

Consumers Shaping Health



News and views on health consumer issues - June 2021



CHF supports vaccination campaign

Since the COVID-19 pandemic gathered pace more than a year ago, CHF has encouraged consumers to not only keep themselves informed, but also have a say in the community response to this health crisis.

The Australian Government Department of Health has in different ways sought to communicate with CHF and our members, through webinars such as that addressed by departmental secretary, Dr Brendan Murphy, and inclusion of consumer representatives on such bodies as the National COVID-19 Clinical Evidence Taskforce.

Now, with many people raising questions such as who gets what vaccine and when during the vaccine rollout, the need for clear and trusted information is as urgent as ever. CHF has joined a national campaign to get credible information to those who need it.

Supported by the Department of Health, CHF has partnered with the National Rural Health Alliance in community-based efforts to develop and promote the strong evidence-based case for vaccination.

We are strongly advising Australians that vaccination is the most effective way to be protected against infectious diseases. The more people vaccinated, the less the likelihood of outbreaks and the need for highly disruptive lockdowns. Vaccinated people are less likely to experience the severe effects of COVID which can lead to hospitalisation or even death.

The vaccines made available in Australia are rigorously examined for safety by the independent medicines regulator, the Therapeutic Goods Administration.

You can learn more about vaccine issues in [answers to your questions](#) from medical experts.

If you're 50 and over, you are now eligible for a COVID-19 vaccine. The prioritised vaccine for people aged 50 and over is the AstraZeneca vaccine.

If you're under 50, you can use the [COVID-19 vaccine eligibility checker](#) to see what phase you are in. If you meet the Phase 1a or 1b criteria, you can get vaccinated now. Medical and scientific experts have recommended the preferred vaccine for people aged under 50 be the Pfizer vaccine.

Both the Pfizer vaccine and the AstraZeneca vaccine are very effective at preventing severe disease and death from COVID-19.

If you're worried about COVID-19 vaccines, that is perfectly normal. Your doctor can help you make an informed decision. Trusted resources such as those accessible through the links above can also help answer your questions.

Leanne Wells

Chief Executive Officer



News and resources

Cancer Australia launches
the development of the first



Australian Government
Cancer Australia

Australian Cancer Plan

Cancer Australia is developing the Australian Cancer Plan (ACP) to provide an overarching national approach to cancer control that meets the needs of all Australians now and in the future.



Australian Cancer Plan Ministerial Roundtable

Cancer Australia is developing the Australian Cancer Plan to enable comprehensive and inclusive engagement and consultation with stakeholders.

This is the outcome from the Australian Cancer Plan Ministerial Roundtable drawing representatives from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, peak national clinical bodies, peak cancer and health organisations, industry and private sector representatives, Commonwealth, State and Territory Health Departments, and more.

CHF CEO, Leanne Wells spoke at the Roundtable reinforcing the consensus for consultation with broad consumer representation and genuine co-design with stakeholders as the first step in development of the Australian Cancer Plan.

The Roundtable was an opportunity for stakeholders to raise ambitious ideas which to address inequities and priorities across the whole cancer journey and for priority population groups.

To read more about the Ministerial Roundtable, see the Australian Cancer Plan [Communique](#) or head to the [Cancer Australia](#) website.

FOR MORE



The Youth Health Forum is looking for new members!

We want to hear from young Australians (aged 18 to 30) who want to get involved in health advocacy for young people. This your opportunity to develop your advocacy skills and have your voice heard.

If you are, or know someone who is passionate about health, the consumer experience and youth issues, consider the Youth Health Forum as an opportunity to grow - and [sign up today](#).

FOR MORE



Join the Steering Group to develop the CHF Election Platform

- Are you a health consumer and advocate with strong connections to your community?
- Are you a leader in a CHF member organisation?
- Are you interested in how Commonwealth Government policies can improve Australia's health care and health care systems, programs and services?
- Would you like to help guide the CHF's policy and advocacy development work?

