



Supporting front-line country clinicians in 24/7 patient care and coordination

WACHS COMMAND CENTRE

Rapidly changing technology has created new opportunities to drastically improve health care and access to specialists, particularly in country WA where vast distances, smaller populations and diverse community needs create unique challenges for health care provision.

WACHS has a strong history of developing innovative technology solutions and investing in world-class telehealth services to enhance access to high quality health care for country people.

The WACHS Command Centre is a true innovation in country healthcare.

Building on the success of the award winning Emergency Telehealth Service, the WACHS Command Centre brings together new and existing services in a 24/7 'virtual' clinical hub. Using videoconferencing and high-tech information technologies, the WACHS Command Centre is expanding the range of timely specialist advice and support currently available to front-line clinicians caring for country patients.



The WACHS Command Centre delivers a digitally enabled, flexible and dedicated specialist clinical workforce available to every WACHS facility in real-time, supporting local clinicians, improving outcomes for patients and keeping care closer to home.

The WACHS Command Centre leverages technology to provide a 24/7 one-stop shop for country doctors and nurses to access a range of clinical expertise via virtual technologies.

WACHS Command Centre



Emergency Telehealth Service

Supports WA's country doctors and nurses caring for patients by providing 24/7 access to specialist emergency clinicians by videoconference.

Currently available in 83 sites WACHS hospitals and health services across country WA with additional sites continuing to be connected.



Inpatient Telehealth Service

Provides virtual ward rounds to patients admitted to our country hospitals when the local GP is unavailable.

Available at all WACHS hospitals with inpatient capabilities.



Mental Health Emergency Telehealth Service

Provides WA country doctors and nurses with access to specialist mental health nurses and psychiatrists, to assist in caring for people presenting to our hospitals and nursing posts.

Currently available in 83 sites WACHS hospitals and health services across country WA with additional sites continuing to be connected.



Acute Specialist Telehealth Service

Provides country clinicians and their patients with access to a range of specialists using three-way videoconferencing facilities.

Expansion of acute specialist services in 2021.



Acute Patient Transfer Coordination

A coordination centre that oversees safe, timely and efficient patient transfer to and from regional and metropolitan hospitals for admitted country patients.

Introduction of transfer coordination service in 2021.



Advanced Patient Monitoring System

A monitoring centre that uses advanced technologies and real-time information to support doctors and nurses in detecting and responding to unwell patients in country hospitals and nursing posts.

Development and integration of technologies in 2021.

Why a Command Centre?

Since its introduction in 2012, the WACHS Emergency Telehealth Service (ETS) has assisted country clinicians in transforming emergency care for country patients presenting to WACHS emergency departments, nursing posts and Silver Chain facilities.

The ETS and Inpatient Telehealth Service have contributed to improved patient outcomes, improved consistency of service and standards, improved governance, and supported building the skills of the country clinical workforce. These transformational flow-on effects have enabled WACHS to envision the future of country health care – the WACHS Command Centre.

Strong feedback from our staff and clinical incident outcomes indicated the importance of having high levels of support available to country clinicians whenever they need it - hence the need for the WACHS Command Centre.

Contemporary evidence supports the introduction of advanced technologies to assist country clinicians in the early detection of deteriorating patients and



providing this information closer to the bedside.

Previous reviews recommended a patient transfer coordination system be implemented to streamline inter-hospital patient transfers. Currently there is no single organisation in WA with overview or responsibility for patient transfers, and the current system takes clinicians away from the bedside.

The development and coordination of these services under the WACHS

Command Centre is a WACHS digital innovation priority, resourced through the State Government's Country Health Innovation (CHI) funding.

WACHS is also working in collaboration with many partners including metropolitan health service providers, St John Ambulance and Royal Flying Doctor Service to leverage technology and clinical expertise that better supports clinicians, creates a more sustainable health service and improves patient safety.



Advanced technologies such as those used in ward telemetry monitoring programs in Intensive Care Units and High Dependency Units have been reported to:

- reduce hospital mortality
- reduce hospital length of stay
- improve survivability of patients for significant events.¹

1. Simpaio et al. 2014. A review of analytics and clinical informatics in health care. *Journal of Medical Systems*, 38:45.

Georgina's patient journey

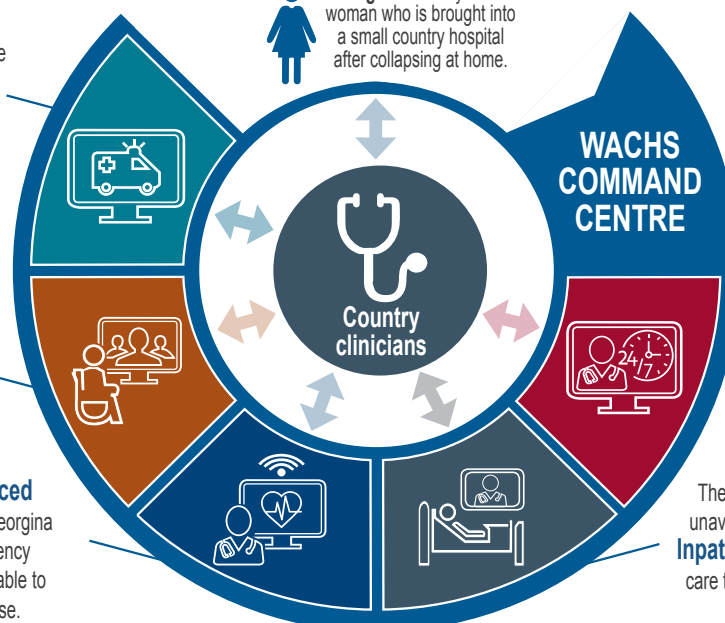
Patient transfer is facilitated by the **Acute Patient Transfer Coordination** service and the progress of the patient transfer request, acceptance and ETA is tracked by the nurse at the bedside.

A call is made to the **Acute Specialist Telehealth Service** and a cardiologist based in Perth is able to see the patient via videoconference and ask further questions, determining that Georgina needs to be transferred to Perth.

The nurse at the hospital and the **Advanced Patient Monitoring System** detects Georgina is deteriorating and within Medical Emergency Response criteria. The **ETS** team are available to dial in, see the patient and assist the nurse.



Georgina is a 57-year-old woman who is brought into a small country hospital after collapsing at home.



Georgina is seen by the local nurse and GP with assistance and advice from the **Emergency Telehealth Service (ETS)**.

The local GP admits Georgina for hydration but is unavailable for the next two days and hands over to **Inpatient Telehealth Service** for ongoing patient care through a daily ward round and ongoing advice.