

Impact Of A Consumer Panel To Inform Health Technology Assessments And Policy Development: The Singapore Experience

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Introduction

A Consumer Panel was formed by the Agency for Care Effectiveness (ACE) in 2022 to encourage meaningful patient involvement in an effort to drive process development, capacity building, and ensure patients have the same opportunities as other stakeholders to effect policy changes. This poster describes the Panel's role and impact in co-developing patient involvement and education initiatives in Singapore during their first term.

Methods

- The compositions and terms of reference of patient and citizen groups in overseas HTA or government agencies were reviewed to identify key aspects which could be applicable to Singapore's context.
- 20 individuals with senior appointments from local patient organizations representing diverse health conditions were shortlisted, before 15, including two Co-Chairs, were appointed from April 2022 to March 2024. Their terms of reference was endorsed by the Ministry of Health (MOH) Director-General of Health and published on the ACE website to promote transparency and accountability.
- The Panel's contributions and impact on ACE's work and healthcare decision-making were documented throughout their two-year term.
- A qualitative survey was also conducted from February to March 2024 to seek members' views on their role within the Panel, their level of engagement with ACE, and ways to improve collaborations and encourage best practices.

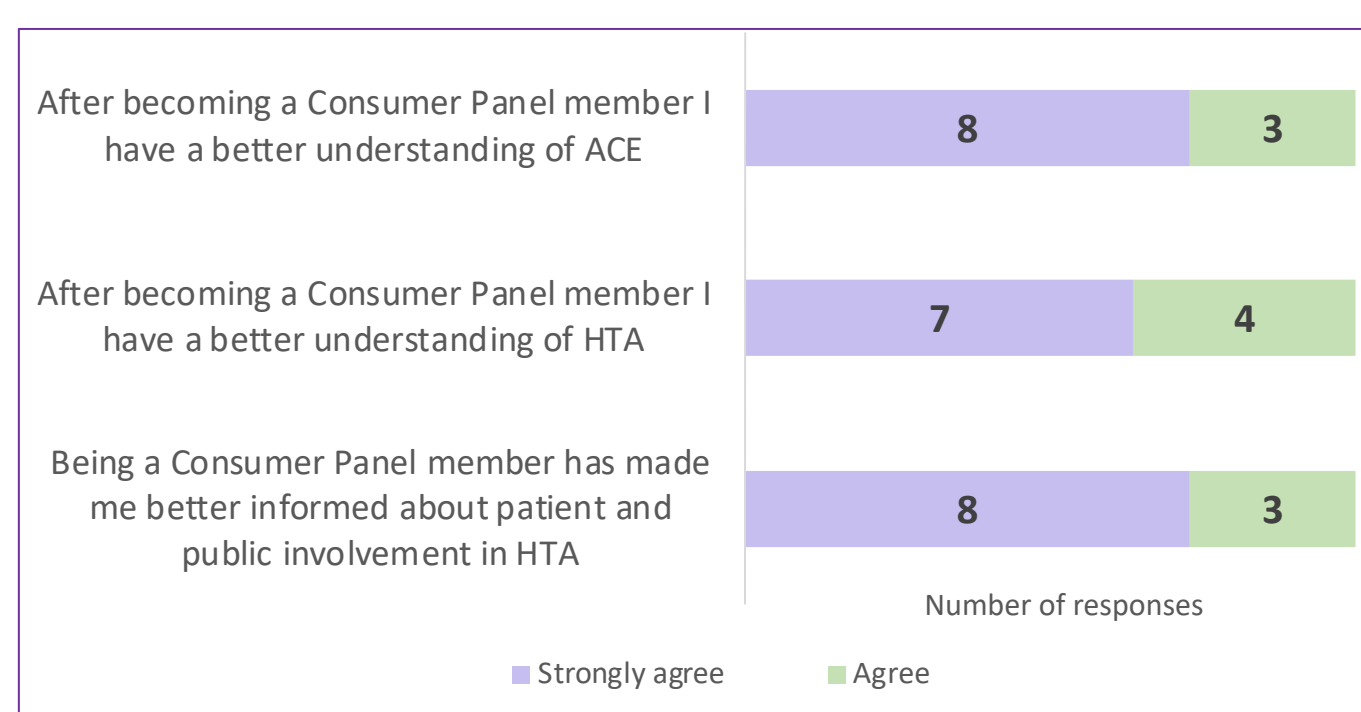
Results

- During their term, the Panel actively participated in four hybrid meetings, co-developed educational resources with ACE, and regularly provided input on patient involvement initiatives.
- Leveraging their extensive lived experiences engaging with Singapore's healthcare system, they were instrumental in co-developing processes to ensure meaningful patient involvement in HTA and policy development. Members also played an integral role in championing ACE's work, providing advice on priority setting, and fostering collaborations between ACE and patient organizations (Fig. 1).
- 11 out of 15 members (73.3%) completed the survey at the end of the first term. All respondents agreed or strongly agreed that being a Panel member improved their understanding of ACE, HTA, and the importance of patient and public involvement in healthcare decision-making (Fig. 2).
- They concurred that ACE's patient involvement initiatives met their expectations and enhanced the public's understanding of HTA and ACE's work.
- Members also appreciated the wide range of patient involvement opportunities discussed during meetings and were confident that ACE considered their advice when designing processes and policies.

Contributions made by the ACE Consumer Panel

- Co-developed ACE's *Process and Methods Guide for Patient Involvement*¹, supporting factsheets and patient glossary²
- Participated as panelists at a targeted briefing session on new patient involvement processes and contributed testimonials for ACE's social media posts and newsletters to promote greater public understanding of the importance of patient involvement in HTA
- Shared ACE's social media posts and disseminated patient educational resources to their members to encourage them to be involved in ACE's work
- Provided feedback on ACE's patient training workshops to improve the content and delivery for future sessions
- Provided advice on priority-setting, communication strategies, and patients' informational needs to inform ACE's workplan and future patient involvement initiatives

Figure 1: Key contributions made by the ACE Consumer Panel during their first term



"The many discussions allow me to value the depth of ACE's work. Please continue with the regular meetings."

