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HCCA INITIAL RESPONSE TO ACT BUDGET

Yesterday Kathryn Dwan and I went to the Community Briefing on the ACT Budget. The Chief Minister and Treasurer, Andrew Barr MLA, presented an overview of the ACT Budget, the financial position and outlined some of the key initiatives. The Ministers in his government were there, as well as key departmental staff. It was an excellent opportunity to ask questions and raise issues.

Health featured strongly in the Budget, as it did during the election campaign in 2016. ACT Labor released a range of election commitments as part of their [Ten Year Health Plan](#). This included:

- significant infrastructure investment with the design and construction of the Surgical Procedures Interventional Radiology and Emergency (SPIRE) Centre
- a new and expanded emergency department
- an extension of the women and children's hospital
- more walk-in centres
- funding for a new building for [Winnunga Nimmityjah Aboriginal Health Service](#).

This budget starts to bring this vision into reality.

People may notice that there are delays in the start dates for many of the commitments, such as [SPIRE](#), which means that these services will not be delivered before 2020. This is for a number of reasons.

ACT Health has started a process of planning for health services for the next ten years. This process is called the [Territory Wide Health Services Plan](#). This will include the development of models of care (the way care is delivered) as well as looking at planning for the workforce needed to deliver this care. Technology – through the Digital Health Strategy – will also be considered. And all of these feed into the design of the new buildings. To bring the infrastructure projects forward without doing this planning is to put the cart before the horse. That is not to say the system is working well currently.

An update on [SHOUT](#). Our members will be interested to learn of the ACT Government commitment to SHOUT. SHOUT supports many community groups and the government wants that to continue. The government also wants to see SHOUT with a sustainable operating model. The government's solution is to give \$70,000 to ensure SHOUT keeps ticking over and await a review's findings. Pending the review's findings, SHOUT may receive recurrent funding in the 2018-19 budget.

I have written a blog post with a number of highlights and including links to the Budget papers. This is on the HCCA blog and can be found [here](#). If you have any comments, please let me know.

In closing there are a few other things I want to share. Firstly, congratulations to Roger Killeen who was recently awarded Life Membership of Diabetes ACT. Roger has been a tireless advocate to improve access to services for people living with diabetes and I am very pleased to see that his contribution has been recognised in this way.

Congratulations also to Fiona Tito Wheatland who received advice this week that her PhD thesis has been considered by her examiners and they were in agreement that she be granted her award of Doctor of Philosophy. Fiona's thesis is on the doctor identity and patient safety. We have hard copies at the office if you are interested in reading this important work.

Finally, we heard this week of the death of Terry Swarner. Terry had been involved with HCCA for a number of years and was very interested in health and food services. Terry was very passionate about these. As a person with a range of health issues he was a regular user of health services and was able to identify areas for improvement. Terry, who was originally from the United States, moved back there two years ago. We are thinking of his family at this time.

Darlene Cox
Executive Director

ENDORSEMENTS

Consumer Representative Endorsements

Calvary Public Infrastructure Planning and Service Development Committee → Kerry Snell

HCCA Staff Endorsements

None at present.

COMMITTEE VACANCIES

None at present.

SPONSORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

The following opportunity closes on Tuesday 13 June 2017.

Affordable, Accessible, Appropriate Housing for Older Australians

COTA Australia National Policy Forum

Thursday 22 June 2017, National Press Club, Canberra

Housing security is a basic human need and human right.

Congratulations!

HCCA would like to congratulate Sue Schreiner on her appointment to the ACT Ministerial Advisory Council on Ageing (MACA). The MACA provides strategic advice to the ACT Government on issues affecting older people in the ACT.

The council assists the Government to develop and implement positive ageing policies, in order to advance the status and interest of older people.

Congratulations Sue!

