



⌚ 🚗 🏠 ❤️ |  SILVER CHAIN

CONSUMER PARTICIPATION FRAMEWORK

Contents

Background 3

Acknowledgements.....4

Why Promote Consumer Participation4

Definition of Consumer4

Definition of Consumer Participation5

Principles of Consumer Participation 6

Consumer Participation Framework 6

Processes to Support Consumer Participation..... 9

Action Plan for 2010/11 and 2011/12..... 11

From the Chief Executive Officer



Silver Chain has embarked on an exciting initiative to enhance consumer involvement within the organisation, with the first key deliverable being the development of a Consumer Participation Framework. To develop this document, Silver Chain worked closely with the Health Consumers' Council of WA, Carers WA and feedback was also sought from clients, carers and staff.

This document establishes the legitimacy of consumer participation as an integral part of Silver Chain business. Consumer participation in this framework is about involving the people who experience Silver Chain's services in the planning, delivery, research and evaluation of its services. It includes consumers being involved in decision making about their own care, service planning, service design, policy development and quality improvement.

Without information and feedback from you, our consumers, we would be unable to tailor our services to meet your ongoing needs.

As successful consumer participation requires a commitment from all levels of the organisation, 2011–2012 will see us implementing a number of actions to ensure Silver Chain's consumers have the opportunity to participate and be engaged. For instance, we will be undertaking a review of the annual client survey in conjunction with consumers and implement the resulting and approved recommendations. We will also be reviewing our project management processes and documents to determine if they can be strengthened to enhance consumer participation.

With the support of our consumers, we can work together to achieve Silver Chain's purpose which is to increase the community's capacity to maximise its health and wellbeing.

I would like to thank everyone who was involved in developing the Consumer Participation Framework, and I look forward to continue working with you on our journey to ensure consumer participation becomes an integrated and integral part of Silver Chain business.

CHRISTOPHER H MCGOWAN

Background

Silver Chain Nursing Association (Incorporated) was founded in 1905 and is a not for profit organisation which provides care to people living in metropolitan, rural and remote areas of Western Australia (WA). Today, Silver Chain is one of the largest providers of community, clinical and health care services to the Western Australian community.

Over one hundred years ago, Silver Chain was funded entirely by the community. The decision as to what services were provided was driven solely by consumer need. The need at the time was to support isolated children in WA, and some of the first funds raised in 1905 were used to purchase Christmas hampers and organise a Christmas tree party for struggling Perth families. A century later, the majority of Silver Chain funding comes from government.

To ensure Silver Chain can achieve its purpose of increasing the community's capacity to maximise its health and wellbeing, Silver Chain engages consumers through a variety of mechanisms. In relation to care delivery, Silver Chain consumers are actively involved in their care planning through the development of individual care plans. Consumers are involved through participation in Branch Committees and Advisory Committees. Consumer feedback is also sought through surveys and is encouraged through the feedback process which is

co-ordinated by Silver Chain's Client Liaison Officers. Silver Chain consults consumers in the development of new services and the evaluation of existing services using a number of methods such as surveys, focus groups and interviews.

Silver Chain is embarking on an initiative to enhance our consumer involvement in the planning, delivery, research and evaluation of our services to the community, with the first key deliverable being the development of a Consumer Participation Framework (this document). This document will establish the legitimacy of consumer participation as an integral part of Silver Chain business. This initiative links closely with Silver Chain's Strategic Plan and the strategies included within it. To successfully achieve these strategies, Silver Chain recognises and values that consumer participation plays an important role.

In developing this Consumer Participation Framework, a Steering Committee was established with representatives from Silver Chain, the Health Consumers' Council of WA and Carers WA to provide input into the initial Consumer Participation Framework documentation. The Consumer Participation Framework was then made available to clients, carers, the community, staff, volunteers and other key stakeholders for feedback (November 2010) and input, prior to it being approved by Silver Chain's Executive team (March 2011) and Board (April 2011).



