

ANNUAL REPORT

2021·22



ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF TRADITIONAL OWNERS

The Board and staff of Health Consumers Queensland acknowledge the Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples of this nation.

We acknowledge the traditional custodians of the lands on which our organisation is located and where we conduct our business. We pay our respects to ancestors and Elders past, present and future for they hold the memories, traditions, culture and hopes of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australia.

OUR ORGANISATION

Health Consumers Queensland is the peak organisation representing the interests of health consumers and carers in the state and acts as an agent of change for consumer-centred health care.

Our Queensland-wide health consumer network is the beating heart of our organisation. Since 2008, we have worked to enable consumers, Queensland Health and the health system to partner effectively together and improve the health of all Queenslanders.

We maximise opportunities to amplify and embed diverse consumer voices at all levels of the health system through our:

- Advocacy on consumer issues
- Strategic advice on contemporary engagement
- Consumer opportunities recruitment program
- Responsive training and skills development programs for consumers and health staff
- Fee for service consultation projects
- Consumer and health staff listening and sharing, and information events

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Front cover image: Members of the Health Consumers Collaborative of Queensland at Health Consumers Annual Forum in October 2022. Consumer members (l-r): Keren Pointon, Tanya Kretschmann, Martin Chambers and Zehrab Vayani (absent member: John Anderson).



MESSAGE FROM OUR CEO

If COVID-19 has taught us anything, it is the importance of good preparation.

“Preparedness” was Health Consumers Queensland’s watchword in late 2021 as we worked to support consumers and the health system to be ready for the borders opening and widespread community transmission of the newly dominant Omicron variant.

Over 600 consumers, health staff, health organisations and NGOs registered for our online COVID-19 Preparation webinar series throughout December 2021. Health Consumers Queensland also led the call for a new approach to public messaging and health literacy based on natural disaster / storm preparedness for Queensland Health to adopt and implement. This resulted in the award-winning ‘Get COVID ready’ online planning tools and resources for everyone in Queensland.

From amplifying the voice of First Nations consumers into the COVID response, in June 2022 we started work on supporting 40 yarning circles being undertaken by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander consumers across the State. As integral stakeholders in the co-design, co-ownership and co-implementation of your Hospital and Health Service’s Health Equity Strategy, your voices, lived experiences and cultural expertise will be heard and positively influence health outcomes.

I would like to thank our incredible and diverse network of consumers for continuing to share your experiences, insights, and solutions to improve health care for yourselves and your communities.

I would also like to thank our outgoing Board Chair, Dr Erin Evans and our Board Director and Company Secretary, Alison Cuthbert who are stepping down. Your tireless support and guidance have been instrumental in making Health Consumers Queensland what it is today.

Finally, I would like to acknowledge Queensland Health and its staff as well as the many organisations with whom we partner who have worked so hard over the past 12 months to minimize the impact of the pandemic and the floods on our health and our daily lives.

There are many changes which have taken place this year in health including changes in leadership and structure across Queensland Health and the Hospital and Health Services. The promise of health reform has never been closer.

Health Consumers has been adapting and readying itself to drive and support another evolution of engagement: one where consumers and stakeholders at every level of the health system partner more boldly than ever, in assertive, innovative and responsive ways to radically transform our health system into one which is accessible, reflective, safe, kind and equitable.

Yours in partnership,

Melissa Fox

MESSAGE FROM OUR OUTGOING CHAIR



This is my last annual Chairs' report and formal engagement with HCQ. I have been reflecting on the significant changes in consumer engagement and partnerships over the nearly 9 years I have been on the board.

When I joined there were four of us. We have been through a lot, and I want to recognise the integrity, grass roots care and dogged determination to serve people who were not served enough by the system.

The Barrett Adolescent Centre is a prime example with the core issue that it had people in decision making positions who did not listen to the risks nor understand the people in them. At the time I was privileged to be around a table with a small group of people, led by our Chair Mark Tucker-Evans, who cared and would take a stand and advocate to the system about the people and the system. Recently I re-read the inquiry and it struck me how different our decision making and priorities were and still are.

The importance of advocacy is still with us.

Over this period, we have seen a shift from compliance to recognising the value of partnering with Health Consumers Queensland and health consumers across the state to deliver better health outcomes and system delivery. There are many examples of when we get this right such as during the pandemic response and in the development of Jacaranda Place which was a ground-breaking co-design of a health facility development following the Barrett closure. HCQ was deeply involved with these initiatives, and we can be proud of the contributions we made. We are also reminded of the impacts that occur when consumers are not listened to, such as recent tragedies in Doomadgee and in the Mackay maternity system. My mantra has been that I work to become redundant, however there is still much to do.

This year we launched the third strategy that we delivered over my time with HCQ. It is forward looking with a focus on health equity, research and innovation and health literacy. We engaged widely with our network to uncover the drivers and enablers. Thank you to all who participated as this will underpin the direction of HCQ over coming years. We have already activated this with discussions at the Consumer

Health Collaborative of Queensland in supporting health reform and health literacy. This is an area of deep focus for its potential in prevention, and consumers having greater agency as shown in our strategy. HCQ has been developing partnerships with researchers and research institutions with delivery of numerous key programs. We welcome the changes to grants bodies requiring authentic consumer codesign and are ready to partner with researchers.

