

Sydney Children's Hospitals Network Board Meeting

Date: 5 May 2022

Time: 8.30am

Location: Boardroom, The Children's Hospital at Westmead, 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 Kath Carmo for Dr Angus Alexander, The Children's Hospital at Westmead (CHW) Medical Staff Council (MSC); 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

Guests

For Item 4.1: Kathryn Asher, Acting Director, Allied Health; Dr Kate Charlesworth, Senior Adviser, Climate Risk and Net Zero Unit, NSW Health*; and Dr Justin Skowno, Senior Staff Specialist, Anaesthetics

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, unless otherwise noted.

2.0 Meeting Opening

2.1 Acknowledgement of Country

Ms Freudenstein provided the Acknowledgement of Country.

2.2 Apologies

Dr Angus Alexander. Dr Carmo attended as CHW MSC proxy.

2.3 Declaration of Interests

The Board **noted** the Chair's advice that her term on the Board of Ochre Health has now concluded.

2.4 Previous Meeting Minutes

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

2.5 Actions Arising

The Board **noted** the two Action Items being closed in May, and the schedule of actions listed for the coming months.

2.6 Board Chair Report

The Chair thanked the teams involved in the successful media announcement and 'sod turn' acknowledging the Minderoo Foundation's relationship with and pledge to the Sydney Children's Hospitals Network's (SCHN) Children's Comprehensive Cancer Centre at Randwick. The Chair, Deputy Chair, Ms Freudenstein, and Chief Executive attended, with the Forrest and Medich families, the Federal Minister for Health, and state and local Members of Parliament. The generous pledges of the two families are gratefully acknowledged noting the further commitment of \$6M matched funding from the Minderoo (\$5M) and Medich (\$1M) Foundations announced on the day.

The Chair also thanked the teams facilitating a series of visits by Federal and State Members of Parliament to SCHN sites, and noted those scheduled in the coming weeks.

The Chair advised of the value of the recently re-established monthly meetings with the Deputy Chair and Chairs of the two MSCs, noting them to be constructive and solutions-based, and forums to collaboratively consider short and longer term SCHN priorities.

The Chair also provided a summary of discussions at the most recent Board Chairs' meeting with the NSW Health Secretary, including the re-orientation of the Health system 'post-COVID', and the obligation for regular Board consideration of performance data. It was noted that the SCHN Board receives and considers performance data at every Board meeting. The Chair also highlighted the excellent results for the two SCHN emergency departments in the recent Bureau of Health Information patient survey. The Chair and Board formally acknowledged the achievement of the Sydney Children's Hospital, Randwick and CHW Emergency Department teams and thanked them for their efforts and the excellent patient care being provided.

The Chair noted she would be attending the Sydney Children's Hospitals Foundation (SCHF) Board meeting later in the day with the SCHN Chief Executive due to present on some funding requests.

2.7 Chief Executive Report

The Chief Executive updated the Board on the proposed feasibility study to develop options for a statewide pathology service for children and young people, to be delivered in partnership with NSW Health Pathology. This had been requested by the previous NSW Health Secretary. The Chief Executive provided background on actions taken to support the initiative and advised of a joint steering committee to oversight the project. The Board discussed the importance of stakeholder engagement, service delivery, and future operational arrangements.

The Board also discussed the parliamentary inquiry into healthcare in regional and rural NSW, with the report due to be released, and actions taken in response to the recent power supply faults in the Westmead Kids Research facility (including a Root Cause Analysis to understand any system issues). The Board received an update on recent industrial action impacting the Network's services and staff, and clarification on employee vaccination requirements.

Dr Singh and Dr Carmo both joined the meeting during Item 2.7.

3.0 Matters for Discussion – Executive Reports

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

The Board **noted** that the financial position has remained stable. The Board also noted the ongoing work to manage expenses, and funding recently received to offset Special Leave for staff related to COVID.

The Board discussed the Network’s ‘winter strategy’ to respond to the anticipated increased demand for patient services at this time, elective surgery waitlists, and ongoing discussions with the Ministry of Health to seek to address structural funding concerns and other financial matters as part of the SCHN Service Agreement negotiations. The Chair, Finance, Capital Works and Performance Committee and Director, Finance and Corporate Services will extend their consultation with clinicians and attend upcoming MSC meeting(s) to discuss the work being done to manage the SCHN’s financial performance.

The Board **noted** the Chief Executive’s presentation to the SCHF later in the day, to discuss the importance of SCHF funding to support enhanced service delivery.

3.2 Strategic Risk Update – Director, Finance and Corporate Services

The Board **noted** updates on the Clinical Capacity and Redevelopment risk mitigation plans/actions. Discussion also included the progress of the ForeSite Project (digital consolidation).

Action: The Director, Communications and Engagement to provide an update on the ForeSite Project in June 2022.

4.0. Presentation and Discussion

4.1 Presentation – Sustainability

The Board received a presentation from Dr Justin Skowno, Senior Staff Specialist, Anaesthetics and Dr Kate Charlesworth, Senior Advisor, Climate Risk and Net Zero Unit, NSW Health, focused on the climate crisis and risks, the impact on population health, and the role and commitments that NSW Health and its entities have in responding.

