

Health Care Consumers' Association of the ACT (HCCA) is an association incorporated under the Associations Incorporation Act 1991 (ACT). It is the principal health consumer advocacy organisation in the ACT, supporting and developing health consumer perspectives and policy in the ACT for over **25years**.

Aims

HCCA's aims are;

- a). To provide a means for health care consumers to participate in local and national policy, planning and service decisions that affect their health.
- b). To encourage the development of health care services that will be:
 - i) effective in enhancing the capacity of consumers to become fully participating members of the community,
 - ii) responsive to the needs and preferences of consumers.
 - iii) respectful of human rights,
 - iv) readily accessible,
 - v) cost effective and affordable.
- c) To promote the right of consumers to be involved in health policy, planning and service decisions that affect their health.
- d). To promote a just and equitable distribution of resources to redress the inequalities in the health status of consumers.

Executive Committee Members

Russell McGowan	President
Marion Reilly	Vice- President
(Vacant)	Treasurer
Kate Moore	Secretary
Paula Calcino	
David Lovegrove	
Darlene Cox	

Staff

Fiona Moore

Executive Director
Commenced 9 July 2007

Marion Reilly

A/g Executive Director
From April – July 2007

Stephanie Louise

Health Issues Policy Officer
Commenced 9 August 2007

Sandra Corey

Administration Officer

Resignations

Shayne McArthur

Executive Director
Resigned April 2007

Michelle Preston

Community Development & Policy Officer
Resigned May 2007

Erika Jackson

Consumer Representative Project Officer
Resigned January 2007

Louise Taylor

Assistant Consumer Representative Project Officer
Resigned September 2006

President's Report

This is my seventh report on the activities of HCCA as its president, this time for the 2005-2006 financial year. Once again I am happy to be able to report on a successful year in which the Association has been able to consolidate its position as a leader of consumer input into the ACT Health system.

Under the able leadership of Shayne McArthur, our Executive Director, the organisation has built a more robust infrastructure which will serve us well as

we continue to strive to improve health outcomes for consumers of ACT Health Services. We should note the departure of Pam Boyer from her position as consumer reps program co-ordinator during the year past and welcome Erika Fisher to that role. Erika brings great energy and enthusiasm to her duties, as well as many years experience as an adult educator. She is ably supported by Louise Taylor in providing support for our consumer representatives. Our office co-ordinator Christine Arnold has also moved on, and we welcome Sandra Corey as her replacement.

The core funding provided by ACT Health provides the means by which HCCA can reach out to the ACT community to ensure that we are reflecting community opinion in the material we feed back to the department and the Minister about the state of ACT Health. All performance indicators for the Consumer Representation Program were again met with ease as the program maintained its strength and momentum under the new funding arrangement. The two training sessions this year have again brought many new consumer representatives to the Association. The main area we have focussed on this year has been on the Access Improvement Program, which you can read more about elsewhere in this report.

As always, I'd like to acknowledge the tireless work of our members and consumer representatives. My personal thanks and those of the whole Executive Committee go to you, as without your ongoing support the Association could not function. It is through you that the Association continues to provide a strong and articulate health care consumer voice in the ACT.

The policy development function has again proved challenging this year with difficulties in sustaining someone in the role of Policy and Community Development Officer. Claudia Cresswell (now with CHF) worked with us in that role for a short time but since her departure we have been fortunate to be able to recruit Michelle Preston to this position, and she has been doing great work tying together our governance policies and helping us respond to various health policy proposals put forward by ACT Health. As I noted in last year's report, there is still not a consistent approach to consumer participation across all sectors within ACT Health and a major aspect of Michelle's work in the coming year will therefore be to help us continue to push for implementation of a system wide consumer participation strategy as ACT government policy. We have now instituted a regular quarterly meeting with the ACT Health Executive and continue to maintain contact through meetings with the Health Minister, Opposition spokesperson on health and other key members of the Legislative Assembly to discuss matters of interest and significance to the Association and its members.