Our work in Kitchen Table Discussions that HCQ has adapted to become the powerful tool it is. It is transformative in this area of research, as well as in many areas including prisoner health, health equity, end of life care and development of our Digital Health Charter, a world first. I am proud of the work the HCQ team have designed and delivered with a commitment to ensure the voices of diverse consumers are heard and that this influences the development of policy and system delivery. Our role in Voluntary Assisted Dying has been central and we represented the >90% of Queenslanders supporting for this access.

I am appreciative of the trusted partnerships I have with clinicians and system policy makers and leaders and the difference this makes. We have deepened the relationships with the Clinical Senate and Clinical Networks and enjoyed strong relationships with their Chairs and Executive. This year's focus in the Clinical Senate on Reimagining Healthcare and on the First 2000 Days had strong partnering with consumers and, as we advocated for, also with primary health and other agencies. These sessions highlighted the importance of consumers in the co-design of the health system, enabling health equity, access across our vast state and the role of digital health so that consumers can receive the care they need closer to home. The Health Consumer Digital Charter is helping to progress on the conversations to make digital access and agency over their data for consumers and thus improve the overall patient safety so that the data is travelling with the patient and available in the right time.

The success of HCQ is the strength of its relationships, integrity and focus on making a difference to the health system for all Queenslanders. I deeply appreciate the positive working relationships with successive Ministers, leaders in Queensland Health, Hospital and Health Services, Primary Health, Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisations, other Non-Governmental Organisations and health consumers across the state. It is our capacity to collaborate and listen to different perspectives that continues to make a difference to health outcomes, and the early pandemic response and recovery demonstrates the critical importance.

Strong relationships and collaboration also underpin the Board and HCQ team. Thank you to our CEO, Melissa, and the dedicated HCQ team who I have worked closely with over the years. The HCQ Board are passionate and highly skilled committed contributors to making the organisation punch above its weight. Thank you to my colleagues who have worked to improve the organisational maturity to help HCQ deliver the best impact to Queenslanders. I would like to especially acknowledge my fellow committee Chairs, Rachelle Foreman (Governance and Policy) and Alison Cuthbert (Finance and Risk) for their leadership and contribution. Alison is retiring this year and on behalf of the board I want to express sincere gratitude for the extensive skills, commitment and outcomes that Alison has contributed to HCQ across many spheres. I also wish to thank retiring Directors Carmel McMillan and Robbie Sinclair, also serving as Company Secretary.

In my new role I am leading Life Sciences Queensland, where I will continue to work with health innovation, research and remain committed to ensuring that we improve health for all Queenslanders. Thank you for the privilege to serve as Chair of HCQ for the past 4 years. I wish the incoming Chair and new Board every success and know that the organisation is in dedicated and skilled hands.

Dr Erin Evans

MESSAGE FROM OUR INCOMING CHAIR



It is with excitement and a great sense of responsibility that I accepted the opportunity to step into the role of Chair of Health Consumers Queensland (HCQ).

I am acutely aware of the critical role HCQ plays in ensuring Queenslanders continue to have access to quality and safe services that improve patient outcomes.

I hope to be able to bring my skills and experience and work collaboratively with all stakeholders to ensure the voices of Queenslanders are strong in advocating for better health services right across our state.

My experience in the Corporate and Not-for Profit sectors both in operational and governance roles has given me unique insights which I hope to be able to use to contribute to HCQ's mission.

My current role as the CEO of Parkinson's Queensland has given me a first-hand look at the challenges faced by people living with a progressive degenerative condition as they look to access health and support services. It is especially challenging for those who live in rural and remote parts of our state.

My family and I emigrated to Australia from Uruguay when I was 10 years old and I became interpreter for my parents whenever they needed to access health services. The importance of culture, language and the way in which our health services communicate cannot be underestimated.

I am looking forward to continuing the great work of my predecessor Dr Erin Evans and working collaboratively with my fellow Board members, the HCQ team and all of you to improve health outcomes for all Queenslanders.

Miguel A. Diaz

STRATEGIC DIRECTION 2022 – 2025



STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

Objective 1: Leadership, advocacy, and representation of consumers at all levels of the health system

As the peak body for consumers, we provide an informed, collective consumer voice. We are a leader in contemporary approaches to consumer engagement and participation. We provide strategic advice to all levels of the health system and Government on issues of consumer concern and consumer-identified solutions. We advocate for meaningful consumer representation to be embedded in decision making and oversight mechanisms at all levels of the health system. We are a conduit to ensure diverse consumer voices and experience shape the delivery of health services. We act to position the voices and visibility of First Nation consumers to ensure that what is important to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people is central in health system reforms; service improvements, and health justice and equity responses.

