

healthUPdate

18 February 2020

From the CEO

Two reports, two views on society's impact on health

The value of community-wide strategies to support healthier lives was highlighted with the launch of two very different documents this week.

The release of the Closing the Gap report on national efforts to reduce the disparity in health and socio-economic outcomes between Indigenous and non-indigenous Australians has once again showed a disturbing lack of progress.

While some educational outcomes are meeting targets, outcomes in most spheres including child mortality, employment and life expectancy are failing to close the gap with outcomes in the rest of Australia. Of deep concern is a worsening of cancer mortality rates among Indigenous Australians highlighting the urgent need to continue programs to reduce smoking and encourage healthy diet and lifestyle.

So much about closing the health inequity gap is about taking on the social determinants of health like education and housing. It seems clear that closing the gap depends significantly on Indigenous communities having a bigger say in the systems that are supposed to benefit them. It is welcome that the Government is supporting primary health care partnership funding that is appropriate to the culture, language and circumstances of communities.

These community partnerships should reflect a social model of health which brings us to the release of a report on social prescribing which CHF has produced jointly with the Royal Australian College of GPs.

The report calls for social prescribing to be incorporated into routine health care. That would involve the referral of patients with chronic conditions to non-medical activities, ranging from pain support groups, health and fitness programs, movie clubs and meditation.

Trials are indicating that social prescribing provides solutions for patients where conventional care has failed. The report finds that while most patients would welcome community-based therapy options, many GPs do not have links to such services.

This is a vital development for patients in providing a path to more effective care. It has become particularly important given rising rates of chronic illness, mental health issues, social isolation and loneliness, many of which cannot be treated effectively with a medical approach alone.

The Closing the Gap report available on the [National Indigenous Australians Agency website](#).

The **social prescribing report** is below:

GET THE REPORT

Leanne Wells
Chief Executive Officer



News & Resources

A promotional banner for the CHF Summit 2020. On the left, a purple background features the CHF logo (Consumers Health Forum of Australia) and the text 'Consumers as leaders in healthcare'. On the right, a white background features a graphic of four interlocking gears with icons inside: a person reading, two people talking, a heart with a cross, and a person in a wheelchair. Below the graphic is the text 'CHF | SUMMIT 2020 Shifting Gears' and 'Sydney 2-3 Sept 2020'.

Summit 2020 - Shifting gears

Registrations are now open for our **Summit 2020 - Shifting Gears** in Sydney this September.

Keynote speakers include: ABC TV's Ellen Fanning, Dr Kate Mulligan, Director, Policy and Communications for the Alliance for Healthier Communities in Toronto, and Vincent Dumez, Co-Director and patient partner at the Centre of Excellence on Partnering with Patients and the Public, University of Montreal - [read more](#)

Registration is [free for consumer advocates](#) and leaders (places are limited).

The summit will offer the opportunity for both organisations and consumers to come together to explore, discuss and grow the concept and practice of consumer-centred care, and be at the forefront of system change.

Submissions for abstracts are also **now open**. We invite you to propose topics relevant to contemporary issues *in health reform from a consumer*

perspective. See more about [topics for submissions](#).

CHF SUMMIT 2020

Health alert - novel coronavirus



The reduction in reported cases of the novel coronavirus 2019 (Covid-2019) has alleviated some fear about the potential spread of the disease, however, the risk of a world pandemic has not yet passed. The Chief Medical Officer and Department of Health are monitoring the outbreak closely and have released information for health workers. Resources and information are to be found on the Department's website.

[DEPT OF HEALTH WEBSITE](#)

Opportunity for consumers



Digital Health - Special Interest Group

CHF has been working closely with the Australian Digital Health Agency on a range of digital health issues.

We are now funded to undertake a 12-month project to build consumer capacity in digital health policy development and implementation.

In support of this project, we are seeking expressions of interest from people or organisations who want to be part of a Digital Health Special Interest Group (SIG). The group will focus on the future of digital health, initially concentrating on electronic prescribing.

To join this group submit your [expression of interest](#).

Applications close at 5:30pm, [Friday 28 February 2020](#).

If you have questions, please contact **Anthony Egeland**, Policy Officer - Digital Health on email: A.Egeland@chf.org.au or tel: 02 6273 5444.

FIND OUT MORE

Safety and Quality Special Interest Group – Expression of Interest



The Safety and Quality Special Interest Group works with CHF to connect consumers with the **Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care** (the Commission) for user testing of resources such as decision support tools, consumer factsheets and consumer tools. We continue to respond to requests for consumer feedback from the Commission, as well as organisations that align with CHF's priority areas including health literacy, patient activation, and shared decision-making.

