



ICHOM Newsletter Interview

Dr Deborah Cole, Chair, Australian Centre for Value Based Healthcare

As Immediate Past Chair of the Australian Healthcare & Hospital Association (AHHA), I pioneered the introduction of value-based health care (VBHC) to reform the Australian health system. This was also my key focus in my role as Chief Executive Officer of Dental Health Services Victoria for nine years, where I implemented VBHC to improve the community's access to quality and equitable oral health. I am the Chair of the Australian Centre for Value-Based Health Care advisory group, a Non-Executive Director of AHHA, HESTA and Frontier Advisors .

Previously I have held CEO positions at Calvary Health Care and Yarra City Council as well as senior executive positions at Mercy Health and St Vincent's Health.

1. Tell us about your current role and responsibilities/key focus?

I am currently Chair of the Australian Centre for Value Based Health Care. It was established by the [Australian Healthcare and Hospitals Association](#) in 2019. It came about after having had many conversations with world experts about the lack of a forum for bringing together people who are actually implementing VBHC.

Our Vision is for a healthy Australia, supported by the best possible health care system.

We have an advisory Board of like-minded people that support the Centre to achieve the vision.

We focus on delivering value - health outcomes that matter to patients relative to the resources or costs required.

In collaboration with our supporters and partners, the Centre aims to:

- Increase knowledge and understanding of VBHC
- Build skills to successfully implement VBHC
- Influence public policy to enable the transition to VBHC, focused on outcomes and patient-centred models of care and supported by innovative funding models
- Curate and share best practice examples, theory and research on VBHC
- Recognised as the Australian thought leadership organisation for VBHC

We have an active publication and webinar program, aimed at sharing research, case studies, and perspectives on VBHC, both from international and Australian colleagues.

We have just commenced the Health Care Transformation Leadership Program and this is a collaboration program between the Australian Centre for Value-Based Healthcare, The Australian National University and the Value Institute for Health & Care at the University of Texas in Austin. This is the first time an education program focused on value-based health care has been offered in Australia.

2. What is your background in patient reported outcomes measurement/value based healthcare?

I have been part of the group developing the oral health standard set. This project has taken a number of years and has just been published in a peer reviewed international journal and is about to be published on the ICHOM website.

In addition, at Dental Health Services Victoria we started using the standard set to review implementation issues.

3. What is the biggest lesson you have learnt regarding your experience to date with patient reported outcomes measurement and value based healthcare?

The biggest lesson I have learnt is we need simple PROMs and not many. Most standard sets are often based on clinical registry data and the PROMs are exhaustive (and exhausting to complete). While the complex large number of PROMs can have a time and place, it's not much use in a clinical setting where shared decision making is being attempted. We need to simplify the PROMs and reduce to the bare minimum the number we need to assess that a health outcome has improved or not. That is easier said than done.

4. What is the most important piece of advice you would offer a peer considering patient reported outcomes measurement and value based healthcare implementation?

I believe you always need a framework so that when you are dealing with one component, you don't ignore the interdependent other components.....and here is one prepared earlier see Figure 2, page 5 https://ahha.asn.au/sites/default/files/docs/policy-issue/perspectives_brief_no.7_dhsv_journey_to_value_based_health_care_3.pdf

5. What do you think are the biggest obstacles to patient reported outcomes measurement and value based healthcare?

The major obstacles are

1. Not having a small number of simple PROMs, not having them integrated into the Patient Information System, not having almost immediate reporting, and not using them in a shared decision making process
2. Continuing to deliver care that do not improve health outcomes
3. Health care workers not willing to change their work practices and share the workload with other people.

6. Where do you see the biggest opportunity for value based healthcare to flourish?

Engaging patients and clinicians to design the future together. Its hard but so worthwhile when it works.

7. What advice would you offer on how to approach patient reported outcomes measurement and where to get started?

Best advice I ever got was – just start! Something is better than nothing. If it doesn't work then try something different.

8. What are the top 3 case studies and real world examples of patient reported outcomes measurement and value based healthcare implementation that would you recommend for further investigation?


The Australian Centre for Value Based Health Care has collected different case studies or run webinars that show some of the work being done in Australia. This can be found on <https://valuebasedcareaustralia.com.au/>

One good example is in relation to cancer care
https://ahha.asn.au/sites/default/files/docs/policy-issue/perspectives_brief_no_5_toward_value_based_care_outcome_measures_2.pdf

Another international example on the website is
https://valuebasedcareaustralia.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/Implementing-Value-Based-Healthcare-In-Europe_web-4.pdf

9. What further reading would you recommend to assist our stakeholders in their patient reported and value based healthcare journey?

The documents that I reference are

- Porter & Lee, "The Strategy that will fix health Care", *Harvard Business Review* 91, No 10 (October 2013)
- Teisberg, Elizabeth, Scott Wallace, and Sarah O'Hara. "[Defining and Implementing Value-Based Health Care: A Strategic Framework](#)"  *Academic Medicine* 95, no. 5 (2020). June 2019
- I also like reading about the Martini Klinik, Germany and Oak Street Health, Ohio, USA. Such great exemplars.