



HEALTH CONSUMERS'  
COUNCIL

# 2021 *Health Consumer Excellence Awards*

Kindness • connection • community  
see the whole person  
*Djinang Kwop Wirrin*



Thursday 29 April 2021



THANK YOU TO OUR SPONSOR



Government of **Western Australia**  
Department of **Health**

#### ABOUT THE AWARDS:

Health Consumers' Council (WA) Inc. and the Western Australian Department of Health welcome you to the 2021 Health Consumer Excellence Awards.

These awards were created to honour the everyday heroes in health in WA, from the administrator to the clinician. We also recognise health consumers who go out of their way to make a difference to our health system.

# Contents

<b>JUDGES</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>HEALTH CONSUMER AWARD</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>COMPASSIONATE CARE AWARD</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER AWARD</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>CARE OPINION HEROES 2020-2021</b>	<b>26</b>

## **A MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**

This is the third year we have announced our Health Consumer Excellence Awards during Patient Experience Week. Patient Experience Week is an opportunity to celebrate the community advocates and healthcare staff who impact on the patient experience every day.

In 2020 like many things, our Excellence Awards were cancelled. We are so pleased to be able to gather again in 2021. Our theme for Patient Experience Week in 2021 is “Kindness, connection, community – see the whole person” or Djinang Kwop Wirrin in Noongar. We’re continuing this theme from 2019 because we believe it captures what people talk about time and time again when they share what makes a positive experience for them when accessing health services. As our Excellence Awards illustrate, it is often the little things that make a big impact in creating a more compassionate healthcare system.

Congratulations to all our 2021 nominees – you are the everyday heroes who play a vital role as ambassadors for a person-centred health system.

**Pip Brennan**

**Executive Director**

**Health Consumers’ Council**

# Judges

## Mallika Macleod

### MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE CHAIR

Mallika Macleod is the Director of Client Services at DADAA, with over 20 years of experience on non-profit boards at state and national level. Previous roles include: Arts Access Australia (as Board member and Chair), People with Disabilities WA (Treasurer), and DADAA (Board member). She has also served on Senses Foundation, Physical Disability Council Australia, the state Quadcentre Board, and as Deputy Chair of the Disability Services Commission. She is deeply concerned about the sustainability of a peak advocacy body that will fight for the rights of her fellow citizens as they wade through the health system in WA throughout their lives. She believes that human rights and contemporary practice must be part of the dialogue at all levels, and independent advocacy bodies are a key strategy in ensuring that health services are held to account.

## Tina Tuira-Waldon

### MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE MEMBER

Tina Tuira-Waldon is a current member on the Respiratory Executive Committee with the Department of Health, CaLD Council member on the South Metropolitan Primary Health Alliance, a member of the Peel and Rockingham Suicide Prevention group, and the former Deputy Chair of the Rockingham/Peel Group Consumer Advisory Committee. Her passion is in Youth Development and Community Education around culturally responsive mental health and wellbeing programs. She is an Alumni member of the Office of Multicultural Interests and collaborates with the William Langford Community Centre, Richmond Wellbeing and United in Diversity WA in training multicultural Suicide Prevention programs. Tina won the 2019 Consumer Excellence Award in the Health Consumer category.

## Christine Sindely

### MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE MEMBER

Christine Sindely is an enthusiastic, highly accomplished senior Indigenous Australian manager with extensive experience in public communications, community and corporate engagement, and relationship management, across a range of industry sectors. She currently owns and operates Waangara Marra Consulting, a 100% owned/operated advisory business providing effective and specialised Aboriginal Engagement, Workplace Diversity, effective and efficient operating advice and services to a range of clients across a range of industry sectors. She provides high-level Aboriginal Engagement outcomes to those companies and non-profits who are genuinely committed to making a positive difference in how they operate.

# Health Consumer Award

This category is for consumer, carer and community representatives demonstrating excellence in speaking up for the importance of a kind, patient-centred health care system. The award recognises community representatives who have an ongoing commitment to positive partnership with our health system to improve the patient experience.



*Nominees*

## Amber Bates

Amber Bates established and runs Tiny Sparks WA to support WA families with high-risk pregnancy, the neonatal unit and the challenges that lay beyond. She Chairs the Preterm Consumer Reference Group at Telethon Kids Institute, is the Deputy Chair of the Consumer Advisory Council with the Child and Adolescent Health Service (CAHS), and is a consumer representative on the Child and Family Centred Care Project that CAHS is undertaking. Amber has a strong interest in the fostering community and representing views that consider the most vulnerable in the community. In 2021 Amber will be working closely with the Lung Health Team at Telethon Kids Institute to run a James Lind Alliance Priority Setting Partnership to ensure consumer views drive research priorities. This will lead to best practice opportunities for patient-centred health care within WA and globally. Amber volunteers hours of her time to support families and she has been an active contributor in the space for the past 7 years.