"It has been very eye opening for me and the sharing by the other members has also led me to think more thoroughly regarding patient issues."

Figure 2: Panel members' understanding of ACE, HTA and patient involvement processes

- Members aspired to engage in more strategic discussions if they were reappointed for a second term and considered that they would like the Panel to be more involved in driving meaningful patient engagement strategies that extend beyond ACE's work to all aspects of healthcare decision-making (Fig. 3).
- Overall, members valued many aspects of being on the Panel, were satisfied with their involvement and impact, and felt that being on the Panel was a good use of their time and resources (Fig. 4).

"That the Consumer Panel members will continue to build trust and work together to address drug and medical device affordability and accessibility issues"

"That it remains robust as a panel, in providing views, suggestions and adding value to enhance patient care"

"I hope the Panel can continue to act as a catalyst for patient engagement, enabling patients to contribute meaningfully to ACE's work. This collaborative approach will lead to a deeper understanding of healthcare technologies and their impact, ultimately resulting in better informed patients empowered to make the best decisions for their health."

Figure 3: Members' aspirations for the Panel's role

"A well-represented and diverse group, which brings forth different perspectives and rich experiences"

"No engagement was tokenistic. Probably the most impactful committee I'm on"

"Relationship building, and the very open sharing and active participation of other members"

"The opportunity to learn about ACE's objectives and being able to contribute to meet the objectives"

Figure 4: What members valued most while on the Panel

Discussion

- The ACE Consumer Panel is the first long-standing engagement of healthcare consumers by MOH and serves as an example for other decision-makers on how to meaningfully involve patients at the organizational level to understand their priorities and preferences and ensure healthcare policies remain relevant for the people affected by them.
- In an ongoing effort to maintain regular communication with Panel members and keep them well informed about local patient involvement and education initiatives, ACE has developed a quarterly publication – *Consumer Engagement and Education (CEE) Updates* (Fig. 5).

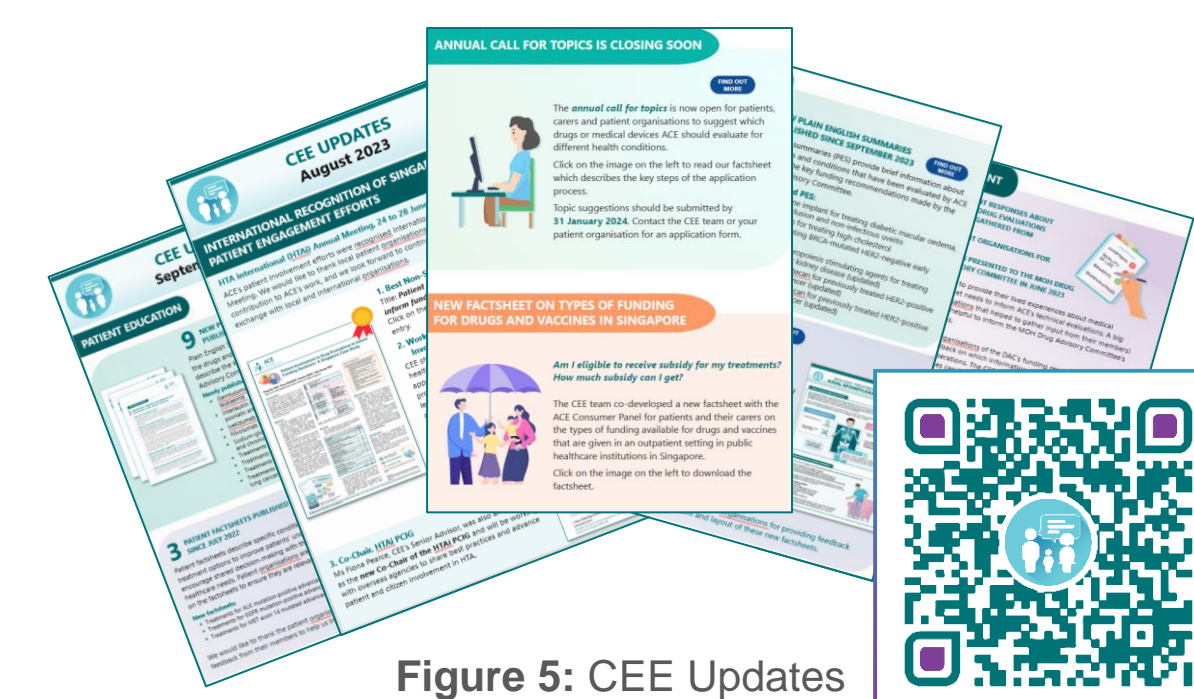


Figure 5: CEE Updates

- In April 2024, the Panel was appointed for a new term (until March 2026) with an expanded membership in view of their valuable contribution towards shaping ACE's patient involvement processes and fostering collaborations with local patient organizations.
- During the new term, members will continue to influence patient involvement processes and will be actively involved in co-developing shared decision-making resources to empower patients to make informed decisions about their healthcare needs with their doctors.

Conclusion

- ACE will continue to evaluate the Panel's impact and ensure that they are given appropriate opportunities to provide the collective patient voice to guide ACE's current and future patient involvement processes.

References:

- Agency for Care Effectiveness, Ministry of Health Singapore. April 2024. *Process and methods guide for patient involvement (Version 1.2)*.
- Agency for Care Effectiveness, Ministry of Health Singapore. March 2024. *Patient glossary*.