

UPDATE FROM THE OFFICE

There have been a number of important changes to health services this week that consumers and carers need to know about. These are outlined below.

Health service changes: Elective surgery

Following endorsement by National Cabinet, the ACT Government is reducing non-urgent elective surgery across the Territory until further notice. This will apply to surgery at public and private hospitals. All patients on elective surgery waitlists are being clinically reviewed to ensure the most urgent surgeries are prioritised. These changes are significant for consumers as it means we will have to continue to manage our symptoms before we can access the surgery we need. The decisions have not been taken lightly and demonstrate the threat that COVID-19 is presenting.

Health Service changes: Outpatient appointments

Canberra Health Services (CHS) is reducing all non-urgent and non-essential community-based services, medical outpatients, procedures, and treatments. From Thursday, 26 March 2020 appointments that clinicians deem to be non-essential will be either cancelled or postponed. Essential appointments will be converted to virtual appointments where possible. This will include telephone or video consultations. CHS is contacting patients whose appointments or treatments are affected. No patient will lose their spot on the wait list as a result of these actions. If consumers determine that they no longer need the service, their referral will be cancelled. However, should it need to be reinstated it will be done so at the original date.

If consumers wish to cancel their appointment, please call Central Health Intake (5124 9977) or use the on-line cancellation form [here](#). GPs are asked to only refer urgent patients at this time.

Health service changes: Temp closure of hydrotherapy pool

From Monday, 30 March 2020 the University of Canberra Hospital (UCH) hydrotherapy pool will temporarily close. This is consistent with the Chief Minister's announcement of a shutdown of all non-essential services, including gyms and indoor sporting facilities. You can find out more on the ACT Health update for Wednesday 25 March - "[Health service changes in response to COVID-19](#)"

[COVID-19 Update](#)

[Policy and Research Update](#)

[Health Literacy Update](#)

[Health Infrastructure Update](#)

[Consumer Reference Group Updates](#)

[Items of Interest](#)

[Upcoming HCCA Events](#)

[Consumer Participation](#)

HCCA EVENTS

All HCCA events have been cancelled until 30 June 2020 at this stage.

HCCA COVID-19 survey

- [Click link here](#)

HCCA blogs

- [Current HCCA response to COVID-19](#)
by Darlene Cox

Health service changes: Transfer of patients to University of Canberra Hospital

To provide increased capacity in acute wards at Canberra Hospital and Calvary Public Hospital for acutely unwell patients, 28 patients from Canberra Hospital and two patients from Calvary Hospital will be transferred to University of Canberra Hospital.

Access changes: Visitor access across Canberra Health Services

Visitor access to all Canberra Health Services sites, including Centenary Hospital for Women and Children, has been limited to one visitor per patient allowed on site per day. They are also discouraging families from bringing children on site, if possible. Please look at [the ACT Health website](#) for more information. If you are unsure or need clarification, please call us on 6230 7800.

Health service changes: Women, Youth and Children

To help prevent the spread of COVID-19, one person will be allowed to be the support person in labour. This person will remain the designated visitor for the duration of the woman's stay in hospital, in line with previously announced visitor restrictions.

Routine antenatal appointments will continue, but as the situation is evolving this may need to change and any impacted patients will be contacted. Antenatal classes and other group sessions will be provided in an online format. An early pregnancy and parenting phone line is being established to support with early pregnancy, maternal and child health, breastfeeding and emotional wellbeing concerns.

I was talking to a friend who is working in the NHS. She let me know that all hospitals closed hospitals to all visitors nearly two weeks ago. Based on the experiences of other countries we can see that if we do not slow the rate of infections, more people will die because too many people are sick at the one time. The system will not be able to cope, and doctors and nurses will have to make the very difficult decisions on who they can treat and who they can't. This is not what any of us want.

The Chief Minister made it clear in his press conference mid-week that there is likely to be further restrictions rather than fewer in the coming days. This makes sense to us.

We have been reviewing lots of consumer information this week. One of the messages we really liked was from the ACT Nutrition Support Service: "The only thing that will save you is your own actions and adhering to sound advice. It is times like these that we must listen to our health authorities and only take advice from qualified health professionals".

