

## **Expression of Interest to Join OPAN's National Older Person's Reference Group in 2026**

The National Older Persons Reference Group (NOPRG) is looking for new members to share their knowledge, skills, lived experience, and community connections to help shape systemic advocacy in aged care.

### **What is the NOPRG?**

The NOPRG was established in 2020 to ensure older people's voices directly inform OPAN's advocacy, policy submissions, and engagement with government. The group shares lived experience perspectives on systemic issues in aged care, contributing insights that help shape OPAN's advocacy and reform efforts.

### **Who Can Apply?**

We are seeking older people (50+) from all states and territories, including those in metropolitan, regional, rural, and remote areas, to ensure a broad range of perspectives are represented. Applicants must either be seeking or receiving aged care services or receiving the NDIS, be current or recent (in the last 5 years) carers or supporters, or community members that have an interest in aged care (e.g. previously worked in aged care or related area).

## We encourage applications from individuals who:

- Are Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander
- Are from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) backgrounds
- Are LGBTIQ+
- Are veterans
- Receive aged care services (residential or home care)
- Are carers, family members, or supporters of older people
- Live in rural, remote, or very remote areas
- Have a disability or cognitive impairment, including dementia
- Have lived experience of mental health challenges or mental illness
- Are parents separated from their children by forced adoption or removal
- Are Care Leavers / Forgotten Australians
- Are experiencing socio-economic disadvantage
- Are homeless or at risk of homelessness

## Applicants must:

- ✓ Be committed to improving aged care services through systemic advocacy
- ✓ Have the capacity to engage in discussions, share insights, and reflect broad perspectives beyond personal concerns
- ✓ Have basic computer skills to participate in online meetings and engagement activities
- ✓ Participate in bi-monthly structured meetings held online (using Microsoft Teams) on Wednesdays and/or Thursdays, and consultations as opportunities arise
- ✓ Be available to attend an annual face-to-face meeting in Sydney in August 2026
- ✓ Where possible, be willing to travel (regionally and interstate) to attend the face-to-face meeting and/or other OPAN engagements as needed
- ✓ **Current members only:** Be willing to enter a mentorship arrangement with a newer member to support their induction into the group

## What's Involved?

Members participate in:

- Bi-monthly structured meetings (held via Microsoft Teams, 11:00 AM – 1:30 PM AEDT/AEST)
- Annual face-to-face meeting, in 2026 this will be hosted in August at a Sydney venue. Travel and accommodation will be arranged by OPAN.
- Consultations as opportunities arise, where their lived experience informs policy, advocacy, and service improvements
- Peer Support Chats (optional), held fortnightly for informal discussions and networking

## Members benefit from:

- An induction and mentoring program to support their participation
- Opportunities to contribute to policy submissions, advocacy initiatives, and aged care reforms
- Opportunities to speak or present at webinars, forums, or events

## How to Apply

To express your interest, please complete the following:

**Full Name:**

**Email Address:**

**Mobile Phone Number:**

**State or Territory:**

**Postcode:**

## 1. Why do you want to join the NOPRG?

(Please provide a brief response.)

### 1A. What do you know about OPAN and the work we do?

(Please provide a brief response in your own words.)

## 2. What experience, skills, or insights would you bring to the group?

(Please provide a brief response.)

## 3. What aged care services are you connected to?

- ☐ Residential aged care
- ☐ Home care/Support at Home
- ☐ Commonwealth Home Support Program
- ☐ Other Aged Care Service, such as NATSIFLEX
- ☐ Carer or family member of someone receiving aged care
- ☐ Carer or Family member of someone who had received aged care in the last 5 years
- ☐ Someone who used to work in aged care or related services
- ☐ Other (please specify):

#### 4. Are you involved in any community networks, advocacy groups, or organisations?

☐ Yes (please specify):

☐ No

#### 5. Please select as many of the following that describes your background.

☐ Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander

☐ From culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) backgrounds

☐ LGBTIQ+

☐ Veteran

☐ Receive aged care services (residential or home care)

☐ Carer, family member, or supporter of older people

☐ Live in rural, remote, or very remote areas

☐ Have a disability or cognitive impairment, including dementia

☐ Have lived experience of mental health challenges or mental illness

☐ Parents separated from their children by forced adoption or removal

☐ Care Leaver / Forgotten Australian

☐ Experiencing socio-economic disadvantage

☐ Homeless or at risk of homelessness

☐ Other/prefer not to say:

**6. Are you available to participate in bi-monthly structured meetings and consultations as opportunities arise?**

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Unsure – I would like more information

**7. Which state or territory do you reside in?**

- ☐ ACT
- ☐ NSW
- ☐ NT
- ☐ QLD
- ☐ SA
- ☐ TAS
- ☐ VIC
- ☐ WA

**8. Do you have access to your own device (e.g. smartphone, tablet, laptop) to join online meetings and receive updates?**

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ I would like to discuss this further

**9. If successful, would you be interested in taking on a leadership role as Co-Chair of the group? This would involve facilitating and helping to co-design content for meetings.**

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ I would like to discuss this further




## 10. If unsuccessful, would you like us to add you to OPAN's *Community Voices* register?

Community Voices is a register of people who we may call upon to provide input to consultation opportunities. This could be for a short term or on a one-off basis and focus on aged care reforms, position papers, policy or other work of OPAN. Engagement may take the form of online consultations, requests for feedback via email or on documents shared electronically or in hard copy. Occasionally it may include face to face consultation.

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ I would like to discuss this further.

## Next Steps

 Please submit your completed Expression of Interest (EOI) by email to **policy@opan.org.au** with the subject line 'NOPRG EOI Submission' **by 5:00 pm AEDT on Monday 22 December 2025.**

We'll be in touch by the end of December to let you know the outcome of your application. If you need to submit a hard copy of your application, you can post it to: **PO Box K176, Haymarket NSW 1240**

**For more information or any questions, please contact:**

### **Community Engagement Officer**

Katie Buddle

 **katherine.buddle@opan.org.au**

We look forward to receiving your application and the opportunity to work together.