

Going Home Staying Home Monitoring and Evaluation Advisory Group - Terms of Reference -

1 Background

- 1.1 The GSH M&E Strategy will guide a suite of evaluation, program review, and monitoring activities to assess the performance, impact, effectiveness and efficiency of the GSH Reform and Specialist Homelessness Services (SHS) Programs. The Strategy will also provide a strategic framework for alignment and integration with program and performance management, capacity building, and continuous improvement activities and priorities across FACS, NSW Government, the SHS sector, and social policy research.
- 1.2 The purpose of the GSH M&E Strategy is to:
- monitor progress in implementing GSH reforms
 - support SHS contract and service performance management
 - build a robust evidence base to inform policy and operational decisions in the SHS Program
 - meet Expenditure Review Committee (ERC) accountability and reporting requirements
 - inform system and service quality improvement initiatives
 - inform investment priorities and identify opportunities for efficiency
 - inform sector and workforce capacity and capability development.

2 Role of the GSH M&E Advisory Group

- 2.1 The role of the Advisory Group is to facilitate consultation and communication between key stakeholders across government, academia, and the SHS sector. Through this forum, members of the GSH M&E Advisory Group will:
- provide expert and independent advice on the scope, design, and implementation of the activities under the GSH M&E Strategy, including:
 - methodology and data development
 - emerging risks, issues and priorities for investigation
 - policy and operational implications of M&E findings or other emerging evidence
 - opportunities for integration, collaboration, or innovation
 - assist in developing a stakeholder engagement strategy and Continuous Improvement and Communications Plan
 - review and provide feedback on key evaluation and review reports and recommendations
- 2.2 The GSH M&E Advisory Group can also recommend new lines of investigation into relevant findings, gaps, or issues that have not been explicitly addressed in the scope of a given GSH M&E activity, where this is feasible, appropriate, and adds value to the objectives of the M&E activity, or to the M&E Strategy as a whole.

3 Responsibilities of Members

- 3.1 Members of the Advisory Group are expected to:
- contribute adequate time to prepare for meetings and provide feedback on papers
 - apply objectivity and expertise
 - express opinions frankly and pursue independent lines of inquiry, to the extent that ethical, privacy, and confidentiality considerations allow
- 3.2 The GSH M&E Advisory Group has no executive powers. It is an advisory body that has been established to support the development and implementation of the GSH M&E Strategy and reports to the GSH Project Board. The Advisory Group may also make recommendations to the GSH M&E Project Control Group, an internal group responsible for overseeing the implementation of the GSH M&E Strategy.
- 3.3 The GSH M&E Advisory Group will work in consultation with the FACSAR Independent Advisory Committee (IAC). The FACSAR IAC will be engaged as required to provide independent technical advice on the methodology and rigour of the M&E Strategy.
- 3.4 Working groups consisting of selected Advisory Group members may be established as required to provide specialised advice or progress discrete pieces of work.
- 3.5 Members of the Advisory Group will act in accordance with the NSW Government Boards and Committees Guidelines (July 2013), which can be viewed at:
- http://www.dpc.nsw.gov.au/data/assets/pdf_file/0020/154127/2013-170983_NSW_Government_Boards_and_Committees_Guidelines.pdf

4 Responsibilities of the Chair and Deputy Chair

- 4.1 An independent member of the Advisory Group will be appointed to the role of Chair. In undertaking this role, the Chair will:
- Ensure that the Group performs its functions, acting within any relevant statutory powers, legal obligations and complying with policies relevant to the entity (including whole of government policies),
 - Facilitate the conduct of meetings to allow frank and open discussion,
 - Ensure individual members make an effective contribution,
 - Facilitate the flow of information to members and stakeholders,
 - Liaise with the relevant Ministers and government executives on behalf of members, and;
 - In some circumstances, provide input into the nomination, selection and recruitment process for new members.
- 4.2 An independent Deputy Chair will be appointed to undertake the role of interim Chair in the event that the Chair is not available to facilitate a meeting of the GSH M&E Advisory Group. The Deputy Chair may also provide advice or support to the Chair in performing the duties of the Chair described in Section 4, as negotiated and agreed between the two parties.
- 4.3 In recognition of the time and expertise required to undertake the additional duties and responsibilities of the Chair and Deputy Chair, the members appointed to these roles will be remunerated in accordance with the Classification and Remuneration Framework for NSW Government Boards and Committees (Dec 2012).