We are encouraging people to go to the ACT Health website for up to date information on COVID-19 in the ACT. Continue to let us know about the issues you see and about your experience of care. Our whole staff team is working on providing input into the response to COVID-19. We are maintaining an Issues Register and this is helping us to identify and understand the matters we are all facing.

The team are mostly working from home now and can be contacted by their email addresses in the first instance. The office phone has been redirected to Liz and Karen, so you can still contact us by phone and one of the staff will call you back.

Thank you to the nurses, doctors, social workers, pharmacists, cleaners, executives, food services staff, administrative clerks, wards staff and everyone else for working so hard to prepare for the impact of COVID-19 on our communities.

Finally, a big thank you to the HCCA staff team. They have all stepped up in the last couple of weeks. They are absolutely committed to ensuring HCCA can advocate for the needs of consumers at these challenging times. They have done this willingly and with an amazing level of commitment.

I am proud of them. We have a long way to go and we are focussing on how we can care for ourselves and each other. I feel extremely fortunate to work here.

Stay safe. Stay away from people. Stay home if you can. Wash your hands.

*Darlene Cox
Executive Director*

COVID-19 UPDATE

Changes to Testing Patients Who Meet the Suspect Case Definition

The criteria for testing for COVID-19 have changed. This is important to know. From 26 March 2020 the criteria are as follows:

- Travellers from overseas or from cruise ships with onset of fever ($\geq 38^{\circ}\text{C}$) or history of fever OR acute respiratory infection within 14 days of return.
- Close contacts of confirmed COVID-19 cases with onset of fever ($\geq 38^{\circ}\text{C}$) or history of fever OR acute respiratory infection within 14 days of last contact.
- Healthcare or aged care workers with recent onset of fever ($\geq 38^{\circ}\text{C}$) or history of fever OR acute respiratory infection, irrespective of travel or contact history. This includes anyone who works in a healthcare or aged care setting and has direct patient contact.
- Patients who are being hospitalised with acute respiratory infection OR unexplained fever ($\geq 38^{\circ}\text{C}$) (e.g. not associated with a urinary tract infection), at the discretion of the treating clinician.
- Patients with unexplained fever ($\geq 38^{\circ}\text{C}$) or history of fever OR acute respiratory infection who live/work in other high-risk settings, such as aged care facilities, residential care facilities, boarding schools, military operational settings, correctional facilities, and detention centres.
- Patients with fever ($\geq 38^{\circ}\text{C}$) or history of fever OR acute respiratory infection who have reported links to settings where COVID-19 outbreaks have occurred, in discussion with Communicable Disease Control.

For all the above, history of fever includes, for example, night sweats or chills. Acute respiratory infection includes, for example, shortness of breath, cough or sore throat.

People without symptoms should not be tested. See the [Chief Health Officer alert here](#).

What Does COVID-19 Mean for Someone Affected by Cancer?

If you or someone you know has cancer, your concerns around the COVID-19 pandemic are likely to extend beyond toilet paper shortages and low pasta supplies.

That's especially true for cancer patients who are undergoing or have recently completed chemotherapy or immunotherapy, because the likelihood of becoming seriously ill if infected with COVID-19 is much higher, due to a weakened immune system that is less able to fight infection.

Infection with the COVID-19 virus can occur quickly following direct close contact with someone while they are infectious (even if they aren't symptomatic). Brief contact with respiratory droplets when a person with the virus sneezes or coughs, or touching objects or surfaces that have the virus on it and then touching your face or mouth is all it takes to become infected.

Five tips for patients

- If you have recently completed or are currently undergoing treatment, let family and friends know that you are at increased risk of infection and ask them not to visit
- Ensure you have adequate groceries, medications and other essential supplies to reduce risk of exposure
- If you have a carer, make plans for a backup in case they get sick
- Discuss the option of teleconferencing with your treatment team. The Government announced funding for bulk-billed video-conference consultation services with GPs, specialists, physicians, psychiatrists, nurse practitioners and allied mental health workers for vulnerable people or who are immunocompromised
- If you must attend appointments in clinic, arrive as close to your appointment time as possible to reduce waiting room congestion

Where can I go for help?