*I wanted to nominate Amber because she has never been recognised for her significant contribution. She is passionate about making a difference in health and inspires me to advocate for my own health needs and those of my children.*

## Carolyn “Caz” Boyd

Living with Cystic Fibrosis and undergoing a lung transplant in 1994, Carolyn “Caz” Boyd has been an advocate for people with Cystic Fibrosis for 38 years. Her extensive volunteer roles include President of Cystic Fibrosis WA, Chair of the Sir Charles Gairdner Hospital (SCGH) Community Advisory Council, consumer representative on the EC SCGH and the medication safety committee. In these roles she has spoken up for all health consumers when the consumers’ voice has not been heard. In addition, her work with Cystic Fibrosis WA has seen a shift into a recognition that adults with CF are living longer and have needs just as children living with this disease do also, something she has advocated for years. While in the Emergency Department at SCGH, Caz recognised the need for change. As a regular at SCGH since 1988 she is well-aware of the system however during this admission, she noted that people who weren’t regular visitors had a very different understanding and experience. Caz spoke up at the CAC and through meetings with ED staff this led to a project developing a consumer video that streams in ED to explain the ED journey to patients in the waiting room.

*I see Caz devoting her time to ensuring that the next patient does not have to endure what she has. Along with holding down a full-time job she devotes hours and days to improving the patient experience not only for people living with CF for but all health consumers, all the while dealing with her own health issues.*



## Hayley Solich

Hayley Solich has demonstrated excellence through her level of commitment, ability to influence and articulate the carer and consumer perspectives to bring about change through her work at HelpingMinds, as the Co-Chair of the National Mental Health Consumer & Carer Forum (NMHCCF) and as a WA State appointed Carer Representative. Hayley has consistently applied herself as a representative, being well-prepared for interactions, armed with information, willing to share appropriate stories and help others to understand the different perspectives she represents. Her work has led to a more informed decision-making process, with some obvious wins for carers. One such win is the development of a Carer Peer Framework at HelpingMinds to guide the development of a peer workforce. She is passionate about supporting others, encouraging their participation in local, state and national mental health reform projects and programs. Online, she has also created interest in the Mental Health reform agenda by posting on the subject of advocacy, mental health reform and the changes required to address stigma and discrimination in social networks and on her website, [hayleysolich.com.au](http://hayleysolich.com.au). She believes in the importance of reflection on her contribution as a representative, seeking feedback and to integrate that feedback to constantly improve.

*I highly value the difference working with peers, accessing information and having intelligent conversations at the highest level in Australia can make.*

## Jane Pearce

When Jane Pearce learned Fiona Stanley Hospital was looking for consumers to join the newly-established Emergency Department's Consumer Advisory Group (EDCAG), she saw it as the perfect opportunity to contribute at a deeper level to the healthcare system. Kindness is in the DNA of hospital emergency departments, and Jane has learned this as a patient, as a family member, as a volunteer, and over the past four years as Chair of EDCAG. The EDCAG at Fiona Stanley Hospital is a partnership between consumers and emergency department senior staff. Originally intended to provide a platform for consumers to provide advice on the development of an Emergency Department service that is responsive to consumers, carers and the community, it has evolved into a close and productive collaboration based on trust and mutual understanding. Underpinning all its work is an acknowledgement by staff that kindness is the key to a patient-centred approach and enthusiasm on the part of consumers to find ways to encourage patient-centred care across the ED. As Chair, Jane works closely with consumers and staff members to initiate, plan and implement strategies directed at this goal. The 'Patients at Risk' project is a consumer-led initiative aimed at finding ways to improve the care of vulnerable patients in the Emergency Department at Fiona Stanley Hospital. As Chair of the EDCAG Jane has been responsible for developing and leading this major, long-term project to identify the needs of vulnerable groups and recommend practical steps to be taken across the Department to better address those needs. After information-gathering and data analysis, the group presented two key recommendations to the Department: to adopt a set of standards for the care of vulnerable patients, and to develop an education program to help staff fulfil the requirements of the standards.

*I have found myself in a space where consumer input is welcomed and valued, and consumer autonomy encouraged. And most importantly for me, it has opened up a wealth of possibilities to advocate for kindness and person-centred care across the health care system.*





## Judy Turner

Judy Turner is currently a meet and greet volunteer at Bethesda, a role she has held since 2019. Judy has served as a respected member of the Bethesda Consumer Partnership Committee where she takes a patient-centred approach to reviewing processes to support patients in their health care journey. Judy's passion for advocating for patient rights and the delivery of high-quality care has been demonstrated through her project work at the hospital and participation as a consumer representative on the Nursing Team Committee. Judy has been instrumental in both developing and piloting the Surgical Volunteer/Concierge project at Bethesda. Following consumer and staff feedback, an opportunity was identified to improve the pre-operative experience for consumers. Judy worked closely with surgical nursing staff, the volunteer coordinator and hospital admissions staff to develop a well-defined position description and training program for the proposed role. The purpose of this new function was to provide communication plus physical and emotional support to patients in the pre-operative phase of their journey.

