

The Australian Healthcare and Hospital Association (AHHA) acknowledges the incredible contribution of consumers to healthcare, in the Cassandra Bennett Memorial Lecture given today at the Value-Based Health Care Congress 2023, in Brisbane.

The Lecture, delivered by palliative care physician, Associate Professor Melanie Lovell, has been established in memory of Cassandra Bennett (1980-2023), a valued member of the AHHA community until her death in May this year.

Cassandra held formal roles as the independent member on the AHHA Audit, Finance and Risk Committee and as a consumer representative on the Australian Centre for Value-Based Health Care Advisory Group.

‘Her dedication and willingness to give up her time, despite the health challenges she was facing, is something that AHHA will be forever grateful for,’ said AHHA Board Member Yasmin King.

Cassandra was a strong advocate for the need for health system leaders to ground their conversations around the realities experienced by people interacting with the health system and what matters most to them during their care.

‘The role of consumer advocate has never been more important, particularly as our system seeks to shift to person-centred, outcome-focused value-based health care,’ said Ms King.

‘As system leaders, we have the opportunity to reorient the way we approach the design and delivery of healthcare, but this will require building trust and transparent partnerships with the people who use our health system.

‘Cass’s legacy is one of devoted mother, loving wife, daughter, sister and friend. Her contributions as a community leader, activist and volunteer have left an ongoing legacy within the health system, demonstrating the profound value of consumer engagement in informing healthcare decision-making and system design to improve outcomes for all.’

To find out more about the life of Cassandra Bennett you can read her [obituary](#) in the August 2023 edition of AHHA publication The Health Advocate.

The online version of this media release can be found on the [AHHA website](#). **The Australian Healthcare and Hospitals Association (AHHA) is the independent peak membership body and advocate for the Australian healthcare system and a national voice for universally accessible, high-quality healthcare in Australia.**

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