Acknowledgment

Silver Chain wishes to acknowledge the assistance and work of the following organisations that provided invaluable assistance in developing Silver Chain’s Consumer Participation Framework:

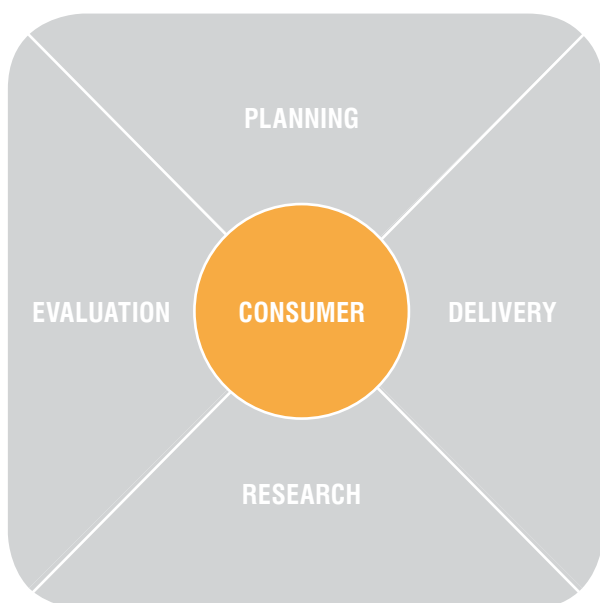
- Domiciliary Care, SA
- Royal District Nursing Service, South Australia
- Royal District Nursing Service, Victoria
- Health Consumers’ Council of WA
- Carers WA
- Aha! Consulting

Why promote consumer participation

Consumers play a vital role in shaping an organisation’s services. Silver Chain recognises that as a health care organisation, consumers should be involved in enhancing and responding to consumer participation because:

- Participation is an ethical and democratic right
- Participation makes service providers more responsive to the needs of consumers
- Participation improves service quality and safety
- Participation improves health outcomes¹

Definition of consumer



Consumer participation within Silver Chain will be sought from consumers in relation to planning, delivery, research and evaluation of the organisation’s services.

In relation to **planning and research**, the consumer is to be defined broadly as potential, current and former users of Silver Chain’s services. They can also be defined as carers or be part of the wider community.

In relation to **delivery and evaluation**, the consumer is to be defined more narrowly as current and former users of Silver Chain’s services and their carers.

¹ THE AUSTRALIAN COUNCIL ON HEALTHCARE STANDARDS (ACHS), THE ACHS EQUIP 4 GUIDE, PART 1 – ACCREDITATION, STANDARDS, GUIDELINES, 2006, SYDNEY, AUSTRALIA.

Definition of consumer participation

Consumer participation in this framework is about involving the people who experience Silver Chain’s services in the planning, delivery, research and evaluation of its services.

This will include consumers being involved in decision making about their own care, service planning, service design, policy development and quality improvement.

Silver Chain has adopted the International Association of Public Participation (IAP2) Spectrum of Public Participation. The Spectrum clearly shows that differing levels of participation are legitimate depending on the goals, timeframes, resources and interest in the decision to be made. The Spectrum (figure 1) is based on five categories of community engagement from “inform” to “empower”, with level of impact increasing.

Inform	Consult	Involve	Collaborate	Empower
CONSUMER PARTICIPATION GOAL				
To provide balanced and objective information to assist consumers in understanding the issue, options and solution	To obtain consumer feedback on analysis, alternatives and/or decisions	To work directly with consumers throughout the process to ensure that their concerns and aspirations are consistently understood and considered	To partner with consumers in each aspect of the decision including the development of alternatives and the identification of the preferred solution	To place final decision-making in the hands of consumers ²
WHAT THIS MEANS FOR THE CONSUMER				
We will keep you informed	We will keep you informed, listen to and acknowledge concerns and provide feedback on how consumer input influenced the decision	We will work with you to ensure that your concerns and aspirations are directly reflected in the alternatives developed and provide feedback on how consumer input influenced the decision	We will look to you for direct advice and innovation in formulating solutions and incorporate your advice and recommendations into the decisions to the maximum extent possible	We will implement what you decide
EXAMPLES OF TECHNIQUES				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fact sheets • Websites 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Surveys • Focus groups • Interviews • Consumer forums • Web sites 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workshops • Active involvement in Care Planning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Advisory Committees • Participation decision-making 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delegated decisions

