

# Consumers Shaping Health

**CHF**  
Consumers Health  
Forum **OF** Australia



News and views on health consumer issues - August 2021



## Young people incubating ideas for healthy lives

When Consumers Health Forum's Youth Health Forum first met, a key theme that quickly emerged was that young people were part of the "missing middle" in health care. The transition from paediatric to adult-level care has often meant that the specific needs and health issues facing young people get overlooked.

The need for action which that concept has inspired has now prompted an inspiring "Incubator" program of young people-centred projects ranging from mental wellness workshops for young surfers to a hip hop video project for young Indigenous people.

The Youth Health Forum supported by CHF has launched the incubator grants program, designed to help address the "missing middle" concerns of young Australians in healthcare by supporting community activities that are led and inspired by young people.

CHF has received funding from the Australian Government Department of Health to enable this development of resources for young people to improve communication, provide pathways to services and ensure that the "missing middle" is recognised and supported.

Read more including details on the [14 successful incubator grant projects](#)

Leanne Wells

**Leanne Wells**  
Chief Executive Officer



## **We're having a summit for young health advocates**

The Youth Health Forum is hosting a major, online event on 15 September 2021.

Youth health consumers aged 18 to 30 are coming together from across the country to discuss the big issues for young people's health.

The Summit will be an event for young health advocates, health and youth organisations, researchers, students, healthcare providers and policy makers can come together to develop co-designed solutions.

### **[View the program](#)**

There will be opportunities to meet and collaborate with organisations from around Australia who want to work with young people to make their health services better. We're looking forward to seeing you in Sept 2021.

This is a must attend for anyone who is interested in working with young people on health issues, and for health advocates of all ages!

### **[Registrations are open](#)**

Anyone can attend this open registration event so [secure your registration now](#) as early bird prices end soon!

### **[Join the Youth Health Forum](#)**

Can't wait until September to have your say? Join the Youth Health forum today - [find out more](#) or [apply here](#)

**YHF Summit**



## Franklin Hooper

*UNICEF Australia's Young Ambassador*

Frank has been advocating for mental health and the LGBTQIA+ community since he was 17 when he started his first not-for-profit organisation in the Northern Territory called *Keep Talking* and ran Katherine's first two pride festivals. He'll be part of YHF Summit discussion on "*What are the Policy Makers Missing for Young People?*"

FOR MORE



## Join the new Mental Health Consumer Special Interest Group

Would you like to help shape and inform CHF policy and advocacy to improve mental health care for all consumers?

Special Interest Groups (SIGs) add greater consumer insight and perspective in shaping CHF's policy and advocacy work. This new SIG on Mental Health will add a direct voice of lived experience to inform CHF policy and advocacy in mental health, and across illnesses and medical conditions where mental health is a factor or comorbidity. For example, consumers living with pain and chronic conditions often experience anxiety, depression or other mental illness.

If you are a mental health consumer or carer of a mental health consumer with strong connections to your community, or if you are, or have been, a consumer advocate in mental health care we would like to hear from you.

Applications are encouraged from people or carers with diverse mental health needs and backgrounds, including diverse levels of English language and literacy skills.

Contact **Tammy Wolffs**, Senior Policy Officer ([t.wolffs@chf.org.au](mailto:t.wolffs@chf.org.au)) for more information. Applications close Sunday 15 August.

SEE MORE



## Brad speaks out about his journey to vaccination

Brad Rossiter OAM is a consumer champion whose life and health experience puts him in an influential position to advocate for COVID-19 vaccinations.

He has overcome multiple health challenges and become a community health leader in Bateman's Bay on the NSW South Coast. Now he has joined CHF's Consumer Conversations video project to lend his voice to encourage COVID vaccinations.

Brad's vulnerable health status has left him in no doubt of his personal need for vaccination. It also drives his advocacy for community-wide acceptance of vaccination.

[WATCH AND SHARE](#)

## Australia's Health Panel



## Survey on Medical Research Participation

There is a known gap between the broader Australian public and the medical research sector. A [report commissioned](#) by the Australian Government Department of Health in 2015 identified a lack of awareness about medical research including clinical trials amongst both doctors and consumers as well as low 'clinical trial culture' at all levels of the health system in Australia.

This was followed by projects in 2017 that found that despite [96% of Australians being willing to participate or consider participation in clinical trials](#), more than 70% had never discussed the option as part of their healthcare decision making.

We support efforts to increase consumer involvement in medical research as leads to benefits for consumers. For this reason, we have joined with initiatives aimed to improve consumer involvement in research such as the [Join Us Medical Research Register](#) and the [Australian Clinical Trial Alliance](#).

However there is little research exploring why Australian consumers do or don't participate in medical research and what barriers exist that cause the disconnect between the broader public and the medical research sector.

This Australia's Health Panel survey for August aims to look further into this area.

We would like to thank the [CHF Research and Data Special Interest Group](#) for their assistance in writing this survey.

Find out more about what you said - on loneliness, the vaccine rollout, the preventative health strategy and health literacy - [See the results](#) or [Join the Panel](#)

## COMPLETE THE SURVEY

### Consumer panel for research

#### Establishing a consumer panel for project on new technologies and the medicalisation of women's reproductive health

The University of Sydney's Wiser Healthcare team from the School of Public Health is looking for consumer representatives to join a research team and form a consumer panel for a research project on medicalisation of women's reproductive health.

Western medicine has a long history of pathologising women's reproductive health, such as framing menopause as an oestrogen deficiency disease needing pharmaceutical correction.

However, with rapidly changing technology opportunities and increasing commercial interests, this issue is expanding on a massive scale.