If you are having chemotherapy and develop a fever, follow the process that your treating team has put in place for you. Contact your doctor immediately if you are concerned about your treatment or if you think you may have been exposed to COVID-19 or begin experiencing symptoms. If you have serious symptoms seek urgent medical attention straight away. Call 000 for an ambulance.

To help slow the spread of COVID-19 and to keep our patients and staff safe, Canberra Health Services will be limiting the number of visitors at the hospital. From Thursday 19 March 2020, patients must limit their number of visitors to one person per day. If you have an appointment at an outpatient clinic, please do not bring anyone unless absolutely necessary and if this is the case please limit it to one person. Restrictions can be challenging, and we understand each family's situation is different. For exceptional circumstances we encourage families to speak to their family members nursing team for further advice. Note that advice may change quickly so check the [ACT Health website](#) for updates.

To find out more visit the [Australian Government Department of Health website](#), contact the Coronavirus Health Information Line on **1800 020 080**. You can find information about the Canberra Region Cancer Centre [here](#).

COVID-19 (Coronavirus) and Translating & Interpreting Services (TIS) National

TIS National continues to work on ensuring continuity of interpreting services in light of the evolving Coronavirus (COVID-19) situation. At this stage there are no changes to their current operations and TIS National continues providing language services to the Australian community. This includes people with no or limited English language skills, agencies and businesses that need to communicate with their clients. This ensures that despite the unprecedented circumstances, Australian Government's programs and services are accessible by all eligible Australians, responsive to their needs, and deliver equitable outcomes, regardless of cultural and linguistic backgrounds.

However, we would like to encourage all people who need this service to access interpreters through TIS National. Please contact the agency you wish to call and they will secure a TIS National interpreter for you. Alternatively, to connect with an interpreter call TIS National directly on 131 450. Further information about TIS can be found [here](#). You can find a TIS multilingual poster and other resources [here](#).

When you need an interpreter, phone 131 450

Arabic خدمة العملاء التي تقدمها خطى الهاتف 131 450	Japanese 通訳の必要に応じては、 131 450 に電話して < 電話 >	Serbian Kada vam treba prevodnik, javite se na 131 450
Chinese 语言服务热线: 131 450	Korean 통역사가 필요하시면 131 450 번호로 전화하세요	Somali Morkaad u baxsho tufurmaan, ka wac 131 450
Dari والتلفون خدمة العملاء هي 131 450	Nepali नेपाली भाषामा 131 450 मा ने भन्नु	Spanish Cuando necesite un intérprete, llame al 131 450.
Farsi (alt Persian) والتلفون خدمة العملاء هي 131 450	Pashto که وخت چې ژمنه (ژبانه) ته نیوه 131 450 ته زنگ کوئ	Tamil உங்களுக்கு உதவியாக தொழில்நுட்பம் 131 450 எனது தொலைபேசி அமைப்பு
Greek Όταν χρειάζεστε διαφώνηση, καλέστε το 131 450	Russian Когда вам требуется переводчик, позвоните по номеру 131 450	Thai เมื่อคุณต้องการล่าม โทรหมายเลข 131 450
Hezargi والتلفون خدمة العملاء هي 131 450	Turkish Bir tercümana ihtiyacınız olduğunda, 131 450 numaralı telefonumuza	Vietnamese Khi cần thông dịch viên, xin gọi số điện thoại 131 450
Italian Quando hai bisogno di un interprete, telefona al 131 450		

www.tisnational.gov.au
24 HOURS A DAY, EVERY DAY OF THE YEAR

Red Cross Response to COVID-19 Across Migration Support Programs

The Red Cross Migration Support Program is taking critical steps to prevent the transmission of COVID-19 and protect clients and people. This includes limiting face-to-face contact, providing services by phone and email where possible, and working with each service to ensure that people have the support they need.

