

Volume 4 / Issue 3

AN UPDATE FROM THE OFFICE

We had a really good session on Tuesday, 28 February (10am - 12pm) of HCCA members and consumer representatives to start the year. Sue Andrews, HCCA President, opened the event with an acknowledgement of country and reflecting on 2016 and highlighting opportunities for involvement in 2017. This year HCCA will be evaluating our strategic plan and a working group has been established to support the staff to undertake this work. There will be opportunities for members input as well as external stakeholders. The Executive Committee will be focussing on the evaluation of our performance against the existing plan and the development of the next plan.

The ACT Health Clinical Services Framework and the development of Specialty Services Plan will also be a focus of our work. There was some concern that the service plan will focus on disease rather than the person but my discussions with ACT Health have reassured me that this is not the intend. Still it will be important for HCCA to monitor this. We look forward to working with ACT Health to establish consumer participation principles and processes around this work.

The Consumer Representatives Program and training will be reviewed in 2017 and there will be opportunity to participate in this.

Sue Andrews welcomed the new members of the Consumer Representatives Program Steering Committee (this was included in the last newsletter) and thanked Adele Stevens for her leadership of this group over the past five years.



Kerry Snell and Darlene Cox

We also fare-welled Kerry Snell who has been with HCCA for over 8 years, working with the Consumer Representatives team and on the Health Infrastructure Program. I have worked extremely closely with Kerry. I will miss her passion and commitment to improving services. We wish Kerry all the best with her retirement.

Lead Article

Committee Vacancies

Recent Endorsements

Health Policy Update

News from Consumer Organisations

Items of Interest

Local Events

Upcoming HCCA Events

Canberra's Feminist Strength Portrait Exhibition

On Thursday 2 March, Julie McCarron-Benson will be launching her art exhibition 'Canberra's Feminist Strength', work that includes our President Sue Andrews, and former President, Adele Stevens, and acknowledges their work in lobbying for women's rights in Canberra. The exhibition will be held at Canberra Artworks Gallery in Phillip until Tuesday 28 March. [Click here if you would like to find out more information on the Canberra's Feminist Strength Portrait Exhibition.](#)

We welcome to the HCCA team four new staff members. Molly Wilkinson will be filling in for Sandra Avila while she is away on maternity leave, helping out with administration. Sally Deacon will be taking over Kerry's role as Manager of Consumer and Community Participation and Claudia Cresswell will take on a new position of Health Promotion Officer. Kathryn Dwan will also take on a new position of Manager to Policy and Research. We will be featuring each new staff member in future editions of Consumer Bites.



Molly, Sally, Kathryn and Claudia at the Reps Thank You Celebration

I read with great interest that the Board of the Capital Health Network passed a resolution to support the trial of pill testing in the ACT as an important public health initiative. As a parent of young people who are of the age to go to music festivals and hit the clubs in Civic. I am extremely aware of the risks involved for them. They need to have tools to handle these situations and pill testing is a useful tool to increase awareness and provide education opportunities around illicit drugs. It will give them more information to make decisions. I know that not everyone in our membership shares this view but it is consistent with our organisation's commitment to consumer control, public health and health promotion and belief in the importance of providing people with opportunities to build their health literacy To have the primary health care organisation take a harm minimisation approach to this public health issue is very reassuring. They reported in their recent newsletter that Dr David Caldicott presented a very informative session on pill testing in the ACT at their recent Board meeting. Dr Caldicott is a strong and articulate advocate on pill testing and harm minimisation. He is the Adjunct Professor at the University of Canberra and Emergency Medicine Consultant at the ANU. Dr Caldicott expects that a trial of pill testing will go ahead this year at an ACT music festival. This is welcome news from my perspective.

Darlene Cox
Executive Director

ENDORSEMENTS

Consumer Representative Endorsements

Geri Badham → Wayfinding Sculpture Committee

HCCA Staff Endorsements

Yelin Hung → Wayfinding Sculpture Committee

Kate Gorman → 2017 ACT Nursing & Midwifery Excellence Awards Panel

HCCA Events

Consumer Representatives Forum

Please note: This meeting is for current consumer representatives endorsed by HCCA. If you have any questions about this, please contact Kate Gorman on kategorman@hcca.org.au.

Time: 11:00am to 2:00pm

Date: Wednesday 29 March 2017

Venue: SHOUT large meeting room, Building 1, Pearce Community Centre, Collet Place, Pearce.

