

Consumers Shaping Health



News and views on health consumer issues - July 2020



Coronavirus exposes importance of health literacy

The coronavirus outbreak that has hit residents in the public housing towers of western Melbourne has tragically highlighted how poor health literacy combined with a lack of appropriately targeted public health messaging can impede attempts to curb the pandemic.

There are few other places in Australia which have such a high concentration of low income and disadvantaged people as does this precinct.

We know that low socio-economic status is often accompanied by low health literacy, exposing people to higher risk of chronic illness and infection.

We urgently need to see in Australia an effective national program to improve health literacy among low socio-economic and non-English speaking people.

The links between disadvantaged groups and the potential spread of coronavirus have been demonstrated in [new research](#) findings led by Professor Kirsten McCaffery of Sydney University's Health Literacy Lab.

The findings show those with the greatest burden of chronic disease are most disadvantaged, and most likely to experience severe disease and die from COVID-19.

Disparities in health literacy and language with regard to COVID-19 are associated with knowledge, attitudes and behaviours that have the potential to undermine efforts to reduce viral transmission and may lead to social inequalities in health outcomes in Australia.

The findings also conclude that health messages must be tailored to meet the needs of diverse populations or they may put already vulnerable people at greater risk.

Never has the health literacy of our population and our institutions been so important, [a recent article](#) in Croakey stated. That article, authored by Professor McCaffery, her colleague Dr Danielle Muscat, and CHF board member Jan Donovan, said the pandemic crisis brings into sharp relief the consequences of low health literacy in our communities and of our institutions.

CHF sees health literacy as a central part of our advocacy to promote health understanding. [We responded](#) to an ABS report last year which showed that in general, people with chronic illness or who are experiencing psychological distress are less likely to feel positive about their health literacy.

What's happening in Melbourne must surely drive comprehensive measures that ensure the message of health literacy reaches those who most need to learn about it.

Leanne Wells
Chief Executive Officer

News and Resources



Janine Mohamed backs Indigenous social equity program

Atlantic Fellows for Social Equity is calling for applications for their 2021 program, a learning experience which has the strong support of Janine Mohamed, CEO of the Lowitja Institute.

In 2018, Janine, a Narrunga Karuna woman, was appointed an Atlantic Fellow for Social Equity, joining a small but expanding cohort of Indigenous and non-Indigenous individuals striving to develop new mechanisms for impactful social change.

Janine who has worked in nursing, management, workforce and health policy, and project management in the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health sector said that in the program she focused on Indigenous leadership, self-sustainability and resilience.

What resulted from that inquiry was the development of knowledge to support emerging leaders in social equity, she said.

Atlantic Fellows for Social Equity applications are now open.

[FIND OUT MORE](#)



Older jobseekers need support

Before COVID-19, the data showed that 1 in 4 people receiving Jobseeker were over 50 years. Many of them were long term unemployed. The lesson from previous economic downturns is that many of these people may never find secure employment again and will be on Jobseeker until pension age

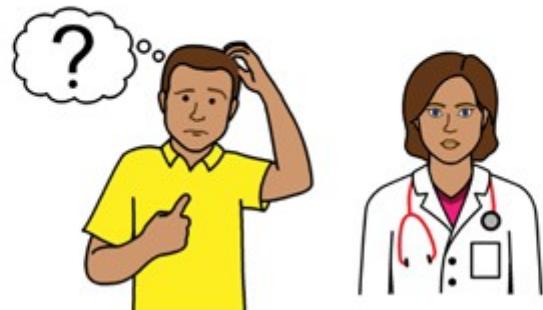
As part of the [National Day of Action](#) to “Raise the Rate for good!” COTA Australia are hosting a Facebook Live discussion about why a permanent increase to Jobseeker is important to Australians over 50. The day of action is next week, on 14 July.

Follow [COTA's Facebook page](#) for notifications.

To help with this campaign, share your story and your thoughts, and [complete this survey](#).

[COTA WEBSITE](#)

AUSTRALIAN COMMISSION ON SAFETY AND QUALITY IN HEALTH CARE



Factsheet: About healthcare rights for people with cognitive impairment: Easy English Guide

The Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care has released a new guide to support people living with cognitive impairment. The Guide covers; what to take to hospital, getting the right information, making choices about your health care and what healthcare staff will do.

[GET THE GUIDE](#)



Information about opioids and chronic non-cancer pain

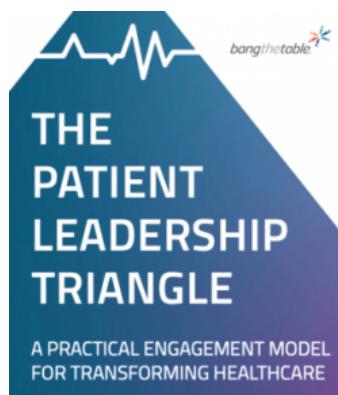
A new video to help people make an informed decision in partnership with their doctor about taking an opioid medicine for chronic (ongoing) non-cancer pain.

