



COVID-19 Consumer Reference Group

*Rapid response consumer feedback and input
into COVID-19 response and recovery strategies*

The Health Consumers Alliance of South Australia (HCASA) is the recognised voice of South Australian health consumers. HCASA works to ensure consumers are at the centre of health in South Australia. Through our experience and trusted networks, HCASA is well positioned to respond promptly to inform government, SA Health and other health and community services and in a timely manner about the consumer and community experience of COVID-19 response strategies.

As part of this response, HCASA has convened the **COVID-19 Consumer Reference Group** to provide a vehicle for consumer and community feedback to government, health and community service providers and policy makers on the experiences and concerns about the impact of COVID-19 and the response strategies to minimise this impact.

The Reference Group comprises over 20 trained consumer advocates with lived experience across board communities, including vulnerable communities who are more likely to experience health disadvantage. Their experience is particularly relevant during the COVID-19 pandemic, that necessitates rapid and changing policy decisions and protocols at systemic levels, which may inadvertently overlook or under assess the unique needs of vulnerable individuals and communities.

The COVID-19 Consumer Reference Group operates under the principles that consumers and communities; have the right to be part of decision-making that affects and impacts their health and wellbeing; know best how their communities need to receive information and are best placed to disseminate it effectively and can effectively and efficiently inform and support COVID-19 decision-making.

The COVID-19 Reference Group can support health and community services through;

- **Rapid response feedback** to requests for consumer input into COVID-19 policy, resources, strategies and implementation to ensure maximum impact and effectiveness for consumers and communities
- **Advising on COVID-19 service gaps** and access concerns for vulnerable individuals and groups
- **Supporting SA Health** to develop information and messages that the public will understand work with consumer peak body
- **Broad ranging dissemination** of COVID-19 resources and public messages (including from the Minister and SA Health)
- **Supporting consistent messaging** to individuals, communities and the public
- **Promoting health literacy** and change behaviour about COVID-19 to individuals and the community
- **Feedback on the effectiveness of the health system response** by consolidating multiple lived experiences of health care consumers into system issues that SA Health and other government agencies can then respond to in a timely and effective manner.

To seek support or input from the COVID-19 Consumer Reference Group contact;

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