

healthUPdate

12 March 2020

From the CEO

Trustworthy information a key weapon to counter COVID19

The extent of the Federal Government's COVID-19 Health Plan announced on Wednesday should bring home to all of us two things: the scale of the challenge we face, and also the capacity that Australians and our health system has to meet that challenge.

The Federal Government's \$2.4 billion anti-COVID-19 measures demonstrate in their scale and detail that in large part we have existing infrastructure and services to ensure we can counter the threat of a pandemic.

CHF made direct representations to the Minister along with others such as the RACGP for many of the measures announced. We will be cooperating and supporting HealthDirect in particular on their task of expanding the existing services of the phone hotline and website for both clinicians and the public.

The provision of bulk-billed telehealth medical services, home medicine deliveries, support for additional aged care staff and increased service capacity for First Nations People in remote locations are much-needed initiatives.

They will require significant changes in the system and there will be blips along the way to full implementation.

Central to an effective response to the virus will be prompt and trustworthy information for the community to understand and share. We will deal with COVID-19 best if we all inform ourselves and act in the best health interests of ourselves, our family and our community.

CHF is ready to support effective measures to ensure the flow of authoritative information to the public

We have welcomed the announcement of a \$30 million national media campaign to provide people with practical advice on how they can play their part in containing the virus and staying healthy.

This campaign is aimed to keep the health and aged care sectors informed, including with up-to-date clinical guidance, caring for patients, and the development of an app and advice to workers in looking after their own safety.

CHF has long promoted health literacy as a key goal for health consumers. Sharing knowledge is important to ensure individual and community health and safety in facing challenges like COVID-19.

At times like the present, sharing beats fearing.

GOVERNMENT ANNOUNCEMENT

Leanne Wells
Chief Executive Officer



News and resources

National Health Information Strategy - webinar for consumers

ABC's Dr Norman Swan joins a special webinar on the National Health Information Strategy (NHIS) on crunch issues like public trust & personal health information.

In this webinar, next Tues 17 March, CHF will lead a consumer focused discussion on the NHIS development.

Consumers are invited to share insights into what the NHIS should look like to improve the healthcare system for all Australians.

[READ MORE](#)



Coronavirus update



Public Health authorities are urgently acting to contain the spread of Covid-19 as many more cases of the disease are confirmed in countries outside China.

CHF reinforces the message from the Chief Medical Officer and the **Department of Health** that people turn to the most recent information posted daily on the Department's website coronavirus and from the [World Health Organisation](#).

The Department of Health has a dedicated page with [resources for health professionals](#).

Healthdirect, a service which provides trusted, quality health information online and over the phone, has expanded its service to help [the public and health professionals](#) stay informed.

Victorian-based **Health Translations** has [resources and factsheets](#) translated into Chinese, Korean, Italian and Farsi (Persian).

CHF has set up a section in the information portal **Be Health Aware** for [useful links for consumers](#).

DEPT OF HEALTH WEBSITE

2020 National influenza vaccination program



Advice from the Chief Medical Officer

The annual vaccination is the most important measure to prevent influenza and its complications and is recommended for all people aged 6 months and over (unless contraindicated).

To meet the anticipated demand for seasonal influenza vaccines in 2020, the Australian Government will be securing the largest supply of seasonal

influenza vaccines ever through the National Immunisation Program (NIP) for people most at risk.

NIP vaccines will be available in April, subject to local supply.

[FIND OUT MORE](#)



Keeping body and mind together with Medicare

How will the rising threat of the coronavirus, COVID-19, burden hospitals in an health system already under pressure? Can we find some opportunity to push through some much needed reforms, asks CHF CEO, Leanne Wells
CANBERRA TIMES: 5 FEB 2020

[READ MORE](#)

Keeping body and mind together with Medicare

CEO, Leanne Wells, highlights the issues that arise when GPs are prevented from co-billing Medicare for physiscal and mental health issues
CROAKEY: 03 MAR 2020

[READ MORE](#)



Social prescribing – a remedy to counter chronic health problems

Australia should use social prescribing to counter rising chronic health problems, according to a new report from the Royal Australian College of General Practitioners (RACGP) and the Consumers Health Forum (CHF)
MEDIA RELEASE: 11 FEB 2020

[READ MORE](#)

National Strategic Action Plan for Rare Diseases

Australian academics first called for a national plan for rare diseases in 2010, and this week **Rare Voices Australia** were delighted to launch the first National Strategic Action Plan for Rare Diseases. Rare Voices Australia (RVA) has led the collaborative development of the Action Plan.

