



National Multidisciplinary Primary Care Research, Policy and Advocacy Consortium Newsletter July 2026

Dear Consortium members,

It was wonderful to see so many of you in person in Wollongong for our second annual Strategic Think Tank. This year's Think Tank focused on a central question: *Where are the evidence gaps, and how can research help shape the future of multidisciplinary primary care?* Internationally recognised primary care expert Professor Jennifer DeVoe delivered the keynote address exploring how evidence can drive the development of multidisciplinary care teams that better meet the needs of the communities they serve. Mark Roddam, First Assistant Secretary with the Australian Government Department of Health, Disability and Ageing provided an update on national primary care initiatives including Medicare bulk billing incentives and Urgent Care Clinics. Richard Nankervis, Chief Executive Officer of the Hunter New England and Central Coast Primary Health Network, outlined new opportunities for collaboration between primary care clinician researchers and Primary Health Networks.



One of the highlights was the presentation of emerging findings from the literature reviews being carried out by the Consortium's five Research Fellows. ICFHS Associate Professor Margo Barr introduced the Consortium's developing Knowledge Bank—an important new resource designed to highlight the current evidence base and research gaps.

Consortium members provided feedback on how the Consortium can maximise its impact over the coming year. A consistent message emerged throughout the day: meaningful progress depends on strong partnerships, consumer involvement and research that is closely aligned with policy and practice needs.

It was excellent that we were joined by members of many Primary Health Networks and representatives from The Australian Government Department of Health, Disability and Ageing, as well as members of the Consortium's Strategic Consumer and Community Group.

We also released our Consortium's Annual Impact Report for 2025. You can now view our [report](#), Professor DeVoe's [presentation](#), the Research Fellows' [presentations](#), and the presentation on the [Consortium Knowledge Bank](#).

Best wishes,

Professor Michael Kidd AO



We would like to get your feedback on the Think Tank to help with our planning for future events. Please fill out the online form [here](#).

Introducing our Consortium's Strategic Consumer and Community Group members

The Consortium welcomes the new members of our Strategic Consumer and Community Group who will be working with the Consumers Health Forum of Australia to ensure consumer voices are represented in our research. Members of this group held a workshop for our Consortium Research Fellows and other early career researchers following this year's Think Tank.

The consumer workshop explored the principles and practices needed for meaningful consumer and community involvement in research and co-design. Participants discussed the importance of working in ways that are inclusive, equitable, accessible, transparent, accountable, respectful of lived experience, trusting, reciprocal, and psychologically safe.

A key discussion focused on the need for genuine power sharing in co-design. Participants reflected that co-design should provide consumers with real influence over decision-making and be transparent about where decision-making power sits. Examples highlighted the impact on consumers when they shared personal and vulnerable experiences but received no communication or feedback from research projects for extended periods.

The workshop emphasised that consumer involvement should begin early in the research process and be tailored to the purpose and level of engagement that is both meaningful and achievable at each stage of the research cycle.



Practical examples included involving consumers in developing expressions of interest for recruitment activities and ensuring that those most affected by research or policy changes are represented in co-design processes.

The workshop reinforced that successful co-design is measured by whether consumer input changes decisions and highlighted the importance of communicating consumer insights transparently within research teams and back to the broader community.



Claire Lee

Claire joins the group with lived experience expertise as a Culturally and Linguistically Diverse young woman, a young patient with complex chronic illness & physical disability, and professional experience (former allied health professional turned AYA patient & consumer advocate).

- Member of the Consumers Health Forum of Australia (CHF) Consumer Assembly (2025-2026).
- Youth Ambassador for the Mater Hospital Brisbane including as a consumer co-lead for quality improvement research.
- Youth Advisory Group for the Royal Australasian College of Physicians (RACP) for the Position Statement on Youth-Appropriate Healthcare in Australia and New Zealand.



Debra Letica

Debra has personal lived experience expertise of primary care through managing her own chronic conditions and as a carer for family members.

- WA Primary Health Alliance as Chair of the South Metro Community Group.
- Rockingham Peel Hospital Community Advisory Group Chair.
- RACP Co-Chair of the Community Advisory Group
- UNSW Consumer/Carer Member of 2 Accreditation Teams for Universities in NSW
- National Health & Research Council Review of the Dietary Guidelines
- International Foundation of Integrated Care on the importance of integrated care with focus on research consumer motivation and researching why health consumers/carers are motivated to step into roles.
- RACP CAG Co-Chair
- Awarded an Honorary Fellowship by the RACP in 2023 in recognition of work across the college.

Kushagra Rathore



Kushagra is a health consumer and advocate who identifies as a CALD young person, living with a chronic condition and disability.

- Crisis to Calm project with Curtin University (collaborative research project)
- Consumer co-researcher on A Part of the Crowd, ALIVE National Centre
- CHF Consumer Assembly member



Jeanette Timor

Jeanette joins the Advisory Group with a strong background in consumer and community advocacy at a direct care and system level. Jeanette also brings extensive professional experience working in First Nation Health Programs across Australia.

