

Partnering with Consumers

Standard 2



FACTSHEET

Leaders of a health service organisation implement systems to support partnering with patients, carers and other consumers to improve the safety and quality of care. Patients, carers, consumers, clinicians and other members of the workforce use the systems for partnering with consumers.

There is growing evidence about the importance of partnerships between health service organisations, health professionals, patients, families, carers and consumers.

Patient-centred care is recognised as an element of high quality healthcare in its own right, and there is strong evidence that it can lead to improvements in health care quality and outcomes by increasing safety, cost effectiveness and patient, family and staff satisfaction.

Studies have demonstrated significant benefits from such partnerships in clinical quality and outcomes, the experience of care, and the business and operations of delivering care.

The clinical benefits associated with better patient experience and patient-centred care include:

- decreased mortality¹
- decreased readmission rates²
- decreased rates of healthcare acquired infections³
- reduced length of stay⁴
- improved adherence to treatment regimens⁵
- improved functional status⁴

What is consumer-centred care?

Consumer or patient-centred care is health care that is respectful of, and responsive to, the preferences, needs and values of patients and consumers.



Operational benefits include lower costs per case, improved liability claims experiences and increased staff satisfaction and retention rates.⁶

The importance of health services partnering with patients, families, carers and consumers is recognised at a national and international level.⁷

Patients need to be placed at the centre of their own care and the health care system more generally. In Australia, consumer-centred care is one of the three dimensions in the Australian Safety and Quality Framework for Health Care.⁸ Partnerships with patients and consumers also form the basis of a range of national and state and territory health policies and programs.

The *Australian Charter of Healthcare Rights* summarises the basic rights that patients and consumers are entitled to receive when accessing health care services throughout Australia. These rights are Access, Safety, Respect, Communication, Participation, Privacy and Comment.

The aim of this Standard is to ensure that health services are responsive to patient, carer and consumer input and needs.

In brief, this Standard requires that:

- Governance structures are in place to form partnerships with consumers and carers.
- Consumers and carers are supported by the health service organisation to actively participate in the improvement of the patient experience and patient health outcomes.
- Consumers and carers receive information on the health service organisation's performance and contribute to the ongoing monitoring, measurement and evaluation of performance for continuous quality improvement.

Resources and Tools

The Commission has the following tools and resources to assist with the implementation of this Standard:

- Australian Safety and Quality Framework for Health Care
- Patient-centred Care: Improving quality and safety through partnerships with patients and consumers
- Australian Charter of Healthcare Rights

Further Information

A full copy of the Partnering with Consumers Standard is contained in the *National Safety and Quality Health Service Standards*. It includes the criteria, items and actions required for health services to meet this Standard and is available on the Commission's website at www.safetyandquality.gov.au.

References

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