

# healthUPdate

09 April 2020

## From the CEO



### **Coronavirus, change and the consumer**

The speed of events fuelled by coronavirus continues to catch us by surprise. Even as the Federal Parliament this week passes into law a momentous funding package to keep Australia's economy on life support during the pandemic, there is already talk that the decline in cases may mean Australia is past the worst of it.

At the same time as China declares the first day of zero deaths from the virus since January, the United States and United Kingdom are plunged deeper into coronavirus catastrophe.

For us in Australia the significant fall in cases in recent days has defied earlier predictions of a much graver predicament by this stage.

If there is one lesson we can learn from coronavirus, it should be that it is unwise to make predictions about its future course.

But predictably or otherwise, necessity is presenting consumers with more scope in responding to the challenge of coronavirus.

A very direct example is the potential for telehealth to stimulate patients to think more carefully about their health and, without the benefit of a physical examination, how to describe their condition to their doctor or nurse.

An article in the *British Medical Journal* describes how telehealth during time of coronavirus has made patient [feedback](#) easier and more likely to contribute to positive results for patient and doctor.

On a broader scale, the circumstances we find ourselves in are introducing new pathways for consumer involvement in supporting the introduction of new and evidence-based treatments to quell COVID-19. CHF is to partner with the new National COVID-19 [Clinical Evidence Taskforce](#) which is being charged with identifying new and trusted treatments against the virus.

COVID is shining a spotlight on the need to pay attention to the health literacy of our institutions and the public generally. At times of public health emergency it is critical that the community receives clear, unambiguous information about the action they need to take and why they need to take it.

A [paper on health literacy](#) in times of COVID our board member Jan Donovan has co-authored calls for governments to improve pandemic communications, and address health literacy concerns.

Our recent [Youth Health Forum survey](#) showed how vital the right message on coronavirus is. It found a common sentiment was that the early messaging gave young people a false sense of security and it was only once they realised their role as a carrier (even with no symptoms) that many started to pay attention to the health advice.

The dynamics of the pandemic are making consumer involvement in health decisions and advice more necessary and appealing. We have to hope that trend survives once coronavirus passes.

**Leanne Wells**  
Chief Executive Officer



We want to hear from you



## 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.

These could be new ideas from consumers to stem spread of infection, or innovations by doctors, nurses and clinics to increase access and improve care.

Sharing ideas that are making a difference where you live will help us all to beat the virus, increase access to care and calm our lives.

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

EMAIL THE COMMUNICATIONS TEAM

## National Health Information Strategy - webinar for consumers

ABC's Dr Norman Swan joins a special webinar on the National Health Information Strategy (NHIS) on crunch issues like public trust and personal health information.

Consumers are invited to share insights into what the NHIS should look like to improve the healthcare system for all Australians.

*This webinar was postponed due to the COVID19 pandemic. **The new date is now Friday 24 April at 12pm-1pm AEST.***

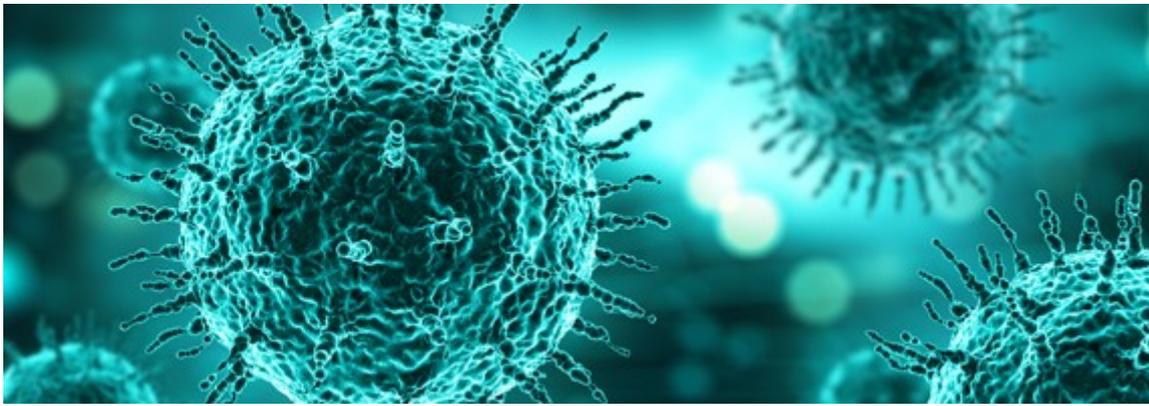
*If you received our other newsletter: **Consumers Shaping Health**, last week, we had scheduled the event for Tues 14 April from 2:00-3:00pm, however due to complications the new date has been confirmed.*

CHF has partnered with the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW) for this project.

