



# CAHS Consumer Engagement Strategy Summary 2020-2022

Partnering with consumers to build healthy kids, healthy communities



Compassion  
Excellence  
Collaboration

Accountability  
Equity  
Respect

# Acknowledgements

## Acknowledgement of country and people



The Child and Adolescent Health Service would like to acknowledge the traditional custodians of the land, the Noongar Whadjuk people, and pay respects to their elders, past, present and future.

## Acknowledgement of the Working Group

A Consumer Engagement Strategy Working Group was established in March 2020 to guide the development of the Strategy. The Working Group was made up of eight consumers (four young people and four parents and carers), who met fortnightly throughout the development of the Strategy. A special thanks is extended to the members of this Working Group who provided invaluable insights and feedback.

The Working Group shared the following reflections:

**Rebecca (parent of one)** “As a consumer, we are often the ones who can see what our child’s needs are, say what we need and make new innovative suggestions to help the system evolve into an excellent service.”

**Jayne (parent of five)** “It’s an honour to be consulted about the shaping of healthcare in Western Australia and at the Child and Adolescent Health Service. It’s great to have a voice and to know what’s happening.”

**Manjuri (parent of two)** “The staff already do a great job and involving families just goes the extra mile in providing an insight to further improve on the services provided.”

**Kerri (parent of two)** “It is so important to have the family of the young person involved to work together to deliver the best outcome for the child.”

**Caelan (young person)** “By being the target audience, I know what might be needed.”

**Ethan (young person)** “It is important to involve consumers because who else is better to give advice to a Strategy affecting consumers, than consumers.”

**Rani (young person)** “It allows for those who don’t feel brave enough or don’t have the platform to speak to be represented. This representation prevents different perspectives from being lost or misheard. Different perspectives are eye-opening!”

**Kailin (young person)** “The Child and Adolescent Health Service exists for its consumers; we’re developing this Strategy because we want consumers to help us understand how we can improve. Of course we need consumers to be involved in helping us understand how we should go about this.”

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## What would better consumer engagement mean to you?

*Better health outcomes for children, peace of mind and the satisfaction of a job well done.*

**(Staff)**

*For young people it would mean having the confidence to use the service yourself and not just rely on your parents.*

**(Young Person)**

*For me personally it would take away a lot of the stress...With my kids there's been times when things haven't been communicated to me or jargon has been used I think knowledge is power and it's better to be informed and know what's going on.*

**(Parent/Carer)**

# Forewords

## The Board Chair and Chief Executive

Having children, young people and families at the centre of everything we do has long been a driving force across the Child and Adolescent Health Service and we are delighted to formalise this ethos in our Consumer Engagement Strategy.

This Strategy provides the foundation for us to build on as we seek to strengthen our partnerships with all consumers who use our services. We encourage all staff to partner with consumers; whether it is about improving clinical care, learning from feedback, or gathering input through consultation. The Strategy provides the foundation on which we commit to building a continually-improving culture of engagement.

We also encourage our consumers to work with us; share your feedback, exercise your healthcare rights, tell us when we do things well or when we could do things better. We look forward to you joining us on this journey. Together we can make changes that will support our vision, **healthy kids, healthy communities.**



Dr Aresh Anwar  
**CAHS Chief Executive**



Debbie Karasinski AM  
**CAHS Board Chair**



## The Consumer Advisory Council Chair



I welcome this 2020 Consumer Engagement Strategy as a concrete step forward; paving the way for greater capacity for consumer involvement and feedback across the Child and Adolescent Health Service.

This Strategy provides parents and carers with the structure to partner with health professionals to achieve the very best outcomes and excellence in healthcare for their children.

Our hope is that this partnership will enhance safe and collaborative pathways that meet the needs of children and young people for truly child and family centred care.

**Margaret Wood – Consumer Advisory Council Chair**

## The Youth Advisory Council Chair

Partnering and engaging with consumers who have experienced the many parts of the Child and Adolescent Health Service has



long been a priority for staff. I believe the focus on consumer engagement is exemplified in this Strategy, including during the stages of its development, where over 1,000 consumers were involved.

I am keen to see the Service continue to build strong relationships with consumers and I am confident that this Strategy will be a solid foundation for doing so.

