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CHANGE IS THE ONLY CONSTANT

This year is underway at speed. In the last week the staff team had the pleasure of holding interviews for the Project Officer position on the Health Literacy Team. We were very impressed with the quality of applicants- all the people we interviewed could do the job. We are delighted to announce that Claudia Cresswell was successful and will be returning to HCCA. Claudia has worked with us before, about a decade ago, and has also worked with the Consumers Health Forum and a range of other organisations, including BreastScreen ACT in ACT Health. Some of our reps have worked with Claudia in that capacity. Claudia will attend the HCCA Consumer Reps New Year Celebration event on 28 February and start work at the beginning of March.

This week on Wednesday and Friday mornings we are interviewing for the Manager of Policy and Research. And on Friday afternoon we are interviewing people to provide administrative support while Sandra Avila (HCCA Office Manager) is on maternity leave. We will be making announcements about these positions in the next newsletter.

A reminder too that Kerry Snell finishes with us at the end of February. I am counting down the days with a degree of sadness whereas Kerry's excitement about retirement is building.

[Last week I received advice that I had been selected to join the Consumer Advisory Committee for the Australian Digital Health Agency \(DHA\).](#)

The Digital Health Agency has only been in existence since 2016, and is tasked with improving health outcomes for Australians through the delivery of digital healthcare systems. Better use of data and technology can help people live healthier, happier and more productive lives. Digital health can make a real difference to people's health by giving them greater control and better access to information.

This committee reports to the DHA Board and is one of six committees being formed:

- Clinical and Technical Advisory Committee
- Consumer Advisory Committee
- Privacy and Security Advisory Committee
- Audit and Risk Advisory Committee
- Digital Health Safety and Quality Governance Advisory Committee
- Jurisdictional Advisory Committee

Other ACT representatives are:

- Dr Paresh Dawda
- Mr Peter O'Halloran
- Mr Paul Madden

HCCA has had a long term interest in eHealth. I look forward to drawing on our membership for input into matters of significance to consumers.

While the new Health Minister, the Hon Greg Hunt MP, focused on the increase in the costs of healthcare being the smallest in a decade, for consumers it means a continuation of rising costs in healthcare. We need to do something about private health insurance. There was a promise of a review but we have not heard anything recently. I was interviewed on this subject last week by news.com.au. If you would like the text of the article about the costs of private health insurance, please contact the HCCA office on 6230 7800.

I would like to extend a warm welcome to the new (and some returning) members of HCCA's **Consumer Representatives Program Steering Committee**. This committee is renewed every two years. The role of the Consumer Representatives Program Steering Committee is to guide the work of HCCA's Consumer Representatives Program and to provide a peer endorsement system for appointing consumer representatives to consumer representation roles. Along with the **Health Policy Steering Committee** and the **Executive Committee**, these internal committees are part of the (largely) unseen machinery which guides and supports HCCA staff and volunteers to do the work we do. All of HCCA's internal committees are mostly made up of members who volunteer their time and considerable skills, and we are extremely fortunate and thankful that we have these people in our membership who continue to make such an important contribution to HCCA.

Our thanks to outgoing Consumer Representatives Program Steering Committee members Adele Stevens, Bill Heins and Caitlin Stamford. The new committee is: Alan Thomas (chair), Louise Bannister, Marion Dean, Kate Gorman, Roslyn Lawson and Marion Reilly.

Lastly, I had hoped to have more to say about the ACT Health Clinical Services Framework but I have not had an update. I have a meeting with Nicole Seils, Deputy Director General Innovation on 1 March and will know more then. The last public information on this process was at the forum held on December 16 2016, now two months ago.

Darlene Cox
Executive Director

Change in our Health System...

Sometimes it feels as if, for all our hard work, change in the health system is so slow that things stand still, or even go backwards. Recently one of our members, Audrey Guy, sent in a couple of personal stories which show that over time, things often do change for the better...it's simply that we need to stick around long enough (perhaps measured in decades!) to see those changes.