MORE INFO



## Coronavirus



As always, CHF advocates caution in sharing information with your family, friends and colleagues without taking time to verify the source and its authenticity. A proliferation of graphs are being shared on social media and everybody has become an armchair expert. Understanding and knowledge about COVID-19 is changing so rapidly that even news articles can be out-of-date. Many people are talking about their confusion.

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

Check also the [World Health Organisation](#) website to verify accuracy of health advice.

Use the **Australian Government Health advice portal** for consumers, Healthdirect for [Coronavirus information](#), [symptom checker](#) and helpline: 1800 022 222.

DEPT OF HEALTH WEBSITE

## Resources and information

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

The Department of Health dedicated page with [resources for health professionals](#)

Resources for [Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and remote communities](#)

Translated resources for [people in migrant communities](#)

Handy mythbusters from the [World Health Organisation](#)

## Learning Resources

[Infection control training](#) - 30-minute online training module for health care workers in all settings. It covers the fundamentals of infection prevention and control for COVID-19. This training is recommended as a useful resource for everyone.

[Patient education materials assessment tool](#) - guide to check how easy it is to follow your instructions

[Trust it or Trash it](#) - free online tool to encourage critical thinking

## Consultations and surveys



### **My Health Record Consumer Experience Survey**

Consumers Health Forum of Australia (CHF) and the Australian Digital Health Agency (the Agency) invites you to participate in this survey to share your experience using My Health Record.

The overall purpose of the survey is to better understand consumer experiences of using My Health Record in real life situations. An additional aim is to develop a series of case studies to capture opportunities for improvement and highlighted what is working well with My Health Record, from a consumer perspective.

Before you complete the survey, read the [Information Sheet](#).

**The survey will close COB Tuesday, 14 April 2020.**

If you have any questions, please contact Project Lead, **Leanne Kelly** on 02 6273 5444 or [l.kelly@chf.org.au](mailto:l.kelly@chf.org.au)

COMPLETE THE SURVEY

## Australia's Health Panel



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

members. Our current survey is open and asks for your views on telehealth services in Australia.

[COMPLETE THE SURVEY](#)

## Get your flu shot in April 2020 to help in fight against COVID-19



### Advice from the Chief Medical Officer

Australians are being urged to get their flu vaccination this April to reduce the risk of a dangerous double-up of seasonal influenza and coronavirus (COVID-19).

More than 13 million doses of the seasonal flu vaccine have been secured by the Australian Government for the National Immunisation Program (NIP) Schedule and the private market.

While the vaccine won't protect you against COVID-19, it will reduce your risk of influenza which kills hundreds of people every year and leads to thousands more hospitalisations.

[LEARN MORE](#)

## Media releases

### [Health funds must inform members of windfall gains](#)

*Health funds must level with their members and give specific undertakings now to return the funds they save as a result of the COVID-19 shutdown of elective surgery .....*

[MEDIA RELEASE: 07 APR 2020](#)

### [Consumers partner COVID clinical taskforce identifying trusted treatments](#)

*The Consumers Health Forum has joined a national COVID-19 taskforce aimed at ensuring Australians receive trusted and best possible care during the outbreak .....*

[MEDIA RELEASE: 07 APR 2020](#)

### [Private hospitals doing the right thing to join the fight](#)

*The Consumers Health Forum welcomes the agreement with governments that will assure the substantial personnel and resources of private hospitals play a big role in the fight against COVID-19. ....* [MEDIA RELEASE: 31 MAR 2020](#)

### ['Medicare at home' a vital step to counter COVID-19](#)

*The expansion of telehealth services to cover all medical and many allied health*

consultations is a watershed advance in the fight against coronavirus ..... [MEDIA RELEASE: 29 MAR 2020](#)

### [Health funds should defer premium rise](#)

Schemes announced by the big health funds to support their members during the COVID-19 crisis are welcome but lower premiums would likely be of more assistance ..... [MEDIA RELEASE: 27 MAR 2020](#)

## Editorial



### Health care rush may guide future of care

The rush of developments in health care triggered by COVID-19 is opening up significant changes in the health workforce ...

[READ MORE](#)



### Understanding young people's thinking about COVID-19

Early messaging gave young people a false sense of security. Only once they realised their role as a carrier, many started to pay attention to the health advice ...