The Executive Committee has continued to guide the work of staff by use of the four strategic goals identified for the Association for the period 2004-2007: governance, participation/representation, policy and communication/visibility. These were further developed in two workshops facilitated by Elizabeth Morgan in February and May and we were very grateful for her assistance in helping us learn how to work together better by acknowledging the considerable commonality of purpose we share rather than constantly arguing

points of dissent. This has resulted in the development of a decision making protocol which we try to follow in meetings. We have now formed sub committees in each of these areas, supplemented by members from outside the Executive Committee and we are confident that these will enable us to pursue the work of the Association more effectively and efficiently.

1. Governance and Management of HCCA

The priorities for the Association include the revision of the Constitution and improvement of performance management and reporting.

2. Consumer Participation and Representation

This goal looks to improve HCCA's capacity to provide a consumer voice to ACT health by increasing recruitment activities, and developing further the support and resources provided to consumer representatives.

3. Health Policy Development

This includes the development of policy positions for the Association, reviewing and revising existing policy, and putting in place processes to make that policy work accessible to interested parties.

4. Communication and Visibility

Our Association will become stronger and more sustainable through the implementation of a communication strategy that improves its visibility in the community and maintains a high level of timely and informative communication with its members and consumer representatives about health-related and organisational matters.

Finally I would like to acknowledge the valuable contributions to the Association made by Treasurer, Sarah Stringer and also give thanks to Catherine Settle who stepped onto the Committee following the retirement of Regina Slazenger after many years valuable service to the Association. Neither is able to continue with their positions this year because of pressure of other commitments, but we thank them for the hard work they have put in on our behalf throughout the year past.

Russell McGowan
President

Executive Director's Report

The last year has been an exciting and challenging one for HCCA, characterised most notably by an escalation in the level of activity in the organisation. This has occurred particularly in the Consumer Representatives program, but more recently in our involvement with ACT Health in policy development as well. We are gratified by the continuing upward trend in new requests for consumer representatives to participate on ACT Health committees, workshops and other events such as the ACT Health Quality First Awards and decision-making panels for ACT Health employee awards, which we see as recognition of the real value of the consumer voice in improving health outcomes in the ACT.

Without the ongoing commitment to this organisation from our members and consumer representatives our capacity to meet this demand would not be possible. Sincere thanks must therefore be extended to our members and consumer representatives who continue to provide their time so generously. Only through this level of participation and support can HCCA maintain its call on the leaders of health in the ACT to include consumers at all levels of health service planning and delivery, policy development and decision-making.

GOVERNANCE

Considerable work has been undertaken this year to develop HCCA's internal organisational policies and to align them with the ACT community sector's quality improvement tool, 'Raising the Standard'. Following the work by the Executive Committee on the organisation's strategic plan this year the sub-committee structure has been established and implemented successfully within the operational processes of the organisation.

CONSUMER REPRESENTATIVES' PROGRAM

At the end of the second year of HCCA's three year funding agreement with ACT Health all performance indicators for the Consumer Representatives' Program have again been met and in fact exceeded. As at 30th June 2006 there were 43 active representatives on 75 committees, representing over 400 hours in the year. This compares to 43 representatives on 50 committees and 278 hours as 30th June 2005.

Although staffing has changed throughout the year the service levels and professionalism of the program has been maintained consistently. Whilst we farewelled Pam Boyer as Manager of the Program in April this year we have been fortunate in having Erika Jackson join the team in her place. Erika has a strong background in training and is well placed to develop and strengthen HCCA's training capability. The best wishes and thanks of the organisation and members are extended to Pam for her contribution to the Consumer Representatives Program and the development of HCCA generally. The continuing work of Louise Taylor in supporting the consumer representatives and ensuring all requests for new representatives are filled is also acknowledged.

Consumer Representatives' Program Steering Committee

This committee is now well-integrated into the procedures of HCCA, and oversees the consumer representative and appointment process. As well as providing rigour, consistency and transparency to the Program the establishment of the Steering Committee provides a greater level of efficiency and timeliness in our response to requests for ACT Health for consumer representation.

Training

Two consumer representatives training courses were held this year, one in September 2005 and the other in May 2006, with 23 people attending. Our thanks go

to Darlene Cox for capably and willingly facilitating the May program this year, which could not have proceeded without her assistance. These training courses remain an important source of new consumer representatives which enables HCCA to build and strengthen the consumer voice in the ACT. New skill building courses for our existing consumer representatives are to be developed during the next year to further strengthen the capacity and quality of our representation within ACT Health.