*Judy's proactive and inclusive approach to identifying opportunities to enhance consumer engagement and positively impact the patient experience at Bethesda is to be commended. Her willingness to bring new ideas with the patient at the centre of the process demonstrates her commitment to enhancing patient outcomes with a consumer lens.*

## Louise Howe

After volunteering as Branch Manager of Grow WA (2005-2011), a consumer-driven community mental health organisation, Louise Howe accepted a consumer representative role on the Older Adult Mental Health Advisory Group, led by the Department of Health. A Health Consumers' Council Representative Training graduate, she represented a collective view of this cohort of consumers. In her role as Consumer Advisor at the Mental Health Commission (MHC) (2011 to present) she has ensured consumer perspectives are embedded in the policy and programs of the Commission. While this is a paid employee role, it is the only role at the MHC that is a designated lived experience role. Louise was instrumental in developing the Charter of Mental Health Care Principles attached to the Mental Health Act 2014. She was Co-Chair and Project Lead on the Steering Committee which developed the co-designed Working Together: Mental Health and Alcohol and Other Drug Engagement Framework and Toolkit. This state-wide policy aims to assist government, non-government, and the community to effectively engage and work together to achieve better outcomes for people whose lives are affected by mental health issues and/or alcohol and other drug use. The Framework has been recognised at a national level and is referenced by the National Mental Health Commission.

*I accepted the role as Consumer Advisor at the Mental Health Commission because I wanted to make a meaningful difference at strategic level. I could see there was much work to be done in this area and...it was an excellent opportunity to make an impact.*

## Margaret Doherty

Margaret Doherty is the convenor of Mental Health Matters 2 (MHM2), a volunteer action and advocacy group whose membership includes people who experience mental distress, alcohol and other drug use and may have involvement in the criminal justice system; their families, supporters, carers and friends, and individuals who work in the sector. Margaret has gone on a learning journey with MHM2 members, together discovering how to do systemic advocacy even before they understood the term. MHM2 has provided a safe space for many people to come forward and share their stories in a way that has translated to real change. Supporting individuals and families to speak out about their experiences under the MHM2 umbrella has provided important shelter, as many people found sharing experiences both stigmatising and distressing. The development of the Working Together Framework and Toolkit has been a game changer for engagement in WA's mental health services and is also underpinning much of the thinking of the Sustainable Health Review's (SHR) implementation. As an SHR Independent Oversight Committee member, Margaret maintains a clear and unwavering voice for the importance of the lived experience voice. She co-chaired the Steering Committee with Louise Howe which created the Working Together Mental Health and Alcohol and Other Drug Engagement Framework and Toolkit. Currently Margaret is on the Independent Oversight Committee of the Sustainable Health Review.

*Margaret has nurtured and developed a unique, values-based initiative that at all times seeks to undertake effective community action to improve the system. Anyone who has had any dealings with Margaret understands her commitment to having the hard conversations, and committing to partnership to reach positive outcomes for people.*



## Phoebe Kingston

Phoebe Kingston began as a local site consumer representative of a North Metropolitan Health Service Mental Health Consumer Advisory Group in 2014 and is now an executive level representative. She trained as a Peer Support Worker and was one of eight individuals to establish WA's first community-based peer support workforce. Phoebe has worked at the North Metropolitan Health Service for five years and has shown courage as a person of lived experience sharing her deeply personal stories of mental wellness/illness in a clinical workplace. As a peer worker Phoebe has on many occasions passionately supported service-users to self-advocate for their individualised personal healthcare needs and priorities. She graduated as a Lived Experience Educator at Curtin University and then became a sessional academic there. When she lectures, tutors, and assesses she speaks to person-centred care and positively individualised approaches beyond (and often in opposition to) conventional clinical interpretations of who consumers are, assumptions about what we want and what's best for us. Since 2015, Phoebe has been a leader in a long-term advocacy project to protect the independence and autonomy of Consumer Advisory Groups and safeguard the currency of consumer and carer experiences and advocacy.

