



The Hon. Roger Cook MLA  
Deputy Premier; Minister for Health  
Level 13, Dumas House  
2 Havelock Street  
West Perth  
WA 6005

Dear Minister,

Thank you for your letter dated 4 June 2021 outlining your Statement of Expectations for the East Metropolitan Health Service (EMHS). As part of the EMHS Board's commitment to accountability and transparency, a monthly report is provided to you, which outlines the priorities and focus for the Board during the reporting period. Whilst this will continue to be provided, the Board acknowledges your request for a quarterly report to provide updates against each of the expectations outlined in your letter.

In response to these expectations, I would like to outline the following:

## **COVID-19**

The EMHS Board acknowledges the continuing effect of the impact COVID has had on the Western Australian community, whilst appreciating the efforts of the State Government to minimise the threat of community transmission within Western Australia (WA).

The EMHS Board remains committed to ensuring our services have ongoing readiness to respond to the pandemic. However, it is important to highlight the impact of COVID and the challenges this presents for the ability for health services to meet their performance targets such as elective surgery waitlists. EMHS is also highly cognisant of the impact the pandemic, as well as the resultant recruitment shortages, has had on the wellbeing of our staff and the level of fatigue across the organisation. We will, however, continue to support our staff and do our best endeavours to continue delivering services in a timely manner.

## **Safety and Quality**

The provision of safe, high-quality care to our community continues to be a priority. Performance against safety and quality indicators is closely monitored by hospital site Executive, area Executive and Board level. As you noted, this is particularly important at a time of staff fatigue during this period of high demand.

In addition, following the release of Prof. Hugo Mascie-Taylor's report in 2017, the EMHS committed to a phased approach for public reporting of its safety and quality data. Since the first release in late 2018, further information has continued to be released to the public in a phased approach. Hospital level data pertaining to a range of safety and quality indicators, compared against benchmarks, will be released in the next iteration.

***Our Vision: Healthy people, amazing care. Koorda moort, moorditj kwabadak***

**Office of the Chief Executive, East Metropolitan Health Service**

GPO Box X2213, PERTH WA 6847

Telephone: (08) 9224 3878 | Email: [EMHS.CEcorrespondence@health.wa.gov.au](mailto:EMHS.CEcorrespondence@health.wa.gov.au)

[www.eastmetropolitan.health.wa.gov.au](http://www.eastmetropolitan.health.wa.gov.au)



## **Mental Health Priorities**

The EMHS Board supports the implementation of the priorities outlined in the *WA State Priorities Mental Health, Alcohol and Other Drugs 2020-2024*. The EMHS Board remains concerned at the increased demand and level of complexity for mental health services and the current capacity in the system, which is available to meet this demand. However, we will continue to work with the Mental Health Commission (MHC) and other relevant stakeholders across government to deliver these priorities.

The EMHS Chief Executive is a member of the Mental Health Executive Committee (MHEC) chaired by the Mental Health Commission. EMHS has appointed a Mental Health Clinical Lead to advocate for effective working relationships with the MHC, DoH and other HSPs and to oversee clinical engagement in areawide policy, strategy and service improvement for Mental Health and Alcohol and Other Drug (AOD) services. The Clinical Lead provides an update to the Board at our monthly Board meeting.

To ensure additional governance, EMHS has established the EMHS Mental Health Leads group, inclusive of representation from St John of God Midland Public Hospital. New services, borne from the direction of the MHEC, have also commenced; for example the Active Recovery Team Service. Other priorities will be delivered in line with the approved funding provided from the MHC, however, pricing to deliver these services needs to be at a level to enable the provision of safe and high-quality care.

## **Workforce Safety, Wellbeing and Engagement**

The EMHS Board is committed to the implementation of strategies supporting the health and wellbeing of the EMHS workforce through the successful implementation of a number of initiatives from the 2020 Your Voice in Health Survey, including: a reward and recognition framework, managers induction program, above and below the line values workshops and a new performance review tool for nurses and midwives.

It was pleasing to see the increased participation rate for the 2021 Your Voice in Health Survey of 43% and we will develop actions plans to support any feedback from the results when they are available.

Violence against our staff is completely unacceptable and EMHS has revisited its Stop the Violence Action Plan and refreshed this for 2021 with new strategies incorporating feedback from staff.

Significant concern is held by the Board in relation to the risk to patient's and staff safety due to capacity and overcrowding because of the current limitations around infrastructure.

## **Commitment to Permanent Employment**

The review of casual and fixed term contract employees, as part of CI23, resulted in 395 employees being appointed on a permanent basis. An ongoing process through the Pathway to Permanency review process will continue to identify and result in the conversion to permanent employment, subject to meeting the pre-requisite requirements.

Monitoring of temporary working arrangements and progression of the conversion to permanency will continued to be reported to the EMHS Board Planning & Performance Committee on a bi-monthly basis.