The Wiser Healthcare team are looking for women to be a part of the consumer panel and be involved with this project, which will use qualitative interviews, surveys and online interventions to:

- understand the benefits and harms of medical technologies and interventions across reproductive health issues, as well as;
- develop, evaluate and implement strategies to reduce inappropriate medicalisation, minimising over-testing, overtreatment and unwarranted psychological harm.

#### Requirements

You do not need specific experience but should have an interest in women's reproductive health. If successful, the consumer representative will join the investigator team to participate in research meetings, the development of the study design and materials, interpreting findings and communicating findings to the public.

To find out more or apply, please email Dr Tessa Copp, Project Co-ordinator [Tessa.copp@sydney.edu.au](mailto:Tessa.copp@sydney.edu.au)

### COVID-19 vaccine rollout

At CHF, we are committed to ensuring clear, credible and evidence-based COVID-19 vaccination information is available to Australian health consumers. To that end, we are developing our COVID-19 information hub, [Be Health Aware](#) health literacy portal to include a COVID-19 information hub with the most up to date information. We are working in collaboration with the Department of Health and information we publish is authorised by qualified health experts.

Vaccination will help all Australians combat the virus in coming months. Vaccination stops you from becoming very sick if you catch the virus. No vaccine is 100% effective, and so you should continue to practise physical social distancing, hand washing and mask wearing (where necessary), even after you have been vaccinated.



## Information from the Australian Department of Health

Use the Department of Health's [Eligibility Checker](#) to find out when and where to get your COVID-19 vaccine.

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.

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.

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.

## Videos

- [Doctors talk about the Stay at Home order in Greater Sydney.](#)
- [How vaccines work](#)
- [Top three questions](#) - Pfizer for 12–15 years, TTS symptoms, Pfizer risks and PCR tests
- [Top three questions](#) - Children and the delta variant, COVID-19 risk after vaccine, and opening borders

FOR MORE

Welcome to CHF new member



## Crohn's & Colitis Australia member profile

Crohn's & Colitis Australia (CCA) was founded in 1985 to provide support for people with Crohn's disease and ulcerative colitis (collectively known as inflammatory bowel disease), and drive research into the diseases.

CCA dreams of a future that is free of Crohn's and colitis. We empower people to live fearlessly while we help search for a cure through our research projects and programs, and support services.

We're about improving quality of life by helping people understand, respond to and actively manage their care. We want there to be a greater understanding of Crohn's and colitis in the Australian community, so that it is easier for people to be authentic and unapologetic about their Crohn's or colitis. Fundamentally, we are an advocate and an educator, leading tough conversations about taboo topics.

We are generously supported by over 2,500 members. We also have a very active social network of 31,700 people who help raise awareness.

[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](#)

## Participate in research



### Research project for engagement of consumers

Louisa Walsh, a PhD student from the [Centre for Health Communication and Participation](#) (CHCP), La Trobe University, is developing an evidence-based guide for using social media to engage consumers in hospital service design and quality improvement activities. Louisa is current seeking people employed in quality improvement or communication roles in Australian public hospitals to give feedback on the draft of the guide.

For more information about the study, including eligibility criteria, head to the [CHCP website](#).

Or you can contact Louisa directly via email: [louisa.walsh@latrobe.edu.au](mailto:louisa.walsh@latrobe.edu.au)

If you are interested in the PhD project as a whole, you can read a summary of the research and access published articles and presentations below.

[FOR MORE](#)



### Join Us - call for research stories

*Join Us* connects researchers with people who are willing to be involved in research, and 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](#)

## Media releases and editorial



[Young people incubating ideas for healthy lives](#) - When the CHF Youth Health Forum first met, a key theme that quickly emerged was that young people were part of the “missing middle” in health care.. ..... [BLOG POST: 05 AUG 2021](#)

[COVID Vaccine Plan firms direction](#) - We welcome the National COVID Vaccine Campaign Plan in providing stronger and more detailed directions for Australia to counter the pandemic but We still face uncertainty about the future impact.. ..... [MEDIA RELEASE: 04 AUG 2021](#)

[Is private health dying and will managed care finally kill it? The consumer perspective](#) - We welcomes the stepped-up campaign promoting COVID-19 vaccinations and says it should be just the start of a broader community-based campaign. .... [BLOG POST: 30 JULY 2021](#)

[CHF makes a point at vaccination wargame](#) - CEO, Leanne Wells, has advised a national ‘wargame’ roundtable of key points we believe must be considered in an effective National Covid-19 Vaccination Plan.. ..... [BLOG POST: 21 JULY 2021](#)

[Now is the time to drive home the vaccine message](#) - We welcome the stepped-up campaign promoting COVID-19 vaccinations and says it should be just the start of a broader community-based campaign. .... [MEDIA RELEASE: 12 JULY 2021](#)

[We join NAIDOC to Heal Country!](#) - Heal Country invites us to embrace First Nations’ cultural knowledge and understanding of Country as part of Australia’s national heritage and respect the culture ..... [BLOGPOST: 09 JULY 2021](#)

[Webinar highlights opportunities for primary health reforms](#) - Proposals for big changes to primary health care have recently been presented to the Government so this week’s #CHF Talks webinar on the subject was timely. The 20 recommendations ..... [BLOGPOST: 08. JULY. 2021](#)

[READ ALL MEDIA RELEASES & OPINION](#)

## CHF Talks webinar series

### Living Evidence and Consumers

In this panel discussion, presenters who have been working on the [National COVID-19 Clinical Evidence Taskforce](#) will share insights about the work they do.

[WATCH THE REPLAY](#)

[CHF YouTube channel](#)

## Resources and Information

Use [\*\*healthdirect Australia\*\*](#), the Australian Government Health advice portal for consumers, for [information on COVID-19](#), the [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 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](#).

## 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](#)

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