They have developed some simple resources which have been translated into community languages, available on their website [here](#). These provide simple steps to reduce the risk in the following community languages: Amharic, Arabic, Chin Hakha, Dari, English, Farsi, French, Hazaraghi, Karen, Kurdish (Kurmanji), Lingala, Malay, Nepali, Oromo, Spanish, Swahili, Tamil, Tibetan and Tigrinya.

The [Department of Health](#) also has a list of resources about COVID-19 in Arabic, Vietnamese, Simplified and Traditional Chinese, Farsi, Italian and Korean. The resources include fact sheets, guidelines and other publications.

Within Migration Support Programs, identified programs are the Humanitarian Settlement Program (HSP), the Support for Trafficked Persons Program (STPP), the continued delivery of financial assistance and complex casework supports for people seeking asylum and the Restoring Family Links (tracing) Program. All programs are continuing where possible, though are transitioning to remote delivery with limited face to face contacts where possible. For more information contact Pia Angelucci - Regional Manager - Humanitarian Settlement Program at pangelucci@redcross.org.au or ph 0420 979 674.

POLICY AND RESEARCH UPDATE

Over the past couple of weeks, our policy focus has been on COVID-19 (Coronavirus). On Friday 20 March we released a survey, to help us, and our health system, to provide consumers in the ACT (and surrounds) with the information we need during the COVID-19 (Coronavirus) pandemic. This was repeated on 27-29 March 2020. The survey aimed to try to find out:

- where people are looking for information about COVID-19
- whether you are finding the information you need
- whether your questions are being answered, and
- what questions you have that are not being answered

We have analysed the results to feed into ACT Health, Canberra Health Services and Capital Health Network. [The report can be found on our website](#) and we are sharing our research with health services as well as our friends at ACTCOSS, Women's Centre for Health Matters, Women with Disabilities ACT and COTA ACT.

We have also completed some more detailed analysis of the survey data and developed three sub-group reports:

- [People aged 65+yrs](#)
- [Women](#)
- [People with Disabilities](#)

The survey will run for four weeks. We are asking people to complete the survey each week if they can. Survey 2 is now open and will run until 8am Monday 30 March. You can access the second survey [here](#) or through the post on the HCCA Facebook site.

Our Health Policy and Research Advisory Committee have been invaluable in providing support for this work. They have helped to develop the survey and analyse the results.

We would really appreciate you sharing the survey with friends, or through your networks. The link will be sent out to our members and be available on our webpage and Facebook page. We know that communication is critical to how we will deal with the coronavirus. We need to know what information people need to feel they can make good decisions in response to this challenging time.

*Kathryn Briant
Policy Officer*

HEALTH LITERACY UPDATE

Who Will Speak for You if You Are Unable To? Advanced Care Planning - A Conversation for Everyone

Sometimes other people may need to make decisions about our end of life care if we can't speak for ourselves. This is even more important currently due to COVID-19.

Have you thought about your preferences for your end of life care? Have you made your wishes clear to those around you? There are several websites and people that can help you to:

- Identify your wishes and preferences for end of life care
- Support you to have a conversation with others about your wishes
- Identify who will speak for you and how to appoint your Enduring Power of Attorney (EPA). This is the person or people that you give legal permission to speak on your behalf. They are called your substitute decision maker in other areas of Australia.
- Help you to understand the Statement of Choices (the form that guides your health care team about your wishes/preferences). In other areas of Australia this form combined with the EPA is called an Advanced Care Directive.

HCCA staff, Claudia and Yelin are available to talk to you (see below) about Advanced Care Planning and recommend the following:

ACT websites

The ACT Advance Care Planning site is [here](#). It has the relevant ACT forms and information on where to register them. We recommend you start on the ACT site first to understand what is ACT specific. ACT and WA are different from all the other states/territory, although most forms that make up an Advance Care Plan are recognised across Australia. In the ACT the forms mostly used are the Enduring Power of Attorney and the Statement of Choices. There is also a legal form called a Health Direction used to specify which treatments you do and don't want.