**Daniel Staer – Youth Advisory Council Chair**



## What is consumer engagement?

Consumer engagement is the active participation of consumers in their own care, treatment and support, and in the planning, design, delivery and review of healthcare services<sup>1</sup>.

Engaging consumers helps us to understand our services from the perspective of the children, young people and families who use them. Our commitment to genuine and meaningful consumer engagement means that we want to partner with consumers so that together we can achieve the best outcomes for their care, treatment and support and for the Service more broadly.

We acknowledge that a 'one size fits all' approach simply does not allow us to achieve our vision of *'healthy families, healthy communities'*. Our consumers need healthcare services that are responsive and flexible to their own and their family's needs and in order to achieve this, it is important that we engage with consumers who are representative of our diverse populations.

At the Child and Adolescent Health Service we aim to engage with consumers in three main ways; (1) partnering in clinical care, treatment and support, (2) sharing feedback with us, and (3) participating in improving our service.

## Why have a Consumer Engagement Strategy?

This Strategy outlines the goals and actions that the Child and Adolescent Health Service will undertake to improve the ways we engage with consumers, between July 2020 and the end of 2022. This document is intended for both consumers and staff and is further supported by the [CAHS Consumer Engagement Strategy 2020-2022](#) and [How We Developed the Strategy](#).

Consumers are currently engaged across many areas of our service and this Strategy is designed to build on existing efforts and expand the scope and approaches used to engage. It will strengthen the involvement of consumers to better plan, design and deliver services that meet the diverse needs of the people who use them. The Strategy aims to improve our approach to engaging a representative consumers base, particularly; Aboriginal, Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CaLD), those with a refugee background and lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex, queer, asexual and questioning (LGBTIQA+).

There is growing evidence that strong consumer engagement undertaken in healthcare services has led to:

- improvements in consumer healthcare experience and health outcomes
- health information that is better understood by consumers
- more accessible services, delivered closer to home
- a healthcare culture that openly involves consumers
- lower risks of complications and reduced hospital and medical visits.
- better quality and more responsive services<sup>1</sup>.

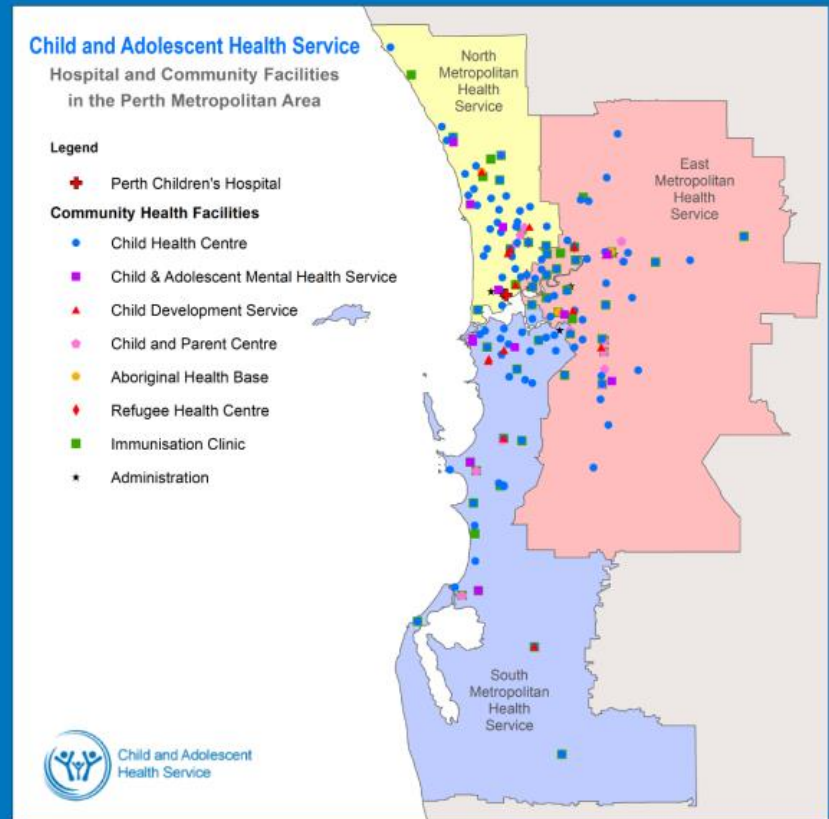
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<sup>1</sup> Adapted from <http://www.hcg.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/HCQ-CCE-Framework-2017.pdf>

# About us and our consumers

The Child and Adolescent Health Service is made up of **Neonatology, Community Health, Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service and Perth Children's Hospital**. We provide health services to Western Australian babies, children and young people, aged from 0-18 years.