RSVP: To Kate Gorman by Wednesday 22 March on kategorman@hcca.org.au or on 6230 7800. Please advise of any dietary requirements.

COMMITTEE VACANCIES

There is a vacancy for a consumer representative on each of the committees below. *The vacancies on the Standard 9 Committee and the Woman, Youth and Children Unit Community Health Programs Quality and Safety Committee have been extended.*

Nominations for the committees below close on **Monday 27 March 2017**.

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.

Woman, Youth and Children Unit Community Health Programs (WYCCHP) Quality and 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 services:

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 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. The location is the 3rd floor of 1 Moore Street, Civic.

COMMITTEE VACANCIES (CONT.)

The Walk-in centre

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. The successful nominee will have consumer experience using the services at any of the Walk-in Centres. Ideally, the committee are looking for a consumer between the ages of 20-25 and/or with children between 6-8 years old. If you are interested in applying but do not fall into these criteria, please submit a nomination form anyway.

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

Hi everyone! We have just reviewed the final ACT Health Multiple Chemical Sensitivities Clinical Procedure to see how our feedback was incorporated. Yelin and I are working on an upcoming presentation on Medicare and Private Health Insurance.

Current issues in the Policy space include:

- 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>
- Independent Review of Accreditation Systems within the National Registration and Accreditation Scheme for Health Professions
http://www.coaghealthcouncil.gov.au/Portals/0/AccreditationSystemsReview_Bulletin2_Feb2017_1.pdf

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

NEWS FROM CONSUMER ORGANISATIONS

Consumers Health Forum

The Consumers Health Forum (CHF) is developing two Policy Briefing Webinars that are free for anyone to attend.

8 March - 'Overview of the Australian Health System' 12:15pm – 1:15pm

15 March - 'Current Areas of Australian Health Reform' 12:15pm – 1:15pm

Videos of the broadcast will be available after the event, but joining the webinar in person give you a chance to put forward questions and comments to us.

[The CHF HealthUpdate for 2017 has been released and is available online.](#)

LOCAL EVENTS

Shaping Spaces for Gen Z – International Forum

Urban Synergies Group, together with the University of Canberra, Health Research Institute, is presenting a one-day international forum, focused on environments that foster healthy childhood development in the broadest sense of this term i.e. including mental and physical capacities, social and psychological development and connectedness to community. Childhood obesity, physical inactivity, environmental design, child empowerment, and the right to play and interact will be central themes. This event provides a unique opportunity to critically reflect on the current state, to collectively discuss emerging opportunities, and to create a realistic pathway forward that should enable better environments for future generations to grow up in.

Date: Wednesday 8 March 2017

Time: 8:30am – 4:30pm

Venue: Ann Harding Conference Centre, University of Canberra

Cost: Free to members of the public, children, charities and university students

Register: [Click here to register for this event!](#)

If you would like more information on this event, please see flyer attached.

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

ITEMS OF INTEREST

Primary Health Care

Latest news from CHN

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

- [Health InterACTion issue 37](#)
- [2/52 Health Care Bulletin](#)
- [CHN Board Communique – February 2017](#)

Women using Digital Technologies in Health – Research Participation

Do you use apps on your phone or tablet, websites, social media, or online searches to find information about, or help manage, health and medical issues?

Women's Centre for Health Matters (WCHM), in collaboration with researchers from the University of Canberra, are hosting discussion groups from March to June 2017 for women in the following groups:

1. 18-25 year old women
2. Women with babies and young children under 5 years
3. Women with chronic health conditions
4. Women with mental health conditions
5. Women who have or have had cancer
6. Women aged 65 or over
7. Women from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds
8. Women with a disability

The objective of the discussion groups is to better understand how women living in Canberra use digital technologies for health and medical reasons:

e.g. online searches, apps, websites and social media.

The findings from the research will be published as a report that will be available to participants when the project concludes later in 2017.

If you are interested in participating, please email admin@wchm.org.au with your name, contact phone number, postcode, and which group you are interested in. We will send you an invitation to your discussion group once the time and place have been set.

ITEMS OF INTEREST (CONT.)

