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CONSUMER VOICES

CHF
Consumers Health
Forum of Australia

News and views of health consumers - 18 Jan 2023



On 1 February, it will be 40 years since the introduction of Australia's universal healthcare scheme, Medicare.

A range of activities is planned to mark the occasion including [a one-day conference](#) organised by Deakin University's Centre for Contemporary Histories where CHF CEO, Elizabeth Deveny, will speak about Grassroots Perspectives of Medicare.

Also on that day, she will appear before a [Senate Committee on cost-of-living pressures](#) which are impacting the ability of many Australians to access the health care they need, when they need it.

Affordability and accessibility will also be themes of Elizabeth's address to an OECD-led policy forum, [The Future of People-Centred Health Innovation](#), on 23 January.

All in all, it's a busy few weeks ahead for CHF as we represent Australian health consumers on both local and international stages and in the media.

Full coverage of all these events will be in our next newsletter, so if you haven't [subscribed](#) please do so.

February is also a busy month with plenty of opportunities for consumers. Read the current opportunities below and head to our website for a list of open [consultations and surveys](#) and [committee vacancies](#).

Consumer opportunities



National Consumer Sentiment Survey

CHF is leading the development of the 2024 National Consumer Sentiment Survey. The survey aims to increase understanding of the health system from a consumer point of view, to improve the delivery and planning of healthcare services in our communities.

There is an opportunity for up to 20 consumers to participate in an online workshop to give feedback on the current survey themes and suggest new ideas.

The workshops are on Tues 20th February and Thurs 22nd February 2024 and consumers will be paid for their time.

Closes: **9:00 am Monday 5 February 2024 (AEDT)**

For more

Council for Connected Care - In-person Consumer Panel meeting

The Australian Digital Health Agency has established the [Council for Connected Care](#), which provides advice on matters related to connecting care and supports the implementation of the [National Healthcare Interoperability Plan 2023-2028](#).

There is currently an opportunity for up to 5 consumers to participate in the next meeting, which will take place face-to-face in **Sydney on 22 February 2024 from 10:00 am – 4:00 pm**.

The theme of the meeting is **Information Sharing** as a key priority area to improve decision making and outcomes, by helping to reduce clinical risks and inefficiencies.

Applicants will be selected from all over Australia. People from Rural and Remote areas are welcome and encouraged to apply.

We expect selection will be made in early February. Please submit your Expression of Interest by **9:00 am Monday 5 February 2024 (AEDT)**

Apply

Committee vacancies

MBS Review Advisory Committee review of telehealth

CHF is seeking up to 30 consumers to participate in an online workshop to inform the Medical Benefits Scheme (MBS) Review Advisory Committee (MRAC)'s post-implementation review of telehealth services.

The workshop will help MRAC advise the Department of Health and Aged Care on telehealth including video and phone, for consultations and changing eligibility requirements.

Closes **9:00 am Monday 22 January 2024 (AEDT)**

[Read more](#)

Diagnostic Imaging Stakeholder Committee

The Department of Health and Aged Care has invited CHF to nominate one consumer representative to its Diagnostic Imaging Stakeholder Committee (DISC). The Department is looking to re-establish this committee that expired on 30 June 2023. The committee provides a forum to consult with stakeholders on diagnostic imaging matters relating to the Medicare Benefits Schedule.

Closes **midnight Sun 4 February 2024.**

[Read more](#)

QUM MATES Stakeholder Reference Group

The University of South Australia has vacancies for up to two consumers on the Quality Use of Medicines: Medicines Advice and Therapeutics Education Services (QUM MATES) Stakeholder Reference Group

The Stakeholder Reference Group will be engaged to provide advice on matters from each stakeholders perspective and to disseminate program information to constituents.

Closes **Thurs 25 January 2024.**

[Read more](#)

National Carer Strategy Advisory Committee

Call for Expressions of Interest

The National Carer Strategy (the Strategy) will deliver a national agenda to support Australia's carers.

A National Carer Strategy Advisory Committee (the Advisory Committee) is being formed to support the development and implementation of the Strategy. The Advisory Committee will include carers with lived experience from diverse backgrounds as well as sector representatives from across a range of portfolios, including aged care, disability, veterans' affairs, and mental health.

Members of the Committee will be selected through an open Expression of Interest (EOI) process and appointed by the Minister for Social Services, the Hon Amanda Rishworth MP.

Applications close **Mon 29 January 2024.**

[Read more](#)

Join one of Apha's National Boards as a community representative

Do you want to play a part in when decisions about patient safety and health professionals' scope of practice are debated?

[Apha](#) (The Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency) is inviting applications to become a community member on one of 15 National Boards responsible for the regulation of 16 health professions.

There are 31 community member positions (open to everyone) and 63 practitioner member positions on the National Boards.

Information about eligibility, roles and the application process [are available here](#). An Information Guide and Frequently Asked Questions can be downloaded from the page.

Register for a webinar and live Q&A to learn more about what is involved in serving as a board member.

When: **23 January 2023**

Time: **6:30 pm**

Register

Other news

COVID-19 Royal Commission

Consumers Health Forum has contributed submissions to two Federal Government post-pandemic investigations into the response to COVID-19. The [COVID-19 Response Inquiry](#) was announced in September 2023. This Inquiry is intended to inform recommendations that aim to improve Australia's preparedness for future pandemics.

CHF's [submission is here](#)

In October last year a COVID-19 Royal Commission was commenced, beginning with an Inquiry into the appropriate Terms of Reference for a COVID-19 Royal Commission. CHF's [response is here](#).

The first public hearing for the Royal Commission is scheduled for **1 February 2024**. You can add your name to [receive alerts and read more here](#)

Read more

In the Media



Recently we commented on:

Rates of [GPs bulk billing all patients dropping](#) (The Guardian, 8 Jan 2024)

Skin cancer screening (The Age and SMH, paywalled, 6 Jan 2024)

Urgent Care Centres (Ch9 news nationally, 28 Dec 2023)

Availability of doctors in regional areas. (Ch7 Regional TV, 27 Dec 2023)

Government pushes back on a [proposal from health insurers](#) to raise premiums (ABC RN, 20 Dec 2023)

[How to find a GP you trust](#) (ABC RN, 15 Jan 2024, starts 1:30 to 1:50)

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