



SMHS Board Communiqué

Excellent health care, every time

February 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 23 February 2026.



After the increasing warm weather of the Birak season, 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. Bunuru is the time of the white flowers, with white flowering gums such as jarrah, marri and ghost gums in full bloom.

Mr Brian Mumme 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. Brian reflected on the recent 18-year anniversary of then Prime Minister Kevin Rudd’s apology to the Stolen Generation, and shared the view of some prominent Indigenous leaders who say the apology was significant and that we can take pride in progress, but that it is also important to reflect and acknowledge on what more needs to be done.

The Board received two patient stories this month; the first relating to an older adult who was referred to the SMHS Older Adult Health Hub, the first to be opened for WA Health which started taking referrals in December and is operating out of the Cockburn Health and Community facility. The second patient story related to the wraparound care and support provided by Peel Health Campus’ Boodjari Mia antenatal clinic for a female Aboriginal patient with complex needs. The Board acknowledged the great examples of community in-reach and coordination of care services in both cases.



Dr Daniela Vecchio, Head of Mental Health and Western Australian of the Year, also presented on her innovative Gaming Addiction Clinic during the session (pictured right with Dr Dominic Mallon, Chair Freona CSA; Professor Fiona Stanley; Ms Sue Le Souef and myself).

Sue Le Souef, Deputy Board Chair and I attending the Djin Djin Education Round hosted by the Freona Consultant Staff Association at FSH on 18 February. I was honoured to represent the SMHS Chief Executive, Neil Doverly in accepting a copy of Professor Fiona Stanley’s most recent book on Aboriginal health (pictured left).



The Board Committee Chairs shared updates on items considered at their February 2026 meetings:

- The Safety and Quality Committee reviewed a quarterly project report, a recent Board to Ward visit report and received an update on SMHS research activity. The Committee also received a QI presentation from the mental health team.
- The Finance and Governance Committee discussed a contract management procurement and exception report, reviewed the financial performance for January 2026 and endorsed the progression of the PathWest and SMHS Service Agreement 2025-26.
- The Audit and Risk Committee considered the litigation schedule, integrity and ethics report, audit log and risk register for January 2026.

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

- Hospital in the Home expansion to Rockingham and Peel in early February.
- SMHS' invitation to sit on the WA Government AUKUS Community Taskforce.
- Confirmation that additional beds will be opened in the State Rehabilitation Service and FSH Intensive Care Unit, as well as a range of other activities linked to the 2026 Winter Strategy.

The next Board meeting will take place on Monday 31 March 2026 at FSH.

Mr Liam Roche
Board Chair, South Metropolitan Health Service

25 February 2026



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