After extensive consultation with stakeholders around the country, the Action Plan has been developed by the rare disease sector, for the rare disease sector.

[READ MORE](#)

[All Media Releases and Blogposts](#)

Conferences and workshops



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](#)

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](#)



Most Common complaints against five health professions revealed

The most common complaints against five different health professions has been revealed in a comprehensive study by a team led by Professor Merrilyn Walton from the University of Sydney.

The team examined over 12,600 complaints made over an 18 month period in the following disciplines:

- Medicine
- Dentistry
- Nursing and midwifery
- Pharmacy
- Psychology

Complaints were most often against doctors and dentists and least common for nurses and midwives. This is the first analysis of this type which spans across these five practices.

The most common cause of complaint was about clinical care (44% of all complaints), medication (10%) and health impairment of the practitioner (8%).

Male practitioners were at least twice as likely as female practitioners to have a complaint made against them.

The details of this research is available the February issue of *Australian Health Review* (AHR), the professional journal of the **Australian Healthcare and Hospitals Association**.

[LEARN MORE](#)

Consultations & Surveys

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.

Join Australia's Health Panel today

[LEARN MORE](#)

Consumer Representatives Program

Consumer Representative Appointments



Jan Donovan, nominated to the Arthritis Australia - Value in Prescribing Program: bDMARDs Stakeholder Panel

Henry Ko, nominated to provide 'Peer to Peer' mentoring for the members of Palliative Care Australia's National Register of Palliative Care Consumers and Carers (the National Register).

Alison Marcus, nominated to provide 'Peer to Peer' mentoring for the members of Palliative Care Australia's National Register of Palliative Care Consumers and Carers (the National Register).

Jennifer Morris, nominated to provide 'Peer to Peer' mentoring for the members of Palliative Care Australia's National Register of Palliative Care Consumers and Carers (the National Register).

Adam Johnston, nominated to provide 'Peer to Peer' mentoring for the members of Palliative Care Australia's National Register of Palliative Care Consumers and Carers (the National Register).

Richard Brightwell, nominated to provide 'Peer to Peer' mentoring for the members of Palliative Care Australia's National Register of Palliative Care Consumers and Carers (the National Register).

Rebecca Edwards, nominated to provide 'Peer to Peer' mentoring for the members of Palliative Care Australia's National Register of Palliative Care Consumers and Carers (the National Register).

Consumer Representative Reports

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.

Richard Brightwell, DoH - National Pathology Accreditation Advisory Council (NPAAC)

Richard Brightwell, DoH - Medical Research Future Fund (MRFF) Medicinal Cannabis Research Roundtable

Richard Brightwell, ADHA - Electronic Prescribing - National Change and Adoption Working Group (NCAwg)

Geraldine Robertson, MBS Review - Diagnostic Imaging Implementation Liaison Group

Christine Walker, Allied Health Roundtable

Geraldine Robertson, DoH - Diagnostic Imaging Advisory Committee (DIAC)

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.

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

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

SEE ALL OUR CONSUMER REP VACANCIES

Multipurpose Services Project Advisory Committee

The Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care (ACSQHC)

The Commission has established the Multipurpose Services Project to improve safety and quality and accreditation processes in multipurpose services, including aged care.

This project will involve consultation with stakeholders to identify safety and quality issues and a preferred strategy to address the concern that some activities provided by multipurpose aged care services such as independence and recreational activities, fall outside the National Safety and Quality Health Service (NSQHS) Standards and the Residential Aged Care Accreditation Standards (the Accreditation Standards).

