



# **Sydney Children's Hospitals Network (SCHN)**

## **Aboriginal Health Consultation Document**

*October 2024*

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## Background

In November 2023, The Sydney Children's Hospitals Network (SCHN) appointed its first Director of Aboriginal Health. The role provides professional leadership, as well as guides and informs services as SCHN improves the experience of Aboriginal children, young people, and their families, and supports SCHN's development as a culturally safe organisation and employer of choice for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

There are approximately 100 staff who identify as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander, working across the SCHN in various departments and several disciplines. SCHN over the last six years has established an Aboriginal Health Unit, with Aboriginal Health Workers (AHWs) covering the Westmead and Randwick campus. The Aboriginal Health Unit was established to improve experiences, access and health outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander patients and their families. In addition, the SCHN has established other positions to support the overall direction and vision for Aboriginal Health, including the creation of an Aboriginal Employment Advisor role and an Outcomes and Equity Project Manager. The AHWs and line manager currently reports to Clinical Operations Directorate through the Priority Populations clinical stream, whilst the Aboriginal Employment Advisor role reports under the People and Culture Directorate.

In January 2023, PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC) Indigenous Consulting Pty Limited (PIC) was engaged to work with SCHN as it aspires to be a leader in better outcomes across Aboriginal Health, and as an employer of choice for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples. PwC were engaged to:

- Develop an understanding of the current state – what is working well and areas for improvement
- Consider cultural safety within the SCHN
- Explore with the existing team aspirational goals for Aboriginal Health, and
- Identify opportunities to improve the SCHN culture and cultural safety

The PIC review had good engagement from both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal staff in several yarning circles, interviews, surveys and ideation workshops. Consequently, many of the review findings demonstrated the importance of reviewing the current model. Some of the key findings included:

- unclear governance and ownership for Aboriginal Health
- lack of understanding about Aboriginal Health
- a perception of limited value placed in Aboriginal Health
- a perception of lack of support and mentoring
- staff feedback suggested that there is limited career progression and pathways

In addition to the key findings, the following recommendations were considered in this proposal:

- Review the internal structure of Aboriginal Health
- Conduct a detailed review of the workforce, including position descriptions
- Career and Leadership opportunities
- The development of cultural safety framework and the implementation of cultural safety strategies (including training)

## Current Status

In the current structure, staff are reporting under the People and Culture, and Clinical Operations Directorate, as outlined below:

Positions	Grade	FTE and status	Current Directorate
Aboriginal Employment Advisor	Health Service Manager Level 2	1.0 FTE permanent (filled)	People and Culture
Aboriginal Health Hub Manager	Health Service Manager Level 4	1.0 FTE permanent (filled)	Clinical Operations
Outcomes and Equity Project Manager	Health Service Manager Level 2	0.6 FTE permanent (vacant)	Clinical Operations
HEALS Project Manager	Health Service Manager Level 2	0.4 FTE temporary (filled)	Clinical Operations
Safe Pathways Project Manager	Health Service Manager Level 2	1.0 FTE temporary (filled)	Clinical Operations
Aboriginal Health Worker	Aboriginal Health Workers' Award	4.0 FTE permanent (3.0 filled, 1 temp vacant)	Clinical Operations
Aboriginal Health Worker – Palliative, Chronic and Complex Medical	Health Service Manager Level 1	1.0 FTE permanent (filled)	Clinical Operations

## Proposed Changes

It is proposed that the identified positions listed above be moved and report to the **Aboriginal Health Directorate**, under the leadership of the Director of Aboriginal Health.

Positions	Grade	FTE and status	Proposed Change in reporting line
Aboriginal Employment Advisor	Health Service Manager Level 2	1.0 FTE permanent (filled)	Report to the Director of Aboriginal Health
Aboriginal Health Hub Manager	Health Service Manager Level 4	1.0 FTE permanent (filled)	Delete
Deputy Director, Aboriginal Health	Health Service Manager Level 4	1.0 FTE permanent	New position
Senior Project Manager	Health Service Manager Level 3	1.0 FTE permanent	New position
Aboriginal Cultural Capability Educator	Health Service Manager Level 2	1.0 FTE permanent	New position
Outcomes and Equity Project Manager Rename to Outcomes and Equity Project Lead	Health Service Manager Level 2	0.6 FTE permanent (vacant)	Report to the Aboriginal Health Senior Project Manager HSM 3 (new position)

