

Learning from consumer experience improves health care

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The health system in Australia would benefit significantly by paying more attention to the lessons learned from patient experience, the Consumers Health Forum says.

This is a key message from the [latest edition](#) of the *Health Voices* ejournal published today which covers the recent *Shifting Gears* Australasian summit conference of the Consumers Health Forum.

Articles describing the benefits of learning from consumer experience have come from a wide range of authors who have been involved with or learned from engagement with conditions including cancer and mental illness.

“The value of learning from experience was given fresh power at the inaugural Australasian summit last month,” the CEO of CHF, Leanne Wells, said.

“As the conference heard more than once, health consumers, particularly those with chronic conditions are more likely to have deeper knowledge of their overall care than any one health professional dealing with a single aspect of their care.

“The themes of the conference were consumer experience and leadership and these themes spurred the imagination and enthusiasm of the 820 registrants.

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Consumers shaping health

“The conference was virtual yet created an active interplay of ideas on a par with a face-to-face event, boosted by contributions from around Australia, New Zealand, England and Canada.

“This edition of *Health Voices* demonstrates that a central reason for that lively response was shared recognition of the value that consumer experience can play in shaping health care.

“Whether it was from the perspective of approach to mental health care, leadership and partnership, digital innovation, research or other focal points, the overall result inspired an invigorated sense of consumer leadership. There is much to learn, including from such community-centred programs as the National Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation success in countering COVID-19.

“Delegates brought an impressive variety and strength of experiences to the many conversations in the six conference streams.

“As the Consumer Health Forum’s first Australasian summit, the Summit proved to be a highly worthwhile experience, affirming our direction and advocacy for the best interests of health care,” Ms Wells said.

If you did not attend the CHF Summit: Shifting Gears, [presentations are available until March 2022](#). If you already registered, just log on with your account details. New registrations can also be purchased.

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