This year's COTA National Policy Forum will place the spotlight on what housing means in later life and explore current policy issues and future trends around housing for older Australians. The Forum will bring together an exciting line-up of policy makers, academics, consumers, advocates and others to discuss some of the pressing housing issues of our time and how they affect older people. These issues include:

- What does the crisis in housing affordability and availability mean for current and future groups of older people?
- What do older people need and want in their housing?
- What kinds of housing supports well-being in later life?
- What are the key challenges facing older renters?
- Why are there increasing rates of homelessness amongst older people and how can this be turned around?
- Should the home be viewed as a financial asset to be leveraged to help fund retirement years?

HCCA will sponsor two consumer representatives to attend the COTA National Policy Forum. Sponsorship includes the

cost of the event, and transport assistance if you require it. Consumer representatives who are sponsored by HCCA to attend events are requested to provide a report to HCCA so that other members can find out about and benefit from items of interest presented at the event. If you are interested in attending this forum please complete an expression of interest, or call Kate at the HCCA office on 6230 7800 for assistance or more information about this.

HEALTH POLICY UPDATE

The Policy and Research Team have been busy working on our research projects:

- Sarah has been scheduling and conducting interviews for the palliative care project. We are still awaiting ethical approval from Calvary. See below for more information on palliative care.
- The Kathryns are in the early initial stages of our after-hours care research project. This includes mapping out the project plan, modifying the survey, and working out how best to promote the survey widely.

The Senate is considering the value and affordability of private health insurance. It is also considering out-of-pocket medical costs. We will be making a submission to this inquiry in late July. See below for more information on how you can help.

Kathryn Dwan
Manager, Policy & Research

Palliative Care

[Last issue](#) we answered a few of the common questions around palliative care. This issue we link you to three new resources that were released by [Palliative Care Australia](#) for National Palliative Care Week, 21-28 May 2017.

- [Ten questions help consumers compare how residential aged care services provide palliative care](#)
- [Dying to Talk Cards](#)
- [Dying to Talk Online Discussion Starter](#)

Have you or a loved one received or wanted to receive palliative care at home?

Then we are keen to hear from you, especially if home-based palliative care was not offered or you could not access them. This ACT Health funded project is focused on the experiences of older people and the unpaid caregivers of older people.

To participate, you'll need to:

- be aged 55 or older and receiving palliative care services; or
- be a caregiver for a loved one or family member who is currently receiving palliative care and is over 55 years; or
- have previously been a caregiver for a loved one aged 55 or older who received palliative care (within the last five years).

Participants in this project will take part in a semi-structured interview with HCCA Policy Officer, Sarah Spiller. Sarah will also work with each participant to create an Experience Wheel – this is a one-page image that shows your key positive and negative experiences of healthcare services, and the areas you identify as requiring improvement.

If you are interested in taking part in the project or would like to find out more, please call Sarah Spiller or HCCA Manager of Research and Policy, Dr Kathryn Dwan, by calling 02 6230 7800 or

emailing sarahspiller@hcca.org.au. We are also glad to talk if you don't meet the criteria to participate in this project, but would like to share an experience of palliative care to inform HCCA's ongoing systemic advocacy in this area. We are also glad to talk if you don't meet the criteria to participate in this project, but would like to share an experience of palliative care to inform HCCA's ongoing systemic advocacy in this area.

Health insurance: Who doesn't have a story?

We would like to hear your thoughts on, and experiences of, private health insurance. For instance,

- What was your experience of being a *private patient in a public hospital*?
- What was the effect of *co-payments and medical gaps* on your finances or health outcomes?
- How were you affected by *product exclusions and benefit levels*?
- Why did you *choose to take out* health insurance?
- Why did you *choose not to take out* health insurance?

HCCA will be providing the Australian Senate a consumer view of [value and affordability of private health insurance and out-of-pocket medical costs](#). If you have a story to share then we'd like to capture your experience by asking you a series of questions. It will take no more than 30 mins. Please contact either of the Kathryns via email kathrynbriant@hcca.org.au, kathryndwan@hcca.org.au or telephone 6230 7800.

