

Western Health

2021

— 2023



Western Health

Western Health respectfully acknowledges the Wurundjeri and BoonWurrung peoples of the Kulin Nation as the Traditional Custodians of the lands on which Western Health sites are located and we pay our respects to their Elders past and present.



Delgaia by Annette Joy,
(Gourmjanyuk and Wergaia) 2018.

Delgaia means to be good, means to be well (Wemba Wemba language).

The colours represent Mother Earth:

Yellow the sun, warmth and freshness

Black/Brown our people, strong, powerful, safety, warmth and the land

Red earth, love and strength

Green growth, nature

Blue calming, sky and water

Orange energy, creativeness and self respect.

The black and white dragon flies symbolise transformation, change and life. In the centre are our people coming together and joining with everyone to be well and safe.

Together, we deliver the healthcare of the future.

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Foreword by Chair and CEO

We are proud to share our strategic plan, presented as Western Health's Strategic Direction 2021-2023.

At its heart, this strategy reflects the constant commitment to our patients, people and communities. It builds on the achievements of the past, enhances the strengths of Western Health and looks to a bold and promising future. It represents our core values: Compassion, Accountability, Respect, Excellence and Safety.

Strategic Direction 2021-2023 has been developed during 2020 when Western Health was in the midst of its response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Interestingly, this was a time when the imperatives to do things differently drove a period of rapid change in how we delivered care. This strategy builds on those imperatives and experiences.

The COVID-19 environment meant we needed to conduct our consultations virtually to inform our Strategic Direction 2021-2023 but nevertheless, we engaged with over 500 consumers, volunteers, staff, Board and external stakeholders through a range of interviews, workshops and focus groups, pop-up sessions and surveys. We have been guided not only by what we heard, but also by a thorough analysis of our catchment and what is happening around us. We have been inspired by global best practice and challenged by thought leaders.

A key factor to this strategy is building on the success of the past and delivering the commitments for Western Health. Our Strategic Plan 2015-2020 focused on the urgent requirements for major infrastructure developments. We were pleased to receive substantial Victorian Government investment in the construction of the Joan Kirner Women's and Children's at Sunshine Hospital, the expansion of the Sunshine Hospital Emergency Department and the funding of the dual diagnosis Westside Lodge at Sunshine.

The need for a New Footscray Hospital was a significant goal identified in the previous strategic plan and the Victorian Government's commitment and funding for this new hospital is an incredibly important development for the communities we serve. We continue to work to support communities across the West of Melbourne and communicate their healthcare needs to Government. We are also very proud to have been named as the operators of the future Melton Hospital.

We are pleased to welcome the community and staff of Djerriwarrh Health Services as part of Western Health following the voluntary amalgamation of our organisations on July 1st 2021. There is close alignment in our aspirations and planning for the future health and wellbeing of our growing community. This forms a strong foundation to progress the delivery of our strategy.

Strategic Direction 2021-2023 is based on a Strategic Framework that provides aspirational guidance and strong direction in this rapidly changing environment. Through the vision of *Together, we deliver the healthcare of the future*, we are harnessing the momentum for change to better meet the needs and expectations of our community.

With such an incredible range of developments and opportunities ahead our Strategic Direction 2021-2023 has been designed to shape and enable these for the long term benefit of our community.

Robyn Batten, Board Chair
Russell Harrison, Chief Executive

“—constant
commitment
to our patients,
people and
communities—”



Our strategy

Context

As our world changes, so too do our challenges. The health and wellbeing of our communities is impacted by a rapidly expanding environment, new technologies, economic shifts and changes in health requirements. Our patients' health needs are becoming more complex. At the same time people have increased expectations around timely access to high-quality care where, and how it best suits their needs.

The onset of COVID-19 in 2020 demonstrated the volatility of the health setting and the need for healthcare services to anticipate and respond to disruption. We believe that our future requires an investment in our capability to encourage new innovations, inspire new ways of working and inform and build on our new models of care.

Our current environment also provides new opportunities. Advances in medical and digital technology and access to accurate and timely data are transforming healthcare. Many people now use technology to receive, communicate and support their care. We have strengthened our relationships with our partners and each other to deliver care for those who need it most. We also continue to grow our network of hospitals, providing a broader system of facilities and services. This will enable access and let us focus on where and how care is delivered.

We deliver this strategy together

The collective 'we' emphasises our connection within and beyond Western Health and our unwavering commitment to working in true partnership with our patients, people and communities.

Strategic Framework

We will be guided by a Strategic Framework that provides a clear direction in dynamic times, and allows us the flexibility to face challenges and take opportunities as they arise (see following page).

