# Discussion Paper: Consumers at the Centre

*For inclusion in your governing body meeting papers, and discussion in your next*

*meeting.*

**Meeting date:** Click or tap here to enter text.

**Agenda item number**: Click or tap here to enter text.

**Paper type**: For discussion

Better consumer engagement drives better outcomes

Effective consumer engagement supports high-quality outcomes, and therefore better provider performance. Governing bodies must understand key concepts and oversee processes to ensure that consumer preferences, values and expectations are well-understood and used to inform provider approaches, operations and inform decisions about their care.

The role of the governing body in consumer engagement

The governing body should implement processes and mechanisms to provide coordinated consumer input (either directly or through representatives) into governance decisions like setting strategic objectives and service design and delivery. This can be done by:

* Embedding the consumer voice (i.e. establishing a consumer advisory group)
* Ensuring the consumer is being engaged directly
* Implementing and monitoring systems and processes
* Ensuring that organisational policies and procedures have a consumer focus and include reference to the opportunity to establish a consumer advisory group
* Ensuring that services and care align with consumer needs and preferences and information collected and recorded from these services (e.g. care plans) are reflective of the needs and preferences of consumers.

BEFORE THE MEETING

To ensure the most productive discussion within the governing body meeting:

* Complete **Module 1: Consumers at the Centre of Care** (20min)
* Read **Topic Guide – Consumer & Stakeholder Engagement** (10min)

Review the **data, policies and procedures specific to your organisation** including for example: *consumer engagement strategy and feedback, communication protocols, service design and delivery frameworks, training and learning on consumer engagement.*

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| QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION1. How does the governing body satisfy itself that the services we provide align with the needs and wants of consumers and other stakeholders such as their families and representatives?
2. How does the governing body know how consumers facing barriers to engagement (e.g. with cognitive or sensory impairment, or facing cultural barriers) are being heard and addressed?
3. How are consumers supported to provide input and feedback to the governing body? How are their needs being considered and built into organisational processes to maximise their participation?
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You might also find it useful to check out **Module 14: Governance within the Home Care Context** and **Module 16: Partnering with People Living with Dementia.**