



# SMHS Board Communiqué

*Excellent health care, every time*

## January 2026 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 19 January 2026.



After the dry of the Kambarang season, Birak sees the rains ease and the warm weather really start to take hold. During this season fledgling birds venture out of their nests, though some still stay close to their parents. Reptiles prepare to shed their old skin for a new one. As temperatures continue to rise in the lead up to the Bunuru season, baby frogs complete their transformation into adulthood.

Ms Libby Soderholm provided an Acknowledgement of Traditional Owners, the Whadjuk people of the Noongar lands on which the Board was meeting and extended that respect to all First Nations people present. Libby shared a recent experience in her capacity as a member on another board, where she undertook a cultural tour of Point Peron, in Rockingham, including a Welcome to Country smoking ceremony and the sharing of bush medicine and Dreamtime stories. Left with a sense of gratitude and responsibility to listen more deeply, to respect the stories and knowledge of First Nations people, and to consider how we all can contribute to reconciliation.

The Board received a patient story from the Kara Maar eating disorders facility, where a patient underwent inpatient treatment for several weeks, and achieved significantly positive results after decades of disordered eating cycles. The Board reflected on the success of this patient's journey and others through the Kara Maar facility, and noted the investment made by former Minister for Health, Amber-Jade Sanderson MLA, in committing to providing this service for vulnerable patients across the metropolitan area.

In the Board Chair report, Liam Roche reflected on attending the SMHS Care to Lead graduation ceremony in December and provided updates on several recent meetings with SMHS management and the Department of Health. Liam also thanked Board members for participating in the Christmas events across SMHS sites, including staff BBQs and judging the Christmas decorating competitions. *Pictured right: Sue Le Souef, Deputy Board Chair and Dr Asheila Narang, Executive Director Rockingham Peel Group at the Rockingham Christmas decorating judging.*



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

- The Safety and Quality Committee received a presentation from the Peel Health Campus physiotherapy team regarding their project to reduce interhospital transfers for spinal bracing patients. The Committee also received a Board to Ward report and considered an update on Aboriginal health mental health.
- The Finance and Governance Committee discussed a contract management procurement and exception report, considered the Committee's risks and noted the 2025-26 mid-year budget review outcomes.

- The Audit and Risk Committee considered the audit log, risk register and integrity and ethics updates. The Committee also endorsed an amendment to the SMHS Authorisations and Delegations Schedule to be progressed to Board for approval.
- The People, Culture and Engagement Committee endorsed the SMHS Multicultural Plan 2026-2030 and endorsed the recommended approach to the SMHS Equity, Diversity & Inclusion Strategy & Action Plan 2026. The Committee also received quarterly workforce and patient experience data updates and a corporate communications dashboard.

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

- Progress in the partnership between SMHS and the Virginia Mason Institute and the naming of the SMHS Improvement Method program.
- Phased opening of the first Older Adult Community Integrated Care Hub in WA Health at the Cockburn Integrated Hub facility.
- Home Hospital program planned expansion to Rockingham General Hospital and Peel Health Campus.

The next Board meeting will take place on Monday 23 February 2026 at FSH.

**Ms Sue Le Souef**  
**A/Board Chair, South Metropolitan Health Service**

29 January 2026