



Your Ref:
Our Ref: 76-22094

Hon Amber-Jade Sanderson MLA
Minister for Health; Mental Health
Level 5 Dumas House
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WEST PERTH WA 6005

By email: Minister.Sanderson@dpc.wa.gov.au

Dear Minister Sanderson

NORTH METROPOLITAN HEALTH SERVICE BOARD'S STATEMENT OF INTENT – MAY 2023

Thank you for your letter of 2 March 2023 that outlines your *Statement of Expectations* for the North Metropolitan Health Service (NMHS) Board. The NMHS Board (the Board) formally commits to meeting your expectations and will ensure the Government's key strategic priorities for our health service are met.

The Board acknowledges the growing demand on the WA health system and the Minister's commitment to improving access to essential health services, including emergency care and elective surgery, for our people.

The below response outlines how the Board will work towards achieving the specified expectations. We will provide a quarterly report against each of the expectations outlined in your letter.

COVID-19

The Board recognises the ongoing impacts of COVID-19 and acknowledges the leadership of the Chief Health Officer and the Department of Health in responding to the challenges of the pandemic.

NMHS has fully integrated the plans issued by the Chief Health Officer and Department of Health into all its activities and has appropriate policies and procedures to ensure that the risks of COVID-19 are minimised. We continue to remain agile in our approach to respond to any future challenges posed by COVID-19. Our sites and services will continue to align with public health measures to ensure the safety of both our patients and our people.

NMHS is well positioned to prioritise projects and programs delayed due to COVID-19 and is wholeheartedly committed to expanding innovation and collaboration across the Western Australian health system. There are plans in place to sustain the improvements recognised during the response to COVID-19, such as the increase in the delivery of virtual care.

Sustainable Health Review – revised priorities

The Board is committed to delivering on the recommendations of the Sustainable Health Review (SHR), aligning the NMHS operational priorities to the six SHR recommendations prioritised for focus across the next one to two years.

NMHS has created and is currently implementing the Aboriginal Health and Wellbeing Strategy and is developing a set of Aboriginal Cultural Protocol documents to support staff in partnering with Aboriginal patients and their families. We are in the implementation phase of the Aboriginal Health Champions Program and initial work has been undertaken relating to the introduction of Aboriginal Health Practitioners.

Aligned to recommendation 4, NMHS has co-created, with consumers, a Consumer Partnership Model which will officially be launched this year. The Partnership Model provides a toolkit for employees and consumers offering practical guidance on different ways of working collaboratively with consumers to achieve best patient outcomes. It will support our consumers to contribute to the design, and delivery of their health services.

The Board is committed to supporting programs that reform delivery of care to ensure timely access to high-quality health services in a sustainable manner. This includes delivery of the Hospital Emergency Access Response Team (HEART) Program and the Outpatient Reform Program.

In response to recommendation 22, NMHS are working towards implementing the digital medical record (DMR) at King Edward Memorial Hospital with a planned go live date in May 2023.

Safety and Quality

The Board will continue to prioritise the delivery of high-quality, safe health care for our patients. The NMHS Board Safety and Quality sub-committee is committed to reviewing and evaluating a comprehensive mix of safety, quality, performance and consumer experience data. This includes monthly Health Service Performance Report (HSPR) data, Severity Assessment Code (SAC) data, key clinical indicators and consumer engagement feedback, including MySay data.

We are committed to utilising data to drive clinical improvements and improved consumer experience across all NMHS sites and services. Furthermore, we commit to supporting the use of data in a just and transparent way. Clinical data will be shared in appropriate forums to support our staff in improving the care they provide in an evidence informed manner.

Specifically, across NMHS we aim to refocus teams on longstanding and internationally recognised clinical Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) that demonstrate excellence in care. These KPI's include falls, pressure injuries, medication incidents, Healthcare Associated Staphylococcus Aureus Bloodstream infections, surgical site infections and hospital acquired Venous Thromboembolism. More timely data on these indicators will be made available to clinical staff to support improvement in these indicators.

NMHS Safety, Quality, Governance and Consumer Engagement has recently reviewed and revised its Operational Plan with a strong focus on building and sustaining clinical governance and consumer engagement capability and capacity throughout all sites and services. This includes establishing clear Safety and Quality roles and responsibilities for all disciplines across all levels of the organisation, mapping and defining all NMHS committee governance structures, reporting requirements and escalation pathways, development of clinical governance training matrix and sustainable training programs for all employees.