We have plotted a three year course for Key Initiatives that will evolve according to the expectation, need and context of the time. Our five Strategic Directions will endure as guiding beacons well beyond this period. Our four Guiding Principles represent, as part of the Framework, all that Western Health is and aspires to be:

Simple

— we will take a straightforward approach, engage people in a way and language that is easy to understand and down to earth

Sustainable

— we are resilient and adaptive, use our resources responsibly and contribute to long-term benefits for our community and environment

Connected

— we collaborate, connect patients to the right services, face-to-face and virtually, and harness the connection we have with our community and each other

Innovative

— we are curious, champion new ways of working and lead by doing.

Western Health

Vision

Together, we deliver the healthcare of the future.

Purpose

Providing the Best Care for the people of the West, in the right place and at the right time.

Guiding Principles

Simple
Sustainable
Connected
Innovative

Values

Compassion—Accountability—Respect—Excellence—Safety

Strategic Direction

01



We partner
with patients
and families

Our patients and families are actively involved in their care and connected to the right services.

02



We care for
our people

Our staff and volunteers are supported, engaged and equipped to embrace a dynamic future.

03



We deliver
services for
the future

Our services are expanding within and beyond hospital walls, advancing high-quality and connected care.

04



We are better
together

Our respectful relationships with our community, system-wide partners and each other drive collaboration and better outcomes.

05



We discover
and learn

Our innovation, research and education inspires and benefits our patients, staff and communities, to deliver a better future.



Strategic Direction 01

We partner with patients and families

Our patients and families are actively involved in their care and connected to the right services.

We are one community, working together to improve the experience, health and wellbeing of the diverse people in the West. Our patients' wishes, feedback and outcomes will be central to continuously evaluating and improving our care. We will consistently engage with our patients, carers and community to learn about their needs. We will endeavour to tailor our care to suit all cultures, identities and abilities. For those patients with longer care journeys, we will work to ensure continuity of care and a seamless experience across the health system.

People can be confident in coming to Western Health through all stages of their lives, knowing they have a voice and we will listen. We will continue to empower patients prior to, during and after their care, so they can manage their condition, advance their recovery and feel supported in making decisions. The respectful relationship between patients, carers and our healthcare professionals is fundamental to our commitment to deliver and live Best Care.

Key initiatives

- Boost virtual care options to empower patients and their families throughout their care journey, enabled by a patient portal where patients and families can access their health details, results and referrals and gather information about their condition
- Expand the current collection of outcomes and experience measures to build and embed a comprehensive Patient Reported Outcome and Experience Measures (PROMs and PREMs) program across Western Health
- Work with patients and clinical teams to co-design a consistent Partnering with Patients model to support decision-making and involvement of family or a support person in everyday practice
- Create spaces for families and carers to meet, connect and support patients and each other, both physically in our new build hospitals and expansions as well as virtually
- Develop an Equity and Inclusion Framework to drive Western Health's initiatives to embrace cultural diversity, LGBTI+, gender and disability for patients, carers and staff
- Expand care options, recognising the diversity of our population and enabling the provision of tailored healthcare which meets individual needs such as the Aboriginal rapid review clinic
- Target initiatives that consistently deliver excellence in care and optimise the safety and wellbeing of our patients
- In partnership with patients and their families, constantly review and enhance the care we deliver
- Review and tailor patient communication, face-to-face, paper-based or digital, in a way that is easy to access and understand so people know where to go, what is happening and how to maintain or improve their own health.

Measuring our impact

- Improved clinical outcomes and patient experience
- Improved patient satisfaction measured through established surveys and feedback mechanisms
- Enhanced and tailored services, technologies and communications as a result of patient and family feedback.



Strategic Direction 02

We care for our people

Our staff and volunteers are supported, engaged and equipped to embrace a dynamic future.

We value our people, who at Western Health include our staff and volunteers. We value what they bring every day — diversity, authenticity, leadership, a ‘can-do’ attitude, talent and compassion. Our staff have a strong connection with patients, our community and each other. Many live in the communities they care for, creating a strong sense of belonging.

We commit to supporting our people to be their best, by promoting a safe and inclusive workplace. We foster a culture that empowers all, encourages innovation and respects wellbeing. As our organisation grows, we will ensure our staff are equipped to continue their great work and embrace new opportunities. We will continue to work together, even though our workplaces might be apart. Through our values-based recruitment we develop and attract the best talent and welcome back past colleagues — because we know Best People deliver Best Care.

