



# SMHS Board Communiqué

*Excellent health care, every time*

## February 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 26 February 2024.

Board members noted the meeting was being held during the Noongar season of Bunuru – the season of adolescence. Bunuru is the hottest time of the year, with little or no rain. Hot easterly winds continue, with a cooling sea breeze most afternoons along the coast. Traditionally those living and fishing by our coast, rivers and estuaries enjoyed a diet high in sea and freshwater foods.



This month, Board members welcomed the Director General of WA Health, Dr David Russell-Weisz ahead of his final month in the position, for a discussion about strategic matters, priorities and challenges. While the Chief Executive and I meet with the Director General on a regular basis, this was an excellent opportunity for all Board members to connect with the System Manager in an engaging and positive conversation. The Board also took the opportunity to acknowledge Dr Russell-Weisz for his commitment, compassion and leadership throughout his time as Director General, and the proactive impact he has had on WA Health as a system.

As part of this month’s acknowledgement of traditional owners, Board member Yvonne Parnell acknowledged the Whadjuk people of the Noongar lands on which the Board was meeting. Yvonne shared a newspaper article from the *Northern Territory News* that she had reflected on several times over recent months. Yvonne noted how much more work there is to be done for the Aboriginal community, and the Board reflected on the courage of a 14-year-old to write such a powerful letter.





For this month's patient stories, Board members heard about a patient at FSH who was managed through the [LifeFit-SurgFit](#) program, and who undertook all the necessary steps to optimise her chances towards a speedy recovery post-surgery.

The second story shared with the Board related to a patient referred to the Statewide Care Navigator Service (SWCNS) to access voluntary assisted dying (VAD), and how the service processed this referral in a timeframe reflective of the patient and his family's sense of urgency. It was also noted that the SMHS Communications team work with the VAD SWCNS team every two months to produce a [podcast series, \*This is my stop\*](#), which shares the lived experiences of accessing VAD in WA.

In the Board Chair's report, I provided Board members with an update on the progress of the Board evaluation process and outlined the recent and upcoming stakeholder meetings I attended.

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

- Emergency and elective access across SMHS' sites.
- The Peel Health Campus (PHC) transition and redevelopment project update.
- Kara Maar eating disorders service accepting GP referrals in a phased approach from 19 February.
- Congratulations to Professor Fiona Wood (*pictured right*) who was appointed an Officer of the Order of Australia.



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 access recovery program and considered regular safety and quality reports, including clinical incidents, and received a quarterly update on strategic plan progress.
- The Finance and Governance Committee discussed the finance, activity, and staffing reports, reviewed contract management reports and risks, considered the strategic plan progress and endorsed a procurement business case.
- The Audit and Risk Committee considered the PHC project update, lost time injury data, the risk register report, audit log, internal audit reports, integrity and ethics matters and the strategic plan progress update.
- The People, Culture and Engagement Committee discussed the consumer advisory councils, doctors in training, the strategic plan progress report, communication achievements as well as patient experience and workforce matters.

The next regular meeting of the Board is scheduled to take place on Monday 25 March 2024 at FSH.

**Adjunct Associate Professor Robyn Collins**  
**Board Chair, South Metropolitan Health Service**  
**5 March 2024**