Figure 1: Consumer Participation Spectrum (based on the IAP2 Spectrum of Public Participation)

² WHILE SILVER CHAIN’S INTENT IS TO AUTHENTICALLY ENGAGE WITH CONSUMERS, CONSUMERS MUST RECOGNISE THAT SILVER CHAIN MUST ADHERE TO ITS GOVERNANCE PRINCIPLES AND POLICIES AT ALL TIMES. THUS THE SILVER CHAIN BOARD RETAINS THE ABSOLUTE DISCRETION TO MAKE A FINAL DECISION ON ANY RELATED ISSUE.

Principles of consumer participation

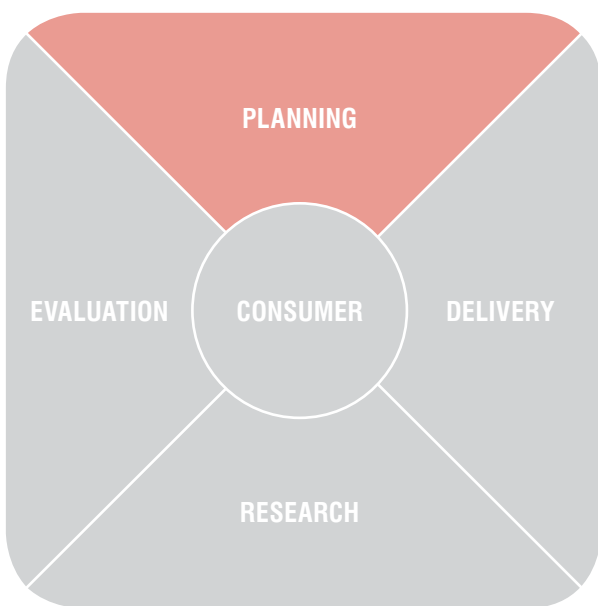
Silver Chain is a value based organisation and the following values guide and underpin everything Silver Chain does, including Silver Chain's Consumer Participation Framework:

- All people are of equal value
- The individuality of people will be respected
- Clients will be given the best possible service
- Excellence and superior performance will be pursued

In addition to these values, Silver Chain has adopted the following principles to be adhered to when involving consumers in Silver Chain's planning, delivery, research and evaluation of its services:

- Consumer participation must be supported and committed to by all levels of the organisation and resourced to ensure that such participation is an integral part of Silver Chain
- Consumer participation must be built from the ground up and this can only be achieved if all participants are open to considering the ideas of consumers and are willing to accept change
- Silver Chain endeavours to involve consumers at the earliest possible time, as this will ensure consumers' concerns and aspirations are reflected in the initiative
- Silver Chain will take active steps to ensure that every consumer who wants to be engaged (including traditionally marginalised groups), has the opportunity to be involved
- To ensure the effectiveness of Silver Chain's Consumer Participation Framework, monitoring and evaluation will take place on a regular basis and will ensure consumers are involved

Consumer participation framework



CONSUMERS IN PLANNING

Consumers in planning are to be defined broadly as potential, current and former users of Silver Chain's services. They can also be defined as carers or be part of the wider community.

Silver Chain has an annual strategic planning cycle and through this cycle, Silver Chain confirms the organisation's direction and identifies the key strategies which must be executed. To uncover the key issues that Silver Chain needs to address, and therefore identify the most appropriate strategies and initiatives, consumers will be involved annually in the strategic planning cycle.

