

HCA 2018 Election Platform Update

Summary of key points from politicians, HCA stakeholders and members

13 March 2018

The HCA 2018 Election Platform has been distributed to all political parties; to key stakeholders in the health, ageing, multicultural, social services, health research, and Aboriginal health sectors; and to HCA members. The Platform has also been featured in digital media, including the HCA website, our weekly eNews, Facebook and Twitter.

Summarized below are key points from discussions with political representatives, and from member and stakeholder feedback.

Summary of discussions with political representatives

HCA's Acting Chief Executive Ellen Kerrins and Board Directors have met with representatives of six political parties in South Australia, to discuss the [HCA 2018 Election Platform](#):

- The Hon Tammy Franks MLC, Greens SA
- The Hon Dennis Hood MLC, Australian Conservatives
- The Hon Peter Malinauskas MLC, Minister for Health, Labor Party
- The Hon Kelly Vincent MLC, Dignity Party
- Mr Peter Vincent, SA-Best
- The Hon Stephen Wade MLC, Shadow Minister for Health and Wellbeing, Liberal Party.

Consumer-centred care

HCA's vision is that consumers are at the centre of health in South Australia.

Political representatives gave in-principle support for the establishment of an individual advocacy service across the health system, for individual health consumers and carers.

All political representatives supported the view that consumers must be full partners in their own care. Successful health reform was considered to depend on consumers being part of decision-making - for consumers to be at the table in design, development, implementation and review.

Discussion took place on a consumer-centred approach to addressing system errors, and the value and need for open disclosure, informed consent and related legal issues.

System change

HCA advocates for system change. A priority for consumers is a comprehensive health strategy for SA, with joined-up community health, primary health and mental health services.

Political representatives recognised there is a gap in joined-up care for consumers, particularly for those who have continued to experience poor/inequitable access to services and care. There is a need for a mental health clinical services plan, and comprehensive clinical care planning, with a focus on primary and preventive care. The primary, tertiary and acute care sectors need to collaborate more, to ensure consumers receive optimal care.

A primary and preventative health hub option, which could provide a mix of services including medical, allied health and nurse-led care was discussed. It will focus on primary and preventive care and help keep South Australians out of hospital.

Also raised was the opportunity to establish a statewide clinical leadership group in mental health services, to engage with consumers and carers on their needs, to develop new models of care and to focus on the development of community-based alternatives to inpatient care.

Decentralisation of the SA Health system was discussed – What would this look like? What governance would be required? Also discussed were the Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care (ACSQHC) National Model Clinical Governance Framework, and the ACSQHC National Safety and Quality Health Service Standards. Another discussion point was the roles of Health Advisory Councils.

Political representatives spoke of health reform and enquired about HCA's role in the retired Transforming Health program. There was agreement that it just makes sense for consumers to be part of the decision-making in health reform.

Health for those with the greatest need

HCA advocates for health for those with the greatest need. Language, culture, gender and age, where you live and how much you earn should not be barriers to health and wellbeing.

Access to health care and services was a prominent issue in discussion. Inability to access care prevents consumer-centred care, whether it is distance, parking, language, age, other specific needs or understanding how the health care services work. There was agreement that health services need to be health literate environments, supporting people to access information and services as relevant and timely for them.

There was discussion related to telemedicine, to improve access to care when other options such as face-to-face interactions were not always timely. The emphasis was on quality services, including telemedicine in settings where this is safe and improves access and care options.

The importance of end-of-life care, palliative care and advance care directives were acknowledged by all political representatives. Discussions included:

- the availability of 24/7 care and identifying any issues that may prevent this
- enablers for more South Australians to die at home with palliative support if they so desired

- the need for further reach of advance care directives, and review of their implementation, including support for consumers to initiate these with families, and the mechanisms by which clinicians can access these documents when clinically relevant.
- the rights of people to pain-free, supportive end-of-life care, and to choose where, how and with whom they want to die, and have the support and care to do so
- an end-of-life care strategy to best match the needs and preferences of South Australians, through strong partnerships across the healthcare system.

There was an acknowledgement of culturally appropriate health care, but there seems to be an understanding that this is already in place, rather than requiring further development and implementation.

The political representatives also raised other issues which HCA has on its agenda for post-election discussions.

Summary of key points from member and stakeholder feedback

“Just read the platform documents - reads very well but more importantly reflects the needs of the health community in such a relatable way. I particularly liked the health advocacy call - clearly with NDIS this has never been more important to reach those most marginalised. In terms of palliative care - this is an area that for clear reasons many have been reluctant to tackle - it is difficult as a health consumer to morally access the services if you are told that due to limited resourcing access is to those facing imminent death only - I applaud the organisation for raising this...”

“I am so impressed and humbled by the widespread health agenda through HCASA and the support to consumers.”

“It is great to see a strong consumer voice for Health in SA.”

“The document is great - please accept my thanks on a great body of work.”

“The content of the election platform was good. I am most interested in how the individual advocacy strategy could help vulnerable people who slip through the system or don't understand how it works to help. My advice is not to 'waste' time meeting with politicians before this election, and don't focus on asking for resources. You should meet with them after the election to advise on how to move things along.”

Conclusion

Overall, there is overwhelming support for HCA's 2018 Election Platform, and the six calls to action, namely:

1. An advocacy service for individual health consumers
2. Consumers as partners in ongoing health reform
3. A primary health strategy for SA
4. Strategic reform for mental health clinical services
5. Access to in-home palliative care and end-of-life services.
6. Culturally appropriate healthcare.