Neami Research & Evaluation Committee

Terms of Reference

1. Title

Neami Research & Evaluation Committee

2. Purpose

The Neami Research and Evaluation Committee oversees and supports Neami’s research and evaluation agenda. The committee’s role is to ensure projects prioritise the perspectives of people with a lived experience of mental illness, are safe, achievable, align with organisational priorities and strategy and inform service delivery within Neami National.

3. Membership

* 1. The Committee is comprised of the following core members:
* Neami CEO
* Neami Senior Manager Research and Evaluation
* Neami Research Coordinator
* Up to Five Academics with at least one with a lived experience
* At least two individuals with a lived experience of mental illness and distress (drawn from Neami or external service users)
* Neami Staff with Direct Service Experience (x2)
* Neami Manager (NLT member)

3.2 On occasions, other individuals may be invited to attend various Neami Research and Evaluation Committee meetings, for example to address specific research issues which relate to their area of expertise.

3.3 Staff, consumer and academic membership is designated through a rolling recruitment program with an advertised expression of interest and application process.

3.4 Neami NLT manager, staff and consumer members will sit on the Committee for a two year period. NLT manager, staff and consumer members interested in reapplying after serving their term can do so through the designated expression of interest and application process.

3.5 Academic members may sit on the Committee for a three year period with opportunity to renominate beyond this period. By agreement of the Committee Chairperson and Co-Chairperson, membership of academic members will be extended on an annual basis if the member expresses the willingness and capacity to continue their role on the Committee.

3.6 A quorum for a meeting of the Committee shall be five members.

3.7 Members are able to attend meetings via tele-conference.

3.8 The appointment of members shall take into account the following factors:

1. Level of expertise, knowledge and experience in research & evaluation methodologies
2. Level of expertise, knowledge and experience in the mental health sector
3. Diversity of expertise, knowledge and experience
4. Level of awareness and understanding of the ethical principles involved in research
5. Knowledge, skills and experience that complement the knowledge, skills and experience of other Committee members
6. Consumer perspectives related to research activity

4.Priority-setting and decision-making

4.1 The Committee will provide advice to the chair and co-chair towards the setting of annual research objectives and priorities, for the Neami Service Development Team.

4.2 All decisions must be considered within current resource capacity of the Service Development Team.

5.Chairperson

5.1 The Neami CEO shall be the Chairperson of the Committee on an on-going basis.

5.2 The responsibilities of the Chairperson include:

1. Guiding the meetings according to the agenda and time available
2. Establishment of annual objectives
3. Setting of meeting agendas
4. Inviting external expert advisors to attend meetings when required by the Committee
5. Ensuring all discussion items end with a decision, action or definitive outcome
6. Reviewing and approving the draft minutes before distribution
7. Reporting on Research Committee activities to the Neami Board of Directors
8. Managing process for re-nomination of Committee members
9. Decision making about research proposals in between meetings in conjunction with the Co-chairperson and Research Co-ordinator. While the Chair, Co-chair and Research Co-ordinator are responsible for this task, Research and Evaluation Committee members can and should be consulted in between meetings as required.

5.3 The Chair and Co-Chair share the responsibility of chairing committee meetings.

5.4 The Neami NLT Manager shall assume the responsibilities of the Chairperson if the Chairperson and Co-chairperson are not available.

6.Co-Chairperson

6.1 A person with a lived experience will undertake the role of Co-chairperson with membership terms being the same as that for consumer members i.e. 2 year term with potential for renomination.

6.2 The responsibilities of the Co-chairperson are to collaborate with the Chairperson to:

1. Guide the meetings according to the agenda and time available
2. Establish annual objectives
3. Set meeting agendas
4. Invite external advisors to attend meetings when required by the Committee
5. Ensure all discussion items end with a decision, action or definitive outcome
6. Review and approve the draft minutes before distribution
7. Report on R & E Committee activities to the Neami Board of Directors
8. Manage nomination processes of Committee members (apart from own)
9. Decision making about research proposals in between meetings in conjunction with the Chair and Research Co-ordinator.

7.Minute taker

7.1 A Neami head office operational support person will carry out the minute taker role.

7.2 The role of the minute taker is to:

1. Schedule meetings and notify committee members
2. Coordinate Committee meeting attendance
3. Distribute the agenda one week prior to the meeting along with all necessary documentation requiring review, discussion or comment
4. Take notes of proceedings and prepare minutes of meeting
5. Distribute the minutes and actions log to the Chair and Research Coordinator for review one week after the meeting

The minutes shall be checked by the Chairperson and accepted by all Committee members as a true and accurate record at the commencement of each meeting.

8.Frequency of meetings

8.1 The Committee shall meet as frequently as necessary, but no less than four times per year.

9.Functions

9.1 The functions of the Neami Research and Evaluation Committee are:

1. To encourage high quality research activity throughout Neami and promote ways to foster a culture of enquiry and commitment to research amongst all staff
2. To advise on priority research areas of focus in line with Neami’s Strategic Directions; evolving service priorities; and sector developments.
3. To review and advise on all research and evaluation proposals to be conducted under the auspice of Neami - including contribution to subcommittee review of expedited reviews when required
4. To raise questions on ethical considerations involved in Neami research and evaluation activity
5. To build in mechanisms for monitoring the progress of research projects and provide advice and feedback where necessary
6. To advise on strategies to support research findings being transferred into practice
7. To refer to established guidelines for publication of research results and publicity, including a policy regarding media contact
8. To advise on internal and external dissemination processes for research findings, e.g. building of the knowledge base within the organisation, the transfer of research findings into practice and sharing more broadly
9. To support and advise on the development of academic and other appropriate affiliations with research bodies within Australia and internationally
10. To review the membership of the Committee on an annual basis
11. To prepare an annual report on the Committee

10.Annual review

10.1 The Terms of Reference shall be reviewed annually at the final meeting in each year or as required.