National websites

The Advance Care Planning Australia site is [here](#). This organisation uses the term Advanced Care Directive throughout the site, including on their ACT specific page. This is not a term used in the ACT which can be confusing at first. But there are many valuable resources for individuals as well as for family, friends and carers. For example, 'Making a Treatment Decision' [here](#) or 'What are Life Prolonging Treatments' [here](#).

Phone support

If you would rather talk to an individual on the phone you can go to:

- Claudia at HCCA on 0438 433 304, or Yelin on 0413 922 184 who can talk you through the forms, the websites that will help you think about your values, wishes and treatment options and can email details to you. Please email first to set up a time that would be useful as we both work part-time. Email: claudiacresswell@acp.gov.au or yelinhung@hcca.org.au
- Phone the Advanced Care Planning team at Canberra Health Services on 5124 9274 who can help you fill in the forms over the phone. Email them at acp@act.gov.au.
- The National Advisory Service on 1300 208 582, (Mon - Fri, 9am-5pm). This is Advance Care Planning Australia. The phone operators are all familiar with the differences in the ACT.

7 April 2020 World Health Day - The Role of Nurses and Midwives

World Health Day is about giving people access to healthcare without the prospect of financial hardship. World Health Day celebrates the launch of the World Health Organisation (WHO). This **International Year of the Nurse and the Midwife**, World Health Day 2020 will shine a light on the vital role played by nurses and midwives in providing health care around the world and call for a strengthening of the nursing and midwifery workforce.

This is particularly relevant in the current COVID-19 pandemic.

The first State of the World's Nursing Report 2020 will be launched to provide a global picture of the nursing workforce and support evidence-based planning to optimize this workforce to improve health and wellbeing for all. The report will look at data collection, policy dialogue, research and advocacy, and investment in the health workforce. A report on the Midwifery workforce will be launched in 2021.

23 – 29 April 2020 World Immunisation Week

World Immunization Week aims to promote the use of vaccines to protect people of all ages against disease. Immunization saves millions of lives every year and is widely recognized as one of the world's most successful and cost-effective

health interventions. Yet, there are still nearly 20 million unvaccinated and under-vaccinated children in the world today. In the current COVID-19 pandemic, influenza vaccination is especially important.

*Claudia Cresswell
Health Literacy Officer*

HEALTH INFRASTRUCTURE UPDATE

Spire Project Update

In response to COVID-19, Major Projects Canberra (MPC) has advised that they will continue to progress the SPIRE Project. They have assured HCCA that community engagement, through the Community Reference Group and the Preliminary Sketch Planning process, will continue. MPC is working with Canberra Health Services to determine how this will be managed. We will provide more information as it becomes available.

MPC has also released a comprehensive update on the SPIRE Project which is available under the Document Library on the SPIRE Project page of the ACT Government YourSay website. A copy of the SPIRE Project update is [here](#).

The update outlines the recent design changes in response to clinical and community feedback. This includes:

- the addition of a covered or enclosed walkway between SPIRE and the main entrance at Building 2 at ground level across Hospital Road

- a new drop off point outside the SPIRE emergency department
- the closure of Hospital Road to through traffic to allow for the walkway
- moving the main entrance to the hospital to Building 2 facing Yamba Drive. Work will be undertaken to create a new and expanded main entry vehicle drop off point into the hospital.

The update also includes information on traffic flows, parking, the procurement process for a contractor and preparatory works on the Canberra Hospital campus to allow the construction of the new building.

Inquiry into Spire Planning

The Standing Committee on Planning and Urban Renewal has cancelled the public hearings for its inquiry into Planning for the Surgical Procedures, Interventional Radiology and Emergency Centre (SPIRE) and the Canberra Hospital campus and immediate surrounds in response to the COVID-19 virus. The hearings were to be held on Tuesday 24 March 2020. We will advise any update on this.

Anne Meuronen
Community Participation Coordinator

CONSUMER REFERENCE GROUP REPORTS AND INFORMATION

Quality and Safety – Better Care Everywhere: Variation in Practice Conference

The Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care has changed the date of its' annual conference to 4 and 5 February 2021. We will advertise the opportunity again closer to the date.