Our consumers are **babies, children, young people, parents, carers and family members** who are currently accessing our services, have accessed our services in the last five years, or who are eligible to access our services in the future.



Neonatology provides state-wide tertiary neonatal services to the sickest newborn babies and infants from across Western Australia.

Community Health offers a range of services to all babies, children and young people in Perth, including child health (purple book appointments), immunisations and school health. Community Health also provide extra services for families who may need them, including Aboriginal and refugee families and Child Development Service for children who need extra support with their development.

The Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service provides mental health services to infants, children, adolescents and their families across the Perth metropolitan area. Services include community based programs as well inpatient care and a range of specialised services for children with complex mental health conditions across Western Australia.

Perth Children's Hospital is Western Australia's only dedicated children's tertiary hospital and provides services to children and young people up to 16 years of age, from across the state.

We use the word 'consumer' as a collective term to acknowledge the essential role children, young people, parents and carers have in shaping our services, not simply receiving them. We use the term 'young people' to describe teenagers or adolescents aged between 13 and 18 years.

As part of developing this Strategy and to help us have the best possible understanding of our consumers, a Child and Adolescent Health Service Consumer Profile has been developed. This is a detailed overview of our consumer demographics and other information to inform service planning and allow us to engage with a representative sample of consumers.



# The three ways we engage

At the Child and Adolescent Health Service, consumers engage with us in three main ways, by:

## Partnering in clinical care, treatment and support

Attending appointments or receiving care and support from clinicians.

## Sharing feedback with us

Giving us good, bad or neutral feedback by filling in a form, calling, emailing or meeting face to face with our Consumer Engagement Team or posting on the Care Opinion website.

## Participating in improving our service

Having a say in how services are planned, delivered, reviewed and monitored. This may be through surveys, workshops and being a consumer representative on committees and working groups.

## Principles of consumer engagement

These principles of consumer engagement are based on what consumers told us is important when it comes to engaging with them, and will guide how our staff approach engagement, in a way that aligns with our values.

Our values	Principles of consumer engagement
<b>Compassion</b> means...	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understanding that consumers' engagement with the Child and Adolescent Health Service is determined by different circumstances, experiences and backgrounds.</li> <li>• Keeping an eye and ear out for what consumers are feeling or saying.</li> <li>• Engaging with consumers in an approachable, friendly and non-judgemental way.</li> <li>• Taking into account consumers' thoughts and feelings, no matter what they are or how they may appear to others.</li> </ul>
<b>Collaboration</b> means...	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Empowering children and young people to partner in their care, treatment and support and in health service improvement.</li> <li>• Bringing staff, non-government organisations and families together to care for and support children and young people.</li> <li>• Consumers and staff share their expertise to improve health outcomes and services.</li> <li>• Creating shared goals, visions and language so we can work together to improve services.</li> </ul>
<b>Equity</b> means...	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Acknowledging that diversity in ability, language and culture may affect how people understand and access their care, treatment and support.</li> <li>• Considering the partnership and participation needs of consumers, no matter how big, small or different those needs are.</li> <li>• Finding ways for everyone, no matter what their needs or preferences are, to have a voice in how services are delivered and improved.</li> </ul>
<b>Respect</b> means...	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Listening to consumers and showing that they have been heard in their care, treatment and support, and in service improvement.</li> <li>• Valuing the expertise and experiences consumers bring to services.</li> <li>• Considering cultural and religious requirements and other preferences, when partnering with consumers.</li> </ul>
<b>Excellence</b> means...	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Engaging consumers to ensure services are the best they can be.</li> <li>• Demonstrating that consumers have been listened to in how we care for, treat and support children and young people and improve services.</li> <li>• Consumers have choices in their partnership with, and participation in, the Child and Adolescent Health Service.</li> </ul>
<b>Accountability</b> means...	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Responding to consumers honestly, clearly and in a timely manner.</li> <li>• Providing clear information and documentation when partnering in care, treatment and support or in service improvement.</li> <li>• Being open to consumer feedback and participation, no matter whether they are positive or negative.</li> <li>• Checking with consumers that their expectations of partnerships, feedback and participation have been met.</li> </ul>



## The goals and actions

### Goal 1

Work together with children, young people and families in the care we deliver.

