



BOARD COMMUNIQUÉ

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

29 November 2024

The Board meeting was held virtually via Microsoft Teams on 29 November 2024.

The Board continued discussions regarding the strategic objectives of the organisation to inform the WACHS Strategic Plan refresh, and digital and face to face engagement and consultation strategies with key stakeholders and staff.

Following a comprehensive briefing on WACHS' medical imaging program in August of this year, the Board were provided with brief on the organisation's medical imaging strategic direction, noting it was key to identifying issues and known risks, and will support better imaging outcomes country patients. In conjunction with this important strategy, the Board were also briefed on the medical imaging workforce plan, noting the plan sets out key workforce attraction and retention strategies through a systematic and purposeful approach to address these challenges and ensure the sustainability and effectiveness of the medical imaging workforce.

The Board also received key briefings on whole of health matters being addressed at a System wide level and which WACHS is providing input, including:

The establishment of the Office of the Major Health Infrastructure Delivery, and how capital infrastructure projects will be delivered through a standardised governance process overseen by the System Manager.

System-wide access and demand strategies and management of patient flow, particularly in the context of Bunbury and Geraldton hospitals; and WACHS' emergency access reform (EAR) program which is one key initiative driving improvements to country care by enhancing hospital flow.

An update on WACHS' research and innovation initiatives was also provided to the Board, and the proactive pursuing of projects that address priority health issues for country patients. The Board were advised of key systems being implemented, along with building internal capacity, to drive a comprehensive research and innovation service. Additionally, the Board were provided with a progress update on WACHS' key strategic relationships with Curtin University and the Department of Jobs, Tourism, Science, and Innovation, and also the WA Rural and Research Innovation Alliance.

The Board congratulated Dr Lorraine Anderson on being awarded the Medicare Champion at the Stronger Medicare Awards at Parliament House and the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Public Health Award at the Australian Public Health Conference. These awards are a worthy recognition of Dr Anderson's commitment to patients and innovative approaches to improving access to health care in regional Australia.

The Board acknowledged the tenure of outgoing member Shaneane Weldon and thanked her for her dedication and commitment as a country Board Member, and for her engagement and support throughout her time on the Board. Mrs Weldon was also an integral member of the Safety and Quality Committee, and her term with WACHS concludes on 4 December 2024.

Members Attending

Dr Neale Fong
Ms Wendy Newman
Dr Lorraine Anderson
Dr Peter Campbell
Mr Paul Fitzpatrick
Mr Colin Holt
Mrs Jodi Johnston
Dr Catherine Stoddart
Mrs Shaneane Weldon

Attendees

Mr Jeffrey Moffet, Chief Executive
Mr John Quinn, Chief Operating Officer – Rural and Remote

Secretariat

Ms Brooke van Blommestein, A/Director Office of the Chief Executive

Apologies

Nil

Key Matters for Decision

- The Board approved WACHS' response to the Minister for Health's Statement of Expectation for quarter one (1) for 2024-25.
- The Board approved the WACHS Medical Imaging Strategy and Workforce Plan.
- The Board approved the Write Off Schedule for 2024-25.

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 further discussed the organisation's consumer engagement model, in particular, the work underway to improve community and consumer engagement strategies and strengthening the District Health Advisory Council (DHAC) focus.

Summary of Standing Items for Discussion and Noting

- An update from the Chair of the Finance Committee, noting the last meeting was held on 25 November 2024, including discussion on the Value for Money program, medical salaried FTE, an update on services funded through Country Health Innovation, and an update on proposed timelines for a post-election State Budget.
- An update from the Chair of the Safety and Quality Committee noting the last meeting was held on 21 November 2024, an update safety, quality and clinical governance matters and initiatives across the organisation was provided, including: an overview on the funding and FTE arrangements for Family and Domestic Violence and Child Safety programs, and a presentation on the organisational preparation for the Short Notice Accreditation Program, including readiness assessment and actions being taken to address identified gaps.
- The Audit and Risk Committee did not meet in the month of November 2024, however the Board were advised work continues to simplify strategic and operational risks and reporting across WACHS.

Items for Noting

- The Board received updates on strategic and operational initiatives including work, health and safety, workforce and service continuity matters, WACHS' staff accommodation and housing program, aged care, capital and infrastructure projects and priorities, and the midwife to patient ratio program.

Next Meeting

- The final Board meeting of the year will be held in Perth on 13 December 2024.

Dr Neale Fong
BOARD CHAIR

November 2024