*My frustration drives my passion to be part of the solution and commit to consumer representation and advocacy.*

## Rebecca Carbone

Rebecca Carbone exemplifies the strength and bravery required to tackle a journey of recovery. Having overcome a massive stroke following removal of a brain tumour, Rebecca understands the importance of holistic and individual care, and when faced with her future being in a nursing home she was determined to not give up on life. Rebecca was initially too embarrassed to speak to anyone other than her family, due to a speech impediment resulting from her stroke, but bravely stood up and gave a speech at her best friend's wedding and was met with a standing ovation. Rebecca has worked with Training in Sub Acute Care WA (TRACS WA) staff to facilitate workshops in goal setting. Through these workshops Rebecca continues to be surrounded by health professionals who want to learn from her. Feedback from Rebecca providing her lived experience to participants at TRACS WA workshops has been highly regarded as clinicians learn the values of each person and participants gain an understanding that what motivates each person is unique. Rebecca supports other stroke survivors, meeting and talking to them about their interests and supporting them to participate in rehabilitation. She has even gone as far as looking after a stroke survivors' beloved cat while they were in rehabilitation. Rebecca believes in "paying it forward" as she is forever grateful to those who cared for her and truly wants to give back to others to support them in their most vulnerable moments. Rebecca recently presenting a TEDx talk where she again received a standing ovation after speaking about her own experiences and how she has gone on to help so many other stroke survivors.

*Rebecca is an inspiration to others. She has dedicated her life to helping others and supporting them to see a positive future in their recovery and this I believe is the epitome of kindness – to suffer, pull yourself up with dignity and humility, and then give to others.*



## Vicki Barry

Vicki Barry cares for her husband who is living with Younger Onset Dementia (YOD), diagnosed before the age of 65. At the time of diagnosis, the rollout of the National Disability Insurance Scheme, changes to My Aged Care and home support, and the introduction of the Integrated Carer Support Service program made for a very complicated consumer and carer journey. She has given voice to the challenges faced by those living with YOD, and in her caring role she takes the opportunity to educate, raise awareness and provide feedback to services to ensure they better support people with YOD. Vicki has been involved with The Young Dementia Network WA since it was established in 2017, and provides peer support for people living with YOD, their care partners, and families. Vicki helps moderate a closed Facebook group and coordinates a monthly memory café and other social events. Vicki has also been part of the Better Living, Caring Together project, a co-housing and care community concept developed out of the collective need to find an affordable living option to assure the support and control to meet their changing needs as time progresses. It is based on the key principles of a pocket neighbourhood, the governance and legal structure of a cooperative, a compassionate community where there is a whole-of-community willingness to help and caring is everyone's responsibility, and deliberative co-design promoting enabling physical and social environments as well as sustainable development. Vicki has also been involved in the Getting Home Safely with Dementia project, led by a research team at Queensland University of Technology. She and her husband were consumer and carer representatives on an advisory group assembled nationally to inform the development of the supported decision-making guidelines for people living with dementia, family members and carers, a significant project undertaken by the research team at the Cognitive Decline Partnership Centre. In addition, she is a dementia advocate for Alzheimer's WA and a member of a consumer advisory group for the Older Persons Advocacy Network.

*It is time to reimagine a care system that supports a person based on individual needs from cradle to grave that does not discriminate on age.*

# Compassionate Care Award

This award is to acknowledge compassionate people working or volunteering in a health service providing support and/or direct patient care. We are looking for compassionate individuals working in any capacity – from cleaner to specialist and everything in between – in health services or organisation. We are also looking for compassionate teams of health care providers who demonstrate effective multi-disciplinary care.



*Nominees*



## Bernadette Cotter

### BEECHBORO FAMILY PRACTICE

Bernadette Cotter works in general practice in the Beechboro community, providing comprehensive care with a particular interest in women's health. Bernadette goes above and beyond to assist her patients, ensuring they never feel rushed or like just a number. Whether it be fitting a patient in for an emergency appointment or following up with a call outside of normal hours, Bernadette's approach to patient care is centred on kindness and compassion. Bernadette's calm and gentle manner helps her establish genuine connections with patients. She makes all patients feel like they matter, and that sometimes is all one needs.

*Bernadette becomes a confidante and a doctor you can trust. Such dedication deserves accolades.*

## Emma Ioppolo

### SIR CHARLES GAIRDNER HOSPITAL

Emma displays compassion as a Hospital Pharmacist by going above and beyond what is required. In her role as the Specialised Drug Supply Pharmacist (Medication Access Programs and Special Access Scheme) she combines quick-thinking, problem solving and dedication to the patient.

*As a carer, this has given me faith....I am glad to know that people like Emma are working to make sure everyone gets what they need... As a patient, I can rest easy knowing there are people like Emma who will go above and beyond.*

## Erin Butler

### WESTERN KIDS HEALTH

Erin Butler graduated with a Bachelor of Science (Physiotherapy) from Curtin University in 2005 and has been working in paediatrics ever since. She has experience in a wide range of paediatric presentations including developmental, disability and musculoskeletal presentations, having worked in paediatrics in the community, public health, not for profit, tertiary education and private sectors. Erin is a compassionate and caring individual who goes above and beyond in her patient care. She goes out of her way to assist her patients, even so far as providing extra equipment, dropping things off to the patient and consistently showing that her care is not limited to her work hours. She is exceptional at her work and the service she provides, and the way she cares not just for the patient but also their families says so much about who she is not just as a therapist but a person.

