

Sydney Children's Hospitals Network Board Meeting

Date: 7 April 2022

Time: 8.30am

Location: Boardroom, Bright Alliance Building Randwick, or via Zoom

Attendance

Board

Elizabeth Crouch AM (Chair), Bruce MacDiarmid (Deputy Chair)*, Dr Abby Bloom*, Jane Freudenstein*, Walter Kmet*, Dr Nikola Morton, Stephen Nugent, John Wigglesworth, and Jeremy Wright AM

Ex-officio

Cathryn Cox PSM, Chief Executive; Dr Angus Alexander, The Children's Hospital at Westmead Medical Staff Council*; Dr Matthew O'Meara, NSW Chief Paediatrician*; and Dr Puneet Singh, Sydney Children's Hospital Medical Staff Council

Executive

Dr Paula Bray, Acting Director, Research*; Bart Cavalletto, Director, Strategy and Innovation*; Emma Cuell, Director, Office of the Chief Executive; Sam Galluccio, Director, People and Culture; Dr Joanne Ging, Executive Director, Clinical Operations; Judy Goldman, Director, Communications and Engagement*; Tim Hoffman, Director, Redevelopment; Dr Mary McCaskill, Director, Medical Services and Clinical Governance; Sally Whalen, Director, Nursing, Midwifery and Education; and Sayeed Zia, Director, Finance and Corporate Services

Secretariat: Melissa Gibson Darling, Board Executive Officer

** indicates attendance via Zoom*

1.0 In Camera Session

The Chair led an in camera session for Board members. The Chief Executive and Director, Office of the Chief Executive were present for the session.

Other attendees joined the meeting from item 2.0.

2.0. Presentation and Discussion

2.1 Presentation – Sydney Children's Hospitals Network (SCHN) Palliative Care Service

Due to the unexpected ill health of one of the presenters, the Palliative Care Service session was postponed.

The Board watched a recently released patient story video, describing the experience of patient 'D' during an extended and complicated SCHN inpatient stay and his transition to supported care at home. The Chair and the Chief Executive spoke of the story's demonstration of the exceptional care and expertise of Network staff, and how an approach of upskilling and supporting local health district staff can support complex patients to access care in their local community.

3.0 Meeting Opening

3.1 Acknowledgement of Country

Dr Bloom provided the Acknowledgement of Country.

3.2 Apologies

Nil

3.3 Declaration of Interests

Nil

3.4 Previous Meeting Minutes

The minutes of the March 2022 Board meeting were accepted as a true record of the meeting.

3.5 Actions Arising

The Board **noted** the updates for the Action Item Register and scheduled report backs. With multiple action items assigned to June 2022, and the holding over of two items from April to future dates, the Chief Executive and Board Executive Officer will review all items and provide an updated schedule in May 2022.

3.6 Board Chair Report

The Chair reported her attendance at recent meetings including the Luminesce Alliance Board, Children's Comprehensive Cancer Centre Steering Committee, and Sydney Health Partners Board Chairs group.

The Chair advised that she and the Deputy Chair had met recently with the Chairs of the two SCHN Medical Staff Councils (MSCs). The Chair thanked both MSC Chairs for their openness and commitment to fostering collaboration across the Network. The Board discussed the significant value of these regular meetings in supporting a free and open exchange of information including opportunities to enhance our practices and clinical care.

3.7 Chief Executive Report

The Chief Executive updated the Board on the impact of high numbers of staff furloughed due to COVID infection or being a close contact, adding to the existing pressures on staff due to the pandemic and other service demands. She expressed her thanks to all staff for the work being done and the patient care provided. The Chief Executive also advised of progress in the recruitment for the position of Director, Research, and noted the International Women's Day celebration and upcoming Redevelopment project milestones.

The Board discussed industrial action by the NSW Nurses and Midwives Association and the Health Services Union, the impact on staff and service delivery, the Network's mitigating actions to ensure safe care, plans to manage possible ongoing service disruption due to industrial action, and discussions through NSW Health to resolve matters.

The Board **noted** that the Grant and Collaboration Agreement for Minderoo is to be signed by the Chair and the Chief Executive today, following Board approval in March 2022.

4.0 Matters for Discussion

4.1 Redevelopment Presentation – Director, Redevelopment

The Board **noted** that the Network has moved into the 'delivery' phase of the hospital redevelopments

at Randwick and Westmead (with both projects due to be completed in 2025), as well as procurement processes, and program updates. Discussion included the impact of COVID and work being done to consult appropriately with staff recognising service demands, the retail strategy at Westmead, approaches to ensuring sustainability through features such as recycling of building materials and energy procurement, and the financial implications of operationalising the new facilities.

The Board **noted** the opportunities that the redevelopments presented to support enhanced models of care and the actions Network teams were taking in response. Discussion also acknowledged the need to engage with primary care providers and Local Health Districts in considering innovative models of care, building on the learnings from the pandemic response.

