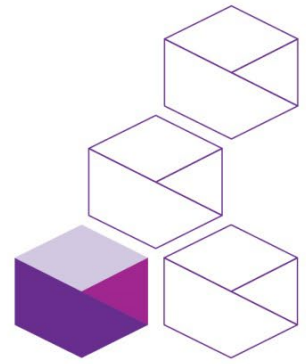




SMHS Board Communiqué

Excellent health care, every time

September 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 Tuesday 29 September 2026.

Djilba

Season of conception

First spring: August to September
Mixture of wet days, cold nights and pleasant warm days.



After the cold and wet Makuru, Djilba is a transitional season. The days range from very cold and clear to warmer, rainy and windy days, with occasional sunny days.

It is the start of immense flowering across the southwest. Yellow and cream flowers start to appear in masses, including yellow flowering plants such as wattle.

Main food sources traditionally included many of the land-based grazing animals from the previous Makuru season, including the yongka (kangaroo), wetj (emu) and the koomool (possum).

I provided an Acknowledgement to Traditional Owners, recognising the Whadjuk people of the Noongar Nation, the Traditional Custodians of the land on which the Board was meeting. In reflecting on the importance of active listening and a recent smoking ceremony, I was reminded that this land is far more than the place where our hospitals and health services are located. It is Country that has been cared for, understood and respected by Noongar people for more than 60,000 years. Knowledge has been passed from generation to generation through stories, experience, observation and, importantly, through listening. Listening to Elders, listening to Country, and listening to community.

Complementing the Board's strategic discussion focus for the month, we welcomed Emma Davies, Executive Director Transformation, and Abbie Norrish, Program Manager Transformation, who provided a progress update on the development of the SMHS Strategic Plan 2027-2030. We heard the key findings from the Environmental Scan and the emerging strategic themes, provided feedback on strategic risks, opportunities, future trends, and areas requiring further exploration through consultation & strategy development.

The Board welcomed Croydon Sequeira, Manager Work Health and Safety, who led a discussion on the increasing intersection between clinical governance and Work Health and Safety (WHS) obligations, including emerging duties owed to patients and other persons under the *Work Health and Safety Act 2020* (WA). Through a case study and supporting due diligence resource, Board members enhanced their understanding of Officer responsibilities and the importance of seeking assurance that appropriate governance, systems and resources are in place to support safe and effective care delivery.

As part of my Chair Report, I highlighted the BMJ & VMI Future Health Leadership co-hosted event that brought together senior hospital leaders, executive and directors from across the health sector to explore the practical approaches for creating high performing organisations.

I also reflected on the farewell event recently held in honour of departing Board members, Dr Amanda Boudville and Sue Le Souef. This was a heart-warming opportunity to acknowledge and extend our sincere thanks for their longstanding invaluable contribution. (Mr Liam Roche, Dr Amanda Boudville, Sue Le Souef and SMHS Chief Executive, Mr Neil Doherty pictured right).



The Chief Executive's Report provided the Board with an overview of key organisational developments, operational matters, and significant activities across the health service during the reporting period, including:

- SMHS Winter strategy update, outlining achievements and actions across prevention, patient flow, and bed capacity aimed at sustaining quality care and service accessibility throughout demand pressures. An evaluation report on the SMHS response to winter is being undertaken.
- An update on the V-block Mental Health Unit at Fremantle Hospital.
- The Fire in FSH ICU recovery efforts, as well as the Minister's visit to ICU and Incident Command Centre.
- Governance and leadership transformation: change management program.
- SMHS Improvement Method activities.
- Finalisation of the SMHS Annual Report 2025-2026
- System-wide phase three Nursing Ratios roll-out postponement.

Aligned with the bi-monthly Board sub-committees, there were no sub-committee meetings held this month. These Committees will resume in October as per bi-monthly schedule. Key highlights from those meetings will be provided at the October Board meeting, with relevant matters reported through October Board Communiqué.

The next Board meeting is scheduled for Monday 26 October 2026 at FSH.

Mr Liam Roche
Board Chair, South Metropolitan Health Service

5 October 2026