



SMHS Board Communiqué

Excellent health care, every time

March 2023 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 27 March 2023.

At the beginning of the meeting, Board member Yvonne Parnell recognised both the Whadjuk people of the Noongar lands on which the Board was meeting and the Aboriginal communities across Western Australia. Yvonne reflected on the historic announcement made by the Prime Minister in the past week, where he confirmed the wording of the referendum on the proposed First Nations Voice to Parliament. Members agreed that one of the roles of the SMHS Board was ensuring informed choice.

Board members discussed and endorsed a proposed statement from the SMHS Board on the First Nations Voice to Parliament. This was developed following discussions at the February Board meeting. The final statement published on the SMHS website is:

As leaders of a health service provider, the Board of the South Metropolitan Health Service takes seriously our responsibility to undertake meaningful action on behalf of our Aboriginal patients and colleagues. The Board of the South Metropolitan Health Service endorses the Uluru Statement from the Heart and offers support in the referendum to recognise our First Nations people in the Constitution through an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Voice. We respect the referendum process and our organisation will seek to contribute positively by supporting informed public debate.

Representatives from the Corruption and Crime Commission (CCC) presented to the SMHS Board, providing a refresher on integrity matters. The Board and CCC representatives considered the importance of a good reporting culture in the public sector and having multiple channels to be able to report to. The presentation and discussion were welcomed by Board members.

In the Board Chair's report, I formally recognised Nola Naylor and Dr Anh Nguyen who were two of 16 people inducted into the WA Women's Hall of Fame for 2023. *Pictured right are the women inducted into this year's Hall of Fame including Nola (centre back) and Anh (front right).* I also acknowledged the Medical Administration team at Rockingham General Hospital (RGH) for winning the team of the season for the Rockingham Peel Group (RkPG) and for organising a Christmas gift drive for remote Aboriginal communities. I



reflected on the recently passed *Health Services Amendment Bill 2021* and meetings and events I have attended in the past month, including the outstanding IMPROVE conference at FSH on 23 March.



I was delighted to report back on several meetings I had with Ms Wong Sook Thow from Singapore Health. Ms Wong was in WA to attend the IMPROVE conference and to finalise the memorandum of understanding between SMHS and SingHealth to develop nursing and midwifery education and research opportunities. This is an exciting 'twinning' and the Board looks forward to seeing the relationship progress. *Pictured left is Ms Wong presenting at the IMPROVE conference.*

At each Board meeting, members consider patient stories to ensure the patient is always at the forefront of our considerations. This month, Board members discussed patient feedback relating to hand hygiene techniques in one of the SMHS hospitals. Board members and the SMHS Chief Executive discussed actions being taken to improve hand hygiene compliance, including a reduction in healthcare acquired infection pilot project at FSH.

This month's Board meeting included reports and discussion on the following items:

- The [Independent review of WA health system governance](#). This review was tabled in Parliament in October 2022. On 14 March 2023, the WA Government released its response to the review and further information can be found [here](#).
- The 2023 Minister for Health's Statement of Expectations and the draft SMHS Statement of Intent.
- A review of Board members compliance with mandatory training.
- The 2023/24 engagement and communication strategy for the SMHS Board. This will incorporate all visits and engagement already undertaken by the Board, including quarterly safety walks and monthly Board to Ward visits.

The Chief Executive's report this month included:

- Acknowledgement of [National Close the Gap Day](#) which is marked on the third Thursday in March each year. The day draws attention to the continuing need for education and advocacy for Australia's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.
- Emergency and elective access across the SMHS' sites.
- The Peel Health Campus (PHC) transition and redevelopment project. PHC will transition to SMHS in August 2024.
- The Your Voice in Health staff survey and Public Sector Census which are currently open. Understanding the views of staff and the culture across the organisation is essential.
- A reflection on a recent Medical Research and Innovation roundtable where Minister Dawson, Minister for Emergency Services; Innovation and the Digital Economy; Medical Research; Volunteering, recognised the excellent work being done by SMHS.
- The draft SMHS Research Strategy which is expected to be launched within the coming months.

Chairs and members of the Board Committees provided reports on the issues considered at their most recent meetings and highlighted specific items including:

- The Safety and Quality Committee discussed the importance of the emergency and elective access recovery program and regular safety and quality reports, including the consideration of clinical incidents.
- The Finance and Governance Committee discussed the finance, activity and staffing reports, reviewed contract management reports and risks and approved the PHC services agreement.
- The Audit and Risk Committee considered the PHC project update, monthly lost time injury data, the risk register report, audit log, internal audit reports, litigation schedule, integrity and ethics matters, and the work health and safety report.



Finally, Board member Karen Brown took the opportunity to congratulate SMHS staff member Nicole Smith (*pictured left*) for her recent completion of Youth Focus' [Hawaiian Ride for Youth](#). This is a charity event to raise money for youth mental health and involves a gruelling 700km ride from Albany to Perth stopping to speak at schools about mental health along the way. This year the event raised \$2.29 million. Congratulations Nicole on your achievement!

The next regular meeting of the Board is scheduled to take place on Thursday 27 April 2023 at FSH.

Adjunct Associate Professor Robyn Collins
Board Chair, South Metropolitan Health Service
31 March 2023

The meeting was being held during the Noongar season of Bunuru – the season of adolescence. Bunuru is February to March, the hottest time of the year with little or no rain. Noongar people traditionally acknowledge six seasons, which are indicated by the changes in local weather, plants and animals.

