

Health Consumer Rights

EIGHT CONSUMER RIGHTS

In 1999 the Consumers' Health Forum (CHF) identified eight consumer rights in their publication *Guidelines for Consumer Representatives*. All consumer representatives should be familiar with these rights and refer to them during decision-making processes.

1. **The right to satisfaction of basic need** – food, clothing, shelter, health care and education.
2. **The right to safety** – protection against products, production processes and services, which are hazardous to health or life.
3. **The right to be informed** – given the facts needed to make an informed choice and be protected against dishonest or misleading advertising and labelling.
4. **The right to choose** – to select from a range of products and services, offered.
5. **The right to be heard** – to have consumer interests represented in the making and execution of government policy and in the development of products and services.
6. **The right to redress** – to receive a fair settlement of just claims, including compensation for misrepresentation, shoddy goods or unsatisfactory services.
7. **The right to consumer education** – to acquire knowledge and skills needed to make informed, confident choices about goods and services, while having an awareness of basic consumer rights and responsibilities.
8. **The right to a healthy environment** – to live and work in an environment which is non-threatening to the well-being of present and future generations.

(taken from 'Guidelines for Consumer Representatives', CHF, 1999)

CHF is the peak health consumer organisation in Australia. It is located in Canberra and recruits consumer representatives for national committees as well as negotiates with the Australian Government regarding health consumer issues. The Health Consumers' Council is a member of the Consumers' Health Forum.