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News and views on health consumer issues - February 2023



## Consumers need to be front and centre in healthcare redesign

Dear all

What an action-packed few weeks we have had to kick off 2023.

As you'd no doubt be aware, the Strengthening Medicare Taskforce [Report](#) was published by Minister for Health and Aged Care Mark Butler on 3 February.

Although the discussion around the Taskforce table was collegiate, the wider response to the report has prompted continued stakeholder debate and lobbying via the media, especially about the Medicare rebate and the full utilisation of health professionals other than GPs.

As outlined in our [media release](#), we regarded the Report as a 'win' for consumers, with the Prime Minister publicly voicing his commitment to putting consumers 'front and centre' of any future reforms.

Of course, while we applaud the words, it is the actions that count, and it will not be until the federal budget in May that we will see which reforms will be funded.

While we outlined CHF's [10 point plan](#) for reform before the Report release, over the coming months we will be advocating for these three specific consumer activities to be funded:

1. The creation of a **Health Consumer Leadership Academy** to bolster consumer skills.
2. CHF to lead a range of **Health Literacy** activities to help consumers, especially those from diverse or vulnerable communities, understand any changes to the health system.

- CHF be funded to support consumers to be actively involved in the co-design of any new policy or health care change.

For each of these initiatives, we are looking for consumers to be involved and participate in our advocacy campaigns leading up to the budget.

We want to recruit about a dozen consumers from all around Australia to be part of our “Consumer Contact Bank” – people from all walks of life who would be willing to share their personal health journey and be featured in the media and CHF campaigns. Successful candidates will be remunerated and receive free media and skills training. To express interest in being part of this exciting initiative, please email your details to Jamila Rehman [j.rehman@chf.org.au](mailto:j.rehman@chf.org.au)

I encourage you to put your hand up to be involved as it is real consumer stories that are at the heart of any successful advocacy campaign.

I look forward to updating you on this and other initiatives in next month’s newsletter

### **Elizabeth Deveny**

Chief Executive Officer



## NEWS AND UPDATES



### **Positions vacant**

CHF is recruiting for two positions which can be based in either Melbourne or Canberra. Please share these links with anyone who may be interested.

### **Finance Business Partner**

We are looking for an accomplished finance professional who will play an important role in driving business strategy.

[READ MORE](#)

### **Senior Policy Officer**

CHF looking for a professional who is passionate about policy and is looking to have a real impact in the sector. To be successful you enjoy working in a fast paced, dynamic environment and are an organised individual with strong written and verbal communication skills.

[READ MORE](#)

## Media

The Strengthening Medicare Taskforce Report was released last week and CHF was represented on the Taskforce by CEO Elizabeth Deveny. Here more from Elizabeth on CHF's response to the report on [ABC's PM](#)

[READ MORE](#)

## EVENTS



### Strengthening Medicare Taskforce report: a community briefing

All you need to know about the Taskforce report and CHF's response. Will feature a panel discussion with plenty of time for questions.

When: Wednesday 15 February 2023

Time: 2:30 pm – 3:30pm (AEDT)

RSVP: [Register here](#)

Cost: Free

[REGISTER](#)

### To prescribe or not to prescribe: community pharmacist prescribing rights in Australia

To prescribe or not to prescribe: community pharmacist prescribing rights in Australia  
Hear from a GP, a pharmacist and a consumer about the pros and cons of community pharmacists having the right to prescribe medicines.

When: 28 February 2023

Time: 6:00 pm - 7:30pm (AEDT)

RSVP: [Register here](#)

Cost: Free

[REGISTER](#)

## WEBINAR REPLAY



### Consumer Link - Health Literacy Webinar

If you missed the last **CHF Consumer Link webinar** on Consumer Leadership – Health Literacy, you can [watch a replay here](#). The December webinar featured a panel of consumers and researchers discussing how to navigate issues of health literacy, working with patients, families and carers to provide accessible health information and improve decision-making.

[READ MORE](#)

### Submissions

Thank you to everyone who contributed to or participated in our consultations for CHF's Pre Budget Submission and the Measuring What Matters submission on well-being budgeting. Both submissions will be published on CHF's website shortly

### Consultations

#### National Allergy Council Shared Care Model Working Group

The National Allergy Council Shared Care Model Working Group (NAC) is seeking one (1) consumer advisor nominations for the National Allergy Council (NAC). Contact NAC about your application directly. Expressions of interest should be sent to [heather@nationalallergy.org.au](mailto:heather@nationalallergy.org.au) by 5pm (ADST), Sunday, 19 February 2023.