Key initiatives

- Review work design and assess how roles are organised, to align with future models of care, supporting a sustainable staffing model and driving the values and aspirations as set out in this strategy
- Strengthen cross-functional learning by developing a cohesive curriculum for clinical and non-clinical roles, to develop specialist expertise while sharing knowledge and experience with aligned disciplines
- Expand the leadership program for emerging, newly appointed and experienced leaders to further harness the people skills, qualities and behaviours that we expect from all our staff
- Further mature and extend our volunteer program through increasing the diversity and variety of roles, developing virtual programs and growing our volunteer base
- Develop strategies to promote, leverage and embrace diversity across all levels of our organisation, reflecting the diversity of our local community and implementing our Gender Equality plan
- Boost the programs of work with our staff, building on their feedback, to promote and support their safety, health and wellbeing
- Implement our new talent management system to understand interests and talents of our staff, and match this with career opportunities and wider development of people’s expertise
- Undertake data-driven strategic workforce planning, supported by service planning and education, to align our capacity and capability with the needs of our growing population and expanding services
- Recruit and retain clinical specialist staff across all medical, nursing, midwifery and allied health disciplines to meet the needs for increasing specialisation in service provision
- Building on existing expertise, drive ongoing development of people’s communication, compassion and cultural awareness through training, mentoring and support
- Tailor our flexible work and work from home approaches and policies, and open up opportunities to attract people from a wider geographical area in the future.

Measuring our impact

- High staff engagement as measured through benchmarked surveys and pulse checks
- Staffing requirements met through the attraction and retention of staff with specific skillsets in line with organisation needs
- Increased diversity in staff and leadership profiles
- High participation rates in leadership and learning programs.



Strategic Direction 03

Our services are expanding within and beyond hospital walls, advancing high-quality and connected care.



We deliver
services for
the future

We are acting now for the future. The community of the West is multicultural, socioeconomically diverse and growing rapidly. To continue to meet their needs, we are expanding our services, locations and technology options. We will strengthen our profile with personalised care options within and beyond hospital walls. We are committed to equitable and timely access to our services, delivered in a socially responsible way.

Our range of care options will give patients greater choice around how and where they receive care, as we continue to build a virtually connected health system. Our digitally enabled services will be pro-active, smart and inclusive to ensure more people can benefit from care and support — irrespective of place.

Key initiatives

- Pilot an integrated multidisciplinary pro-active approach for people with specific and high-risk needs who might not be able to readily access our care
- Continue to strengthen timely access to quality care and efficient pathways through Emergency, Medicine, Surgery, Subacute and into community-based care as required
- Align support structures and clinical practices to ensure consistent care and patient experience, as we expand the places from where we provide care, both physically and virtually
- Maximise opportunities through technologically-advanced equipment and devices integrated seamlessly across the system
- Expand our healthcare services in the home and our virtual care options in ambulatory settings and community services
- Collaborate with staff, patients, carers and communities to co-design new care models and hospital environments
- Pursue the next stages of capital planning and building for our new hospitals in Footscray and Melton, community hospitals in Sunbury and Point Cook, and the expansion of the Sunshine campus that will benefit patients with mental health needs
- Develop a strategic clinical services plan across all current and future Western Health sites to align our services, and how we deliver them, with community needs
- Optimise opportunities to promote health and wellbeing and prevent disease in the community through the establishment of the Western Public Health Unit
- Actively pursue opportunities which will strengthen operational and financial performance for the long term benefit and viability of the organisation
- Enable reliable and secure use of accurate and timely data to drive innovation, and improve patient care and clinical decision-making
- Deliver our Digital Health strategy, including completing the full roll-out of the Electronic Medical Record, data governance and cybersecurity.

Measuring our impact

- Achievement of Department of Health and Western Health performance targets
- Alternative options to presenting at Emergency Departments in place for patients and referrers
- Days returned to people in their homes out of hospital
- Increased rates of uptake in virtual and in-home care
- Developed care models and capital projects delivered on time and within budget, in line with community needs.



Strategic Direction 04

We are better together

Our respectful relationships with our community, system-wide partners and each other drive collaboration and better outcomes.

Every day, we engage and collaborate to improve the health and wellbeing of our communities. Together, we listen, learn and act, so that patients can benefit from our collective worth to achieve their health goals. This will be strengthened through our relationships with healthcare providers, academic partners and the momentum from working with our health colleagues to drive system reform.

These external alliances and our focus on better outcomes is equally reflected internally, as we innovate across clinical and non-clinical teams to live and deliver Best Care for the people of the West.

Key initiatives

- Develop a Western Health Partnership strategy to optimise productive mutually-beneficial relationships with identified partners
- Pursue a collaborative model for our new Community Hospitals in Point Cook and Sunbury to deliver Western Health services as part of a broader and seamless patient journey
- Strengthen collaboration with local organisations in the West to address social health determinants, increase health literacy and support preventative initiatives for targeted groups
- Leverage our Community Engagement and Volunteers program to strengthen links with community institutions and create opportunities to assist with local projects
- Explore opportunities to expand our shared care models with GPs, streamline referral pathways to and from Western Health, and simplify referral processes
- Progress integrated technology and connected systems to further enable interdisciplinary and efficient working in everything we do
- Implement a coordinated approach to managing Western Health wide projects — leveraging resources, outcomes and feedback
- Strengthen collaboration with universities as our long-term, valued partners, exploring different models of delivering under- and post-graduate learning to develop our future workforce together
- Build stronger connections between and amongst researchers, educators, clinical leaders and frontline staff, through multidisciplinary projects, learning and innovation.