*When I met and began receiving services from Erin a huge weight was lifted from my shoulders. I was so relieved we had gotten it right. Erin has become so much a part of our journey and support network I don't know what we'd do without her. It is always a joy to have her in our home for therapy and we look forward to her visits.*

## George Eskander

### ROYAL PERTH HOSPITAL

In his role as Executive Medical Co-Director of the Surgical Division at Royal Perth Hospital, George Eskander shows great courtesy and compassion, giving consumers the time and respect that shows they are being listened to. When a consumer made a complaint, he reassured that they had done the right thing in pursuing the matter, and thoroughly studied the information relating to the patient. He took the time to quietly and compassionately explain in detail the hospital's perspective of the events which occurred. It was apparent that there was a misunderstanding of communication and he was thankful for this being brought to his attention. He praised the consumer for advocating within the hospital system and acted with compassion, respect, and sincerity in wanting to treat all people with dignity. These actions not only helped convince the consumer they were doing the right thing but encouraged them to continue carrying on following the path of fighting for patients' and carers' rights.

*Meeting such a wonderful, understanding, compassionate and likable person as Dr Eskander in such a position of authority, is surely very rare. Still being rather young he displays an admirable attitude of equality towards his fellow human beings, even when they bring forward complaints and accusations.*





## Jennifer Plint

### SOUTH WEST ALLIED THERAPIES

Jennifer Plint is a senior physiotherapist with the Department of Health. She has a kind and compassionate approach to what she does, taking the time to adapt to what her patients need and going above and beyond to help people live their best lives.

*Jenny has been our son's physiotherapist since moving to Bunbury 10 years ago. She has always guided us and kept in close contact through every surgery or hospital admission my son has been through at PCH. Jenny has been a strong advocate for him within the school environment and an amazing part of our therapy team through some very difficult periods of recovery, complex pain issues and illness. Jenny has helped make the transition to NDIS and currently, children's to adult services within the hospital so much more manageable, having her support and knowledge in this period has made the situation so much less stressful for our family, we appreciate her so much.*

## Joy Campbell

### BETHESDA PALLIATIVE CARE UNIT

Joy Campbell has been a valued volunteer within the Bethesda Palliative Care Unit (PCU) for over six years, displaying a caring disposition and dedication to assisting patients at the end of life. Joy's contribution to palliative care is renowned and is demonstrated by her commitment to providing high quality support to patients and carers in the terminal phases of life. Joy quietly sits with patients, providing emotional assistance where no family exist or where relatives are unable to attend. This often occurs outside her volunteering hours when Joy identifies there is a lack of family support. Joy's presence provides comfort to family members who are not able to be with loved ones at the end of life. Joy has also initiated and independently drives the lost property project on PCU, to reunite lost/left property of loved ones with their relatives. She gives herself generously to patients and loves the work she does. Joy encourages her friends to volunteer and often talks about the work at the PCU. Joy's colleagues describe her as kind, compassionate, conscientious, timely, reliable, positive, and encouraging.

*Joy has inspired all staff and colleagues she has worked with at Bethesda. Our PCU team have been moved by Joy's empathetic, gentle, attentive, and selfless nature.*

## Maudie Sketchley

### RICHMOND WELLBEING

Maudie Sketchley has been a Transition Worker with Richmond Wellbeing since August 2020 and has become an invaluable team member. She has a deep and solid understanding of trauma-informed practice and sees every single person as an individual, finding the best way to work with them. She is a bottomless cup of compassion for people, always managing to find a deeper level of understanding and connection with a diverse range of consumers in the most culturally sensitive and appropriate way. Maudie is an inspiration to her team and the entire organisation, with her infectious energy and friendly manner to all. She is a ray of sunshine in the office, always with a greeting and kind words for her colleagues. Maudie's hard-working attitude and commitment to helping others is infectious, making us all strive to excel in our work, either with consumers or a corporate setting. This nomination reflects the positive feedback received from consumers, who always speak very highly of Maudie. They have called her a credit to the organisation, with a compassionate and down-to-earth approach that helps clients move forward towards their goals.