[READ MORE](#)

#### Consumer representative for conference committee

The organising committee is seeking a consumer representative for the [3rd Australasian COVID-19 Conference](#), to be held on 27-28 July 2023 in Brisbane.

The conference will be a 2 day single stream event and will be made up of content across the following four (4) themes:

- Clinical management & therapeutics
- Social, political and cultural aspects
- Basic science
- Epidemiology, prevention and health promotion

The primary role will be to develop content and recommend speakers and topics. Professor Catherine Bennett, A/Professor Edwina Wright, Dr Dean Murphy and Dr Kirsty Short are on the Committee. Contact Cara Bruce [Cara.Bruce@ashm.org.au](mailto:Cara.Bruce@ashm.org.au) for more information



## Consumer opportunity

Expressions of interest are now open for an exciting paid opportunity to help shape services at Blue Knot.

Lived Experience Australia have been working with [Blue Knot](#) to establish an increased Lived Experience focus across Blue Knot's organisation. Blue Knot are seeking to establish a Lived and Living Experience Committee and are now seeking Expressions of Interest for people to join (consumers, families and carers with lived and living experience).

Blue Knot recognises the importance of lived and living expertise in:

- design and development of all Blue Knot's services, resources and activities.
- supporting work in advocating for and building pathways empowering recovery for the more than 5 million Australian adults with the lived and living experience of complex trauma – repeated violence, abuse, neglect or exploitation.

Contact [bjohnson@blueknot.org.au](mailto:bjohnson@blueknot.org.au) for more information. Expressions of interest close on Friday 24th February 2023.

## SECTOR NEWS



## Two new Mental Health consumer peak bodies created

The Albanese Government will invest \$8.5 million to support those with a lived experience of mental health to shape the policies and programs that affect them.

Funding of \$7.5 million will establish and operate two independent national mental health lived experience peak bodies – one representing consumers and the other representing carers, families and kin.

The funding package was [announced](#) as part of the Mental Health and Equity and Access Forum in Canberra on 30 January.

[READ MORE](#)

## New report on marketing of unhealthy products

FARE and VicHealth have published [a new report on community experiences](#) with online marketing of alcohol, gambling and unhealthy food.

The report details a survey FARE and VicHealth conducted last year with 220 people seeking to reduce alcohol, gambling and unhealthy foods.

They found that over 90 per cent of participants were concerned about online marketing for the products and 83 per cent felt that this exposure made it harder for them to reduce their use or consumption of these products.

[READ MORE](#)

## 9th Rural and Remote Health Scientific Symposium - call for papers

The 9th Rural and Remote Health Scientific Symposium '*Connecting research, practice & communities*' is being held in Canberra on 20-21 June 2023 and the call for abstracts is now open.

The Symposium will focus on rural and remote health research that informs strategic health policy and health service challenges in rural and remote Australia into the future.

Presentations are now being sought from emerging and active researchers.

For abstract guidelines and details about the various presentation types visit the [Symposium website](#)

The call for abstracts closes on 20 February 2023.

For further details please contact the Conference & Events team at [conference@ruralhealth.org.au](mailto:conference@ruralhealth.org.au) or 02 6285 4660.

CONFERENCE WEBSITE

## YOUTH HEALTH FORUM

### The Australian Health System: an overview for young people

We had a good turnout of young consumers who joined CHF Youth Health Forum's master class on 9 February to gain an overview of the Australian health system. Presented by Croakey editor and Chair of the Australian Health Care Reform Alliance Jennifer Doggett, the webinar provided a foundational understanding of how our health system works.

A link to a recording of the webinar will be published on CHF's webinar shortly



## Get involved

### Digital Health Special Interest Group

Have you:

- Accessed care via Telehealth?
- Used My Health Record?
- Used mobile health apps?

Do you have opinions on digital health? The CHF Digital Health Special Interest group is a space for people of any level of digital literacy or interest to have their voices heard on any

issue regarding digital health.

Following the establishment of the Australian Digital Health Agency (ADHA) in 2016, CHF has been working closely with them to represent consumers on a broad range of issues regarding digital health. As digital solutions to healthcare issues become more common, it becomes more important that the voices of consumers are heard. As such, we are expanding the membership of our Digital Health Special Interest Group to represent consumers more effectively on digital health issues.

To ensure a diverse and representative range of voices, we are asking people who are interested to submit you [expression of interest](#). If you have any questions please contact Daniel Weber at [d.weber@chf.org.au](mailto:d.weber@chf.org.au)

#### MORE ABOUT SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS



## 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

#### READ ALL MEDIA RELEASES & OPINION

## 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**

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Consumers Health Forum  
02 6273 5444  
info@chf.org.au