### Goal 2

Partner with children, young people and families in ways that work best for them.

### Goal 3

Communicate compassionately with children, young people and families according to their unique needs.

### Goal 4

Provide clear guidance for working together with children, young people and families.

Four key goals emerged from the consultation, each of which aligns with the requirements of the National Safety and Quality Health Service Standards 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition and the National Standards for Mental Health Services. Each of the goals has an adjoining set of actions that aim to improve the three ways we partner with consumers; (1) partnering in clinical care, treatment and support, (2) sharing feedback with us, and (3) participating in improving our service.

The goals and actions were developed by consumers and staff when consulted about the ways that consumer engagement needs to improve.

The goals and actions will be implemented across our entire service. It is acknowledged that some actions may have already started within some service areas. Many actions are described in broad terms only, allowing for services to plan and implement tailored approaches that take local circumstances and capacity into account.

The table below includes a summary of the outcomes that will be achieved when all actions have been implemented. The full list of actions can be read in the full version of the [CAHS Consumer Engagement Strategy 2020-2022](#). The icons against each outcome show which of the three types of engagement will be improved.

# Goal 1

Work together with children, young people and families in the care we deliver.

When consumers use the Child and Adolescent Health Service, it will be clear that working in partnership is our priority. This is a goal that was suggested by the Executive and staff of the Child and Adolescent Health Service, as well as consumers. In order to achieve this, there needs to be clear expectations, support for staff and resources for consumers.

Sixty percent of parents and carers say that they always feel involved in their child's care and more than 70% of staff report that they always partner with consumers in planning care and support. Over 95% of staff believe that consumer engagement should be embedded in how the Child and Adolescent Health Service makes decisions.

From consultation with staff and consumers we found that:

- All consumers, particularly children and young people, want to feel more involved in decisions made about their or their child's care, treatment and support.
- Consumers want their family's strengths and experiences to be considered more often in care planning.
- Staff need to better inform consumers about their healthcare rights and what they are consenting to.
- The Child and Adolescent Health Service needs to better support and encourage consumer feedback and participation and incorporate it into meaningful change.

Icon	The type of engagement this action relates to
	Partnering in clinical care, treatment and support
	Sharing feedback with us
	Participating in improving our service

## Outcomes

More consumers will feel involved in the decisions about their own or their child's clinical care and support.

Consumers will be able to access information about healthcare rights, consent processes and partnering with the Child and Adolescent Health Service.

Consumers will know how their feedback and participation had an impact.

Consumers will be encouraged and supported to give feedback about their experience at the Child and Adolescent Health Service.

There will be increased opportunities and recognition for consumer engagement through funding and incentives.

Information from consumer feedback and participation will lead to service improvements.

Consumers will want to partner and participate in decision making with the Child and Adolescent Health Service.

# Goal 2

Partner with children, young people and families in ways that work best for them.










The Child and Adolescent Health Service will provide staff and consumers with opportunities to partner together in ways that are easy for everyone to access. This includes taking advantage of digital technology, online communication and social media. The need for this shift has been widely acknowledged by staff and consumers. It is recognised that this goal may require significant investment and resources but this is considered necessary to ensure improvements in consumer experience and partnership. A high number of consumers who were consulted about this Strategy indicated interest in participating in making decisions about services and 70% of staff reporting that they already involve consumers in this way.

From consultation with staff and consumers we found that:

- Consumers want better access to information in formats that meet their needs so they can be better informed to make decisions about their own or their child's care and support.
- Consumers, including children and young people, people with a disability, people for who English is not their first language, and Aboriginal people need a variety of ways to give feedback and participate in service improvement.
- Consumers want to give feedback in ways that are safe, comfortable and suit their needs and preferences. They also want to know how their feedback has had an impact.
- The Child and Adolescent Health Service needs to be better at involving consumers in improving services. This includes making sure consumers have the resources and support they need to participate.