CHF will invite up to five consumer advocates to join the Steering Group that will develop the national policies to be advocated with the government, opposition, minor parties and independents during the next election campaign.

Please complete the application by midnight on Sunday 13 June if you would like to join the Steering Group. You can get [more information and apply](#) or contact CHF Senior Policy Officer, **Tammy Wolffs** t.wolffs@chf.org.au with your questions

FOR MORE



Have your say on secondary use of data in clinical research

Are you interested in secondary use of data for Australian research?

You can take part in the [Australian Clinical Trials Alliance](#) (ACTA)'s online webinar and virtual consultation workshop.

ACTA is working with the [Australian Research Data Commons \(ARDC\)](#) to gather insights and feedback about the Health Studies Australian National Data Asset (HeSANDA).

For more [information about this project](#) and to **read the background paper**, head to the ACTA website.

You can [register now](#) to attend a 1-hour online webinar about the HeSANDA initiative at 3.00–4.00pm AEST on **Tuesday 8 June**.

The webinar will provide a brief background on secondary data use and the proposed approach to designing a national data asset to support secondary use of data from clinical trials in Australia. The webinar will provide a useful background for anyone attending the consultation workshops and will be of particular value for consumers.

For questions, contact policy officer, [James Ansell](mailto:James.Ansell@chf.org.au) J.Ansell@chf.org.au

[FOR MORE](#)

CHF member brief



FECCA

Federation of Ethnic Communities' Councils of Australia

We welcome the Federation of Ethnic Communities' Councils of Australia (FECCA), the national peak body representing Australians from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) backgrounds, as a new member of CHF.

FECCA strives to ensure that the needs and aspirations of CALD Australians are given proper recognition in public policy. FECCA works to promote fairness and responsiveness to its constituency in the delivery and design of Government policies and programs.

As well as advocating on issues affecting CALD communities nationally, FECCA is currently focused on advocacy and capacity-building in health, aged care, multicultural policy, access and equity into government services, citizenship, and CALD data.

The federated nature of FECCA, brings under its umbrella multicultural councils and associations from across all states and territories, and this means it has thousands of members across Australia.

[FOR MORE](#)

National Pancreatic Cancer Roadmap

On behalf of Cancer Australia, the Federation of Ethnic Communities' Council of Australia (FECCA) is conducting consultations with culturally and linguistically diverse people and health professionals providing care to people affected by pancreatic cancer. FECCA is a national organisation representing Australians from different ethnic communities. All interested stakeholders are invited to participate.

For further information on this consultation, email pancreatic@fecca.org.au, phone 02 6282 5755 or visit www.fecca.org.au/pancreatic and the National Pancreatic Cancer Roadmap.

Spread the word: share our tweets via [@CancerAustralia](https://twitter.com/CancerAustralia)

[FOR MORE](#)

COVID-19 vaccine rollout



Information on the COVID-19 vaccine

Use the *healthdirect's* [Eligibly Checker](#) to find out when and where to get your COVID-19 vaccine.

Find the [answers to your questions](#) from medical experts.

Use the Department of Health page on [COVID-19 vaccinations](#) to access priority resources including videos and social media campaigns.

You can visit [healthdirect](#) or see your doctor for medical advice.

Videos

- [Your top 3 questions from Dr Lucas De Toca](#)
- [How vaccines work](#)
- [Vaccine development times](#)
- [Who will get their COVID vaccine first?](#)

[FIND OUT MORE ABOUT VACCINES](#)

Australia's Health Panel survey results



What Australia's Health Panel said about loneliness

"When we think of loneliness in Australia, it's often portrayed as the elderly person who can't leave the house and doesn't get visitors, but we need to recognise that loneliness can be experienced by anyone ..."

[FOR MORE](#)



Australia's Health Panel views on National COVID19 Vaccine Rollout Strategy

" These are new types of vaccines, they have been produced faster than any other and I've heard stories of negative side effects, I am anxious about receiving it and whether it will negatively impact my chronic health conditions."

