
Western NSW Local Health District
Western NSW LHD Annual Public Meeting Held Virtually (video)
Wednesday 3 Nov 2021, 1:00pm – 2:00pm AEDT

Housekeeping

Ms Kathy Connell, Executive Director Communication and Engagement opened the meeting and provided information on how the APM would run.

Welcome and Acknowledgement of Country

The meeting commenced at 1.00pm with the Chair providing an Acknowledgement of Country and welcoming those online.

Attendance of Board Members

Matthew Irvine (Chair), Fiona Bennett, Jason Cooke, Annette Crothers, Dr Colin McClintock, Amanda O'Brien

In Attendance

Scott McLachlan, Chief Executive; Mark Spittal, Executive Director Operations; Peter Bonnington, Director Finance; Lauren Nott, Board Secretariat (minutes); Kathy Connell, Executive Director Communication and Engagement (facilitator)

Members of the community, health council representatives and LHD staff

Apologies

John Walkom (Board member)

Chair's Report – Mr Matthew Irvine

The Chair joined the Board in July 2021 at the onset of the COVID outbreak in the LHD. The Chair paid tribute to the entire LHD team for the response they provided to meet the COVID challenge and keep the community safe and supported.

Looking forward, there are significant capital works continuing including the Western Cancer Centre, Dubbo Car Park and Cowra Hospital redevelopment.

Chief Executive Address – Mr Scott McLachlan

Mr McLachlan acknowledged the traditional owners of the land we are meeting on and those across the LHD.

This has been a year of real challenge with the tail end of the drought, bushfires and then COVID. It is a tribute to the strength and resilience of rural people to not only respond to the challenges but to also see opportunities in these challenges.

A presentation was given which included an overview of the LHD, services, achievements and operating challenges including the response to COVID.

Financial Report – Mr Peter Bonnington

Mr Bonnington commenced by acknowledging the traditional owners of the various lands upon which we are meeting.

A presentation was given outlining 2020-21 financial results including key achievements.

Questions and Open Discussion

Comments from the participants/audience were read out.

Western NSW LHD is considered the state leader in outbreak management – Staff and clinicians were all thanked for their commitment.

Restore and Invigorate staff – the LHD leaders acknowledge the toll the outbreak has taken and that staff are under continuing pressure. Looking at slowing down over Christmas and New Year to give staff rest and break.

Impact on population health and service needs – conversations have been held and are ongoing to ensure continuity of services. The number of COVID patients ongoing will be small in comparison to those with other chronic conditions. Work continues to ensure services are well positioned to manage as a better picture emerges of long term impacts.

Commitment to primary prevention – significantly scale up primary health, supported by appropriate budget.

Plans to attract more doctors – significant focus into recruitment, marketing, onboarding, support and networking. The LHD is to launch a new campaign for rural generalists.

LHD response to Aged Care Royal Commission – there is a focus on our aging population in community and aged care facilities. The LHD is well regarded for providing high quality services to aged care in MPS and other services. Accreditation of facilities is to take place early 2022. The LHD used an evidence based approach in developing the Aged Care Strategy which is currently being implemented.

Health precincts – work continues for Dubbo, Orange Bathurst, Mudgee, Cowra. Master planning for Bathurst continues.

Further questions will be answered offline and responses provided with the notes from the meeting.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 2.03pm