

SA Health's formal response to the
Health Performance Council's four-yearly review

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY
LAID ON THE TABLE

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**Review of the
performance of South
Australian health
systems, the health of
South Australians and
changes in health
outcomes over the
reporting period 2015-
2018**

June 2019



Government
of South Australia

SA Health

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1. Introduction

In December 2018, the Health Performance Council (HPC) submitted its report *Review of the performance of South Australians and changes in health outcomes over the reporting period 2015-2018* (the report) to the Minister for Health and Wellbeing in accordance with the requirements of the *Health Care Act 2008*.

SA Health acknowledges HPC's four-yearly review of the overall operations of the State's health system, which requires the collection and evaluation of health intelligence information. It is the third such review since the HPC was established in 2008.

SA Health's response addresses the latest report's key findings and six categories of recommendations, outlining the organisation's current undertakings and/or planned actions.

It is pleasing to note positive trends such as improved quality of care and a culture of staff and patient safety reporting. Areas for further improvement such as workforce engagement and a culture of innovation align to this Government's vision for stronger clinician engagement, collaboration and stewardship and clinical innovation and performance monitoring.

There is alignment between the Council's recommendation and this Government's commitment to a vision for the South Australian health system. This is reflected in the implementation of changes to SA Health's governance arrangements to support decision making at the local level and improved engagement with our clinicians and the community. The Council's independent review of the performance of the state's health systems provides a valuable indicator on the state of our health. It reinforces the importance of South Australia's contribution to national data sharing initiatives. It provides a timely reminder of the need to maintain our focus on priorities such as tailoring services for vulnerable population groups, improving access and investing in wellbeing and prevention.

SA Health continues to engage with clinicians, the community and consumers as it endeavours to ensure the best quality healthcare into the future.

2. Response to HPC's recommendations to the Minister, in consultation with stakeholders

Aiming for excellence

The Council advises that the Minister for Health and Wellbeing introduce the following changes across the state's public and private health system to improve services and outcomes for all South Australians.

Responses provided contain a high level summary of the SA Health response to the recommendations.

2.1 Establish clear, actionable initiatives, expected outcomes and related performance indicators in all policies.

SA Health is committed to ongoing performance improvement for all its stakeholders. Strategic plans and policies are designed to meet outcomes with clear objectives set and tested against relevant policy and impact statements.

Preparation for the establishment of the new Local Health Network Governing Boards (Governing Boards) structure in 2019 includes thorough and ongoing Induction processes delivered for Transition Board Chairpersons and members at both the system and Local Health Network levels (LHNs).

The complexity of our health system is acknowledged and high level information relevant to the roles and functions of boards from a health system perspective has included a focus on a partnership approach across the health system.

Workforce plans continue at a broader business unit level to meet the immediate and future health needs of the community and to align to plans to address measure for all designated groups.

2.2 Ensure governance recognises, reflects and addresses the needs and expectations of communities who are served.

SA Health is committed to creating an inclusive environment that meets the needs of the diverse communities it serves and recognises the range of needs that exist at both the broader and local level.

Work has commenced on developing a Diversity and Inclusion Framework (the Framework). This proposed Framework will include a set of guiding principles that could be used in promulgating an understanding of the concepts, the impact of discrimination and exclusion on employees, and the management of diversity and inclusion in each local context. The principles of this framework may form a basis for LHNs to develop local level strategies tailored to their local governance arrangements.

Legislative requirements around engagement will ensure that Governing Boards are connected to and working to meet the specific needs of their consumers and stakeholder groups at the local level. The Governing Boards will continue to engage with and feedback to their local communities on all of the board activities for the preceding period, including engagement activities.

The method of reporting on progress on equality, diversity and inclusion strategies, plans and initiative will be considered following the development of the Framework.

2.3 Ensure the health workforce reflects the communities who are served.

SA Health is committed to a workforce demographic that is representative of the South Australian communities in which it operates.

