

Western Sydney
Local Health District

Change Management Plan

Proposed Aboriginal Health Workforce Redesign & Alignment



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1 Introduction

This Change Management Plan outlines the proposed redesign and alignment of Aboriginal Health positions across Western Sydney Local Health District (WSLHD). The Plan not only establishes a comprehensive framework for approaching, communicating, and preparing for the impending changes but also effectively addresses the organisational impacts associated with them.

2 Background and reasons for the organisational change

2.1 Background

Western Sydney Local Health District (WSLHD) stands at the forefront of clinical services, research, and education, delivering an extensive array of healthcare services to over one million residents across the Hills Shire, Parramatta, Blacktown and Cumberland. Encompassing approximately 2% of the community who identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander (as of 2021), WSLHD caters to one of the largest urban Aboriginal populations in Australia.

WSLHD Aboriginal Health offers a vast range of services in the community including Antenatal & Perinatal Health, Child & Family Health, Sexual Health, Chronic & Complex Care, Palliative Care, Mental Health, Youth Health, Health Promotion and Health Education. Beyond this, there are also hospital liaison officers and other roles that fulfil strategic, policy, employment, and project related components of Aboriginal Health across WSLHD's facilities.

WSLHD envisions a future for Aboriginal Health where Aboriginal people experience enduring well-being rooted in their culture and fostering long and healthy lives. This vision is realised through equitable and timely access to services that prioritise prevention, ensuring they are culturally safe, responsive, equitable, and free from any form of racism. Aligned with the NSW Health CORE values of Collaboration, Openness, Respect and Empowerment, these principles form the foundation of the ongoing efforts to improve Aboriginal Health.

2.2 Reasons

The proposed changes are based on the Aboriginal Health Strategic Framework 2023 – 2026/27, designed to advance Closing the Gap in health outcomes for Aboriginal people living in Western Sydney. The proposed redesign and alignment aim to integrate Aboriginal Health priorities seamlessly into WSLHD's overarching plans, strategies, and actions.

Although WSLHD has implemented numerous initiatives to improve Aboriginal Health, there is a recognised operational opportunity, where these efforts currently operate independently at times hindering the achievements of these initiatives. There is a crucial need to strengthen the coordination of these initiatives across the District and bridge the gaps to better address the needs of the local Aboriginal communities. By establishing clear priorities and demonstrating a commitment to a transparent reporting and evaluation approach, this redesign and alignment aims to enhance safety for Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander consumers. In addition, the plans to improve accountability and performance reporting on Aboriginal health outcomes across the District.

Furthermore, WSLHD has recently reaffirmed their dedication to fostering and strengthening their relationships with local Aboriginal communities through genuine partnership. The proposed redesign and alignment emphasises the importance of meaningful engagement and understanding, with a commitment to building mutually beneficial relationships where Aboriginal people have influence over decisions that affect them.

Notably, WSLHD has made strides independent of the proposed redesign and alignment through the development and implementation of the Aboriginal Staff Network, Aboriginal Health Advisory Council and Aboriginal Consumer Council. These key groups serve as inputs from the Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander feedback into WSLHD's initiatives at all levels while embedding cultural safety into governance structures. The proposed redesign and alignment ensures the effective utilisation of this input, aligning with the objectives of the Closing the Gap, Senior Executive Forum (SEF) Actions and WSLHD Service Agreements 2023/24.

This proposed redesign and alignment will ultimately establish and strengthen governance structures, leadership, and create opportunities for further development. It actively contributes and underscores WSLHD's commitment to expand the Aboriginal workforce and aligning policy with tangible, connected and collaborative Aboriginal Health outcomes. The objective of these changes is to strategically position all roles within WSLHD, facilitate streamlined reporting in Aboriginal Health and the integration of WSLHD services to dismantle existing silos. This in turn empowers the Aboriginal Health Strategy to assess the implementation of the Framework and steer Aboriginal Health initiatives according to an evidentiary basis of data and community needs.

