

## Planetree

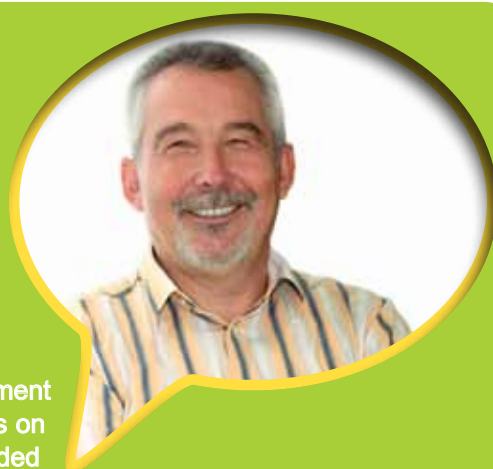
**Planetree, a not for profit organisation based in the United States, that promotes patient centred care, suggests that patient centred health care organisations respect patient's rights and recognize that:**

- A patient is an individual to be cared for, not a medical condition to be treated.
- Each patient is a unique person, with diverse needs.
- Patients are partners and have knowledge and expertise that is essential to their care.
- Patients' family and friends are also partners.
- Access to understandable health information is essential to empower patients to participate in their care and patient centred organisations take responsibility for providing access to that information.
- The opportunity to make decisions is essential to the well-being of patients and patient centred organisations take responsibility for maximizing these opportunities for choices and respecting those choices.
- Each staff member is a caregiver, whose role is to meet the needs of each patient, and staff members can meet those needs more effectively if the organisation supports staff members in achieving their highest professional aspirations, as well as their personal goals.
- Patient centred care is the core of a high quality health care system and a necessary foundation for safe, effective, efficient, timely, and equitable care.

## Healthy Voices

Health consumer leaders in South Australia have many ideas about how we can work together to make patient centred care a reality. The following recommendations emerged from HCA's 2011 Conference:

1. In South Australia, the Charter of Health and Community Services Rights is fundamental to the achievement of patient centred care and must be widely promoted in the community and adopted by healthcare providers.
2. Connected and co-ordinated care across public, private and non-government healthcare providers at all levels, primary, secondary and tertiary. A focus on the patient journey and the establishment of e-Health records are regarded as critical elements.
3. Consumer and carer involvement in the education, training and continuing professional development of healthcare providers. This is regarded as essential to moving from a paternalistic, medical model to a patient centred approach that promotes emotional, social and physical wellbeing and patients as true partners. It is also an opportunity to share stories of good care as well as the importance of learning from feedback and complaints.
4. Development of accessible evidence-based information for consumers and carers using a range of media, including opportunities for information sharing and libraries or resources centres.
5. Support for educational and knowledge sharing opportunities for consumers and carers.
6. Development of health literacy tools for healthcare providers to enable them to support consumers and carers to make informed choices.
7. Support for an annual joint consumer/healthcare provider patient centred care conference.
8. Consumer and carer involvement in setting standards, tools and measures for patient centred care and monitoring healthcare provider achievement.
9. A comprehensive and consistent approach to partnering with consumers and carers that mandates active engagement at all levels (individual, service, network, system) with the aim of achieving safe, quality patient centred care.
10. Serious leadership commitment to patient centred care demonstrated through support of the above and "walking the talk".





## K.O.R.E: ● kindness ● openness ● respect ● empathy

HCA seeks to put consumers and carers in the driving seat as leaders for change in our health system. We want to turn the rhetoric about consumer centred care into reality.

There are numerous proposed definitions of patient or consumer centred healthcare, which include many of the same principles or standards, but there is no internationally accepted definition. The International Alliance of Patients' Organisations (IAPO) suggests that it is probably most useful to promote the essence of consumer centred care - that the healthcare system should be designed around the patient with respect for a person's preferences, values and needs (IAPO Declaration on Patient-Centred Healthcare 2006).

### The following themes emerge consistently from our conversations with consumers and carers:

- Caring and healing relationships;
- Holistic healthcare;
- Access to information;
- Support to make informed choices;
- Safe, quality healthcare;
- Patients as partners.

These are similar to the five principles in the IAPO Declaration: Respect; Choice and empowerment; Patient involvement in health policy; Access and support; and Information.

### HCA believes that at the core of a consumer centred culture of care are the following guiding principles or behaviours:

- Kindness
- Openness
- Respect
- Empathy

These principles underline that consumer centred care is fundamentally a partnership for our health and wellbeing and they apply to all the partners in the healing relationship. That is, all partners, all ways: provider to patient, patient to provider, patient to patient, provider to provider. In this context provider means all professional caregivers, including management, administration and support staff, working in a health care setting. A consumer centred culture of health care will only be realised if caregivers show kindness and respect towards each other.



## Partnering with Consumers

What is clear is that consumer centred care is part of a shift in focus and that healthcare systems cannot cope if they continue to focus on the disease rather than the person. There is a growing consensus that the involvement of consumers, and a system focussed on the needs and preferences of consumers may be the most cost-effective way to improve health outcomes. Research demonstrates that patient-centred care improves patient experience and creates public value for services through improving the safety and quality of our health system.