Objective 2: Enabling consumers and the health system to work together to ensure safe, equitable and accessible healthcare

HCQ builds consumer, staff, and system capacity to co-design an equitable and accessible health system through collaborative, integrated and consumer-centred approaches. We drive uptake to these approaches in the health system by providing support, strategic advice, training, and advocacy.

Objective 3: Facilitating the central role of consumers in innovation, technology and research that delivers a healthy future

We ensure consumers are active contributors to innovation, technology and research policy and projects. We actively promote co-design approaches so that new technologies and delivery models are fit for purpose and to the benefit of all Queenslanders. We harness and utilise evidence-based approaches to inform decision-making and policy advocacy.

Objective 4: Supporting consumers to be active participants in their healthcare

We enable consumer confidence and encourage them to be informed so they:

- Understand their healthcare rights
- Know where to access reliable health information
- Make informed decisions about their health
- Understand the consumer-clinician capacity for shared decision making

We support the health system to partner with consumers to create tools and resources to support this.

RECRUITING RECORD NUMBERS OF CONSUMERS

SNAPSHOT OF HCQ'S CONSUMER RECRUITMENT IN 2021-22

● HCQ'S STATEWIDE NETWORK 4077 PEOPLE.

● 581 PEOPLE JOINED IN 2021-22

Lockdowns and COVID-19 waves were unable to dampen the appetite of consumers on our network for engaging with the health system over the year with over 500 people applying for roles via our consumer recruitment program.

Their commitment to engage was matched by Queensland Health and other health organisations with an increase in both opportunities and the numbers of consumers requested.

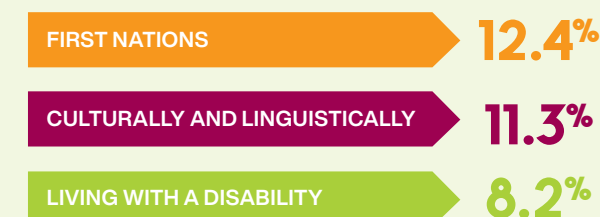
Requests for consumers to join state-wide, strategic, long-term partnerships, including the Queensland Clinical Senate and Statewide Clinical Networks also increased with 325 new consumers (an increase of almost 25% on last year) appointed to long term or state-wide committees, working groups or advisory groups as well as one-off panels or strategic meetings during the year.

Preventative healthcare attracted the most interest from consumers along with overseeing the implementation of the Voluntary Assisted Dying legislation and opportunities in mental health.

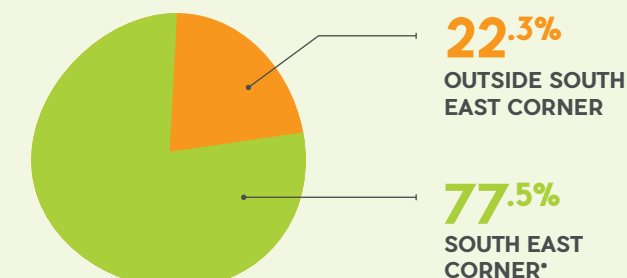
CONSUMER PARTNERSHIPS



DIVERSITY OF CONSUMERS WHO WERE RECRUITED INTO PARTNERSHIP ROLES



WHERE DID THOSE CONSUMERS LIVE?



*(South East Corner = Metro North, Metro South, Sunshine Coast, Gold Coast, West Moreton HHSs)

As part of our consumer recruitment program, we provide best practice, tailored strategic advice and support to health staff to successfully recruit, orientate, engage and empower their consumer partners – this year for 77 separate opportunities! Our five star rating and positive feedback from staff about our recruitment program demonstrate how well we have met the needs of health staff, many of whom were new to consumer partnerships.

"Just a quick email to thank you for all your work linking me in with consumers. Talking to the consumers has brought to light some relevant issues that we weren't aware of and is going to be really useful in engaging our clinicians, and moving the project forward" QH staff member.

TRAINING CONSUMERS AND HEALTH STAFF TO PARTNER SUCCESSFULLY

485

CONSUMER AND STAFF ATTENDANCES AT 35 TRAINING SESSIONS

The highlight of HCQ's consumer engagement training program this year has been the successful introduction of consumer co-presenters for all our online training events to increase capability, confidence, accessibility and trust in the engagement process amongst health staff and consumers.

For this new approach, we worked with Helen Mees and Philip Carswell, both highly experienced consumer representatives and members of our network, to co-plan and co-deliver four training events, including our signature Fundamentals of Consumer Partnership for both health staff and consumers.

Phil Carswell to consumers participating in a HCQ training session:

"I'll share my insights into how it works day by day and meeting by meeting. I will pass on my tips and tricks for how to make your voice heard and how to find support for yourself as you navigate this role. You have power as well and I'd like to give you the confidence to use your power judiciously and strategically."

Helen and Phil's contribution has now paved the way for five new consumers and a HHS staff member to co-present with HCQ staff as we continually seek to offer multiple and diverse perspectives and expertise.

RESPONDING TO THE EVER-CHANGING LEARNING NEEDS OF CONSUMERS AND STAFF

During the mobilization of health staff between January to March 2022 to respond to the COVID-19 emergency, Health Consumers Queensland temporarily suspended all training, including 'Snack Pack' our popular lunch time learning sessions, and redeployed our team to set up twice-weekly Coffee & Connect listening hours for our network to hear how they were coping at this difficult time.

