

## NPS MedicineWise Statement – Consumers Health Forum of Australia

CHF is aware of the government decision in the Federal Budget that the national Quality Use of Medicines (QUM) role currently fulfilled by NPS MedicineWise will transfer to the Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Healthcare (ACSQHC).

From January 1, 2023:

- A number of QUM functions currently delivered by NPS MedicineWise will be transferred to the ACSQHC
- NPS MedicineWise will no longer receive any uncontested funding from the Department of Health to support QUM.

CHF supports the independent stewardship of QUM and for the last two years has been the principal consumer partner for NPS MedicineWise. Independent and nationally coordinated stewardship allows for a more objective analysis of how medicines are used, keeps health professionals and consumers up-to-date with timely, independent evidence-based information and resources about QUM, and gives scope for suggestions for change and improvement in practice that would benefit consumers.

Given the ongoing nature of the reviews of the National Medicines Policy; and given the Partnering with Consumers Standard that underpins all other standards upheld by the Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care, now is not the time for QUM stewardship to be diluted.

Consumers play a vital role in promoting medicines quality and safety. Medicines safety has been designated a National Health Priority Area (NHPA) and should continue to be so in the wake of the findings of the Aged Care Royal Commission. Consumers must be involved in all stages of the proposed new approach from design to implementation.

Consumer interests remain central to the QUM agenda. To uphold this fundamental principle, all organisations seeking to be involved in the various components of the new suite of services from 1 January 2023 should be required to partner with consumer organisations in genuine collaborations to set priorities, co-design and deliver programs.