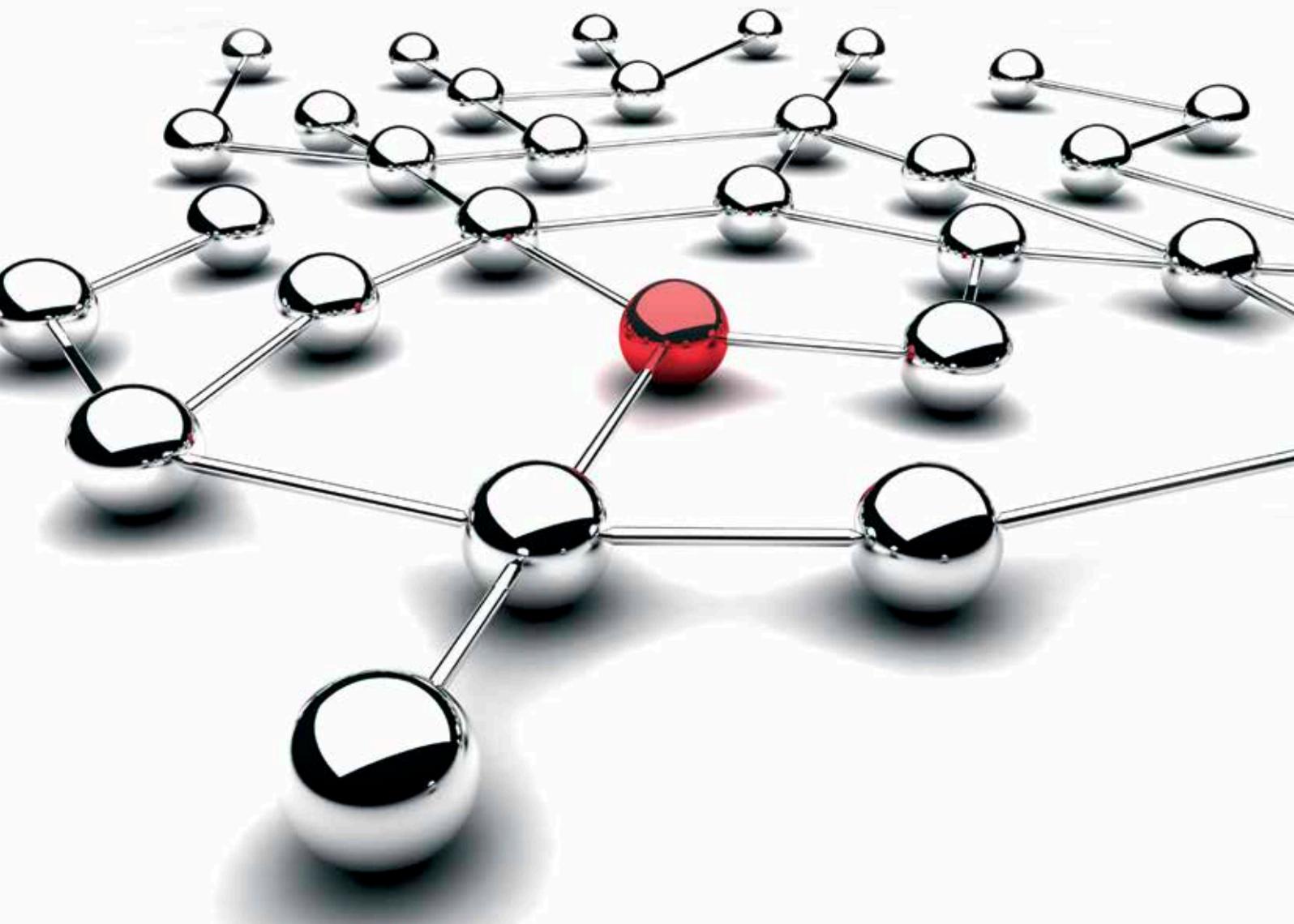




Government of **Western Australia**
Department of **Health**

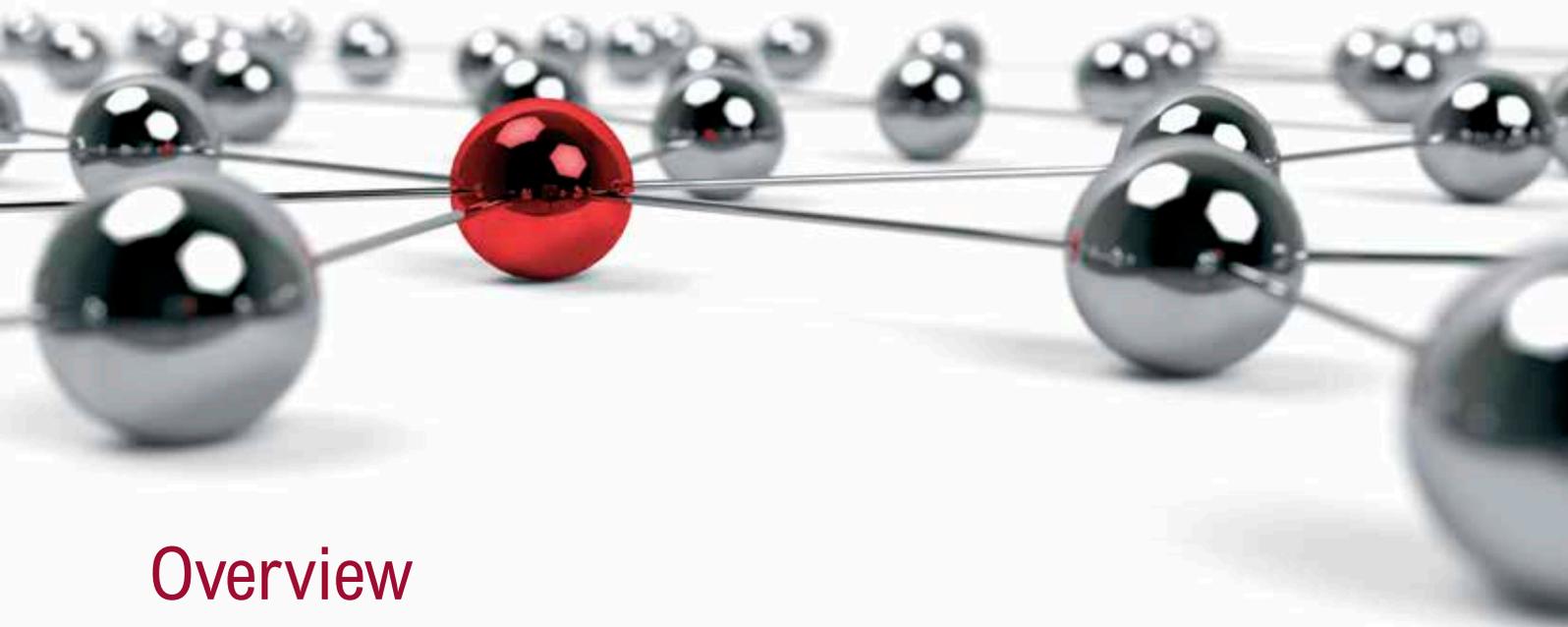
WA Health Networks Strategic Direction 2015–2020

Collective input for collective action



Contents

Overview	3
Our foundations	4
Our vision	4
Our mission	4
Our guiding principles	6
Our values	6
Our partners	7
Our strategy	8
Our priorities	10
Priority One: Optimising care in the community	10
Priority Two: Improving the person's journey	10
Priority Three: Influencing system change	10
Our areas of impact	11
Our key action areas	12
Area One: Engagement	12
Area Two: Pathways	12
Area Three: Planning	13
Area Four: Leadership	13
Consultation	14
Making it happen	14
Defining success	14
Be part of the change	14



Overview

Western Australia's health system is facing significant challenges to adapt to the needs of an ageing and growing population and to ensure that health spending is sustainable. Providing equitable access to services and equitable outcomes for a growing number of people with complex and chronic health conditions is an ongoing challenge for the system. This means health reform is needed to develop a more responsive, coordinated system where spending is adjusted to obtain better value for money while ensuring standards of high quality care are maintained.