The Australian Health Ministers Advisory Council (AHMAC) has recognised the importance of partnering with consumers by approving the Australian Commission for Safety and Quality in Healthcare's (the Commission) ten national standards. The two overarching standards are "Governance for Safety and Quality in Health Service Organisations" and "Partnering with Consumers". The standards reflect a recognition of the rights of consumers to exercise power in health care across all levels of decision-making.

The Governance Standard specifies an open disclosure process and complaints management systems that include partnership with consumers and carers and recognition of the rights of patients.

This requires a well communicated Charter of Rights, including support for vulnerable consumers, and informed participation, including health literacy measures, informed consent, and advanced directives.

The Partnering with Consumers Standard specifies consumer and carer roles in governance for service planning, designing care, and service measurement and evaluation.

The **SA Charter of Health and Community Services Rights** includes a Right to actively participate which states that:

- I have a right to be fully involved in decisions and choices about services planned and received.
- I have a right to support and advocacy so I can participate.
- I have a right to seek advice or information from other sources.
- I have a right to give, withhold or withdraw my consent at any time.

The Commission report on **Patient-Centred Care: Improving Quality and Safety Through Partnerships with Patients and Consumers** acknowledges significant international developments led by the Picker Institute, Planetree, and the Institutes for Patient and Family Centred Care and Healthcare Improvement, all of whom are setting new benchmarks for the delivery of patient and family-centred care.

The Commission recommends that patient-centred care be recognised as a dimension of high quality health care and outlines twenty two recommendations for service level and system level improvements to achieve this reorientation. It specifically targets actions to be taken by health service executives, managers and system leaders to implement patient and consumer centred care reforms.

**Safety and quality, respect, participation, information and protecting patient rights are central to patient centred care. Valuing the consumer voice is very much, therefore, integral to partnering with consumers and achieving consumer centred care.**



## **Caring and healing relationships:**

the interaction between patients, their carers and healthcare providers is based on trust, openness and a shared humanity. The relationships, and the quality of interactions, are at the centre and are seen as the key to the healing process. The small things are therefore as important as the big things. Every interaction, no matter how trivial is important, and important issues should not be trivialised. Respectful and honest communication between patients, carers and healthcare providers is essential and is a two way process. Healthcare providers need to ensure an environment conducive to caring and healing relationships, including organisational cultures that are relationship focussed rather than task oriented. All interactions should promote and support emotional, social and physical wellbeing.

## **Holistic healthcare:**

consumers are treated as individuals with emotional, social and physical needs, that is, as a person not just as a disease, condition or collection of symptoms. A holistic approach to diagnosis, care and treatment is at the heart of patient centred care. Care needs to be designed around the needs, preferences and values of the patient and acknowledge that consumers are experts by experience. From the consumer perspective patient centred care is care that is provided “seamlessly” and the patient journey is at the heart of the care team’s deliberations. This approach also acknowledges that significant others are important and that the healthcare provider is the visitor in the patient’s life.

## **Access to information:**

consumers and their carers have access to clear, timely and accurate or evidence-based information. This requires professional cultures that are open and transparent, for example, about medical training and qualifications, errors and mistakes, alternative treatments and to requests for second opinions. For consumers to feel confident and be able to trust healthcare providers they need information about the people providing their care and the treatment they are recommending, including information about adverse events associated with medicines and devices. Healthcare providers should be proactive about keeping patients and their carers informed at all stages of the care relationship. Most importantly, patient centred care requires healthcare providers committed to enabling patients to make informed choices.

## **Support to make informed choices:**

if patient centred care is about respecting patient needs and preferences, then choice is fundamental. Consumers see choice as “being empowered” and being able to make informed choices about the what, when, who and how of their healthcare. It is also about the flexibility and adaptability of healthcare provision rather than a “one

size fits all” approach. Access to information that supports understanding and optimises the control that patients have over their healthcare decisions, for example, the consequences of choosing a particular doctor or the full financial implications of a course of treatment. This also involves access to resources such as peer workers, and advocacy support for when things go wrong.

## **Safe, quality healthcare:**

consumers have access to safe, quality care delivered by competent and trusted healthcare providers. Safety from unintended harm is a basic need for any patient; it is not possible to be truly patient centred without being safe. It is also not possible to be safe without being patient centred. Consumers need access to information and healthcare providers must openly disclose errors and mistakes. Effective communication and technical skills are both critical to patient centred care. Consumers need to be actively encouraged to be informed and involved in their own care as this is an important foundation for safety and quality. Healthcare providers need to embrace feedback and complaints and be open to learning from their patients.



## **Patients as partners:**

the engagement of consumers in a true partnership is essential to achieving patient centred care. Consumers need to be engaged as full and equal partners in designing and implementing change in accordance with the principle “nothing about me, without me”. It is not just about “good bedside manner”, although that is important; it’s about a very different approach, that is, a shift from paternalism to autonomy. Consumers need to be involved as partners in the learning and improvement process, from reviewing complaints and feedback to setting safety and quality goals. Public reporting of healthcare provider and system performance is essential to accountability and consumer centred decision making.