HEALTH LITERACY UPDATE

Advancing Health Literacy

According to the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS), sixty per cent of Australians have poorer levels of health literacy. While we can guess that this number is less in the ACT, the HCCA Health Literacy team can testify that some basic health information is missing across the populations we are talking to. Three of the main pieces of information missing concern the existence or scope of HealthDirect, the Walk-In Centres and the National Home Doctor Service. The HCCA Health Literacy team attempts to fill in the missing pieces of information through presentations and engaging people at expos or community information stalls. If you would like a presentation to your community, cultural, religious or other group, please let us know. While Claudia Cresswell focuses primarily on people with chronic conditions and Yelin Hung focuses on encouraging people from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) backgrounds, they can both speak on a variety of health topics to any group.

Claudia is building a map of existing community health literacy presentations and strategies for people with chronic conditions by talking to support groups and ACT Health. We want to know how HCCA can add value to what already exists. These conversations will continue over the coming months. The Health Literacy team has also approached ACT Libraries to identify if we can present to residents within the health literacy stream of their public programs. We are exploring presentation options with the University of the Third Age (U3A) and network meetings of community and health sector staff.

Environmental health literacy is also on the agenda through a new trial project called First Impressions. This project will show how easy it is to find a health service, once there how easy it is to find where you want to go, and whether the results prove useful to the health service. More on this in coming newsletters.

Claudia Cresswell
Health Literacy Project Officer

Alzheimer's Australia ACT Survey

[Alzheimer's Australia ACT](#) will be launching a health promotion campaign funded through ACT Health and aimed at people aged 40 - 65 years of age. Before the campaign is released, Alzheimer's Australia ACT need to ascertain whether people in Canberra have an awareness of dementia risk reduction or aware of the everyday steps we can take to reduce our risk of dementia. [If you would like to participate in the Alzheimer's Australia ACT Survey, please click here.](#)

LOCAL EVENTS

Yoga for Chronic Pain: Support and Information

Pain Support ACT will be holding a support and information session regarding pain management and yoga by an experienced yoga for chronic pain instructor. The session will also include discussions on key aspects of managing pain, what techniques are/aren't working for you and how you feel about accepting pain. This is a friendly support group where you can talk to other who experience chronic pain.

Date: Tuesday 27 June 2017

Time: 12:00pm – 2:00pm

Venue: HCCA Meeting Room 2, 100 Maitland Street Hackett

Cost: a small gold coin donation is appreciated

Please bring your own lunch and cushion for meditation if you would like. Tea and coffee will be provided.

St. Vincent de Paul CEO Sleepout

As June marks the beginning of winter, Canberra will start to again experience extremely cold nights, with temperatures hovering at around 0 degrees. Although most of us have a roof over our heads, there are many people who are forced to sleep out on the streets and face the cold with no more than a sleeping bag and some cardboard boxes. The cold can affect everyone's health, but for those who struggle to stay warm, the cold winter nights can increase susceptibility to easily preventable illnesses and health conditions. Access to health care services can also be difficult with barriers such as cost and transport. Every year, the [St. Vincent de Paul Society](#) raise awareness and funds to help support homeless services, such as accommodation, food and clothes, through its CEO Sleepout to insure that our most

disadvantaged are cared for. People participating include [Travis Gilbert](#), CEO of Shelter ACT and [Tina Bracher](#), Executive Director of Mental Health, Justice Health and Alcohol and Drug Services in ACT Health. [If you would like to find out more about the work that St. Vincent de Paul are doing through their CEO Sleepout, click here.](#)

ITEMS OF INTEREST

Safety and Quality

HealthDirect App for your phone and tablet

[HealthDirect](#) have launched their new smartphone and tablet app to help consumers make informed decisions about their health. This app includes their symptom checker and find a health service search engine for consumers to access trusted health information easily on-the-go. The app can also assist consumers in emergency situations by providing GPS coordinates of your exact location that you can provide to emergency services operators, making it easier and faster to receive help. The app is free to download from the Apple App Store and the Google Play Store. [Click here to find out more about the HealthDirect app.](#)



ITEMS OF INTEREST (CONT.)