Since the establishment of WA Health Networks in 2006, over 4000 people across all systems of care and the community have joined the Networks to focus on opportunities to address fragmentation and duplication across the WA health system. As part of this, 56 Models of Care and 9 Frameworks were developed to provide a foundation for service and facility planning and to inform purchasing intentions. A report on these can be found at www.health.wa.gov.au (under Improving WA Health). Over the next five years, the Networks will build on the achievements of these policies and operationalise future activities under the four key action areas identified in this Strategic Direction:

Engagement • Pathways • Planning • Leadership

WA Health's repositioning as a system manager for health has created an increased opportunity for WA Health Networks to provide clinical and health system leadership and advice to support health reform. Operationally, WA Health Networks connects key partners to WA Health, the system manager, to provide clinical and health system advice which in turn influences policy, purchasing, workforce and planning.

Looking to the future, WA Health Networks will play a vital role in providing clinical and health system leadership and connecting diverse partners across the health system and the community. This will ensure that health services become more responsive to people's needs, better coordinated, more sustainable and informed by evidence of best practice care. The result will be an integrated health system, which can provide better care for better value.

“Health Networks are in an ideal strategic place to be able to facilitate a statewide transformative process.”

Health administrator

Our foundations

Our vision

WA Health Networks' vision is for people in Western Australia to live well in their communities for longer, supported by safe and high quality integrated health care services.

This aligns with the vision of the *WA Health Strategic Intent 2015–2020*. It also adheres to WA Health safety and quality improvement priorities, and national safety and quality health service standards.

Our mission

Connect ● **Share** ● **Improve**

Connect

WA Health Networks is a collaborative mechanism which **connects** internal and external partners across all systems of care together with the people who receive the care.

Share

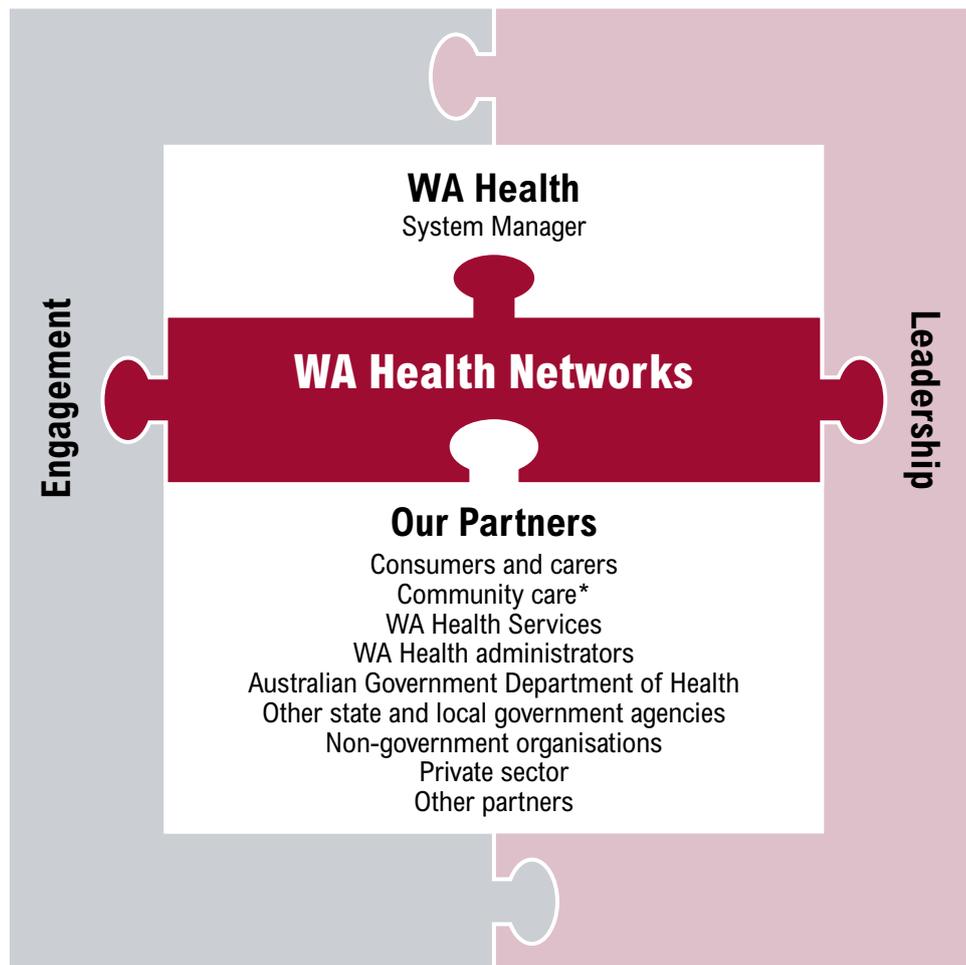
WA Health Networks brings together the partners to **share** their collective clinical and health system knowledge and experience. This is combined with evidence of best practice care, policy, service mapping, epidemiology profiles and data collection.