The Commission is seeking consumer representation on a Multipurpose Services Project Advisory Committee which will support this project.

The appointment will run from March 2020 to December 2021, and will consist of three teleconferences. The next teleconference is anticipated to take place on Monday 6 April 2020. Sitting fees will be paid by the Commission for this work.

Expressions of interest close Sunday 22 March 2020 (midnight AEDT).

[MORE INFORMATION](#)

Reference Group for the Post-market Review of Medicines for Smoking Cessation

The Department of Health

There are currently three pharmacological interventions for smoking cessation available on the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS): nicotine replacement therapy (NRT), varenicline, and bupropion. The post-market review (PMR) of medicines for smoking cessation will re-assess the PBS restrictions in the context of the latest available evidence, best clinical practice and cost-effectiveness.

The Reference Group will provide a platform for key stakeholders and technical experts to provide advice to the review. Consumer representatives are invited to apply.

The appointment is for an eighteen month term from June 2020 to 31 December 2021. The work will consist of three or four face-to-face meetings in 2020 and 2021, to be held in Canberra and possibly Brisbane.

Expressions of interest close Sun 29 March 2020 (midnight AEDT).

[MORE INFORMATION](#)

Consumer Advisory Group

NPS MedicineWise

NPS MedicineWise is establishing a Consumer Advisory Group to advise on best practice for consumer and community engagement as well as provide consumer input to influence the work of NPS MedicineWise.

The Consumer Advisory Group will consist of eight members - a mix of consumer representatives and consumer engagement experts.

Interested consumer representatives will have knowledge of the consumer issues around the quality use of medicines and medical tests, have the ability to challenge the status quo and promote innovative thinking and be able to engage constructively in a committee environment.

This application is for two CHF nominated places. *NPS MedicineWise is also directly recruiting a chair and a number of consumer representatives.*

Expressions of interest close 5:30pm on Tues 31 March 2020 (AEDT).

[MORE INFORMATION](#)

General Practice Accreditation Coordinating Committee

The Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care (ACSQHC)

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.

[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.

Dietetic Credentialing Council (DCC)

Dietitians Association of Australia (DAA)

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

The Dietitians Association of Australia (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](#).

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

To apply, please email the following to Credentialing Manager at 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](#)

Medical Research Future Fund - Rural, Regional and Remote Clinical Trial Enabling Infrastructure - Grant Assessment Panel

Department of Health

DoH is reviewing the grant design and processes to increase emphasis on the potential impacts/benefits of proposed projects and the translational

focus of the MRFF.

The Department is seeking consumer representatives for the Grant Assessment Panel, with experience in clinical trials or health research or health services in rural, regional and remote areas.

The work consists of one day of pre-reading followed by a single meeting in Melbourne expected to be held on 29 May 2020.

Travel costs, sitting fees and a pre-reading fee will be covered by the Department of Health.

Contact the Department of Health via email at ClinicalTrialsTeam@health.gov.au for your enquiries.

Applications close on Sunday 29 March 2020 (midnight AEDT)

[MORE INFORMATION](#)

Consumer Advisory Group - Chair and Consumer Representatives

NPS MedicineWise

NPS MedicineWise is establishing a Consumer Advisory Group to advise on best practice for consumer and community engagement as well as provide consumer input to influence the work of NPS MedicineWise.

The Consumer Advisory Group will consist of 8 members - a mix of consumer representatives and consumer engagement experts.

Members will have knowledge of the consumer issues around the quality use of medicines and medical tests, have the ability to challenge the status quo and promote innovative thinking and be able to engage constructively in a committee environment.

Apply for positions of chair and consumer representatives directly to NPS MedicineWise. *Applications are also open for two CHF nominated places.*

To apply, submit your expression of interest through [this online application](#).

Contact Bronwyn Walker at NPS MedicineWise via email at Bronwyn.walker@nps.org.au or on (02) 8217 8784 should you have any queries.

Applications close 5:30pm AEST on Tues 31 March 2020

[MORE INFORMATION](#)