This work is currently encompassed in the SA Health Aboriginal Workforce Framework 2017-2022 and the SA Health Aboriginal Cultural Learning Framework and aims to increase the Aboriginal workforce across the public health sector in clinical, non-clinical and leadership roles. It includes attraction, retention and development strategies aimed at achieving a 4% participation rate by Aboriginal people across SA Health. The Aboriginal Workforce Advisory Group and the Aboriginal Workforce Implementation Group are made up of representatives from across the LHNs. These groups have been established to progress implementation of both frameworks by facilitating collaboration across the five LHNs, the Department for Health and Wellbeing and South Australian Ambulance Service (SAAS), and to achieve outcomes at the local level.

Currently, SA Health employees record diversity data, such as gender, age, status as Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) backgrounds and Aboriginal identification upon commencement of employment and there is continued encouragement for employees to record identification information to enable improved records and reporting.

Measurement of staff perceptions has been obtained through the 2018 Office of the Commissioner for Public Sector Employment 'I Work for SA – Your Voice' survey. Results have been valuable in shedding light on employees' views on a range of workplace matters, including values, development, leadership, service provision and inclusivity. The results provide baseline data on employee perspectives of their workplace from which SA Health can draw. The implementation of a set of guiding principles for diversity and inclusion, and the associated strategies and policies, can then be assessed for their effectiveness.

2.4 Practise zero tolerance for discrimination and racism.

There is zero tolerance for any actions that impact on the mental or physical health of our staff and consumers, including discrimination, intimidation, sexual harassment, intentional violence or bullying.

Active policies are in place to provide information on consumer access and rights to public and private health care.

SA Health employs processes to seek regular feedback from patients, carers and families about their experiences and outcomes of care and there is an organisation-wide complaints management system.

Measures are in place to identify and address institutional discrimination and racism

2.5 Involve and engage consumers in system development and evaluation, and ensure their voices are heard at executive and board levels.

South Australia remains an active participant in national discussions around data collection, creation of a national dataset and employing national data indicators around priorities on measurement of patient experiences.

SA Health has processes in place to seek and use regular feedback from patients, carers and families about their experiences and outcomes of care. Increasingly, consumer and clinical engagement strategies will occur at the level of the LHNs as responsibilities devolve.

SA Health will continue at a system level to monitor consumer experience via the SA Consumer Experience Surveillance System and Measuring Consumer Experience Computer Assisted Personal Interview program.

2.6. Collect, make accessible and publish data about health outcomes and health systems performance.

Through the South Australian Population Health Survey, SA Health can identify sub-groups of the community who experience less than satisfactory health outcomes, identify emerging health issues, measure trends over time for key health indicators and report regularly.

Findings are disseminated to relevant professionals, researchers and policy makers within SA Health and the wider community, and are used to monitor and evaluate population health policy, programs and initiatives.

The need to improve data collection and linkage on health outcomes is recognised and there is ongoing work taking place on this. There are wider discussions at state and national level around better data linkage of datasets across not only different layers of government, but also taking into consideration the private health system.

There are considerations around removal of barriers of legislation across government agencies, system placement, and logistical details on storage, implementation and management. Issues around data standards, ethics, privacy, accessibility and consumer trust to be considered and managed. Further work and investment would be required to fully implement and establish this capability.

3. Summary of Council Reviews, 2015 to 2018

Each report produced by the Council over the four year period has already been published and a response provided. In this regard, additional high level commentary is provided only, as outlined below.

3.1 Indicator reports monitoring SA Health's implementation of Transforming Health

Transforming Health had a variable impact on South Australia's public health system. This is not surprising given its extensive scope, the timeframes and preparation and change management limitations. However, it has created the opportunity for SA Health to progress building on piecemeal improvements in select clinical specialities, on a broader system-wide scale.

3.2 Aboriginal Health Case Study working with the Aboriginal Leaders' Forum

The need for integrated and cross sectorial approaches as part of policy and program development are recognised as critical to address the significant health inequalities experienced by the Aboriginal population in South Australia. Initiatives such as the development of the Aboriginal Health Care Framework 2019-2024 seek to provide a collaborative and cohesive approach to the delivery of culturally appropriate services for Aboriginal people, focussed on improving overall health and wellbeing.