Improve

WA Health Networks collates this information to advise and inform **improvements** in WA Health's system-wide policy, planning and purchasing and the development of integrated person-centred care pathways (see Figure 1).



Figure 1: **WA Health Networks connect key partners in health to create an informed and integrated health system.**



*Community care is inclusive of general practitioners, dentists, public health professionals, community health nurses, midwives, nurse practitioners, pharmacists, Aboriginal health workers, paramedics, allied health professionals and carers across the local, state and Australian government sectors, non-government organisations and the private sector.

“Health Networks are just that – networked. They can also bring together key players who do not usually work together.”

Medical co-director

Our guiding principles

The following principles will underpin WA Health Networks' activities over the next five years.

Engagement: Ensuring high quality and comprehensive engagement is undertaken in policy development and planning.

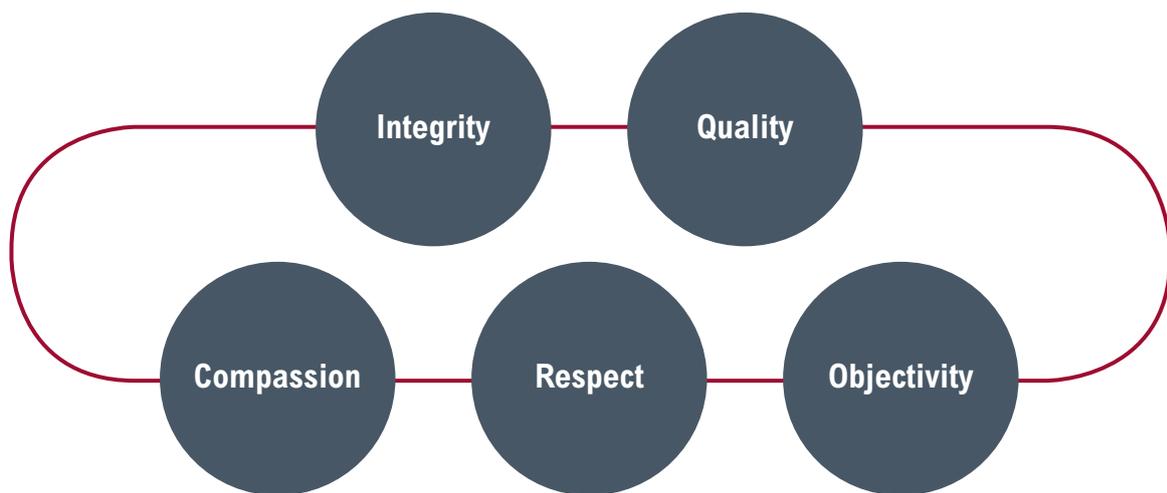
Influence for positive change: Influencing system-wide reform through clinical and health system engagement.

Empowerment: Enable consumers and carers to be involved in health care planning and the provision of the care pathway.

Collaboration: Building stronger connections across WA Health, health care providers and the community.

Leadership: Developing a culture of cross-system leadership and engagement to inform policy, system planning and purchasing.

Our values



Our partners

WA Health Networks brings together over 4000 members across all systems of care from metropolitan and country areas of WA. Members come from a diverse range of professions and are employed by a wide range of sectors (see Figure 2).

