

# Consumers Shaping Health

**CHF**  
Consumers Health  
Forum OF Australia



News and views on health consumer issues - April 2021



## Summit catches the wave of health consumer power

If you are reading this edition of *Consumers Shaping Health*, you could still be reflecting on the varied and absorbing messages that came out of our *Shifting Gears* Summit. The multiple presentations and chats at the virtual event produced a thought-provoking array of topics as diverse as why it is time to re-imagine health and social care; [‘big ideas’ for change](#); global trends in safety and quality in health care; and future horizons in healthcare.

We have just finalised a [communiqué](#) to present the major themes of the [#ShiftingGearsSummit](#) and directions for future action it has inspired.

If there were an over-arching theme that captures the essence of the conference it was the enthusiasm and acknowledgement of the consumers’ active role in the health care system — both in delivery and policy.

As the 820 delegates could have heard more than once, the consumer is often the only individual in the care setting to have insider experience and knowledge about all aspects of their care — a reality that the enlightened providers and organisations are accepting and building on.

Discussions covered issues from the rise of the patient as partner to the need for consumer organisations to be “engagement-capable”.

The Summit gives stimulus for a more structured approach to the development of health consumer leaders, advocates and their organisations through the establishment of an [academy](#) to provide research, education, and training.

A bespoke [mentoring program](#) for consumer advocates and recognition with appropriate [remuneration](#), and real empowerment of consumer representatives in decision powers are among other important ambitions voiced at the conference.

Leadership and education in collaborative practice and better ways to work together and share power through leading-edge programs such as CHF's **Collaborative Pairs Australia** is needed.

The Summit succeeded not only because of the interesting and vibrant ideas that it generated, but also more importantly because it reflected the mood for change and development of innovations that are needed and well within our reach.

Our Summit coincided with Close The Gap Day on 18 March. Its report, '[Leadership & Legacy Through Crises: Keeping our Mob Safe](#)', produced by the Lowitja Institute, has a message that was also heard at the Summit, of respecting and engaging with communities' leadership and knowledge. The report's call for governments to recognise that [communities have their own solutions](#) has resonance for #ShiftingGearsSummit, writes Melissa Sweet, from [Croakey](#), which provided such comprehensive coverage of the conference.

## Leanne Wells

Chief Executive Officer



## News and Resources



### Ageism in health care

*A project by the Older Women's Network NSW (OWN NSW) and Health Consumers NSW (HCNSW)*

The HCNSW and the Older Women's Network (NSW) launched a new report on ageism in health care: "[What Can You Expect at Your Age?!](#)" – an investigation of recent experiences of age discrimination by older adults accessing health care at the [CHF Summit: Shifting Gears](#).

The report is the result of an 18-month investigation into older people's experience of health care. Most people included were in NSW but we did hear from people across Australia and, sadly, that this reflects many people's experience of health care across the country.

HCNSW and OWN will be hosting a webinar at 10:30am on 23 April to further explore the issues raised in the report.

You can download the report, watch the launch video, and register for the webinar [here](#):



FIND OUT MORE



## Did you miss the CHF Summit? Hungry for more?

Here's a few ways you can catch up on what you missed, or find out what #ShiftingGearsSummit was all about.

**CHF Communique** with [future focus for consumer advocates](#) .

If you registered, all the presentations will be [available online](#) for twelve months until March 2021. [Login to the website](#) using your previous credentials. [Contact us](#) if you are interested in purchasing access to the summit and conference material.

**Listen** to the first of two [Croakey VOICES podcasts](#) from Cate Carrigan: *Croakey Voices examines Shifting Gears to drive consumer leadership and experience in healthcare.*

Or the mixtape on [Spotify for your listening pleasure](#) created by Belinda MacCleod-Smith

**Watch** the fifteen health consumers who submitted their [#CHFBigIdeas to change the healthcare system](#).

**Review** the [Best of Ten, a user manual in ten parts](#), with Jennifer Doggett who spotlights 100 insights, moments and facts that will make you feel like you were there, as well as prompting reflection and further reading.

**Read** the reports for day one - [Consumers on song in health research, policy and care: Shifting Gears](#) and for day two - [Navigating the road to consumer leadership in health](#).

