

CAREPULSE Community And Rural Experts Partnered for Understanding and Leveraging Strategic Endeavours in Cardiac Rehabilitation and Secondary Prevention

Background

Cardiovascular disease is a major public health concern, particularly for disadvantaged populations residing in rural Australia. The formation of an expert reference group, **CAREPULSE**, integrates people with lived experiences from three significant cardiac rehabilitation and secondary prevention studies to enhance cardiac health for rural populations:



CHAP (Country Heart Attack Prevention): The CHAP project was funded with \$3.3 million by the NHMRC Partnership Scheme. It was initiated to recommend cardiac rehabilitation, establish an ongoing auto-referral system, and provide a choice of delivery modes (Face-to-Face, Telephone, Mobile Apps, and Web-based) for long-term support for heart health from primary carers in rural and remote areas.



CRA4ALL (Cardiac Rehabilitation for All): Funded with \$25,000 by the Flinders Foundation, the CRA4ALL program was designed to improve cardiac rehabilitation for disadvantaged populations living in rural and remote South Australia. It aimed to address barriers to access and completion of cardiac rehabilitation in these regions.



CREW (Cardiac Rehabilitation Especially for Women): The CREW program received funding of \$150,000 from The Hospital Research Foundation. It focuses on empowering Australian women living in rural and remote areas with cardiovascular disease through a person-centred approach to cardiac rehabilitation.

Approach to Reference Group Formation

CAREPULSE comprises 83+ individuals from diverse rural regions in South Australia who participated and actively contributed to shaping the development and implementation of cardiac rehabilitation studies. They are experts on how to ensure, customise and address the unique needs of rural populations. Their lived experiences are central to shaping the future of cardiac rehabilitation research, policy and implementation.

Expected Outcomes

CAREPULSE, as a new reference group, is expected to:

- Expand the CR4ALL Program to address disadvantaged populations' specific needs and challenges in diverse rural regions.
- Enhance patient-centred care to boost cardiac rehabilitation adherence and improve health outcomes.
- Serve as a co-design model for enhancing cardiac rehabilitation and secondary prevention in rural and disadvantaged populations throughout Australia and inform change.

Conclusion

CAREPULSE is integrating the experiences of rural Australians and is set to revolutionise the cardiac rehabilitation field. This initiative promises to elevate the quality of care and patient outcomes, establishing a co-design model for nationwide cardiac rehabilitation improvements. The participation of consumers as experts with lived experiences is central to this process, reflecting a critical step in co-designing cardiac rehabilitation for disadvantaged populations, particularly using technology and evidence-based research.

Authors

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