

Strengthening Consumer Engagement in Healthcare

Why we engaged

The Commission on Excellence and Innovation in Health (CEIH) is committed to the principle of a person-centred healthcare system, where the voice of consumers drives innovation and improvement.

In 2021, consumer representatives working with the CEIH identified the need to examine how consumer engagement can be improved throughout the health system, to ultimately create better healthcare for South Australians.

How we engaged

The consumer-designed and led engagement process included:

- An in-person Consumer Forum, open to anyone
- An online survey (YourSAy), open to anyone
- Two-way communications specifically designed for regional groups

The engagement included feedback from consumers, carers, clinicians and other stakeholders representing the consumer voice.

What we asked and heard

How do we know we're achieving meaningful consumer engagement and how do we measure it?

- Commit to co-design with consumers, actively seeking input on subjects such as service design and needs assessment, and maintain ongoing communication through agreed channels
- Adopt formal evaluation methods to measure engagement outcomes
- Build capability among consumers and healthcare organisations to better support consumer engagement
- Embed consumer advocacy and safety principles

What could the future of consumer engagement look like?

- Open, honest and authentic communication which meets individual needs and considerations
- Provide more formal opportunities for consumer positions of influence, while also meeting consumers where they are
- Provide equitable engagement opportunities that are culturally sensitive and inclusive
- Support engagement education for both consumers and clinicians
- Ensure engagement is well coordinated and systematic

Where to from here

Acknowledging the considerable work in consumer engagement already being done across the South Australian healthcare sector, the recommendations in this report will be adopted by the CEIH in its future activities and will be promoted by the CEIH with all its partners.

For more detail on this engagement process and outcomes, please read the [full report](#) published on the CEIH website.