Over the next five years the membership of WA Health Networks will be expanded and the diversity of representatives across all systems of care and the community will be increased.

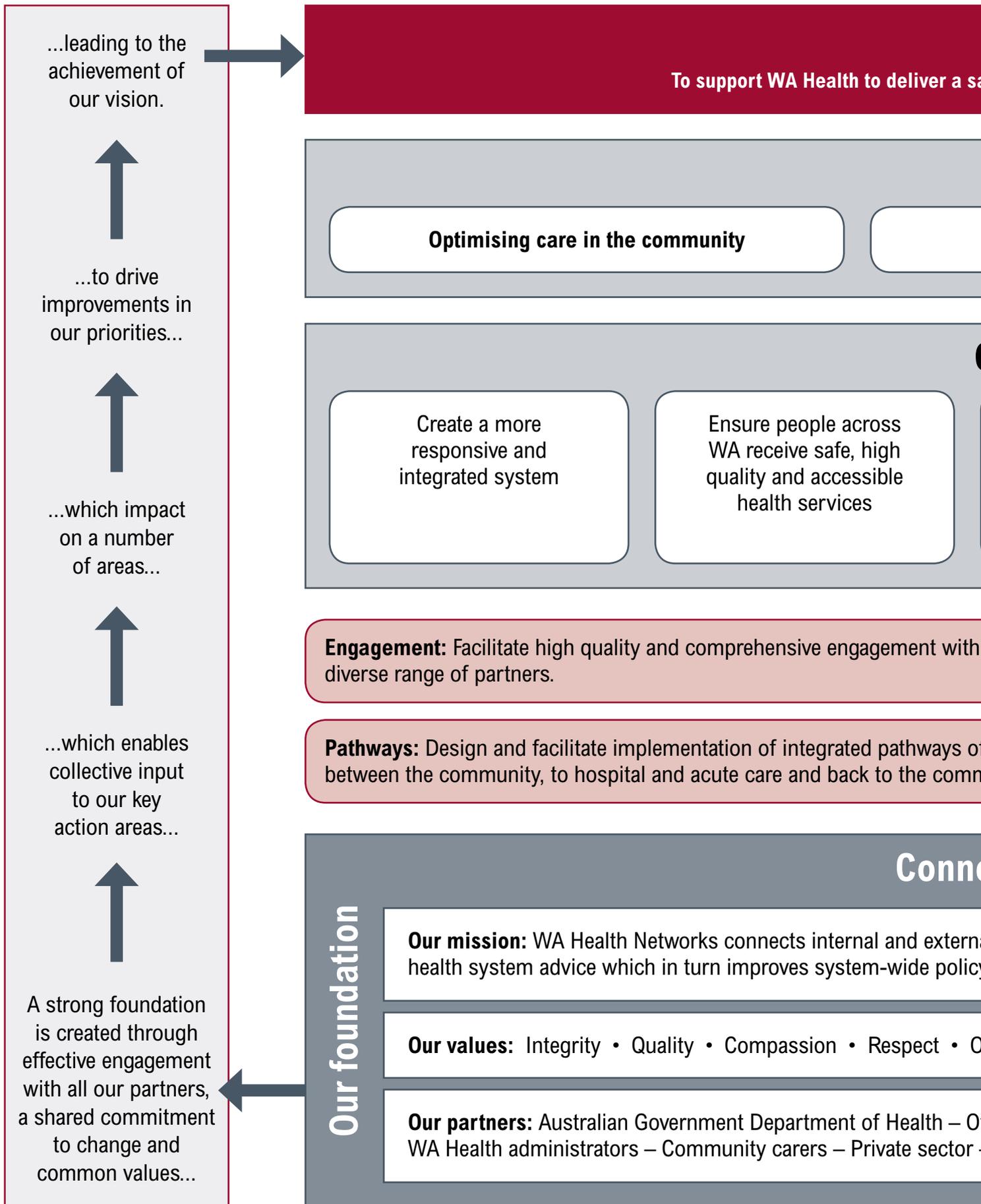
Figure 2: **Diversity of WA Health Networks' members and areas of work**



“WA Health Networks provide an opportunity to bring together diverse groups of people with an interest in health to improve the system.”