5 Membership of the M&E Advisory Group

- 5.1 GSH M&E Advisory Group members will have a broad range of skills and expertise, including policy, operational, content and academic expertise.
- 5.2 Membership of the M&E Advisory Group will consists of representatives from the following member organisations:
- Homelessness NSW
 - Yfoundations
 - DV NSW
 - NCOSS
 - NSW Federation of Housing Associations
 - GSH Panel of Experts members (x 2) with evaluation or academic research expertise in homelessness
 - Consumer representatives (x2)
 - NSW Treasury
 - NSW Department of Premier and Cabinet
 - FACS Strategic Reform and Policy
 - FACS Programs and Service Design
 - FACS Districts (1 x Regional, 1 x Metro)
 - FACS Corporate Services
- 5.3 Member organisations will be responsible for nominating delegates to represent their organisation at meetings of the Group.
- 5.4 Non-members may be invited to attend on an as-needs basis where their input is required.

6 Independent Oversight

- 6.1 The NSW Ombudsman will attend meetings of the GSH Monitoring and Advisory Group as an independent observer to ensure that the advisory process is fair and transparent.
- 6.2 The NSW Ombudsman may provide independent oversight of specific Monitoring and Evaluation Strategy activities, to ensure that they use transparent processes and are governed objectively.
- 6.3 The NSW Ombudsman will receive and respond to feedback received directly from interested individuals and organisations on the implementation of the GSH reforms, and may provide advice to the Advisory Group on the basis of this feedback.

7 Meetings and Secretariat

- 7.1 The number of members that constitutes a quorum is at least half (5 or more) of the non-government members of the Group.
- 7.2 Costs associated with convening meetings of the Advisory Group will be funded by FACS.
- 7.3 FACSAR and the GSH Reform Team will provide secretariat support and coordinate all meetings and the distribution of agendas, minutes and papers.

- 7.4 Papers will be approved by the Chair and circulated at least five working days prior to meetings. Minutes will be circulated within four weeks of the meeting.

8 Dispute Resolution

- 8.1 Members of the Advisory Group will work collaboratively and seek to resolve differences by way of open negotiation.
- 8.2 All efforts will be made to resolve contentious issues between parties at Director level. If issues cannot be resolved at this level advice will be sought from the Project Control Group and/or relevant Executive Directors.

9 Conflicts of interest

- 9.1 Advisory Group members will provide written declarations of potential or perceived conflicts of interest at a minimum annually. The Chair and other Advisory Group members will determine the appropriate course of action to address conflicts of interest as they arise.
- 9.2 Advisory Group members will declare any conflicts of interest in relation to specific items of business at the commencement of each meeting. These will be minuted.
- 9.3 Where members or observers at Advisory Group meetings are deemed to have a real or perceived conflict of interest, the Chair will make a determination on the appropriate course of action.
- 9.4 Where the Chair is the subject of the conflict of interest, an interim Chair will be appointed to lead the discussion on the relevant item(s) of business.

10 Confidentiality

- 10.1 The Group will operate with the intent that evaluation findings should be made available publically.
- 10.2 As a general practice, participants in evaluations will also receive feedback about their contribution.
- 10.3 Certain content brought before the GSH M&E Advisory Group for consideration may be confidential. Members submitting papers or raising issues for consideration are responsible for making a recommendation to the Chair that the matter be treated confidentially, where appropriate.
- 10.4 When the GSH M&E Advisory Group agrees that a matter should be treated confidentially, the group will also agree when, how, and what content can be disseminated or communicated to parties outside of the group.

11 Terms and Timeframes

- 11.1 The Advisory Group will meet, at a minimum, quarterly. Meetings will be primarily scheduled around key milestones and deliverables.
- 11.2 The terms described above are effective from their endorsement to November 2015, at which time they will be reviewed by FACS. Terms of reference beyond this date will be renegotiated with the M&E Advisory Group member organisations subsequent to their review.