



Consumers Health
Forum OF Australia

TheKingsFund>

Developing Leaders»

A decorative graphic consisting of three overlapping, rounded, wave-like shapes. The top shape is green, the middle one is beige, and the bottom one is purple, matching the CHF logo colors.

COLLABORATIVE PAIRS AUSTRALIA
Collaborative Pairs and
National Health Reform

WHAT IS THE RELEVANCE OF THE COLLABORATIVE PAIRS PROGRAM TO HEALTH REFORM AND THE HEALTH SYSTEM IN AUSTRALIA?

Changes in the healthcare system in the developed world over the last decade are moving to having consumers and the broader community at the core of the health system. Enabling consumers and communities to gain greater control over, and contribute to better health outcomes, involves reorienting or reengineering the system to focus on the enablers (ie health literacy, access to shared information, shared decision making) and the settings in which this will take place.

At the national level, The Australian Commission for Safety, Quality in Health Care (ACSQHC) has developed the National Safety and Quality Health Service Standards (NSQHS) which are mandatory for hospitals and day procedure services. The NSQHS Standards require health service organisations to engage consumers in partnership in the design, delivery and evaluation of health services. Consumer-centred care is at the heart of a contemporary health care system and consumer participation needs to be embedded in all levels of the health system.

However, there is a need to reflect the changing role of consumers in the health system by building consumer capability and capacity to partner with health care providers and policy makers in influencing and shaping the system of health care. It includes equipping consumers to be more informed and enabled to make the cultural shift from a pure 'advocacy' approach to one of collaboration and partnership. Similarly, there is a significant need to educate and lead service providers in cultural change which will enable more effective partnerships with consumers. The Collaborative Pairs Program is seen as a key enabler for the transformational change required for Australia to develop a consumer – centred health care system.

In addition, there are a number of significant national reforms in health underway in Australia. These include:

- the establishment of Primary Health Networks and their transition to regional commissioners
- the redevelopment of the My Health Record and development of a national digital health strategy
- the Health Care Home program
- implementation of the broad ranging Government response to the recommendations of the National Mental Health Commission's Review
- reforms to improve aged care and disability services

Furthermore, there is a commitment from the Australian Government to a long term National Health Plan which will bring together and consolidate all of these health reforms and establish agreements with the states and territories. This will require input of consumers, clinicians, health service providers and other relevant stakeholders to work together within the health system to shape it and ensure that there continues to be a move towards a more sustainable, person-centred system.

“Achieving a more collaborative dynamic will require a change in the way that all of us work. The ability to adapt, communicate and shift between roles will be important for all leaders in developing the collaborative relationship that puts safety and quality at the heart of health care in our communities”

Alison Trimble, the King's Fund

WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS TO PRIMARY HEALTH NETWORKS (PHNS) AND LOCAL HEALTH DISTRICTS (LHDS) ?

Collaborative Pairs is relevant for Primary Health Networks and for Local Health Districts as they engage with their local consumers and communities in a new, different and systemic way, particularly PHNs as they fulfill their new commissioning roles and their obligations for greater accountability and transparency to the constituencies they serve.

PHNs are tasked with building a primary health care service system that effectively addresses priority health conditions, improves efficiency and helps manage hospital demand and increases equity and access for those whose health outcomes are poorer. There is an expectation that they will engage with consumers and communities in the development and implementation of regional based planning, commissioning and delivery of health services. It is anticipated that this will include increased co-design and co-development of health services with consumers and communities .

Collaborative Pairs provides an opportunity for PHNs and LHDS to develop their leaders: consumers, service providers and managers to work collaboratively in co-designing their local service system and to have an impact on their local health economy. It also enables communities and consumers to have greater ownership in the health system in their local area, promotes a culture of continuous quality improvement and encourages innovation.

Key outcomes for PHNs and LHDS of this program would be:

- the development of consumer leaders who are system literate and confident in engaging in effective dialogue with clinical, managerial and other stakeholders about the healthcare they provide and to be able to engage in joint projects and co-design strategies and services
- the development of clinical and managerial leaders who have respect for consumer and community leaders, view them as an asset and, importantly, have the knowledge and skills about how to engage them optimally in commissioning process and service development initiatives
- assistance with accountabilities around the extent to which PHNs are systemically involving consumers and communities in their governance and commissioning decisions, including steps taken to support such participation
- a contribution to PHN workforce development and retention efforts and a culture of improvement with PHNs.

The learning that is captured from each cohort trained can then inform and deepen the future development of new and effective relationships between the health and care system and patients, citizens and communities where each pair engages in a cycle of planning, reflection and action to continually adapt and improve the quality of their work. This style of learning has already proved to be successful in primary health care.

WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS TO CONSUMERS AND COMMUNITIES?

Consumers and communities will learn and develop together with service providers and managers. They will be seen as equals. It also provides them with the skills, knowledge and confidence to engage effectively with the health system to influence and drive system change. One of the current barriers to progress in consumer influence and leadership is the culture of the health system and this program identifies the need for change at all levels of the system. Being involved as partners from the outset is a game changer, as by its very nature the dynamics in the relationship have changed. This program will help grow and sustain consumer and community leaders. Leaders will benefit from participation in the program in the following ways:

- capacity to build effective relationships based on trust, credibility and respect
- the ability to see the big picture and act strategically and systemically
- skills to lead and manage their own health and wellbeing and build on this experience to lead and influence others
- the ability to lead by example through demonstrating in their behavior and language the changes they are trying to achieve.

“People who access the services that my team deliver can have many factors influencing their wellbeing. We need to work in partnership to accurately understand and plan. We need to review and reflect on how care is received, so that services are shaped by the people who use them. Collaborative care should be embedded in what we do at every contact, thus making collaborative leadership part of the culture of service delivery at every level of the organisation”

Clinical Manager for Neuro-rehabilitation,
Cambridgeshire and Peterborough NHS
Foundation Trust

Collaborative Pairs Australia is supported by the following organisations

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QUALITY IN
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