

Community and Consumer Participation in Health – what we're learning

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Health Issues Centre

Aims to improve the health outcomes for
Australians, especially the
disadvantaged

Undertakes policy, research and training from a
consumer perspective

Based in Victoria for 22 years

Current projects

- ❏ Optimising Consumer Participation in Cancer Services (Southern Melbourne Integrated Cancer Service)
- ❏ Ongoing support to Community Advisory Committees in metropolitan and rural health services (DHS)
- ❏ Consumer, carer and community participation in primary health care services (DHS)
- ❏ Dental cost study (VicHealth, DHS)
- ❏ Consumer Nominee Program (DHS)
- ❏ Consumer participation workshops (DHS)

Consumers and carers

- ❑ Unaware that they can have a say
- ❑ Skeptical of the commitment and capacity of services
- ❑ Acknowledge illness, frailty, fatigue and lack of time may affect their capacity to participate
- ❑ Believe participation should happen in a range of ways
- ❑ Need clear pathways to support their participation
- ❑ Believe they offer an important perspective
- ❑ Concerned that their ideas/hard/work/contributions are not acknowledged nor taken up

What agencies need to do

- ❏ Gain support for participation from Board, Executive and Heads of Departments
- ❏ Allocate adequate human and financial resources
- ❏ Develop and implement an organisational plan
- ❏ Ensure participation takes place at all levels of the organisation
- ❏ Ensure participation approaches build upon the experiences and skills of staff
- ❏ Implement multiple and appropriate strategies
- ❏ Review and systematically evaluate participation work
- ❏ Ensure participation becomes integral to strategic planning, project design, implementation, evaluation and research

What we are learning

- 🖥️ Rights
- 🖥️ Access
- 🖥️ Cochrane evidence
- 🖥️ Consumer involvement
- 🖥️ Support to consumers
- 🖥️ Consumer led initiatives
- 🖥️ Consumer involvement in policy development

Our learning continues

- 📄 Planning for participation
- 📄 Diversifying efforts of participation
- 📄 Consumers on DHS committees
- 📄 Documenting and evaluating consumer participation approaches
- 📄 Partnerships

For additional information

Visit Health Issues Centre's websites

www.healthissuescentre.org.au

www.participateinhealth.org.au

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