



SMHS Board Communiqué

Excellent health care, every time

August 2022 Meeting

This Communiqué highlights key discussions of interest at the South Metropolitan Health Service (SMHS) Board's Board meeting which was held at Rockingham General Hospital (RGH) on Monday 22 August 2022.

Djilba

Season of conception



Board members noted that the Board meeting was being 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. As the temperatures continue to rise, the flower stalks of the balgas (grass trees) emerge in preparation for the coming Kamarang season. Noongar people traditionally acknowledge six seasons, which are indicated by the changes in local weather, plants and animals.

Before Board this month, Board members enjoyed a visit to the new Moordibirdup Ward at RGH. The new 30-bed modular ward opened to patients on 15 August 2022 and provides RGH with additional capacity for general medical patients. Board members heard from Nurse Unit Manager Paul as well as two patients who were happy to share their positive impressions of the care received in the new ward.



Each month, a Board member is asked to acknowledge the traditional owners of the land on which the Board meets. The South Metropolitan Health Service is based within Whadjuk lands and Bindjareb lands in the south of the health area, both lands of the Noongar nation. This month, Amanda Boudville reflected on a case of institutional racism that she had recently witnessed while shopping and members talked about the importance of equal treatment, equity of access and compassionate care for all people accessing SMHS services, particularly vulnerable groups.

At each Board meeting, members consider patient stories early in the meeting to ensure that the patient is always at the forefront of our considerations. Both patient stories at this Board meeting were related to communication failures with patients and their family members. One of the stories related to a teenage surgical patient and Board members appreciated hearing the story directly from Kath Smith, Executive Director Rockingham Peel Group (RkPG), who was this month's Executive observer.

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

- An update on RGH's upcoming accreditation against the national standards by the Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care. The standards describe the level of care that should be provided by health service organisations and the systems needed to deliver such care.
- An update on the SMHS Strategic Plan 2021-25. The goals within the Strategic Plan are monitored by the SMHS Board committees and reports are provided to the Board by the committee chairs.

- Review and approval of the annual governance attestation statement. The SMHS Board is responsible for ensuring an effective governance framework is in place for the organisation and the attestation statement sets out board governance practices and controls in operation within the last financial year.
- Quarterly reporting against the latest Minister for Health's Statement of Expectations. You can read the Minister's [Statement of Expectations](#) on our website here and the responding [SMHS Statement of Intent](#).
- Ratification of the dates for the SMHS Board and committee meetings for 2023.

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

- The continued management of COVID-19 including the recent publication of the 'Blue SAR'.
- Ongoing work being done to ease the pressure on hospital emergency departments and improve access to elective surgery.
- The Peel Health Campus transformation project. The hospital will be managed by SMHS from August 2023.
- The appointment of Dr Jon Chan to the position of wellbeing lead for SMHS, with a focus on engaging with and supporting all clinicians.
- The recent research strategy day, which saw 32 members of the SMHS research community gather to plan research efforts and investment over the next five years.
- Attendance at a ministerial roundtable for research and innovation and a cardiology research symposium.
- NAIDOC Week, which is celebrated across SMHS from 22-26 August to ensure that the maximum number of people can be involved. Led by the SMHS Aboriginal Health Strategy team, the week incorporates a jam-packed calendar of events. I was fortunate to attend one of the events at Fremantle Hospital on Tuesday 23 August.



Board members very much enjoy having the opportunity to get out to the sites across SMHS and meet staff and see our facilities. This time the Board was pleased to meet with the Executive team from RkPG as well as staff who have done an exceptional job in recent months such as those managing the COVID surge and the opening of the new ward. *Pictured left are Board Member Dr Ryan Atkinson and me talking to the Nursing Co Director Surgery and Specialist Care and Head of Department Obstetrics.*

In the Board Chair's report, I commended members of the SMHS Executive and the entire team for their hard work managing our services in very challenging circumstances over the past few months. I also highlighted the upcoming SMHS Excellence Awards.

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 Fiona Stanley Fremantle Hospitals Group (FSFHG) accreditation held in June and the upcoming RGH accreditation. The Committee also discussed regular safety and quality reports as well as the emergency and elective access recovery program.
- The Finance and Governance Committee discussed the finance, activity and staffing reports, reviewed contract management reports and approved a procurement business case and contract award.
- The Audit and Risk Committee considered the audit log, corporate risks, internal audits, the litigation schedule and integrity and ethics matters.
- The People, Culture and Engagement Committee discussed communication and engagement achievements as well as patient and staff feedback matters. The Committee Chair and I also reflected on the FSFHG Consumer Advisory Council meeting that we attended in June 2022.

The next regular meeting of the SMHS Board is scheduled for Thursday 29 September 2022 at Fiona Stanley Hospital.

Adjunct Associate Professor Robyn Collins
Board Chair, South Metropolitan Health Service
29 August 2022