Governance Advisory Council, with two members of the CAC sitting on this body. This will ensure linkages between the two and ensure information is shared.

1.4.1 Code of Conduct

Members are required to act with integrity and impartiality, in good faith and in the best interests of the CAC at all times. Members are required to observe the principles of ethical conduct, confidentiality, and privacy. Membership is subject to return of a signed acknowledgement of the CAC Code of Conduct.

1.4.2 Declaration of Interest

Members and the Chair must declare any personal, organisational, or financial interest relevant to agenda items at the commencement of each meeting. In cases where a conflict of interest exists, or could reasonably be seen to exist, the member(s) shall not participate in the discussions relating to that conflict.

Membership is subject to return of a completed Declaration of Personal Interests form to the Office of the Administrator on an annual basis.

1.2.8 Grievance & Complaints

Where a Committee decision, action or inaction, or another Committee member's behaviour or input gives rise to a grievance, the aggrieved Committee member agrees to attempt to resolve the grievance fairly,

reasonably and promptly. A complaint/grievance made, may be in person or in writing. In the first instance, the complainant will advise the Chair of the grievance/complaint and informally raise their concern with the other party offline. Where this is not viable, the committee member will seek guidance from the Chair who will seek to resolve the grievance with the assistance of the Secretariat by engaging in a formal grievance procedure.

1.5 Roles and Responsibilities

1.5.1 Chair

The Administrator of the Territories of Christmas Island and the Cocos (Keeling) Islands will chair the CAC, and will:

- appoint members following an Expression of Interest process;
- assist in planning meeting dates based on members' availability;
- lead discussions to determine focus areas and priorities at the commencement of the term and develop a forward program of work for the CAC;
- ensure regular monitoring and progress reporting on focus areas and priorities throughout the term;
- approve the agenda and papers for each meeting;
- ensure meeting time is used efficiently and effectively to consider relevant matters;
- approve actions from meetings and, where relevant, communicate these to the Assistant Secretary of the IOT Branch and to the IOTHS for consideration;
- ensure community engagement is open and transparent;
- communicate regularly with the IOTHS Health Services Manager, ensuring an open flow of information between the IOTHS and the CAC; and
- ensure the CAC fulfils its reporting requirements, including the provision of an annual report to the Minister with responsibility for Territories and the community.

The CAC will select a Deputy Chair, who will act in the role of Chair as needed.

1.5.2 Members

Members will:

- agree focus areas and priorities at the commencement of the term, a work program and arrangements to measure deliverables and outcomes throughout the term;
- agree on community engagement methods to bring together community views on health issues regularly and strategically throughout the term;
- engage regularly with the community to share health information and bring together community views, in line with the agreed community engagement methods; and
- contribute to discussions in a constructive and informative manner.

1.5.3 Secretariat

The Administrator's Office will provide secretariat and support for the CAC, including:

- facilitating meetings, including arranging suitable venues and teleconference or video link details;

- ensuring the CAC is supported in its secretariat needs, including in preparation, recording and distribution of:
 - meeting agendas and relevant papers at least ten business days prior to each meeting;
 - Minutes within ten business days of each meeting;
 - reports as required.
- Maintaining records of agendas, Minutes, consultations, and other documents;
- providing records of agenda, Minutes, consultations, and other documents to the Department;
- maintaining an Actions Register to track agreed actions and accomplishments; and
- providing regular updates on open actions.

1.5.4 The IOTHS

The IOTHS will:

- seek advice from the CAC on the design, delivery, measurement, and evaluation of systems and services, as needed and as requested by the IOTHS Health Services Manager;
- seek advice from the CAC about community engagement, health education, promotion of services and dissemination of information;
- provide regular updates to the CAC about its activities and performance;
- provide information about specific matters at the request of the Chair or the Administrator's Office; and
- consider matters raised by the CAC and provide feedback in a timely manner.

1.5.5 IOTHS Governance Advisory Council

Two community representatives from the CAC will sit on the IOTHS Governance Advisory Council (one each from Christmas Island and the Cocos (Keeling) Islands). The representatives will be nominated by the CAC and recommended by the Chair. Matters to be raised at governance body meetings by these representatives will be agreed with the CAC. The two representatives should provide a summary of discussions to the CAC following governance body meetings.

1.5.6 The Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications and the Arts

The Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications and the Arts (The Department) may prepare agenda papers and other documents at the request of the Chair or Administrator's Office.

1.6 Meetings

Meetings will be held quarterly, with at least one meeting per year to be held on the Cocos (Keeling) Islands. The CAC is to agree on an indicative schedule of meeting dates for the calendar year at its first meeting. The meeting schedule is to be published via a Community Bulletin. Additional meetings may be held at the request of the members or the Chair.

A quorum shall be 50 percent of members plus one.

1.7 Reporting requirements

It is a requirement that the CAC provide a copy of the Minutes to the Assistant Secretary of the IOT Branch in the Department following each meeting. The CAC must provide a report on its work at the end of each calendar year to the Minister with responsibility for Territories. This report is to be available in English, Malay, Cocos Malay, and Chinese to ensure all members of the community have access to information. The report is to be made available via a Community Bulletin.

A summary of the outcomes of each meeting may be shared with the community via a Community Bulletin as determined by the CAC. The Minutes of meetings may be made available to the public with the approval of the Chair.

The Department is to be consulted on the content and distribution of documents prior to being published.