[FOR MORE](#)

Get involved



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](#)

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.

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. Find out more about CHF [Special Interest Groups](#).

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

[FIND OUT ABOUT SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS](#)

Participate in research



Research project for engagement of consumers

Louisa Walsh, a PhD student from the [Centre for Health Communication and Participation](#) (CHCP), La Trobe University, is developing an evidence-based guide for using social media to engage consumers in hospital service design and quality improvement activities. Louisa is currently seeking people employed in quality improvement or communication roles in Australian public hospitals to give feedback on the draft of the guide.

For more information about the study, including eligibility criteria, head to the [CHCP website](#).

Or you can contact Louisa directly via email: louisa.walsh@latrobe.edu.au

If you are interested in the PhD project as a whole, you can read a summary of the research and access published articles and presentations below.

[FOR MORE](#)

Australia's Health Panel



Australia's Health Panel is a way for you 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.

See [Australia's Health Panel results](#)

[Have your say on Australia's Health Panel](#)



Join Us - call for research stories

Join Us connects researchers with people who are willing to be involved in research, and helps researchers prevent, treat and find cures for disease.

It's quick and simple – you sign up, provide a few details that are held in a secure database and when a relevant study comes up, you are asked if you'd like to take part. By joining us you could help change a life. Together we can change millions of lives.

[JOIN US REGISTER](#)

Media releases and editorial

[Time to make prevention matter](#) - *We urge the Federal Government to produce a preventive health strategy that reflects the wishes of most Australians for more action on population-wide pro-health measures, including curbs on the promotion and sale of junk food and sugary drinks. The results of a new survey...* [MEDIA RELEASE: 24 MAY 2021](#)

[Budget moves for youth health welcome as a first step](#) - *The \$2.3 billion investment in mental health and suicide prevention is a welcome first step on the road to much needed mental health system reform, the Youth Health Forum says...* [MEDIA RELEASE: 12 MAY 2021](#)

[Budget's modest response to aged care and mental health inquiries](#) - *The Budget has offered a modest but welcome response to the compelling recommendations for, transformational reform and substantial funding urged by two national inquiries into the unacceptable state of aged care and mental health...* [MEDIA RELEASE: 11 MAY 2021](#)

[QUM the script for patient-centred care](#) - *The power of modern drugs makes it more important than ever that consumers are supported to know and understand their impact. Think of the potency and benefits of opioids, antimicrobials and anti-psychotics, yet all too often they are also associated with harms that could have been avoided....* [BLOGPOST: 28 MAY 2021](#)

[READ ALL MEDIA RELEASES & OPINION](#)

CHFTalks webinar series

Living Evidence and Consumers

What's it like to watch your partner, pregnant with twins, ventilated in intensive care with COVID-19? What is long COVID like? Chris, a science communicator & broadcaster has had COVID-19, now he is contributing to the Living Evidence Taskforce.

Each week, more than 250 Taskforce contributors work together to find new research and quickly incorporate that research into national, evidence-based guidelines for the clinical care of Australians with COVID-19.

In this panel discussion, presenters who have been working on the [National COVID-19 Clinical Evidence Taskforce](#) will share insights about the work they do.

[WATCH THE REPLAY](#)

[CHF YouTube channel](#)

Resources and Information

Use **healthdirect Australia**, the Australian Government Health advice portal for consumers, for [information on COVID-19](#), the [symptom checker](#) and helpline: 1800 022 222.

Turn to the website of the [Department of Health](#) to find the most recent, verified information, posted daily.

NPS MedicineWise

A new [information hub from NPS MedicineWise](#) will help you be medicine wise during COVID-19

Be Health Aware - [CHF portal for health resources](#)

The **Australian Commission of Safety and Quality** has published a [FAQ page](#) on the **safe use of masks** for consumers and a [factsheet you can download](#).

Become a member



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](#)

[Consumers Health Forum](#)

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