



Strategy, Planning and Service Development Policy

1. Background

This policy documents the WA Country Health Service (WACHS) Strategic Planning and Reporting Framework (Figure 1).

This approach ensures that all planning and service development activities align with the WACHS strategic documents, WA Health and broader government priorities, as well as clinical models and frameworks. This approach should be adopted when undertaking operational, work/action and clinical service plans, or any other plans which consider service development.

The focus of all levels of strategy and planning is to improve access to patient-centred integrated care in a place or locality, and improve the patient/carer health journey, experience and outcomes.

This policy aims towards this outcome, by ensuring the linkage between high level strategic planning, service focussed strategies, and other levels of operational and action planning, service development and change. The policy also outlines the governance and reporting of the different levels and types of plans.

This policy contributes to, and is informed by, State and Commonwealth government strategy, policy and evidence. It aligns WACHS planning processes with the WA Sustainable Health Review 2019 and the WA Clinical Governance Framework (CSF) as the overarching clinical services planning document, and other government priorities.

Figure 1: The WACHS Strategic Planning and Reporting Framework



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2. Policy Statement

WACHS has an integrated approach to strategy, planning and change:

- WACHS' strategic vision, mission, directions, values and priority actions should cascade through all levels of planning (strategic, operational, and work plans; service strategy documents and health service plans as required) across WACHS central office, regions and services.
- The focus of all strategy, planning and change is improving the consumer/carer experience of, and access to, care, alongside their health care journey and outcomes with the intent that comprehensive care will be delivered as close to the places people live as possible.
- Consumer and carer engagement in strategy, planning and change is required in accordance with the National Safety and Quality Health Service Standard 2, and must be embedded in the governance, development implementation and review of plans and service development at all levels.
- Risk identification and management is applied to all levels of strategy development, planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation, including considering completion of an Aboriginal Impact Statement.
- Benchmarking, monitoring and evaluation frameworks and plans relative to the scale and scope of projects or programs are to be developed in the early, pre-implementation stage of design of new services, projects and programs.
- Ethics approval is to be considered in the planning of evaluation through the [WACHS Human Research Ethics Committee](#).
- Operational planning, monitoring and reporting occur within the annual financial and performance cycle of government, WA Health and WACHS (Appendix 2).

WACHS' strategy, planning, service development and change principles are:

- Equity of access to services for country people;
- Enabling safe, accessible services closer to home where possible;
- The delivery of safe, sustainable, high quality services providing value for money;
- Involving consumers, communities and partners;
- Ensuring processes and products are consumer and community focused;
- Ensuring culturally appropriate and secure services;
- Seeking to achieve improvement in the health of the population;
- Determining and delivering contemporary workforce models matched to health service need; and
- Including use of modern, innovative digital and medical technologies.

All planning, service development and service development change require governance and accountability to deliver, implement, monitor and evaluate.

- The WACHS Strategy and Service Development (SSD) Executive Sub-committee (ESC) has overall responsibility for this policy, its implementation and review.
- The SSD ESC facilitates appropriate linkages across WACHS regions and central office programs and business areas such as business performance and improvement, corporate and clinical governance, research and ethics (Figure 2).
- The WACHS Executive, relevant Sub-committees and Regional Executives are responsible for effective planning, as well as delivering, monitoring and evaluating implementation.
- Development of the WACHS Strategic plan will be led and endorsed by the Board Chair and Chief Executive (CE) prior to publication.
- The Strategic Plan is operationalised through the WACHS Operational Plan with annual reports on progress and performance provided to the Executive and Board. Implementation is monitored through existing monitoring and reporting mechanisms including:
 - Quarterly Regional Performance meetings;
 - Quarterly performance dashboards;
 - WACHS Executive Performance Agreements;
 - WACHS Operational Plan Reporting; and
 - Board and Executive meetings.

