



Australian Government
Department of Infrastructure
and Regional Development



Health Advisory Groups - Christmas Island and the Cocos (Keeling) Islands

Request for Expressions of Interest

May 2017



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Introduction

The Christmas Island and the Cocos (Keeling) Islands communities benefit from a high quality health system, which includes a doctor's surgery and eight-bed hospital on Christmas Island, two health clinics on the Cocos (Keeling) Islands, dentist services, allied health services, accident and emergency care, and community health services.

In addition, medical specialists visit the islands on a regular basis, including a general physician, ophthalmologist, paediatrician and radiographer.

The health system is operated by the Indian Ocean Territories Health Service (IOTHS), with funding provided by the Department of Infrastructure and Regional Development (the Department).

Senior personnel in the IOTHS, located on island, make decisions on the delivery of health services, including the type of services available, frequency and nature of visiting specialists, and the future direction of health care.



Image 1: Entrance to the Christmas Island Hospital

Opportunity

To support the continued provision of high quality health services, Senator the Hon Fiona Nash, Minister for Local Government and Territories, announced the establishment of two new community-based Health Advisory Groups (Advisory Groups), one each on Christmas Island and the Cocos (Keeling) Islands.

The Advisory Groups provide the opportunity for the community to share information and experiences, and provide advice to the IOTHS on:

- services offered, including gaps or areas which may require additional support;
- risks which may arise in the provision of health services;
- arrangements to best meet cultural needs;
- optimal use of IOTHS facilities;
- community engagement activities;
- emerging needs of the community, such as support for aged care and mental health;
- lessons learnt from other areas of remote medicine to support future planning; and
- how the IOTHS can best meet community needs.

Each Advisory Group will have six members, including the Administrator of the Territories of Christmas Island and the Cocos (Keeling) Islands (the Administrator) as Chair. Membership is expected to be diverse and reflect the age, gender and cultural characteristics of the islands. The Health Services Manager of the IOTHS will attend Advisory Group meetings in an ex-officio capacity to provide factual and contextual advice. The Advisory Groups will meet quarterly.

Members will be appointed for two years and may be re-appointed. These are volunteer positions and remuneration is not payable. Members are expected to act impartially and in good faith to the benefit of the community.

The Advisory Groups will operate according to the Terms of Reference at [Attachment 1](#).

The Department is seeking Expressions of Interest from members of the community who are willing to join the Advisory Groups.

Applicants

Applicants should represent the diverse community of Christmas Island and the Cocos (Keeling) Islands and have a strong understanding of community health needs. They should have the capacity to provide informed and considered advice to the Advisory Group, which is supported by facts, evidence or anecdotal information.

Applicants must be either a resident of Christmas Island or the Cocos (Keeling) Islands. To remove any potential for conflicts of interest, employees of the IOTHS will not be considered for appointment to the Advisory Groups.

Applicants should provide as much detail as possible when completing their Application Form and should demonstrate:

- skills and experience to support their strong contribution to the Advisory Group;
- an understanding of the groups and organisations in their community and the issues that are important to those organisations; and
- a desire to be part of the Advisory Group.

If you are willing to volunteer your time, represent the views and interests of your community and support the delivery of health services, please read this information package, complete the Application Form at [Attachment 2](#) and return the Application Form to the Department by 5.00pm local (island) time on Friday, 26 May 2017.

Appointment

The Minister for Local Government and Territories will appoint members, considering advice from the Administrator.

