



15TH NATIONAL
RURAL HEALTH
CONFERENCE
Better together!

24-27 MARCH 2019
Hotel Grand Chancellor
Hobart, Tasmania



NATIONAL RURAL
HEALTH
ALLIANCE LTD

MEDIA RELEASE

1 March 2019

Ignore consumers at you peril

One of Australia's leading health consumer advocates has called for greater engagement with patients and health consumers in developing individual and systemic health programs.

Anne Cahill Lambert says patients and health consumers are the Australian health system's greatest asset and her advice is simple.

"Ignore them at your peril – it won't be a good system unless you work with them rather than choosing to do things to them and for them," Ms Cahill Lambert said.

Ms Cahill Lambert is a Keynote Speaker at the 15th National Rural Health Conference in Hobart, 24-27 March 2019 (www.ruralhealth.org.au/15nrhc). The theme of the Conference is 'Better together' and she will be presenting in a plenary session looking at community perspectives of the determinants of health in rural and remote Australia.

A well-known social commentator, Ms Cahill Lambert believes that consumers want to understand and be involved in their own healthcare and work with their clinician and the health system on their own treatment and healing. They want to be equal partners in the processes of healthcare.

"Consumers need infrastructure for health just as in other areas of life, and access to health facilities should be seen as a right of everyone. But if what they need is missing they will use every means at their disposal, such as the internet, to build it for themselves.

"So if governments work with consumers, the best and cheapest outcomes can be achieved.

"People often go to Dr Google for information in simple English which allows them to understand complex issues. But this should be the responsibility of the health system and its practitioners. This is particularly challenging in rural, regional and remote Australia where there are fewer clinicians and greater problems with other means of communication like on-line information and social media.

Ms Cahill Lambert says the partnership needs to go beyond the clinician-patient relationship.

"All the important processes in health care are more effective if service managers and health professionals work Better together!," she says.

Other keynote speakers in this session include the Past-President of the Public Health Association of Australia and the Climate and Health Alliance, Dr Peter Sainsbury who will talk about climate change and the health of rural Australia; together with the co-founders of OrangeSky, Lucas Patchett and Nicholas Marchesi who will discuss their aim to positively connect communities in rural Australia.

People interested in attending the 15th National Rural Health Conference can find more information and the full conference program on the Conference website at www.ruralhealth.org.au/15nrhc.

Media Inquiries: Allan Yates Director Communications and Media Liaison 0421 150 229

Principal Sponsor



Royal Flying Doctor Service

ruralhealth.org.au/15nrhc



15TH NATIONAL
RURAL HEALTH
CONFERENCE
Better together!

24-27 MARCH 2019

Hotel Grand Chancellor
Hobart, Tasmania



NATIONAL RURAL
HEALTH
ALLIANCE LTD

Anne Cahill Lambert



Principal Sponsor



Royal Flying Doctor Service

ruralhealth.org.au/15nrhc