



Building a Consumers Health Voice in Tasmania

Welcome to the Tasmanian e-update – November 2018

We are pleased to announce that work has commenced on building a new health consumer organisation for Tasmania.

The aim of this organisation is to create an independent health consumer voice in Tasmania.

In this e-update we would like to achieve two things.

Firstly, we would like to keep you informed on what is happening as we collectively put our minds together to build and co-design a health consumer organisation in Tasmania.

Secondly, we welcome your feedback and comments as we commence this journey. For this organisation to work, and for us to practice what we preach, we will rely on our fellow consumers to help advise, shape and drive this organisation so it does what you would like it to do.

We have enormous scope to collectively build this organisation from the ground up to ensure Tasmanian consumers have a significant voice in the decision-making process on all health-related issues that affect Tasmanians. We aim to positively shape and drive health policy and service delivery across the State.

This newsletter provides a snapshot on what has occurred to date, introduces the new Executive Officer – Bruce Levett and the Implementation Advisory Group and begins a conversation about what's next.

What's happened so far – a snapshot

The Tasmanian organisation has been some time in the formation and a significant amount of work has already gone into getting us to this point in time.

Some of you may remember or were involved in the consultations that were undertaken in the initial phase of this project. A scoping study, funded by Primary Health Tasmania, was completed at the end of 2016 that presented evidence supporting the development of a state-wide health consumer organisation for Tasmania. This report recommended that a new organisation work closely in partnership with existing health-based organisations to support and build a coordinated health advocacy role. A copy of the report is available on request or on the website.

Tasmania was the only state in Australia that did not have an independent peak health consumer voice into the health system.

Towards the end of 2017, three bodies agreed to jointly fund a health consumer organisation for Tasmania: Primary Health Tasmania; the Tasmanian Department of Health; and the Tasmanian Health Services.

The Consumer Health Forum (CHF), which is based in Canberra and is the peak national body for health consumer advocacy, was identified as the auspice body to help build the Tasmanian organisation.

The first step saw the appointment of an Executive Officer located in Tasmania who will lead the formation of the organisation. Bruce Levett commenced in this role in mid-August 2018.

From this point, the focus of activity has been spent re-engaging with Tasmanian consumers, stakeholders including not-for-profit peak bodies, service providers and government departments which culminated in the formation of an Implementation Advisory Group and its first meeting on 2 October 2018.

We acknowledge and welcome the support and commitment demonstrated by the State and Federal governments to help get us to this stage of the journey.

Introducing the new Executive Officer

Bruce Levett has been appointed as the Executive Officer and commenced work in late August 2018.

Bruce, originally from Burnie, educated in Hobart, has a strong background in stakeholder engagement, business management, strategy and policy development across both the public and private sectors. Bruce worked in Hobart in state government and then as a management consultant for 6 years before moving to Melbourne together with his partner in 2000.

He returned with a young family to Hobart earlier this year after working in senior government roles in Victoria and more recently working on an international aid project in the Solomon Islands.

Introducing the Implementation Advisory Group

An advisory group has been established to help guide the formation of the organisation.

Its role is to provide support and advice to CHF and the Executive Officer in the establishment phase of the organisation and

to also commence the role-out of a consumer panel.

The intention is to support the members of the panel with training and support to serve as effective consumer advocates and advisers to key Tasmanian agencies such as the Department of Health, Primary Health Tasmania and others.

Members of the advisory group include: Leanne Wells (CHF), Chair; Bruce Levett (Tasmanian HCO); Sue Leitch (COTA); David Brennan (Carers Tasmania); Graeme Lynch (Heart Foundation); Klaus Baur (Flourish Tasmania); Penny Egan (Cancer Council Tasmania); Kym Goodes (TasCOSS); and the following consumer representatives: Mathew Etherington; Claire Hadolt; Kate Griggs; Anita Campbell; Darren Jiggins; John Pauley and Elida Meadows.

At its first meeting, the advisory group agreed to the underlying principles and ways of working for the new organisation. These included ten key principles which covered the following:

- co-designed to meet Tasmania's needs;
- state-wide focus and reach;
- independent;
- strategic and systems focused;
- led by Tasmanian consumers;
- partners with stakeholders;
- builds capacity of consumers and service providers;
- evidence based;
- focuses on sustainable solutions; and
- the consumers voice is respected, supported and valued.

More information on each of these principles is available on request. They will be available on a website we are setting up and which will 'go live' in the near future.

What's next

How to get involved - we would welcome your involvement and there are several ways that you can become involved.

By following the Survey Monkey link below and ticking one or more boxes or email your preferences to b.levett@chf.org.au.

The options are:

- You would like to continue to receive these e-updates and information on our activities including outcomes from the advisory group meetings.
- You would like to meet the Tasmanian Executive Officer to provide input into the organisation work program and activities.
- You would like to volunteer to support the activities of the organisation.
- You would like to join a network that may involve being a consumer advocate for your different community or group.

We would also like to take this opportunity to ask you **a couple of** questions to gain a quick pulse on the key issues that you believe are important for the new health consumer organisation to focus on.

If you would like to contribute to the pulse, or become involved please link to the survey here

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/TLMK8ML>



Leanne Wells
Consumer Health Forum Canberra



Bruce Levett
Tasmanian Executive Officer

Where to find us

The Tasmanian Health Consumer Organisation is now located in a shared office location at:
Level 1/89 Brisbane St, Hobart

Email: b.levett@chf.org.au