We noticed that new and emerging consumers valued listening to the experiences of highly skilled consumer representatives in a small, informal, safe and supportive space. Evolving out of Coffee & Connect, in June 2022, we introduced our first Consumer Mentoring session. Now a regular fixture on our training calendar, these sessions offer a relaxed opportunity for new consumers to ask a consumer who is at the top of their game everything they've ever wanted to know about consumer engagement and partnerships.

[Helen's] experience is so valuable, and she explains things so clearly. Consumers so often work alone or in pairs, these opportunities to learn from each other are incredible."
Attendee at HCQ consumer mentoring session

Training for staff came back online in April with Snack Pack lunchtime learning and Fundamentals of Consumer Partnerships. These six sessions were attended by almost 100 staff. We saw particularly high numbers of staff attending North West Hospital and Health Service. We also resumed our face-to-face tailored training for Hospitals and Health Services with two sessions for Mackay HHS Consumer Advisory Partners and their Health Equity Advisory Group in May.

BUILDING THE CAPACITY OF CONSUMERS WHO PARTNER WITH THE HEALTH SYSTEM

We've also supported newly appointed and experienced consumer representatives to navigate their roles, handle challenges, network, travel and attend professional development opportunities including the Queensland Clinical Senate forums, Clinical Excellence Showcase, Queensland Rural and Remote Clinical Network Forum, and the Rural Doctors Association of Queensland (RDAQ) Conference. In addition, we've brought together consumers involved in independent reviews of Hospital and Health Service investigation of services, an emerging area where support is critical.



Pop Up Palliative Care is an outstanding consumer-led and centred framework for a model of care from Torres and Cape Hospital and Health Service.

In May, consumer representative Helen Mees presented the Consumer's Choice Award at Clinical Excellence Showcase 2022 to the project's leaders, Lynda Mason and Vesta Sexton.

CONSULTATION PROJECTS AMPLIFYING GRASSROOTS CONSUMER VOICES FOR REAL CHANGE IN HEALTH



CONSULTATION PROJECTS

856

CONSUMERS PARTICIPATED IN 100 CONSULTATION ACTIVITIES ACROSS 15 FEE-FOR-SERVICE PROJECTS

METHODS USED

83

KITCHEN TABLE DISCUSSIONS

6

YARNING CIRCLES

5

ONLINE CONSULTATIONS

6

FOCUS GROUPS

KITCHEN TABLE DISCUSSIONS, YARNING CIRCLES, ONLINE CONSULTATIONS & FOCUS GROUPS

The expertise of Anne Curtis, HCQ's Senior Engagement Consultant has continued to be in high demand, ensuring that the voices of diverse Queenslanders shape changes and improvements in the health system through a variety of accessible engagement mechanisms.

In 2021-22, Queensland Health and other health-related organisations were able to hear directly from more than 850 consumers about their experiences and views on issues such as water security and purified recycled water, voluntary assisted dying, cancer screening, safe medicines, mental health review tribunal, palliative care reform, care closer to home, maternity and child health, death education in schools, domestic and family violence, connecting end of life care, virtual health care, care of older Australians, health equity strategies, and accessing online information about health and community services.

Kitchen table discussions and yarning circles give consumers the opportunity to lead consultation on important health subjects with their own communities within a safe and supportive environment, reaching out to people who may not participate in more formal consultation or have their voice heard.

DEMOGRAPHICS OF PARTICIPANTS

- People with an intellectual disability
- Mental health consumers
- Carers
- Peer support workers
- LGBTIQ+
- Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people
- Culturally & linguistically diverse people
- Non-English speaking people
- Bereaved families
- Rural and remote consumers across Queensland (from Julia Creek to the Bay Islands)
- People with a disability
- People living with chronic conditions

Consumers Anh Tho Tien and Rajini Eschwarachar Shankar joined our new Project Support Coordinator, Declan Winterton at Seqwater's Luggage Point Advanced Water Treatment Plant for a tour of its recycled water facility.



WATER-WISE: CONSUMERS INFLUENCING DETERMINANTS OF HEALTH

South East Queensland's bulk water supplier Seqwater invited Health Consumers Queensland to undertake consumer and health care professional consultation about water security and purified recycled water.