From Audrey:

In around 1974/5 my son, aged about 18 months, was admitted to Canberra Hospital with a fever. He was in a room containing about 6 to 8 cots. The children had no toys with them and visiting was 2 hours in the afternoon and a further 2 in the evening. Fortunately the Indian doctor looking after him was more humane and said I could stay as long as I wanted although there were no beds or eating facilities. Some of the nurses made their displeasure at my presence clear. Following that I joined a group arguing for parents (usually mothers!) to stay as long as we wanted, including overnight, with our children. The first step was to get some camping beds delivered! The matron publically commented that we'd be much better off getting a good nights' sleep in our own beds. Fast forward to 2017 and my granddaughter was admitted to the same Canberra hospital this morning. She has her

HCCA EVENTS

Consumer Representatives New Year Celebration (morning + lunch)

Come along, catch up with your HCCA network and celebrate our achievements from 2016 and a new year of health consumer advocacy.

Please note that this meeting is for current consumer representatives endorsed by HCCA only.

Time: 10am -1pm

Date: Tuesday 28 February 2017

Venue: Meeting Room Two, Maitland House, 100 Maitland Street, Hackett

RSVP: To Kate Gorman by Monday 20 February on kategorman@hcca.org.au or on 6230 7800. Please advise of any dietary requirements.

Capital Health Network Needs Assessment Forum

Have your input into CHN's needs assessment process, which identifies the current and likely future health care needs of the local population.

All HCCA members are invited to attend this forum.

Time: 1pm-3pm

Date: Tuesday 28 February 2017

Venue: Meeting Room Two, Maitland House, 100 Maitland Street, Hackett

RSVP: To Kate Gorman by Monday 20 February on kategorman@hcca.org.au or 6230 7800. Lunch will be served from 12.15pm. Please advise of any dietary requirements.

own room with ensuite and a bed for her mother. There are plenty of eating places for visitors and a really imaginative play area for when she is mobile. We do get results eventually!

The second good news stories involves another ACT public service department. When my daughter was in kindergarten we joined a campaign to reduce their class sizes to 20 with the slogan '20's plenty in a Kindergarten class!'. It included marches through the centre of Canberra to advertise our cause. On one occasion I recall being part of a Chinese dragon! I was somewhat relieved that only the lower part of my body was visible! On another march my daughter carried a placard saying 'There are 27 in my kindergarten class'. Several years later my daughter counted the children in her daughter's kindergarten class- there were 20! She whispered to me 'We got it Mum! I'm so pleased for her sake!'

If there's one thing HCCA has a lot of in its membership, it's the wisdom of experience. Have you got a story about something in the health system you've noticed (or have helped) change for the better? Please email it to me kategorman@hcca.org.au (or tell me) so that it can be included in Consumer Bites – we could all use a little evidence of positive change from time to time!

Kate Gorman

Consumer Reps Program Coordinator

COMMITTEE VACANCIES

There is a vacancy for a consumer representative on each of the committees below. These vacancies close on **Monday 20 February 2017**. [Click here for the HCCA Nomination Form to apply for a committee vacancy.](#)

Clare Holland House Quality, Risk & Safety Committee

[Clare Holland House](#) provides specialist palliative care across ACT and the surrounding region.

This committee evaluates and approves standards of care, enhances clinical outcomes and identify risks to ensure effective and safe efficient service at Clare Holland House. The committee is responsible for monitoring the activity of Clare Holland House to ensure all relevant standards are met and the facility is providing clinical care in accordance with best evidence palliative care. This committee also oversees quality improvement activities and risk management.

This committee meets monthly on the third Wednesday of the month from 8:00am to 10:00am at Clare Holland House.

Standard 9 Committee

This high-level committee will establish and maintain systems for recognising and responding to clinical deterioration appropriately in accordance with Standard 9 of the National Safety and Quality Health Standards. This committee has a wide variety of functions, including ensuring governance

arrangements are in place to support the development, implementation, and maintenance of organisation-wide recognition and response systems to patient deterioration, review and endorse policies, procedures and protocols relevant to patient deterioration and provide expert advice to capital planning working groups for future developments within the Health Directorate. This committee meets every second Wednesday of each month at 2:00pm at The Canberra Hospital.

