Background
The Health Consumers’ Council supports health consumers on a number of local and state committees.

Most Health Consumers’ Council representatives are not paid for their participation. The Health Consumers’ Council believes that as a minimum consumer representatives must be reimbursed their out of pocket expenses.

Definitions
Health Consumers’ Council representatives are members of a group, however titled (eg committee, working group, Board, focus group, etc.), considering health policy, planning, implementation, service and review.

A Health Consumers’ Council representative is a person who brings a consumer perspective to matters under consideration and takes part in the decision-making process. This includes:
- Presenting how consumers may feel and think about certain issues
- Contributing the consumer experience
- Proving information about relevant issues affecting consumers

Health Consumers’ Council representatives should be an active member of a consumer organisation.

Rationale
HCC endorses the principle of payment to Health Consumers’ Council representatives as an acknowledgement of their expertise and the value of the consumer input.

Remuneration/reimbursement puts the Health Consumer Council representative on a similar footing to other participants and makes the consumer opinion as valuable as that of others.

HCC does not want the issue of payment to become a barrier to consumer participation and accepts the participation, not payment, is the key issue.

Policy
HCC considers the importance of acknowledgement of consumer expertise and the value of consumer input should be rewarded and thus recognised by health agencies.

Health Consumers’ Council representatives have the right to accept or refuse payment for their participation.

Policy Implementation
HCC will promote this policy through Health Matters, the Department of Health and health-related agencies.
The Council, when approached by agencies for participants to sit on health-related bodies, will encourage these agencies to consider payment for the Health Consumers’ Council representative(s).

HCC will advocate for consumer payments.

**Recommended Payment Guide**

Recommended rates will include recognition of effort and out-of-pocket expenses similar to the model of the Mental Health Consumers Participation:

- Minimum rate for first hour (or part thereof) $30.00
- Minimum rate for two (2) hours (or part thereof) $60.00
- Hourly rate after first two hours $30.00

**Policy to be reviewed:** May 2003  
**Reviewed:** 2003  
**Reviewed:** 2008  
**Reviewed:** Oct 2011  
**Review Again:** Oct 2013