

# Consumers Shaping Health



News and views on health consumer issues - April 2022



## Persistence and resolve will get the best reforms in health care

Time and time again, consumers tell us they value accessible and affordable access to a GP, and to have that GP offer 'wrap around' services with other providers such as allied health, health coaches and navigators. Primary health care reform is the pressing need for the long term-health of Australians – and for the long term effectiveness of the health care system. Without future planning and systemic reform affordability and access will put health care out of reach of many Australians.

It doesn't have to be this way.

The Government released the long awaited [Ten Year Primary Health Care Plan](#) on Budget night. The plan is a good one and has wide support. CHF, along with many others, will continue to call for the new government to commit to funding its implementation. CHF is co-convening a Primary Health Care Leaders Summit on 11 May with the Primary Health Network Collective to develop priority implementation recommendations for the new Health Minister.

We were looking for [more in the Budget](#), such as support for people in self-care management, social prescribing and link workers, and additional programs to address the digital divide. These measures take the pressure off GPs and allow for localised programs of health care to address

community needs. My comments on the [ABC's Budget Special can be heard here](#) [begins at 33:10]

A big moment for consumers last week was the launch of latest Australian Health consumer Sentiment Survey Report, and the preliminary findings, CHF co-designed the survey, which was conducted by the Australian Institute of Health Innovation, and the NHMRC Partnership Centre for Health System Sustainability (PCHSS).

We were delighted to host an expert panel for this launch, with consumer advocate **Laila Hallam**, researcher and mental health expert **Professor Ian Hickie**, health policy expert **Professor Rosemary Calder** and digital health specialist **Annette Schmiede**. The **Minister for Health, the Hon Greg Hunt MP** and the **Shadow Minister for Health, the Hon Mark Butler MP** also shared their reflections on the survey, and it's long term importance in service design.

Read more in our [media release](#) and view the [webinar replay here](#). Together with PCHSS, we want to thank all the participants for their involvement. Deeper analysis of the findings will follow, with insights and potential actions.

The impending election date announcement and campaign season offers incentive for political hopefuls to engage with the public. For CHF, our members, stakeholders and all of you, this gives us opportunities to talk about what matters in health.

CHF has embarked on developing the thinking around the [Australian Health Consumer Leadership Academy](#), as an avenue to strengthen the consumer voice in all levels of health care and system design. In the weeks and months ahead, we will bring the concept to the attention of health system designers and funders.

Our Election Platform [is publicly available](#) and we have a month or two to highlight our critical points; Primary Health Care reform, commitment to preventative care, developing health consumer participation and improved access to health services. Later this month, on Wed 27 April we'll be running a webinar on the election: "What does the election hold for health?" with Jennifer Doggett, Fellow of the Centre for Policy Development and editor at Croakey Health News, Anna Peeters, Professor of Epidemiology and Equity in Public Health at Deakin University, Dr Saba Nabi, who brings a rural and CALD consumer perspective and Harry Iles-Mann, a Young leader with the Youth Health Forum. If you want to keep up with this discussion, register for the webinar here.

**Leanne Wells**  
Chief Executive Officer





## Engage with consumers on social media

A new guide for using social media to engage consumers in hospital service design and improvement activities is now available.

*Using social media as a tool to facilitate consumer engagement in service design and quality improvement: A guide for hospitals, service providers and consumers* was developed as part of a NHMRC-funded PhD project and co-created with Australian hospital service providers and consumers.

It is available to download now. You can access the guide, the accompanying Implementation Workbook, and read more about the project that led to the guide, on the project website.

Please feel free to share this with your networks, or contact **Louisa Walsh**, [louisa.walsh@latrobe.edu.au](mailto:louisa.walsh@latrobe.edu.au) directly for more information or to ask about a short presentation for your group or organisation.

EXPLORE



**Don't delay – book your flu vaccine today.**

## Flu shots are available now

CHF joined with the Royal College of GPs (RACGP) in the call for Australians to get vaccinated for the flu this month.

As the vaccine rolls out from April, you can make a booking with your health service, or when you receive a notification from your GP.

"Getting your flu vaccine as soon as it becomes available in April gives you protection before the expected peak of the influenza season," said RACGP President Karen Price.

"If you have questions about vaccination, you should talk to a trusted medical expert. Your GP will be able to advise you on when to get your next vaccination," said CHF CEO, Leanne Wells.

Diabetes Australia joined in highlighting the importance for people with the condition to make having your flu job a priority.

"For some people living with diabetes flu can even be life-threatening so please get your flu vaccine, so schedule your COVID booster and keep yourself healthy this flu season," said CEO, Justine Cain.

## WEBINAR



## What does the election hold for health?

A webinar to look at the health policy commitment by the parties.

