



The Hon. Amber-Jade Sanderson MLA
Minister for Health; Mental Health
5th Floor Dumas House
2 Havelock Street
West Perth WA 6005

Dear Minister

East Metropolitan Health Service Board Statement of Intent

Thank you for your letter dated 2 March 2023 outlining your Statement of Expectations for the East Metropolitan Health Service (EMHS). In response to your expectations, the EMHS Board is providing our Statement of Intent as follows:

COVID is the new normal

Public COVID-19 testing, and vaccination clinics have closed, and all dedicated COVID-19 staff resources have returned to business-as-usual positions. The 'EMHS Living with COVID-19 Framework' details how EMHS will continue to monitor COVID-19 and respond, as part of our operational requirements, inclusive of case surge identification, N95 mask fit testing and mandatory PPE training and assessment.

Mask wearing in clinical areas continues to be monitored by infection control teams based on advice from the Department of Health (DoH), numbers of admitted patients infected with COVID-19 and levels of COVID-19 in the community.

EMHS identified a number of key lessons learnt from its experience during the pandemic including:

- The importance of streamlining the recruitment and onboarding process with EMHS creating a Talent Acquisition Team to manage the recruitment process, initially for nursing and midwifery staff, then the program was expanded into patient support services and mental health recruitment.
- Strengthening Staff Wellbeing resources through the release of the EMHS Wellbeing Strategy. The Strategy has three pillars – prevent, promote, and respond to provide and maintain a psychosocially safe workplace. A comprehensive implementation plan has been developed, with a psychosocial support program being piloted in the Armadale Hospital Emergency Department.
- Developing competencies in staff to build a more transferrable workforce in times of demand surging, with a focus on Intensive Care Unit (ICU) core competencies.
- EMHS continues to invest in Health in a Virtual Environment (HIVE) to allow innovative remote monitoring (including wearable devices) and specialist care

Our Vision: Healthy people, amazing care. Koorda moort, moorditj kwabadak
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of patients from a centralised care team using artificial intelligence to alert clinical deterioration in patients.

- EMHS is also working collaboratively with the WA Country Health Service (WACHS) to establish a HIVE unit with 6 bedspaces at the Kalgoorlie Health Campus in the High Dependency Unit. This will allow WACHS to provide enhanced monitoring and clinical support to patients at Kalgoorlie and other sites in the future.

Sustainable Health Review – revised priorities

EMHS is highly engaged in supporting system programs against the prioritised Sustainable Health Review (SHR) recommendations. This includes the digital health program with the rollout of the Electronic Medical Record (EMR), new/innovative funding models and joint commissioning and the outpatient access reform program striving to transform outpatient access and care linked with digital health enablers.

The EMHS Chief Executive has and will continue to be the executive lead for the SHR recommendation 13, and the ongoing comprehensive program of work focused on enhancing management of complex chronic disease. This will particularly be driven through the growth of integrated and whole-person care service provision in the community, in partnership with hospital services. Expanding community services is acknowledged by EMHS as critical in supporting hospital avoidance and sustainably meeting rising demand for health services.

EMHS is committed to identifying and embedding strategies within all Focus recommendations which have a positive and sustained impact on Aboriginal Cultural Governance, Aboriginal Health Outcomes, mental health outcomes, health equity across diverse and vulnerable population groups, preventative healthcare, and partnership approaches.

EMHS key focus areas for the year ahead include the implementation of EMHS-wide plans including the Aboriginal Health and Wellbeing Framework Action Plan and Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Plan; commencement of an EMHS Multicultural Advisory Group; a continued focus on implementation of innovative models in mental health care; and ongoing strong partnerships with Non-Government Organisations (NGOs) to support delivery of important services for our vulnerable homeless population, including the Medical Respite Centre.

Safety & Quality

The EMHS Board remains committed to the provision of safe, high-quality care to our community, and safety and quality performance is frequently monitored at hospital, area executive and Board level. EMHS continues to perform well comparatively against the state-wide benchmarked Safety & Quality Indicator Set (SQiS).

Following the release of the Independent Inquiry into the Perth Children's Hospital (PCH), EMHS used this as an opportunity for organisational learning and considerable progress has been made against a documented action plan of initiatives.