Health of Older People – Exercising at Home for the Over 50s

Due to COVID-19, Strength for Life ACT will offer two online classes a week on the Council on the Ageing (COTA) ACT Facebook page. As physical attendance at classes is now impossible, this might be a great way to keep active.

These classes will take place live on Thursday 26 March, Tuesday 31 March and Thursday 2 April 2020 at 1pm. Each class will be 30 minutes in length. All you need to participate is a chair, comfortable clothing and shoes.

Strength for Life is an is a progressive exercise program, created to help people over the age of 50 (over 40 for Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islanders) to improve the participant's strength, balance, coordination and endurance. Other likely benefits of the program may include:

- | | |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • increased mobility • reduced risk of falls • preventing or managing arthritis, osteoporosis, diabetes and heart disease • speeding up recovery from illness • reducing lower back pain | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • improved ability to do daily living tasks • opportunities for social interaction • improvement in self-esteem and mental wellbeing |
|--|--|

To participate in these online classes, follow these simple steps:

1. Login to the internet from your computer, mobile or tablet.
2. Type "COTA ACT Facebook" into the Google search bar or click on this link – www.facebook.com/cotaact/
3. Once you are on the [COTA ACT Facebook page](http://www.facebook.com/cotaact/), click on the 'Like' button.

ITEMS OF INTEREST

Acacia: Understanding Participation Research Opportunity

Acacia is the ACT Carer Mental Health Research Unit at the Centre for Mental Health Research at Australian National University. Acacia is currently seeking people with lived experience for research into consumer and carer participation in health policy and services.

Taking part in the study will involve a one-hour interview and a 30 minute follow up session. All participants will receive a \$50 gift voucher. To register or find out more please email acacia@anu.edu.au or look at the website [here](#).

Health Issues Centre – Medical Research Survey

Health Issues Centre, the peak body for healthcare consumers in Victoria, is working with Alfred Health on the key research questions consumers would like to see investigated.

The online survey will be conducted using the internationally recognised James Lind Alliance approach. It aims to determine the consumer focus for research into the care and medicines

given to patients before, during and after surgery. People with lived experience are particularly encouraged to take part.

The Anaesthesia And Perioperative Care Research Priorities Survey can be found [here](#) and if you would like more information you can call Sophie Wallace or email s.wallace@alfred.org.au

Consultation Open: Draft National Safety & Quality Digital Mental Health Standards

The Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care (ACSQHC) is conducting an online survey to address safety and quality risks for digital mental health service users. The Commission is seeking feedback on the draft standards from consumers and carers, clinicians, service providers and any other interested stakeholders.

If you would like to participate in the online survey there is a link provided [here](#) Feedback can be provided by email to DMHS@safetyandquality.gov.au, or by post to Ben Prest, Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care, GPO Box 5480, Sydney NSW 2001.

The commission is also running webinars and consultation forums. You can register for these via the link above and find out more information about the consultation process. The Canberra consultation forum will be held on **Thursday 23 April 2020** from 10am to 12.30pm.

Useful Newsletters

ACTCOSS

- March COVID-19 e-Update [here](#)

Consumers Health Forum of Australia

- March edition [here](#)

Public Health Association of Australia

- March edition [here](#)

Office for Mental Health and Wellbeing

- Autumn newsletter [here](#)

ACT Health COVID-19

- Latest update [here](#)

Council on the Ageing ACT

- March e-newsletter [here](#)

UPCOMING HCCA EVENTS

HCCA has taken the decision to stop any face to face events until the end of June 2020. We have written to all of our members to let them know.

For up to date information about COVID-19 please check the following websites and social media channels:

ACT Health: <https://www.health.act.gov.au/about-our-health-system/novel-coronavirus-covid-19>

Healthdirect: <https://www.healthdirect.gov.au/coronavirus> (This has information in other languages)

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/ACTHealthDirectorate/>

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/ACTHealth>

Commonwealth Department of Health: <https://www.health.gov.au/news/health-alerts/novel-coronavirus-2019-ncov-health-alert/coronavirus-covid-19-news-and-media>

People who are concerned and want further information on the virus can also call the Australian Government's Coronavirus Health Information Line on [1800 020 080](tel:1800020080). The line operates 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

CONSUMER PARTICIPATION

At this stage, HCCA has cancelled all events that we had planned until 30 June. We will review this decision at that time. We advise consumer representatives not to attend face-to-face meetings of the committees that they are members of. Should we have further opportunities available for consumer reps to join committees, we will advertise them here, however face-to-face attendance will be postponed until further notice. Consumer representatives can continue to contribute to committee work remotely.

