



Consumer and Community Participation Fact Sheet M06: Consumer and Community Researchers

What are they?

Consumers and community members who have been trained to work with researchers to conduct research. This is high level involvement (see Fact Sheet T03).

What role will they have?

Consumer and community researchers can;

- Have input into the development of methodologies.
- Carry out interviews with other consumers and community members.
- Co-facilitate focus groups.
- Analyse results of interviews.
- Go through consenting procedure (training is essential for this).

**See Fact Sheets
M02 - M12 for help
in deciding which
method you will use.**



Why use consumer and community researchers?

- Research participants may feel more comfortable with members of their own community.
- Consumer and community researchers can provide insight into the experience and implications of living with a condition or disability.
- Consumer and community researchers can help researchers understand a community's response to research findings.

Practical considerations

- Training and support that will be required if the consumer and community researchers haven't done these activities before. This may require extra funding and/or support.
- Develop draft Terms of Reference and a plain language summary (see Fact Sheet M11) of the research, be prepared to accept changes from the stakeholders and be upfront about items that are not open to negotiation.
- Decide what method you will use to achieve the level of participation you are aiming for (Fact Sheets M02 - M12).
- Consider any legal or ethical considerations; will police clearances or working with children checks need to be completed?
- Budget for expenses/honorarium/payments. It is important to be clear about payments for the consumer and community researcher at the beginning of the project.

The Nature, Understanding and Impact of Family and Domestic Violence in Five African Refugee Background Communities in Perth project was a community-initiated participatory action research project. It drew together a researcher from The University of Western Australia, government and non-government agencies and members from five African refugee background communities. A steering committee was formed and included one member from each community as well as members from each of the stakeholder groups. Representatives from the five communities were equal partners across the entire research process including research design, interview guide development, research documentation, and input and feedback on draft research reports. Importantly 14 members of the five communities collected the data for the research from members of their community using in-depth interviews after receiving training in qualitative research. The training and experience the interviewers gained had the added advantage of building research capacity in the communities.