5.0 Matters for Discussion – Executive Reports

5.1 Communications and Engagement Update – Director, Communications and Engagement

The Board **noted** that SCHN was waiting on an outcome for the brand exemption request with NSW Health and the NSW Department of Customer Service. It is hoped that there will be an opportunity for co-branding, allowing a small number of SCHN logos to sit alongside the NSW Government ‘waratah’ brand. Once the decision is advised, the Communications and Engagement team will work with Network staff to implement any changes required.

The Board **noted** that the digital consolidation project was progressing, with the consolidation of 27 sites into three and an expected completion in late 2022/early 2023. The Board also noted that online content regarding the Cardiac Services model of care and patient experiences was being updated.

The Director will consider how to best extend invitations to the Board for fundraising and other events of interest and value, noting Board member feedback.

5.2 Research Update – Acting Director, Research

The Board **noted** the refresh of the Research strategy and discussed the role of the Kids Research Management Committee, the value of the Clinical Trials Management System, and the potential roles of Network Research ‘champions’ and career pathways to support Research professional development. Discussion also included how research findings were translated into clinical service enhancements, with specific consideration of recent mental health research outcomes.

5.3 People and Culture Update – Director, People and Culture

The Board **noted** updates on industrial relations matters and the progress of the leadership development program. The Board discussed factors that contributed to the lower level of compliance for completion of performance appraisals and the importance of it being a continuous discussion between manager and employee rather than an annual compliance approach. The Board noted the focus on building leadership skills in this regard.

Discussion also included the status of the Network’s Aboriginal employee initiatives and consideration of linking to the ‘Academy’ program at Western Sydney Local Health District, presented at the NSW Health Board Member Conference.

5.4 Clinical Operations Update – Executive Director, Clinical Operations

The Board **noted** that Emergency Department presentations at both sites had increased considerably in the past month, and the anticipated impact on the month’s performance data. The Board discussed the surgical wait list and actions being taken by the Network to resolve this as quickly as possible, noting it would probably be at least another six months or so before improvements were observed. The Executive Director confirmed that patient clinical status was being closely monitored and collaborations with private providers were being utilised as much as possible for lower complexity

cases, to support patient safety.

The Board discussed the actions being taking to improve sustainability and particularly to improve the efficiency in the use of clinical consumables. The Executive Director provided several examples of current projects, noting a Board presentation will be provided on Network sustainability initiatives in the coming months.

Action: The Executive Director to consider inclusion of month-on-month data comparisons for Board reports.

Action: Board members to be invited to the Westmead and Network Innovation Forums.

5.5 Finance, Capital Works and Performance Update – Director, Finance and Corporate Services

The Board **noted** the engagement with the Ministry of Health to address significant structural issues that are impacting financial performance. Recently, the Deputy Chair and Chair of the SCHN Finance, Capital Works and Performance Committee, and the Director Finance and Corporate Services met with the NSW Health Chief Financial Officer and other key staff as part of ongoing discussions on this important issue.

The Board discussed how enhanced collaboration with Network clinicians could be achieved to support better revenue collection, cost management, and process improvement, and the plans in place to engage with staff in this regard.

5.6 Strategic Risk Update – Director, Finance and Corporate Services

The Board noted there had been minimal movement in Strategic Risk assessment in the past month. The Board provided feedback on the risk appetite ratings and it was agreed further work would be progressed on these, with a dedicated risk session to be scheduled with the Board.

Action: The Director, Finance and Corporate Services will lead a review of the risk appetite ratings, so that the measures are clear as a Board and Executive tool.

5.7 Quality and Safety Update – Director, Medical Services and Clinical Governance

The Board discussed the patient story as an example of Network reach and positive impact and congratulated the VirtualKIDS ‘flying squad’ on the services and support provided.

5.8 COVID-19 Update – Director, Medical Services and Clinical Governance

The Board **noted** the high levels of staff furloughed due to COVID infection or close contact classification, considerations taken when bringing ‘close contacts’ back to work under specific and controlled circumstances to support provision of service, and preparations being made for the winter season, particularly considering patient testing and infection control for COVID, influenza, and respiratory syncytial virus.

6.0 Matters for Noting

6.1 Strategy and Innovation Update

Taken as read.

6.2 Clinical Council Update

Taken as read.

6.3 Committee Meeting Minutes

Taken as read.

7.0 Any Other Business

Board members provided feedback on their experience of the 2022 NSW Health Board Member Conference.

8.0 Next Meeting

8.1 Meeting Evaluation

A short, online evaluation was completed by Board members.

8.2 Next Meeting

The next meeting is scheduled for 0830, Thursday 5 May 2022.

The meeting closed at 1205.

Action Items

Agenda item	Description	Responsible	Due date
5.4	Consider inclusion of month-on-month data comparisons in Clinical Operations Updates	Executive Director, Clinical Operations	August 2022
5.4	Board members to be invited to the Westmead and Network Innovation Forums	Board Executive Officer; Director, Strategy and Innovation	June 2022
5.6	Review the risk appetite ratings for clarity as Board and Executive tool	Director, Finance and Corporate Services	July 2022

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