



Council for Connected Care

A better-connected healthcare system for all Australians

Communiqué

The eighth meeting of the Council for Connected Care (Council) was held in Melbourne on 25 February 2025.

Conjoint Professor Anne Duggan, Chief Executive Officer of the Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care and Chair of the Council, welcomed members, noting the addition of new member organisations: Health Information Management Association of Australia, SANE Australia, and the National Mental Health Commission.

Members reviewed the [Quarterly Progress Report](#) for the period October to December 2024 which includes status updates received from the Australian Digital Health Agency, the Department of Health and Aged Care, state and territory health departments, Services Australia, the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, Healthdirect, and the Australasian Institute of Digital Health.

The February 2025 meeting focussed on the unique needs of people experiencing health disadvantage. Members discussed the needs of culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) communities and explored the key barriers and challenges they frequently experience when navigating health challenges and accessing health care services. The Chief Executive Officer of the Federation of Ethnic Communities' Councils of Australia (FECCA) spoke about current challenges impacting CALD communities including language and literacy barriers, discrimination and stigma, socioeconomic factors and access to support services. FECCA also provided Council members with an overview of the Australian Multicultural Health Collaborative and its advocacy work to improve the health and wellbeing of Australia's multicultural communities, including research, policy development and the work of the National Multicultural Consumer and Carer Network.

Discussions were also supported by presentations from South Western Sydney Primary Health Network (PHN), National Disability Services, and SANE Australia who each provided an overview of current initiatives underway at their respective organisations:

- *South Western Sydney (PHN)* - presented an overview of digital health applications used to mitigate challenges in accessing quality primary healthcare in an area of widespread socioeconomic disadvantage.



- *National Disability Services (NDS)* - presented solutions currently making a positive impact in the disability sector and discussed the positive impacts of small, supported residential group homes. The NDS also provided an overview of the challenges experienced by people living with a disability when navigating the health system and noted the burden of responsibility on disability care workers to manage complex health conditions, often without the support of digital tools or clinical training.
- *SANE Australia* – highlighted the new Digital Navigation Project which is funded by the Australian Government, led by SANE Australia in collaboration with 16 partner organisations and enhances accessibility of mental health services through digital solutions.

In an interactive breakout session Council members collaborated in small groups to explore the challenges faced by people experiencing health disadvantage when they are navigating the healthcare system and discussed how digital health could help solve these issues, including existing digital health initiatives underway to address these barriers.

A discussion facilitated by Bettina McMahon from Healthdirect, comprised of experts from SANE Australia, the Consumers Health Forum of Australia, FECCA, and Telstra Health, supported the Council to build upon information shared throughout the meeting. Members discussed the importance of trust for consumers and human empathy and how powerful this is in engaging these communities in our healthcare system, including the criticality of culturally appropriate care and the importance of carers' access to health information.

A video showcasing some of the common challenges faced by people experiencing health disadvantage can be viewed [here](#).

The next meeting of the Council will take place in Alice Springs on 12 June 2025.



Australian Government

Australian Digital Health Agency

COUNCIL for CONNECTED CARE

people experiencing health disadvantage

25th February 2025

PART 1.

EQUITY

WHAT ARE the BARRIERS?

WHAT ARE the OPPORTUNITIES?

ALL AUSTRALIANS DESERVE DECENT HEALTH CARE

FREE FROM DISCRIMINATION

Navigating Health Challenges

FECCA

Australia is NO LONGER an ENGLISH-SPEAKING COUNTRY



MARY ANN BAQUERO

Language is at the CORE of people's HEALTH OUTCOMES

IT'S HARD to NAVIGATE the SYSTEM
CONFIDENCE, FEAR, MISTRUST



Relationships ARE WORK

Prioritise SO THAT CARERS AND CONSUMERS See their RECOMMENDATIONS TRANSFORM INTO REALITY

FEEDBACK
BREAKING THROUGH
MAKING SOLUTIONS WORK

TECHNOLOGY IS USEFUL BUT...

WE NEED TO MAINTAIN

ENGAGE

at the COMMUNITY level to make it REAL!

TRUST

REGIONAL SUPPORT?
DIGITAL / ON-LINE ACCESS?

CREATING SUSTAINABLE SUPPORT

IT'S ABOUT HAVING MEMBERS IN THE COMMUNITY ENCOURAGING OTHERS TO SUPPORT

WE NEED TO RALLY MORE STAKEHOLDERS

PARTNERING WITH OTHER ORGANISATIONS

THAT ONE-ON-ONE CONVERSATION

Current Initiatives in transitions of care and medication safety

South-Western Sydney

Low English Speaking area with POOR Health OUTCOMES
Worse than Kilkunda



KEITH McDONALD

VULNERABLE COMMUNITIES NEED SYSTEMATIC SUPPORT

THE HUMAN TOUCH

TECH LITERACY CHALLENGES

National Disability Services

SMALL 2 BEDROOM AT FRONT, COMMON LOUNGE ETC...

GROUP HOMES
WHAT DO THEY LOOK LIKE?

SOME RESIDENTS HAVE SEVERE HEALTH ISSUES

CHALLENGING CONDITIONS

OFTEN YOUNG WORKFORCE
NOT NURSES...

VIOLENCE HAPPENS

MANUAL SYSTEMS
A LOT OF PAPER



DEBBIE JAGGERS

COMMUNICATION DIFFICULTIES

PARTICULARLY AROUND CHANGE-OF-MEDICATION PLANS

DIFFERENT FORMS, DIFFERENT HOUSES, SAME PROVIDER?

GPI PARTICIPATING
700 LOCALISED PATHWAYS
300+ FACT SHEETS IN MANY LANGUAGES

LIVE TESTING INTEROPERABILITY

SYSTEM CHALLENGES WORKING TOGETHER

INTEROPERABILITY OFFERS HUGE OPPORTUNITIES

Digital Navigation Project

CATERING FOR DIVERSITY IN AN AMBITIOUS PROJECT

FOCUSSED ON THE EARLY STAGES OF DIGITAL ACCESS

TO FIND THE RIGHT PATHWAYS AT THE RIGHT TIME

NO DIRECTORIES FOR FIRST NATIONS PEOPLE

THE TOOL SHOULD BE BUILT BE HEALTH DIRECT NOT ON ANOTHER FRAGMENTED SYSTEM

ALWAYS A NEED FOR AN UPLIFT IN SUPPORT FOR COMMUNITY SECTOR



RACHEL GREEN
SANE AUSTRALIA CEO

LIVED EXPERIENCE

THE LOOP OF DISPAIR

THE SYSTEM HAS BEEN DESIGNED DIFFICULT TO NAVIGATE

FIND ME WHERE I AM

ONE TOOL IN MANY PLACES

TELLING MY TRAUMATIC STORY OVER AND OVER AGAIN

FIND IT YOURSELF!

BUT I DON'T UNDERSTAND THE LANGUAGE
NOT TARGETED AT MY AGE, CULTURAL HERITAGE, OR STATE OF MIND!

DON'T MAKE ME SEARCH FOR YOU

OFFICIAL

sketch
Captured with
on Warandjini land
by @SketchCorp.



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