NMHS is committed to revitalising engagement with our community, including patients, families and carers. We are progressing the development of our Partnership Model – which describes our approach to consumer engagement and provides tools for teams to partner with consumers in a new way. In addition, we are revitalising our Community Advisory Councils (CAC's) and seeking new ways to have community representation in key decision-making forums. Community and patient experience data will continue to be collected through the MySay survey, with results made available on a Realtime basis on the new MySay Dashboard. Clinical teams will be encouraged to utilise this data to identify patient experience issues and focus improvement efforts.

Ramping, Transfer of Care and patient flow

The Board will continue to prioritise the implementation and delivery of initiatives that improve access to emergency care and improve ambulance Transfer of Care performance via the NMHS Hospital Emergency Access Response Team (HEART) Program. This will continue to be monitored and reported via the Emergency Access Response Program and the Minister for Health's Ramping Taskforce. To date, the HEART program has shown successful delivery against this priority area with noted improvements in ambulance ramping, earlier safe discharge, and access to emergency care (WEAT). The Board, and NMHS, remain committed to this program of work and working towards further improvements in access to care.

Specific NMHS strategies to achieve this include:

- Continued delivery of initiatives to improve patient flow and discharge across the organisation.
- Delivery of the Emergency Care Navigation model (including Emergency Care Navigation Centre, My Emergency Visit App, Neurology Rapid Access Clinic and expanded services for the older adult) funded under Mid-Year Review.
- Delivery of the Weekend Discharge - Seven Day Hospital initiative with an increase in Allied Health, Pharmacy and Radiology on the weekends.
- Delivery of a program of works focused on improving integrated care for the older adult, and those patients that experience extended length of stay in our hospital beds.

Deferred care and plan for elective surgery

The NMHS Outpatient Reform Program is an endorsed priority of the North Executive Team and NMHS Board. The Program aims to ensure timely equitable access to outpatient appointments, optimise capacity and ensure excellent care.

The initial focus for work will be on initiatives aligned to:

- Optimising governance and associated service delivery models across outpatient services;
- Waitlist remediation strategies to reduce over-boundary cases on the list;
- Optimising utilisation of existing capacity across sites and services to increase the volume of appointments delivered;
- Improving our data quality across outpatient services to ensure financial outcomes are optimised.

NMHS remains committed to reducing the over-boundary cases on hospital elective surgery waitlists and improving performance against WA Elective Services Targets with a specific view of over-boundary proportions returning to pre-pandemic levels by June 2024. NMHS has recently demonstrated an improvement in performance in this area and will have a continued focus on short and longer term strategies to support our patients being seen on time. With the waning of the impact of COVID-19 on the hospital system and the return to more normal levels of staffing, NMHS has implemented several initiatives to remediate the elective surgery waitlist.

The following areas will remain a focus for the 2023/24 year:

- targeted strategies to reduce over-boundary cases across all categories
- strategies to ensure service capacity and access aligns with demand within our catchment area; and
- optimising theatre utilisation and available capacity across our sites and services.
- an emphasis on reducing the waiting time for Gastroenterology procedures.

Mental Health

The Board is committed to working with the System Manager and other Health Service Providers (HSPs) to prioritise the implementation of the whole-of-system reforms. Furthermore, we remain committed to ensuring the implementation of the Action Plan and the ongoing reporting of activities undertaken for the Action Plan to the Mental Health Executive Committee.

NMHS is actively involved in implementing a significant number of election commitment initiatives that relate to the Infant Child and Adolescent Ministerial Taskforce and Young People's Mental Health Action Plans. This includes establishing a new Youth Community Assessment and Treatment Team and a new Child and Adolescent Forensic Service. Both services have recruited a core clinical workforce and commenced service provision. We have also been progressively expanding two of our community youth mental health teams (Youth Axis and Youth Link) in line with the 30 per cent election commitment uplift received.