**Follow** the hashtag [#ShiftingGearsSummit](#) on Twitter

**Login** to the [conference platform](#) to review sessions or catch up on what you have missed.

**Medicine Shortages Communication Champions**



## Consultation Paper on medicine shortages

Medicine shortages have been of particular concern during the COVID-19 pandemic, and for this reason the Department of Health has been reviewing the ways in which this can be managed.

The Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) is seeking feedback on proposals to help ensure ongoing, reliable supply of important medicines.

The Department of Health is seeking feedback on possible reforms that would:

- prioritise the evaluation and registration process for certain important generic prescription medicines, to reduce the risk of shortages
- encourage registration of more generic versions of medicines known to be affected by shortages, to mitigate the impact of those shortages
- support a more reliable supply of overseas-registered medicines imported into Australia

Public consultation is invited on the consultation paper: *Building a more robust medicine supply: proposals to help prevent, mitigate and manage medicine shortages*.

Your input on the proposals to help facilitate ongoing, reliable supply of important medicines is welcomed. The consultation will close on 17 May 2021.

The [consultation paper gives further details](#) about proposed mechanisms to prevent and mitigate medicine shortages.

Read more [about this consultation](#) and complete the survey.

If you have any queries, please feel free to contact us at [medicine.shortages@health.gov.au](mailto:medicine.shortages@health.gov.au).

[FIND OUT MORE](#)

## COVID-19 vaccine rollout

### Latest from the Dept of Health on the COVID-19 vaccine rollout in Australia

Currently people in phase 1a and 1b are eligible to receive a COVID-19 vaccine.

#### [When will you get your COVID-19 vaccine?](#)

Go to [Australia.gov.au](https://australia.gov.au) and use the [Vaccine Eligibility Checker](#) to confirm which phase of the rollout you are in.

**Top 3 COVID-19 vaccine questions** – phase 1b, misinformation and GP appointments. The latest [video from Dr Lucas De Toca](#), First Assistant Secretary of the COVID-19 Primary Care Response, has answers to the top 3 questions you've been asking.



- Why are we starting phase 1B of the rollout when not everyone from Phase 1a has been vaccinated?
- How can I avoid misinformation about COVID-19?
- Can I address other health matters with my GP when I get my free COVID-19 vaccine?

[FIND OUT MORE](#)

## Opportunity to participate



### Preventive Health Strategy consultation

The Government has released a [consultation paper](#) on the Development of the National Preventive Health Strategy.

There will be a consultation with members at 2 pm on Thursday 8 April, to inform the CHF response to the paper.

We encourage members and consumers to [answer the survey](#).

Contact **Tammy Wolffs**, for more information and to register for the consultation — email: [t.wolffs@chf.org.au](mailto:t.wolffs@chf.org.au)

### Webinar

**CHF Talks**  
Consumers shaping health  
WEBINAR SERIES



### Living Evidence and Consumers

*Presentation and panel discussion featuring the National COVID-19 Clinical Evidence Taskforce.*

The National COVID-19 Clinical Evidence Taskforce brings together 32 peak health professional bodies from across Australia.

Each week, more than 250 Taskforce contributors work together to find new research and quickly incorporate that research into national, evidence-based guidelines for the clinical care of Australians with COVID-19.

These are living guidelines, updated with the latest global research in near real-time with trusted, up-to-the minute advice to clinicians providing frontline care. Hear from the team on the findings from this project.

**When:** 27 April 2021  
**Time:** 12 to 1 pm

[REGISTER](#)

## Australia's Health Panel



### New survey on loneliness from Australia's Health Panel

In late 2020 CHF and the Medibank Better Health Foundation hosted a Loneliness Thought Leadership Roundtable to develop a roadmap for addressing loneliness in Australia. The final [report from the Loneliness Roundtable](#) has just been published.

There's one last chance for you to help us by sharing your experiences about loneliness and your views the effects of loneliness in Australia.

The results will be used inform CHF's advocacy on loneliness, please share details about Australia's Health Panel with your networks.

