



# BOARD COMMUNIQUÉ

This communiqué highlights key discussions from the recent WA Country Health Service (WACHS) Board meeting.

**28 June 2024**

The Board meeting was held in Perth on Friday, 28 June 2024 at WACHS' offices at Grace Vaughan House (GVH) in Shenton Park.

The Board approved the WACHS Palliative and End of Life Care Strategy 2024-28. The Strategy describes the way in which palliative care and end-of life care services should be experienced by people in regional and remote WA through six (6) core priorities: care is accessible to everyone, everywhere; care is person-centred; care is coordinated; families and carers are supported; all staff are prepared to care; and the community is aware and able to care.

The Board approved a new five-year Aeromedical Patient Transfer Services contract with the Royal Flying Doctor Service (RFDS) commencing from 1 July 2024. Aeromedical patient transfer is an important component of service delivery in country WA to ensure patients can access to specialist care if they require– with almost 8,500 patients accessing the service over the last year. The new contract is a milestone for WACHS, RFDS and country WA communities. The new contract strengthens the service model through additional investment in aeromedical transfer workforce, revised clinical governance and performance measures, and equity of access through improved coordination with the State Health Operations Centre to ensure services are provided to patients who need it most.

Another key milestone approved by the Board was the 2024-25 Service Agreement with the Department of Health. The Service Agreement details the scope of services and targeted levels of activity within a financial year, consistent with the State Government's policy objectives and funding allocations. The 2024-25 Service Agreement provides positive steps forward to supporting service delivery and addressing the unique cost pressures experienced in country WA. The 2024-25 Service Agreement builds on the collaborative work undertaken by WACHS and the Department of Health through the Country Health Sustainability Taskforce to ensure budget sustainability and to support the ongoing delivery of safe and high-quality services in our rural and remote communities.

The Board discussed accommodation and housing initiatives to help attract and retain healthcare professionals especially those who want to live permanently in regional WA, as well a visiting, agency and short-term staff. Currently, WACHS supports staff with accommodation and housing through over 2,000 owned or leased properties across the state. The Board discussed innovative partnerships to provide sustainable long term housing solutions, as well as acknowledging work completed to date to refurbish existing properties.

The Board discussed performance against the WACHS Aboriginal Health and Wellbeing Action Plan 2022-25 which aims to strengthen and embed the approach to improving the health and wellbeing of Aboriginal people living in WA. The Action Plan is a requirement for all WA Health Service Providers under the [WA Aboriginal Health and Wellbeing Framework 2015-2030](#), and sits alongside the [WACHS Aboriginal Health Strategy 2019-2024](#). The Board remains committed to improving health outcomes for country Aboriginal people in WA.

The Board acknowledged Rob Pulsford has taken up a six-month secondment as Chief Executive of North Metropolitan Health Service from 24 June 2024. Rob is a much-valued member of WACHS' Executive – having contributed to WACHS in several roles as Chief Operating Officer, Executive Director Infrastructure and Sustainability, and Executive Director Kimberley. The Board wished Rob Pulsford all the best for his secondment noting North Metropolitan Health Service is in steady hands with Rob at the helm. In the interim, Chief Operating Officer Rural, John Quinn, will take responsibility for the full operations portfolio.

## Members attending

Dr Neale Fong (Board Chair)  
Ms Wendy Newman (Deputy Board Chair)  
Mr Peter Campbell  
Dr Catherine Stoddart  
Mr Alan Ferris  
Mr Paul Fitzpatrick  
Mrs Jodi Johnston  
Mr Colin Holt  
Dr Diane Mohen  
Mrs Shaneane Weldon

## In Attendance

Mr Jeffrey Moffet, Chief Executive  
Mr John Quinn, Chief Operating Officer Rural  
Ms Melissa Vernon, Executive Director Strategy & Change

## Apologies

Nil.

## Key Matters for Decision

- The Board approved WACHS' response to the Minister for Health's Statement of Expectation for quarter three (3) for 2023-24.
- The Board approved the Deed of Variation Two (2) to the Mental Health Commission Service Agreement 2023-24 with WACHS.
- The Board approved the WACHS Palliative and End of Life Care Strategy 2024-2028.
- The Board approved the 2024-25 Service Agreement with the Department of Health.
- The Board approved a new Aeromedical Patient Transfer Services contract with the Royal Flying Doctor Service.

## Key Matters for Discussion

- The Chief Executive provided an update on executive appointments, workforce development initiatives, service delivery matters, and the progress of key projects.
- The Board continued discussions on the progress of the WACHS Strategic Plan refresh and strengthening person-centred service delivery models.
- The Board discussed key strategic initiatives including progress of the Country Health Sustainability Taskforce, aged care, infrastructure projects, cyber security, and key performance indicators related to Aboriginal health.

## Summary of Standing Items for Discussion and Noting

- An update from the Chair of the Audit and Risk Committee (ARC) noting no meeting was held since the 16 April 2024 meeting and providing an overview from the ARC Chairs meeting held on 4 June 2024.
- An update from the Chair of the Finance Committee from the 24 June 2024 meeting, noting the Finance, FTE and Activity Dashboard standing report.
- An update from the Chair of the Safety and Quality Committee from the 20 June 2024 meeting, noting the deep dive presentation into renal services in country WA.

## Items for Noting

- The Board received updates on strategic and operational initiatives including contractual matters, work, health and safety, workforce and services, and governance matters.

## Next Meeting

- The next Board meeting will be held in Kununurra on 26 July 2024, as part of a regional engagement visit to the Kimberley.

**Dr Neale Fong**  
**BOARD CHAIR**

July 2024