

HCA Strategic Direction 1:

We lead health consumer engagement across all levels: individual, service and system.

Outcome:

Consumers influence health at all levels.

“ *HCA's willingness to work in partnership is making a significant difference.* ”

HCA acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of Country. We pay respect to Elders past and present, and recognise that their cultural heritage, beliefs and relationship to Country are important for sustaining health and wellbeing.



ACTIVITIES

HCA facilitates engagement opportunities for health consumers and consumer organisations, and supports consumers and health services to work in partnership in the planning, design, delivery, measurement and evaluation of care.

Activities this year included:

- > organising five forums on topics such as Transforming Health, primary health and mental health
- > holding six focus groups on a variety of health issues
- > holding the HCA annual Members Forum, and Annual General Meeting
- > promoting 122 consumer consultation opportunities on a broad range of topics
- > promoting and assisting the recruitment of 65 consumer advocates for a variety of committees and advisory groups across the health system, and for non-government services and private providers
- > leading and supporting the Transforming Health Consumer and Community Engagement Committee to provide broad, strategic and representative consumer engagement
- > recruiting and supporting consumers to participate in Transforming Health Models of Care Work Groups, and to contribute to the Transforming Health evaluation strategy
- > working with health services to support consumer partnerships, by providing training and resources, and developing consumer engagement plans.

Our vision: Consumers at the centre of health in South Australia

HCA Strategic Direction 2:

We lead systemic advocacy and policy to shape consumer-centred care.

Outcome:

Consumers inform health policy, planning, design, delivery, measurement and evaluation.

“ I have been involved with HCA for over three years... I now know it to be a very important spoke in the wheel of health...I have been able to make a difference through being a consumer rep on several committees. ”

“ It is satisfying to work at HCA, knowing that our organisation provides an opportunity for health consumers in South Australia to have a say on health policies that will affect them. ”



ACTIVITIES

HCA engages with consumers, health staff, research institutes, national bodies and key stakeholders to inform and develop our policy positions and systemic advocacy.

This year we contributed to SA Health by:

- > joining the Oakden Response Oversight Committee and co-chairing the Partnering with Consumers and Community Advisory Group
- > providing advice and consumer perspectives, for example on Transforming Health, governance issues, privacy breaches, patient access to medicinal cannabis, the Community Power Dependency Project, and the Cancer Drug Protocol Committee.

Nationally, we continued working with:

- > the Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care, chairing the Partnering with Consumers Committee
- > the Consumers Health Forum, particularly around Medicare and pharmaceutical issues
- > consumer groups advocating for women to participate in the pelvic mesh Senate inquiry
- > key bodies such as the Australian Medical Council, to assist a training strategy review.

To progress work on consumer and community engagement, HCA partnered with organisations such as the South Australian Health and Medical Research Institute (SAHMRI), the SA Translation Centre, and the Robinson Research Institute. We were involved in recruiting consumers to a variety of committees, delivering training, and co-publishing a journal paper.

We also worked with other key stakeholders and peak bodies including the SA Mental Health Commissioner, Chief Psychiatrist of SA, Health Performance Council, and Drug and Alcohol Services SA.

HCA Strategic Direction 3:

We provide information, learning and development to build the skills of consumers and health services.

Outcome:

Consumers have access to accurate health information. Consumers and health services have the skills to effectively partner.

“ SA Health continues to partner and collaborate with HCA... its commitment to having consumers at the centre of health in South Australia has been instrumental... as Chair of the Transforming Health Consumer and Community Engagement Committee, (HCA) ensured consumers' and communities' voices were heard... SA Health would like to thank HCA for its ongoing commitment to consumer and community engagement, and looks forward to working together in the future. ”

ACTIVITIES

HCA provides information on health consumer engagement opportunities; builds the skills of consumers and health services through training, forums and networking; and develops work with vulnerable communities to address inequities in health.

HCA's annual statistics at a glance:

- > eight Introduction to Consumer Advocacy Training programs for 73 participants, to build contemporary health advocates
- > four meetings of our Consumer Advocates Network, to develop skills and networks
- > assisted in training 150 health executives, clinicians, researchers and students
- > 16,881 website visitors
- > 1,032 Facebook followers
- > 1,278 Twitter followers
- > 50 editions of our weekly eNews published, with 1,242 subscribers.

We promoted health literacy by adding it as a new category to our website, publishing resources from reputable Australian sources.

Our activities for vulnerable communities included advocating for people with disabilities, cancer patients, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island peoples, and those from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.



HCA Strategic Direction 4:

We develop our people, culture and systems to be an effective and thriving organisation.

Outcome:

Health consumers have an effective, thriving and sustainable organisation in South Australia.

“ Partnering with Health Consumers Alliance of SA in the design and implementation of SAHMRI’s Framework for Consumer and Community Engagement has been a great experience. It has been very useful to have an external and independent group working with us, bringing their expertise and mature insight. HCASA has also helped us engage a wider network of health consumers for our co-design processes. ”

“ Advocacy has given me purpose and meaning, and certainly the hope that, through social action, one can make a difference. ”



ACTIVITIES

HCA develops member, Board and staff capacity to innovate and excel; manages human and financial resources responsibly; complies with legislation and regulations; and monitors and mitigates risk.

This year’s activities included:

- › ongoing monitoring and management of risk and compliance
- › comprehensively reviewing and developing HCA’s governance policies
- › implementing a new Customer Relationship Management System, allowing better online access and usability for consumers and staff, and investing in Microsoft SharePoint, a contemporary document management and storage system
- › undertaking staff training to develop our internal business plans and a customer service charter
- › initiating the recording of requests for individual advocacy on our content management system
- › increasing our focus on evaluation and review across our work.

HCA supports personal and professional development opportunities for each staff member, via attendance at a variety of conferences, forums and meetings. Staff also have access to a confidential and free Employee Assistance Program and to salary sacrificing.

HCA manages our financial resources responsibly, contracting an independent accountant to ensure best-practice financial management. Finances are audited at least annually. We provide quarterly reports to SA Health, and we report to government regulators. The Board oversees the business plans, budget, and major financial decisions.