



**Health Consumers Queensland** *...your voice in health*



# Strategic plan

2008-2010

## **Health Consumers Queensland**

*...your voice in health*

**Mission statement** Health Consumers Queensland (HCQ) supports the voices of Queensland consumers to achieve better health outcomes.

**Guiding principle** HCQ is committed to the consumer perspective in the development and delivery of health services.

- Aspirations**
- To engage, to empower and to give a voice to consumers through individual and systems advocacy.
  - To work collaboratively with government, Health Community Councils (HCC), the community, consumer organisations and other stakeholders to achieve this end.
  - To provide relevant and timely advice to the Minister for Health reflecting the voice of consumers.

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## Message from the Minister

A strong consumer voice is vital to making Queenslanders Australia's Healthiest People. Over the last three years the Queensland Government has undertaken widespread reform of health services, supported by unprecedented levels of funding. However, Queensland still faces key challenges, including a growing and ageing population, overcoming unhealthy lifestyles and preventable diseases, high birth rates, increasing cases of mental illness and an unacceptable gap in Indigenous life expectancy.

These challenges need to be addressed by health consumers, communities and government working together.

HCQ was established to be *your voice in health*. Health Consumers Queensland Strategic Plan 2008 – 2010 outlines how this state-wide body will work collaboratively with government and communities to strengthen the consumer perspective in health policy, planning and service delivery.

HCQ's strategic plan details its mission, guiding principles, goals and strategies in acting as *your voice in health*, focusing on consumer engagement, capacity building and advocacy support. By complementing the work of and collaborating with key consumer and community groups and health bodies, HCQ is building an active, state-wide network of consumers to participate in the development of responsive prevention, early care and new and innovative forms of health service provision.

I encourage health consumers to become involved in their communities and the work of HCQ as one way of having a say in the health services they need and receive. I will continue to work closely with HCQ towards achieving better health outcomes for Queenslanders.

**Stephen Robertson MP**  
**Minister for Health**

## Message from the Chairperson

At the outset I acknowledge the considerable work that health consumers, both as individuals and in informal and formal groups, have undertaken and are still undertaking to ensure that Queensland's health system meets the needs of consumers.

It is our intention to work collaboratively with existing health consumers' groups to ensure that a strong independent voice is developed and effectively contributes to the ongoing reform of the health service system and quality health services for consumers.

This strategic plan sets out the direction and a framework that health consumers can all work towards. It reflects the contribution of a broad range of passionate and committed health consumers and will be supplemented by an action plan.

I encourage all health consumers in Queensland to support this strategic plan. Your contribution to the work of Health Consumers Queensland is essential to assist our organisation to move beyond a plan to become *your voice in health*.

**Mark Tucker-Evans**  
**Chairperson**  
**Health Consumers Queensland**

## About Health Consumers Queensland (HCQ)

HCQ comprises a Ministerial Consumer Advisory Committee and a Secretariat supported by the Division of the Director-General, Queensland Health. This is an interim arrangement to build the capacity of this body and Queensland health consumers to engage more effectively with government. The model will be reviewed after two years with the view to moving towards a more independent support organisation in the future.

HCQ's Ministerial Committee was appointed on 1 September 2008 and comprises a mix of 14 health consumers from across Queensland. The committee and secretariat represent the diversity of health consumers from a range of life stages, health populations and social situations. The committee specifically includes members from rural, regional and remote Queensland as well as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and culturally and linguistically diverse communities (CALD), people with a disability and women.

HCQ identifies consumers as people who use, or are potential users, of health services including their family and carers. Consumers may participate as individuals, groups, organisations of consumers, consumer representatives or communities (Queensland Health, 2003<sup>1</sup>). Within the context of this definition, a carer is a person of any age who, without being paid, cares for another person who needs ongoing support because of a long-term medical condition, a mental illness, a disability, frailty or the need for palliative care. A carer may or may not be a family member and may or may not live with the person. Volunteers under the auspices of a voluntary organisation are not included (Queensland Government, 2007<sup>2</sup>).

HCQ looks forward to engaging with statewide health consumers, their communities, community organisations, key health and statutory bodies and Queensland Health in delivering on its mission and implementing its strategic plan.

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1 Queensland Health. (January 2003). *Queensland Health position statement: Consumer and community participation: To promote community engagement in health*. Brisbane: Author.

