

Introduction

The Uniting AgeWell Customer and Community Engagement and Participation Framework and Plan has been developed to support the implementation of meaningful customer and community involvement with UA. It describes how UA will partner with customers, families, carers and community in decision making at all levels of the organisation, from planning and policy to individual care and services. The Framework links to the UA Clinical Governance and the Aged Care Diversity Frameworks.

The Uniting AgeWell Board has identified its number one key strategic priority as: ***The quality of life and experience of our customer is at the heart of everything we do***, with outcomes that include:

1. Supporting our customers to be active partners in their care through informed, respectful decision making
2. Engaging with our customers and community to participate in the planning and delivery of services
3. Strengthening customer and staff feedback and response systems to ensure continuous improvement, transparency and organisational learning and growth
4. Investing in our staff, systems and services to meet the current and future needs of customers and enable staff to actively support the customer journey and experience

Principles of customer participation

Participation is based on enabling positive engagement and relationships that reflect the following key principles (DHHS)

- Trust – Participation works best where there is mutual agreement of the process and assessment of the issues under consideration as developed through meaningful relationships.
- Responsiveness – The capacity to undertake participation requires a skilled organisation that benefits from multiple strategies and resources.
- Respect – All participants need to show consideration and value each other as equal contributors.
- Dissemination – What decision has been made and how customers/community-influenced outcomes should be communicated to all those involved.
- Openness – participation must be built from the ground up and will only occur if participants are open to ideas of ‘customers and community’ and willing to change
- Evaluation – Lessons learnt from the participation process should be identified and communicated widely.
- Equal opportunity – At the earliest possible time involve all those affected by the decision, ensuring they have access to information to allow them to effectively participate.
- Shared ownership and accountability – All involved share ownership of the process and decisions and are responsible for monitoring and evaluating the impact and outcomes.
- Advocacy and support – Participation must be supported from the top and resourced so that participation is meaningful for customers and community members.

Standards of participation

Uniting AgeWell commits to the following standards, which will deliver on the strategic outcomes and ensure effective partnerships with our customers and community

1. UA demonstrates a commitment to customer and community engagement, participation and individual choice appropriate to its diverse communities.
2. UA’s customers, and where appropriate their families and carers, have access to evidence-based information and are supported to make informed choices and actively participate in decisions about care and services and their health and wellbeing.
3. UA’s customers and community members are engaged in the planning, development improvement and evaluation of UA’s services and programs.
4. UA’s customers and community are provided with appropriate information and support to build their capacity to fully and effectively contribute to a whole-of-organisation approach.

Key actions

1. **UA demonstrates a commitment to customer and community participation and individual choice appropriate to its diverse communities**
 - › Develop a Customer and Community Participation and Engagement Framework and Plan. Provide resources to support their implementation.
 - › Develop and progressively implement the Customer Experience Strategy, including the Customer Promise and Charter.
 - › Explore opportunities to improve UA's understanding of the diverse needs of our customers and community.
 - › Review the Aged Care Diversity Framework and develop a plan to deliver the strategic requirements, actions and outcomes.
 - › Revise the induction for staff to ensure customer focus and experience is a core component.
 - › Provide staff and volunteers with training to undertake customer-centred care planning and service delivery where appropriate.
2. **UA's customers, and where appropriate their families and carers, have access to evidence-based information and are encouraged to make informed choices and actively participate in decisions about the care, services and their health and wellbeing**
 - › Review the current processes for commissioning, development, review and distribution of customer information to ensure customer and community input and accessibility.
 - › Identify and report on feedback from customers about their ability to actively engage in their care and wellbeing.
 - › Expand the opportunity for customers to partner in care and services through the expansion of the Consumer Directed Care Model trialled in Tasmania.
 - › Monitor the effectiveness of services that support daily living (lifestyle) to ensure they enable individual choice, independence, wellbeing and quality of life.
3. **UA's customers and community members are engaged in the planning, development, improvement and evaluation of UA's services and programs**
 - › Undertake an annual customer experience survey and consider the utilisation of benchmarking companies to undertake this.
 - › Increase the opportunities for customers to provide feedback through implementation of strategies such as postcards, snapshot experience surveys and commercial companies (if appropriate).
 - › Consider the use of customer stories to support the improvement in customer experience.
 - › Review and update the feedback framework, ensuring information on how to provide feedback is available and accessible at sites and programs.
 - › Implement the RiskMan feedback module and develop reporting to be utilised for improvement initiatives at all levels of the organisation.
 - › Consider the inclusion of community members on relevant Board and Operational committees.
 - › Undertake a mapping exercise to understand how customers and community are currently engaged in the planning and delivery of UA's services and develop strategies to improve participation and co-design methodologies.
 - › Consider the findings and recommendations of the Community Engagement and Participation in Aged Care research project and develop an implementation plan.
4. **UA's customers and community are provided with appropriate information and support to build their capacity to fully and effectively contribute to a whole-of-organisation approach**
 - › Explore the opportunities to develop centralised customer community and volunteer coordination, enabling interested members to be trained and supported to engage in various aspects of UA's operations such as committees, development of customer information, undertaking surveys.
 - › Develop systems to ensure volunteers, community and customers are appropriately supported and informed to fully and effectively participate.

Key result areas and outcomes

Standard 1

- › **KRA:1** A Customer and Community Participation and Engagement Framework and Plan is developed and resources allocated for implementation.
July 2018- ongoing
- › **KRA:2** A Customer Experience Strategy and Plan is developed and implemented including the Customer Promise and Charter.
July 2019
- › **KRA:3** A Mapping exercise is undertaken and a report is prepared on current demographic and service diversity needs.
March 2019
- › **KRA:4** A Diversity Committee is established to incorporate CALD, LGBTI, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander customers' diverse characteristics and life experiences.
July 2018
- › **KRA:5** Staff and volunteer induction and training programs incorporate customer-centred care and service delivery where appropriate.
March 2019

Standard 2

- › **KRA:6** Rigorous process relating to the management of information for customers is developed and implemented.
December 2018
- › **KRA:7** Use customer feedback to determine if customers feel able to actively engage in their care and decision-making and use this information for improvement.
March 2019
- › **KRA:8** Expansion of Consumer Directed Care in Residential following current evaluation.
Roll out December 2019
- › **KRA:9** Complete review of lifestyle services and implement recommendations for improvement.
June 18 Progressive implementation

Standard 3

- › **KRA:10** Rigorous customer feedback processes are in place utilising a variety of mediums and feedback is utilised to improve care and services.
Progressive 2018-2019
- › **KRA:11** RiskMan feedback module is implemented and reports developed and utilised.
September 2018
- › **KRA:12** Customer/community participation occurs as part of appropriate UA governing and operational committees and forums.
September 2018
- › **KRA:13** Mapping provides an understanding of UA's current customer and community participation levels and gaps are identified for improvement.
March 2019
- › **KRA:14** Develop a plan to address the findings and recommendations of the Community Engagement and Participation in Aged Care research project.
July 2018

Standard 4

- › **KRA:15** A system is developed to improve the availability, capacity and support for customers, volunteers and community to effectively engage and support UA using a whole-of-organisation approach.
July 2019