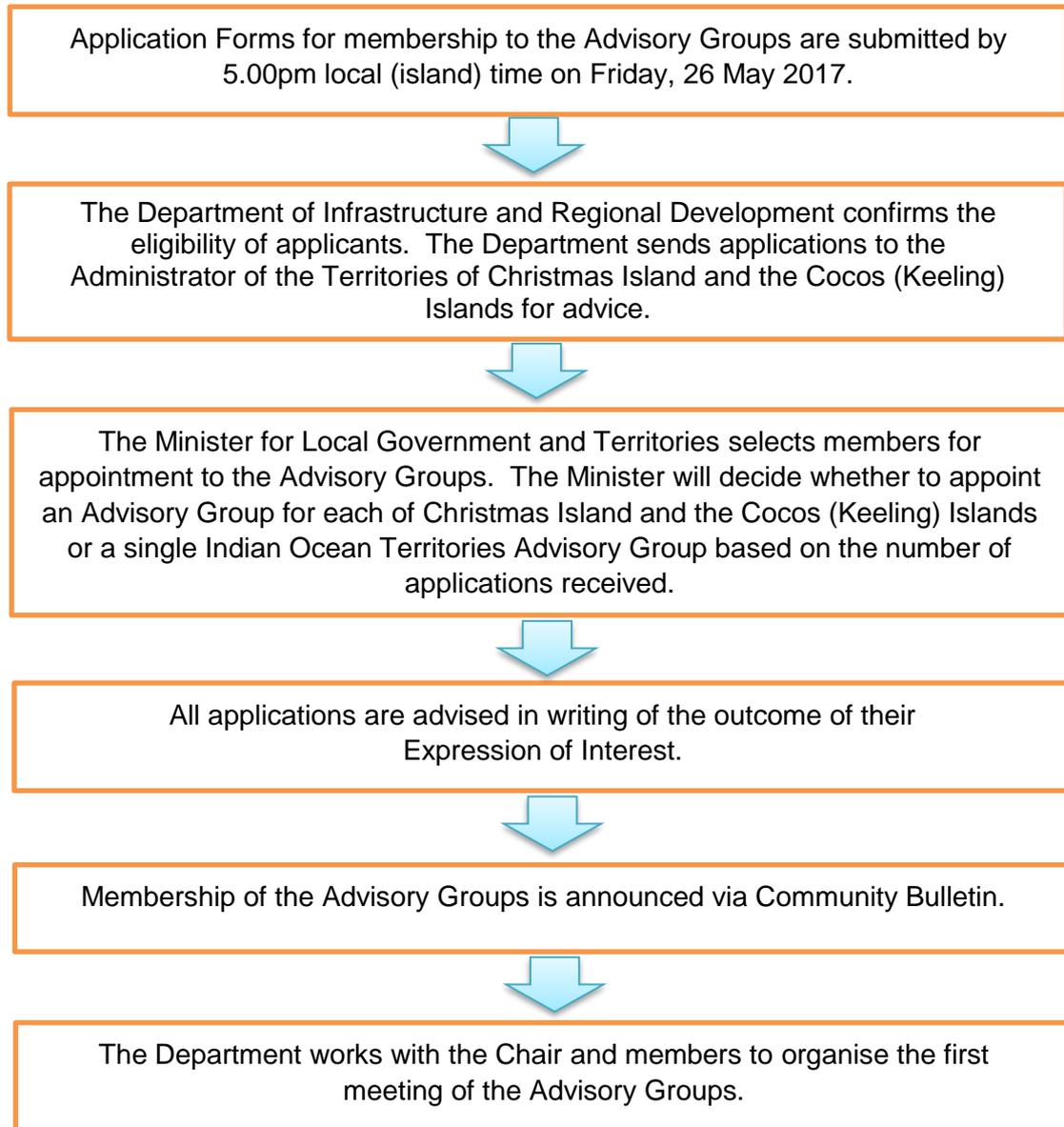
All applicants will be advised, in writing, of the Minister's decision. An announcement about the composition of each Advisory Group will be made by Community Bulletin.

If there are insufficient applications to form one Advisory Group for each of Christmas Island and the Cocos (Keeling) Islands, applications will be considered for a single Indian Ocean Territories Health Advisory Group.



Image 2: Dental Surgery, Cocos (Keeling) Islands

Assessment Process



How to Apply

Applications must be completed using the Application Form at [Attachment 2](#). Completed Application Forms may be emailed to:

<indianoceanterritories@infrastructure.gov.au>

or sent by post to:

Attention: EOI – Health Advisory Group
Indian Ocean Territories Policy Section
Department of Infrastructure and Regional Development
GPO Box 594
CANBERRA ACT 2601

Application Forms must be sent before **5.00pm local (island) time on Friday 26 May 2017**. Postal applications must be date stamped at time of posting to demonstrate despatch prior to the closing date.

The Department will advise all applicants in writing of the outcomes of the Expression of Interest process.

For further information, please email *<indianoceanterritories@infrastructure.gov.au>*.



Image 3: Accident and Emergency, Christmas Island Hospital

Other Information

The Department may withdraw or change the Advisory Groups during or following the conclusion of the Expression of Interest process. The Department will determine, on the basis of applications, whether to establish an Advisory Group for each of Christmas Island and the Cocos (Keeling) Islands, or one joint Advisory Group supporting both islands. This decision will be based on the number of applications received from each island.

The Department is not responsible for any costs incurred in preparing and submitting an application.

A conflict of interest arises where a person makes a decision or exercises power in a way that may be, or may be perceived to be, substantially influenced by personal interests or associations. Once selected, applicants must declare any potential, actual or perceived conflict of interests in relation to their membership or issues being discussed by the Advisory Groups.



Image 4: Ambulance Bay, Christmas Island

**CHRISTMAS ISLAND HEALTH ADVISORY GROUP
COCOS (KEELING) ISLANDS HEALTH ADVISORY GROUP**

TERMS OF REFERENCE

1. THE GROUPS

The Christmas Island Health Advisory Group and the Cocos (Keeling) Islands Health Advisory Group (Advisory Groups) will support the continued provision of high quality health services to the local community.

The Advisory Groups operate under these Terms of Reference.

2. ROLE

The Advisory Groups provide the opportunity for the community to share information on the nature and delivery of health services, and to provide advice to the Indian Ocean Territories Health Service (IOTHS) and the Department of Infrastructure and Regional Development.