Assistant Director General

Our strategy



Our vision

Safe, high quality, sustainable health system for all Western Australians

Our priorities

Improving the person's journey

Influencing system change

Our areas of impact

Support the delivery of health services that are person centred and based on evidence

Improve the health and wellbeing of Aboriginal people and other disadvantaged people living in WA

Focus on prevention, early intervention and improved coordination of care for people with chronic and complex health conditions

Our key action areas

Leadership: Cultivate leaders, across the health system and community, to inform the implementation of health reform.

Planning: Inform planning and purchasing intent based on collective clinical and health system knowledge, evidence and policy.

Identify ● Share ● Improve

Engage external partners with an interest in health to share their expertise and experience to provide clinical and operational support, planning and purchasing.

Ensure objectivity.

Engage other state and local government agencies – Non-government organisations – WA Health Services – Other partners.

Our priorities

Priority One: Optimising care in the community

Optimising care in the community will enable individuals to receive safe and quality care and to help manage avoidable demand on acute and speciality services. Providing integrated, quality and accessible services in the community requires the building of stronger connections across health service providers. It requires an emphasis on increasing the capacity of community providers to deliver this care, as well as the promotion of strategies to ensure individuals, their families and carers can access, understand and apply health information to make effective decisions about their health and health care. WA Health Networks is a mechanism to bring people together to identify opportunities to enhance care within the community based on the health needs of the local community.

Priority Two: Improving the person's journey

The person's journey should be an integrated pathway across the continuum of care from prevention to highly complex care which is centred around the individual's needs. WA Health Networks will strengthen the communication between different types of health professionals, consumers and carers to identify solutions to improve the person's journey. Services will become more connected to enable individuals and their families to navigate the health system more easily. Issues of equity and access to health care for disadvantaged and vulnerable groups will be addressed in designing pathways of care.

Priority Three: Influencing system change

Through building diverse partnerships and sharing of knowledge and expertise, WA Health Networks facilitates the adoption of innovation and offer new perspectives on existing system challenges. This in turn will inform the development of strategy and policy as well as system planning and purchasing. With representation across all systems of care, WA Health Networks is able to respond to the need for change across the system to improve health care within existing financial and workforce constraints.

“WA Health Networks can help to connect up parts of the health system and improve communication between different types of health professionals to make a patient's journey smoother.”

Health Network Lead

Our areas of impact

Collectively, WA Health Networks will influence positive change across the following areas:

Impact Area 1

Create a more responsive and integrated system which is focused on the health needs of local communities across metropolitan and country WA.

Impact Area 2

Ensure people across WA receive safe, high quality and accessible health services.

Impact Area 3

Support the delivery of health services that are person-centred, based on evidence and operate within a culture of continuous improvement.

Impact Area 4

Strengthen the approach to improving the health and wellbeing of Aboriginal people and other disadvantaged people living in WA.

Impact Area 5

Focus on prevention, early intervention, and improved coordination of care for people with chronic and complex health conditions.