Through this group, CHF aims to provide a space for those interested in safety and quality to share information, communicate and bounce ideas around to enact change.

We currently have 19 members and would like to increase to 25. The group is advisory to CHF, and is open to all members and consumer representatives with final decision remaining with the CHF Board. We do not meet face-to-face however use a mixture of online forums (SharePoint) and meet via teleconference once per month. No sitting fees or reimbursement is offered to participants.

For more information [see our website](#), or contact Leanne Kelly, Safety and Quality Policy Officer on l.kelly@chf.org.au

SUBMIT YOUR EXPRESSION OF INTEREST

Conferences and workshops:



Registrations are now open and abstracts are being invited for the two exceptional healthcare events of 2020, to be held at the International Convention Centre Sydney in May.

Choosing Wisely Australia 2020 - National Meeting

The Choosing Wisely National Meeting offers members and supporters, policy makers, consumer advocates, health services and other healthcare influencers the opportunity to engage in discussions, presentations and workshops.

The focus will be on empowering consumers and supporting health professionals to be champions for changing the conversations in our health system so that people only receive care that is evidence-based and truly necessary.

[Choosing Wisely Australia](#) is an initiative of NPS MedicineWise in partnership with Australia's health professional colleges, societies and associations.

[FIND OUT MORE](#)

National Medicines Symposium (NMS) 2020: Rising to the medication safety challenge

NMS 2020 will bring together influential organisations, individuals and decision makers in the health sector to discuss and debate key issues around quality use of medicines and health technologies. The program will encourage a collaborative approach with a focus on the needs of the consumer.

Who is this conference for?

This conference is for people from all sectors of the health industry.

[CONFERENCE WEBSITE](#)

Consultations & Surveys

Evaluation of the Primary Health Network After Hours Program

The Australian Department of Health has commissioned an independent evaluation of the Primary Health Network (PHN) After Hours Program.

The program has been in place since 2015 and provides funding to PHNs to plan, co-ordinate and support after hours care for their areas.

PHNs focus on addressing gaps in after-hours services, at risk populations and improved service integration.

The Consumers Health Forum of Australia (CHF) is being interviewed as part of the evaluation as a national stakeholder organisation. To inform our input we are seeking consumer views and experiences of after-hours care.

The questions in this survey are provided to help guide your response and all questions are optional. If there is additional information you would like to provide you are welcome to include that at the end of the survey. Feel free to circulate throughout your networks.

If you have any questions about the survey, please contact CHF **Senior Policy Officer**, Lisa Gelbart at l.gelbart@chf.org.au

The survey will close COB Tuesday, 25 February.

[GO TO THE SURVEY](#)

Australia's Health Panel



Australia's Health Panel allows consumers to comment on health policy and issues and offer feedback on current trends and discussions.

Join Australia's Health Panel and have your say on today's issues in health care. Please share details about Australia's Health Panel with your members.

[LEARN MORE](#)

Plus Paternal - focus on fathers



Healthy Male is conducting two national surveys.

1. Men's lived-experience survey – for men who have fathered or tried to father a child in the last five years.
2. Health professional survey – from general practice, fertility support, midwifery, obstetrics and gynaecology services.

The survey will be ask about your experiences at difference points in time and with different health professionals and services. Healthy Male (Andrology Australia) would like to hear your ideas for how the system could be improved to better meet the needs of men.

[LEARN MORE](#)

CHF Media Releases & Blogs



Consumer anxiety about climate health impacts shows need for effective government strategy

A large majority of those who participated in a recent Australia's Health Panel survey have expressed concern about health implication of climate change.

MEDIA RELEASE



Social prescribing – a remedy to counter chronic health problems

Social prescribing can counter rising chronic health problems, according to a new report.

MEDIA RELEASE

[All Media Releases and Blogposts](#)

Consumer Representatives Program

Consumer Representative Appointments

Richard Brightwell, nominated to attend the Department of Health - Medical Research Future Fund (MRFF) Medicinal Cannabis Research Roundtable Roundtable

Christine Jeffery, nominated to attend the NPS Medicinewise - Value in Prescribing Immunoglobulin's Program Design Forum

Andrew Warden, nominated to attend the NPS Medicinewise - Value in Prescribing Immunoglobulin's Program Design Forum



CHF expects and appreciates reports from CHF nominated consumer representatives. These reports help keep CHF informed of consumer representative work.

Consumer representative reports can be made online, via email, mail or phone. CHF thanks the following consumer representatives for keeping us up to date on their work.