Measuring our impact

- Increased referral pathways to and from partners in primary care and community health
- Increased participation of partners on Western Health projects and committees, and increased requests by partners for Western Health representatives to contribute to their initiatives and projects
- Development of an innovative model of care and collaboration for Community Hospitals
- Improved outcomes for patients with multiple, chronic or complex conditions
- Improved, productive relationships with partners as indicated through feedback and increased projects delivered in partnership.



Strategic Direction 05

Our innovation, research and education inspires and benefits our patients, staff and communities, to deliver a better future.

We discover and learn

We are curious and forward-thinking. We question, investigate, evaluate, adapt and innovate as we share, mentor, encourage and learn. We are continuously improving the quality and sustainability of our services and facilities to ensure accessible care for future generations.

In looking to the future of healthcare, we will encourage life-long learning; fostering curiosity and supporting staff to lead and participate in research and education, and to be recognised as specialists in their fields. Our highly-regarded experience in innovative care models for people with chronic illness and complex needs, will see Western Health excel as a centre of expertise for translational and health service research, inspired by our local population and delivering a global impact.

Key initiatives

- Develop a comprehensive research plan that harnesses an innovative culture, celebrates successes and drives improvement of patient options and outcomes, nationally and internationally
- Strengthen organisation-wide research and educator capacity and capability through targeted workforce planning
- Establish an organisation-wide, evidence-based methodology for collaborative quality improvement and implementing translational research across the organisation
- Progress technology to enable connections between systems, ensuring reliable and centralised data sources, to boost data collection, analysis and reporting
- Leverage our relationships to grow consumer and community engagement in research design and delivery and increase inclusion of culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) communities
- Enhance active participation, facilitation and collaboration in research, education and quality improvement initiatives
- Harness the opportunities of virtual, remote and interactive delivery of education and training in blended and tailored programs, offered at all times and using an interactive, learner-centred approach
- Expand our specialist knowledge by encouraging education opportunities, seeking and leveraging opportunities for scholarships and fellowships
- Plan and develop an implementation pathway to embed sustainability as a core aspect of our operations
- Implement world-leading frameworks to equip our leadership in making data-driven decisions, set priorities and monitor our impact towards becoming more sustainable.

Measuring our impact

- Being the health service of choice for graduate placements and advanced training of medical, nursing, midwifery and allied health professionals
- Increased research grants, philanthropic funding and collaboration
- Greater participation of staff in education, research and quality improvement initiatives
- Adopted new ways of working which strengthen our financial, operational and environmental sustainability
- Increased knowledge gained in education measured by learner satisfaction, assessments and patient outcomes.

Driving
factors that
shape our
future

Community expectations

Through consultations to inform this strategy, patients emphasised that family, carers or advocates are a critical part of patient-centred care, especially for their emotional wellbeing and in the transition from hospital to home. Patients also highlighted the continued importance of clear communication, so they understand what is happening, can make informed decisions and that they are spoken with, not to.

There is a global trend and increasing opportunities for patients to be actively involved in their care.²

Many communities nowadays are increasingly connected through smart devices, enabling them to be better informed about their condition. Many expect their health needs to be satisfiable anytime, anywhere, as is increasingly the case in other parts of their lives^{3,4}. Especially over the last year, people have experienced more care services that can be easily accessed while staying at home⁵.

These findings and trends are motivating us to continue to empower patients and families, work together with respect and realise the benefits of technology. An example where Western Health has done this is by developing an app for pregnant women to connect with Western Health and other services and sources. Another example is the Greatest Need program, to support vulnerable patients to help them leave hospital and move forward with their lives, while investing in research to break the cycle of chronic disease impacting health and wellbeing. We will build on these experiences to continue our efforts to meet patients' and families' expectations and continue to listen and deliver what matters most to them.

Prioritising our people

Western Health staff are exceptional. They respond to challenges and lead with conviction. A recent staff survey showed the importance for staff to have access to learning and growth opportunities, be empowered and consulted, encouraged to innovate, and supported to work in the most efficient way. A further wellbeing pulse survey in late 2020 highlighted that people at Western Health report being very involved in their work and, while over-extended through the year, they didn't become cynical and treated each other well. This emphasised the strength of our culture.

