

CONTINUITY OF CARE COLLABORATION (CCC)

Patient safety and continuity of care is extremely important, particularly for those patients who have chronic and complex diseases or conditions, vulnerable populations, the elderly and immunocompromised. There are mounting concerns that Australians are not maintaining their regular doctor visits for existing chronic conditions and/or putting off seeing their doctor to get a test, investigation, or immunisation due to fears of contracting COVID-19 or burdening the health system.

In March 2020, healthcare participation fell sharply as patients followed isolation advice which was the right thing to do. As a result, the pathology sector saw a 40% drop in testing – equivalent to over 60,000 Australians per day not getting tests vital to manage their healthcare. This became a 'surrogate indicator' of potential wide spread implications of not engaging in regular health checks and how this could put Australians' long-term health at risk.

Not seeking help when it is really required may place your health, and even your life, at risk.

The CCC is a unique and first of its kind communication collaboration of Peak Bodies, Industry and Healthcare Organisations coming together to stress the importance for people to continue with monitoring their health status and conditions to ensure optimal long term health outcomes are achieved. The CCC represents the broad healthcare ecosystem and through the committed organisations can reach in excess of 50,000 people.

POSITIONING STATEMENT

The CCC is advocating for people to continue with their health management during the COVID-19 pandemic and preparing for the future. The aim is to communicate consistently the importance of:

KEY HIGH LEVEL MESSAGES

- Urging people to keep a close watch on their ongoing health care and maintenance, and to not allow the ongoing COVID-19 crisis to prevent this crucial healthcare activity.
- We all have a responsibility to keep people safe and healthy during the COVID-19 pandemic and beyond
- Continuity of care consists of the following areas:

PREVENTION



CHRONIC DISEASE MANAGEMENT



VACCINATION



CANCER SCREENING



ADHERENCE TO MEDICINES



ACUTE CARE



PATHOLOGY TESTING



MENTAL HEALTH



CLINICAL TRIALS



X-RAYS AND SCANS



DENTISTRY/ORAL HEALTH



CALL FOR ACTION

- Federal and State Government Engagement on Continuity of Care
- Business Partners Engagement to increase reach of Continuity of Care
- Media Engagement (TV, Radio & Print) and Social Media via each individual organisation communicating consistent messages to inform consumers
- Frequent and timely data sets are required to track and monitor the situation

KEY MESSAGES

- Patient (and carer) safety is paramount and we support the various strategies to help protect patients' access to medical services they need. This includes; Telehealth; E-prescribing; Home Delivery of Medicines; Health Clinics Infection Control Measures; Separate Pathology Collection Centres and Personal Protective Equipment for Healthcare Professionals.
- Australians' long term health status could be severely impacted if people don't maintain regular doctors visits, tests, investigations and immunisations – we need to act now
- A healthy Australia will ensure a stronger economic recovery on the 'road out' – we don't want the healthcare system to be inundated post COVID-19
- What health checks did you miss? – don't leave it too late - #dontwaitmate

YOUR COMMITMENT

By committing your organisation to the CCC, you are agreeing to the following:

- a) During your normal engagement with Federal/ State Governments, Business Partners and Media please continue to seed the collaboration's messages around continuity of care
- b) Amplifying the CCC consumer messages through your organisation's main media and social media channels to ensure we have one collective voice
- c) Contribute patient stories to highlight opportunities and issues for maintaining healthcare
- d) Be part of the ongoing community to develop, evolve and execute key messages
- e) Nominate a representative from your company to attend meetings as required

DURATION

The anticipated duration of the collaboration is over the next 3-6 months, with a view to review, depending on how the pandemic evolves. We will use the measures of success to determine overall longevity.

PROCESS

Pathology Awareness Australia (PAA) will take the lead in the facilitation of communication materials and will provide organisations the opportunity to provide feedback to ensure high quality materials.

FINANCIAL COMMITMENT

The concept of CCC is to utilise our existing internal resources and rely on in-kind contributions. At this stage, we expect there is no additional costs to organisations to be part of the collaboration.

OPEN TO EXPANSION

The CCC is open to expanding to other organisations beyond the founding members as we want to be inclusive and diverse in our approach. Please submit your nomination to PAA.

MEASURES OF SUCCESS

1. Consumers feel safe, equipped and confident to access usual care during the pandemic
2. Federal and State Governments engage and advocate for the continuity of care
3. Increase in testing, clinic visits, immunisations – back to at least baseline seen prior to COVID-19
4. Media Coverage / Social Media Posts with correlation of increasing access of medical services

RESULTS SO FAR

- The CCC has generated a media reach of more than 173 million and 1.4 million via social media
- The CCC has held 3 webinars so far, reaching more than 500 people directly, with a further 4 scheduled
- In mid-June 2020, pathology testing rates had stabilised to similar levels as seen before COVID-19 in most states and territories
- Visits to GP's have returned to normal through the combination use of Telehealth and face to face visits

LIST OF PARTICIPATING ORGANISATION

1. Pathology Awareness Australia
2. Australian Diabetes Society
3. Diabetes Australia
4. Royal Australian College of General Practitioners
5. National Rural Health Alliance
6. Australian Primary Health Care Nurses Association
7. Consumers Health Forum
8. Cancer Council
9. Heart Foundation
10. National Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation
11. Allied Health Professions Australia
12. Medicines Australia
13. Australian College of Rural and Remote Medicine
14. Prostate Cancer Foundation Australia
15. Patient Voice Initiative
16. Australian Patients Association
17. Jean Hailes Foundation
18. Australian Diabetes Educators Association
19. Australian Cardiovascular Alliance
20. Australian Cervical Cancer Foundation
21. Royal College of Pathologists of Australasia
22. The Pharmacy Guild of Australia
23. Pharmaceutical Society of Australia
24. Medical Technology Association of Australia
25. Asthma Australia
26. Pathology Technology Australia
27. Living Positive Victoria
28. Royal Australia and New Zealand College of Psychiatrists
29. Australian Dental Association
30. Australian Clinical Trials Alliance
31. Epilepsy Action Australia
32. AusEE
33. Immune Deficiencies Foundation Australia
34. Australian Digital Health Agency
35. Carers Australia
36. Mental Health Australia
37. Australian Diagnostic Imaging Association
38. Australian Dental Association