In January 2022, consumer CRG member Paul Williamson co-presented with Anne to SEQ Water and Urban Utilities on the key consumer findings:

- 9 KITCHEN TABLE DISCUSSIONS AND 1 ONLINE CONSULTATION
- 6 CONSUMERS APPOINTED TO A SHORT-TERM COMMUNICATION CO-DESIGN CONSUMER REFERENCE GROUP (CRG)
- 4 CONSUMER WORKSHOPS

- SUPPORT CONSUMERS AND CLINICIANS TO INCREASE THEIR WATER LITERACY
- COMMUNICATION MUST BE ACCESSIBLE AND EASY TO UNDERSTAND
- OPENNESS AND TRANSPARENCY OF INFORMATION IS KEY

"I just wanted to say that I really appreciated doing this. It's been really enjoyable and very informative. I congratulate Seqwater and Urban Utilities for this work. And again, congratulate Anne and Kirra for the work they do. It's brilliant." Consumer CRG member

CONSUMERS SHAPING PLANNING FOR START OF VOLUNTARY ASSISTED DYING SCHEME IN QUEENSLAND

Following many long years of advocacy by Queenslanders for access to choice and control at the end of life, Anne has been able to provide supportive sessions for consumers and carers sitting across six Voluntary Assisted Dying sub-committees to enable them to share information and learnings, provide emotional support and mentoring. Anne also attends meetings with VAD Secretariat members to ensure consumer voices are heard.



HCQ AND CONSUMERS: THE CURE FOR COVID-19 COMPLACENCY AND CONCERN

Nowhere else in Australia nor internationally, have there been mechanisms to enable health consumers and community members to directly raise and address their concerns with the health system and the COVID-19 response in the ways that Health Consumers Queensland made possible in Queensland since early 2020.

HEALTH CONSUMERS QUEENSLAND REPORTS ON OUR IMPACT ON COVID-19

On 30 June 2022, HCQ reported on the outcomes of additional funding which meant that HCQ could support Queensland Health's COVID-19 response in the following ways between March 2020-June 2022:

Report infographic

- 3,974 health consumers, carers, health staff and NGO partners engaged with Queensland Health's COVID-19 response.
- 632 consumers provided advice, views and feedback on 76 Queensland Health consultations, projects, and resources.
- HCQ resourced and delivered key and significant individual projects with long term impacts for consumers and the health system.
- A new youth engagement strategy: Amplifying the Youth Voice: Health Consumers Queensland Youth Engagement Framework, was developed by a 24 member strong Youth Reference Group.
- 108 consumers, Queensland Health executive staff (including the Chief Health Officer) and NGO partners contribute to an independent report commissioned by HCQ on the evaluation of the effectiveness of consumer engagement during the COVID-19 pandemic in Queensland between January 2020 and January 2021.
- The weekly amplification of consumers' voices via the production of 36 issues papers, situation reports and briefs to the Health Minister's Office, leaders across Queensland Health, Primary Health Networks and NGO partners.
- 2,000 health consumers and carers and staff across Queensland Health listened and shared concerns, recommendations, information and solutions through the establishment and facilitation of 59 online and face-to-face opportunities including our Consumer Conversations, Q&A forums and webinars).

Critically, it facilitated the tireless work by our CEO, Board Chair and senior members of staff on 30 Queensland Health COVID-19 and system leadership committees and working groups. Our growing influence and trusted position on these committees, ensured that consumers remained at the centre of key decisions and we could amplify their voices with greater impact, urgency and meaning.

CONSUMERS AT THE CENTRE OF THE RESPONSE IN 2021-22

Many health consumers have complex conditions or health and social need which put them at high risk from COVID-19. Generic public health messaging does not meet their needs and our focus throughout 2021-22 was to continually amplify their voices and ensure they had access to high quality, tailored information and care.

Our ear always to the ground, Health Consumers Queensland also continued to act as an early warning system for Queensland Health to flag important consumer concerns and recommendations throughout the early stages of the vaccine roll-out and the height of the emergency via our positions on key committees and working groups, and our widely disseminated issues papers.



CONSUMERS SUPPORT THE CARE OF PEOPLE TESTING POSITIVE TO COVID-19

Mirroring the rapid engagement required at the start of the pandemic, by late 2021, consumers were constantly engaged in advising on COVID-19 testing as well as reviewing communications which would support the triaging, management and care of people during widespread community transmission. Outputs included the scripts used by staff when speaking with COVID+ people over the phone, emails to be sent out to those at risk of serious illness, and surveys which would inform the virtual care management of children and adults.

Christmas Eve saw the release of Queensland Health's 'Get COVID Ready' resources, a concept initiated by Health Consumers Queensland and developed with 18 consumers, in partnership with Queensland Health and communications agency, Articulous. The resources won a highly coveted national 'Readiness and Resilience Highly Commended' Award from EMPA which runs the national emergency communication awards program. Consumers continued to inform into communications for those deemed vulnerable and at risk as well as women and people who were pregnant, into 2022.

HCQ'S 'STORM READY' WEBINARS HELP CONSUMERS PREPARE FOR DELTA

By November 2021, increasingly concerned at the lack of public preparedness for widespread community transmission of what we thought would be the Delta strain of the virus, we planned our own 'Preparing for Delta' webinar series which were open to the public and health staff.

Health Consumers Queensland invited key clinicians and Clinical Network Chairs to share their knowledge with almost 500 attendees and help them understand how the virus could affect them and their families whilst getting 'storm ready' wherever they lived in Queensland including in rural and remote locations.

HCQ KEEPS EAR TO THE GROUND DURING THE HEIGHT OF THE PANDEMIC

Best practice in disaster management includes "intelligence" or "on the ground" information through engaging with local communities.