The increasing demand and complexity of our services, expansion in locations, more remote work, digitisation and system-wide skills shortages all directly impact our people.^{15,16}

These factors, along with progressive social and legislative change for a more inclusive workplace, will be key to attracting and retaining talented and compassionate people¹⁷. What is also evident is the imperative to act now to ensure the right capacity and capability, while keeping the same strong culture, is in place as we grow rapidly in the future.

2019 **5,000+** Full Time Equivalent
2036 **9,000** approx

The supportive culture across Western Health was a focus during the pandemic response and has provided the impetus to build on our sense of trust and communication. Our award-winning Positive Workplace programs have strengthened staff empowerment and a safe, respectful work environment. We are working together with our academic partners to further enable our people to provide Best Care. Our collaboration with Deakin University for example, has led to the enhancement of team-based practice within nursing and midwifery, increased staff satisfaction and improved patient outcomes.

These are strong foundations as we approach a different and constantly changing future.

A growing and diverse population

The community of the West is multicultural, socioeconomically diverse and represents an area that is among the fastest growing populations in Australia⁶.

2019 **880,000** people

2036 **1.3 million**

People in the West have a relatively higher burden of disease, especially in chronic disease, certain types of cancer and mental illness⁷. Our population is also one of the most diverse, with more than 40% being born outside of Australia.

Our growing, diverse population not only drives our capital expansion plans, it also stimulates us to provide appropriate care models, environments and support services, respecting the specific needs of our communities.

Over the past years, we have consolidated and expanded critical care and commenced new clinical procedures in the cardiac catheter laboratories at Sunshine Hospital. We have also opened the western suburbs' first neonatal intensive care unit in 2019, enabling mothers and babies to stay together. The dedicated services like Wilim Berrbang and the Westside Lodge are other examples of our commitment to personalise our growing services, and we will continue to do so in the future.

Building a sustainable Health Service

As we experience an increasing burden of health costs, Western Health sees a strong responsibility to use resources wisely, providing the best value for our communities and ensuring funds are well directed. From an environmental perspective, the Victorian Climate Change Act 2017 and its path to net zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050 drives Western Health to further reduce its impact on emissions¹⁸.

By strengthening sustainability and resilience, health services can adapt quickly to unexpected events and fluctuations in demand, and be more flexible in the allocation of staff, service planning and delivery¹⁹. A sustainable health service also innovates in areas that reduce the burden of disease by addressing social factors and preventative health.

Western Health is leading in sustainability through strategies to reduce our carbon footprint and minimise waste, and through initiatives such as forwarding excess food to OzHarvest and recycling programs. The focus on sustainability in infrastructure design and renewal will reduce the impact on the environment and will maximise our flexibility into the future.

Working across the health system

Health services are increasingly working beyond organisational boundaries to address shared challenges and spark new innovations¹⁰. System reform and initiatives with neighbouring health services, help Victorians to stay healthy and well through more integrated care¹¹. The Royal Commissions into the Aged Care, Disability and Mental Health sectors are expected to reinforce focus on equity of access, respectful and safe services and coordinated care for people with specific needs¹².

Collaboration will be a key lever to implement system reform. It requires more than an individual health service.

As a major tertiary health service we already have a strong track record of working across the care continuum. Together with our partners, the HealthLinks program has been leading in transforming care for people with chronic disease. The newly established Public Health Unit will also boost our efforts to keep our communities safe and well. We will build on these valuable experiences to strengthen our role as industry leader in the years to come.

New places and ways to deliver our care

While care is increasingly being delivered out of hospital, COVID-19 has driven the implementation of digitally-enabled and at-home models at larger scale and faster pace across Australia⁹. Western Health's allied health, medicine and nursing in the home services, now support six times more patients compared to last year, avoiding unnecessary hospitalisation and enabling earlier discharge.

In the future, more care will be provided 'irrespective of place'. Our new facilities in Melton and Point Cook will further expand the places we deliver care from, as our hospital activity grows significantly:

2019 **130,000** hospital stays

2036 **230,000+**

It will be increasingly important to support continuity of care while seamlessly transitioning through different care settings and Western Health locations.

The next step will be to complement our digital and at-home care options before and after admission, and continue to pro-actively provide alternatives to hospitalisation. This strengthens Western Health's path of delivering Best Care within and beyond hospital walls.

Accelerated digitalisation

Advances in medical and digital technology are disrupting healthcare around the world. Surgical techniques are unfolding alongside rapid advances in technological innovations and devices, which are increasingly accessible, available and affordable¹³. Digitalisation is boosting connectivity, mobility and data collection¹⁴.

With more data and technology at our fingertips, there is a greater opportunity to gain insights in real-time, predict future events and use digital devices to complement our care. This also brings greater accountability with an imperative for data governance and cybersecurity.

