

Need to know? Go to **#Be Health Aware**

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The Consumers Health Forum today launches a new portal, **#Be Health Aware**, to help people find the health information they seek.

Modern health care involves more choice and complexity for consumers and patients than ever, the CEO of the Consumers Health Forum, Leanne Wells, says.

“That’s why we have established **#Be Health Aware**. Whether you need to know more about what to ask your doctor, patient guides, how to lodge a health complaint, or health insurance, or how Medicare works, **#Be Health Aware** offers information on what to do or where to go,” Ms Wells said.

“The Consumers Health Forum has developed this new portal for consumers and the community as part of our advocacy of health literacy as a central element of consumer-centred health care.

“It draws together a comprehensive selection of authoritative websites and other information developed by many experts in a single clearinghouse that is designed around consumers.

“Evidence shows best health outcomes significantly rely on an informed and engaged patient and consumer.

“But only about 40 per cent of adults have the level of individual health literacy they need to be able to make well-informed decisions and take action about their health,” according to the Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care.

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Consumers shaping health

“And as the Commission says, everyone can play a part in addressing health literacy, including health care organisations, providers, consumer and health and education policy organisations.

“People can improve their own health literacy by speaking up, asking questions or asking for help and support if they are provided with information or services that are hard to understand.

“A current example of the way people may not know how to get the best out of the system even when it might be financially worthwhile is the disclosure that Medicare is holding \$150 million in benefit payments waiting to be rightfully claimed by patients who have already paid their doctors the full fee but not claimed back the Medicare benefit,” Ms Wells said.

When in doubt about where to turn to, check **#Be Health Aware** at: <https://chf.org.au/be-health-aware>

ENDS

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