

Sydney Children's Hospitals Network (SCHN) Board Meeting

Thursday, 2 September 2021

1 In-Camera Session

The Chair led an in-camera session with Board members, Chief Executive, Executive Director Clinical Operations and Director Office of the Chief Executive.

2 Meeting Opening

2.1 Acknowledgement of Country

Professor Waters provided the Acknowledgement of Country and highlighted the current challenges being experienced by Aboriginal communities in Western New South Wales linked to the COVID-19 pandemic.

- 2.1.1 The Board viewed 'The Kinchela Boys' video. Board members commented that this moving video was a reminder of the important role SCHN and its staff must play in addressing health inequities while ensuring that past and current challenges for Aboriginal people continue to be recognised in decision making and service planning moving forward.

2.2 Attendance and Apologies

Present:

Board members: Ms Elizabeth Crouch AM (Chair), Mr David Nott (Deputy Chair), Professor Louise Baur AM, Dr Abby Bloom, Mr Jack Ford, Ms Jane Freudenstein, Dr Elizabeth McEntyre, Mr Bruce MacDiarmid, Professor Donna Waters, and Mr Jeremy Wright AM

Ex officio invitees: Dr Kathryn Carmo (CHW Medical Staff Council (MSC) Chair), and Dr Matthew O'Meara (NSW Chief Paediatrician)

Executive: Ms Cathryn Cox PSM (Chief Executive), Mr Bart Cavaletto (Director, Strategy and Innovation), Professor Chris Cowell (Director, Research), Mr Sam Galluccio (Director, People and Culture), Dr Joanne Ging (Executive Director, Clinical Operations), Ms Judy Goldman (Director, Communications and Engagement), Mr Tim Hoffmann (Director, Redevelopment), Dr Mary McCaskill (Director, Medical Services and Clinical Governance), Ms Sally Whalen (Director, Nursing, Midwifery and Education), Mr Sayeed Zia (Director, Finance and Corporate Services) and Ms Emma Cuell (Director, Office of the Chief Executive)

Apologies: Dr Michael Solomon (SCH Medical Staff Council Chair)

Secretariat: Ms Jane Jennings (Senior Executive Support Officer) and Ms Melissa Gibson Darling (Board Executive Officer)

Action: Ms Crouch to write to Dr Solomon to advise a MSC delegate is able to attend Board meetings if he is unavailable.

2.3 Declaration of Interests

No new declarations noted.

2.4 Previous Meeting Minutes

The minutes of the August 2021 meeting were accepted as a true record of the meeting.

2.5 Actions Arising

The Board noted the Action Item Register.

Ms Crouch acknowledged the significant pressure being experienced by staff currently and invited requests to defer outstanding items if required.

Ms Cox acknowledged the support of the Board and indicated that it was important to monitor the statewide paediatric training item, and that Dr McCaskill was progressing the Quality and Safety Account, noting that the submission deadline had been deferred by the Ministry. A balanced scorecard was provided in today's meeting papers (item 5.6 Strategy and Innovation Update).

2.6 Board Chair Report

Ms Crouch noted the following key issues and activities of the past month:

- Ms Freudenstein has been invited to be a member of the Comprehensive Children's Cancer Centre (CCCC) Interim Steering Committee to assist with shaping the governance arrangements for the CCCC.
- Continued support of the Randwick Health and Innovation Precinct (RHIP) with a presentation at the meeting today by Ms Brooke Griffin, Executive Director RHIP.
- Met with Professor Mark Scott AO, incoming Vice Chancellor, University of Sydney with Ms Cox to discuss key issues, the future role of the University and opportunities for greater collaboration.
- Continued work with the Sydney Children's Hospitals Foundation (SCHF) with Mr Nott and Ms Cox.
- Meeting scheduled to progress Board appointments with several Board member terms expiring in 2021.

Dr O'Meara's assistance in representing the Board on the Quality and Safety Committee pending the appointment of new Board members with clinical experience was acknowledged and appreciated.

2.7 Chief Executive Report

Ms Cox highlighted the positive discussions with NSW Health Pathology and the Children's Hospital at Westmead Pathology service aimed at supporting greater collaboration and partnership. The Board will be updated as this work progresses.

Arrangements for clinical presentations at Board meetings are in progress with Mental Health to be the first session at the October 2021 meeting.

Mr Anthony Wallis will be commencing as Manager, Internal Audit on 6 September 2021, and selection is progressing for the role of Director, Mental Health via an internal expressions of interest process.

Ms Cox highlighted the strong collaboration between SCHN and local health districts (LHDs) in responding to the COVID-19 pandemic. This has included Far West NSW and Western NSW LHDs, and South Eastern Sydney LHD, with a dedicated COVID-19 vaccination clinic held at La Perouse for the local Aboriginal community.

The Board noted the update.