During the initial Omicron surge our new twice-weekly Coffee & Connect sessions enabled 124 consumers, NGO staff and health staff to share their experiences about what it was like to navigate the health system at that time and get the care they needed whilst enabling us to continue bringing their voices to the table via our weekly issues papers. A parallel "How are you going living with COVID?" survey for consumers who couldn't or didn't want to attend the virtual sessions, also enabled contribution of their concerns and experiences.

HCQ'S OMICRON HOT ISSUES BRIEF INSPIRES LOGAN & BEAUDESERT HEALTH SERVICE'S REAL TIME COMMUNITY RESPONSE

In January 2022, Logan & Beaudesert Health Service obtained and responded to their own consumer feedback to enhance care in their community after reading HCQ's hot issues brief which had identified key challenges consumers were facing with accessing testing, health and visitor information.

Their resulting Partnering with Consumers Omicron gap analysis and action plan led to:

- Multilingual resources available with COVID tests.
- Routine disability screening to allow for reasonable adjustments for COVID clinics.
- COVID Ready resources in Outpatient departments and COVID/vulnerable cohort wards.
- Translation of concierge screening script and Proof of Vaccination available at facility entrances.
- In Top 10 languages.
- Use of interpreter services and Hearing Impairment communication kits to support.
- Conversations regarding rapidly changing visitation policy.
- Responsive Consumer Liaison responses through simplification of language and inclusionary.
- Wording.

Nicola Rogers, Principal Consumer Liaison Advisor noted,

"Healthcare quality improvement is often driven by lessons learnt retrospectively, missing the opportunity to actively respond to the community need in real time. Our project demonstrated that with the right resourcing and motivation to respond, complex large-scale systems like public health can truly put policy into tangible practice."

AMPLIFYING THE VOICES OF FIRST NATIONS CONSUMERS DURING OMICRON

"Mob know how to talk to mob. It is a missed opportunity when they are not utilised" – First Nations consumer and Reference Group member

Leading up to re-opening the borders, 14 Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander health consumers or carers joined a Health Consumers Queensland First Nations reference group to consider how to improve engagement with First Nations Queenslanders. This was so people felt more informed about COVID-19 vaccinations and also ways in which community members could lead these conversations in their local community

The Reference Group recommended the following actions which were summarised in an Issues Paper for Queensland Health's leadership and presented to the First Nations COVID-19 Response Oversight Committee:

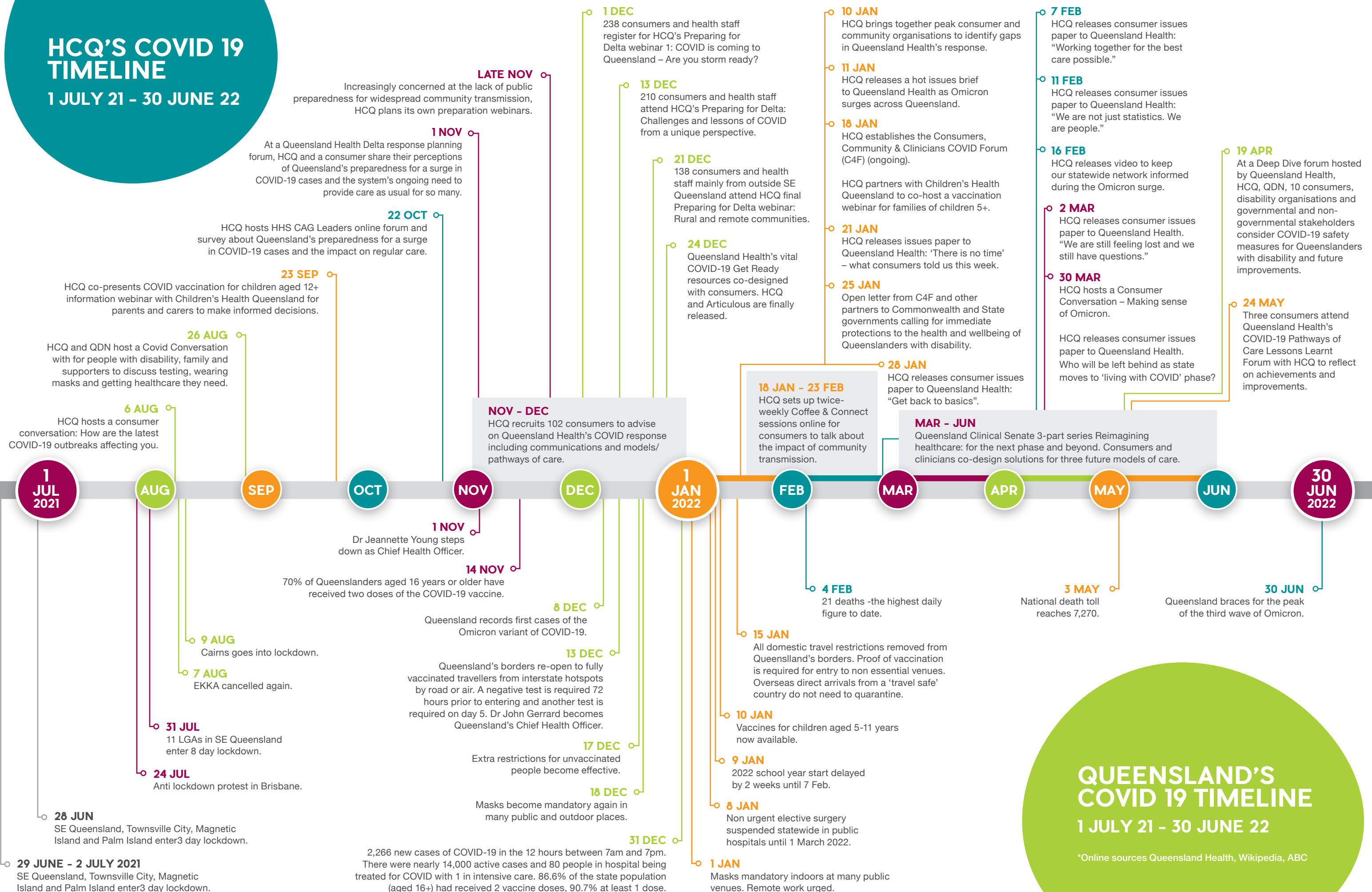
- In-service education and key messaging for call centre and health staff about what supports are available for First Nations people.
- More firsthand accounts from other First Nations people about vaccine side-effects or COVID symptoms to share with community.
- Invest in community to share information the best way they know how. This investment is needed in people and their time, as well as printers/ink/paper, laminators/laminator sheets and other equipment. It supports community-based organisations (often under-funded) to be prepared for future health campaigns/other campaigns.
- More tailored communications developed in partnership with community members.
- Digital literacy education in communities which includes how to assess online information.
- Train and engage a network of community members to monitor and respond to misinformation online.