ACT Policy Advisory Committee

This committee evaluates changes to high-level ACT Health Directorate policies and standard operating procedures (SOPs) to determine whether they meet policy management criteria. This criteria aims to ensure appropriate stakeholder consultation has occurred, the policy meets legal obligations, and the purpose and scope of the policy is clear and able to be evaluated. The consumer representative on this committee will not be required to provide consumer input to all policies and SOPs put before this committee. Their role will be to ensure that the consumer perspective has been sought and heard as required when these documents were developed, and to participate in discussion around whether the policy or SOP meets the policy management criteria.

This committee meets on the first Thursday of every month from 9:30am to 11:30am.

Woman, Youth & Children Unit Community Health Programs (WYCCHP) Quality & Safety Committee

This committee aims to monitor and improve the standard of clinical care for Woman, Youth and Children Unit Community Health Program (WYCCHP) clients through effective structures, systems and processes. They discuss issues of risk and safety and quality of patient care for all of the Programs. The WYCCHP includes a wide range of community and school based services for women and children. More information about what these services are is available [on the HCCA website](#).

What WYCCHP services have in common is that the health care is not an extension of hospital or acute care and often the recipients of care are 'well' but need support through a period of vulnerability whether that is because it's a significant period of rapid development (young children, high school students) or a woman has experienced trauma or a family is on the margins and therefore any children are more vulnerable. The successful nominee to this committee will have an interest and some background knowledge of this area of health.

Meetings are held on the 4th Tuesday of the month from 10am until midday on the 3rd floor of 1 Moore Street, Civic.

Maternity Quality and Safety Committee

This committee aims to improve the standard of care through the promotion of a culture of quality and safety within the Maternity Services at the Canberra Hospital. This committee reviews and monitors safety and quality activities, acknowledges and responds to risk and endorses clinical policies and Standard Operating Procedures. The consumer representative on this committee will have an interest in women's and children's health services, and an ability to contribute the consumer perspective across a range of maternity programs, as well as the ability to read and critique policies and procedures for their impact on maternity services consumers.

This committee meets on the second Tuesday of every month from 11:00am to 12:00pm at the Canberra Hospital.

ANTICIPATED COMMITTEE VACANCIES

Walk-in Centre Clinical Advisory Group

This committee provides strategic direction for the Walk-in Centres at the Belconnen Community Health Centre and the Tuggeranong Community Health Centre. It is responsible for reviewing and

recommending changes to key performance indicators, risk management, adverse events, clinical policy, occupational health and safety, and quality assurance projects and accreditation.

This committee meets every two months on the third Thursday of the month, from 9.30-11am. The location alternates between the Walk-in Centres at Belconnen and Tuggeranong.

HEALTH POLICY UPDATE

Sarah Spiller is continuing work on a brief history of HCCA's Consumer Representatives Program, focusing on the period since 2004: the years 2004 to 2016 saw substantial growth and consolidation of the important work that consumer representatives do to influence strategic healthcare decision-making in the ACT, with HCCA's support. This project is a chance for us to document and celebrate the longevity and activity of the Consumer Representatives Program!

Current issues in the Policy space include the Nursing and Midwifery Board of Australia's (NMBA) public consultation on the revised Code of Conduct for Nurses and Code of Conduct for Midwives (the Codes). <http://www.nursingmidwiferyboard.gov.au/News/Current-Consultations.aspx>

If you are interested in this consultation, please get in touch if you need copies of the relevant documents or for more information. Or please e-mail your thoughts to me at kathrynbria@hcca.org.au.

Get involved in policy - it is a great way for consumers to help shape the direction of health care!

Kathryn Briant, Policy Team

Email: kathrynbria@hcca.org.au.

Just a reminder that I work 20 hours per week, mostly from home. I am in the HCCA office every Friday but check my email most days.

LOCAL EVENTS

SHOUT Chronic Conditions Seminar Series – Gutsy Story

SHOUT are continuing to provide information sessions to people with chronic conditions through their Chronic Conditions Seminar Series in 2017. This month Erica Roughton, a dietician at Arthritis ACT, will talk about the importance of good gut health, the signs of poor gut health and the difference between the various microorganisms that keep your gut healthy.

