



BOARD COMMUNIQUE

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

25 May 2023

The Board meeting was held in Perth on Thursday, 25 May 2023 at WACHS' offices at Grace Vaughan House, Shenton Park.

Grace Vaughan (1 April 1922 – 21 January 1984) was a was a member of the Legislative Council of Western Australia from 1974 to 1980. Prior to entering politics, she was a social worker, holding degrees from the University of New South Wales and the University of Western Australia. Vaughan entered parliament at the 1974 state election and served a single six-year term before being defeated at the 1980 election. After leaving parliament, Vaughan served as president of the International Federation of Social Workers from 1983 to her death in 1984.¹

In recent years the building has undergone a major refurbishment and is now the offices for various directorates including WACHS Business Services, People Culture and Capability, Strategy and Change and Medical Services.



Grace Vaughan House is surrounded by remnant bushland. To the rear of the building is a section of the “Bush to Beach Trail” part of the Whadjuk trail where staff often enjoy walking during their breaks.

¹ [Grace Vaughan - Wikipedia](#)

At the meeting the Board acknowledged the pleasing increase in response rate of 7% to the 2023 Minister for Health 'Your Voice in Health' Employee Engagement Survey, particularly the 41% increase in the Pilbara region.

The Board were advised that Premier Mark McGowan and Health Minister Amber-Jade Sanderson visited Albany to have a first look at the \$13.1 million Albany radiation oncology facility as the site prepared to open to patients.

The Chief Executive, together with the Regional Executive Director and local staff also welcomed the Premier and the Minister for Health to the Pilbara region to officially open Newman's brand-new, state-of-the-art health facility. The \$61.4 million purpose-built facility includes a new emergency department, inpatient beds, emergency and treatment bays, as well as a dedicated medical centre, consultation spaces and a dental clinic with space for two dental chairs.

The Board Finance, Audit and Risk, and Safety and Quality Committee Chairs provided briefings to the Board on recent Committee meetings held in the month of February.

Members attending

Dr Neale Fong (Board Chair)
Ms Wendy Newman (Deputy Board Chair)
Mr Alan Ferris
Mr Paul Fitzpatrick
Dr Daniel Heredia
Mr Colin Holt
Ms Kelly Howlett
Dr Diane Mohen
Mrs Shaneane Weldon

In Attendance

Mr Robert Pulsford (A/Chief Executive)
Mr Sean Conlan (A/Chief Operating Officer)

Apologies

Ms Mary Anne Stephens

Key Matters for Decision

- The Board endorsed the WACHS Aboriginal Employment Strategy 2023-2026. This is the third document of its kind for WACHS and recognises the requirement for culturally safe and responsive workplace environments to attract, develop and retain Aboriginal employees.

Key Matters for Discussion

- In his report, the A/Chief Executive provided an update on Executive appointments, meetings with the Department of Health, progress of various inquiries and State Budget outcomes.
- The Board discussed several strategic priorities and areas of focus for the organisation.
- The Board received an update on the progress of the Country Health Sustainability Taskforce and were provided with the amended Terms of Reference.
- Additional discussions also focused on workforce and service continuity matters, work, health and safety, the WA Safety and Quality Strategic Plan, transport matters and service provision to WACHS NDIS recipients.
- High level updates were also received on WACHS' performance across the Business Performance, Workforce, Safety and Quality, Finance and Business Services.

Summary of Standing Items for Discussion and Noting

- WACHS Organisational Standing Reports including:
 - Health Service Performance Report, April 2023.
 - Safety, Quality and Clinical Performance Report, March and April 2023.
 - Workforce, Assurance and Compliance Report, April 2023.
 - WACHS Finance, FTE and Activity Report, April 2023.
 - Risk Review Report.
 - Progress Summary against the Audit Plan.

Items for Noting included

- An update on the amendments to the *Health Services Act 2016*.

Next Meeting

The next Board meeting will be held in Newman on 29 June 2023.

Dr Neale Fong

BOARD CHAIR

May 2023