Positions	Grade	FTE and status	Proposed Change in reporting line
HEALS Project Manager <b>Rename to HEALS Project Lead</b>	Health Service Manager Level 2	0.4 FTE temporary (filled)	Report to the Aboriginal Health Senior Project Manager HSM 3 (new position)
Safe Pathways Project Manager <b>Rename to Safe Pathways Lead</b>	Health Service Manager Level 2	1.0 FTE temporary (filled)	Report to the Deputy Director, Aboriginal Health (new position)
Aboriginal Health Worker	Aboriginal Health Workers' Award	4.0 FTE permanent (3.0 filled, 1 temporarily vacant due to secondment in another role)	Report to the Deputy Director, Aboriginal Health (new position)
Aboriginal Health Worker – Palliative, Chronic and Complex Medical	Health Service Manager Level 1	1.0 FTE permanent (filled)	Report to the Deputy Director, Aboriginal Health (new position)
Executive Assistant	Health Service Manager Level 1	1.0 FTE permanent (unfilled)	Report to the Director, Aboriginal Health

In this proposal, it suggests the creation of significant roles that targets the recommendations from the PwC review, including:

- the creation of a Deputy Director of Aboriginal Health
- the creation of an Aboriginal Cultural Capability Educator
- the creation of an Aboriginal Health Senior Project Manager
- the creation of an Executive Assistant to the Director, Aboriginal Health

These new roles and the introduction of a tiered approach will result in the deletion of the current Network Aboriginal Health Hub manager.

The proposed new structure will enable:

- Clear strategic direction and governance for Aboriginal Health
- Career development pathway and succession planning
- Clarity of roles and responsibilities, with defined portfolios that targets the overall goals for Aboriginal Health
- Adequate support and mentoring of staff

The proposed new structure (see pg 9) is the *preferred longer-term structure* that will support the direction and future work in Aboriginal Health. These new roles will be dependent on future growth funding or realignment of existing positions.

## Case for Proposed Changes

As previously highlighted, the review reported on some critical governance structures and systemic issues impacting the Aboriginal workforce. Feedback from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff that there is a lack of formal support mechanisms and career development opportunities. In addition, there is limited leadership development opportunity for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff.

Findings of the PIC review identified that there is a lack of understanding about Aboriginal Health, which results in the lack of appropriate action or responsiveness when it comes to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and their families. This gap then flows on to the lack of clarity of procedures, accountability, and team structure in Aboriginal Health, and within the Unit more particularly.

There are four key opportunities which this proposal addresses:

- Culturally intelligent and responsive workforce – through the supervision and oversight of the Deputy Director of Aboriginal Health and Director of Aboriginal Health
- Supported, skilled and growing Aboriginal workforce – through the creation of new roles including Deputy Director of Aboriginal Health, Senior Project Manager, and Cultural Capability Educator.
- Well integrated, valued and governed Aboriginal Health discipline – through the alignment under the Aboriginal Health Directorate, and leadership of the Director of Aboriginal Health
- Culturally safe and respectful health service – through the creation of the Cultural Capability Educator

## Method of Filling Positions in the Proposed Structure

Pending finalisation of the consultation, appointment to positions within the new structure will progress as follows;

- Change of Reporting Lines

Establishment of the new reporting structure for the following positions:

- Aboriginal Employment Advisor
- Outcomes and Equity Project Lead
- HEALS Project Lead
- Safe Pathways Project Lead
- Aboriginal Health Worker
- Aboriginal Health Worker – Palliative, Chronic and Complex Medical

- Position matching

Positions in the current structure	Proposed position matching in the new structure
Aboriginal Health Hub Manager, permanent 1 FTE Health Services Manager Level 4	Deputy Director, Aboriginal Health permanent 1 FTE Health Services Manager Level 4