*Maudie is down to earth and at the same time she's compassionate, she shows empathy and she's really easy to get along with. If you've got something you're trying to work on, she gives you positive feedback with the ways she does things. It's so easy to connect with her... We're able to have a laugh and a joke and even though she's providing a very professional support it doesn't feel like that, it feels very informal which makes it more comfortable.*

## Louisa Waters

### WA COUNTRY HEALTH SERVICES

When Louisa Waters heard from patients that they were unhappy with the Parkinson's treatment and support on offer, she decided to do something about it. She observed the lack of engagement, motivation, and therefore outcomes for the individual this caused, and resolved to provide another evidence-based alternative. Outside of her regular hours, Louisa obtained funding to implement Expiratory Muscle Strength Training (EMST). This is an inexpensive, cost-effective evidence-based solution that can be replicated across health service providers to provide Parkinson's patients with options and dignity. Louisa has driven the need to deliver the therapy system not only in a face-to-face format, by via group, home visit and Telehealth, to ensure equitable access to the program.

*Louisa's project will make a great impact for Parkinson's patients. She did not settle for the status quo, and championed her patients' feelings to deliver them viable service options. Louisa's readiness to fight to ensure the quality of life of her patients is courageous and laudable. Louisa has challenged clinicians to think about the impact when there are limited service options for consumers, and to do something about it.*



## Royal Perth Hospital Pre-Admission Clinic

### CLINIC O

Clinic Manager Katherine and the team at RPH's Pre-Admission Clinic (Clinic O) were instrumental in coordinating support for a consumer who experiences extreme anxiety and was working with an advocate to achieve the best possible outcome for a hospital procedure. Katherine ensured that the consumer was able to come into the clinic before it opened, and flagged with the whole Pre-Admission team that the consumer needed to be seen as a priority so the consumer could leave the clinic before it got too busy. On the day each team member (anaesthesiologist, nurse, physiotherapist and the pharmacist) ensured that things ran smoothly and enabled the consumer to stay within one consulting room so the consumer did not have to move between the various consulting rooms and the waiting room. The whole team gave the consumer the time to fully discuss their concerns and was never made to feel that they had to rush through the appointment.

*As advocates...what is always so wonderful for us to see is a true trauma-informed response like Clinic O provided for this consumer. We feel it is important to draw attention to this kind of response by a health service, and name it as the compassionate care we would always like to see in our health services.*

## Ru-Wen Teh

### ROYAL PERTH HOSPITAL

As a medical oncologist, Dr Ru-Wen Teh goes out of her way to make sure patients are cared for during their cancer journey. She always takes the time to ensure patients are well taken care of, printing out notes for them to later refer back to and answering questions about symptoms and treatment. Her care is apparent in everything she does, and she recognises when patients struggle to ask for help. When it comes to cancer care it is important for patients to trust their doctors. Dr Teh is compassionate and empathetic and helps patients to feel confident and supported. In one example, Dr Teh helped a patient who had been waiting over 12 weeks for a prescription, when it was mentioned during a phone appointment with Dr Teh, she followed up and had the script to the patient just three days later.

*Dr Teh presented a type of doctor I had never experienced before. It was obvious that she actually cared. She impacted my journey by showing me that I had value. That some-one actually cared about me and what happened to me. This reached into my core and allowed me to see that I can have value that my health care actually matters as a patient.*

## Satyam Brown

### BETHESDA METROPOLITAN PALLIATIVE CARE CONSULTANCY SERVICE

Satyam Brown is a Senior Social Worker with Bethesda's Metropolitan Palliative Care Consultancy Service (MPaCCS) covering the south metropolitan region. He not only provides compassionate care to people facing the end of life, he also supports their families and loved ones to manage this challenging experience. Along with direct services to clients, Satyam provides skill building and compassion-centred education to build the capacity of staff. He touches the lives of people at a difficult time with skill, patience and generosity of spirit, meeting people where they are, and walking beside them to the very end of their journeys. Satyam brings his lifetime of meditation practice, his professional skill set, pragmatism, and practicality, and most of all his ability to comfort and offer safety and stability to people from all walks of life, in a kind, considerate, mindful, nonjudgmental approach that is rare in healthcare.

*As a cancer researcher, I am inspired by the level of engagement Satyam has with the people he serves, and his deep commitment to provide this service regardless of the personal costs. He inspires me to face my own mortality and that of my clients, and to make a good death part of a good life. I've been educated, uplifted, sometimes challenged, and his work has helped me understand the deep importance of compassion in healthcare.*

## Sumathi Rajkumar and Jordan Vermeulen

### AKG MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

The Armadale Kalamunda Group (AKG) Mental Health Services has partnered with Matchworks to provide an Individual Placement and Support (IPS) service for mental health consumers to achieve their vocational goals whilst navigating the barriers to success stemming from their mental health disorder. Matchworks is one of Australia's biggest employment services which provides assistance to job seekers and incentives for employers helping to forge lasting employment and stronger workplaces. The partnership between AKG Mental Health Services and Matchworks creates a valuable service for those affected by mental health disorder in the Armadale area. Re-employment is one of the most effective ways of improving the mental health of consumers who are unemployed. The IPS partnership integrates employment and vocational services with clinical mental health and non-vocational support, in addition to focusing on the individual needs of people with mental illness who are seeking to enter, or remain in, education or employment. The IPS partnership has become an integral part of clinical review meetings, medical reviews and through AKG's monthly business meetings.

