
MEMO

To: Board Members
From: Judith Holmes, Consumer Council Chair
Date: 7th December 2020
Subject: **Consumer Council Report**

Status

This report contains:

- For decision
- Update
- Regular report
- For information

The Consumer Council met on 7th December in Nelson.

The Council discussed the report from the Clinical Governance Committee meeting. Of note was the topic of access to health medical records for medical staff and consumers. The key points requiring further discussion were:

- Difficulty maintaining records
- Lack of consistency among GP's. This is of concern to consumers.
- Awareness that this is an issue that is of interest to all DHB's. However, it is something that the Council feels committed to raise until resolved.

The Telehealth project is strongly supported by the Consumer Council. The Council has a representative regularly attending the project meetings. The key to success for this work is ensuring that the infrastructure is in place to support community uptake. This is in place as the first step leading to increased community uptake.

Karen Bailey and Jane Kinsey presented on the Enabling Good Lives project. The Council are very supportive of the goals for this work. We applaud the goal of empowering people to be self-determining in the services they receive and to make choices that will enable them to live the life they want.

Finally, as this is my final report I offer a reflection from my four years as the first Chair of the Consumer Council for Nelson Marlborough Health. I have been delighted by the "cultural" changes that the Council has helped usher in. In our consultations with many different programmes throughout the DHB we have been pleased with the willingness of our NMH staff to adapt to more modern approaches in their provision of health care as they see themselves as advocates for greater individual ownership or responsibility of each-and-every-one-of-us for our own optimal health as part of a health "team". The Council sees this team approach as a necessary evolution of how we consume health interventions in this current "Information Age". In consultations on every stage and aspect of our health journey from the consumers perspective with many different departments in the DHB, the Council has helped bring about a "cultural" shift from an previous system in which the patient often felt that s/he was directed to follow certain procedures by "those in charge" (whether they had the motivation to, understood why, or had the means to follow the directives) to a culture where the goals are those of being a central part of one's own treatment team in which a greater understanding of treatments, choices involved, motivating factors, advocacy and active involvement are valued and necessary for general wellbeing and achieving health goals.

We have been particularly conscious of how the opening of health systems to fit actual people and actual lives and those of whanau can be helpful in the improvement of health for people of Maori and Pacific heritage. It is an important goal of the Consumer Council to be part of a solution for removing barriers to the gaining of greater health equity for people of all ethnicities in Aotearoa/New Zealand. We all owe this to our fellow citizens.

Members of the Consumer Council see the huge impact that consumer engagement makes in program design and implementation and enjoy active participation in Clinical Governance, Advanced Care Planning, Models of Care and many similar programs wherein the staff appreciate the different perspective gained from considering things from the consumer perspective. It is our hope that health care delivery continues to keep pace with our rapidly changing lives and enables us access to best practice in every sense of the word and that programme design and implementation continue to consider the consumer perspective as key in every decision.

I wish to thank everyone on the Board for your ongoing service to the health and wellbeing of the people of the Nelson Marlborough District. It has been a pleasure to report to such an enlightened and supportive group. I wish you all well for a healthy and happy future.

Judith Holmes
Consumer Council Chair

RECOMMENDATION

THAT THE BOARD RECEIVES THE CHAIR'S REPORT.