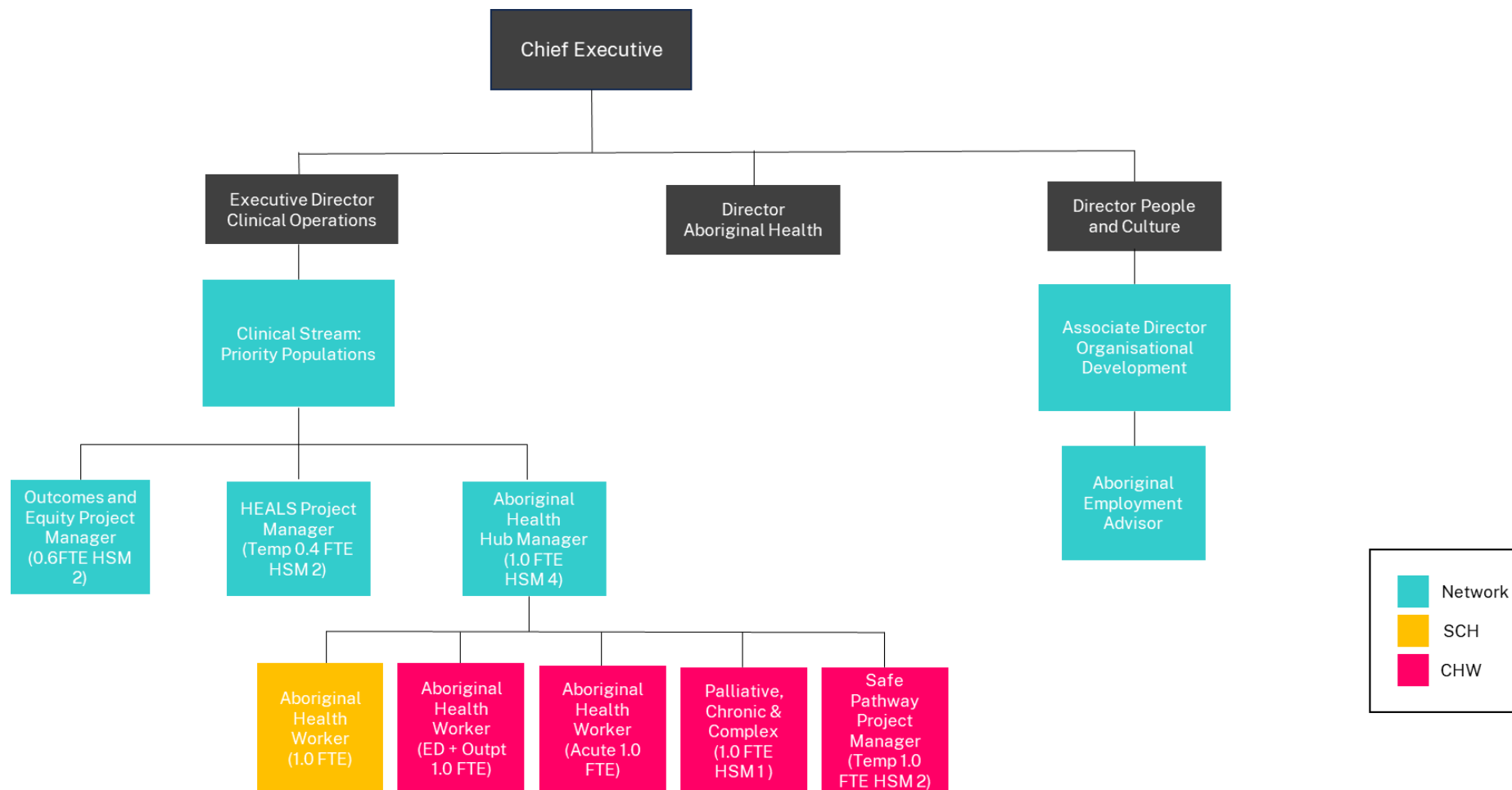
The proposed changes will be managed as per the NSW Health Policy Directive Managing Excess Staff of the NSW Health Service (PD2012\_021).

- Advertisement with a merit-based selection process:

Advertisement for the following positions will be undertaken with a merit-based selection process in accordance with the NSW Health Policy Directive Recruitment and Selection of Staff to the NSW Health Service (PD2023\_024):