Dr Skowno spoke of his role as a climate action advocate, the scale of the climate challenge and the necessity for action, and some of the work being undertaken locally to reduce the SCHN carbon footprint, such as changes in the use of anaesthetic gases, and theatre material recycling. The Board was asked to consider committing to transitioning the Network to ‘green power’ within a year recognising that most of these supply arrangements are facilitated by HealthShare.

Dr Charlesworth presented on climate change risks, international best practice responses, the importance of clinician involvement, the vision and plans of the new NSW Health Climate Risk and Net Zero Unit, and the imperative for action.

Discussion between the presenters and Board included:

- Development of a dashboard to monitor and manage SCHN project progress, as recently discussed at the Finance, Capital Works and Performance Committee.
- Opportunities available in the redevelopment projects, and the actions already being taken to support sustainability.
- The role of adapting clinical models of care to reduce climate impact. Several adjustments to practice, such as increased adoption of ‘telehealth’, have been accelerated by COVID responses. Advice of several projects to extend the use of virtual care was provided by the Executive Director, Clinical Operations.
- Managing redundant equipment, and the existing SCHN actions and processes.

- Working with HealthShare in relation to statewide contracts for equipment and other services.
- The opportunity for procurement of green energy contracts via NSW Health and how this can assist in the Network move to “green power”.
- The Chair will seek further details from Health Infrastructure regarding opportunities for NSW Health and SCHN in the redevelopments.
- The option of community fundraising to support climate action.
- Partnerships with universities and other stakeholders, including the Ministry, to advance expertise and action.

Action: The Board Executive Officer will schedule Sustainability Updates in the Board meeting calendar, to support discussion on Network sustainability actions and progress.

The Chair thanked Dr Skowno and Dr Charlesworth for their presentations and for facilitating this important discussion.

3.0 Matters for Discussion – Executive Reports (continued)

3.3 Nursing Update – Director, Nursing, Midwifery and Education

The Board **noted** the nursing update, including that more than 100 new graduate nurses joined the Network this year, the role of nurses in COVID swabbing and vaccination clinics, and the impact of COVID-related furloughing and recent industrial action. The Director advised of the continued focus on nurse wellbeing and actions being taken to advance nurse education and research.

The Board discussion included nursing retention, professional development support, recent industrial action, and ‘pandemic malaise’ and actions being taken to support workforce recovery.

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

The Board **noted** the patient story and its illustration of the importance of parent/carer support, the strategic program update, and the successful virtual Network Quality and Safety Awards.

The Board **noted** the minimal proposed changes to the Terms of Reference for the Quality, Safety and Patient Engagement Board Committee, reflecting the Committee’s maturing over the past year.

The Board **approved** the updated Quality, Safety and Patient Engagement Committee Terms of Reference.

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

The Board **noted** that levels of staff furloughing were beginning to plateau, although service impacts continue. Updated guidance has been provided to staff on participating in social activities in a COVID-safe way.

3.6 People and Culture Due Diligence Report – Director, People and Culture

The Board **noted** the report and discussions included:

- Recent trends in workers compensation claims, and the SCHN premium adjustment
- The planned due diligence session for Board members
- Work being done on an ‘accountability matrix’, with education for staff at all levels
- An update on the industrial action by the Australian Salaried Medical Officers’ Association, and the SCHN response
- The immediate focus on leadership development, as a step to supporting workplace culture improvements.

3.7 Clinical Operations Update – Executive Director, Clinical Operations

The Board **noted** and discussed the operational performance data and the current and anticipated demands on emergency departments, and the number of patients on elective surgery waitlists. A project designed to improve emergency department patient access and flow was also discussed.

The Board was provided with a presentation on the Kids Early Years (KEYS) Network. SCHN clinicians partner with multiple organisations such as the Department of Communities and Justice, Department of Education, and the local Primary Health Network to support vulnerable families. The approach is comprehensive and collaborative, and designed to remove systemic barriers to care. The Board **noted** that 200 families now accessed care through the service, and that more than 750 individuals are being cared for. This is a pilot program in Western Sydney currently, with the team keen to implement it across NSW.

5.0 Matters for Noting

5.1 Strategy and Innovation Update

Taken as read.

5.2 Committee Meeting Minutes

Taken as read.

6.0 Any Other Business

A short verbal report was provided on a recently attended induction course for new directors.

7.0 Next Meeting

7.1 Meeting Evaluation

A short, online evaluation was completed by Board members.

7.2 Next Meeting

The next meeting is scheduled for 0830, Thursday 2 June 2022.

The meeting closed at 1203.

Action Items

Agenda item	Description	Responsible	Due date
3.2	Update provided to the Board on the ForeSite (digital consolidation) Project	Director, Communications and Engagement	2 June 2022
4.1	Schedule regular and ongoing Sustainability discussions in the Board calendar	Board Executive Officer	2 June 2022

Privacy – NSW Health is committed to safeguarding the privacy of consumer information. Health service staff are bound by law (Health Records and Information Privacy Act 2002), NSW Health privacy policy and a strict code of conduct to maintain confidentiality of consumer information. Consumer information is used for purposes directly related to treatment and to ensure ongoing care. When consumer information is discussed at meetings for the purposes of care planning, all personal health information, including names and personal details must be de-identified for the minutes. Participants of the meeting must not discuss the health information of consumers outside of the meeting, unless they are directly involved in providing a service to those consumers.