To ensure health service planning is tailored to meet the needs of consumers, Silver Chain's environmental scanning activities will include sourcing information and feedback from internal committees (such as Branch Committees or Advisory Committees) and external organisations such as the Health Consumers' Council of WA, Carers WA, Department of Health (DOH) Health Networks, WA Country Health Service (WACHS) District Health Advisory Councils (DHACs)³, and any other relevant local consumer participation activities.

³ WACHS HAS 24 DHACS WHEREBY COMMUNITY MEMBERS, HEALTH SERVICE CONSUMERS, STAKEHOLDERS AND AGENCY REPRESENTATIVES HAVE THE OPPORTUNITY TO INFLUENCE HEALTH SERVICE POLICY AND DEVELOPMENT AT VARIOUS LEVELS.

CONSUMERS IN DELIVERY

Consumers in delivery are to be defined more narrowly as current and former users of Silver Chain services and their carers.

To build consumers' capacity, and to ensure they are able to be involved in the delivery of Silver Chain services, Silver Chain endeavours to:

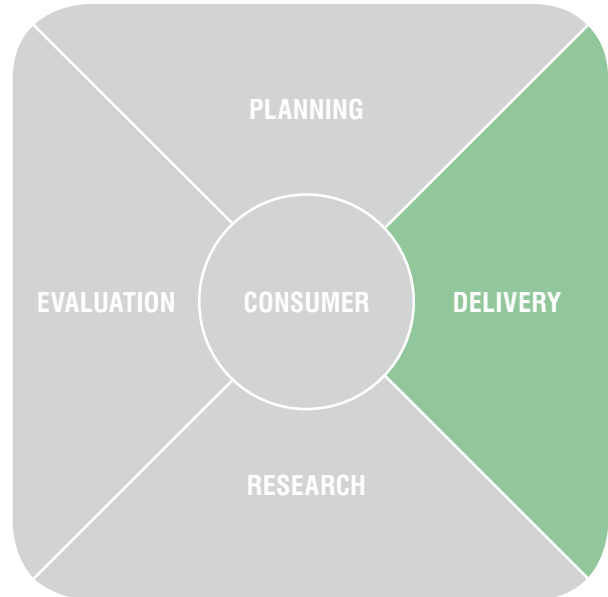
- Keep consumers well informed about their services, rights and responsibilities, choices and how to give feedback
- Provide support to consumers to ensure they are involved and able to provide feedback
- Keep consumers well informed through the dissemination of appropriate information in a timely manner

As a consumer of Silver Chain services, consumers are informed of their rights and responsibilities. This is promoted to staff during their induction to the organisation. Consumers have the right to:

- Be actively involved in planning their care and services
- Receive professional and efficient service and support
- Appeal against any decision made in regard to fees, support or services
- Appoint an independent advocate, family member or friend to represent them and act on their behalf
- Refuse services offered to them
- Contact Silver Chain, or an independent advocate, if they believe they are being treated unfairly or that their privacy and circumstances are not being respected

Silver Chain endeavours to provide consumers with the highest possible level of care through:

- Providing a professional and efficient service
- Treating consumers with respect and dignity
- Listening, responding and assisting consumers in any appeal process
- Actively involving consumers in care planning and support
- Reviewing consumers' care and services both periodically and in response to changes in personal circumstances
- Ensuring consumers remain as independent as possible
- Protecting consumer's privacy (in accordance with Silver Chain's Privacy Policy Statement)



Silver Chain recognises the importance of using a variety of mechanisms so that every consumer who wants to provide feedback, can find a method that suits their needs. Consequently, a number of mechanisms are in place and communicated to consumers to ensure they can provide feedback in relation to service delivery:

- Feedback can be provided through the Silver Chain staff members who visit the client or through the local service centre
- Telephoning Silver Chain's Customer Centre (24 hours a day, seven days a week)
- Through Silver Chain's Client Liaison Officers via the telephone, web, e-mail, letter or face to face
- Writing a letter to the Chief Executive Officer

Feedback through these mechanisms is captured on Silver Chain's Continual Improvement Register which ensures the feedback provided is given consideration and implemented where applicable.