Technology has proven its pivotal role during the pandemic, enabling Western Health to stay connected with patients, families and each other. This has paved the way for a wider adoption of telehealth, with a rise from 0 to 75 telehealth clinics and with many more virtual contacts expected in the future.

2020 **13,000** virtual contacts

2036 **25,000+**

We are also proud that we have implemented Phase 1 of our Electronic Medical Record (EMR) across many areas in 2018. This opens new opportunities for collaboration, data analysis and access to information for patients and system partners like GPs. Examples are the Future Health Today program to enhance early diagnosis and intervention in chronic disease and the GP messaging system implemented in 2017. Encouraged by these recent experiences, there is a commitment to embark on Phase 2 of EMR and further developments which will continue the work in becoming a smart, fully digitally-enabled health service.

Speed of innovation

The COVID-19 pandemic has driven a remarkable speed of change and innovation.²⁰

The time between ideas and implementation has dramatically shortened with greater focus on evaluation and refinement in practice. We have learned how to adapt and take on new roles as individuals, teams and organisations.

Western Health commits to maintaining this momentum. We are well positioned to stay ahead with driving and adopting new ways of working supported by an open, learning culture.

While caring for the greatest number of COVID-19 positive patients across Australia, multidisciplinary teams, together with the University of Melbourne, developed the 'Iso Hood', designed to protect staff and patients from droplet transmission — a technology that has since been shared with intensive care units across Australia and the world. Western Health has become a trusted advocate for infection control and disease outbreak management. It has seeded further initiatives such as the Innovation Accelerator Program with the University of Melbourne to bring ideas to market. We will maintain the pace of sparking and implementing innovations over the years to come.

Delivering our strategy

Engagement

To support the ongoing implementation, the next step is to continue our engagement on this strategy with staff, the wider community, and our current and prospective partners. Consistent with the emphasis in Strategic Direction 2021–2023 on connection and collaboration, we will use this engagement to seek new opportunities for working together.

On the horizon

As we embark on delivering our Strategic Direction 2021–2023, we are already aware of significant changes that will impact on our health service now and in the near term. We are already experiencing an increased and more complex demand for care as a result of delayed treatments, overlooked symptoms or limited access to care due to COVID-19. While our staff are adapting to new ways of working, we are planning to expand and upgrade our infrastructure and IT. The delivery of Strategic Direction 2021–2023 will further maximise the opportunities within these major projects.

Governance and monitoring

The Western Health Board is accountable to the Minister for Health through the Department of Health. It is responsive and transparent in all areas of its responsibility. Our robust governance ensures our progress is monitored and reported through annual and operational planning and budgeting processes. Strategic Direction 2021–2023 will guide our investments, priorities and activities. Our performance and progress of the delivery of this strategy will be transparently shared with our stakeholders. Driven by the commitment of our Executives, staff and volunteers, and supported by our communities and system partners, our Strategic Direction 2021–2023 will enable Western Health to deliver the healthcare of the future, together.

Implementing a dynamic strategy

To recognise this rapidly changing environment, we have developed a Strategic Direction 2021–2023 with a balance of strategy and flexibility. For its execution that means a strong commitment to the overarching Strategic Framework developed by our organisation and communities, and endorsed by our Board and the Department of Health. The Framework also enables us to pursue emerging or unforeseen opportunities, respond swiftly to changes and adopt new technology and ideas within these Strategic Directions.

As we continually improve and refine our detailed plans, Strategic Direction 2021–2023 will be a ‘living’ strategy eliciting dialogue and welcoming input from others. Through regular pulse checks, we will monitor its alignment with our circumstances and overall goals.

Underpinning activities

Our Strategic Directions and Guiding Principles provide a strong focus for all our planning, along with the measures to direct our work over the coming three years. This will be driven by a broad range of underpinning strategic activities, plans and frameworks, including:

- Best Care
- Cultural Safety
- Research
- Digital and Data
- Positive Workplace.

These and other plans will ensure the delivery aligned to the Strategic Framework as set out in Strategic Direction 2021–2023.



About Western Health



Our communities

Western Health is the major healthcare provider to one of the fastest growing and most diverse regions of Australia. The catchment population is nearing 900,000 and the birth rate and movement into this region means that strong growth will continue in the years ahead.

Our communities are culturally rich, with members speaking more than 150 different languages and dialects. Yet, while proudly diverse, people from across our suburbs face significant challenges. Many experience substantial social and economic disadvantage, with higher-than-average unemployment, and a large proportion of our population experience financial hardship.

Our population has higher-than-average rates of cancer, heart disease, stroke and mental illness, and diabetes and depression are also significant population health issues. And our community is ageing, with frailty becoming a significant challenge to independent, healthy living.

We are committed to providing Best Care to communities across Melbourne's west, improving health outcomes for all.