HCQ First Nations Consultant Lynda Maybanks and First Nations Health Consumer and Talei Elu from the Northern Peninsula Area (Cape York) discuss the use of social media to combat misinformation and tailoring communication for community.

HCQ'S COVID 19 TIMELINE

1 JULY 21 - 30 JUNE 22



QUEENSLAND'S COVID 19 TIMELINE

1 JULY 21 - 30 JUNE 22

*Online sources Queensland Health, Wikipedia, ABC

THE POWER OF OUR PARTNERSHIPS

HEALTH CONSUMERS QUEENSLAND'S CONSUMERS, COMMUNITY & CLINICIANS COVID FORUM (C4F)

In January 2022, it became clear that rapid, high level information sharing with an equity lens to identify gaps in the COVID-19 response for vulnerable communities was vital.

Health Consumers Queensland immediately initiated our Consumers, Community & Clinicians COVID Forum (C4F).

The Forum initially met online three times a week at the height of the first wave of Omicron. It brought together consumer representatives, clinicians, consumer and community organisations and health professionals associations outside the public health system (ie not funders or providers of health services).

Together we agreed on burning issues to collectively escalate, identified consumer-focused solutions to resolve and the supporting role our organisations could play, and advocated for immediate resolution by Government, the health system and other stakeholders.

At a state and national level, these meetings also enabled us all to engage with more consumers on the COVID-19 response as well as strengthening safeguarding calls for action.

A key initiative was a joint open letter to Commonwealth and State governments at the height of the Omicron surge seeking vital supplies, services and supports for people with a disability. Eighteen organisations signed the letter resulting in a report and recommendations to Government from a cross-departmental forum to discuss the effectiveness of the pandemic response for people with disability held by Queensland Health in April 2022.

C4F ATTENDEES

- Health Consumers Queensland
- Queenslanders with Disability Network
- Palliative Care Queensland
- ADA Australia
- Blind Citizens of Australia
- Ethnic Communities Council of Queensland
- Refugee Health Network Queensland
- Council of the Ageing Queensland
- Queensland Nurses and Midwives' Union
- Australian Medical Association Queensland
- Rural Doctors Association of Queensland
- Royal Australian College of General Practitioners
- Australian College of Rural & Remote Medicine
- Pharmaceutical Society of Australia
- Pharmacy Guild of Australia

HEALTH CONSUMERS COLLABORATIVE OF QUEENSLAND

Health Consumers Collaborative of Queensland meets four times a year to discuss topics that cut across multiple silos requiring focused and collective thinking at a strategic level with mix of leaders from across the health system and consumers. Topics this year have included:

- Implementing and monitoring Queensland Health's 2021-22 system priorities.
- Strengthening the role of consumers in Queensland Health system governance.
- Getting the balance right: Responding to a COVID surge, delivery of non Covid care and embedding health reform.
- Preparing for the next phase: What have we learnt during transition phase from elimination to suppression (Delta to Omicron)? How do we build a better plane as we fly it?
- Health Reform – health system priorities and issues, and initiatives that are important to consumers.

For further information on the work and resources featured in this Annual Report, please visit www.hcq.org.au.

