



Consumer-Centred Care Position Statement

What are the benefits of consumer-centred care?

Health services that are consumer-centred provide high quality and safe care.¹

Consumer-centred care leads to

- better health outcomes,
- improved consumer and family experience of care,
- better clinician and staff satisfaction, and
- wiser allocation of resources.^{2,3,4}

Different terms for the same thing

Different people use different words to describe consumer-centred care, including:

- person centred care,
- patient and family centred care,
- client centred care, and
- patient centred care.

HCCA is a consumer organisation advocating for consumer interests in the health system so we generally use the term consumer-centred care. Sometimes in our work, we may use another one of these phrases to help communication around the idea.

What is consumer-centred care?

Consumer-centred care meets the physical, emotional and psychological needs of consumers, and is responsive to someone's unique circumstances and goals^{5,6}

Consumer-centred care tells consumers, carers and families what they can expect from healthcare providers and the health system.

Consumer-centred care

- provides consumers with good quality, unbiased information about options for their health
- provides information to a consumer's family and carers about these options so they can support the consumer and know what is happening
- allows consumers, carers and families to have time to discuss the options and ask questions
- empowers consumers to choose the best option for them.

Consumer-centred care

- treats consumers, carers and families with dignity and respect
- helps consumers, carers and families to participate in their care
- expects health professionals to work in partnership with consumers, carers and families throughout their lives
- provides safe, high-quality and appropriate services that consumers
 - can get access to, and
 - feel comfortable using
- provides support to consumers to use the services, where necessary.

Consumer-centred care comes from health governance and policy systems that involve consumers as partners in designing and shaping the whole health care system, as well as other systems that affect people's health and well-being.

Where our ideas come from

National and international researchers and organisations have defined some key elements of consumer-centred care. HCCA's statement draws on the ideas of:

- the International Alliance of Patients' Organisations (IAPO) Declaration on Patient-Centred Healthcare⁷⁸, and
- the Picker Institute⁹.

We include information here about these elements to clarify the meaning of some terms used in our definition.

Access and Support

Safe, high-quality and appropriate services are available. Consumers are able to use, and feel comfortable using the services. A consumer's condition or socio-economic status does not prevent them using the services. Where necessary, consumers receive support to access safe, high quality and appropriate services.

Choice and Empowerment

Consumers get to decide who they consider part of their family. They also determine how they and their family and carers will:

- take part in the care, and
- make healthcare decisions that affect their lives.

The health system is responsive to consumers, carers and their family. It provides suitable choices in treatment and management options. These options are

- clinically sound,
- meet the patient's needs, and
- achieve the best possible outcome from the consumer's perspective.

Dignity and Respect

Health practitioners and policy makers listen to the voices of consumers, carers and families, and respect and respond to their decisions and their choices.

The planning and delivery of care incorporates consumer

- knowledge,
- values,
- beliefs, and
- cultural background.

Participation and Partnership

The health system and government encourage and support consumers, carers and families to take part in:

- improving the delivery of care
- improving safety and quality of care
- policy and program development
- implementation and evaluation
- research
- facility and service design
- professional education, and
- stewardship of the system¹⁰.

Information Sharing

Consumers, carers and families receive timely, complete and accurate information.

This information is current and unbiased. It also supports

- involvement in decision making, and
- partnerships built on mutual respect.

HCCA's commitment to consumer-centred care

HCCA's research shows that consumers highly value care that is consumer-centred, but this is not consistently experienced in local health services.^{11,12,13}

HCCA commits to consumer-centred care as a foundation principle in all its work and to promoting consumer-centred care across the health system, within government and across the ACT community.

HCCA also commits to enabling all people living in the ACT to achieve the best health and wellbeing possible, whatever their circumstances.

Authorisation and Review

Endorsed by the HCCA Executive Committee December 2021
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