Date: Thursday 16 February 2017

Time: 7:00pm – 8:30pm

Venue: SHOUT offices, Building 1, Pearce Community Centre, Collett Place, Pearce

Cost: Free

RSVP: None required.

For more information, please call the SHOUT Offices on 02 6290 1984.

ITEMS OF INTEREST

Primary Health Care

Survey – Therapeutic Relationships between GPs and Patients

Dr Liz Sturgiss is a Canberra based GP who also works at the ANU Medical School. She is leading a team from the ANU Academic Unit of General Practice who are researching a new tool to measure the therapeutic relationship between a GP and a patient.

The first stage of this research is an online survey to assess whether the questions make sense in the GP setting. The survey takes less than 10 minutes.

[If you are interested in participating, please click here to go to the survey.](#)

If you would like to know more at any stage, please do not hesitate to contact Dr Liz Sturgiss on (02) 6244 4947 or elizabeth.sturgiss@anu.edu.au.

ITEMS OF INTEREST (CONT.)

Social Prescribing – What is it?

Social prescribing enables GPs, nurses and other primary care professionals to refer people to a range of local, non-clinical services. Put simply, it is community referral and is fundamental to primary health care.

[The Kings Fund has a useful article explaining how it works in the UK.](#)

“Recognising that people’s health is determined primarily by a range of social, economic and environmental factors, social prescribing seeks to address people’s needs in a holistic way. It also aims to support individuals to take greater control of their own health” (The Kings Fund, 2017).

There will be an opportunity to ask the Capital Health Network about their view of social prescribing at the forum on 28 February 2107.

Latest news from CHN

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

- [Health InterACTion issue 36](#)
- [2/52 Health Care Bulletin](#)

Swedish study – Person Centred Care

BMC Nursing has published an article entitled ‘Safety climate and readiness for implementation of evidence and person centered practice – A national study of registered nurses in general surgical care at Swedish university hospitals’. [Click here to access the full text of this journal article looking at Person Centred Care.](#)

Safety and Quality

IHI Resources: Tackling the Opioid Crisis

To support health care deliverers in successfully taking on the challenge of the opioid crisis, the Institute for Healthcare Improvement (IHI) is pleased to offer several free resources: the [IHI Innovation Report: Addressing the Opioid Crisis in the United States](#) and a WIHI on the topic: [The Opioid Crisis: How Health Care and the Community Can Act](#). Within each you'll find insights on how health care delivery teams, law enforcement, government health departments, drug treatment programs, and community groups

can strategise to address this crucial health issue.

AHPRA National Register of Health Professionals

The [Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency \(AHPRA\)](#) supports the 14 National Boards that are responsible for regulating the health professions. The primary role of the National Boards is to protect the public and they set [standards and policies that all registered health practitioners must meet](#). There is a public register of all registered health practitioners in Australia. If someone's name appears on this register, they are registered and can practise within the scope of their registration. AHPRA also has [a list of cancelled practitioners](#) and a [list of practitioners who have given an undertaking not to practise](#).

[Click here if you would like to search the register of practitioners](#). If you have trouble finding someone on the register who you think should be there, you can call AHPRA on 1300 419 495.

Grants announced to improve road safety for the ACT

Minister for Justice and Consumer Affairs Shane Rattenbury recently announced \$251,955 in funding across nine organisations as part of the ACT Government’s road safety grants program. The grants will be used to fund a range of community road safety projects including training, education and awareness programs as well as a number of infrastructure projects to reduce the risk of accidents. Grants include:

- COTA ACT was successful in receiving \$46,300 per year over two years for their Street Smart Seniors program. COTA will review and update their existing Street Smart Seniors program.
- Chapman Primary Parent & Citizens Association was successful in a grant of \$15,000 for their Junior School Road Safety program.

[Click here for more information about the ACT Road Safety Fund Grants Program.](#)

ITEMS OF INTEREST (CONT.)

