

# Remuneration and reimbursement of consumers

## Position Statement

Chronic Pain Australia is the national voice for the 3.6million Australians living with chronic pain. Chronic Pain Australia is a non-profit, non-government, registered organisation founded in 2001. The organisation is driven by a group of committed volunteers advocating to reduce the social and economic barriers to those who live with chronic pain.

Consumer-centred care and consumer engagement are supported by the Australian Charter of Healthcare Rights, which acknowledges consumers have the right to have our say and be heard; to be engaged in the decisions about our individual healthcare; and in health policy development and service planning, implementation and evaluation. Chronic Pain Australia recommends that consumers invited to engage with health services, researchers or research organisation should be remunerated for their contribution and reimbursed for expenses.

Early in the process, it is useful to discuss with consumers how (or whether) they would like to be paid or acknowledged for their contributions. Ideally, the process of payment should be simple and easy to navigate. Consumers should also be given clear information on how to get assistance should they need it.

**It is also important that consumers are aware that any payments they receive may affect their taxable income, pension or benefits. It is good practice to recommend that consumers get advice if they are unsure if payments will affect their tax status.**

## Consumer remuneration and reimbursement

Chronic Pain Australia recommends the following **2021-22 payment rates** for remuneration of health consumer representatives:

<p>Consumer representatives on ongoing, regular committees, such as safety and quality committees, consumer advisory committees, councils or Boards.</p>	<p>\$211.58 per meeting 4 hours and under * \$423.14 per meeting 4 hours and over * (*includes pre-reading and travel time)</p>
<p>Consumers engaged in less formal ways eg. focus groups, reviewing patient information brochures.</p>	<p>\$45.26 per hour including preparation time</p>

These rates should be increased by 2.5 percent annually. Consumers should also be reimbursed for any costs related to their engagement (such as):

- parking
- travel expenses
- printing costs
- childcare

Fees and reimbursements should also be paid when:

- consumers incur costs to attend meetings that are subsequently postponed or cancelled (such as costs involved in arranging respite or child care).
- consumers arrive at the designated meeting place and have not been adequately informed of the postponement, cancellation, or change of location of the meeting.