

'Doing it with us not for us'

Policy distribution & promotion update

February–August 2006



The *Doing it with us not for us - Participation in your health service system 2006-09: Victorian consumers, carers and the community working together with their health services and the Department of Human Services* policy, recognises that participation is valued as an aid to improve health outcomes and the quality of health care, a mechanism to ensure accountability, and an important democratic right.

Since the policy launch on February 14 2006, a period of six months post the initial promotion and distribution of the policy, the following has occurred:

- 1100 copies distributed
- implementation is being reported through the Department of Human Services response to the states 'A Fairer Victoria' policy
- 3 presentations on participation were coordinated for the Rural Health Conference Victoria by regional and rural health services and the Department of Human Services to promote implementation of the policy
- the Participation Advisory Committee foreshadowed in the policy was established in July 2006
- Consumer Health Forum of Western Australia requested and received permission to use 'Doing it with us not for us' to form a similar policy
- a *Participate in Health Conference* (February 2007) is being funded by 6 divisions/branches across the Department of Human Services and organised by a sub-committee of the Participation Advisory Committee
- the participation performance indicators developed as part of the policy have been incorporated into the *2005-06 Quality of Care Report Guidelines* and outlined in the policy and funding guidelines for metropolitan and rural and regional health services by the Department of Human Services
- 'How to develop a community participation plan' guidelines developed and provided to health services
- stronger links between the Consumer Participation and Information Program and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander programs, disability services, and cultural and linguistically diverse services have been created
- membership of the Department of Human Services consumer participation email network has grown from the focus groups conducted to develop the policy
- an independent review of the Department of Human Services advisory committees and Ministerial Advisory Committees on participation processes has been undertaken by the Health Issues Centre