3 Managing Organisational and Operational Change

3.1 A Change Management Plan

The primary objectives of this Change Management Plan are to meet the following Key Focus Areas of the Aboriginal Health Strategic Framework 2023 – 2026/27:

1. **Action & Accountability:** Turn the Aboriginal Health Strategic Framework into action with adequate resourcing and mechanisms for accountability.
2. **Community Relations:** Build meaningful, trust-based relationships and partnerships with local Aboriginal communities and services.
3. **Healthcare Priorities:** Identify and address the healthcare priorities and needs of local Aboriginal populations across the life course.
4. **Cultural Safety:** Create a culturally respectful and safe environment for all Aboriginal employees and consumers.

3.2 Purpose

The objectives of this Change Management Plan are to:

- Share and engage with WSLHD Aboriginal workforce about the proposed redesign and alignment occurring across the district,
- Provide specific details of employee support and communication strategies,
- Provide WSLHD with a framework and guidelines for implementing the organisational changes and management of affected employees, and
- Outline of any arrangements that may be necessary to ensure the transparent and equitable handling of impacted employees.

4 Employee communication strategy

The employee communication and consultation strategy aim to effectively communicate the proposed organisational change to the impacted employee groups and the management of staffing adjustments as outlined in the Change Management Plan.

Staff impacted are encouraged to actively engage in the consultation and provide feedback of the proposed changes. Impacted employee groups will be given two weeks to consider the proposed changes and provide feedback that will be managed by People and Culture and Aboriginal Health Strategy.

The communication strategy for this Change Plan across WSLHD is multi-faceted and includes:

- Consultation with individual impacted staff, team leaders and/or managers to advise of proposed change,

- Engagement with Chief Executive, Director of Aboriginal Health as well as relevant District Executives, General Managers and Clinical and Non-Clinical Senior Managers on the impacts on their teams.
- Broad communication to all Aboriginal Health staff to advise of the proposed change, and
- Provision of supporting materials outlining the proposed change, relevant roles, communication plan and supporting resources.

4.1 Detailed Communication Plan

Action	Method	Responsible	Key Messages	Audience	Communication Material	Target Timeframe
Pre-consultation meetings	Informal discussions: Face to Face and/or Virtual	Aboriginal Health Strategy	Informal discussion to provide context & insight for proposed staffing and structural changes.	General Managers	Proposed redesign and alignment diagrams for corresponding stages.	May/June 2024
Impacted Individuals	Individual discussions: Face to Face and/or Virtual	Integrated and Community Health Leaders Other District Directorate Leaders	Provide proposed change impact and overview of change process.	Impacted leadership and staff within WSLHD.	Proposed Change Plan and outline of proposed new structure.	June/July 2024
Union notification	Written	Industrial and/or Employee Relations HR Director District Directorates	Outline proposed changes with background and reasons for changes.	Relevant Unions	Letter to unions with proposed change plan material.	August 2024
General communication with impacted teams and/or groups	Communication through email with accompanying attachments.	Chief Executive Director of Aboriginal Health	Outline background and reasons for proposed change. Provide details of consultation process. High level overview of proposed change process.	Impacted teams across WSLHD	Change Plan including EAP details. Proposed redesign and alignment structures.	August 2024
Broad WSLHD Aboriginal Health communication	Aboriginal Staff Network Meeting			Aboriginal Staff Network	Open discussion format	

Consultation Period (2 weeks)	Feedback in writing to WSLHD-PeopleandCulture@health.nsw.gov.au					August 2024
Consultation Feedback	Written communication	Chief Executive – Director Aboriginal Health	Outline feedback received and outcome of changes (if any).	Impacted teams across WSLHD	Consultation feedback points & final structure.	Late August 2024

5 Support services

Additional support services can be provided to staff as required throughout this change. The People and Culture and leadership team can coordinate these initiatives or support can be accessed by individuals and the details are:

- Professional Counselling Services and Manager Support provided by the Department's Employee Assistance Provider (EAP): AccessEAP. Call: 1800 818 728 or use the website (www.accesseap.com.au) to access confidential counselling support on site or by phone.
- Individual advice and support enquiries can be made to line managers, executive and Human Resources.