Join CHF, health and policy experts, and consumers to analyse the Liberal National Party and Labor Party's health policy platforms and have your questions answered.

## Panelists:

**Jennifer Doggett:** Fellow of the Centre for Policy Development and editor at Croakey Health Media

**Anna Peeters:** Professor of Epidemiology and Equity in Public Health, and Director of the Institute for Health Transformation at Deakin University.

**Dr Saba Nabi:** Based in Wagga Wagga, Saba has a PhD Biomedical Sciences. She has been a member of Regional Advisory Council (RAC) member with Multicultural NSW, and represented consumers on Health Boards.

**Harry Illes-Mann:** A Young Leader with the Youth Health Forum and holds positions on other NSW committees as a consumer representative.

[REGISTER](#)

[WATCH THE REPLAY](#)



# The Voice of Australian Health Consumers

The Australian Health Consumer Sentiment Survey



## Australian Health Consumer Sentiment Survey: Report Launch

In this webinar, broadcast 28 March 2022, we publish the preliminary findings of the latest Australian Health Consumer Sentiment survey.

The survey provides a national snapshot of health service access, satisfaction, and experiences of over 5,000 consumers before and during the COVID-19 pandemic. It is aimed at understanding the health system from a consumer point of view to inform better delivery and planning of healthcare services in our communities.

CHF conducted the study with our research partners, the Australian Institute of Health Innovation at Macquarie University, and NHMRC Partnership Centre for Health System Sustainability (PCHSS).

The results were presented by **Professor Jeffery Braithwaite** and **A/Prof Yvonne Zurynsky**, followed by a panel discussion with distinguished panelists and comment from the **Minister of Health and Aged Care, the Hon Greg Hunt MP** and **Shadow Minister for Health and Aging, the Hon Mark Butler**.

Panelist were:

- **Professor Ian Hickie AM**, Co-Director, Health and Policy at the University of Sydney's Brain and Mind Centre and internationally renowned researcher in clinical psychiatry
- **Laila Hallam**, Health Care Consumer Advocate
- **Professor Rosemary Calder AM**, Professor of Health Policy at the Mitchell Institute, Victoria University and leads the Australian Health Policy Collaboration, (AHPC)
- **Annette Schmiede**, Acting CEO, Digital Health CRC

[VIEW THE REPLAY](#)



## Advanced Care Planning Australia

A [new video explores](#) advance care planning through three unique family and health perspectives. Watch the video and have the conversations now to make more control over your health care choices into the future. Ask your loved ones to reflect on 'what matters most' to them. For more on advanced care [planning visit the website](#).

Make your wishes known when you cannot speak for yourself, upload your advance care planning documents to [My Health Record](#).

FOR MORE

## Winter dose of of COVID-19 vaccine

On Friday, 25 March 2022, the Australian Technical Advisory Group on Immunisation (ATAGI) recommended a winter dose of the COVID-19 vaccine for:

- people 65 and older
- residents of aged care or disability care facilities
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders over 50
- people who are immunocompromised.

Commonly asked [questions about booster shots](#) in translated languages

FOR MORE

## PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH



**Survey on your experience in finding out about**

## costs for medical procedures

Before agreeing to buy something, people generally like to know how much it is going to cost.

As the costs of living, — and health care costs — continue to increase faster than wages, it is becoming crucial for people to find out the costs of medical procedures before they commit to them.

However, it isn't well established what Australians do (or don't do) in order to find out how much medical and health procedures cost.

CHF has been commissioned by the Department of Health to find out.

For the Australia's Health Panel survey for April 2022 we are asking you- how do you (or would you) find out the costs of a medical or health procedure

[DO THE SURVEY](#)



## Australia's Health Panel



**CHF**  
Australia's  
Health Panel



## Get your patient experience into the policy discussion

Australia's Health Panel is an interactive online platform devoted to harnessing the views of Australians about the state of the nation's health care system.

We invite you to encourage family and friends to have a say on the pressing issues in healthcare by joining the panel.

Find out more about what you said - on the [preventative health strategy](#), [COVID vaccine passports](#) and [consumers participating in research](#) - [See the results](#) or [Join the Panel](#)

## AUSTRALIA'S HEALTH PANEL

### COVID-19 vaccine rollout



## Information from the Australian Department of Health

Use the Department of Health's [Clinic Finder](#) to book your your COVID-19 vaccine.

Vaccine [information in your language](#)

ATAGI advice on [vaccinating children](#) 5 - 11 years

Dr Mark shows us [how to use a rapid antigen test](#) (RAT)

The COVID-19 [restriction checker](#) from *healthdirect* is a search tool to help you find the restrictions in your state or territory as advice changes about COVID-19.