Opioids are a class of medicines taken to help reduce pain. They work on the central nervous system to slow down nerve signals between the brain and the body. This can reduce feelings of pain, but opioids may also produce unwanted effects, ranging from constipation to dangerous slowing down of a person's breathing.

The animated video from NPS MedicineWise and the Faculty of Pain Medicine of the Australian and New Zealand College of Anaesthetists (ANZCA) provides information to people who may be considering taking opioids for chronic (ongoing) non-cancer pain.

[SHARE THE VIDEO](#)

Book review



Healthcare jewels from the caves of suffering

Author and patient advocate David Gilbert writes how healthcare fails to value what he calls the "wisdom and insight forged in the caves of suffering". See the review of his book, *The Patient Leadership Triangle*, on our blog.

[READ THE REVIEW](#)

Surveys

How you value clinical trials: University of Melbourne Survey

The University of Melbourne are developing a method to measure clinical trial value and currently have a survey open seeking input from consumers / patients / family member of a patient who have received cancer care. You do not have to have taken part in a clinical trial to participate in the survey.

Being able to measure and represent clinical trial value numerically, will help the University of Melbourne to develop decision support tools for hospitals, universities and other institutions. This will allow improvements in how they choose the clinical

trials they run. Improving the system will lead to better outcomes for patients and more efficient use of healthcare resources.

The survey is completely anonymous, and you are free to stop participating at any time. It should take less than 10 minutes to complete.

The survey closes **31 July 2020**.

If you have any questions, please feel free to get in contact with Piers Gillett, Research Fellow (Cancer Data and Information Analytics) via email: gillettp@unimelb.edu.au

[GO TO THE SURVEY](#)



Covid19 Allied Health Telehealth Study

If you have consulted with an allied health practitioner since March 1st 2020 and via telephone and/or via video (e.g. Zoom, Facetime), and are 18 years or older, Allied Health Professions Australia (AHPA) invites you to contribute to this survey with Monash University.

The survey will support longer-term implementation of telehealth access via Medicare for people receiving allied health service.

Allied Health Practitioners, include exercise physiologists, osteopaths, podiatrists, speech pathologists, occupational therapists, and diabetes educators.

A parent/carer who is aged 18 years or over can also participate on behalf of a patient who is under 18 years old.

[COMPLETE THE SURVEY](#)

Webinars

This block contains two main sections. On the left, there is a white square containing the logo for "Collaborative Pairs Australia", which consists of a stylized purple and green graphic followed by the text "Collaborative Pairs Australia" and "A Consumers Health Forum Partnership". On the right, there is a dark teal rectangular area containing the text "Webinar" in large white letters, followed by a description: "A Celebration of the Learnings from the National Collaborative Pairs Program". Below this, the date and time are listed: "Friday 17 July 2020" and "10.00 - 11.00 am AEST".

WEBINAR: A Celebration of the Learnings from the National

Collaborative Pairs Program

CHF is leading the national implementation of an innovative consumer leadership program Collaborative Pairs developed in the UK by the King's Fund. The Program is designed for consumers to work in pairs with clinicians /service providers to develop new ways of working together to drive system reform. This program focusses on the relational aspects of collaboration.

This webinar is an opportunity to hear from the participating Pairs from CHF's inaugural Collaborative Pairs Program who will share their journey, learnings and highlights of how the program helped them shape and transform their collaborative relationship.

Date: Friday 17 July 2020
Time: 10.00pm – 11.00am AEST

[REGISTER](#)



#CHF Talks webinar series

CHF will be hosting more webinars in this series on topics relevant to the interests of consumers in healthcare. Topics will include:

- July – COVID Living Evidence Initiative.
- August – Primary health reform: meeting consumer expectations.
- September – Follow-up on e-prescribing to coincide with the community-wide introduction of the token initiative
- October – Social prescribing, what it is, its value to consumers and the community and its place in health and related policy.



Script change - Electronic prescribing and the consumer

Join our expert panel as they break down the roll-out of e-prescribing in Australia. Topics include; explaining the e-prescribing model, the current roll-out plan, privacy concerns, the importance of patient choice and guidance on what to expect and when.

If you missed the webinar or want to send it to your networks, [view the replay here](#)

If you would like to support us with your feedback after watching the webinar, please take [our short survey](#).

Access the slides for the [e-prescribing presentation](#)

[VIEW THE REPLAY](#)

Conferences & workshops



Summit 2021 - Shifting Gears

Share the lessons learned from COVID-19 at Shifting Gears

Abstract submissions are now open

Submissions can be for oral, workshop or poster presentations at the [CHF Summit: Shifting Gears](#).

