

# Consumers Shaping Health



*News and views on health consumer issues - October 2019*

## ***Consumer focus groups on primary care data: your chance to be involved***

Australians use primary care more than any other part of the health system yet given its scope and influence, there is relatively little information available about the overall activity and outputs of primary health care. Health consumers will have the opportunity this month to participate in focus groups to raise awareness about a new development to improve knowledge about primary care.

The Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW) is progressing plans to develop a National Primary Health Care Data Asset (Data Asset). It is envisaged that the Data Asset will facilitate a better understanding of what happens to patients in the primary health system including their diagnoses, treatment, outcomes and patient experiences by bringing together a range of data from various sources over time.

AIHW is the premier agency responsible for collecting and reporting statistics in health and welfare to provide stronger evidence - data and information - for better decisions and improved health and welfare. It publishes over 180 high quality reports annually on key health and welfare topics and issues in Australia.

AIHW has contracted CHF to promote awareness and confidence among consumers about the Data Asset. To support this goal, CHF is seeking to gauge consumer knowledge, attitudes, support and concerns about this new path to primary health care information.

We will be conducting small focus groups this month to explore consumer implications of the development. We invite interested health consumers to inform CHF if they would like to participate (**see details below**). Participants will receive a briefing note to inform themselves before the group session. Separately on 30 October and 11 November we will hold two webinars in which consumers, AIHW and clinical panellists will discuss the data project and respond to online questions.

The development of robust data on primary health care requires active consumer consideration of sensitive aspects including privacy, patient consent and use of de-identified data. CHF welcomes AIHW's approach in seeking consumer consultation on this development, given the extension of data gathering and reporting into the sometimes intimate setting of primary health care.

Public confidence in the credibility and security of the Data Asset will be important for its eventual operation and success. The focus groups provide an important opportunity for consumer input.

**Leanne Wells**  
Chief Executive Officer

## Join the focus group on primary care data



Teleconferences are expected to take place in the week starting **14 October 2019**.

**Please note that a \$50 participation fee will be paid to all participants.**

Focus group numbers are limited. To apply, please email the reason for your interest and your contact details to CHF's Research and Policy Officer, James Ansell at [j.ansell@chf.org.au](mailto:j.ansell@chf.org.au).

## News and Resources



### ***October is health literacy month***

CHF has developed Be Health Aware as part of our advocacy of health literacy as a central element of consumer-centred health care - visit the hub to access the most reliable and evidence-based healthcare resources in Australia.

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### ***Health expenditure Australia 2017-18***

More than \$185 billion, or almost \$7,500 per person, was spent on health goods and services in Australia during 2017-18, according to a new report by the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW).



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### ***Grow's annual odd socks day***

1 in 2 Australians will experience a mental health issues in their life-time but just over a quarter will actively engage a support service. On the **4th of October**, Grow will be celebrating the annual Odd Socks Day; their annual National Mental Health Anti-Stigma Campaign. On this day, they ask supporters to help stamp out the stigma of mental health by wearing their Odd Socks and start the conversation about everyone's mental health.

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### ***Outcomes from the TGA's review of breast implants and breast tissue expanders***

Some breast implant devices have been suspended. This means that these implants will not be available on the Australian market for the next six months. During this period, the sponsor will have the opportunity to provide additional information to the TGA about their implants' safety and performance.

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### ***Extension on the Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety***

On Friday 13 September 2019 the Australian Government announced the appointment of an additional Commissioner and a six month extension to the Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety. The newly signed Letters Patent which detail the changes are now available to view on the Royal Commission's website.

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### ***World Mental Health Day***



World Mental Health Day – October 10 — is a day for global mental health education, awareness and advocacy. An initiative of the World Federation for Mental Health to raise public awareness of mental health issues worldwide. Mental Health Australia is leading the World Mental Health Day campaign in Australia.

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## ***CHF Media Releases and Blogs***

### ***Climate a consuming issue for our health***

The Consumers Health Forum of Australia recognises that climate change represents an immense threat to our health and announces it has joined the Climate and Health Alliance.

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### ***Out of pocket costs dilemma requires action***

New figures showing that Australians are spending more than ever in health costs highlights the need for more Government action to remedy the crippling out of pocket costs many patients face..

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### ***Improved medicine information for consumers***

When Sally\*, a young mother, was prescribed antibiotics for an illness, she began taking them straightaway according to her doctor's instructions. She had never taken these medicines before, and when she started experiencing a persistent headache and nausea soon afterwards, she wondered if it had anything to do with the antibiotics.

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### ***Social prescribing - a new way to think about health care***

When an elderly lady visits her GP for a routine check-up, the GP notices that she's been reading a novel while she was in the waiting room. As they talk about her health conditions, as well as her day-to-day life, her GP suggests that she join a newly established book club at her local library.

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## ***Benefits of Becoming a CHF 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.

[FIND OUT MORE ABOUT OUR MEMBERSHIP HERE](#)

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