### **Sustainable Health Review**

The EMHS Board is committed to actively promoting and supporting the enduring strategies and recommendations of the Sustainable Health Review (SHR) Final Report (Report). EMHS continues to monitor the implementation of eight prioritised recommendations for local implementation through periodic reports to the Area Executive Group.

### **Research and Innovation**

EMHS has a strong focus on innovation and research and the launch of the HIVE (Health in a Virtual Environment) – the first of its kind in Western Australia – is a good example of how innovation can dramatically transform the way we care for our patients. The recent appointment of a dedicated Director of Innovation and Research will continue to drive the delivery of the Innovation Hub, as well as promote intellectual curiosity and research to improve the services we provide to our patients.

### **Election Commitments and Key EMHS Workstreams**

Key capital works projects are being implemented including the Innovation Hub, Royal Perth Hospital (RPH) Mental Health Unit, RPH Intensive Care Unit, Bentley Redevelopment infrastructure upgrades and Kalamunda Palliative Care, are on track. Regular reporting on election commitment progress continues to be provided through the Department of Health. EMHS has submitted an emerging cost pressures submission as part of the 2021-22 budget process as a number of our capital projects are facing increased costs due to market conditions in the building and construction industry .

### **Hospital Performance Targets**

The Health Service Performance Report (HSPR) Safety & Quality Indicators continue to be monitored on a monthly basis by the Board's Safety & Quality Committee. A number of strategies have been adopted to remain vigilant on areas of performance, inclusive of an EMHS Hospital Acquired Complications (HACs) Strategy, unplanned readmissions case review process and prevention of hospital acquired blood stream infections strategy.

The Board continues to closely monitor performance against Western Australian Elective Surgery Target (WEST) and WA Emergency Access Target (WEAT) on a monthly basis and has clearly communicated to the Area Executive Group that performance needs to improve. Several initiatives across the sites are underway and progress against action plans are reported through to the EMHS Board Planning & Performance Committee and the Board.

It should be noted that the current physical constraints of the Emergency Department at Royal Perth Hospital, as well as the limitations of its current footprint, provide significant challenges to both WEAT performance and staff safety.

## Care Opinion

The EMHS Board remain committed to Care Opinion and the stories are regularly monitored through the Board Safety & Quality Committee. The Board were pleased to note that Kalamunda Hospital was awarded, as one of this year's winners of the 2021 Care Opinion Award, for best compassionate care and best practice responses to Care Opinion Stories.

In addition to Care Opinion, EMHS have adopted a continuous form of patient feedback with the implementation of the My Say Survey, to supplement the Care Opinion process.

EMHS is in the process of developing a Consumer Engagement Framework. The Framework will explore new opportunities for the use of online and digital technology for the purpose of community engagement.

## Financial Performance

The EMHS Board remains focused on progressing and prioritising financial strategies that maximise revenue collection and constrain growth in expenditure and costs. This in turn supports both short- and long-term financial sustainability. Maintaining this approach over the past five financial years, has seen the Board achieve its operational objectives of a positive operational Net Cost of Service position, while concurrently delivering high quality healthcare services to those in its catchment and others in need. The minor works program is approved and agreed each year, and the Board receives regular updates and reports on projects within that program, and how funds are being applied and expended on a monthly basis at the Board Finance Committee.

EMHS public hospitals are all aged facilities except St John of God Midland Public Hospital and there are ongoing challenges to meet statutory and compliance requirements in these facilities and continue to provide excellent care. The EMHS Board will endeavour to support the implementation of priorities, this will need to be done within allocated resources. There continues to be a price differentiation between the activity funded by the Department of Health and that of the MHC. This issue has been raised with the MHC who I understand are having ongoing discussions with Treasury.

## Recovery

The EMHS Board are committed to the development of plans to ensure that EMHS is well placed in the recovery phase of this current pandemic. Regular reporting to the Department of Health - Health Executive Committee is provided on a monthly basis on the Health Recovery Program Report.

Additionally, recovery will focus on workforce engagement, retention and recruitment and alignment with national standards to ensure services grow within a strong governance framework with supported people to deliver care within a values-based leadership team.

## **WA Health System Governance**

The EMHS Board will continue to fulfill its function, roles, responsibilities and accountabilities as outlined in the *HSP Board – Governance Policy* that sits within the *Statutory Board Operations Policy Framework* and as prescribed in the *Health Services Act 2016*.

## **Advice to Government**

The EMHS Board fully commits to continuing to provide accurate and timely advice to the Government on significant issues in its core areas of business and ensuring the progression of achieving the Government's priorities. The Board's Annual Governance Attestation Statement is to be tabled for endorsement at the July Board meeting.

Yours sincerely



Mr Ian Smith PSM  
**BOARD CHAIR**  
**EAST METROPOLITAN HEALTH SERVICE**

27 July 2021