

## MEDIA INFORMATION SHEET

### About us

Representing over two-hundred thousand health consumers in NSW through our members

We provide an independent voice, advocating for patients, carers, their families and health consumers to have a say in the NSW health system.

We work to be a link between health consumers, consumer representatives, health providers, the media and the NSW government on topics concerning health consumers and patient centred care.

As a membership-based, independent, not-for-profit organisation, we enable, promote and practice consumer engagement in the NSW health sector.

We believe that all perspectives are important and necessary to create better health outcomes for people in NSW. Consumer engagement leads to better health outcomes, more efficient and effective services, consumer centred care and happier patients and staff.

### Contacts

We welcome calls from journalists on health and health consumer topics and look forward to working with you to provide information, interviewees and quotes to your deadline.

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### What we do

We support and help health consumers to be a voice for themselves and their communities. We do this through:

- training and mentoring for health consumer representatives, so they can be powerful advocates for themselves and others
- training for health services, so they build patient-centred care and consumer partnerships and feedback into their strategies and systems
- our 'request-a-rep' service for health organisations who want genuine input from consumers
- representation of consumers through submissions and seats on key government and health service committees
- our online tools and resource hub, newsletters and social media channels.

We do not offer a personal advocacy service and we don't handle personal complaints about a health service. But we do help consumers to find the right person to talk to and make a complaint.

Health Consumers NSW is the peak health consumer organisation in NSW. We provide an independent voice, advocating for patients, carers, their families and health consumers to have a say in how health services in our State are planned, provided and managed.

### Who are health consumers?

Health consumers are people who use, have used, or are potential users of health services, including patients, carers, their families and friends.

Health consumers have a unique perspective on health and the health services they receive. Our job is to make sure this unique voice is heard by the people who make important decisions about health policy and health services in NSW as well as by the people who deliver the services.

### What is consumer engagement?

Listening to what consumers really want is extremely important to achieve safe, quality, timely and affordable health care for all people in NSW. This care needs to be supported by accessible and easy-to-understand health information and systems.

Consumer engagement is about involving consumers in decision-making. Be it decisions at an individual level – around people’s own health, treatments and illness-management (consumer-centred care) – or at health service level around policy development, service design, delivery and evaluation.

Research shows great benefits to health systems, patients and even health staff when care is centred on patients and their support people. It is not only better experiences and health outcomes for consumers, but even things like less re-admissions to hospitals and happier doctors and nurses.

### Why consumer representatives/advocates/advisers/stakeholders?

Health consumer representatives, advocates, advisers and stakeholders ensure consumer participation across the health system to improve health care for all.

This means being involved in committees, workshops and surveys and working together with health services, like a hospital, to provide feedback on how they could do things better and what the community wants from them.

### Our news and publications

- [Monthly e-newsletter: The Wrap – health consumer news and views](#)
- [Quarterly member e-newsletter: Update!](#)
- Online news and blog
- [Facebook](#)
- [Twitter](#)
- [LinkedIn](#)
- Media releases

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