

Health Consumers Alliance of SA Inc

Wellbeing through health for all South Australians

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Who are we?

- HCA is a not for profit, independent alliance of health consumers and health consumer organisations.
- HCA is consumer-led with a Board elected by the membership.
- HCA is the peak body for health consumers in South Australia funded by the Minister for Health & Mental Health and Substance Abuse.



Who are we?

Vision:

Wellbeing through health for all South Australians

Mission:

To provide a respected and informed consumer voice to influence the development of quality health services



Key areas of activity

- Policy and systems advocacy
- Mental Health focus
- Building and supporting consumer networks
- Consumer and community engagement



Key areas of activity

HCA:

- works in partnership to involve consumers in policy development and health care decision making.
- organises forums on relevant health topics.
- supports consumers to develop skills in advocacy and representation.
- communicates systemic advocacy concerns of consumers to health planners and decision makers.



Healthy Voices

- **Person-centred care**

Consumers want health care that puts them at the centre of decision-making and treats them as whole human beings not as symptoms or body parts that need treatment. This means a relationship between consumers and health care providers that is based on mutual respect and operates as a partnership.

- **Access**

Our health care system needs to be responsive to the diverse needs of our community. A “one size fits all” approach is not appropriate. Along with the importance of ease of physical access and culturally appropriate services, participants talked about affordability.

- **Rights and responsibilities**

Participants talked about mutual or shared responsibility for health and wellbeing. However, there was much concern about the ability of some people to take responsibility for their health care due to their economic, education or health situations.

- **Health literacy**

Health literacy was consistently viewed as critical to effective reform of the health care system. Participants viewed it as the basis and starting point for ensuring consumer awareness of rights and responsibilities, making health services accessible, and ensuring they are person-centred.



Consumer Perspectives: Primary Health Care

- Person-centredness
- Comprehensiveness
- Integration
- Continuity of care
- Participation – of patients, families and communities



Consumer Participation in Research



Consumer Participation in Research

Consumers can help:

- ensure the issues identified & prioritised are important to them and to health care as a whole
- ensure that money and resources aren't wasted on research that has little or no relevance
- ensure that research doesn't just measure outcomes that are important to health professionals and researchers



Consumer Participation in Research

Consumers can help:

- with the recruitment of their peers for research projects
- access other people who are often marginalised
- disseminate the results of research and work to ensure that changes are implemented

Involvement in research, done well, can help empower consumers and the community.



Principles for Consumer Participation in Research

- Start involvement as early as you can – but don't be put off if you didn't it's never too late
- One size doesn't fit all – work with consumer to find out what will work best
- Consumer participation should add value to the research
- Treat everyone – with courtesy and respect
- Keep everyone informed and involved by sharing information willingly and in language everyone understands



Better, more relevant research

- Seeing the health care system through a consumer lens
- Consumer rights, research ethics
- Requirement of funding bodies
- Ensure resources for consumer participation
- Involve consumer in all stages of the research process
- Develop partnerships with consumer organisations



Thank you!

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