The [National Cultural Respect Framework](#) seeks to ensure the Australian health system is accessible, responsive and safe for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. SA Health is currently considering how implementation of this National framework will occur in South Australia.

Aboriginal health priorities, such as cancer, diabetes, heart disease and stroke prevention and timely intervention, and working in partnership with South Australian Health and Medical Research Institute, will be recognised in the South Australian Health and Wellbeing Strategy, due for release in 2019.

In addition, initiatives such as the Department for Health and Wellbeing Aboriginal Workforce Implementation Plan, aim to increase the number of Aboriginal people working in SA Health, by

improving the cultural environment and increasing development opportunities.

3.3 Culturally and linguistically diverse communities (CALD) health outcomes audit: tackling equity

The requirement for compassionate and responsive services, recognising the barriers and inequities faced by diverse and disadvantaged/vulnerable groups, is acknowledged. The need to develop tailored strategies to reduce the causes of ill health for people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds and other disadvantaged/vulnerable groups, including through the development of inclusive and culturally appropriate services, and workforce cultural sensitivity training will be recognised in the South Australian Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2019-2024 under development.

3.4 Revisit Review of Country Health Advisory Councils' Governance Arrangements 2011

Learnings from this review inform improvements for Country Health Advisory Councils' operations and potentially other Health Advisory Councils such as SAAS volunteers and Veterans.

The new Regional Boards will become operational on 1 July 2019 and they are required, under the legislation, to undertake engagement processes as a priority to develop a Community Engagement Strategy and a Clinician Engagement Strategy. The Partnership Framework will be one tool used in this process.

3.5 Post-implementation review of Country Health SA Local Health Network's Aboriginal Community and Consumer Engagement Strategy

These valuable findings are applicable and transferrable beyond Country Health SA Local Health Network to all engagements with the Aboriginal community.

Each Regional LHN is increasingly devising measures and strategies to engage with Aboriginal consumers, Aboriginal families and Aboriginal communities in compliance with their regulatory requirement to develop (regional) community engagement plans. There is a focus on development of place based initiatives co-designed with Aboriginal partners to engage and facilitate Aboriginal contribution towards (localised) decision-making processes and structures.

3.6 Revisit End of Life Care Case Study

The Government is committed to supporting palliative care outreach services. A model of care for Specialist Palliative Care Services in South Australia is being progressed that integrates with SA Health's contracted end of life care service providers that provide services into consumers' homes. The establishment of a statewide clinical network for Palliative Care as part of the Commission on Excellence and Innovation in Health creates the opportunity for the Council's recommendations on SA Health's End of Life Care Strategy to be further explored and considered.

3.7 Scope an approach to monitor health outcomes for people with mental health and addiction issues in South Australia

The Government recognises serious gaps in our mental health services and is committed to action to improve the health and wellbeing outcomes of vulnerable groups, including those with mental health illness. The Council's scoping project proposed framework along with the South Australian Mental Health Strategic Plan 2017-2022 and the development of the SA Health Mental Health Services Plan 2019-2024 contribute to ensuring service users are provided with the best treatment, care and services, delivered by a skilled and dedicated workforce.

DASSA is collaborating with Mental Health Service Plan Committee and acknowledges the important need for clinical collaboration between Mental Health and DASSA.

3.8 Areas to Act analysis in collaboration with SA Health and Adelaide and Country SA PHNs, examining health system data for indicators of potentially preventable hospitalisations using Grattan 'Perils of Place' (2016) method

A key priority of the State Government is to rebalance the health system in South Australia in a way that represents the values of our community, delivers the highest standards of safe and quality care, and is economically viable for the future. SA Health is currently exploring innovative service models that provide safe and effective provision of care in the community, as an alternative to hospital.

The Areas to Act Report: A South Australian Review of Potentially Preventable Admissions report is a collaborative first step in building the evidence base to identify areas in South Australia where health inequalities are entrenched and without invention are likely to continue. Governance arrangements with stakeholders are being finalised, including for the purposes of finalising the report for publication and to establish a mechanism for undertaking this analysis on a regular basis.

For more information

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