What to do if you have COVID-19 - [Video](#)

COVID-19 news and media updates [from the Dept of Health](#)

Japanese Encephalitis alerts [from the Dept of Health](#)

Find the [answers to your questions](#) from medical experts.

Use the Department of Health page on [COVID-19 vaccinations](#) to access priority resources including videos and social media campaigns.

You can visit [Healthdirect](#) or see your doctor for medical advice.

FOR MORE

Get involved





## 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



## Media releases and editorial

### [Australians urged to prepare for resurgence of flu](#)

*The RACGP, CHF and Diabetes Australia are urging Australians to prepare for a potential resurgence of influenza (flu) and get vaccinated early. The pandemic has led to decreased exposure to the influenza virus and lower... 8 Apr 2022 — media release*

[Increasing Medicare rebates the key to increasing rural health care access for consumers – but how can we offer more?](#)

*We welcome the recommendations in the Community Affairs References Committee's interim report into the provision of general practitioner and related primary health care services to outer metropolitan, rural and regional Australia. CHF CEO, Leanne Wells said that the report ...* 4 Apr 2022 — media release

[Young people's health and wellbeing: we must not leave them behind](#)

*The Youth Health Forum, coordinated by CHF, has welcomed the \$206.5 million for additional Early Psychosis Youth Services (EPYS) to support the mental health of young people and other inclusions such as enhancements to headspace, and community-based eating disorder treatment...* 29 Mar 2022 — media release

[Federal Health Budget: steady as she goes, not transformational](#)

*We welcome tonight's health budget as a solid budget that continues to invest in health care for Australians. The highlights for health consumers include targeted cost of living measures to make medicines more affordable, significant investments in mental health services ...* 29 Mar 2022 — media release

[Health consumer voices more important now than ever](#)

*Australia's largest consumer survey of healthcare finds confidence in services has increased but gaps remain in affordability and accessibility for disadvantaged groups and people with chronic conditions ...* 24 Mar 2022 — media release

[Funding reforms on medical devices welcome, but will health insurers pass on savings?](#)

*We welcome the announcement of a joint four-year agreement between the Federal Government and the Medical Technology Association of Australia (MTAA) supporting the Protheses List. The Protheses List (PL) sets out the benefits insurers must pay patients (if covered) and is...* 17 Mar 2022 — media release

[READ ALL MEDIA RELEASES & OPINION](#)

## CHFTalks webinar series

### Consumer Assessors – improving healthcare and service outcomes

In this webinar, we look at the role of consumers as assessors in accreditation.

Hear from current consumer assessors and key leaders in the Australian Council of Healthcare Standards (ACHS).

[WATCH THE REPLAY](#)

# Reimagining Healthcare: where to next for digital health?

Professor Suzanne Robinson and A/Prof Richard Norman from Curtin University present their findings from recently completed studies done in partnership with CHF, funded by the Digital Health CRC and the Australian Government Department of Health.

The discussion includes by a panel discussion on the implications and opportunities for health system and service transformation to better serve consumer needs and interests.

Panellists:

- Professor Tim Shaw, Professor of eHealth, Faculty of Health Sciences, University of Sydney
- Amanda Cattermole PSM, CEO Australian Digital Health Agency
- Dr Amandeep Hansra, GP and Digital Health Consultant
- Laila Hallam, Consumer Advocate and Chair, HCSNW Covid taskforce

Facilitated by CHF CEO, Leanne Wells.

[WATCH THE REPLAY](#)

[CHF YouTube channel](#)

## Resources and Information

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

Use [Healthdirect Australia](#), the Australian Government Health advice portal for consumers, for [information on COVID-19](#), the [symptom checker](#) and helpline: 1800 022 222.

Healthdirect provides free, approved medical advice and has delivered information to Australians on COVID-19 since the beginning of the pandemic. Tools and information on COVID-19 can be accessed from the [COVID-19 section](#) of the Healthdirect website.

### NPS MedicineWise

A new [information hub from NPS MedicineWise](#) will help you be medicine wise 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](#).

## What to do if you have COVID-19

- Isolate immediately for at least 7 days
- Let your contacts — friends, family, work – know
- Look after yourself — stay hydrated and take over-the-counter medications if needed
- Monitor your symptoms — [know what to expect from mild COVID-19](#)
- If you're worried about your symptoms use the [COVID-19 Symptom Checker](#)
- If you are symptomatic on day 6, get tested before leaving isolation.
- Visit the RACGP guide to [managing COVID-19 at home](#)

### 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 - Become a member](#)

[Consumers Health Forum](#)

7B/17 Napier Close,  
Deakin ACT 2600

02 6273 5444

[info@chf.org.au](mailto:info@chf.org.au)

[Unsubscribe](#)

