Community Engagement Information Guide

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Welcome

Partnering with the community to shape meaningful medical research

At Centenary Institute, we believe the most impactful science is created *with* the community, not just *for* it. Our Consumer Partnership Program brings lived experience, curiosity and community insight directly into our research.

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About Centenary Institute

Centenary Institute is an independent medical research institute affiliated with the University of Sydney and Royal Prince Alfred Hospital.

Our researchers focus on understanding the causes of disease and translating discoveries into better prevention, diagnosis and treatment, particularly in areas such as:

- Cancer and immunology
- Inflammation and infection
- Cardiovascular disease
- Eye and metabolic diseases

Community partnership is a vital part of how we do this work.

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Why Community & Consumer Involvement Matters

Scientific excellence is strengthened when research reflects real-world needs. Consumers help us to:

- Ground research in lived experience
- Ask better, more relevant questions
- Improve communication and clarity
- Ensure outcomes matter to patients and families

By working together, we create research that is more inclusive, ethical and impactful.

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Who Are Our Consumers?

Consumers are people from the community who may:

- Have lived experience of a medical condition
- Care for or support someone with illness
- Have a strong interest in medical research and health outcomes

You don’t need a science background - just curiosity, insight and a willingness to share perspectives.

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What Does a Consumer Partner Do?

Consumer partners contribute their voice and experience in ways that may include:

- Providing feedback on research ideas and priorities
- Reviewing plain-language summaries
- Supporting grant applications with community insight
- Helping researchers think about real-world impact
- Acting as ambassadors for research within the community

Each partnership is tailored and collaborative.

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Joining a Research Team

Consumers are matched with research teams based on interests and experience. As part of a research team, you may:

- Meet regularly with researchers to share perspectives
- Learn about the research process and goals
- Contribute skills from your professional or personal background
- Support communication, engagement or dissemination activities

The focus is on mutual learning and respect.

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Time Commitment & Flexibility

We understand that life, health and family come first.
Typical involvement may include:

- Several meetings per year (online, in-person or hybrid)
- Occasional document review or feedback
- Optional attendance at seminars, lab tours or events

Participation is flexible and designed to fit around your availability.

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How Centenary Supports Our Consumers

Centenary Institute is committed to supporting consumer partners through:

- Program coordination and ongoing guidance
- Induction and ongoing training opportunities
- There are two main onboarding providers for training which include Health Consumers NSW and Cancer Council NSW.
- Clear communication and expectations

We value your time, experience and contribution.

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What You'll Gain

Being a consumer partner offers opportunities to:

- Contribute to meaningful medical research
- Learn how science moves from lab to impact
- Connect with researchers and other community members
- Have your voice influence future health outcomes

Many consumers describe the experience as empowering and rewarding.

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Get Involved!

If you are interested in partnering with Centenary Institute researchers, we'd love to hear from you.

Together, we can shape research that truly reflects the needs of our community.

Learn more
Register your interest

Get in touch: communications@centenary.org.au

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Thank You!

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