



SMHS Board Communiqué

Excellent health care, every time

September 2025 meeting



As the days warm up, the first newborns are seen and heard. Their parents provide them food, guide them through foraging tasks and protect them from bigger animals, including people. As the season progresses and temperatures rise ahead of the coming Kambarang season, the flower stalks of the balgas, also known as grass trees, emerge.

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 Tuesday 30 September 2025.

At the beginning of the meeting, Board member Karen Brown acknowledged the Whadjuk people of the Noongar lands on which the Board was meeting, extending that respect to all First Nations people present. As the final meeting for several members, Karen reflected on the purpose of the Acknowledgement of Traditional Owners which are instilled in the SMHS Board's agenda and summarised some of the key learnings she has absorbed in previous reflections. While they can be challenging and confronting, they can also be inspiring and are an opportunity for learning. With several founding Board members departing, it was acknowledged this standing item on the Board agenda is an important legacy.

This month in patient stories, the Board viewed a short clip - *Empathy: The human connection to patient care* produced by the Cleveland Clinic as a reminder of the importance of compassionate care. The Board agreed the commitment to compassionate care and the acknowledgement of the patient experience is of the utmost importance.

In the Chief Executive's report, Neil Doverly provided updates on:

- Executive recruitment;
- financial performance and management;
- SMHS Quality Management Program progress with the Virginia Mason Institute; and

The Board Committee Chairs shared updates on items considered at their September 2025 meetings:

- The Safety and Quality Committee received a presentation from the Community Services team regarding a project conducted in collaboration with Community Physiotherapy Services and WA Primary Health Alliance. The project focused on providing options for GPs who are managing complex high-risk patients in the community to access and receive timely and appropriate care to reduce presentations to hospital. The Committee also received quarterly project service reports, considered two Board to Ward reports and endorsed the annual Governing Body attestation statement to be progressed to Board.
- The Finance and Governance Committee received a quarterly contract management procurement and exception report, considered the Committee's risks and noted the 2024/25 annual financial statements.
- The Audit and Risk Committee received an update from the Office of the Auditor General representative. The Committee also considered the audit log, risk register and integrity and ethics updates and reviewed an internal audit report.

In my Chair report, I acknowledged the incoming Board members who commence their terms as of 1 October 2025: Mr Brian Mumme, Ms Pearl Proud and Ms Libby Soderholm. I also congratulated Mr Liam Roche who has been appointed as Board Chair and Ms Sue Le Souef as Deputy Board Chair, both who will commence as of 1 October.

Following the meeting, the Board invited SMHS colleagues to join in farewelling the four members finishing their tenure as of 30 September: Ms Kim Gibson, Deputy Chair (pictured right, who was unable to attend), Mr Julian Henderson, Ms Yvonne Parnell and myself (pictured below, L-R with Neil Doverty, Chief Executive SMHS).



Mr Neil Doverty and Mr Liam Roche shared some kind words acknowledging our commitment and contribution to the Board over our nine-year terms, and I reflected on my time as Chair of a compassionate and efficient Board.

I have thoroughly enjoyed my time as SMHS Board Chair and look forward to watching on as SMHS staff continue to strive for excellence in everything they do.



(L-R: Neil Doverty, Chief Executive SMHS and Board members Julian Henderson, Liam Roche, Yvonne Parnell, Robyn Collins, Dr Amanda Boudville, Karen Brown, Colin Murphy and Sue Le Souef. Absent: Kim Gibson and Dr Stephanie Trust).

The next Board meeting is scheduled to take place on Monday 27 October 2025 at FSH.

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

30 September 2025