LiveHealthyCanberra Directory

[The Capital Health Network \(CHN\)](#), with the support of ACT Health as part of the Healthy Weight Initiative, has recently launched a new easy to use online directory to connect Canberrans with physical activity programs, nutrition support services and social participation opportunities, in an effort to keep people active and well. HCCA Consumer Representatives Program Coordinator, Kate Gorman attended the launch of the directory on Monday 8 May 2017.



Gaylene Coulter and Andrea from CHF with Kate Gorman (centre)

The [LiveHealthyCanberra](#) directory connects people in the Canberra region with programs and services that aim to improve health and reduce the risk of chronic conditions such as cardiovascular disease, type 2 diabetes and other lifestyle related diseases. You will find information about walking groups, running, cycling and group fitness classes, healthy eating education and programs offered by dietitians on improving your diet. The directory also includes community groups that promote being active, healthy and provide opportunities for social participation.

You can search for programs and services in your local Canberra region by service type, ranging from dietetics/nutrition services and weight management to pain management and physical activity. [Click here if you would like to learn more about the LiveHealthyCanberra directory.](#)



International Clinical Trials Day

International Clinical Trials Day was celebrated on 20 May 2017, recognising the importance of clinical trials in health care research. [The National Health and Medical Research Council \(NHMCR\)](#) and the Department of Industry, Innovation and Science launched improvements to the Australian Clinical Trials website, including:

Further resources for consumers and health care providers, including:

- a new 'browse for a clinical trial' feature
- new 'real stories' video clips of health care providers talking about their experience of clinical trials. These will help to inform people who are participating or considering participating in a clinical trial.
- a new *Search for an Australian Clinical Trials Site* functionality which enables sponsors to find and contact Australian Clinical Trial Sites (over 150 clinical trial sites are currently listed)
- a new Clinical Trials Toolkit, containing useful information and resources for conducting a clinical trial in Australia
- an overview for international sponsors of how to undertake a clinical trial in Australia.

[If you would like to find out more about the improvements made to the Australian Clinical Trials website, click here.](#)

Calvary Public Hospital named Canberra's biggest recycler

At the [Actsmart Business Sustainability Awards](#) on 25 May 2017, Calvary Public Hospital was named Canberra's biggest recycler, recycling 153.8 tonnes of waste. This is the equivalent of 10,170 household recycling bins worth of recycling, and the hospital has achieved this award by implementing 29 different waste streams as a part of its sustainability initiative. As a part of the ACT Government's initiative to create a more sustainable, eco-friendly city, the Actsmart programs assist organisations and businesses across the region to implement better energy, water and waste reduction practices to reduce greenhouse emissions. Congratulations to all the winners!

ITEMS OF INTEREST (CONT.)

Future of Education Update – 17 May 2017

The ACT Government last month released an update on the future of education in the ACT. The update includes the progress the Minister for Education and Early Childhood Development, Yvette Berry MLA, has so far towards developing a strategy on improving education and how she would like to hear from the community about our needs and how to develop an education system that supports young people to achieve their goals. If you would like to read Minister Berry's update, please find it attached with this newsletter.

Mental Health

'Same Love, Same Rules' the domestic violence campaign specifically targeted at the LGBTIQ community was launched by the Women's Centre for Health Matters on Friday 19 May. WHCM CEO Marcia Williams referred to the timeliness of this campaign: violence can occur in all relationships, both heterosexual and otherwise, however people who are in non-heterosexual relationships face unique obstacles. These include not being able to recognise the same signifiers of domestic violence that may appear in heterosexual relationships or being reluctant to access help or services for the fear of being 'outed'. Veronica Wensing, former ACT Greens candidate and one of the campaign models, pointed out that a campaign like this can be risky for the LGBTIQ community. For instance, does it detract from the LGBTIQ movement to admit that LGBTIQ relationships still have the same flaws as any other relationship? The answer is no! It is more important to remind the broader community that LGBTIQ relationships are the same as any other.