*For participants who have struggled finding employment due to their mental health or have struggled managing their mental health due to unemployment, participating in the program and gaining the support and assistance to seek and maintain employment can result in a significant reduction in the presentation of a mental health crisis in participants.*



## Suzanne Wallace & Karen Crombie

### WA COUNTRY HEALTH SERVICE – PAIN PAIN GO AWAY PROJECT

Suzanne Wallace and Karen Crombie have worked tirelessly to ensure that child and adolescent patients in the Emergency Department receive compassionate care during medical procedures. Working with consumers in the ED, they have observed the impact of the complex experience of pain, including sensory, cognitive, behavioural and psychological reactions. Recognising the benefits of health professional using non-pharmacological distraction techniques to manage and attenuate anxiety related to pain and fear, Suzanne and Karen developed and are implementing the Pain Pain Go Away project. Using immersive virtual reality, they aim to provide a proven method of distraction during necessary medical intervention to improve patient outcomes and experience. Thinking outside of the box can be incredibly difficult in stressful environments, but by combining innovation and technology in a positive manner, Suzanne and Karen have managed to deliver a project to ensure excellent care and improve the consumer experience, encouraging others to do the same.

*Suzanne and Karen have raised the bar regarding delivery of non-pharmacological techniques to reduce pain associated with medical interventions.*

# Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Award

This award is to acknowledge outstanding service to Aboriginal/Torres Strait Islander health consumers. The candidates can be an Aboriginal/Torres Strait Islander person – either a health professional, consumer, carer or volunteer – or an organisation creating real change for Aboriginal people.



*Nominees*



## Danika Tager

### WA COUNTRY HEALTH SERVICES – AUGMENTED REALITY PROGRAM

Danika Tager has successfully received funding and is developing an augmented reality program to deliver video and other culturally appropriate forms of communication to Aboriginal people at key points on their patient journey in the Northam Hospital. Danika's project will enable Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander consumers to use their smartphones or other devices to access a series of clearly identifiable symbols placed around the hospital setting to cue culturally appropriate content relevant to key stages of the patient journey. Each symbol will link to a unique piece of audio-visual content containing important patient information. For example, a patient might point their phone at a 'kaya' symbol at reception and bring up a welcome to country video on their phone, then access an interactive hospital map via another symbol and receive a video of an Aboriginal staff member explaining critical discharge information via a symbol printed on their discharge paperwork. Danika has assembled a Project Team of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff, and is in consultation with the Aboriginal community of the Northam region to develop these triggers and tools. The level of community consultation has put the power to influence the program squarely with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander consumers, guaranteeing a product that is accepted by and making great impact for them.

*Danika's project is focused on enhancing cultural competence of hospital staff to deliver care in a culturally safe and appropriate manner. The resulting Augmented Reality program will not only enable equitable access to healthcare and be duplicable across other health sites, but will encourage better health outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander consumers.*

## Natasha Laden

### WA COUNTRY HEALTH SERVICE – BETWEEN 2 HOMES PROGRAM

Natasha Laden recognised the impact on Aboriginal people of being far from home can have and responded. Whilst juggling her regular role, she developed and delivered a successful WACHS Innovation Project Pitch, securing the funds required to implement the Between 2 Homes program. Natasha's Between 2 Homes program directly responds to feedback of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander consumers. The program aims to provide culturally appropriate, socially supported outings and activities to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders accommodated in the metropolitan for medical treatment. Natasha's project works to improve social and emotional wellbeing for the period that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander consumers are isolated from family and Country. Providing culturally appropriate outings, transport and face to face support, the Between 2 Homes program launched on March 17, 2021.

*Most importantly, Natasha's project will create a feeling of belonging and connection for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander consumers, enabling them to focus on their medical treatment whilst residing far from home, enabling better health outcomes.*

## Nola Naylor

### SOUTH METROPOLITAN HEALTH SERVICES

Nola Naylor is the Director Aboriginal Health Strategy, South Metropolitan Health Service (SMHS) and in that role has developed the Aboriginal Health Champions Network Program. This identifies Champions from the staff who undergo a half day Cultural Learning opportunity to explore additional understanding and experiences. Champions are awarded a badge to identify them in the workplace for both other staff but most importantly patients and community. The program has increased the awareness of Aboriginal ways of working, increased knowledge and value-added skill. Nola has also partnered with Aboriginal Health Strategy Directors state-wide and staff from the Training Centre in subacute care (TRACS WA) to prepare an introductory module for health clinicians in Aboriginal Person-Centred Care. Nola is committed to a community development model of care. She has worked tirelessly for Aboriginal people to ensure services are person-centred and culturally appropriate. The teams she is part of have built alliances with health clinicians, support workers, and policy makers not only from WA secondary and tertiary hospitals but including non-government and not-for-profit organisations. She considers everyone unique and deserving of the best quality of life possible - her compassion is for all.