NMHS is working with the Mental Health Commission to expand Mental Health Alcohol and Other Drug (AOD) services within Graylands Hospital, the Mental Health Observation Area and the Mental Health Unit at Sir Charles Gairdner Hospital. New positions will be established for Patient Liaison Nurses and an Addictions Psychiatrist to improve and increase service provision in these areas and develop a model of care to support patients with co-occurring AOD and mental health issues. An increase in service within the Self-Harm and Crisis Care Service (SHACCS) to provide seven-day per week care is also underway.

In response to the Mental Health Clinical Workforce Action Plan, we have convened the WA Mental Health Nursing Advisory Group to assist in the development of a Role Framework for the Mental Health Nursing Workforce. The Working Group is a consortium collaboration of stakeholders responding to the need for a consistent state-wide role framework for mental health nurses in WA and has already commenced work in this area.

Our commitment to eating disorders remains steadfast with the establishment of an Eating Disorders Intensive Outpatient Program, supporting consumers with complex eating disorders residing within the NMHS catchment. NMHS will continue to recruit specialists to the service with the expectation of providing a complete service and fully functioning service this financial year. A key priority for this service, and the expanded WA Eating Disorders Outreach Consultation Service (WAEDOCS), will be to build a suitably skilled and trained workforce for now and into the future.

Work Health and Safety

The Board and the NMHS Executive Team commit to working collaboratively with the System Manager to ensure compliance with Work Health and Safety (WHS) legislation. NMHS have participated in the System Manager workshop regarding the whole of health approach to Work Health and Safety (WHS) and are collaborating with the System Manager on the system policy, framework and operational framework. Additionally, NMHS has provided significant support in the early stages of investigating a whole of Health Work Health and Safety Reporting and Investigation system, which has now progressed under the Department of Health Work Health and Safety Unit.

NMHS has developed a High Priority Action Plan to assess high-risk hazards and gaps against the *WHS Act 2020*, including assessment of transition periods. Other strategies to ensure legislative requirements are met include:

- Reporting on Due Diligence activities on a regular basis, with deep dive sessions regularly scheduled for Wellbeing, Injury Management and WHS topics.
- NMHS will commence Executive Safety Walkarounds in June. This will be expanded to the NMHS Board and other leadership roles.

The NMHS Health, Safety and Wellbeing Department has implemented and strengthened a number of controls that support cultural improvement and risk management. These include:

- Formulation of a Statement of Commitment relating to Health, Safety and Injury Management;
- Ongoing work towards the Health Safety and Wellbeing Strategic Priorities (2021-2026), with a focus on high risks such as manual tasks, psychosocial/wellbeing and workplace violence and aggression;
- Clinical Psychologists introduced during the COVID-19 pandemic have been transitioned to permanent roles, providing support for critical incident debriefing, ongoing worker support through difficult issues, manager assistance and specialist advice in dealing with psychosocial hazards; and,
- NMHS continues to implement the Stop the Violence Strategy with specific Workplace Violence and Aggression packages about to commence trials in specific departments.

Increased job security

NMHS continues its commitment of conversion to permanency of casual and fixed-term contracts and to comply with the regulations as per the Conversion to Permanency Provisions under the Industrial Agreements.

Current strategies NMHS have in place to support achievement of this priority include:

- Implementation of a dedicated conversion to permanency team to conduct job security reviews. This team are also working on the development of recruitment resources within People and Culture to assist line managers with recruiting decisions.
- NMHS Industrial Relations (IR) is developing education tools for managers on new job security provisions and collaborating with central Finance teams to examine agency usage and finding opportunities to appoint permanently.
- NMHS has a joint consultative committee with United Workers Union (UWU) in patient support services and tables casual usage at meetings for information.

Procurement

NMHS operates under a centralised procurement and contract management function, following a program of reform ending in October 2022. Based on a fit-for-purpose operating model to enable NMHS to meet all of its governance requirements under the WA Procurement Act 2020, the procurement and contract management framework meets and exceeds compliance with procurement and asset management standards.

As part of NMHS commitment to transparency and procurement integrity, a suite of KPIs has been developed and monthly reporting has commenced to the NMHS Executive Team, Procurement and Contract Management Governance Executive subcommittee. The KPI's are informed by organisational priority and risk areas and measure the effectiveness and efficiency of procurement and contract management processes across NMHS. The KPIs are also aligned to legislative obligations prescribed by the *Procurement Act 2020* and Western Australia Procurement Rules. In addition, integrity education has also been conducted across departments that have high levels of interaction with contractors.

