



Terms of Reference

1. Purpose

The Council of Australian Therapeutic Advisory Groups (CATAG) aims to improve medicines management and use within the framework of the National Medicines Policy as it applies to clinical practice in Australian public hospitals and at transitions of care within the public sector and wider community. CATAG promotes the equitable, safe, cost-effective and quality use of medicines, with the objective of realising the best possible health outcomes for all Australians.

2. Accountability

CATAG is an independent entity, with current funding provided by the Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care (the Commission) and hosted by NSW Therapeutic Advisory Group (TAG) (due to its status as an incorporated entity able to receive funds). As such, CATAG reports quarterly to the Commission on performance according to its Services Agreement and periodically reports to the Management Committee of NSW TAG regarding its performance and associated finances.

CATAG will participate in grant funding opportunities from time to time and will be accountable to the funding organisation only for the funded activity.

3. Goals

The goals of the CATAG are:

1. To provide expert, consensus-based and focused collaboration with new and existing strategic partners across Australia for the purpose of maximising influence on clinical practice to ensure a quality use of medicines approach is considered in both policy and practice.
2. To strive towards equity of patient access to safe, cost-effective and affordable medicines nationally through the development of resources to guide decision-making processes at the local and jurisdictional levels.
3. To facilitate and support members, through an effective communication and information sharing network, to ensure a strategically high-level cohesive approach to therapeutic issues of national importance.

4. Membership

CATAG is a collaborative national organisation made up of representatives from all Australian State and Territory Therapeutics Advisory Groups or equivalents and jurisdictional health departments. The CATAG committee comprises representatives from the following organisations:

- Canberra Health Services
- Clinical Excellence Commission (CEC)
- NSW Therapeutic Advisory Group (NSW TAG)
- Northern Territory Drugs and Therapeutics Committee
- Queensland Health Medicines Advisory Committee (QHMAC)
- South Australian Medicines Advisory Committee (SAMAC)
- Tasmanian Medicines Access and Advisory Committee (TMAAC)
- Victorian Therapeutics Advisory Group (VicTAG)
- Western Australian Therapeutics Advisory Group (WATAG)

Each organisation is responsible for nominating their representation. Two representatives from each jurisdiction are nominated as formal voting members. Representatives must have skills and expertise related to medicines governance, medicines health technology assessment, evidence-based medicine or quality use of medicines and may be clinical specialists, pharmacologists, pharmacists and nurses.

Other invitees (advisors), with specific expertise may be nominated on an annual basis. These invitees will not be entitled to vote.

4.1 Appointments

The Chairperson is appointed through a nomination process by members of CATAG for a two-year term. An additional year may supplement this two-year term (2 years + 1 additional year) when agreed by the majority of members. With the approval of the CATAG membership, chairing may be shared within a jurisdiction. Where possible, chairing should be rotated through all jurisdictions.

4.2 Appointment of proxies

Members are able to nominate a proxy with knowledge of medicines issues within their jurisdiction to attend CATAG meetings in their absence. Proxies are appointed by, and at the discretion of, the State and Territory Advisory Group or equivalent.

4.3 Length of membership

Jurisdictional representation on CATAG and the duration thereof is determined by the respective jurisdiction.

4.4 Temporary Vacancies

Temporary vacancies may be filled at the discretion of the Chairperson.

4.5 CATAG Executive Committee

The Executive consists of three members: the current Chair, the previous Chair and a representative from the hosting organisation (NSW TAG). The Executive will meet to discuss CATAG management issues out of session when deemed necessary.

5. Secretariat

The Coordinator and the Chairperson are responsible for the management of the Secretariat and coordination of CATAG's activities. Further, the CATAG Executive Committee is expected to provide leadership to the Secretariat.

The Coordinator shall be an *ex-officio* member of the CATAG committee. The Coordinator shall be entitled to receive notice of and to attend CATAG meetings, and be heard at such meetings, but will not be entitled to vote. The Coordinator shall act as the CATAG Committee Secretary and record and prepare minutes of meetings. The CATAG Committee shall delegate the day-to-day functions of the committee to the Coordinator, who shall report regularly to the Chairperson.

6. Management arrangements

CATAG's *Coordinator* is responsible to the:

- CATAG Chairperson on operational matters and will arrange a regular meeting schedule to seek guidance and support to ensure CATAG activities are progressed in a timely manner, and
- Hosting organisation (NSW TAG) on administrative, and human resource support matters.

When required, management of CATAG and the CATAG Coordinator may be referred to and considered by the Executive Committee (see 4.5).

Project Officers:

Where CATAG has been funded to deliver additional QUM activities through a grant process, CATAG may seek to employ additional Project Officers. Those project officers report to the CATAG coordinator and are responsible for the day-to-day management and delivery of project activities.

Project Oversight

Where CATAG has been funded to deliver additional QUM activities through a grant process, CATAG will develop an Expert Advisory Group to guide the project activities and progress. The Project Officer will provide reports of the project milestones to the full CATAG committee.

7. Funding

Current funding is provided by the funder (the Commission) on a financial year basis (1 July to 30 June), subject to a Services Agreement in which CATAG funds are managed and held by the hosting organisation (NSW TAG).

To supplement funding and further CATAG's priorities, CATAG will also seek competitive grant funding relevant to quality use of medicines.

8. Meetings

8.1 Regular Meetings

CATAG meets regularly with at least 5 meetings in a twelve month period. Meetings are virtual, with a minimum of 1 face-to-face meeting a year. A schedule of meetings is prepared by the Coordinator for each new financial year, and tabled for adoption at the last meeting of the

financial year. Members will be advised by the Coordinator of any variation from the approved schedule at least one month in advance of the scheduled meeting.

