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Consumer Voices

News and views on health consumer issues - 14 April 2023

Male clinician hands unmarked bottle of pills to patient

For 30 years consumers have been waiting for healthcare reform. It's time for the government to deliver.

Almost a thousand people have joined CHF's [#30YearsOn campaign](#) which is demanding that health consumers be given a greater voice in the upcoming Strengthening Medicare reforms.

With just four weeks to go until the 2023 Federal Budget, we need your help to boost our campaign and tell the government that **it's time for healthcare reform**.

Medicare came into being in 1983 and was an outstanding initiative. However, over the next decade, cracks started to appear. Since then it's been 30 years of health system reviews, reports, and roundtables to address the issues and CHF has contributed at every point.

But we're tired of talking and I bet you are too!

We understand that the government is in a pressured position with this Budget, but the community has been **waiting for 30 years for action**.

Consumers want to see visits to the GP made easier and more affordable, they want help to navigate our complex health system and they want greater access to mental health and dental services. Consumers also want to have a seat at the table, to help shape the reforms from their design to implementation.

As you know, we pay for everything: through our taxes, Medicare levy, private insurance, and out-of-pocket costs. It all comes down to us.

For 30 years we've been paying for a system that doesn't deliver everything we need. We are asking for the government to seriously consider our views, to have us represented in all levels of decision-making, and to work with consumers to make sure the system works for them.

So, can you help us? Please visit our campaign [website](#) and

- [Sign the petition](#)
- [Share your story](#)
- Write to your MP

Over the next four weeks, let's remind the Australian Government to listen to the views of consumers.

Now is the time for Health Minister Mark Butler to deliver real reform and fully engage and listen to consumers. We all want the health system to get better.

Because it's our health system – It's ours and it's time.

Elizabeth Deveny

Chief Executive Officer

News from CHF

Webinar: Federal Budget for health 2023

Register for this post Budget webinar, the day after the Budget is handed down. Our policy team will be working late to bring you the breakdown for health so that you have best

information at your fingertips. **Wed 10 May 2:30 – 3:30 pm**

[Register here](#)

Consultation – Senate Inquiry into Dental Services

A [Senate Committee](#) has been formed to review dental services in Australia and Consumers Health Forum will be putting in a submission. We are running an Australia's Health Panel survey and also a member consultation to hear about your experiences and how you think dental services could be better accessed and provided. Register for the consultation on **Tuesday 18 April at 1:00 pm (Australian Eastern Standard Time)**

[Register for the consultation](#)

Australia's Health Panel

For the latest April 2023 [Australia's Health Panel](#) survey, we want to ask about your experiences with getting [dental or oral care](#) and your views on issues and solutions. This will help shape our submission to the Senate Committee and our broader advocacy efforts. Register for

Log in to [Australia's Health Panel](#) or [Join the panel](#) .

[Complete the survey](#)

News and Updates

Cosmetic surgery

Last years' investigations into the cosmetic surgery industry has led to a new public campaign from the Department of Health and Aged Care. The campaign will educate Australians about:

- where to find credible information,
- understanding the risks and
- knowing your rights.

Visit the Dept of Health and Aged Care website to find out more about the campaign and [share the resources](#) including how to choose a practitioner and how to choose a licensed facility

[Campaign](#)

Your Medicare card is now available in the MyGov App

The [MyGov App](#) has a digital wallet to securely store some government digital cards and certificates. You can already use the app for Centrelink concession and health care cards. The MyGov app has features to project against fraud and theft including an [animated hologram](#) to show that the card is not just a screenshot. Cards can be scanned using a [QR code generated](#) by the app.

[Read more](#)

Medicine Shortages – what if my antibiotics are out of stock?

The Australian Commission of Safety and Quality in Healthcare (ACSQHC) have produced a guide for consumers about how to access antibiotic medicines during the antibiotic shortage. Resources for [consumers are available here](#). The TGA website has the latest information on medicine shortages and how you might manage your medications.

[Find out more](#)

Consumer Rep opportunity

Paid health consumer representative opportunity - Torres and Cape Hospital and Health Service

The Torres and Cape Hospital and Health Service Consumer Advisory Committee (CAC) is looking for new health consumer representatives (members). CAC members are an important part of how they develop and provide health care services. The committee is made up of a group of dedicated members, patients, carers and community members from across their region. Members are paid sitting fees and are reimbursed for expenses in line with Health Consumers Queensland Remuneration and Reimbursement of Consumers Position Statement.

[Find out more](#)

Surveys

Digital Health Technologies Survey

COTA (Council of the Aging) Australia is asking for your views in a project to develop resources for elderly Australians and their families. The project will support the use of Digital Health Technologies such as Medicare Online, My Health records and e-prescriptions. You can help by completing this survey (closing 18 April 2023). There's also an opportunity to take part in a focus group. The survey is anonymous and will take 5 -10 minutes of your time.

[Do the survey](#)

Mission Australia Youth Survey



Mission Australia's Youth Survey 2023 is now open. In its 22nd year, the Mission Australia Youth Survey is the largest online survey of its kind in Australia and provides an important annual snapshot into the experiences and views of young people aged 15-19.

Please consider sharing on social media and to your networks and encourage the young people aged 15-19 in your life to share their voice and participate. For more information, please [read the media release](#).

[Do the survey](#)

Healhdirect Service Finder

Covid vaccine finder (healthdirect)

The Vaccine Clinic Finder, developed by [Healthdirect](#) to help Australians find and book COVID-19 vaccines has been retired. COVID-19 vaccination bookings are now available on the refreshed [Healthdirect Service Finder](#). Users can book and click on a broader range of clinical appointments, including COVID and flu vaccines. The Vaccine Clinic played a critical

role during the pandemic to help consumers find vaccines and ease the administrative burden on vaccination clinics. Use Healthdirect for free, professional health advice you can trust from the Australian Government.

[Healthdirect](#)

Become a member

Consumer representative program

Consumer representatives are nominated for national committees to ensure that the views and interests of health consumers are represented at the national level. CHF supports consumer representatives by providing resources in a number of ways. Find out how to become a [Consumer Rep](#)

CONSUMER REPRESENTATIVE PROGRAM

As a member of CHF you will be kept up to date on key health reform issues through our publications and member alerts. CHF membership enables you to influence the national health agenda by contributing to CHF surveys and polls, consultations and campaigns. Members can draw on CHF position statements, media releases and policy submissions to inform your work and advocacy.

[JOIN US - Become a member](#)

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02 6273 5444

info@chf.org.au