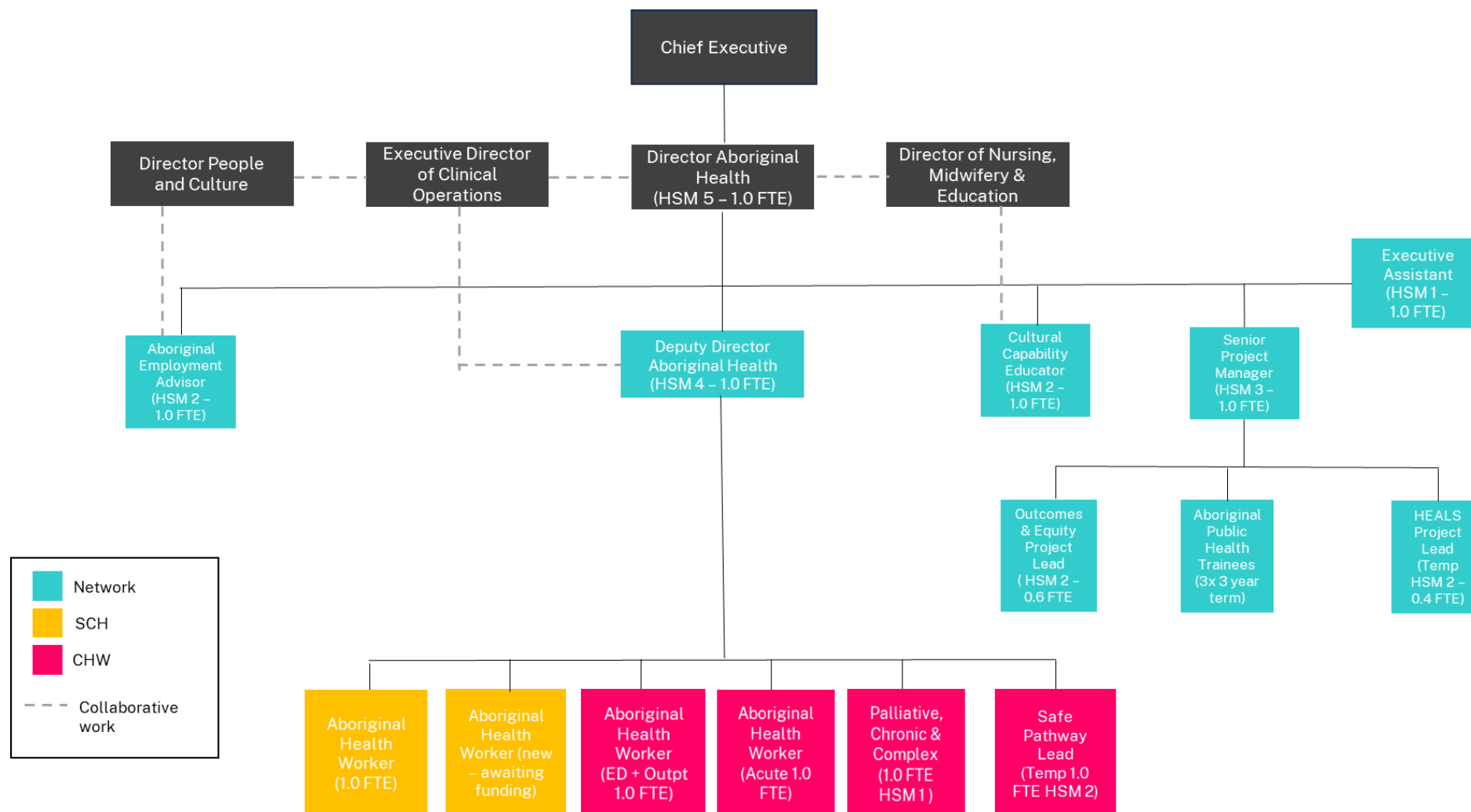
- Senior Project Manager, Health Service Manager Level 3, permanent 1 FTE
- Aboriginal Cultural Capability Educator, Health Service Manager Level 2, permanent 1 FTE

## Current Structure





## Proposed Structure



### Timetable for the Realignment

	Stage	Timescale
<b>A</b>	Consultations with staff	October 2024
<b>B</b>	Notification to unions	October 2024
<b>C</b>	Work with staff who may be affected to determine support required	during consultation
<b>D</b>	Consultations with staff and union close	End of October 2024
<b>E</b>	Assessment of staff and union feedback	November 2024
<b>F</b>	Communication of new structure and implementation of changes	Mid-late November 2024
<b>G</b>	Continue to work with staff affected by changes	Ongoing

### Employee Assistance Program

Employee Assistance Program (EAP) is a free strictly confidential and professional counselling service provided by the Sydney Children's Hospitals Network to all staff. Staff can access the program via the following contact details:

- AccessEAP (1800 818728)

### Feedback and Contact Details

Enquiries and feedback regarding the proposed structure should be addressed to:

*Enquiries & feedback:*

**Karen Beetson – Director, Aboriginal Health**

[SCHN-AboriginalHealthConsultation@health.nsw.gov.au](mailto:SCHN-AboriginalHealthConsultation@health.nsw.gov.au)

*HR enquiries & support:*

**Roseanna North – Principal Business Partner**

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