A strong focus remains in preventing harm from healthcare acquired complications and finding new and innovative ways of improving communication with and truly engaging with our consumers, their carers and community.

EMHS has completed a phased approach to the publication of safety and quality data in their public facing website, with the provision of hospital level metrics and commentary. The information on the website is updated twice a year and the next update is imminent.

Ramping, Transfer of Care and Patient Flow

The EMHS Board is committed to providing safe and timely access to care for our community. EMHS has established a robust Emergency Access Program (EAP) with key areas of focus including improving both access and exit block to EMHS Emergency Departments (ED) and hospital services, with an overall objective of improving patient flow within a whole-of-hospital approach. There are currently > 40 workstreams included under the EAP across each of the EMHS hospital sites, plus centrally managed area-level works.

To deliver this program, the EMHS EAP emphasises a high level of collaboration across sites, with strong engagement from frontline clinical leaders through to the EMHS Executive and Board. The program relies on a data driven process with regular data reporting supported by the EMHS Data and Digital Innovation team plus an in-house Senior Data Analyst. Key metrics for EAP include median ToC times, extended ToC (ramping) hours, and the WA Emergency Access Target (WEAT).

The program has succeeded in developing contemporary care models to reduce ED attendances such as:

- Supporting the development and launch of Co-HIVE, with integration into state-wide virtual emergency models
- Establishment of Ambulatory models of care at Midland and Royal Perth Hospitals
- Launching of the Crisis Resolution Home Treatment Team at Armadale to prevent mental health attendances, with City and Midland services expected to launch mid-2023.

Another notable area of success has been the improved collaboration with ambulance services regarding Transfer of Care (ToC) processes, with all EMHS sites, adopting new front of house strategies, to improve the cycle times of ambulance crews and improve patient flow.

There has also been improved understanding of discharge processes by ward teams, through the application of lean methodology. Incremental progress is being made in reducing process times associated with discharging a patient, which will aid access block.

Additionally, EMHS continues to contribute to the state-wide reform on emergency access, including innovative models of care through the Co-HIVE programme of work. This is achieved through engagement in the various Department of Health Emergency

Access Reform (EAR) stakeholder groups, as well as through Ministerial reporting as required, including the Ministerial Taskforce for Ramping.

Deferred care and plan for elective surgery

EMHS is committed to addressing the long waitlist for elective surgery and outpatient appointments, as well as improving over boundary performance. A multi-strategy approach will continue to be driven through the EMHS WA Elective Surgery Target (WEST) Recovery Plan and Outpatient Reform Program.

Whilst delivery of additional clinics and surgical lists across high-demand specialties will be an important part of this work, it is recognised that efforts will also need to focus on strategies which will have the potential to achieve sustained impacts on patient access and waitlists. This includes the trial and expansion of new models of care, including advance practice roles; delivery of care in alternative settings for outpatients; initiatives which can support and optimise patient care earlier in the surgical journey; and working with the Department of Health Reform Program to identify opportunities to accelerate system-wide improvements to outpatient service delivery.

EMHS will continue to closely monitor referrals and over-boundary cases across specialties to assess the impact of strategies as we work towards bringing over-boundary proportions back to pre-pandemic levels.

Mental Health

The EMHS Board supports the implementation of the priorities outlined in the WA State Priorities Mental Health, Alcohol and Other Drugs 2020-2024 and continues to work with the Mental Health Commission (MHC) and other relevant stakeholders across government to deliver these priorities.

EMHS continues to have a mental health clinical lead to strengthen relationships with the MHC and other Health Service Provider's (HSPs) and to oversee effective clinical engagement in areawide mental health strategy and initiatives.

EMHS has opened a number of new services in the last twelve months to increase capacity, particularly in the community sector and move demand away from the emergency departments, as follows:

- Youth Community Assessment and Treatment Team (YCATT)
- Bidi Wungen Kaat Centre (Transitional Care Unit – TCU)
- Crisis Resolution Home Treatment Team (CRHTT) Armadale location.