The COVID-19 pandemic has disrupted the way we live, work and access healthcare. We invite you to submit your abstract about Consumer involvement in times of rapid change, reflecting on your or your organisation's experience in the COVID-19 pandemic or other similar situations.

- What have you learned during that it can share with others?
- What new parts of our healthcare systems have developed that should be retained and expanded?
- What have we learned about equity and inclusion in a time of crisis?

We also invite you to propose topics across our four streams:

- **Consumers as researchers:** Partnering for new knowledge and translation
- **Consumer-based Health Care:** Integrating consumer and community values in health care and decision-making
- **Consumer Leadership:** Collaborative partnerships in individual health care, services and system
- **Consumer Enablement:** Creating supportive environments

See more about [topics for submissions](#). Abstract submissions close on 7 September 2020.

The CHF Summit offers 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. We look forward to seeing you in March 2021.

Conference features

Big Ideas Forum

Showcasing innovative thinking from consumers to transform healthcare.
Applications open late July, email the [communications team](#) to go on the mailing list

Capturing experiences of care

A pre-conference masterclass in experience based co-design.

Conference website

We're looking



Job opportunity

Executive Officer

CHF is looking for an Executive Officer to join our team. The Executive Officer provides high-level executive support to the CEO to ensure the efficient operation of the CEO's office, CHF operations and high level support to the Board secretariat and its committees

[FIND OUT MORE](#)

Australia's Health Panel



CHF Australia's Health Panel

Australia's Health Panel - community pharmacy

Pharmacies are one of the **most common contact points** consumers have with the Australian healthcare system and pharmacists are one of the most trusted sources for healthcare services. In recent years issues related to price transparency, medicine shortages and provision of information have given some consumers a less than ideal health experience.

This month's survey asks about your views and experiences with community pharmacies.

Australia's Health Panel allows consumers to comment on health policy and issues, and offer feedback on 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 networks.

Australia's Health Panel



What Australia's Health Panel said about the COVIDSafe app

In May 2020, Australia's Health Panel (AHP) asked panellists about their first impressions of and attitudes towards the COVIDSafe smartphone app released by the Australian Government

[READ MORE](#)

Media Releases and editorial



Consumer Commission to seek lessons from COVID-19 to drive a better health system

CHF is establishing a Consumer Commission to take forward the lessons the COVID-19 experience offers for a better and more consumer-focused health system

..... MEDIA RELEASE: 24 JUNE 2020

[LEARN MORE](#)



Pharmacy agreement updated but not upgraded

Australian patients and taxpayers will contribute more than \$25 billion over five years under the new Community Pharmacy Agreement yet consumers have little effective say MEDIA RELEASE: 23 JUNE 2020

[LEARN MORE](#)



COVID and the power of ethics in health care

Among the many issues which have emerged with fresh power for consumers during the COVID-19 pandemic is health ethics MEDIA RELEASE: 22 JUNE 2020

[LEARN MORE](#)



National Health Information Strategy and the public interest

The reality that illness is often unexpected or unplanned makes the immediate availability of health information vital MEDIA RELEASE: 22 JUNE 2020

[LEARN MORE](#)



Pandemic offers guide to future continuity of care

The Continuity of Care Collaboration survey has shown the range of influences affecting patient access to health care during the pandemic that should guide future improvements to health services MEDIA RELEASE: 15 JUNE 2020

[LEARN MORE](#)



Ainslie Cahill AM recognised for her health consumer advocacy

The Consumers Health Forum congratulates Ainslie Cahill on being made a Member of the Order of Australia (AM) for her great work in promoting the interests of health consumers MEDIA RELEASE: 09 JUNE 2020

[LEARN MORE](#)

[READ ALL MEDIA RELEASES & OPINION](#)

What's happening in your community?



COVID SPACE – a place for sharing stories

What's happening in your home and community to beat COVID-19?

Share your story - tell us on **COVID SPACE**

We want to hear about the smart moves and fresh steps in your community to counter the virus.

Email the Communications Team on communications@chf.org.au or share your story with us on [Facebook](#)

[EMAIL THE COMMUNICATIONS TEAM](#)

Opportunities for participation



Special Interest Groups

Special Interest Groups (SIGs) are a way for members and the broader consumer community to be involved in our advocacy work and in shaping policy.

CHF has established Special Interest Groups to focus on Primary Health Care, Research & Data, Digital Health, Safety & Quality and Rural & Remote. SIGs help us to features even more consumer insight and perspective reflective of our Australian community..

Opportunities to join SIGs are advertised in newsletters and on our website.

[FIND OUT ABOUT CHF SIGS](#)



Join us!

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.

[BECOME A MEMBER](#)

Consumers Health Forum

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