Primary Care

Latest news from CHN

Read all the latest news from the [Capital Health Network](#):

- [CHN Board Communique - May](#)
- [2/52 Health Care Bulletin](#)

Health of Older People

The balance in healthy ageing – Tai Chi

[The Harvard Gazette](#) has published an interesting article on how practicing Tai Chi may help prevent falls and some chronic conditions in older people. As we get older, our bone density, mobility and balance decrease, increasing the likelihood of falls, one of the largest preventable causes of death and injury amongst older people. By practicing regular Tai Chi, a Chinese martial art that focuses on slow movements of the body, researchers at the Harvard Medical School found that mobility, flexibility and balance all improved, reducing falls and even lowering some participants' blood pressure. As well as physical attributes, participants of Tai Chi also showed signs of improved mental agility due to the involvement of memorisation and social interaction within each class. The benefits of Tai Chi to improving the quality of health and life of older people seem very promising as researchers continue to find solutions to how we as a society can age healthier. [If you would like to read the full article about the benefits of Tai Chi, click here.](#)

Chronic Conditions

The importance of SVR test post HCV treatment

[Hepatitis ACT](#) have released a statement emphasising the importance for consumers who are currently being treated for the Hepatitis C Virus (HCV) direct-acting antivirals (DAA) or other HCV treatments, to return to their treating GP, nurse or specialist 12 weeks after completing treatment to have a sustained virologic response (SVR) test, to determine whether their treatment has been successful. Whilst HCV DAAs are extremely effective, there is a chance that treatment may not have been curative. This can include people whose HCV is undetectable at treatment completion, but are polymerase chain reaction (PCR) positive twelve weeks post-completion. When that happens it is vital that the result is known and that the person and their treating doctor consider other treatment options.

LOCAL EVENTS (CONT.)

Palliative Care Australia Web-based Tool for Carers - Consultation

Palliative Care Australia (PCA), in collaboration with the NIB Foundation, are currently in the process of developing a web-based tool/app for families and carers of people who have a severe chronic or terminal illness. The aim of the tool is to create a community of care around the person with a terminal illness and their primary carer to provide support and share the responsibility of care. The project will enable the primary carer to share specific needs of the person receiving care, which may be activities like providing a meal, walking the dog or picking up milk. It will also allow the carer and person receiving care to identify how they are feeling, and whether they would like visitors, and the best time of day to visit.

PCA will be hosting 6 community consultation sessions to demonstrate and test the tool. At each session, participants will be given a scenario and a device to determine if the tool is meeting its intended goals and objectives. Participants do not need to have a high level of technological competence to participate and provide valuable input, however some familiarity with apps, tablets and smartphones will be helpful.

Session	Date	Time
Session 1	Friday June 9 2017	12:00pm – 1:00pm
Session 2	Tuesday 13 June 2017	12:00pm – 1:00pm
Session 3	Tuesday 13 June 2017	5:15pm – 6:00pm
Session 4	Wednesday 14 June 2017	12:00pm – 1:00pm
Session 5	Wednesday 14 June 2017	5:15pm – 6:00pm
Session 6	Thursday 15 June 2017	12:00pm – 1:00pm

Lunch or snacks will be provided.

Venue: All sessions will be held at the Palliative Care Australia Boardroom, Unit 8, 113 Canberra Avenue, Griffith ACT

RSVP: Please RSVP by Friday June 9 2017 to Lizzy Laroche at lizzy@palliativecare.org.au or by calling 02 6232 0706

If you would like to participate but cannot make any of the sessions above, please contact Lizzy to take part in an online evaluation.

Contact Us

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Please note that Consumer Bites provides a small snippet of health related articles our members might find interesting to consider, ponder and analyse. The HCCA does not purport to endorse any opinions or the veracity of claims contained within the articles.