In addition, the following services are due to commence during 2023:

- Outpatient based eating disorders service
- Dual Diagnosis Community Model of Care
- Project Air – an enhanced service for personality disorders
- Relocation of community mental health teams at Armadale Kalamunda Group (AKG) to the Armadale shopping centre, bringing services closer to the community.

EMHS has led the development of a budget submission on behalf of other HSPs for funding for *Strengthening the Foundations* of our community mental health services, to ensure they are better placed to take on future innovation and new services.

EMHS mental health services continue to be challenged in recruiting a fully established workforce. EMHS is taking immediate action by progressing a number of initiatives outlined in a single consolidated mental health workforce action plan, that aligns also with the WA Health Mental Health Clinical Workforce Action Plan. Immediate actions are focused on centralised attraction and recruitment practices, improved learning from exit feedback processes and increasing numbers of permanent positions.

Work Health and Safety

The EMHS Board is committed to undertaking its obligations under the new Work Health & Safety (WHS) Act 2020 and Regulations 2022 to ensure a safe environment and health care service for all workers, patients, and visitors. EMHS WHS strategies have a strong focus on hazard identification and risk assessment to prevent harm to all persons involved in or affected by the work of EMHS.

A comprehensive WHS compliance review and action plan was developed with policies, procedures, instructions, and guidance updated. Communications, training, and upskilling have been provided for all EMHS staff to ensure they are educated and understand their due diligence requirements, obligations, and rights under the WHS Act 2020.

An EMHS Wellbeing strategy has been implemented with a preventative focus to identify and control psychological hazards in the workplace to complement reactive programs designed to support staff and work areas. A successful early injury intervention physiotherapy program has reduced minor manual task related workers compensation claims and a psychosocial early injury intervention program is in development.

Exposure to workplace violence and aggression continues to be a significant issue. An EMHS Stop the Violence Action Plan for 2023 has been developed to address the prevention and response to violence and aggression in the workplace.

Increased Job Security

The EMHS Board are pleased to advise that following a review of casual and fixed term contract employees, this resulted in 149 conversions to permanent employment in 2022. A focus on patient support services and health information management will continue through 2023. Ongoing education to EMHS line managers on appropriate recruitment practices and monitoring of temporary working arrangements continues.

Procurement

EMHS undertakes on a quarterly basis an internal review of upcoming procurements through a Forward Procurement Plan, which supports adequate planning and management of processes and priorities. Government procurement rules are

incorporated into all procurement planning and processes which incorporate the needs to assess values for money, social, economic, and environmental outcomes.

The EMHS Board is dedicated to promoting engagement with local businesses industry and receives regular updates and reports on procurement activities. Under the WA Industry Participation Strategy, procurement activity above defined thresholds must include a requirement for Contractors to prepare a 'core' or 'full' industry participation plan and these reporting requirements, have been incorporated into the standard request documentation used by EMHS.

EMHS has developed and is progressing a Supply Chain Optimisation Strategy to look at innovative solutions to lead a reduction in overall spend. The Strategy will achieve efficiencies, harvest available discounts, minimise financial leakage and waste. The EMHS Pillars of Supply Optimisation are across the areas of Goods & Services, ICT, Facilities and Clinical Technology.

Expenditure and Activity

The EMHS Board continues to focus on prioritising service delivery strategies that maximise revenue collection and constrain growth in expenditure and service costs, where this does not compromise the provision of safe services to its patients.

This approach has served to deliver a positive Net Cost of Service position over the past six years, however as the Health Service transitions into a new environment of higher costs associated primarily with the requirement to maintain higher standards in order to 'live with COVID', it faces greater challenges in maintaining this positive position, as funding provided under Activity Based Funding (ABF) models of funding is increasingly inadequate to meet these increased costs of running a public health service.

The Health Service acknowledges however, that it must take steps to demonstrate its own commitment to being fiscally responsible and financially sustainable. To this end, a program of actions to identify areas where cost and expenditure savings and efficiencies can be made, without compromising patient care and safety, has commenced. The program aims to deliver savings within achievable timeframes across clinical and non-clinical service areas and will be monitored through regular reporting to the Board.

