

Frequently Asked Questions

headspace Bankstown Family Reference Group

1. What is the headspace Family Reference Group?

The Family Reference Group is a group of volunteers who may have had a family member or friend access headspace or other mental health services. They consult with headspace Bankstown on a variety of topics and issues and are involved in a number of local and national projects.

The reference group aims to give family members and friends the opportunity to provide input into the strategic direction of headspace Bankstown, headspace programs and services.

The reference group will consist of:

- All members must have direct experience with supporting a family member or friend with mental health issues
- A mix of ages and genders
- Representation from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families and friends
- Representation from diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds
- A diversity of family type
- All members must have easy and regular access to the internet and phone

2. What does being in the reference group involve?

Members of the Family Reference Group will have the opportunity to be involved in a number of ways including:

1. As consultants for headspace Bankstown by providing feedback to all areas of the organisation in a variety of ways
2. Local and national projects
3. Media spokespeople for headspace Bankstown local centre
4. Marketing, Promotion and Community Awareness activities
5. Resource development
6. Education and training for both staff and young people
7. Evaluation and Research
8. Policy advocacy

By providing a variety of activities it is hoped that it will provide the opportunity to draw on people's strengths, abilities and capabilities, while also appealing to a broad range of interests.

3. What's the time commitment?

The duration of membership of Family Reference Group Members is two years or as otherwise agreed. There are in-person meetings held regularly (e.g. bi-monthly) or as agreed to by the group, located at the Bankstown headspace centre, with capacity to host online if more accessible.

In between meetings and events, contact will be maintained through Facebook, email, and WhatsApp. There will be an expectation that you participate regularly in group discussions. This is a volunteer role, and although you may be paid for some of the events, it is expected that you will also volunteer your time for subcommittees, projects and other events.

4. Can you tell me more about the activities that I can be involved in?

There are several activities that Family Reference Group members have the opportunity to be involved in. You do not need to have previous experience in order to participate in any of these.

MEDIA SPOKESPEOPLE AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

What is it? Family Reference Group members are supported to become active community advocates for youth mental health and for the involvement of family. The goal is to raise awareness of youth mental health, encourage young people to seek help early and to educate the broader community in matters of wellbeing. Members may be involved in community development activities such as organising events, or in community education activities, or may be allocated as media spokespeople on the issue of youth mental health. Media Spokespeople may be requested to speak at public functions or at local schools, mental health forums and conferences.

LOCAL AND NATIONAL PROJECTS

What is it? With support from headspace Bankstown, members of the Reference Group may have the opportunity to lead specific projects. We encourage members to develop their own projects where they see a need. Interested members will be required to submit a project proposal; feasibility will be assessed by a panel of headspace Bankstown employees.

INVOLVEMENT IN FOCUS GROUPS AND CONSULTATIONS

What is it? From time-to-time, focus groups are held around specific topics to help headspace decide on direction of its activities and resources to be developed. The purpose is to ensure that the interests and opinions of family are represented in all aspects of headspace activity.

When do they meet? These discussions may take place at in-person meetings or may occur between meetings via online forums or over the phone.

EVALUATION, RESEARCH AND POLICY ADVOCACY

What is it? Members may have the opportunity to work with the evaluation and research teams at headspace Bankstown. Topics for research and evaluation will depend on the need at the time.

When do they meet? A subcommittee or working group will be established to work in these areas. Members will be notified and asked for expressions of interest through email. Communication will be mostly through online forums and email.

6. What costs are involved?

headspace Bankstown will cover the following costs:

- Travel costs to attend interstate meetings and events
- Accommodation while attending interstate meetings and events

If you have any further questions, please contact headspace Bankstown at:

headspace.bankstown@flourishaustralia.org.au, 02 9393 9669 or visit us at Suite 1, Ground Floor East, 41-45 Rickard Road NSW 2200.