NMHS will continue to work in partnership with the Chief Procurement Office of the Health System and Department of Finance on procurement processes and comply with the Western Australian Jobs Act 2017 and the Western Australian Buy Local Policy 2022.

Expenditure and activity

The Board is committed to progressing and prioritising financial strategies that manage NMHS' activity within budget allocation. The Board will continue to monitor and develop strategies to maintain sufficient cash balances to meet its financial obligations.

NMHS is committed to working through the significant pressures on activity, expenditure and cash resources, with consideration of external social, economic and environmental factors. Where the pressures are related to factors beyond NMHS control, these will be raised and brought to the attention of and discussed with the System Manager.

NMHS remains committed to meeting its activity targets and to ensuring that State-wide services are resourced appropriately.

Implementation of election commitments and key ICT and infrastructure projects

The Board will ensure NMHS prioritises and delivers against the Government's election commitments for the 2022/2023 financial year. Regular reporting will be provided via the Department of Health.

The Graylands Reconfiguration and Forensic Taskforce

NMHS will continue to work in partnership with the Department of Health, Mental Health Commission, and the Graylands Reconfiguration and Forensics Taskforce (GRAFT) on the concept to reconfigure and rebalance mental health services across the state and boost the capacity of forensic mental health services. As the area of most immediate need, GRAFT has prioritised the first business case to focus on the expansion of Graylands' forensic mental health services. NMHS has been working closely with all key stakeholders (including people with lived experience) to develop this business case.

Women's Community Health Services

Women's Community Health Services for Karratha, Peel, the culturally and linguistically diverse South-Eastern Metropolitan corridor and Goldfields have all commenced providing their respective community services.

A solution to meet the requirements of the Kimberley Women's Health Program remains a priority, with NMHS working closely with stakeholders across State Government agencies, service providers in the Kimberley and peak bodies to implement this vital community health service for this area.

Albany Dental Clinic

NMHS continues to engage with the Department of Finance and the Department of Communities to realise the Government's commitment to doubling the size of the Albany General Dental Clinic from four public dental chairs to eight.

Aboriginal Maternity Group Practice

NMHS has designed a model of care and a service redesign is being processed in partnership with community to realise the establishment of an Aboriginal Maternity Group Practice at King Edward Memorial Hospital. The first birth has occurred in April 2023.

Acute Mental Health Beds and Campus Expansion – Joondalup Health Campus (JHC)

Work on the JHC expansion continues with three of the eight stages of work completed, and another three in progress. NMHS are working towards completion of the acute mental health bed unit at JHC in September 2023.

Strong Community Consultation for the new Women's and Newborns Hospital

The Women's and Newborns project team continue to engage in strong community consultation through consumer focus group workshops and the implementation of a Communications Reference Group. A Community and Stakeholder Engagement Stakeholder Strategy has been developed to guide this consultation.

Independent Governance Review

The Board acknowledges the tabling of the Independent Governance Review in Parliament and the recommendations of the Minister for Health; Mental Health and supports its findings. NMHS will work with the System Manager and other Health Services Providers to ensure the recommendations are implemented in a strategic and timely manner.

Advice to Government

The Board is committed to ensuring that the Minister for Health; Mental Health and their office is kept informed of current concerns, issues and potential issues and will continue to ensure progress is made in achieving the Government's priorities.

In summary, the Board understands that it is accountable and responsible to the Minister for Health; Mental Health in accordance with the HSP Boards Governance Policy and the Statutory Board Operations Policy Framework. The Board will comply with the obligations in the *Health Services Act 2016* and will continue to comply with the Board assurance processes and the requirement to submit the Annual Governance Attestation Statement at the end of each financial year.

The Board continues to work with the NMHS executive leadership team to build a new direction and future for the health service. NMHS has tackled and resolved many issues and challenges, thanks to the commitment of our people and our community. The Board remains committed to ensuring an innovative future and sustainable health system for Western Australians.

Yours sincerely



David Forbes AM
BOARD CHAIR

08 May 2023

cc: Dr Shirley Bowen Chief Executive, NMHS