HCCA Consumer Participation Training was due to be held this May. It has been cancelled and we will schedule it later in the year. Please contact Karen James at karenjames@hacca.org.au or 6230 7800 to be notified when the training is to be held again.

Communicating for Safety: Clinical Handover Working Group

Canberra Health Services (CHS) is forming a Clinical Handover Working Group under the NSQHS National Standard 6 Communicating for Safety. The aim of the working group is to ensure CHS has safe and reliable processes for the transfer of patient related clinical information at all points of transfer of care embedded in practice.

This position will suit a consumer representative interested in quality and safety issues and in contributing to ensuring consumers are involved in setting and implementing safe clinical handover procedures. All meetings will be held monthly, via remote link until further notice.

This opportunity closes on **Tuesday 21 April 2020**. Terms of Reference are [here](#).

OTHER COMMITTEE VACANCIES

NPSMedicineWise Consumer Advisory Group Chair and Consumer Members

NPSMedicineWise is an independent, non-profit body that uses evidence-based information to improve the quality use of medicines and medical tests to help people achieve better health outcomes. NPSMedicineWise is establishing a Consumer Advisory Group to advise on best practice for consumer and community engagement, and to influence the work of the organisation.

Applications for a chair and members of the Consumer Advisory Group are now open. The chair will be a consumer representative with leadership experience and an understanding of the consumer issues involved in the quality use of medicines and medical tests.

The members will be a mix of consumer representatives and consumer engagement experts. The chair and members will initially be appointed for a term of two years. Three face to face meetings are planned each year, with the first scheduled for 27 May 2020. Travel costs and sitting fees will be provided. Please note that face to face meetings may be changed to online meetings due to COVID-19.

Applications close at 5.30pm on **Tuesday 31 March**. Please submit your Expression of Interest via the online form [here](#). For more information please call Bronwyn Walker on (02) 8217 8784 or email Bronwyn.walker@nps.org.au

The Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care (ACSQHC) - General Practice Accreditation Coordinating Committee

Accreditation of general practices is voluntary; the Royal Australian College of General Practitioners (RACGP) develops standards for general practices and assessment criteria intended to improve quality of care for patients.

The National General Practice Accreditation Scheme has been developed by the Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care (ACSQHC) in collaboration with the RACGP and supports the consistent assessment of general practices against the standards.

The General Practice Accreditation Coordinating Committee oversees the accreditation process and provides input on issues relating to the implementation and assessment of the RACGP Standards as part of the National General Practice Accreditation Scheme.

Expressions of Interest are sought from suitably qualified and experienced consumer representatives to join the Co-ordinating

Committee for the remainder of its' term to December 2020, with an expectation of a new two- year term to follow. The work consists of three teleconferences, to be held on 23 June, 17 September and 10 December 2020. The Commission will pay sitting fees, accommodation, travel and related expenses.

To apply, please complete a CHF nomination form available online [here](#). In addition, attach a letter of endorsement from HCCA and a PDF CV of no more than two pages.

For more information contact Ghislaine Martin at Consumers Health Forum on 02 6273 5444 or email g.martin@chf.org.au Expressions of Interest close at midnight on **Sunday 26 April 2020**. Please call Karen James on 6230 7800 or email karenjames@hcca.org.au to request a letter of endorsement from HCCA.

Contact Us

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Consumer Bites is the fortnightly newsletter from **Health Care Consumers' Association ACT**

Please note that Consumer Bites provides a small snippet of health related articles our members might find interesting to consider, ponder and analyse. The HCCA does not purport to endorse any opinions or the veracity of claims contained within the articles.

Editor: Darlene Cox