In a post-pandemic environment, the achievement of activity targets has been problematic, as the community continues to experience a form of 'pandemic hesitation' and a general reluctance to seek or obtain healthcare in a public hospital environment to the levels demonstrated pre-pandemic. Mental health activity in particular has not fully recovered to pre-pandemic levels, and patient flow and an ability to provide services to a greater number of mental health patients, is complicated by 'long stay' mental health patients who cannot be discharged for lack of suitable alternative accommodation and care options.

Operating within an increasingly challenging financial and health care environment, EMHS will continue to aim to operate within the parameters of its Service Agreement with the DoH, and will as and when necessary, raise issues with the System Manager

according to required protocols. EMHS will also support its stance on issues and matters of significance related to its financial position and circumstances, with robust evidence and analysis.

Implementation of election commitments and key ICT and infrastructure projects

EMHS is currently progressing with a number of election commitments and key infrastructure projects. Regular reporting on election commitment progress continues to be provided through the DoH.

- **Mental Health Emergency Centre (Armadale)**

Mental Health Emergency Centre (Armadale) is currently in Project Definition phase. The project has experienced some delays in commencement due to resourcing constraints, however measures to expedite progress are being considered as part of project definition planning.

- **Royal Perth Hospital Innovation Hub**

Royal Perth Hospital (RPH) Innovation Hub, following a Ministerial visit to a number of innovation precincts in the United States, a new innovation model and facility functionality was proposed. In response to the proposed new innovation model and functionality, a more appropriate space for the Innovation Hub has been identified. This location requires extensive roof replacement works which is not within the approved budget. A cost pressure submission was made as part of 2023-2024 budget to address the roof replacement. If the cost pressure submission is not approved, an alternative location has been identified for the Innovation Hub.

- **Byford Health Hub**

EMHS is coordinating the planning, design, development, and delivery of the Byford Health Hub (BHH) in collaboration with the Shire of Serpentine-Jarrahdale (SSJ) and a broader range of stakeholders in the WA Government.

In December 2022, the capital business case for the BHH was submitted for consideration as part of the 2023-24 State Budget. Focus will now shift to progressing the integrated commissioning program which will include all aspects required for the successful delivery of the BHH. This includes the service mix, operating model and other operational requirements which will feed into an operational business case for the 2024/25 budget cycle. Ongoing collaboration with the SSJ will continue throughout these next stages, including to support continued strong engagement with the local community.

- **Bentley Surgicentre**

The Bentley Health Service (BHS) Surgicentre is a joint election commitment by the State and Federal Governments. The BHS Surgicentre business case has been submitted for consideration by the Expenditure Review Committee in the 2023/24 budget cycle.

The scope of the business case includes 6 operating theatres, 2 endoscopy suites and a central sterile supply department. The preferred option includes a new outpatient facility as well as an update to the birth suites and maternity ward. It is anticipated that the BHS Surgicentre will be operational in 2029 if the funding is approved.

Independent Governance Review

The EMHS Board noted that on Monday 13 March 2023, Cabinet approved the Independence Governance Review Report and accepted in-principle 49 of the 55 recommendations with 3 recommendations requiring further consideration and 3 recommendations not supported.

The EMHS Board are committed to working with the System Manager and Government, pending the release of the implementation plan outlining the staged approach across 4 horizons mapped based on priority over the next 2-3 years.

Advice to Government

The EMHS Board will continue to fulfill its function, roles, responsibilities, and accountabilities as outlined in the HSP Board – Governance Policy that sits within the Statutory Board Operations Policy Framework and as prescribed in the *Health Services Act 2016*.

The EMHS Board fully commits to continuing to provide accurate and timely advice to the Government on significant issues in its core areas of business and ensuring the progression of achieving the Government's priorities. Furthermore, I can confirm that the EMHS Board Annual Governance Attestation Statement is in development and will be provided to your office at the conclusion of the 2022-23 Financial Year.

As part of the EMHS Board's commitment to accountability and transparency, a quarterly report providing updates against each of the expectations will continue to be provided throughout 2023.

Yours sincerely



Ms Pia Turcinov
Board Chair
EAST METROPOLITAN HEALTH SERVICE

28 March 2023