Our people

Employing more than 7000 staff and over 600 volunteers, we are focused on enabling and supporting the culture and capability of all people across the organisation. A large proportion of our staff are from the western suburbs, or live locally now, further entrenching Western Health in the communities we serve.

Western Health has a strong philosophy of working with our local community to deliver excellence in patient care. We span the municipalities of Brimbank, Hobsons Bay, Maribyrnong, Melton, Moonee Valley, Moorabool, Hume and Wyndham, and we value our relationships with each local government.

Our growing health service has long-standing relationships with health providers in the western region of Melbourne, as well as strong affiliations with numerous colleges and academic institutions.

Our services

Western Health provides a comprehensive, integrated range of clinical services from our various sites ranging from acute tertiary services in areas of emergency medicine, intensive care, medical and surgical services, through to subacute care and onsite and virtual ambulatory clinics. Our specialised services include oncology, renal, women's health including maternity, chronic disease, geriatrics and cardiology.

We provide a combination of hospital, community-based and in-reach services to aged, adult and paediatric patients and newborn babies. Western Health also offers drug health and addiction medicine support through our inpatient service and community Drug Health Service.

The already wide range of community services managed by Western Health was expanded significantly during 2020, as part of our extensive COVID-19 response. Our new and innovative Rapid Allied Health Service provides urgent physiotherapy, occupational therapy and social work care to patients in their homes, complementing the in-home care already provided by the nursing and medical at-home service and, in some cases, preventing unnecessary presentations to emergency and admissions to wards.

Underpinning Western Health's world-class clinical care is our commitment to research and education. The Western Centre for Health Research and Education, based at Sunshine Hospital, provides a range of purpose-built, state-of-the-art teaching, research and simulation facilities. It is home to the Western Clinical School for Medicine and Allied Health, in partnership with the University of Melbourne, and also houses researchers, academics and educators from Western Health, Victoria University and the University of Melbourne.

As a Registered Training Organisation (RTO), we offer high quality training focused on professional development. Our innovative and valuable programs are accredited and evaluated externally.



Our locations

Western Health manages three acute public hospitals: Sunshine Hospital (including Joan Kirner Women's and Children's), Footscray Hospital and Williamstown Hospital. We also operate Sunbury Day Hospital, Hazeldean in Williamstown, Bacchus Marsh and Melton Regional Hospital, Melton Health and Community Services, Bacchus Marsh Community Health Centre, Caroline Springs Community Health Centre and Grant Lodge Residential Aged Care in Bacchus Marsh.

1 — Sunbury Day Hospital

The Sunbury Day Hospital provides day medical, day surgical, day chemotherapy and haemodialysis treatment, along with a number of specialist clinics.

2 — Sunshine Hospital

Sunshine Hospital is an acute and subacute teaching hospital with approximately 600 beds. The hospital provides elective and emergency care with a range of inpatient and outpatient services, including intensive care and coronary care, acute medical and surgical services, sub-specialty medicine and surgical services, and rehabilitation, aged care and palliative care. Sunshine Hospital also provides a range of women's and children's services at the new Joan Kirner Women's and Children's facility which opened in 2019. The Sunshine Hospital Radiation Therapy Centre provides treatment to patients with a range of cancers through a partnership between Western Health and the Peter MacCallum Cancer Centre.

3 — Footscray Hospital

Footscray Hospital is an acute and subacute teaching hospital with approximately 300 beds. It provides elective and emergency care, with a range of inpatient and outpatient services including acute general medical and surgical, intensive and coronary care, sub-specialty medicine, rehabilitation and aged care and related clinical support.

4 — Williamstown Hospital

Williamstown Hospital is a 90 bed facility providing emergency, surgical, rehabilitation and geriatric evaluation and management services, renal dialysis and community rehabilitation and transition care.

5 — Hazeldean

Hazeldean provides services to support people at the conclusion of their hospital stay.

6 — Bacchus Marsh and Melton

The services in Bacchus Marsh, Melton and Caroline Springs provide a range of general and specialist care across acute, sub-acute, residential aged, community nursing, allied health and dental services.

Western Health is working within an environment of major capital and service development.

A — Planning and implementation of Phase 2 of Electronic Medical Record

B — New mental health beds and pre-assessment rehabilitation services planned for Sunshine Hospital

C — Infrastructure works at Footscray Hospital

D — Planning work for New Footscray Hospital is continuing ahead of construction

E — Upgrade of patient and community facilities at Williamstown Hospital

F — Redevelopment of the Sunshine Hospital Emergency Department

G — Planning and development of the Sunbury and Point Cook Community Hospitals

H — Planning and development of a new Melton Hospital

Western Health is growing with our communities. A number of exciting major projects are underway — or have been recently completed — ensuring we can continue to provide Best Care into the future:

New Footscray Hospital: Construction of the state-of-the-art tertiary facility, on the corner of Geelong and Ballarat roads, is on track to open in 2025. It will replace the current facility at Gordon Street, increasing our capacity by nearly 200 beds. The new hospital will treat approximately 15,000 additional patients and enable around 20,000 additional people to be seen by the emergency department each year.

