



STRICTLY PRIVATE AND CONFIDENTIAL

Gerard Hayes
Secretary
Health Services Union – NSW
Level 2, 109 Pitt Street
SYDNEY NSW 2000

By email: secretary@hsu.asn.au

Dear Mr Hayes,

Re: Proposed Aboriginal Health Workforce redesign and alignment for WSLHD

I write to advise you of the proposed changes to the Western Sydney Aboriginal Health Workforce.

We have commenced a consultation period with the impacted staff and teams today. We are proposing changes across our Aboriginal Health portfolio that enables expansion on current roles and a realignment of current positions which currently sit across a range of diverse services and directorates in supporting indigenous Western Sydney communities within Aboriginal Health across WSLHD's facilities.

Background for the proposed changes

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.

Reasons for the proposed changes

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 aims 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.

A copy of the organisational chart, change management plan and draft Position Descriptions reflecting the proposed realignment are attached for your consideration.

The District is notifying staff of this proposed redesign and realignment today, commencing a two week consultation period which will conclude on Thursday 29 August 2024. If you have any questions or wish to discuss this matter further, please contact Verity Lloyd, HR Director, District Directorates, WSLHD on 0499 861 725, or by email Verity.lloyd@health.nsw.gov.au.

Yours sincerely,



Nicole Grice
Director People & Culture

Date: 15/8/2024