- Queensland Clinical Senate as a consumer representative
- Consumer and Research Advocate with MCD Spotlight for Cancer Research
- Community Champion Consumer with Indigenous Genomic Healthcare
- Member of the Community Advisory Group in Genomic Health
- Community Advisory Partner with Mackay Hospital and Health Service
- Member of the Collaborative HCQ Health Consumers QLD



John Asgari

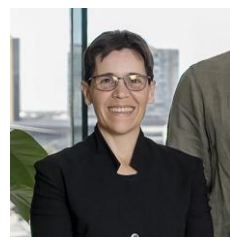
John is a Health Consumer Advisor with a background in Clinical Dietetics and Health Science, serving as an NHMRC Associate Investigator, the NHMRC 2025 Clinical Trials and Cohort Studies Peer Review Panel Member, and community surveyor for the Postgraduate Medical Council of Victoria. John has contributed to national policy and research initiatives, including the Australian Government's Dental Feasibility Study Expert Reference Group, and serves

across multiple clinical governance, safety, and advisory committees in major Victorian health services.

- NHMRC Clinical Trials and Cohort Studies Peer Review Panel
- VCCC Alliance Statewide Consumer Led Research Program Steering Group
- Various advisory groups with Safer Care Victoria, Peter MacCallum Cancer Centre, Monash University and Eastern Health

Co-authored publications including:

- Equitable Access to Genomic Molecular Testing for Australian Cancer Patients
- The ANZICS Guidelines on Patient & Family Engagement in Critical Care Research and Registries
- The National Oral Health Messages for Australians consensus statement
- The Consumer Led Authorship Principles for the Cancer Consumer-Led Research.



Vanessa Cullen

Vanessa's lived experience expertise has evolved from regular engagement with GPs, pharmacy, psychology, optometry, dental & physiotherapy primary care for preventative care & management of chronic/complex health needs.

Notably, their experience of having to travel regionally to access high-quality, patient-centred care due to gaps in preventative health, accessibility & follow-through in the metropolitan system; resulting in a reliance on self navigation. Their professional experience includes being Director, member of Strategic & Scientific Boards, research designer, & published co-author in the domains of consumer engagement, kidney, dietary, pharmacological & living guidelines (clinical & translation).



- Community Member AHPRA
- Optometry Board of Australia - Policy & Education Committee, Registration & Notifications Committee
- Nursing & Midwifery Board of Australia – Notifications Committee
- Psychology Board of Australia - Registration & Compliance Committee
- Extensive involvement in co-design of clinical & consumer guidelines
- Consumer Member-Podiatry Council NSW.

New Affiliate Members

Our Consortium has introduced Affiliate Membership as a way to expand our national network, strengthen collaborations among those involved in primary care research, policy and advocacy, and provide an opportunity for other primary care clinician researchers to engage in our work. We are pleased to welcome the following new affiliate members to our Consortium:

- Frances Barraclough, University Centre for Rural Health, University of Sydney
- Shona Bates, International Centre for Future Health Systems, UNSW
- Bianca Bell, North Western Melbourne PHN
- Heather Block, Flinders University
- Peter Brown, UNSW
- Josephine Burton, University of Sydney
- Dr Marianne Coleman, National Centre for Healthy Ageing, Monash University
- Dr Andrew Giddy, Western Victoria PHN
- Julie Gordon, The University of Sydney
- Katelin Haynes, Brisbane South PHN
- Lauren Hickson, Brisbane North PHN
- Jailing Lin, International Centre for Future Health Systems, UNSW
- Associate Professor Stephen Martin, ANU
- Ruth Mursa, University of Wollongong
- Judith Ngai, Digital Health CRC
- Cathy O'Callaghan, International Centre for Future Health Systems, UNSW
- Professor Belinda O'Sullivan, Monash University School of Rural Health
- Karen Price, RACGP/AMA/Monash/HCF research foundation
- Susan Saldanha, Monash University
- Shona Sundaraj, Medibank Better Health Research Hub
- Cristina Thompson, University of Wollongong
- Kate Tye, Wentworth Healthcare-Nepean Blue Mountains PHN
- Nada Vidić, UNSW
- Kylie Vuong, UoM
- Michael Woodhouse, ACON and Kaleido

MRFF 2026 Primary Health Care Research Grants Now Open

The Medical Research Future Fund (MRFF) 2026 Primary Health Care Research grant opportunity opened 17 June and closes 4 November 2026. Further details are available through the GrantConnect website and through logging in for the grant opportunity guidelines: www.grants.gov.au/Go/Show?GoUuid=ccc1e089-f6d8-4a54-8637-0162b929120d



AI-Enhanced Knowledge Bank for Multidisciplinary Primary Care

The Consortium AI-enhanced Knowledge Bank brings together key documents that Consortium members think are important to our shared work. Thank you to Consortium members who have already contributed key research papers.

By combining AI-enabled evidence synthesis with the expertise of our researchers, policy partners, and peak organisations, the Knowledge Bank aims to support evidence-informed decision-making and strengthen the translation of research into improved multidisciplinary primary care practice.

Early analysis has identified priority themes such as care coordination and integration, equity and access, healthcare system change and economic evaluation.

We encourage all Consortium researchers to submit their most influential and relevant multidisciplinary primary care publications to ensure the Knowledge Bank reflects the breadth and depth of research involving members of our Consortium. You can send a link or a pdf version to elizabeth.byrne@unsw.edu.au