



**Hon Meredith Hammat MLA  
Minister for Health; Mental Health**

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Our Ref: 85-01109

Dr Neale Fong  
Board Chair  
WA Country Health Service

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Dear Dr Fong, *Neale*

**Statement of Expectations**

As the responsible Minister for the Department of Health (Department) and governing bodies of Health Service Providers (HSP), my Statement of Expectations is to be read in the context of the functions and responsibilities listed in the *Health Services Act 2016*.

I expect the Board to report to me on a quarterly basis against the following expectations.

Quarterly reports should include: actions taken to address the expectation; quarterly results, outcomes, or findings; next steps; and recommendation(s) to improve performance against the expectation.

**System Management**

I expect all HSPs to work collaboratively with the Department as System Manager and to implement service agreements, policy frameworks, or Department CEO directions as required.

I expect the Department, as System Manager, to ensure efficient, effective, and consistent approaches to the provision of health services across all HSPs, with a particular focus on Ambulance Transfer of Care, emergency department performance and patient flow, whole-of-system management of mental health presentations, elective surgeries, discharge, and ensuring the central role of the State Health Operations Centre to direct and coordinate health services as appropriate.

I expect the Department to continually review the operations of HSPs to reduce system-wide duplication and, where necessary, ensure consistent approaches to employment in, and the movement of employees between, HSPs.

I have a strong expectation that Safety and Quality will remain the highest priority and a core focus for the Board. I expect that work to evaluate and consolidate progress with regard to the improvement of patient outcomes will be continued.

## **Emergency access**

The Board is to deliver improved outcomes for emergency department performance and patient flow across the System, including:

- delivery and execution of plans to achieve sustained improvement in emergency care access, including Ambulance Transfer of Care (TOC) performance;
- demonstrated progress towards relevant Emergency Access Response (EAR) program milestones and actively contribute to the Ministerial Taskforce;
- a continual focus on early discharge and links with aged care and disability service providers;
- delivery and execution of specific plans to reduce the proportion of over boundary cases on the elective surgery waitlist and progress towards achievement of WA Elective Services Targets (WEST); and
- delivery and execution of specific plans to reduce the proportion of over boundary referrals awaiting a first outpatient appointment.

## **Sustainable Health Review**

The State Government is committed to the implementation of the Sustainable Health Review (SHR). I expect the Board to continue implementing the Strategies and Recommendations of SHR, which remains the blueprint for building an enduring health system.

## **Financial Performance**

The Board is to prioritise management of its financial performance, including delivering to activity targets, operating within allocated budgets, and ensuring sufficient cash balances are maintained.

Where there are significant pressures on activity and expenditure that cannot be managed by the Board, these are to be raised with the System Manager, and I expect the System Manager to raise these with me.

Requests for additional expenditure should be supported by robust evidence of the drivers, financial impacts, mitigating options and actions, and evaluation metrics to assess the impact of additional expenditure.

## **Workforce**

The Sustainable Health Review (2019) and the Independent Governance Review (2022) both called for a systemwide workforce strategy to enable the WA health system to meet its workforce requirements.

The WA Health Workforce Strategy 2034 was launched in September 2024, and I expect the Board to continue to support the implementation of the strategy.

Increasing job security through offering more permanent positions, reducing the use of fixed term contracts and casual modes of employment is of critical importance to the Government.

I expect the Board to maximise the occasions of permanent employment and actively minimise insecure, temporary employment arrangements, and, in particular, the use of rolling fixed term contracts.

agency usage for salaried officers, to be achieved over the life of the relevant industrial agreement.

I also expect the Board to collaborate with unions and industrial advocates in good faith and to work collaboratively to roll out initiatives that are the result of enterprise bargaining, including the implementation of Nurse and Midwife to Patient Ratios.

### **Election Commitments and Key Projects**

I expect the implementation of the Government's election commitments and key projects to be prioritised, including but not limited to:

- Geraldton Health Campus Radiation Oncology service
- Kalgoorlie Health Campus masterplan
- Kalgoorlie-Boulder Step-Up/Step-Down Facility transition to a publicly operated service
- Acute Care and Response Team establishment in Bunbury
- Air-conditioning upgrade at the Kalbarri Health Centre
- Human Resource Management Information System
- Electronic Medical Record Program

### **Procurement**

I expect the Board will manage procurement activity in accordance with relevant Western Australian legislation and frameworks, in particular the *Western Australian Jobs Act 2017*, with a view to maximising value for money and social, economic and environmental outcomes for West Australians.

It is my expectation that the Board will ensure local businesses have a fair and reasonable opportunity to access Western Australian Government supply contracts as they arise, and that local businesses are prioritised to manufacture and develop healthcare-related medical goods, equipment, and technologies where appropriate.

### **Advice to Government**

I expect the Board to provide accurate and timely advice to the Government on significant issues in its core areas of business and ensure progress is made in achieving the Government's priorities. The Board is expected to ensure my office is aware of all critical issues in a timely manner and is briefed appropriately at regular meetings.

I expect all HSPs to ensure the Department, as System Manager, is similarly aware of all critical issues in a timely manner.

### **Media and Communications**

I expect the Board to ensure the following are shared with my office for review and approval prior to publication or release:

- Media statements
- Media comments, including comments from HSP employees
- Media events
- Paid media
- Campaign advertising, and
- Other external communications identified by my office

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I expect the Director General of the Department, or delegated officer, to approve HSP media statements and comments before they are sent to my office.

### **Statement of Intent**

I look forward to receiving the Board's response to my Statement of Expectations in the form of a Statement of Intent as soon as practicable. I request that the Statement of Expectations and Statement of Intent be published on your website.

I would like to take the opportunity to acknowledge and thank you for the considerable efforts of the Board and all WA Country Health Service staff in leading our health system and ensuring the people of Western Australia continue to access world-class health care.

Kind regards



HON MEREDITH HAMMAT MLA  
**MINISTER FOR HEALTH; MENTAL HEALTH**

25 MAY 2025