CHF – HealthyCover Checklist Tool

[The Consumers Health Forum of Australia \(CHF\)](#) have recently launched their online tool *HealthyCover*, a checklist that identifies whether or not consumers are paying for the right private health insurance package. The tool is in the format of a survey, and asks consumers a variety of questions to better understand the type of cover they have and how they can compare and contrast other providers to find the right cover for their needs. With this tool, CHF hope to better inform consumers about private health insurance policies and hope to see better reforms to private health insurance rebates into the future. [Click here to find out more information on CHF's HealthyCover tool.](#)

Health of Older People

Staying Active on your Feet – Falls Prevention

[The NSW Falls Prevention Network](#) together with [NSW Ministry of Health](#) have collaborated together to produce *Staying Active on your Feet*, a consumer resource that promotes easy lifestyle choices to lower your chances of having a falls related injury. The resource includes tips on how to keep active, eat well and also what you should do if you have a fall. This resource has also been translated into six community languages: Arabic, Chinese (simplified and traditional), Greek, Italian and Vietnamese. [If you would like find out more information about Staying Active on Your Feet, click here.](#)

Ensuring Equitable Access to Aged Care

The Brotherhood of St Laurence Research and Policy Centre submitted a policy submission into the Aged Care Legislated Review in December 2016. Their submission outlined their thoughts on how accessing aged care services might be well suited for some, for others it can be extremely difficult. There needs to be more action to address these barriers older consumers face to ensure all consumers have equitable access to the services they need. [Click here if you would like read the full Brotherhood of St. Laurence submission.](#)

A Novel about Healthy Ageing

Recently, one of our members brought to our attention a Dutch novel that follows a man who is determined to live life to the fullest. *The Secret Diary of Hendrik Groen 83 ½ Years Old* follows a year in the life of Hendrik as he sets out to write an expose on what life is like in his aged care home in Amsterdam. Hendrik establishes the Old-But-Not-Dead-Club, an endeavour to encourage other older people to increase their enjoyment of advanced ageing by arranging outings together. If you are interested in reading this book, you can find it in most bookstores or online.

Safety and Quality

Smoke-Free Transport Waiting Areas – Have your Say

Like public health spaces, play grounds and play spaces, the ACT Government is proposing a smoking ban within five metres of public and private transport waiting places under the *Smoke-Free Public Places Act 2003*. Areas that this extension would cover are bus and coach interchanges, residential bus stops, taxi ranks, light rail stations and train stations. Minister for Health, Meegan Fitzharris MLA, said that this extension of the act would help to reduce the normalcy of smoking behaviours and to reduce the harms of the public inhaling second-hand smoke. The consultation is open until 7 April 2017 and a discussion paper, *Smoke-Free ACT Public Transport Waiting Areas*, provides information about the proposal to help interested community members to respond. [Click here if you would like to find out more on the Smoke-Free Transport Waiting Areas consultation.](#)

LOCAL EVENTS (CONT.)

Grief and Loss Information Session for Seniors – Friday 24 March 2017

As part of Seniors Week 2017, the Canberra Grief Centre will host a free grief and loss information session for seniors with a Concession or Pension Card.

The session will cover:

- The losses we experience as we age
- The relationship between loss and grief
- What is grief and how can it affect us
- What causes us to grieve the way we do
- Understanding the difference between 'healthy' and 'unhealthy' grieving
- How we can support ourselves and others who have experienced loss

Date: Friday 24 March 2017

Time: 1:00pm – 3:00pm

Venue: Griffith Neighbourhood Hall, off Stuart Street, Griffith

Register: [Please click here to register](#) or phone Sonia Fenwick on 0409 966 515 or Mandy Cox on 0401 344 577.

Seniors Week 2017

ACT Seniors Week is an annual celebration featuring hundreds of free events held across the ACT by government, community and commercial organisations. The objectives of Seniors Week are to encourage older people to live healthy and active lifestyles all year round, demonstrate that older age can be a time of learning and adventure and to celebrate older people and their continuing contribution to family, friends, workplaces and communities, and across generations. This year, Seniors Week will be held from 18 – 26 March and a timetable of key events can be found below:

Event	Date	Time	Venue
Seniors Week Launch	17 th March	3pm -5pm	Legislative Assembly
ACT Chief Ministers Concert	21 st March	10:30am – 12:30pm	Albert Hall
Seniors Week Expo	23 rd March	10am – 3pm	EPIC
Positive Ageing Awards	24 th March	12:30pm – 2:30pm	Ginninderra Labor Club Charnwood

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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**

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