6 Union Consultation

WSLHD is committed to consulting with staff and their union representatives in relation to any proposed major changes in the workplace.

A representative from People and Culture will engage with our relevant unions on the consultation process and our unions will be provided with written advice on these proposed changes.

7 Organisation Change and Workforce Impact

The aim of the proposed changes for Aboriginal Health is to bring together the resources needed to effectively advance the Framework, to best strengthen linkages and remove silos between Aboriginal roles across WSLHD. The proposed realignment does not suggest the loss of any roles, but rather the movement of existing roles and creation of critical identified roles. The changes are proposed to occur both within the current ICH and Aboriginal Health strategy teams.

See attached the proposed Organisational Structure Charts.

There are a number of reporting line changes proposed which are intended to renew the focus on operational leadership and the alignment and integration of services across WSLHD.

The following proposed changes to Aboriginal Health Services will occur over the next three years:

- There will be an addition of:
 - Nurse Unit Manager 2 - Aboriginal Maternal & Child Health Team
 - Nurse Manager 2 - Aboriginal Chronic Care Team
 - Child & Family Health Nurse Clinical Nurse Specialist (CNS) Grade 2
 - Aboriginal Community Partnership Team Service Coordinator
 - Two Aboriginal Hospital Liaison Officer roles (Blacktown and Westmead)
 - Administration Coordinator Administration Officer (AO) Level 5
 - Increase the total FTE of Aboriginal Health Practitioner position from 0.5 FTE to 1.0 FTE
 - Senior Aboriginal Project Officer HSM2 – Aboriginal Health Strategy
 - Aboriginal Cultural Engagement Officer HSM2 – Aboriginal Health Strategy

- Aboriginal Training Officer HSM2 – Aboriginal Health Strategy
- Aboriginal Project Officer HSM1 – Aboriginal Health Strategy
- There will be a realignment of:
 - Aboriginal Chronic Care Nurse
 - Aboriginal Occupational Therapist
 - Aboriginal Health Worker (48hr Follow Up)
 - Aboriginal Cardiac Rehabilitation Worker
 - Healthy Deadly Feet Worker
 - Aboriginal Podiatrist
 - Aboriginal Employment Coordinator
 - Traineeship Cadetship Officer
 - Aboriginal Training Officer

8 Risk Assessment and Proposed Mitigations

Risk	Proposed Actions / Mitigations
Staff disenfranchisement affecting service delivery, productivity, and quality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Engage with staff during the consultation period to gauge their feedback to the proposed changes. ● Encourage staff to engage in an open dialogue to address concerns.
WHS implications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Nil inherent WHS implications or risks with the proposed changes.

9 Managing the Change

9.1. The change management plan is made on the following principles and assumptions.

- Where new positions are to be created or current roles will be changed on the proposed organisation structure, role descriptions will be developed and evaluated. Drafts are attached for the majority of these.
- New positions created will be advertised and go through merit-based recruitment process. Changed positions may be direct appointed where there is only one suitable candidate, with aligned skill and expertise required.
- Where there are permanent occupants of roles that are subject to regrading, we will work with these individuals who may be assessed and appointed, reassigned or declared excess at the conclusion of this change program.
- Where appropriate, if there are any staff declared excess they will be managed in accordance with the NSW Health Managing Excess Staff of the NSW Health Service Policy Directive PD2012_021.

10 Proposed timetable for implementation.

Action	Start
District Executives, General Managers and the Clinical and Non-Clinical Senior Managers of impacted teams.	May 2024
Impacted Individuals & leadership team informed	June/July 2024

Consultation – open	August 2024
Consultation – closes	August 2024
Consultation feedback/outcome provided	August 2024
Next steps & implementation	From September 2024