2 Queensland Government. (February 2007). *Queensland Government: Carer Recognition Policy*. Brisbane: Author.

## **Terms of reference**

### **Purpose**

To contribute to the continued development and reform of health systems and services in Queensland, by providing the Minister for Health with information and advice from a consumer perspective, supporting consumer engagement and promoting advocacy development.

### **Outcome**

The strengthening of the consumer perspective in health services policy, systems and service reform and improvement.

### **Term of reference 1**

Provide timely, high level, strategic advice to the Minister on government health policies and proposals, other matters the committee identifies, or as referred by the Minister, from a consumer perspective, and recommend priority areas of action to improve the quality and responsiveness of health services.

### **Term of reference 2**

Develop a plan and framework that promotes and informs individual, broader community and systemic health consumer engagement and representation in Queensland, in line with contemporary and innovative service delivery and sector best practice.

### **Term of reference 3**

Work collaboratively with Health Community Councils to develop strategies to increase consumer capacity and participation in councils and provide advice around consumer engagement initiatives and activities in local communities.

### **Term of reference 4**

Working collaboratively with government, health sector and community stakeholders develop and promote an advocacy framework to inform and strengthen individual and systems consumer health advocacy activities in Queensland.

### **Term of reference 5**

Provide quarterly reports to the Minister, a published annual report at the end of the financial year in line with the Strategic Plan and Terms of Reference and advise the Minister on the future priorities and governance of the Ministerial Consumer Advisory Committee.

*These terms of reference were endorsed by the Queensland Minister for Health, the Hon. Stephen Robertson on 7 May 2008.*

Term of  
reference**one**

Provide timely, high level, strategic advice to the Minister on government health policies and proposals, other matters the committee identifies, or as referred by the Minister, from a consumer perspective, and recommend priority areas of action to improve the quality and responsiveness of health services.

**Goals** (broad objectives)

- To provide the Minister for Health with informed advice and recommendations on health policies, initiatives and other identified matters from a health consumer perspective.
- To provide strategic advice on HCQ's priority areas of:
  - quality and safety
  - equitable access and targeted responses
  - participation and engagement.
- To be informed and engaged in state and national health agendas.
- To act as one mechanism to enable Queensland health consumers to be engaged, informed and to provide feedback about important health policy and other initiatives.
- To be an action and outcomes, strategic focused organisation.
- To be a credible voice for Queensland health consumers.

**Strategies** (what we will do)

- Develop knowledge and understanding of state and national health agendas and reforms, and their impact on Queensland health consumers.
- Develop an Issues Register for HCQ to identify current and emerging health-related issues and trends.
- Provide input from a consumer perspective on key state and national health policies and initiatives, consistent with HCQ's priorities and brief the Minister in relation to HCQ's analysis and position.
- Develop and maintain links with grassroots consumers, consumer networks and community organisations to inform and be informed about the impact of health policy, planning and service delivery.
- Establish relationships and affiliations with other state and national consumer and community organisations and statutory bodies to clarify roles and functions relevant to HCQ's provision of advice to the Minister.
- Address specific areas identified by the Minister from time to time.

**Key Performance Indicators** (indicators of success)

- Meetings of Chair and Director with Minister.
- Number of items raised with and advice given to the Minister.

- Quarterly reports provided to Minister and published on HCQ's website.
- Annual report provided to Minister and published on HCQ's website.
- Number of state and national policies and initiatives acted upon across HCQ's three identified priority areas.
- Number of initiatives acted upon, as identified by the Minister.
- Number of issues recorded on Issues Register and actions taken.
- Number of relationships and affiliations established with key state and national bodies linked with HCQ.
- Number of consumers, consumer networks and community networks involved in the development of HCQ's advice to the Minister.

Term of reference

**two**

Develop a plan and framework that promotes and informs individual, broader community and systemic health consumer engagement and representation in Queensland, in line with contemporary and innovative service delivery and sector best practice.

**Goals** (broad objectives)

- Queensland Health Consumers are better engaged in health service delivery, policy and planning.
- Health Consumers have increased information and capacity to participate in health initiatives.
- Health service providers and policy makers have increased understanding of mutually respectful consumer engagement processes.

**Strategies** (what we will do)

- Develop a framework and plan for consumer engagement.
- Assist in the development of Queensland Health's Consumer Engagement Policy and Procedures.
- Develop a network and register of health consumers to provide input into health policies and initiatives.
- Engage directly and develop links with Queensland health consumers and networks to identify and raise their emerging issues.
- Develop and distribute information resources to health consumers, which will support their representation and engagement in the development of policy and other health initiatives.
- Develop a range of resources to inform organisations about best practice in consumer representation.
- Develop and maintain close links and relationships with other relevant bodies and groups.