Sunshine Hospital Emergency Department: The \$34.8 million redevelopment, to be completed in early 2021, will enable an extra 59,000 emergency patients to be treated every year. The redevelopment will add an extra 55 treatment spaces in the emergency department, an expanded children's section, a medical imaging suite, a mental health and alcohol and other drug crisis hub, and an expanded administration area.

Sunshine Women's Prevention and Recovery Care (PARC): Sunshine Women's PARC is a community-based, short-term supported residential service for females who are experiencing a mental health problem and who do not need (or no longer require) an acute inpatient admission. The Women's PARC is designed to accommodate patients and their young children, making this a unique approach to supporting patients and their families.

Joan Kirner Women's and Children's: Based at Sunshine Hospital, the new Joan Kirner Women's and Children's offers women and families world-class maternity and paediatric services, including the first neonatal intensive care unit in the western suburbs. In the first year since its May 2019 opening, more than 6000 babies were delivered and 22,780 patients treated, including 10,434 children.

New Melton Hospital: The State Government has committed to building a new tertiary centre — to be run by Western Health — that will provide a wide range of acute and subacute services. It will be built on a greenfield site in Melton, one of the fastest growing areas of Australia.

Community Hospitals: Western Health has been appointed by the State Government to operate two of 10 new Community Hospitals in Victoria. One will be in a greenfield location in Point Cook and the other, in Sunbury, will be an expansion of our current day hospital. Community hospitals will provide a range of ambulatory care services, diagnostics, pharmacy, urgent care and day procedures in an accessible, integrated care setting.

Mental Health beds at Sunshine: Planning is underway for a new 52-bed Adult Acute Mental Health Inpatient service to be located on the Sunshine Hospital site. It will provide psychiatric assessment, care and treatment for people aged 18–65 years.

Williamstown Community Hub: The 'Heart of Williamstown' public fundraising campaign generated \$2.5 million for the redevelopment of Williamstown Hospital's main public areas into a central visitor hub.

- ¹ The themes stated in this section were brought forward by consumer representatives in a range of one-on-one interviews and focus groups.
- ² The King's Fund, 2018. Shared responsibility for health: the cultural change we need.
- ³ Australian Government, Australian Digital Health Agency, 2018. Australian's National Digital Health Strategy. Safe, seamless and secure: evolving health and care to meet the needs of modern Australia.
- ⁴ Rowlands, D., 2019. Digital Health Workforce Academy and Health informatics Society of Australia. What is digital health? And why does it matter? White paper.
- ⁵ Grattan Institute, 2020. Coming out of COVID-19 lockdown. The next steps for Australian health care.
- ⁶ ABS ERP, VIF2019.
- ⁷ 2019 Social Health Atlases of Australia: Local Government Area (LGA).
- ⁸ Ibid.
- ⁹ Grattan Institute, 2020. Coming out of COVID-19 lockdown. The next steps for Australian health care.
- ¹⁰ PWC, 2019. Health Matters, the future of health. Collaboration.
- ¹¹ State of Victoria, Department of Health and Human Services, 2016. Health 2040: Advancing health, access and care.
- ¹² Royal Commission into Victoria's Mental Health System, 2019. Interim report. Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety, 2019. Interim report. NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission.
- ¹³ McKinsey & Company, 2019. Finding the future of care provision: the role of smart hospitals.
- ¹⁴ Gartner, 2020. The Data Driven Hospital without walls.
- ¹⁵ Gartner, 2020. 9 Predictions for the Post-COVID Future of Work.
- ¹⁶ PWC, 2019. Health Matters, the future of health. The workforce of the future.
- ¹⁷ For instance through the Gender Equality Act 2020 to commence on 31 March 2021.
- ¹⁸ State of Victoria, Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning, 2016. Victoria's Climate Change Framework.
- ¹⁹ Grattan Institute, 2020. Coming out of COVID-19 lockdown. The next steps for Australian health care.
- ²⁰ Advisory Board, 2020. Locking in crisis-driven innovation: a guide to inventorying our Covid-19 improvements.

The highlighted data in 'Factors that drive our Future' is based on our Annual Report 2018-19, Western Health performance data and ABS population data. The 2036 estimates are based on population growth (ABS) and expected activity growth (DHHS Inpatient Forecast model), acknowledging planned expansions for Footscray, Melton, Point Cook and Sunbury (VHHSBA/WH service plans and capital briefs).



Western Health

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