See [Australia's Health Panel results](#)

[Have your say on Australia's Health Panel](#)

## Member profile



## Welcome to the Epilepsy Foundation

*New member of the Consumer's Health Forum.*

Epilepsy is a medical condition that affects the brain and causes seizures. Around 65 million people in the world live with epilepsy, making it one of the most common neurological disorders. Despite the number people diagnosed with epilepsy, there is still a lot of misunderstanding about what it is and what it is like to live with this debilitating brain disorder.

The **Epilepsy Foundation**, believes that understanding is the key to promoting better quality of life for people living with epilepsy - find out more about the Foundation, it's goals and [myths and misconceptions](#) about the disorder.

**EPILEPSY FOUNDATION**

## Participate in research

### Join Us - call for research stories

*Join Us* connects researchers with people who are willing to be involved in research that is relevant to them.

*Join Us* is the [national health research register](#) that helps researchers prevent, treat and find cures for disease.

It's quick and simple – you sign up, provide a few details that are held in a secure database and when a relevant study comes up, you are asked if you'd like to take part. By joining us you could help change a life. Together we can change millions of lives.



**JOIN US REGISTER**

### Carers of older adults needed to help with research

*This project will improve hospital discharge for carers and older adults.*

Monash University is seeking carers of older adults living in the community, to take part in research project which aims to identify carers' experiences and needs when supporting older adults who are discharged from hospital to home. The research interview will take place by telephone and it will take about one hour. To take part, carers will:

- Be supporting an older adult living in the community with chronic health difficulties,
- Have experience with discharge from hospital to home following admission for a physical health problem of the older adult that they support

All carers are very welcome including people who have recently supported an older adult within the past 12 months.

Contact Jacqui Allen on 0427 940 794 or by email [Jacqui.allen@monash.edu](mailto:Jacqui.allen@monash.edu) for more information.

## Media releases and editorial

**[COVID vaccination program needs the community to be patient and well-informed](#)** - We welcome the start of the 1b phase of the COVID vaccination roll out to older people and other vulnerable groups, urging the importance of the need for community patience and two-way communication between .... .. [MEDIA RELEASE: 22 MAR 2021](#)

## CHF Talks webinar series

### Recent webinars for healthcare consumers

Future focus: What's in store for health and care in 2021? Insights into Australian priorities from leaders in the health sector. Speakers include: Dr Brendan Murphy, Secretary for the Department of Health, and Amanda Cattermole, CEO of the Australian Digital Health Agency - 8 Feb 2021 .... [watch replay](#).

CHF YOU TUBE CHANNEL

## Opportunities to participate



### Consumer representative program

Consumer representatives are nominated for national committees to ensure that the views and interests of health consumers are represented at the national level. CHF supports consumer representatives by providing resources in a number of ways. Find out how to become a [Consumer Rep](#)

CONSUMER REPRESENTATIVE PROGRAM

### Special Interest Groups

**Special Interest Groups** (SIGs) are a way for members and the broader consumer community to be involved in our advocacy work and in shaping policy.

Special Interest Groups to focus on Primary Health Care, Research & Data, Digital Health, Safety & Quality and Rural & Remote. SIGs help us to features even more consumer insight and perspective reflective of our Australian community. Find out more about CHF [Special Interest Groups](#).

Opportunities to join SIGs are advertised in newsletters and on our website.

FIND OUT ABOUT SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS

## Resources and Information



Use **Healthdirect Australia**, the Australian Government Health advice portal for consumers, for [information on Coronavirus information](#), [symptom checker](#) and helpline: 1800 022 222.

Turn to the website of the [Department of Health](#) to find the most recent, verified information, posted daily.

### **NPS MedicineWise**

A new [information hub from NPS MedicineWise](#) will help you be medicinewise during COVID-19

### **Be Health Aware** - [CHF portal for health resources](#)

The **Australian Commission of Safety and Quality** has published a [FAQ page](#) on the **safe use of masks** for consumers and a [factsheet you can download](#).

## Become a member



As a member of CHF you will be kept up to date on key health reform issues through our publications and member alerts. CHF membership enables you to influence the national health agenda by contributing to CHF surveys and polls, consultations and campaigns. Members can draw on CHF position statements, media releases and policy submissions to inform your work and advocacy.

[JOIN US](#)

### Consumers Health Forum

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[Unsubscribe](#)

