

Welcome and orientation for our new Panel members

Tuesday, 21 August 2018

The Consumer and Community Reference Panel members (the Panel) for the Tweed Valley Hospital project met on Tuesday 21 August for an orientation to the project and introduction to the project team.

There was an air of excitement as the group officially began their involvement in the Tweed Valley Hospital project, with around 50 representatives attending the two sessions held at the integrated project office.

The orientation included an introduction and welcome by senior members of the project team, and the project architect (Silver Thomas Hanley | Bates Smart) presented their perspectives on the site and some of the concept design principles. These consider the connection to the community and the adjacent education facilities, as well as evidence-based design approaches to promote wellness and provide a healing environment.

The role of Panel members was also outlined, noting the many ways in which they will be involved in the project; whether it be from the perspective of a carer, patient, neighbour, or volunteer. The message was clear that the involvement of consumers and the community was highly valued and inherent to the success of the project.

Panel members nominated their specific areas of interest to assist with matching their involvement in project activities and also responded to the question *“What does being a consumer representative mean to you?”*.

Responses to this question were detailed and indicated the diversity as well as the high level of interest and commitment from Panel members; and included that the Panel “provided the opportunity to contribute to the biggest investment in health and our community as a parent, carer, patient or community member”, and that “others can have a voice [about the hospital planning and design] through me”.

Wrap up of the orientation provided a look-ahead of the coming months, which will see Panel members actively involved as project planning and design progresses. Some Panel members will be involved in a master planning focus group, with others invited to participate in the Project User Groups alongside hospital clinical and support staff, and others will become involved in working groups for specific areas of the project including arts, health information and technology etc.