Australia's first Park and Pedal facility launched in Canberra

On Thursday 9 February 2017, the ACT Government launched its first Park and Pedal facility at the National Arboretum, the first in the country, to encourage more people to ride their bikes into the office. Commuters will have to bring their own bikes and can park for free at the 64 space Lindsey Pryor carpark, just off Barrenjoey Drive. From there, it's only a 30 minute cycle around the lake to get to the city, Woden, parliamentary triangle and Barton precincts. With obesity in Australia on the rise, the ACT Government hopes that this initiative will help to combat obesity and provide an easier way for Canberrans to achieve the recommended 30mins of daily exercise. [For more information, you can visit the Transport Canberra website here.](#)

Chronic Conditions

NeuroMoves Program to launch in Canberra

Minister for Health Meegan Fitzharris MLA has announced that the [Spinal Cord Injuries Australia's \(SCIA\) NeuroMoves](#) program will soon be launching in the ACT later this year, after promising \$300,000 in funding in the 2016 ACT Elections. The *NeuroMoves* program is currently being offered in five other capital cities across the country, and will provide access to quality, individualised and supported rehabilitation exercise programs to assist people with spinal cord injury, acquired brain injury, stroke, multiple sclerosis, motor neuron disease and cerebral palsy to better manage their chronic condition. The program will operate at the John James HealthCare Campus where a range health and wellbeing programs will be offered in a group setting as well as having a purpose-built gym for people with spinal injuries to use to aid recovery. [Click here to find out more information on the SCIA NeuroMoves Program.](#)

ACT Equipment Scheme Committee: Joanne Baumgartner 9 Feb 2017

After spending the last couple of years on this committee today I stepped down mainly due to the fact that the implementation of the NDIS meant that our applications have significantly reduced and we only needed to have one consumer representative which is capably filled by Marion Reilly.

During my time on the committee I have gained a lot of knowledge and experience on what items of equipment the community of Canberra need in living in their homes with what are at times almost insurmountable disabilities. The Occupational Therapists who I have worked with have at all times shown compassion and understanding in assisting their clients and I respect their work. Hopefully there will be better streamlining of the NDIS/NDIA in the near future to assist their clients and I have appreciated being given the opportunity to undertake this work.

Many thanks to Michael, Tanya and Cheryl for the lovely floral gift and card. Much appreciated.



Empathy in Health Care – the Human Connection to Patient Care

Patient care is more than just healing -- it's building a connection that encompasses mind, body and soul. If you could stand in someone else's shoes . . . hear what they hear. See what they see. Feel what they feel. Would you treat them differently? [Click here to watch this captivating and eye-opening video from the US Cleveland Clinic.](#)

Contact Us

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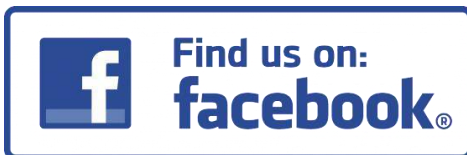
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Please note that Consumer Bites provides a small snippet of health related articles our members might find interesting to consider, ponder and analyse. The HCCA does not purport to endorse any opinions or the veracity of claims contained within the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

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

Editor: Khalia Lee

LOCAL EVENTS (CONT.)

Alzheimer's Australia ACT – Great Expectations Inspiring Hope Through Research

Alzheimer's Australia ACT is pleased to invite you and your colleagues to their inaugural Dementia Research Forum: *Great Expectations: Inspiring Hope Through Research*. This forum will bring together respected and well established leaders in dementia research to share knowledge and expertise. The aim of this full day event is to showcase the current and leading research in Australia, understand how to translate research into practice, and to develop meaningful and collaborative networks within the field.

Date: Monday 27 February 2017

Time: 8:00am – 5:30pm

Venue: QT Canberra, 1 London Circuit, Canberra ACT 2601

Cost: \$60pp general admissions, \$20pp for people living with dementia and their carers

Register: [Click here to register and secure your tickets.](#)

Let's Talk Dementia

Alzheimer's Australia ACT will be holding an information session for anyone caring for people with dementia or who have an interest in learning more about dementia. The session will cover the basic overview of what dementia is, its causes and impacts, as well as the latest statistics in dementia research. Details for the event are below:

Date: Monday 6 March 2017

Time: 1:30pm – 2:30pm

Venue: 159 Maribyrnong Avenue, Kaleen

Cost: Free. Donations are welcome.

RSVP: Call 02 6255 0722 or email act.admin@alzheimers.org.au