CONSUMERS AND CLINICIANS WORK TOGETHER TO RE-IMAGINE HEALTHCARE



Consumers at the final session of Queensland Clinical Senate's three-part series - Reimagining healthcare: for the next phase and beyond

HCQ recruited 12 consumers to come together with clinicians from across the health system at a time when the system is facing fundamental reform – by choice and necessity.

The **Queensland Clinical Senate's Re-Imaging Healthcare for the next phase and beyond Meeting Series** between March - June 2022 invited them to imagine bravely and boldly - outside of any real or perceived constraints - what great care can look like, how it can be brought closer to people's homes, and be timelier, consumer-centred and sustainable.

Consumer representative, Zehrab Vayani presented her family's experience of care during COVID-19 before describing the difference that good, radically transformed, timely care could make. She then worked with clinicians and other consumers to co-design a vision for three new care delivery models across out of hours care, referral pathways and at-home care transitions.

Zehrab said, "It was a great opportunity to look at our healthcare system from a lived experience perspective and highlight how fragmented and siloed it is, making it difficult for consumers to navigate. My hope for a re-imagined healthcare system would be to see consumers who are connected, informed and confident about their healthcare, who would be more likely to be active in their own health and wellbeing, allowing them to make decisions about what is important to them with the ability to seamlessly navigate through our health system from tertiary to community."

The final recommendations from this meeting series were recently released by the Senate.

Meanwhile, the **Queensland Child and Youth Clinical Network** in partnership with Health Consumers Queensland enabled more than 100 young people, families, health staff and other stakeholders to hear from a panel of seven diverse young Queensland consumers and health staff from Queensland Children's Hospital about their vision for young people's health care through the Re-Imaging Healthcare for Young People webinar in May.

Described as a 'phenomenal' webinar by one attendee, Jordan Frith, a panellist and member of our Youth Reference Group which developed Health Consumers Queensland's Youth Engagement Framework in 2021, added, "It was a fantastic opportunity for young consumer leaders to come together, share what really matters to us in our health care journeys, and model what youth excellence can look like. Health staff still come up and tell me what a big impact the webinar has had on their consumer engagement practices, and how it has inspired them to reach out to young consumers to engage them in their representative programs."

The webinar highlighted the importance of youth engagement and followed the submission of a funding proposal by Health Consumers Queensland to continue this work to Queensland Health via Children's Health Queensland in December 2021. It also followed a presentation of the Framework by the Youth Reference Group at a Queensland Health Senior Leadership Forum which received broad support from Chief Executives and Deputy Director Generals in July last year. Discussions to seek progress on this work are ongoing.



Re-imagining Healthcare for Young People webinar panellists.



Members of Health Consumers Queensland's Consumer Advisory Group (l-r) Michelle King, Breanna Medcalfe, Bec Waqanikalou (Chair) at our Annual Forum in October 2022. We worked closely together to review our training program.

Dr Jim Madden passed away on 3 September 2022. Jim was a valued member of the Health Consumers Collaborative of Queensland and HCQ's consumer network. He was a staunch advocate for health consumers and touched the lives of so many people across his consumer partnership roles. We will all miss his thoughtfulness, knowledge and wisdom.

BOARD GOVERNANCE 2021-22

The names of the directors in office at any time during the year are:

NAME	SPECIAL RESPONSIBILITIES	PERIOD OF WHICH PERSON WAS DIRECTOR
Erin Evans	Board Chair	12 months
Rachelle Foreman	Chair, Governance & Policy Committee	12 months
Alison Cuthbert	Chair, Finance & Risk Committee	12 months
Ann Maree Liddy		12 months
Ainsley Barahona Santos		12 months
Tracey Porst		12 months
David Mowat Resigned 22 October 2021		4 months
Chris Miers Resigned 2 September 2021	Company Secretary	3 months
John Anderson Appointed 17 November 2021		7 months
Robbie Sinclair Appointed 17 November 2021	Company Secretary	7 months
Carmel McMillan Appointed 17 November 2021 On leave from 3 Feb 2022 Resigned 28 April 2022		5 months

NAME	NUMBER ELIGIBLE TO ATTEND	NUMBER ATTENDED
Erin Evans	5	5
Rachelle Foreman	5	5
Alison Cuthbert	5	5
Ann Maree Liddy	5	4
Ainsley Barahona Santos	5	5
Tracey Porst	5	5
David Mowat	2	2
Chris Miers	1	0
John Anderson	3	2
Robbie Sinclair	3	3
Carmel McMillan	3	1

Finance and Risk Committee: 10 meetings held during 2021-22 financial year

Governance and Policy Committee: 9 meetings held during 2021-22 financial year

Remuneration Committee: 13 meetings held during 2021-22 financial year

Please visit Health Consumers Queensland's website: hcq.org.au/our-board to read Directors' profiles and hcq.org.au/about-us/annualreports/ for the 2021-2022 Annual Audited Financial Statements.

“ HCQ acts like spider-cam moving everywhere over a stadium crowd, vigilantly lighting and reflecting individual truths, and highlighting collective themes. ”

John Anderson,
consumer representative and HCQ Board Director.



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