



SMHS Board Communiqué

Excellent health care, every time

November 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 25 November 2024.

At the beginning of the meeting, Board member Yvonne Parnell acknowledged the Whadjuk people of the Noongar lands on which the Board was meeting. Yvonne reflected on the Wadjemup Wirin Bidi Commemorative Ceremony held this month on Wadjemup/Rottneest Island, where the Premier acknowledged the crimes committed against Aboriginal people by colonial authorities on the island between 1838 and 1931. Yvonne noted it was a reflection of hope for Western Australians in moving forward together.

The Board welcomed Dr Scott Blackwell, Voluntary Assisted Dying (VAD) Board Chair to discuss the progress of VAD in Western Australia, and the role SMHS plays in managing the VAD Statewide Care Navigator Service.

In patient stories this month, Board members heard about an older adult patient who was initially admitted to Rockingham General Hospital (RGH) following bouts of confusion, and subsequently transferred to Peel Health Campus, where the patient's hospital stay was extended due to a number of factors, including his increased aggression and agitation upon being moved to different hospital beds or rooms. Board members acknowledged the impact the hospital environment had on this patient, and the importance of keeping the patients and families educated and informed regarding impacts on length of stay, especially for older adults in situations such as these.

During the meeting break, we invited the 14 SMHS finalists in the WA Health Excellence Awards to a morning tea to acknowledge and congratulate their efforts (*pictured right and below*). SMHS had six overall award winners across ten categories:

- **Director General's Award** – Fiona Stanley Fremantle Hospitals Group (FSFHG) Virtual Immunology Clinic for General Practice
- **Excellence in person-centred care** – RGH Emergency Department Musculoskeletal diversion pathway
- **Excellence in workplace wellbeing and culture** – Staff with Disability and allies network
- **Excellence in Research and Innovation** – The Emerging Drugs Network of Australia
- **Excellence in Rural and Remote health care** – 24/7 WA Statewide Telestroke service
- **Excellence in Primary Health Care integration** – FSFHG Virtual Immunology Clinic for General Practice



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

- Emergency and elective access across SMHS sites.
- FSH Cockburn Mental Health.
- SMHS representation at PrideFest 2024 with a float decorated by a group from the Wesley College arts department. *Pictured right: Ms Kim Gibson, SMHS Deputy Board Chair and Ms Marani Hutton, Manager Workforce and Clinical Strategy, SMHS.*



The Board Committee Chairs highlighted specific items considered at their most recent meetings:

- The Safety and Quality Committee heard about the RGH Clinical Services Redesign team's quality improvement project to reduce the use of respiratory PCR testing. The Committee also reviewed an assurance report on the State Hyperbaric Medicine Unit and approved the new SMHS Research Grants Strategy 2024-2026.
- The Finance and Governance Committee discussed the October financial performance reports, considered the contract management exception reports, reviewed the Facilities Management services contract annual review and endorsed the signing of the Mental Health Commission and SMHS Service Agreement 2024-25.
- The Audit and Risk Committee considered the audit log, integrity and ethics matters and internal audit updates, including the final internal audit report on SMHS Diversity and Inclusiveness in Recruitment.

In my Chair report, I acknowledged Board members' involvement at various SMHS events throughout the month, including Deputy Board Chair Kim Gibson and Board member Yvonne Parnell who attended the 'Light of Life' memorial service at Rockingham General Hospital (RGH). The annual ceremony provides an opportunity to remember and honour colleagues who have passed away. I also reflected on attending the Department of Health Board development day on 15 November and taking part in a panel discussion around Board challenges, trends and governance.



The SMHS Communications team asked Board members to be involved in the SMHS dance video this year. Following the final Board meeting for 2024, we embraced the festive spirit in filming an end of year message to all staff (*pictured left*).

I also had the pleasure of launching the inaugural SMHS Consumer Involvement in Research Framework on 27 November. This important work, led by Jane Pearce, FSFHG Consumer Advisory Committee (CAC) Chair, provides a platform to engage with our consumers throughout all stages of research and enhance the partnership between community members and our researchers. *Pictured right (front L-R): Yvonne Parnell, SMHS Board member; Adj. Assoc. Prof. Robyn Collins, SMHS Board Chair; Ms Jane Pearce, FSFHG CAC Chair; Ms Mel Wright, Director Research SMHS.*



Board members acknowledged the meeting was held during the Noongar season of Kambarang – the season of birth. The balgas (grass trees) start to flower, especially if they've been burnt in the past year or closely shaved. The koolbardi (magpie) is out protecting its nests and babies and the continuing warm weather indicates the Birak season is soon upon us.

The next Board meeting is scheduled to take place on Monday 20 January 2025 at FSH.

Adjunct Associate Professor Robyn Collins
Board Chair, South Metropolitan Health Service
28 November 2024