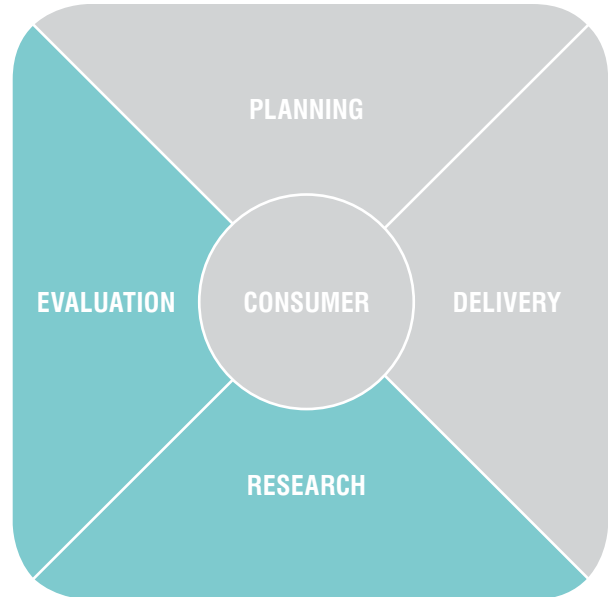
CONSUMERS IN RESEARCH AND EVALUATION

In relation to Research, consumers are to be defined broadly as potential, current and former users of Silver Chain’s services. They can also be defined as carers or be part of the wider community.

Silver Chain’s Research Department undertakes numerous research projects to ensure Silver Chain’s services are relevant, effective and meet consumer needs. It also works to improve and influence the future direction of community and aged care. When undertaking research activities, the Research Department is committed to seeking input utilising a variety of mechanisms from all relevant stakeholders, such as clients, carers, the general public, government agencies, non-government organisations, staff and volunteers. All research projects are approved by Silver Chain’s Human Research Ethics Committee which includes a consumer representative.

In relation to Evaluation, consumers are to be defined more narrowly as current and former users of Silver Chain services and their carers.

Silver Chain’s programs and services are evaluated every three years by Silver Chain’s Research Department. When evaluating Silver Chain’s programs and services, the Research Department is committed to seeking input utilising a variety of mechanisms from all relevant stakeholders, such as clients, carers, the general public, government agencies, non-government organisations, staff and volunteers. This process ensures Silver Chain remains at the forefront of community care provision by providing services that continue to meet the demands of consumers.



Processes to support consumer participation

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITY

Successful consumer participation requires a commitment at all levels of the organisation to ensure that consumers have equal opportunities to participate and be involved. This requires active steps to ensure that consumers have the opportunity to participate and be engaged in terms of planning, delivery, research and evaluation.

All staff, management and participating consumers have a responsibility to ensure consumer participation becomes an integrated and integral part of Silver Chain business. This should be done by ensuring consumer participation is practiced and that the information gained is used to meet Silver Chain's purpose of increasing the community's capacity to maximise its health and wellbeing.

While Silver Chain's intent is to authentically engage with consumers, consumers must recognise that Silver Chain must adhere to its governance principles and policies at all times. Thus the Silver Chain Board retains the absolute discretion to make a final decision on any related issue.

The General Manager, Strategy, has overall responsibility to ensure initiatives for ongoing consumer participation are developed, implemented and evaluated at the organisational level.

The Strategy Unit is available to provide advice and assistance to staff, volunteers and consumers on appropriate participation levels and tools. A collection of tools will be made available to assist staff in implementing meaningful and effective consumer participation activities.