Melissa Cadzow, ACSQHC - Patient Safety Reporting Advisory Committee

Joanne Muller, ACSQHC - Topic Working Group developing a clinical care standard on peripheral venous access

Consumer Representative Vacancies

CHF nominates consumer representatives to high level committees and those related to funded priority areas. Calls for nominations are made via *healthUPdate* and the CHF website. Not all opportunities are advertised due to time limitations or because CHF decides to target invitations due to the specific work or strategic nature of the work involved.

If you have any questions about any of the opportunities please contact the contact person or our Consumer and Member Relationship Coordinator, Ghislaine Martin, on 02 6273 5444 or email g.martin@chf.org.au.

More information about all the opportunities below can be found on our Consumer opportunities webpage.

[SEE ALL OUR CONSUMER REP VACANCIES](#)

Palliative Care Australia - Consumer Peer to Peer Mentoring Program

Expressions of interest are sought from experienced and skilled consumer advocates, who would like to share their knowledge of consumer leadership and pass on skills and insights as part of a 'Peer to Peer' mentoring program for consumers and carers. The program is being run by Palliative Care Australia and CHF and initial appointments will be for 6 months.

Expressions of interest close 23 February 2020 (midnight AEDT).

[MORE INFORMATION](#)

The Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care (ACSQHC) - General Practice Accreditation Coordinating Committee

General practice accreditation is voluntary in Australia and is designed to support implementation of processes and systems to improve the quality of care for patients attending accredited general practices. The Royal Australian College of General Practitioners (RACGP) develops the Standards for General Practices against which practices are assessed for accreditation.

The General Practice Accreditation Coordinating Committee provides oversight and input on issues relating to the implementation and assessment of the RACGP Standards for general practices as part of the National General Practice Accreditation Scheme. Applications are invited to be on this committee which involves two teleconferences up to December 2020. The work is likely to be ongoing.

Expressions of interest close 26 April 2020 (midnight AEDT).

MORE INFORMATION

Full details of committee vacancies are only accessible on our website by our members and consumer representatives. If you do not have access and would like to apply, please contact Ghislaine Martin on 02 6273 5444 or g.martin@chf.org.au.

Click below for more information on CHF membership.

BECOME A MEMBER

Other Consumer Representative Vacancies

This section is for consumer representative opportunities that CHF does not provide nominations for. Members can work directly with other stakeholders to nominate consumer representatives to committees that are of interest to them.

CHF checks that consumer participation is supported with coverage of travel costs and sitting fees, however CHF does not prescribe an amount for sitting fees as committee requirements vary.

Department of Health - Expert Working Group - Supporting Optimal GP Pathology Requesting

The Department of Health is seeking two consumer representatives to join a time-limited expert working group.

The expert working group is being established to assist with a project to:

- support optimal GP pathology requesting by providing feedback, information and educational materials

- reduce GP requests for pathology tests that are unlikely to support diagnosis or improve health outcomes for their patients.

Two representatives are sought to provide the consumer perspective to help better understand the context, drivers and patient implications of GP decision making around ordering pathology tests.

Please contact Cristy Henderson, Assistant Director, Behavioural Insights and Evaluation Section at the Department of Health on (02) 6289 8898 should you have any queries.

Applications close on Friday 28 February 2020

[MORE INFORMATION](#)

Dietitians Association of Australia (DAA) - Dietetic Credentialing Council (DCC)

The Dietitians Association of Australia (DAA) is the peak body for dietetic and nutrition professionals, representing more than 7,000 members around Australia and overseas.

The Dietetic Credentialing Council (DCC) is an independent Council responsible for the regulatory framework for the dietetic profession in Australia.

The DAA is seeking a consumer representative to join the Council to assist in overseeing all aspects related to the maintenance and development of regulatory standards, codes and guidelines and their implementation. More information is available in the [Terms of Reference](#).

The appointment is for a two-year term, starting on 23 March 2020 and ending on 23 March 2022. The work will consist of six to eight teleconferences. The teleconferences are usually between one to two hour long. The next meeting is anticipated to take place on 23 March 2020.

The DAA will pay sitting fees for this work and cover travel costs when necessary.

To apply, please email the following to Credentialing Manager at the DAA, Ms Julia Schindlmayr at credentialing@daa.asn.au.

- a letter of endorsement verifying experience and links to a health consumer group
- A CV in pdf format
- responses to the selection criteria listed in the Terms of Reference under “External member- health consumer representative”

Please contact Julia Schindlmayr at the Dietitians Association of Australia on 02 6189 1210 should you have any queries.

Applications close on Friday 13 March 2020

[MORE INFORMATION](#)

Consumers Health Forum



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