*Nola is a kind, gentle, passionate, courageous, tireless leader who is a true team player. Her dedication to improving the health and wellbeing of Aboriginal people and bridging the gap in health and access is especially her passion.*





## South Metropolitan Health Service

### WELCOME TO COUNTRY VIDEO

South Metropolitan Health Service has developed programs such as the Aboriginal Health Champions network, Aboriginal Workforce and Employment program, the establishment of the Moombaki Aboriginal Employee Network and the Patient Centred Cultural Care Guidelines to name a few. All aim to increase the cultural awareness of the organisation with the ultimate goal of improved health outcomes for all Aboriginal patients. The Welcome to Country (WTC) video was created as part of the Lighthouse project, a project that aims to improve the care and experience for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with heart disease. The WTC video was developed to provide a welcome to Aboriginal patients visiting from the regions and outside of Noongar Country and can be used at all Fiona Stanley Fremantle Hospital Group services when an Aboriginal patient is admitted.

*SMHS has contributed to real change through the regular and ongoing engagement and collaboration with Aboriginal community members and staff to support the provision of better quality and more effective care for Aboriginal people and enhance the cultural competency of the organisation.*

# Care Opinion Heroes 2020-2021

For this award category, Health Consumers' Council selects stories from the Care Opinion platform that highlight both best compassionate care as well as best practice responses to Care Opinion.

In March 2020 the Australian Patient Opinion platform came into line with its founders in the United Kingdom and joined the hospital and social care services into the one platform, Care Opinion. The Team at Care Opinion in Queensland (an independent non-profit organisation) implemented the Care Opinion Heroes in March 2021.

The Minister for Health has required all WA public health services to become members of what is now called Care Opinion since 2017. However, a number of health services had joined the platform before then. This means that some health services – in particular the WA Country Health Service (WACHS) – have a considerably higher number of stories than others.

While WACHS won the inaugural Patient Opinion Award in 2019, we wanted to acknowledge and highlight the work that all Health Service Providers are doing. This year we have reviewed stories from all Health Service Providers and will highlight what our panel considers to be the best and in some cases, highly commended, Care Opinion Hero stories or services within that Service.

Brené Brown has called stories “data with soul” and as an advocacy agency we recognise the importance of even one story to create positive change. We also acknowledge that the emphasis we put on the chosen stories of care can seem very different to the priorities of the health system. We know we are seeing just a small slice across the large and complex public health services we have in our wonderful state. How many stories is something that can be positively influenced by the health services themselves. While there may be great inequities between the numbers of stories compared to how many health care episodes occur, the remedy for this lies within health service hands. We look forward to seeing this becoming an ever more complex and arduous Award to judge in future years.

# Patient Experience Week

## *What is Patient Experience Week?*

Patient Experience Week is an initiative of the Beryl Institute to celebrate healthcare staff impacting patient experience everyday. Inspired by members of the Institute community, Patient Experience Week provides a focused time for organisations to celebrate accomplishments, re-energise efforts and honour the people who impact patient experience everyday. From nurses and physicians, to support staff and executive professionals, to patients, families and communities served, the Institute hopes to bring together healthcare organisations across the globe to observe Patient Experience Week. It is usually held in the last week in April.

## *Why does the Health Consumers Council run Patient Experience Week Events?*

The Health Consumers' Council is passionate about the partnership between health consumers and service providers in shaping a kinder, more compassionate, person-centred health system. The CEO of the Beryl Institute, Jason Wolf, attended our 2017 Patient Experience Week Event all the way from the US as our event was the only one in the world that was convened by consumers rather than health service providers.

### **PATIENT EXPERIENCE WEEK POSTCARDS**

Health Consumers' Council has created Patient Experience Week postcards to enable consumers, carers and family members to acknowledge staff who have had a positive impact on their experience. Please look for them tonight, and take one with you to give to health services where you've had a positive experience.



Unit 6 Wellington Fair

40 Lord Street, EAST PERTH WA 6004

GPO Box C134, PERTH WA 6839

**Phone:** (08) 9221 3422

**Country freecall:** 1800 620 780

**Email:** [info@hconc.org.au](mailto:info@hconc.org.au)

[www.hconc.org.au](http://www.hconc.org.au)



HEALTH CONSUMERS'  
COUNCIL

