

Family Day Care Australia

National Members' Forum Charter 2009-10



National Members' Forum definition, role and function

Family Day Care Australia's National Member's Forum is an advisory body established in accordance with Clause 15 of the Family Day Care Australia Constitution (2009).

The constitutional purpose of the National Members' Forum is to:

- (a) assist the Board of Family Day Care Australia achieves its objects as set out in clause 2.1 of the constitution, and in particular the following objects:
 - i. to be an advisory and consultative body unified in representing the interests of family day care services;
 - ii. to provide interaction, liaison and clear communication links between family day care stakeholders in each state and territory; and
- (b) do such other things as authorised or directed by the Board from time to time.

The National Members' Forum:

- is a representative group of carers and staff that brings to the national table aspects of family day care at the state and territory level
- provides information and industry-specific knowledge to inform the strategic direction of Family Day Care Australia
- is a critical conduit of information to the CEO about the family day care program
- informs the CEO who in turn uses that information to develop policy positions, advocacy objectives, and representation strategies to further the agenda of the national membership. This information feeds into the Board agenda via the CEO and influences the strategic direction of the national peak body
- is a conduit for reporting back to the membership

The aim of the National Members' Forum is to provide for two way communication between the family day care community and Family Day Care Australia's Chief Executive Officer, and through that role to the staff and to the Board.

National Members' Forum representatives provide an important link between Family Day Care Australia and its membership, and help to build positive relationships within the family day care community.

Membership of the National Members' Forum

In accordance with the constitution (clause 15.3), between the adoption of the constitution on 23 May 2009 and the Annual General Meeting of Family Day Care Australia on 7 November 2009, the Board shall determine the National Members' Forum Representatives who will comprise the National Members' Forum during the transition period to the AGM in 2010.

The National Members' Forum Representatives will be those people identified as:

- the president or executive member of a state staff or carer association
- the CEO or equivalent personnel from state associations which have resource units

- individual representatives nominated and endorsed by the current Board from those states and territories without a formal association structure

All representatives must be current financial members of Family Day Care Australia.

Each state and territory shall have one carer representative and one coordination unit representative.

The sixteen member National Members' Forum will be chaired by the Chief Executive Officer of Family Day Care Australia and meetings will include representative of Family Day Care Australia senior management.

Membership criteria

Essential criteria for candidates interested in being nominated as their state/territory (carer or coordination unit worker) representative on the National Members' Forum after the transition period includes:

1. Strong networks, good communications skills and the capacity to keep informed
2. A willingness to commit time and to take an objective, big picture approach to issues affecting family day care, particularly the national child care framework
3. Support for the strategic directions and model of family day care
4. A full commitment to Family Day Care Australia, its future directions, the change program and its business base; there must be no conflict of interest or they must be declared and subsequently considered
5. Individual, Scheme or Organisation membership of Family Day Care Australia

Family Day Care Australia welcomes nominations from positive, forward thinking people who can bring forward ideas and contribute to solutions.

Membership protocols

Family Day Care Australia agrees to:

- provide the necessary agenda papers, presentations and other documentation to facilitate understanding of relevant matters
- provide a good mix of appropriate presentations from Family Day Care Australia staff, forum members and external persons
- consider any advice and recommendations from the National Members' Forum within the context of the strategic direction and operational work of Family Day Care Australia
- report on relevant projects, proposals and submissions and seek input where appropriate from the National Members' Forum
- encourage all National Members' Forum members to present their views and contribute to discussion
- respond within agreed timeframes to requests for information
- support the effective operation of the National Members' Forum by providing administrative support and other resources
- help promote the National Members' Forum existence and objectives to the broader family day care community and Family Day Care Australia staff

- encourage discussion on continuous improvement of the National Members' Forum process
- clearly articulate the role of the National Members' Forum in electing a Director from among their number to the Family Day Care Australia Board
- work within the framework of the National Members' Forum Charter

National Members' Forum representatives agree to:

- attend meetings and actively participate in discussions
- facilitate state and territory Members' Forums on a quarterly basis – either face to face, by teleconference or a mixture in order to underpin a strong consultative framework
- consult with and report the views of their constituents to Family Day Care Australia
- give feedback to their constituents on National Members' Forum matters in a timely fashion
- suggest agenda items in advance of the meeting where possible
- respect the position they hold with regard to access to information from Family Day Care Australia and not use this position in any way for personal gain
- help promote the National Members' Forum existence and objectives to the broader family day care community and Family Day Care Australia staff
- respond within agreed timeframes to requests for information
- discuss continuous improvement of the National Members' Forum process
- consider the criteria for the National Members' Forum-elected Director and make well informed decisions in relation to the election process
- work within the framework of the National Members' Forum Charter

Nature of matters to be considered by the National Members' Forum

The National Members' Forum will address matters relating to the family day care program at the state, territory and national levels, and provide information and advice to Family Day Care Australia on government policy, regulations, the quality reform agenda and any other matter relevant to the work of Family Day Care Australia and its strategic direction.

Family Day Care Australia will make every effort to ensure that the issues placed on the agenda will be sufficient in number that will allow for appropriate levels of discussion.

Confidentiality

From time to time National Members' Forum members may be given confidential material or information that relates to sensitive issues. These materials are provided in good faith and members will ensure that confidentiality is maintained. Documents that are confidential will be marked accordingly.

Administrative arrangements

- **Frequency of meetings**

National Members' Forum meetings will be held at a minimum twice a year. Each year's meetings will be planned in advance and dates provided as early as possible

- **Agenda and minutes**

All National Members' Forum members have the right to raise agenda items
Minutes from the previous meeting, formal agendas and support materials will be forwarded to National Members' Forum members at least one week prior to the meeting

- **Chair and support**

Family Day Care Australia's Chief Executive Officer will chair each National Members' Forum. In the absence of the CEO the General Manager will chair.

National Members' Forum members will be provided with contact details for relevant Family Day Care Australia management and support staff.

- **Resourcing the National Members' Forum**

Family Day Care Australia will provide the necessary resourcing to enable the National Members' Forum to function effectively, including:

- Organising and funding flights, transfers, venue hire, accommodation and catering
- Assembly of material for National Members' Forum meetings, including liaison with the Chair and National Members' Forum members to establish the agenda
- Documentation of National Members' Forum meetings, monitoring and reporting of follow-up actions and responses

Communication and outcomes

Family Day Care Australia will communicate outcomes from the National Members' Forum in the following ways:

- All papers relating to the National Members' Forum will be published on the Family Day Care Australia website and accessible to all Family Day Care Australia members to ensure an open and transparent consultative process
- A summary of the National Members' Forum's work for the previous year will be included in the Family Day Care Australia Annual Report
- An outline of matters addressed at the previous National Members' Forum will be provided to members via the e-newsletter *Family Day Care Matters* and through *JIGSAW* magazine
- A copy of the National Members' Forum charter will be placed on the Family Day Care Australia website and made available to members.