3. OBJECTIVES

The Advisory Groups will:

- provide a forum for community representatives to share information and advice on health services;
- advise on priority areas of focus for the IOTHS, including emerging needs and risks;
- advise on community engagement activities to ensure effective planning, delivery and evaluation of health services;
- advise on effective strategies to seek community comment on particular health issues and communication strategies relating to health matters; and
- provide comment on relevant policy documents and other material, and assist with the flow of this information to the broader community, where appropriate.

4. MEMBERSHIP

Membership of the Advisory Groups will comprise six community representatives, including the Administrator of the Territories of Christmas Island and the Cocos (Keeling) Islands as Chair. Members will be appointed for a two-year term.

The Health Services Manager of the IOTHS will attend Advisory Group meetings in an ex-officio capacity to provide factual and contextual advice. The Health Services Manager may attend meetings via teleconference or video link if unable to attend in person.

External, off-island experts in particular fields of medicine or health care may be asked to provide advice to inform or contribute to discussions by the Advisory Groups.

5. CODE OF CONDUCT

Members are required to act with integrity and impartiality, in good faith and in the best interests of the Advisory Group at all times. Members are required to observe the principles of ethical conduct, confidentiality and privacy.

6. DECLARATION OF INTEREST

Members and the Chair must declare any personal, organisational or financial interest relevant to agenda items at the commencement of each meeting. In cases where a conflict of interest exists, or could reasonably be seen to exist, the member(s) shall not participate in the discussions of the Advisory Group relating to that conflict.

7. FREQUENCY OF MEETINGS

Meetings will be held quarterly (every three months). An indicative schedule of meeting times for the next twelve months will be agreed at the first meeting and published via a Community Bulletin. Additional meetings may be held at the request of the members or the Chair.

A quorum shall be 50 per cent of members plus 1.

8. CHAIR

The Chair will be the Administrator of the Territories of Christmas Island and the Cocos (Keeling) Islands. The Chair will:

- assist in planning meeting dates based on availability;
- approve the meeting agendas and papers;
- approve actions from meetings; and
- ensure community engagement is facilitated in an open and transparent way.

Each Advisory Group will select a Deputy Chair, who will act in the role of Chair as needed.

9. SECRETARIAT AND SUPPORT

Secretariat and support for the Advisory Groups will be provided by the Indian Ocean Territories Administration, with assistance from the Indian Ocean Territories Branch of the Department of Infrastructure and Regional Development. Support may include:

- preparing meeting agendas and papers in conjunction with members and the Chair;
- distributing agendas, minutes and papers at least 10 days prior to each meeting;
- recording Minutes of meetings and maintaining a complete set of records;
- facilitating meetings, including arranging suitable venues; and
- providing updates on actions from previous meetings.

10. OPERATION

The Advisory Groups will operate within the scope of the Objectives.

The Advisory Groups are not decision-making bodies, and will not make purchasing, spending or clinical decisions. The Advisory Groups will provide advice that is within, and reflects, the existing IOTHS budget and infrastructure framework.

Should there be insufficient interest or membership for an Advisory Group for Christmas Island and the Cocos (Keeling) Islands, the Minister for Local Government and Territories may appoint one Advisory Group representing both territories under the title "Indian Ocean Territories Health Advisory Group".

The Terms of Reference apply equally to two Advisory Groups or a single Advisory Group.

11. REPORTING

Minutes of meetings will be prepared, approved by Chair, and provided to Advisory Group members within two weeks of each meeting. The Minutes of meetings will be made available to the public with the approval of the Chair.

The Advisory Groups will provide a written report to the General Manager, Indian Ocean Territories Branch of the Department of Infrastructure and Regional Development, and the Director, Indian Ocean Territories Administration, following each meeting.

A summary of the outcomes of each meeting will be shared with the community. A detailed report on the work of the Advisory Groups will be published at the end of each financial year.

Issued: May 2017

Next Review due: Two years from establishment



Application Form

Christmas Island and the Cocos (Keeling) Islands Health Advisory Groups

This Application Form should be completed by members of the community interested in joining the Health Advisory Groups. Applicants should complete all sections and provide as much detail as possible.

1. Which Advisory Group are you applying for (please circle):

Christmas Island	Cocos (Keeling) Islands
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2. Your name, address and contact details:

Prefix	Mr / Mrs / Ms / Miss / Dr / Other []
Name	
Address	
Phone	
Email	

3. Are you employed by the Indian Ocean Territories Health Service? **yes** **no** (please circle)

4. If selected, could you serve on the Advisory Group for two years? **yes** **no** (please circle)

5. Describe your skills and experience which would assist the Advisory Group:

6. Describe your understanding of organisations and groups in your community, such as cultural organisations, young people, carers and women, and your understanding of issues that are important to these groups:

7. Why would you like to be a member of the Advisory Group? Describe the contribution you could make, how your participation would assist your community, and how you could support the provision of high-quality health services:

8. Please provide any additional information which may assist your application, for example on your ability to gather information, work with a range of stakeholders or report on community views:

By signing this document, I declare that all of the information I have provided is true, and that I have not left out any information which might make my application misleading. I understand and agree to adhere to the Advisory Group Terms of Reference.

Signed:

Date:

Name: