

CONSORTIUM OF AUSTRALIAN HUNTINGTON'S ASSOCIATIONS

Dear Members and Volunteers

On behalf of the Consortium of Australian Huntington's Associations (CAHA) we are updating you on the proposed merger of the five State and Territory Associations into one new national body.

Firstly, we would like to thank everyone for their feedback. We are heartened that the overwhelming majority of you are very supportive. There are some concerns, however, most commonly about preserving local services and community engagement.

Local services

We reiterate that this proposed merger will strengthen local services, not diminish them.

The notion of maintaining local services with local flavor, local influence, local volunteers and the local community is integral to our merger principles.

Feasibility study complete

The feasibility study conducted by Good Foundations has been completed. Once the State Boards have absorbed this report, they will be voting on whether or not they support proceeding with the merger. This decision is due by the end of August – not far away!

As well as the final feasibility study report, the other key matters the State Boards have deliberated on are Board structure, recruitment and appointment process and Membership.

Board structure, recruitment and appointment process

The national Board will, in the first instance, have representatives from current Board members in each State - at least one member per State with a maximum of two. We will also be looking for between 1 and 3 new external Directors, including an independent Chairperson as this is a demonstrated way of delivering good governance. Recruitment is being undertaken by an external specialist to avoid any internal conflict of interest.

Membership

CAHA has agreed that the new national entity will be a membership-based organisation.

Legally we cannot transfer memberships from one organisation to another. All members will be invited to join the new national body with membership fees for individuals waived for the first year.

Members to vote 26 November

If State Boards agree, we will then be asking our members to make the final decision at the AGM on 26 November. We will be getting back to you with more details ahead of the voting process.

If members vote to proceed with the merger, State Associations will continue until their operations are transferred to the new national body on 1 July 2023. State Boards will also provide a conduit to and from the new national Board until then.

In the new structure, each State will have an advisory body to ensure a conduit to the new Board and to support the link between local communities and the new management.

In concluding we would like to return to the issue of ensuring the preservation of local state-based services and local voices. When CAHA first started the feasibility study process, we agreed on the following principles. (This is an excerpt from a longer list.) You can see that maintaining and building on local supports and services has been foremost in CAHA's thinking.

Merger Principles

In considering a merged organisation the following principles will be enshrined. We will:

- Seek a solution that provides more benefits to the HD community across Australia than would otherwise be possible under current structures;
- Ensure appropriate key stakeholder engagement;
- Preserve the ability to deliver localised state-based services and activities;
- Build on the existing strengths of State Associations, i.e. human resources, successful program models and income generating initiatives;

We will be communicating with you again soon. In the meantime, please do not hesitate to contact the key contact person in your State, Lewis Kaplan (Lewis.kaplan@hdnswact.org.au or M: 0407 108 667) if you want more information or to provide feedback about the proposed merger.

Yours sincerely



Jason De Bakker
Chair, CAHA
11/8/2022



Katy Clymo
Chair, Huntington's NSW ACT
11/8/2022

