

Victorian Advisory Council on Koori Health (VACKH)

TERMS OF REFERENCE

PURPOSE

VACKH is a strategic partnership between Commonwealth & State Governments & the Victorian Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation (VACCHO) to improve health outcomes for Aboriginal peoples in Victoria. Its role is a primary focus on Government policy and VACCHO's strategic plan relating to Aboriginal health and the implementation of the state and national health strategies and directions, as they impact on the relevant health of Aboriginal people in Victoria.

VACKH carries out its purpose by:

- Engaging in strategic dialogue on key issues relating to Aboriginal health.
- Proposing directions for joint negotiations, planning or other activities occurring on a state wide basis specific to Aboriginal health in Victoria.
- Contributing to and promoting the coordination of Aboriginal health policy, planning, program development and data collection across Commonwealth and State Governments in Victoria.
- Identifying and taking action to resolve issues and problems in the wider system that is barriers to better health outcomes for Aboriginal peoples.
- Providing advice to, and responding to requests from government relating to joint efforts or activities and the roles of respective participating bodies.

The Advisory Council principally focuses on strategies to improve health outcomes that meet the health needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. It concentrates on broad strategic and systemic issues rather than operational matters within individual agencies

MEMBERSHIP

VACKH Core members are:

- CEO of the Victorian Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation (VACCHO)
- Director of the Aboriginal Health Branch, Victorian Department of Health
- Two representatives (Assistant Secretary, Indigenous Rural Health Division and Director, Grant Services Division - Vic/Tas), Commonwealth Department of Health

Each core member will have a supporting staff member that will also attend the meetings.

Guests and/or specialist participants may attend through invitation from the VACKH.

VACKH will convene working groups to carry out tasks on its behalf. The working groups will consist of expert, professional staff on the working group topic/issue and will comprise of Government department staff, VACCHO staff and relevant stakeholders.

VACKH will meet with the Senior Executives of DoH, DHVic and VACCHO yearly and/or as necessary. This will include the:

- Commonwealth Department of Health, Indigenous and Rural Health First Assistant Secretary
- Department of Health Victoria Wellbeing, Integrated Care and Ageing Executive Director
- Victorian Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisations Chair of the Board

The Advisory Council will have a secretariat.

OPERATING GUIDELINES

The Advisory Council will have no formalised legal structure or establishment.

The VACKH Chair will rotate among partners and be appointed for a two-year period.

The Advisory Council involves a viable and independent VACCHO which represents the Aboriginal community controlled health sector.

Each member will be responsible for the costs associated with their participation in the council, including the commitment to allocate resources to fulfil tasks undertaken as members of the Council.

Each VACKH member must submit a written report with updates on activity to the VACKH secretariat one week prior to the meeting.

VACKH meetings:

Will occur bi-monthly however special meetings may be held at other times if necessary. All ordinary meeting will be held at VACCHO unless otherwise specified by the VACKH Chair.

VACKH Senior Executive meetings:

Will occur twice yearly and/or when deemed necessary and must only be convened when:

- VACKH core members have deemed necessary and agreed on a strict agenda
- there is something of high importance to be discussed, authorised or influenced/championed

Working Groups:

- be authorised by VACKH and are accountable to it
- be convened when a job needs to be done and have clear, written terms of reference
- be composed of role holders needed to get a particular job done
- exist for as long as needed to get task done
- will have an appropriate feedback mechanism to VACKH

The VACKH secretariat will be responsible for:

- collecting agenda items from VACKH members 3 weeks prior to meeting

- drafting and circulating an agenda 2 weeks prior to meeting
- recording and circulating minutes and action items within 1 week of the meeting
- administrative and research functions in consultation with each member organisation, as negotiated

The cost of the Secretariat position will be funded by arrangement with the Department of Human Services and the Department of Health Commonwealth, however the position will sit at VACCHO.

All Members have a responsibility to raise a potential conflict of interest, real or perceived, which should be openly discussed at the meeting or with the Chairperson prior to the meeting. The conflict will then be recorded in the minutes.