Access Improvement Program

One of the principal highlights for this year has been HCCA's involvement in the Access Improvement Program. This program aims to redesign the way health care services in the ACT are provided by focusing on the patient's journey through the health care system. HCCA has entered into a strategic alliance with ACT Health through a formal Memorandum of Understanding which aims to embed the principle of consumer engagement within the Access Improvement Program. Consumer representatives for HCCA have been involved in each of the patient journey projects undertaken by the Access Improvement Program to date, including representation on the Program Steering Committee:

- The Canberra Hospital Emergency Department
- Calvary Hospital Emergency Department
- Aged Care
- Mental Health
- Community Health
- Calvary Hospital Intensive Care
- The Canberra Hospital Bed Management

Supporting and Networking of Consumer Representatives

The Program's staff offers ongoing assistance and advice to all HCCA's representatives to ensure their committee participation is productive and effective, and meets the expectations and needs of the committee and the consumer representative. Bi-monthly forums are held for consumer representatives to attend, meet and network with other representatives, and participate in discussions about issues relating to their representative activities.

A series of regular sessions known as "Drop-Ins" are also available as further training and networking opportunities. During this last year four "Drop-Ins" have been held relating to ACT Health's 'Listening and Learning' feedback program, changes to the ACT Health Professional Board legislation, clinical ethics with Professor David Ellwood from The Canberra Hospital, and current health issues for consumers entitled "What's hot in health?"

HCCA has supported consumer representatives on the following committees during the last year:

ACT Health

ACT Clinical Council
ACT Clinical Council Executive
ACT Aged Care Advisory Council
ACT Diabetes Services Advisory Council
ACT Diabetes Services Review Reference Group
ACT Health Falls Prevention Funding Program Steering Committee
ACT Health and Medical Research Council

ACT Influenza Pandemic Action Committee
ACT Organ Donation Taskforce
ACT Maternal and Perinatal Information Network
Council for Nurses and Midwives ACT
Clinical Audit Committee
Management Committee Canberra Cancer Service
Aged Care Rehabilitation Services Advisory Group
Healthfirst Stakeholder Reference Group
Maternity Services Planning Advisory Group
Quality and Safety Forum
Quality Use of Medicines Committee
Radiology Information System Picture Archiving & Communication System
Recognition of the Deteriorating patient Steering Committee
ACT Health Ambulatory Care Steering Committee
ACT Health Care Associated Infections Reference Group
ACT Health/Greater Southern Area Health Service Joint Health
ACT Health Accreditation – Leadership and Management Working Group

Access Improvement Program – Improving the Patient Journey

The Canberra Hospital Emergency Department Project
Calvary Emergency Department Project
Aged Care Project
Mental Health Project
Community Health Project
Access Improvement Program Steering Committee
AIP Team
Calvary –ICU (Intensive Care Unit)
The Canberra Hospital – Bed Management

Community Health

ACT Cervical Screening Disability Task Group
ACT Cervical Screening Program Advisory Committee
Cervical Cytology Management Committee
Community Health Consumer Participation Working Group
Health Publications Review
Policy Development and Review Committee
Quality Committee
Home Visiting Policy Working Party
ACT Self Management of Chronic Conditions Sustainability Committee
Continuing Care Clinical Governance Committee
ACT Equipment Policy Reference Group
Continuum of Care Function Group

The Canberra Hospital

Clinical Ethics Committee
Clinical Handover Project – Doctor to Doctor Shift to Shift
Clinical Handover Project – Emergency Department to Accepting Care Team
Clinical Handover Project – Nurse to Nurse Shift to Shift

Maternity & Gynecological Management Group
Psychiatric Services Unit Continuum of Care
Renal Unit Management Committee
The Clinical Board
Death Package Project
VTE Working Group
Respecting Patient Choices

Calvary Health Care

Acute Care Continuum
Care Continuum Team
Clare Holland House Quality Improvement Risk & Safety Committee
Clinical Governance Committee
Maternity Care Continuum
Medical Care Continuum
Mental Health Continuum Care
Mission Integration Team
Palliative Care Partnership Team
Surgical Care Continuum
Infection Control Advisory Committee
Patient Safety Committee

