

Customer and community partnership framework

The framework

This document describes NSW Health Pathology's approach to meaningful and effective participation with people and communities across NSW.

Partnering with communities, customers and staff strengthens our services, system and helps us to deliver our strategic objectives.

This framework brings to life the commitment within our Strategic Plan (Towards 2025) to put people at the heart of everything we do. It aligns to NSW Health's Elevating the Human Experience, the NSW Design Standards and the National Safety and Quality Health Service Standards (partnering with consumers). This is the beginning of our journey to ensure our system is built on care and connection.



We work with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to support truth-telling, reconciliation and self-determination

THERE WILL
BE A TOOLKIT
TO SUPPORT YOU



The options

How are we meaningfully involving people?

Read about the levels of participation on the page 4

DOING AT

DOING FOR

DOING WITH

LED BY

The principles

1 Respectful

We value people as unique contributors and honour their lived experience. We focus on their strengths alongside barriers.

2 Aware

We are aware of power differences and share power. We consider whose needs we serve and whose voices we prioritise.

3 Trustworthy

We take care with the stories and information given to us. We are clear about how this is used. We aim to build trust and relationships through everything we do.

4 Safe

We create environments of physical, emotional, spiritual and cultural safety for feedback, experiences and stories to be shared.

5 Inclusive

We listen widely and deeply to a range of different perspectives, including voices that have been overlooked and undervalued.

Read more about the principles on page 5



The Participation Spectrum

Governments in Australia and internationally are moving away from designing at people and into designing for, at a minimum. The NSW Government Design Standards mandate designing with and for. Designing with people who are intended to benefit from what we do is good practice. It improves community and staff experience by ensuring we do things that work and people can use.



Top-down, clinicians and professionals decide

This can look like:

Rapid decisions under pressure

Making decisions for other people (staff, patients, customers, families) without understanding their views and experiences

Required resources: None beyond existing project resources and governance structures

Human-centred, patient-centred design, consultation

This can look like:

Listening to people with lived experience, staff and customers to understand their needs and experiences

Improving our products, services and systems as a result of that feedback, keeping decision-making within our organisation

Engaging with committees and groups, meaningfully

Required resources: Dedicated resource to facilitate feedback sessions and incorporate feedback

Co-design, participatory design, peer-to-peer research

This can look like:

Partnering with people with lived experience, staff and professionals to learn, design and decide

Sharing power and responsibility with people with lived experience

Supporting people with lived experience into leadership roles (e.g. in governance, evaluation)

Required resources: Specialist facilitation of co-design, payment for community co-designers

Co-production, community-led design, movements

This can look like:

Listening to communities, without an agenda or expectation that we will 'fix' or act in a particular way

Supporting communities to better care for each other (for example, for prevention, end of life care)

Reimagining government's role.

Required resources: Resource to work 'on the ground' in community, funding for initiatives

WHAT DO THE PRINCIPLES LOOK LIKE IN PRACTICE?

Respectful means...

We see people as experts in their personal experiences
 We take lived experience seriously when making decisions about funding and service delivery
 We pay people with lived experience for their expertise and any out of pocket expenses such as parking (policy to come)

Aware means...

We understand power differences and aim to minimise them
 We consider if we are the right people to lead a piece of work (as individuals, as an organisation), and whether uneven power dynamics mean we need to engage a third party facilitator
 We are flexible; projects, processes and ideas can change

Trustworthy means...

We respond to experiences with care and without judgement
 We are honest and clear about how we use people's feedback
 We tell people's stories in their words and do not use words or phrases that are demeaning to them or their communities (this is strengths-based language, which avoids further stigma)

Safe means...

We choose environments that are safe and comfortable for the people we want to work with, not most convenient for us
 We adopt and apply trauma-informed principles to increase safety – such as building relationships and offering choices about how people want to participate
 We ensure that people can come as they are and do not have to change to engage with us. If anything – we as professionals change to better engage with communities, on their terms

Inclusive means...

We ensure our teams match the diversity of the communities we're trying to engage (for example, in Aboriginal projects we aim to have an Aboriginal Lead)
 We aim to work with people who have multiple identities that intersect and produce both resilience and disadvantage – including age, race, class, disability, education, gender and sexuality (this is called 'intersectionality')
 We recognise that all participation is valuable and it doesn't have to be throughout a project, people can drop in and out

References: Bovaird, Tony, and Elke Loeffler. (2014) We're in this together: User and community co-production of public outcomes
 Roper, C., Grey, F., & Cadogan, E. (2018). Co-production: Putting principles into practice in mental health contexts.
 McKercher, K. A. (2020). Beyond Sticky Notes: Co-design for Real
 University of Melbourne. (2020) The Family Violence Experts by Experience Framework: Executive Summary
 Victorian Council of Social Service. (2015) Walk alongside: Co-designing social initiatives with people experiencing vulnerabilities

Our values

We always walk our talk by committing to our RITE values and behaviours.

We treat our patients, partners, customers and each other with respect and dignity – always. We embrace what makes us unique as individuals and communities.

We work together connecting our partners, customers and communities to meaningful answers regardless of who they are or where they live, at every stage of life.

respect
We all deserve it

r

integrity
We are trusted partners

i

We are honest, reliable and accountable. We care about protecting the health, safety and wellbeing of all people who rely on and deliver our services.

t

teamwork
We are one team

e

excellence
We lead the way

We are curious and passionate about making a difference through innovation and excellence. We push boundaries and go above and beyond to strive for the best, every time.