8.2 Other meetings

Additional meetings may be convened, or scheduled meetings may be cancelled, deferred or rescheduled at the discretion of the Chairperson and Coordinator. Members will be advised in advance by the Coordinator of any variation from the approved schedule.

8.3 Attendance

It is expected that CATAG members attend (either virtually or in person) at least three of the five CATAG meetings in each calendar year. Members unable to attend a meeting should send a proxy to attend the meeting and table an apology.

Up to two members from each jurisdiction are supported to attend face-to-face meetings.

Guest speakers may be invited as necessary.

A senior representative/s from the funder (the Commission) shall be invited to attend, observe and participate in proceeding of a CATAG meeting in a non-voting capacity. If required, the Chairperson may request the Commission representative/s to leave the meeting room during confidential discussion or voting. Attendance at meetings is at the discretion of the Commission.

8.4 Conflicts of Interest

Each member of CATAG shall declare any perceived, potential or actual conflict or duality of interest in matters of concern to the committee (or sub-committee). CATAG members shall:

- complete and sign a Declaration of Conflicts of Interest at the beginning of each financial year.
- alert the Chairperson of any other conflicts of interest that may arise during the course of a meeting.

Nominated proxies shall complete and sign a Declaration of Conflicts of Interest at their first meeting attended in each financial year.

Invited regular guests or attendees shall complete and sign a Declaration of Conflicts of Interest at their first meeting attended in each financial year.

Where a perceived, potential or actual conflict of interest has been declared, the Chairperson shall determine how to proceed and advise the meeting accordingly.

8.5 Quorum

The quorum exists when five jurisdictions have at least one representative present, including the Chairperson or their delegate.

8.6 Chairing of Meeting

The nominated Chairperson will chair CATAG meetings. If the Chairperson is unable to attend a meeting, they will nominate an Acting Chairperson from the CATAG membership.

8.7 Resolutions

Wherever possible, all members should be represented when resolutions are to be taken. There must be an opportunity for discussion by all members for any matters requiring resolution. Resolutions will generally be reached by consensus. When necessary, a vote may be taken (see 8.8). When a quorum is not present (see 8.5), decisions shall not be final but will require confirmation at a later meeting or by email (see 8.9) at which a quorum is present.

8.8 Voting

The Chairperson may call for a vote on any matter requiring resolution and may have the vote taken again if there is doubt as to the result, or to have the vote counted. Voting will normally be by voice or show of hands but may be by secret ballot if requested by any member. Each jurisdiction has two votes and resolutions will be passed if more than eight votes are counted in the affirmative. In the case of an equality of votes, the Chairperson shall have a casting vote, which shall be cast in favour of the *status quo ante*.

8.9 Out-of-session resolutions

To resolve some matters in a timely manner, the Chairperson may elect to determine the CATAG committee's position by way of out-of-session vote. A written proposal(s) will be circulated to members, usually by email and a time and date will be specified for responses to be returned. A resolution shall only be made if supported by a majority of at least five responding jurisdictions. (Voting will be valid only if a minimum of five jurisdictions responds). In case of an equality of votes, the Chairperson may have a casting vote which shall be cast in favour of the *status quo ante*, or the Chairperson may elect to defer the matter for full discussion at the next regular meeting. Members will be advised promptly of the outcome of any out-of-session voting and consequent resolutions.

8.10 Agenda

Preparation of the Agenda for each meeting shall be prepared by the Coordinator and Chairperson. Any member may submit items of business to be placed on the agenda. The agenda of regular meetings shall include business requiring discussion or action, including new and unfinished business, subcommittee reports including minutes and other information, any other business, correspondence, and other items for information or noting. The agenda for regular meetings shall be made available to members by e-mail at least seven days before each meeting.

Copies of all documents associated with a meeting shall accompany the agenda or be tabled at the meeting. Documents for information or noting may be circulated to members upon receipt and in advance of a meeting, to be noted during the meeting proceedings.

8.11 Minutes

Draft Minutes shall be distributed to members no later than ten working days after the meeting for which they were recorded. Minutes must include the date, time and place of meeting. Details of attendance and apologies must be recorded accurately. Items will be written in the order in which they appear in the agenda, irrespective of the order in which they were discussed during a meeting.

Resolutions shall be recorded accurately and numbered sequentially for each calendar year. Any actions to be taken shall also be recorded, together with the initials of the member(s) responsible for completing the action.

Minutes shall be confirmed at the next scheduled CATAG meeting with a quorum and filed in the record of CATAG Minutes.

9. Communication

Usually, committee correspondence will be by electronic means. A database of CATAG members' contact details shall be maintained by the Coordinator.

10. Confidentiality

Non-ratified working documents or papers marked 'confidential' are for the exclusive use of the CATAG committee members and are not to be copied or circulated unless authorisation is provided by the Secretariat.

11. Annual summary of activities

The Coordinator shall prepare an Annual summary of activities with the Chairperson. This shall be provided each year to CATAG members and published on the CATAG website. Financial details of the organisation are available by contacting the hosting organisation (NSW TAG).

A work plan will be developed and agreed with any funding organisation. Funded activities against that workplan will be regularly reported back to the funding organisation.

12. Review

The committee shall review its performance and Terms of Reference at least biennially; otherwise, as deemed necessary. Review and changes to the Terms of Reference shall be considered and endorsed by the CATAG membership prior to adoption.

For more information

Council of Australian Therapeutics Advisory Groups

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www.catag.org.au

[CATAG Terms of Reference, Final endorsed version 8, 14 November 2023]