



BOARD COMMUNIQUE

This communique highlights key discussions from the recent WA Country Health Service (WACHS) Board meeting:

1 July 2022

The Board travelled to the Kimberley Region for this meeting. This was the Board's first Regional meeting and engagement since August 2021 due to the ongoing COVID response and protocols. Members were pleased to be back on the road and meeting with Regional staff and stakeholders.

After arriving in Broome, Board Members split up to visit sites across Broome and Derby and meet with local staff across two days in both towns. The Board spoke with staff and key stakeholders about relevant issues and challenges, but also heard positive stories of resilience and innovation that have occurred as a result of the difficulties faced over the last 30 months.

The Board received presentations on key initiatives implemented across the Region, including the Kimberley Population Health Unit (KPHU) COVID response in remote communities. Members were advised this was a collaboration between the KPHU and key stakeholders, including Indigenous community leaders, to ensure people across the Region were fully vaccinated in preparation for the April opening of the WA border.

Pictured right are the KPHU staff receiving a WACHS Values Award from the WACHS Board Chair (L-R Chris Hart, Allied Health Manager, Johari Bin Demin, Senior Programs Officer, Pippa May, Public Health Physician, Celia Simpson, KPHU Local Emergency Operations Centre Lead, Neale Fong, Board Chair, Kate Matthews, A/Director KPHU and Rob Pulsford, A/Regional Director Kimberley).



The Services visited exemplified to the Board the resilience and ingenuity of WACHS staff and their determination to deliver patient-centered care to country people in the face of workforce shortages and high demand. The Board thanks the Kimberley staff for their ongoing commitment to the health and wellbeing of rural and remote communities.



After the Board meeting at Broome Hospital on Friday 1 July, Members attended the opening of [NAIDOC Week](#), the annual celebration of history, culture and achievement of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. The theme this year, [Get Up! Stand Up! Show Up!](#) is a call to action, encouraging us all to champion positive change and celebrate those who have fought hard to drive and lead change for Aboriginal communities. The celebration was held in the lush courtyard of the Hospital and after a moving Welcome to Country and smoking ceremony conducted by Yawuru elder

Neil McKenzie, Members enjoyed sharing lunch with WACHS staff from across Broome and the entertainment provided by talented musician and WACHS employee David Pigram. Pictured above at the NAIDOC Week opening ceremony are (L-R) Diane Mohen, Board Member, Kim Isaacs, Board Member, Neale Fong, Board Chair, Alan Ferris, Board Member, Wendy Newman, Deputy Board Chair, David Pigram, Regional Aboriginal Health Consultant, Neil McKenzie, Yawuru Elder and Rob Pulsford, A/Regional Director, Kimberley.

At the Board meeting the Members thanked Rob Pulsford for his work in the Kimberley over the past six months as Acting Regional Director and wished him well for his return to WACHS Central Office following the commencement of the new Regional Director, Rex O'Rourke in late July. Members are also grateful to the hard-working Regional team for facilitating and hosting the Board's meeting and engagements over the two-day visit.

This meeting was the last for Board member Dr Kim Isaacs. The Board Chair and Members thanked Kim for the expertise and leadership she has provided to the Board in relation to Aboriginal health in particular, but also for advocating for safe, high-quality health care for all rural and remote patients.

Members attending

Dr Neale Fong (Board Chair)
Ms Wendy Newman (Deputy Board Chair)
Mr Alan Ferris
Mr Paul Fitzpatrick
Dr Daniel Heredia
Ms Kelly Howlett
Dr Kim Isaacs
Dr Diane Mohen

In attendance

Mr Jeffrey Moffet (Chief Executive)
Ms Melissa Vernon (Executive Director, Operations Hub)

Apologies

Ms Mary Anne Stephens

Key Matters for Decision

The Board endorsed the progression of the WACHS Service Level Agreement 2022/22 as well as the Mental Health Commission Service Agreement 2021/22.

Key Matters for Discussion

- The Board received an update on WACHS staff accommodation activity, including the work done to quantify and prioritise maintenance and renewal of workforce accommodation.
- An overview of WACHS' Child Development Services' achievements and areas for improvement was provided to the Board and included an update on the Early Years Initiative.
- The Board was advised that WACHS Aboriginal Health Strategy has developed the Aboriginal Health Performance Monitoring and Reporting Plan 2021-2025 and an Aboriginal Health Dashboard will provide oversight of health outcomes for Aboriginal people accessing WACHS' services.
- In his report, the Chief Executive provided an update on changes to Executive staffing, the COVID response, staff safety and patient transport, and acknowledged the retirement and service to WACHS of Margaret Abernethy, A/Director of Nursing and Midwifery and Wendy McIntosh, Director of Safety and Quality.

Summary of Standing Items for Discussion and Noting

- WACHS Organisational Standing Reports including:
 - Health Service Performance Report.
 - Safety, Quality and Clinical Performance Dashboard Report June 2022.
 - Audit and Risk Quarterly Report to the Board
 - Workforce, Assurance and Compliance Dashboard Report May 2022.
 - Risk Review Report.
 - Progress Summary against the Audit Plan Report.

Items for noting included:

- Manager My Care app update.
- Public Sector Commission 2022 integrity and conduct annual collection.

Next Meeting

The next Board meeting will be held in Perth Friday 29 July 2022.

Dr Neale Fong

BOARD CHAIR
1 July 2022