REPORTING AND PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

The General Manager, Strategy, has an overall responsibility for the preparation of a report that will be provided to the Executive and the Board to update them on consumer participation activities. This report will also include reporting against the following performance indicators:

- Percentage of strategic initiatives (detailed in Silver Chain's 1 Year Plan) that include consumer participation in design against the IAP2 Spectrum of Public Participation levels
- Percentage of evaluations (detailed in the Evaluation Plan) that include consumer participation against the IAP2 Spectrum of Public Participation

EVALUATION OF CONSUMER PARTICIPATION FRAMEWORK

To ensure Silver Chain's Consumer Participation Framework is effective an initial evaluation will be held at the end of 2012/2013. This evaluation is to be completed by Silver Chain's Research Department in conjunction with consumers and other applicable stakeholders. An evaluation of the Consumer Participation Framework will then take place every three years as a minimum.

OUT OF POCKET EXPENSES

Silver Chain will provide assistance to consumers for out of pocket expenses incurred through their involvement in consumer participation activities. These activities may include (but are not limited to):

- Transport costs
- Respite costs for carers
- Phone or fax costs
- Stationery

Where consumers incur out of pocket expenses, they will need to provide a receipt and complete a Claim for Reimbursement of Expenses Form.

CONFIDENTIALITY

All consumers involved in Silver Chain consumer participation activities are required to adhere to Silver Chain's Confidentiality Policy.

EDUCATION AND TRAINING

If required, education and training will be provided to interested staff, volunteers and consumers to ensure:

- Active involvement
- To enhance skills and knowledge
- To enable consumers to participate effectively and build capacity

Action plan for 2010/11 and 2011/12

Action	Sponsor
PLANNING	
Embed the involvement of consumers, consumer advocacy groups, Branch Committees and Advisory Committees in the strategic planning cycle.	General Manager Strategy
DELIVERY	
Ensure that the design of new service delivery models include consumers as a stakeholder, where applicable.	General Manager Strategy
RESEARCH AND EVALUATION	
Undertake a review of other organisations to determine how consumers can be more involved in advising on research projects.	General Manager Strategy
Increase the level of consumer input in the evaluation process, which would allow richer data to be collected from consumers.	General Manager Strategy
Undertake a review of the annual client survey in conjunction with consumers and implement approved recommendations.	General Manager Strategy
PROCESSES TO SUPPORT CONSUMER PARTICIPATION	
Link survey findings and agreed actions with the Continual Improvement Register.	General Manager Strategy
In Link Newsletter (consumer newsletter) include regular articles which communicate to consumers how their involvement can or has changed services.	General Manager ACNA
Program / project management processes to be strengthened by the development of a Communications / Engagement Strategy template, which is to be used for each strategic and divisional initiative.	General Manager Strategy
Review project management processes and documents to determine if they can be strengthened to enhance consumer participation.	General Manager Strategy
Complete further work to ensure an effective monitoring framework for the Consumer Participation Framework is in place. This may include the production of a report to the Executive and Board in relation to consumer participation activities in the organisation.	General Manager Strategy
Creation of a consumer participation page on Silver Chain's website to communicate with consumers on how they can be involved.	General Manager Strategy
Creation of a consumer participation page on the intranet which can be used as a resource by staff and volunteers to assist them in ensuring consumer participation becomes an integrated and integral part of Silver Chain business.	General Manager Strategy
Investigate, determine and implement appropriate mechanisms to educate applicable staff, volunteers and consumers in effective consumer participation.	General Manager Strategy
Review FIN-FRM-013 Claim for Reimbursement of Expenses to include consumers.	General Manager Finance



SILVER CHAIN



FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT OUR CONSUMER PARTICIPATION FRAMEWORK CALL 24 HOURS A DAY, 7 DAYS A WEEK.

Telephone (08) 9242 0242

Country callers 1300 650 803
(for the cost of a local call)

Facsimile (08) 9242 0268

Email info@silverchain.org.au

Website www.silverchain.org.au

Silver Chain Nursing Association (Incorporated)
6 Sundercombe Street OSBORNE PARK WA 6017
ABN 77 119 417 018