[READ MORE](#)

All Media Releases and Blogposts

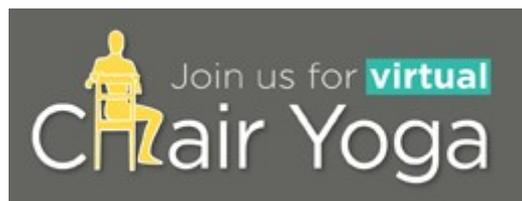


### CT:IQ launches Early Phase Trials Best Practice Checklist

The CT:IQ [Early Phase Best Practice Checklist](#) aims to support Australian research sites to conduct high-quality early phase clinical trials.

CT:IQ welcomes feedback with a view to improvements for future versions. There is a draw for three **\$100 gift vouchers** for feedback provided by **Friday 1 May 2020**.

[FIND OUT MORE](#)



### Online chair yoga class

Classes will be held from 11am-noon (AEST) on Tues and Thurs throughout April.

The classes are free to all frontline healthcare workers.

Others are asked to contribute \$5 per class, which will go towards Croakey Health Media public interest journalism.

[FIND OUT MORE](#)



## Summit - Shifting gears

The **CHF Summit: Shifting Gears** has been postponed until **18-19 March 2021** due to the COVID-19 pandemic. We look forward to welcoming you to our rescheduled conference in March 2021.

**Keynote speakers include:** ABC TV's Ellen Fanning, Dr Kate Mulligan, Director, Policy and Communications for the Alliance for Healthier Communities in Toronto, and Vincent Dumez, Co-Director and patient partner at the Centre of Excellence on Partnering with Patients and the Public, University of Montreal - [read more](#) .....

The summit will offer 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.

Submissions for abstracts are also **now open**. We invite you to propose topics relevant to contemporary issues *in health reform from a consumer perspective*. See more about [topics for submissions](#).

CHF SUMMIT 2021

## Consumer Representatives Program

## Consumer Representative Appointments



**Richard Brightwell**, nominated to the DoH - Reference Group for the Post-market Review of Medicines for Smoking Cessation

**Diane Walsh**, nominated to the NPS MedicineWise - Consumer Advisory Group

## Consumer Representative Reports

CHF expects and appreciates reports from CHF nominated consumer representatives. These reports help keep CHF informed of consumer representative work.

Consumer representative reports can be made online, via email, mail or phone. CHF thanks the following consumer representatives for keeping us up to date on their work.

**Geraldine Robertson**, MBS Review - Diagnostic Imaging Implementation Liaison Group

**Joanne Baumgartner**, Protheses Clinical Advisory Group – Ophthalmic

**Dianne Smith**, ACSQHC - Primary Care Committee

**Dianne Smith**, RANZCR - Peak Imaging Coalition (PIC)

**Dianne Smith**, ACIPC Board

## Consumer Representative Vacancies

CHF nominates consumer representatives to high level committees and those related to funded priority areas. Calls for nominations are made via *healthUPdate* and the CHF website. Not all opportunities are advertised due to time limitations or because CHF decides to target invitations due to the specific work or strategic nature of the work involved.

More information about all the opportunities below can be found on our Consumer opportunities webpage.

If you have any questions, please contact the person listed or alternatively, our Consumer and Member Relationship Coordinator, **Ghislaine Martin**, on 02 6273 5444 or email [g.martin@chf.org.au](mailto:g.martin@chf.org.au).

SEE ALL OUR CONSUMER REP VACANCIES

## General Practice Accreditation Coordinating Committee

### The Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care (ACSQHC)

General practice accreditation is voluntary in Australia and is designed to support implementation of processes and systems to improve the quality of care for patients attending accredited general practices. The Royal Australian College of General Practitioners (RACGP) develops the Standards for General Practices against which practices are assessed for accreditation.

The General Practice Accreditation Coordinating Committee provides oversight and input on issues relating to the implementation and assessment of the RACGP Standards for general practices as part of the National General Practice Accreditation Scheme.

Applications are invited to be on this committee which involves two teleconferences up to December 2020. The work is likely to be ongoing.

*Expressions of interest close 26 April 2020 (midnight AEDT).*

MORE INFORMATION

Full details of committee vacancies are only accessible on our website by our members and consumer representatives. If you do not have access and would like to apply, please contact Ghislaine Martin on 02 6273 5444 or [g.martin@chf.org.au](mailto:g.martin@chf.org.au).

BECOME A MEMBER

## Other Consumer Representative Vacancies

This section is for consumer representative opportunities that CHF does not provide nominations for. Members can work directly with other stakeholders to nominate consumer representatives to committees that are of interest to them.

CHF checks that consumer participation is supported with coverage of travel costs and sitting fees, however CHF does not prescribe an amount for sitting fees as committee requirements vary.

**CHF is not currently advertising any consumer representative opportunities.**



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