

SAHMRI/HTSA COMMUNITY INTEREST REGISTER

Summary of Survey Results

In May 2021, community members on the SAHMRI/HTSA Community Interest Register (CIR), along with researchers who had engaged with the Register were surveyed to learn more about their experiences using and being part of the register.

The intent of this survey was to identify whether the communication, engagement and learning opportunities provided through the Register are meeting the needs of both community members and researchers involved and determine where improvements could be made. 17 community members who are registered on the CIR and 4 researchers who had utilised the Register responded to the survey.

The feedback received was generally positive in tone and no significant risks were identified with continuing the current practice relating to management of the CIR.

COMMUNITY MEMBER SURVEY

Expectations of signing up

65% of respondents reported that the expectations they had of being on the Register had been either met or partially met and their reasons for joining the Register could be categorised under three primary motivations, namely to participate in research projects, be helpful/contribute to change, and be informed/stay up to date with SAHMRI research activities.

Frequency of communication

All respondents were either satisfied with the frequency of communication as is, or preferred more regular communication, across all three types of communication (webinars, research engagement opportunities and events). Respondents suggested several potential improvements to the Register, including requests for more regular communication as well as opportunities for researchers to better understand the role of consumer/community participants.

Introductory Information Session

CIR members are offered the opportunity to participate in an introductory information session, which is offered twice yearly. 35% of respondents had attended an introductory session (via video-conferencing platforms due to COVID-19 restrictions). The majority of responses indicated no improvements were required to the introductory session. Suggestions for improvement included preference for face to face sessions where possible, hearing directly from researchers about their experiences with community engagement, and hearing results from completed projects where community engagement had been valuable. 82% of respondents indicated an interest in attending additional information sessions.

Engagement with Projects

46% of respondents reported having been involved with a project or engagement opportunity through the CIR, whilst others reported they were yet to identify an opportunity relevant to their interests and experience. This reinforces feedback provided elsewhere in the survey supporting an increase to the number of engagement opportunities made available through the Register.

Respondents who had been engaged with a project reported they were satisfied with the fit of the recruitment, suggesting that current recruitment processes are meeting community member needs. Positive aspects of the recruitment process were reported to include good communication, effective time management, helpful staff to support consumers, and the opportunity to meet a diverse range of researchers. One suggestion for improvement was to offer additional advocacy training.

RESEARCHER SURVEY

Of the four researchers who responded to the survey, three provided very positive feedback about their experience engaging community members through the CIR. All respondents had engaged multiple consumers through the Register and three were satisfied with the process for the recruitment and the resulting suitability of the community member being engaged. Respondents were highly complimentary about the process of using the CIR and of the contribution of the community members, noting positive experiences regarding skill alignment and relevant experience of consumers, and of the support from SAHMRI/HTSA staff. One respondent suggested they would have liked further information about the CIR structure and membership prior to using the Register.

OUTCOME & RESPONSE TO FEEDBACK

A communications plan is under development, to guide efforts to increase to the frequency and relevance of communications sent to CIR members. This will include promoting the CIR to researchers to build engagement opportunities as well as initiatives to increase the capacity of researchers to understand consumer/community roles in research and meaningfully partner with consumers.

The HTSA website is being updated with new resources targeted towards researchers and consumers, as well as linking to external learning opportunities. SAHMRI is also progressing initiatives to support researchers undertaking consumer and community engagement.