**Key Performance Indicators** (indicators of success)

- Finalised plan and framework provided to the Minister for Health.
- Participation in the development of Queensland Health's Consumer Engagement policy and procedures.
- Number of consumers on Consumer Network Register.

- Number of consumers nominated in response to requests.
- Number of external meetings with consumer and community networks.
- Number of formalised relationships with consumer and community networks.
- Number of resources developed and posted to HCQ website and / or distributed in the community.
- Number of formal relationships and affiliations established with other state and national consumer and community organisations and statutory bodies.

Term of  
reference

**three**

Work collaboratively with Health Community Councils to develop strategies to increase consumer capacity and participation in councils and provide advice around consumer engagement initiatives and activities in local communities.

#### **Goals** (broad objectives)

- HCQ and Health Community Councils (HCCs) will have collaborative and mutually beneficial relationships, including mechanisms for communication and joint consumer engagement initiatives.
- Health consumers have increased awareness of and more engagement in local HCCs and HCQ networks.
- HCCs and HCQ hold collaborative meetings on health consumer and broader engagement initiatives
- HCQ is informed about state-wide consumer issues through its relationships with HCCs.

#### **Strategies** (what we will do)

- Support the work of HCCs.
- Hold joint meetings with representatives of HCC and HCQ.
- Collaborate with HCCs to develop and distribute resources and information which support and promote consumer participation in HCCs.
- Promote health consumer membership of HCCs.
- Work collaboratively with HCCs around common issues and joint activities.

#### **Key Performance Indicators** (indicators of success)

- Support provided to HCCs' activities.
- Number of joint meetings.
- Mutually agreed communication mechanisms developed.
- All HCC's are provided with information about HCQ.
- Information and resources regarding consumer engagement are shared with HCCs.
- Increased consumer membership of HCCs.
- Common issues identified and action taken.

Term of  
reference

## four

Working collaboratively with government, health sector and community stakeholders, develop and promote an advocacy framework to inform and strengthen individual and systems consumer health advocacy activities in Queensland.

### **Goals** (broad objectives)

- Develop a common understanding and definition of health advocacy.
- Develop a framework that promotes formal and informal advocacy approaches at grass roots and systems levels.
- Identify gaps and unmet needs in current health advocacy approaches.
- Strengthen relationships between Queensland Health, HCQ, community organisations and advocacy groups.
- Strengthen the capacity of advocates to engage with health and community service providers on behalf of consumers.

### **Strategies** (what we will do)

- Develop discussion papers, which present options for the development of formal and informal health advocacy in Queensland.
- Provide information and advice to the Minister for Health around health advocacy.
- Engage with health consumers and other stakeholders around health advocacy.
- Identify opportunities to increase and promote health advocacy.
- Develop and implement a health advocacy toolkit and training package for consumers and / or advocates.

### **Key Performance Indicators** (indicators of success)

- Increased consistency of understanding of advocacy across broad stakeholders.
- Discussion papers completed.
- Number of pieces of advice provided to the Minister relating to health advocacy.
- Health advocacy framework completed and promoted.
- Number of engagement activities facilitated around health advocacy.
- Formalised relationships established between HCQ, advocates and Queensland Health.
- Number of health advocacy promotion opportunities identified and followed up.
- Advocacy toolkit and training package developed.

Term of  
reference

## five

Provide quarterly reports to the Minister, a published annual report at the end of the financial year in line with the Strategic Plan and Terms of Reference and advise the Minister on the future priorities and governance of the Ministerial Consumer Advisory Committee.

### **Goals** (broad objectives)

- To be accountable to the Minister and Queensland health consumers for the work of HCQ.
- To be open and transparent in reporting the work done by HCQ.

### **Strategies** (what we will do)

- Develop a template for quarterly reports against the Terms of Reference which records the progress of HCQ against its Terms of Reference.
- Develop and publish annual reports.
- Make recommendations to the Minister on the best future arrangements for HCQ beyond August 2010.

### **Key Performance Indicators** (indicators of success)

- Reporting templates developed.
- Quarterly and annual reports completed.
- Reports and snapshots posted to HCQ's website.
- Recommendations provided to the Minister around HCQ's ongoing governance and operations.

**Health Consumers Queensland**

# Strategic plan 2008-2010

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