HEALTH POLICY DEVELOPMENT

HCCA's participation in ACT Health policy development has increased significantly during this last year. With the difficulty in recruiting a Policy and Community Development Officer this increasing trend has strained the available resources of the organisation. During her short stay with HCCA Claudia Cresswell most capably undertook this role and our thanks are extended to her. Michelle Preston has recently joined HCCA in that capacity and has already established a strong foundation for policy development work, which will enhance the quality of HCCA's policy development capability. To complement this HCCA's Health Policy sub-committee is now in place and will provide a robust policy development framework for the organisation, improving HCCA's effectiveness and responsiveness.

Written feedback has been provided to ACT Health over the past year on the following policy initiatives and planning issues:

- ❖ ACT Health procurement feasibility planning for major radiation oncology equipment
- ❖ Discharge Planning Kit
- ❖ Medical and Dental – Appointments and Clinical Privileges
- ❖ Management of a complaint or a concern about a clinician
- ❖ Review of the Health Act 1993 concerning quality assurance committees
- ❖ Public Hospital Patients' Charter (jointly with ACTCOSS)
- ❖ Ambulatory Care
- ❖ Clinical Streaming
- ❖ Clinical Risk Framework
- ❖ Primary Health Care Strategy

Discussion and feedback has been provided on:

- ❖ Hospital parking – a forum was organised by HCCA on behalf of the ACT Health consultants. Further comments were collated and forwarded in letter format to the consultants

- ❖ Access Improvement Program
- ❖ Ambulatory Care – a forum was organised by HCCA at which the project staff received feedback from HCCA members
- ❖ Patient Safety Infrastructure – HCCA staff and consumer representative attended the Workshop organised by ACT Health. In addition Mark Cormack met with HCCA executive to discuss HCCA's role in relation to patient safety initiatives.
- ❖ Community Health Intake and Canberra Connect integration – HCCA staff and consumer representative met with ACT Government consultant

HCCA consumer representatives have provided feedback directly on the following ACT Health issues:

- ❖ ACT Health waiting list website
- ❖ Home Visiting Policy – Community Health
- ❖ Calvary signage review
- ❖ Community Health Discharge planning checklist
- ❖ Diabetes Services Review
- ❖ ACT Health Public Safety Infrastructure
- ❖ Access Improvement Program
- ❖ Community Health's Consumer Participation Strategy
- ❖ Primary Health Care Strategy
- ❖ Ambulatory Care framework

Other Policy Work

- ❖ HCCA arranged consumer representation and hosted a focus group on diagnostic imaging for the College of Radiologists
- ❖ HCCA arranged a discussion group of members for the Pharmacy Guild on the issue of pharmacy deregulation

Community Inclusion Fund Application

In conjunction with the Community and Health Service Complaints Commissioner HCCA submitted an application under the Chief Minister's Community Inclusion Fund in the recent round of grants. The objective of the proposed pilot project was to trial a health care consumer advocacy model for the ACT that assists socially excluded health care consumers in the community to communicate with health service providers in order to resolve health complaints. Unfortunately the application was not successful but other options by which this project may be funded are being considered.

COMMUNICATION and VISIBILITY

The major achievement for this year in regard to communication was the redevelopment of HCCA's website. Although there is still development work required to optimise the effectiveness of the site, it is functional and provides a sound base for information about the organisation. Thanks are extended to Melissa Smith and Christine Arnold for their assistance in the preparation and development of the information on the site.

Finally I again thank the staff of HCCA who have contributed so capably to the achievements of HCCA this year. To Christine, Pam and Claudia who have resigned during the year I extend my personal thanks and wish you the very best in your future endeavours. I would also like to express my sincere thanks to Russell McGowan for his guidance, wisdom and assistance throughout the year, and to all other members of the Executive Committee for their tireless work and support.

Shayne McArthur
Executive Director

**HEALTH CARE CONSUMERS
ASSOCIATION ACT INCORPORATED**

*Financial Statements
For The Year Ended 30th June, 2006*

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