Figure 2: Levels and Governance of strategy, planning and service development

	Planning Level	Focus	Governance	Timeframe
System wide	System Level Strategy, Strategic Plan, Policies and Frameworks	National and State health policies and priorities Sustainable Health Review, WA CSF	System Manager National and State	5-15 years
WACHS Wide	WACHS Strategic Plan	WACHS strategic priorities and directions	WACHS Board WACHS Executive	5 years
	WACHS Operational Plan	Implementing Strategic Plan & other strategic imperatives	WACHS Executive and governance groups	1-2 years
Operational Implementation	Regional/District/Local Action Plans	Regional/District/Local priorities incl. from Service Strategy docs	Regional Directors, Execs & COO.	1-2 years
	Central Office Program Action Plans	Central Office priorities to support WACHS wide programs	Tier 3 or 4 Directors and Managers	1-2 years
Detailed Planning	Service/Specialty Strategic documents	WACHS service /specialty priorities and models	Strategy & Service Development Executive Sub Committee (ESC) & other ESCs	5 years
	Detailed Clinical Service Plans	Specific Specialty Plan - WACHS or Regional	WACHS Executive and Tier 4 Directors Clinical Governance groups	5 years
	Detailed Service Plans for geographic catchment areas	Regional / District / Local	Regional Executives and Tier 4 Directors	5-10 years
	Detailed business area plans	Workforce, Finance, ICT, Performance, Digital Innovation	WACHS Executive and Tier 4 Directors Performance reporting and dashboards	3-5 years
	Detailed infrastructure plans	Infrastructure	WACHS Executive, Regional Executives, Tier 3 or 4 Directors and Managers Infrastructure and Environment ESC	5-10 years
Project level	Implementation planning, delivery and change – aligned with project management system as required	Program or project level planning and evaluation	WACHS Executive Tier 2-3 and Tier 4 Directors and Managers Program or project monitoring	As required

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3. Definitions

Strategic Plan	A systematic process which sets priorities, focuses energy and resources, and strengthens operations. The output is a strategic plan that describes the long term focus of the organisation with key strategic priorities identified for a three to five year period.
Operational Plan	A process to identify the objectives and initiatives/projects ¹ to achieve the Strategic Plan and other informing strategic imperatives, service strategies, government priorities and key WACHS risks. The output is a one to two year WACHS Operational Plan. Operational planning informs annual budget development and ad hoc funding opportunities.
Implementation Plans (aka 'action' or 'work' plans)	Regional and central office teams develop implementation plans to support achievement of the WACHS Strategic and Operational Plans, organisational strategic priorities, and key emerging issues. These plans detail: what and where (scope, stages); how (tasks, activities, actions); who (accountabilities, responsibilities, governance); and when (milestones to achieve key deliverables, timeframes).
Clinical or Health Service Strategies or Plans	Service specific documents (e.g. WACHS Mental Health and Wellbeing or Cancer Strategy) document strategic directions (goals) and priorities. They describe contemporary, innovative service delivery and workforce models and technology that respond to community health needs, projected service activity and population, and are aligned with the CSF, endorsed policies, and academic literature and evidence.
Service development	The activity of investigating, planning, organising the people, infrastructure, resources, and communication supporting incremental or transformational service change to improve the quality of the service.

4. Roles and Responsibilities

All Staff are required to work within policies and guidelines to make sure WACHS is a safe, equitable and positive place to be. See also governance framework in section three.

5. Compliance

Failure to comply with this policy may constitute a breach of the WA Health Code of Conduct (Code). The Code is part of the [Integrity Policy Framework](#) issued pursuant to

¹ Initiatives/projects may occur over multiple years with key deliverables for the following financial year.

section 26 of the [Health Services Act 2016](#) (WA) and is binding on all WACHS staff which for this purpose includes trainees, students, volunteers, researchers, contractors for service (including all visiting health professionals and agency staff) and persons delivering training or education within WACHS.

WACHS staff are reminded that compliance with all policies is mandatory.

6. Records Management

All WACHS corporate records must be stored in the approved Electronic Documents and Records Management System.

[Records Management Policy](#)

7. Evaluation

- This policy is to be reviewed every five years (or as required).
- The Strategic Plan is to be reviewed at least every four years to ensure it has currency and remains relevant.
- The Operational Plan is to be reviewed at least every 12 – 18 months.
- Service strategy documents and health service plans are to be reviewed every three years (or as required) by the relevant region, program area or the WACHS Planning and Evaluation team.
- Monitoring and evaluation of programs, services and projects will be considered during the initial planning stage of programs of work and should be conducted as part of the review process.

8. Standards

[National Safety and Quality Health Service Standards – 1.1, 2.11](#)

9. Legislation

[WA Public Health Act 2016](#) (WA)

[WA Health Services Act 2016](#) (WA)

10. References

[WACHS Authorisations Schedule 2020](#)

11. Related Forms

Nil

12. Related Policy Documents

[Strategy, Planning and Service Development Guideline](#)

13. Related WA Health System Policies

- [WA Clinical Services Framework 2014 – 2024 \(under revision at February 2021\)](#)
- [Health Service Provider Boards – Governance Policy](#)
- [WA Aboriginal Health and Wellbeing Framework 2015 – 2030](#)
- [WA Health Aboriginal Workforce Strategy 2014 -2024](#)

14. Policy Framework

- [Clinical Services Planning and Programs Framework](#)
- [Purchasing and Resource Allocation Policy Framework](#)

**This document can be made available in alternative formats
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