Consumer Bites is the fortnightly newsletter from **Health Care Consumers' Association ACT**

Editor: Khalia Lee



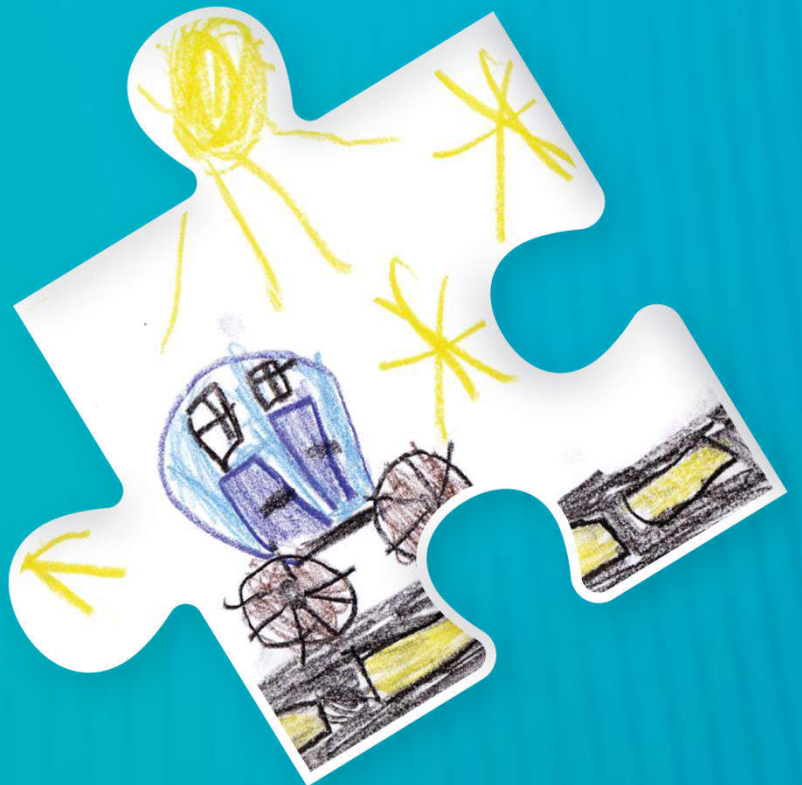
ACT
Government
Education



The future of
EDUCATION

An ACT community conversation

Update – 17 May 2017



FUTURE OF EDUCATION UPDATE – 17 MAY 2017

Background

The ACT Government has committed to developing a strategy for the future of education in the ACT because we believe every child deserves a great education and the life chances which flow from it. We want to know what we want and expect from our school and early childhood education systems, are they providing it and what might we need to change? The resulting strategy for education will reflect extensive community engagement throughout all stages of development. Enhanced equity will be acknowledged as a constant focus and the strategy will also be strongly tied to the importance of access to quality early childhood education and care.

What's happened so far?

The Minister for Education and Early Childhood Development, Yvette Berry MLA commenced the conversation with the community on 27 April 2017 at a forum with ACT public school Principals and then Community Stakeholders.

On 5 May 2017, Minister Berry also stood up the Minister's Student Congress. Student representatives from all public schools have been asked to engage in this conversation for the duration of the 2017-18 Congress. Congress representatives returned to school this week with a letter to principals outlining their role on Congress and seeking support to help them carry out this role.

What's happening next?

- **Throughout May 2017** - Engagement across Government and throughout the community.
- **6 June 2017** – Second meeting of the Minister's Student Congress.

An invitation will also shortly be sent to all our partners in the community, inviting them to attend a second Partners' Symposium. At this meeting, further information about the consultation methodology will be available alongside stimulus materials that will be available to assist with the facilitation of the conversation in the community.

How does this conversation work?

The conversation invites broad participation seeking to understand the goals of the community, and consider how education can support those goals. The conversation places the education system in a broader context which also includes health, community services, early childhood, as well as other services. This is to ensure an authentic conversation about education as a driver of equity. Support materials have been developed for anyone who wishes to facilitate a conversation and assistance is available from the Education Directorate, if required.

How can I get involved?

Everyone is welcome to be part of this conversation around the future of education. Want to make a submission? Got questions? Have an idea about how we can get people involved?

Send us an email at: futureofeducation@act.gov.au

Visit Your Say at: yoursay.act.gov.au/futureofeducation

Tag us on social media: [#EducationfortheNextGeneration](https://twitter.com/EducationfortheNextGeneration)