Icon	The type of engagement this action relates to
	Partnering in clinical care, treatment and support
	Sharing feedback with us
	Participating in improving our service

## Outcomes

-  Child and Adolescent Health Service will have a plan guiding them how to better engage with Aboriginal consumers.
-  Digital technologies and online opportunities will be provided for consumers to participate.
-  An online consumer network will be established to invite and inform consumers about opportunities for participation.
-  Consumers will be able to access health and service information easily.
-  There will be opportunities for consumer feedback and participation that is inclusive of the diverse needs and preferences of consumers.
-  Consumers will be involved in the development of staff training and service improvement.
-  Staff will have access to training, resources and support for consumer engagement and participation.
-  Consumers will have resources that inform them about what consumer participation involves.
-  Consumers will find it easier to get the information they need from clinicians.

# Goal 3

Communicate compassionately with children, young people and families according to their unique needs.

Consumers of the Child and Adolescent Health Service come from diverse backgrounds and have a range of communication needs and preferences. While many consumers report always understanding the information they were given (76% of parents and carers and 53% of young people), this goal is aimed at improving the way all needs and preferences for communication are met. It is clear that both staff and consumers agree that there are more effective and efficient ways that we can better connect with our consumers, particularly for those who are Aboriginal, those who speak a language other than English, young people and people with disabilities. Only around a third of staff felt information and communication was appropriate for the diversity of consumers.

From consultation with staff and consumers, we found that:

- Clear, timely and complete information, in formats that are better suited to consumer needs, is required.
- Staff need to make sure they allow time and opportunity for consumers to understand information.
- Children and young people want to be communicated with in a way that enables them to partner in their care, treatment and support and participate in service improvement.
- Consumers want to know the outcomes of their feedback or participation in service improvement.

Icon	The type of engagement this action relates to
	Partnering in clinical care, treatment and support
	Sharing feedback with us
	Participating in improving our service

## Outcomes



Consumers will receive the time, resources and support they need to understand the information they are given.



Consumers who speak languages other than English will have better access to interpreters and translated publications and resources.



There will be resources for children and young people about what to expect when accessing the Child and Adolescent Health Service.



There will be a clear process of involving consumers in the development and review of consumer resources, publications and forms, as well as policies.



Consumers who are not satisfied with a service will receive an appropriate and constructive response from staff they interacted with.



Consumers will hear about the outcomes of consumer feedback and participation.

# Goal 4

Provide clear guidance for working together with children, young people and families.

The Child and Adolescent Health Service is committed to ensuring more consumers are involved in decisions about their or their child's care, treatment and support and are able to participate in service improvement. There was support from the leaders of the Child and Adolescent Health Service to reduce barriers and a call from staff for clear, consistent and coordinated governance. Currently, 70% of staff agree that the development and direction of our service is based on consumer feedback and preferences. Achieving this goal will hopefully help to increase this even further.

From consultation with staff and consumers we found that:

- The Child and Adolescent Health Service requires clear and consistent standards for consumer engagement.
- Strengths and gaps in consumer engagement require continual monitoring by the Child and Adolescent Health Service.
- Service improvement needs to be guided by consumer feedback and participation.
- Staff require clear processes and policies that enable consumer feedback and participation, including the involvement of children and young people.
- Consumer engagement across the Child and Adolescent Health Service needs to be coordinated and knowledge should be shared.

Icon	The type of engagement this action relates to
	Partnering in clinical care, treatment and support
	Sharing feedback with us
	Participating in improving our service

## Outcomes

- Staff will know what is expected of them in relation to consumer feedback and participation.
- Information provided by consumers through feedback or participation will be incorporated into the planning, development and improvement of services.
- There will be processes for involving children under 14 in consumer feedback and participation.
- Consumers will hear about the outcomes of consumer feedback.
- Staff will know what is happening at the Child and Adolescent Health Service in regard to consumer engagement.
- Consumers will be involved in planning and monitoring consumer engagement.
- Risks identified through consumer engagement will be shared with all staff.
- Child and Adolescent Health Service Consumer Councils will be reviewed to strengthen their focus and purpose.



Government of **Western Australia**  
**Child and Adolescent Health Service**

## **Child and Adolescent Health Service**

### **STREET ADDRESS**

Level 5  
Perth Children's Hospital, NEDLANDS WA 6009

### **POSTAL ADDRESS**

Locked Bag 2010 Nedlands WA 6090

### **EMAIL**

[CAHS.Consumers@health.wa.gov.au](mailto:CAHS.Consumers@health.wa.gov.au)

### **WEBSITE**

[www.cahs.health.wa.gov.au](http://www.cahs.health.wa.gov.au)

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