2.8 Presentation: Randwick Health and Innovation Precinct (RHIP), Ms Brooke Griffin (Executive Director, RHIP)

Ms Griffin presented on the priorities and issues for the RHIP. This included discussion of the significance of the investment and partner collaboration, approaches to stakeholder engagement, responses of local government and business, and the project's challenges and aspirations.

3 Matters for Decision

3.1 Board Committee Membership

Ms Crouch noted the requirement to reconsider Board committee arrangements as a result of Board vacancies with several members concluding their terms. It was noted that the Research, Education and Innovation Committee and Infrastructure Committee would be put on hold, with the work of the committees coming directly to the Board in the interim to ensure satisfactory information flow.

The extra contributions from Board members were acknowledged.

Following Board member appointments, committee memberships will be considered and a Board calendar developed for 2022.

The Board endorsed the proposed Committee arrangements.

3.2 Corporate Governance Attestation Statement

Ms Crouch had some minor edits and will provide these to Ms Cox.

In relation to items referred to the Independent Commission Against Corruption (ICAC), all items have now been considered by ICAC and returned to SCHN management with confirmation that actions taken were sufficient. Fraud and corruption training is continuing to be delivered through the Health Education and Training Institute.

The Board requested references or examples of the work being done to support and progress Aboriginal health be included in the Statement.

It was confirmed that the Chief Executive and the Director, Finance and Corporate Services supported statements regarding budget allocations and distribution.

The Board approved the Corporate Governance Attestation Statement for 2020-21 with minor amendments to be progressed offline.

The Executive and ex-officio members joined the meeting.

4 Matters for Discussion

4.1 COVID-19 Update Director, Medical Services and Clinical Governance

Dr McCaskill acknowledged the work being done by SCHN staff to care for COVID-19 patients and continue necessary existing services. Ms Crouch thanked the teams for their work under enormous pressure.

The Board noted:

- The extensive planning being done, noting COVID-19 is requiring teams to continually adapt and adjust at a rapid pace.
- The VirtualKIDS team is working closely with staff in metropolitan LHDs to align actions, synchronise changes, and minimise duplication.
- Services, such as SCHN's VirtualKIDS, are important in reducing attendance at emergency departments, and minimising the movements of people with COVID-19.
- The pandemic is bringing social issues to the fore. SCHN teams are working with staff from the Department of Communities and Justice for expanded capacity to support vulnerable families.
- In Western and Far West NSW, SCHN teams are partnering with local services, supporting those who have existing relationships with families.
- The 'Home in Hospital' service has seen a significant increase in demand in the past week. Predicted demand levels will require expanded physical facilities and hotel accommodation is currently being considered. Planning is progressing in relation to the availability of appropriately skilled staff to support an expanded service. The Board discussed options for accessing facilities and staffing.
- SCHN teams have been supporting vaccinations for older children at Qudos Bank Arena and have commenced vaccination of complex patients aged 12-15 years. This service also provides vaccinations for the patient's family.

- Some staff remained hesitant to be vaccinated, despite the recent Public Health Order which mandates NSW Health staff vaccination. The impact of this is being monitored and managed.
- There have been several on-site exposure events in the past few weeks that have impacted a significant number of staff.
- Surveillance testing is recommended for particular groups of staff and families and is being offered at both hospitals.
- Substantial logistics work has accompanied the staff changes and set up of new teams.
- Communication remains a very strong focus with daily email COVID updates, including information on wellbeing.

Ms Cox noted the Ministry of Health strategies to source suitable staff including retraining programs, identifying university students undertaking clinical studies and accessing staff through the private sector.

Dr O'Meara acknowledged the significant work being done by Network staff on a state and national basis.

The Board noted the update.

5 Matters for Discussion – Executive Reports

5.1 Quality and Safety Update Director, Medical Services and Clinical Governance

Dr McCaskill highlighted the concluding terms for several members of the SCHN Family and Consumer Council, with 15 new members joining since March 2021. A joint chair arrangement, with two consumers alternating with the Director, Safety, Quality and Governance, is working well.

Ms Crouch has written to the outgoing Council members to thank them for their contributions.

The impact of adjustments to the Hospital Acquired Complications indicators in the SCHN Service Agreement was noted as a positive achievement and should result in more accurate paediatric data.

The Board noted the update.

5.2 People and Culture Update Director, People and Culture

Mr Galluccio advised of the significant work of the People and Culture team to respond to the COVID-19 outbreak.

Mr Galluccio also updated the Board on discussions in relation to Anaesthetics and Intensive Care staff remuneration, as well as other clinical groups. Initial discussions have taken place with the Ministry of Health and the SCHN will submit a proposal to the Ministry within the next few weeks.

The Board noted the update.

5.3 Clinical Operations Update Executive Director, Clinical Operations

The impact of COVID-19 was highlighted with Dr Ging advising that Elective Surgery Access Performance breaches had occurred in August 2021, particularly for Category C procedures. There were no Category A breaches, and patients with a Category B priority are accessing surgery as quickly as possible.

