

# What is the Community Interest Register?



The SAHMRI/HTSA Community Interest Register is a database of community members who are interested in being involved in health and medical research.

Community members may have:

- experience of specific health conditions (either personally or in caring for others)
- been a 'consumer' of health services
- a general interest in health and medical research topics

Regardless of their background, register members will have observations, thoughts and ideas that bring valuable experience and diverse perspectives to our research.



Community members are provided with information and training in consumer and community engagement to ensure they have the necessary skills to participate in your project.

# Who can use the Register?

Researchers from all partner organisations of Health Translation SA can engage consumers and community members from the Register

There are many ways community members can and should be involved in research across the research life cycle.

Community engagement activities include:

- Informing the design of research studies
- Reviewing grant applications
- Participating in advisory groups
- Assisting to write or review patient information
- Reviewing study tools such as surveys
- Helping disseminate research findings
- Co-presenting at conferences
- Collaborating on the evaluation of research

Using consumers as subjects in research or disseminating results to community is NOT community engagement.

Community members should be reimbursed for their time and contributions to research projects and it is the responsibility of the research team to arrange remuneration. The [SAHMRI Consumer Reimbursement Policy](#) provides guidance.

# Why involve community?



*The Australian Code of Research (2007) states that  
“Appropriate consumer involvement in research should be encouraged and  
facilitated by research institutions and researchers.”*

There is substantial evidence that meaningful consumer and community involvement across all stages of health and medical research is valuable and promotes:

- Increased quality of research
- Improved relevance, ensuring research reflects issues of importance to the community
- Improved translation of research into clinical practice, policy and education

Researchers benefit in many ways from community involvement in research.

# Value & benefits of involving community

## Ethical

**Right to be involved** in the publicly-funded research conducted about them.

Consumer engagement **reduces the power imbalance** between researchers and consumers.

Right to participate in the **planning and implementation of their health care.**

## Organisational

**Increased public confidence** in research through transparency, accountability and credibility of research.

Increased likelihood of **funding** through increased feasibility and improved study design.

Research truly **responding to consumer needs.**

## Individual

### Researcher

**Improved** ethical acceptability, recruitment and retention, cultural appropriateness, validity, dissemination of results to wider audience.

Researchers **gain confidence in work,** develop trusting relationships with community.

### Community Member

Improvement in consumers' **quality of life** through improved translation, **empowerment.**

Increased **sense of purpose** and **giving back** to the community.

Research **capacity building for consumers.**

*[The value and importance of consumer and community involvement in health and medical research \(2020\)](#)*

# How to use the Register?

## Contact HTSA

Researcher to contact HTSA Senior Project Officer (SPO) via [community@sahmri.com](mailto:community@sahmri.com)

Researcher completes & returns Community Engagement Request & other forms.

SPO uploads request details to mailout software.

## Expression of Interest distributed

SPO distributes engagement request to community.

Community members contact researcher directly to express interest in the role.

## Researcher engages community

Researcher communicates with all applicants, reviews & selects suitable community member(s).

Researcher confirms detailed information re: role expectations, reimbursement & other logistics

## Close the loop

SPO contacts researcher to confirm if suitable community member(s) engaged.

Researcher acknowledges & reports community engagement via all relevant channels (e.g. PURE, publications)

# Resources & Support



HTSA and SAHMRI are committed to supporting researchers to undertake meaningful community engagement.

HTSA provides a range of tools and resources to support researchers:

- Online access to forms, templates and policies via the [Community engagement toolkit](#)
- [Community Orientation Guide](#)
- Links to [training opportunities](#) for both researchers and community members
- Access to 1:1 or group information and support from HTSA staff
- Recruitment for engagement opportunities via the [Community Interest Register](#)

Contact Health Translation SA via email - [community@sahmri.com](mailto:community@sahmri.com)