

## Informed consent

This project aims to provide HomeGround Services and the Rural Housing Network – as well as other housing agencies– with advice on ways to improve consumer participation.

As a result, a Consumer Participation Resource Kit will be available in print and on the internet to agencies across the housing and homelessness sector. The aim of this kit is to increase effective consumer participation and improve the quality of services provided.

The project is involving consumers (people who use housing services) in its planning and consultations and a project worker (Sally Jope 03 9419 8855) has been employed to research different ways of engaging consumers in decision making and to produce the Kit.

This focus group will be hosted by Peer Educators: people who have experienced homelessness, have used homelessness services and have undertaken training in order to run consumer focus groups and to provide services with consumer feedback and input. They are volunteers of the Peer Education Support Program of the Homelessness Advocacy Service (HAS) based at the Council for Homeless Persons in Melbourne.

As a member of the focus group you will be asked about your experiences and your ideas on:

- How to provide feedback to services and government departments;
- What aspects of the service you receive you would like to participate in;
- What aspects of the organisations decision making processes you would like to participate in;
- How consumers can and should be involved in decision making about the services they receive, and
- Examples of participation that feel/felt positive and effective.

Your participation in this focus group is entirely confidential. HomeGround Services and Rural Housing Network – who are running this project – guarantee that. You will not be identifiable in any summary which is produced from the Focus Group, nor in any final information or resource kit.

Your participation is entirely voluntary. For this reason, HomeGround Services and Rural Housing Network guarantee that the service you receive will not be affected if you decide not to participate.

If you have any concerns about this research and/or your participation in it, please contact

- Michael Burke, Research Coordinator of HomeGround Services phone 03 9419 8855 or
- Nick Shaw, Service Development Coordinator of Rural Housing Network 02 60559007 or
- An Advocate from HAS on 1300 066 256.

If you participate in the Focus Group you will be reimbursed \$50 to cover any costs associated with your participation.

A summary of the focus groups (one in Melbourne and one in Wangaratta) and access to the Consumer Participation Resource Kit will be available if required.

Please sign below to show you understand the reason for the project and that you agree to participate.

(name) \_\_\_\_\_

(signature) \_\_\_\_\_ (date) \_\_\_\_\_

If you would like a copy of the summary and to be advised of the launch of the Kit please provide an address where you can be contacted.

Street: \_\_\_\_\_

Suburb and postcode: \_\_\_\_\_