Dr Ging anticipated that, based on last year's experience and the current COVID-19 response, current surgery delays may be impacted until mid 2022, although there are multiple variables to consider.

There has been assistance from Healthscope with provision of nursing staff to assist with the VirtualKIDS service and discussions are occurring with WentWest (Western Sydney Primary Health Network) regarding potential general practitioner support.

The Board noted the update.

5.4 Finance Capital Works and Performance Update Director, Finance and Corporate Services

Mr Zia highlighted how the SCHN is working to improve its financial position over the financial year to meet the position agreed with the Ministry of Health.

It was noted that the Service Agreement with the Ministry of Health had been submitted for Ministry approval.

The structure and process to access Federal government COVID-19 support has changed since 2020, with additional reporting requirements. The SCHN team is planning to have coordination of the new arrangements in place by the end of September 2021.

There is ongoing work regarding funding of SCHN positions through the SCHF.

Longer term management of the risks around operational funding for multiple redevelopments in the same financial year requires ongoing planning.

There was also discussion regarding the Newborn and paediatric Emergency Transport Service (NETS) base redevelopment. Dr McCaskill advised that the strategic plan has been approved by the steering committee and is being discussed with NETS leadership prior to being shared with staff. It is expected to be made available more broadly to stakeholders in two to three weeks. Mr Hoffman confirmed that the capital investment priorities would be informed by the strategic plan. Mr Zia noted that the lease of the hanger is still being finalised.

The Board noted the update.

5.5 Planning and Development Update Director, Planning and Redevelopment

Mr Hoffman highlighted several points in his report, noting the incorporation of the Neurosciences Comprehensive Care and Research Centre in the SCH Stage 1 redevelopment was progressing well.

Capital investment proposals for CHW Stage 3, SCH Stage 2 and NETS have been finalised and been submitted to the Ministry.

The Board noted the update.

5.6 Strategy and Innovation Update Director, Strategy and Innovation

Mr Cavalletto highlighted the balanced scorecard and advised the Board of the work being done to continue to plan for the medium to longer term, beyond the current challenges of COVID-19.

The Board noted the update provided.

5.7 Research Update Director, Research

Professor Cowell commented about the value of the capability statements, of which there were now more than twenty, and their role in supporting how the health precincts will advance.

The recipients of the small grants funded by the SCHF were highlighted, and the role of these grants in supporting early career research was acknowledged. Board members noted the large number of very good applications that were not funded and that no grants had been provided to nursing-led projects.

The Board noted the update.

5.8 Communication and Engagement Update Director, Communications and Engagement

Ms Goldman's presentation on the environmental graphics in the new Westmead Central Acute Services Building will be held over to the next meeting due to time constraints.

There was discussion regarding the opportunity to progress thought leadership approaches with the Board through LinkedIn and other networks. The Public Relations and Media team will develop content that can be tailored by members for release to their networks.

Dr Ging's recent media interviews were highlighted, and it was noted that the Ministry of Health will be recording and sharing a story relating to the La Perouse COVID vaccination clinic.

Ms Goldman advised that the SCHN has applied for an 'Endorsed' brand exemption, ahead of the transition to the NSW Government Master Brand. Receiving approval for an endorsed brand exemption would mean that the SCHN logo would be the more prominent brand, with the NSW Government logo used in a secondary position.

The Board noted the update.

5.9 Strategic Risks Update Director, Finance and Corporate Services

The Risk Appetite Statement was discussed, including next steps for operationalising this risk work including through stakeholder buy-in and understanding.

Ms Crouch acknowledged the work of Mr Zia and the Audit and Risk Committee.

The Board noted the update.

6 Matters for Noting

6.1 Board Committee Minutes

Taken as read.

6.2 Mandatory Training Update

The Board noted the update.

7 Other Business

Ms Freudenstein noted the value of the Mental Health Service Summary 2020-21 which had been made available to Board members. Ms Cox confirmed the plan for the Mental Health team to present to the Board in October 2021.

Ms Crouch acknowledged the significant contributions of Professor Baur and Professor Waters, as their Board terms expire. Both have been dedicated SCHN Board members for ten years.

Professor Waters was recognised for her passionate advocacy for the health and welfare of children and young people and her health research and academic management, with a particular focus on advancing the education and development of nursing staff. The Network is fortunate to have Professor Waters continuing to contribute to SCHN through leading the Medical and Dental Appointments Advisory Committee.

Professor Baur has been instrumental in raising the profile of childhood obesity as an issue of clinical and public health importance in Australia and internationally. She has supported and mentored many early career health professionals and contributed substantially through her research in addition to her work globally on the World Obesity Federation. Professor Baur will continue to be part of the SCHN as a senior clinician.

Professor Baur and Professor Waters both thanked Ms Crouch and the Board.

8 Next Meeting

The next meeting will be 8:30am – 12.00pm on Thursday, 7 October 2021 via Zoom.

The meeting closed at 12.05pm.