19 March 2020

Dear Minister

RE: Health Consumers Alliance Closure

The Public Health Association of Australia (PHAA) is recognised as the principal non-government organisation for public health in Australia working to promote the health and well-being of all Australians. It is the pre-eminent voice for the public’s health in Australia, and seeks to drive better health outcomes through increased knowledge, better access and equity, evidence informed policy and effective population-based practice in public health.

We are writing with concern regarding the closure of Health Consumers Alliance of SA Inc. Annual government funding of $500,000 was ceased in the 2018 budget. While the organisation was able to continue with limited revenue from training and fee-for-service projects along with cutting back staff, we understand that this is no longer sustainable and they are scheduled to close on 30 June.

PHAA are particularly concerned that SA will now be the only state or territory without a government funded, independent health consumer body. While we appreciate that an element of consumer engagement is being build into the Local Health Networks, these will sit within the Government framework. They will not be impartial, external and independent. PHAA reiterates that we believe the decision to defund HCASA is a significant and disappointing oversight.

Yours sincerely

Terry Slevin
Chief Executive Officer
Public Health Association of Australia

Kate Kameniar
PHAA Branch President
South Australia