



SMHS Board Communiqué

Excellent health care, every time

August 2024 meeting

This communiqué highlights key discussions of interest at the South Metropolitan Health Service (SMHS) Board meeting which was held at Fiona Stanley Hospital (FSH) on Monday 26 August 2024.



Board members acknowledge the meeting was held during the Noongar season of Djilba – the season of conception. Djilba is August to September, which is a time of transition, with some very cold and clear days mixed with warmer, rainy and windy days. It brings a flowering explosion, starting with yellow flowering plants, such as acacias.

At the beginning of the meeting, Board member Karen Brown acknowledged the Whadjuk people of the Noongar lands on which the Board was meeting. Karen reflected on the career trajectory of recently appointed Federal Minister for Indigenous Australians, Senator the Hon Malarndirri McCarthy who was born Barbara Anne McCarthy and grew up in the remote Gulf of Carpentaria.

This month, Board members welcomed recently appointed Director General of WA Health, Dr Shirley Bowen for the first time for a discussion about strategic matters, priorities and challenges. While the Chief Executive and I meet with the Director General on a regular basis, this was an excellent opportunity for all Board members to connect with the System Manager in an engaging and positive conversation.

In patient stories this month, Board heard about the patient centred, culturally appropriate care demonstrated by a Muslim nurse at FSH. A Muslim patient required an intravenous injection but was afraid of needles, so the nurse supported her through prayer and as a result, the patient was calmed and relaxed enough to undergo the procedure. Board noted the excellent balance struck between compassionate care and clinical need in this story.

The SMHS Board recently underwent an external evaluation to review its performance, strengths and opportunities for improvement, and to ensure appropriate governance practices are in place. A workshop was held with Board members and the consultant to review the outcomes, and it was pleasing to hear the SMHS Board was considered a high performing and effective Board. This month, all Board Committees enacted actions from the evaluation at their individual meetings.

The Board was pleased to learn of the safe and smooth transition of Peel Health Campus (PHC) to SMHS on 14 August 2024, and commended PHC Executive Director Kellie Blyth and her team on their commitment and dedication to the project.

Pictured right is Hon Amber-Jade Sanderson MLA, Minister for Health (second from front left) with PHC staff on transition day.



The Chief Executive's report this month included updates on:

- The commissioning of FSH Cockburn Health which opened on Monday 5 August 2024.
- Emergency and elective access across SMHS' sites.
- The Murdoch Medihotel.

The Board Committee Chairs provided reports on the issues considered at their most recent meetings and highlighted specific items including:

- The Safety and Quality Committee received a presentation from the Head of Speech Pathology at FSFHG regarding a quality improvement project which addressed staffing workload across the ear nose & throat / head & neck service. The project resulted in a coordinated care pathway which streamlined clinic and administrative structures, and improved staff morale and confidence in managing caseloads. The Committee also considered the emergency access update, regular safety and quality reports including clinical incidents.
- The Finance and Governance Committee discussed the end of year financials for 2023-24, projections for 2024-25, activity and staffing reports, and reviewed contract management & procurement reports.
- The Audit and Risk Committee welcomed representatives from Health Support Services Board and Executive who provided a comprehensive update regarding HSS' actions relating to the Office of the Auditor General (OAG)'s general computer controls audit. The Committee also considered the risk register report, audit log, internal audit reports, integrity and ethics matters and a number of reports released by the OAG.
- The People, Culture and Engagement Committee considered the SMHS Multicultural Plan progress report 2023-24, the SMHS Carers Recognition Act compliance report 2023-24 and received patient experience and quarterly workforce reporting.



Following the Board meeting, Deputy Chair Kim Gibson and Board member Karen Brown visited ward 5A at FSH as part of the Board to Ward program and spoke with staff and patients.

Pictured left, Karen Brown (far left) and Deputy Chair Kim Gibson (second from right) with Ward 5A staff.

The next regular meeting of the Board is scheduled to take place on Monday 30 September 2024 at FSH.

Adjunct Associate Professor Robyn Collins
Board Chair, South Metropolitan Health Service

4 September 2024