Our key action areas

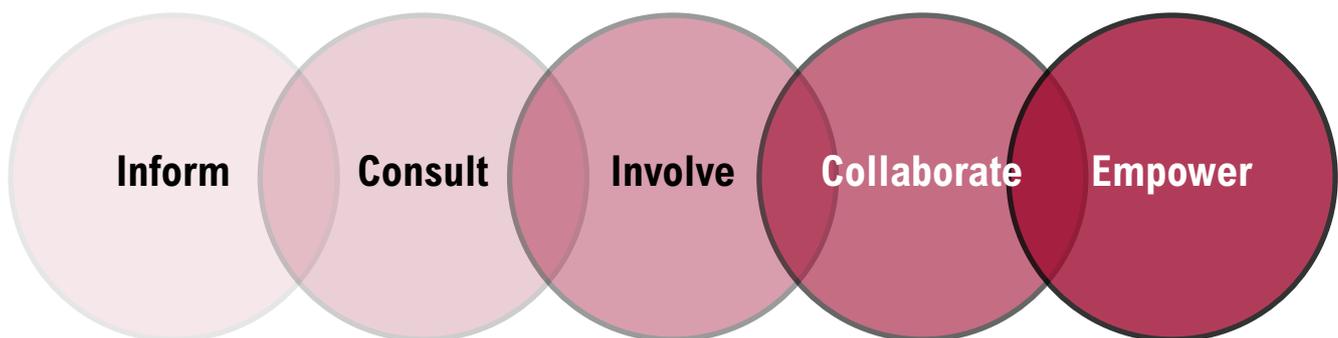
Area One: Engagement

Facilitate high quality and comprehensive engagement with a diverse range of partners.

WA Health Networks will foster a culture of high quality and comprehensive engagement with all its partners. To enable collective input at a range of levels and for different purposes, WA Health Networks will adopt a broad spectrum of engagement inclusive of the five levels of engagement articulated in Figure 3.

WA Health Networks recognises the value of collective impact to produce change. Achieving a cohesive health system will require the interaction of many different partners operating across WA. WA Health Networks will provide engagement opportunities for clinicians, consumers and carers, planners, policy developers and researchers to work together to improve the health system. There will be an increased focus on developing partnerships with the primary care sector through the new Primary Health Networks, as well as strengthening partnerships with other government agencies such as the Mental Health Commission and Disability Services Commission. The development of a multi-level, comprehensive engagement strategy will articulate the process and breadth of engagement to be facilitated by WA Health Networks over the next five years.

Figure 3: **Spectrum of Engagement**



(Modified from the IAP2 Public Participation Spectrum, refer to <http://www.iap2.org>).

Area Two: Pathways

Design and facilitate the implementation of integrated pathways of care from the community, to hospital and acute care, and back to the community.

Pathways of care focus on improving patient access and flow through the health care system, which creates capacity to provide better care and a more seamless journey for the individual. They articulate a model of integrated care from community care, to hospital and acute care and back to the community, which is based on evidence of need and the appropriate type of care required. Pathways will include consideration of the metropolitan and regional interface and the needs of disadvantaged groups. WA Health Networks will ensure that the individual and their family and carers are at the centre of the care planning and are engaged at all points on the care pathway.

The collective knowledge of WA Health Networks members and partners will be used to design and validate integrated pathways of care which are centred around an individual's needs. There will be an emphasis on improving referral and discharge protocols, as well as enhancing communication between service providers, and with the person and their family and carers. The development of pathways will

be prioritised according to high volume, high cost and impact on the health system, and will include statewide standards and quality indicators to define success and measure performance.

WA Health Networks will develop a governance structure and appoint steering groups to drive the implementation of the pathways. The steering groups will include representation from community care, consumers and carers, health services, purchasing and system performance.

Area Three: Planning

Inform planning and purchasing intent based on collective clinical and health system knowledge, evidence and policy.

The collective knowledge across WA Health Networks can be used to identify where changes across the health system are required, and identify the potential for shared investments and the reallocation of resources. New contracting models should be based on statewide policy, evidence of need and improved care integration and be accountable for contributing to broader system outcomes. WA Health Networks provides an opportunity to link policy with the evidence and rationale for future services planning, and advise on their translation into purchasing arrangements.

The Networks will use epidemiological profiles, data collection, service mapping and gap analysis to better inform service redesign, pathways development and planning and purchasing intent. They will identify duplications, barriers and gaps, as well as best practice examples of integrated care. There will be an emphasis on utilising research and epidemiological evidence in undertaking redesign and service improvement activities. The methodology for connecting internal and external partners to the system manager will be outlined in a planning framework.

Area Four: Leadership

Cultivate leaders, across the health system and community, to inform the implementation of health reform.

Across all systems of health care, WA Health Networks will provide clinical and health system leadership to influence system change. The value attributed to leadership will be evident in the ongoing investment in improving access to leadership development opportunities to better inform and support the implementation of health reform. A program of leadership opportunities will be offered in partnership with the Institute for Health Leadership.

The WA Health Networks Leadership Forum, with representation from WA Health Networks, WA Health executives, community care, and consumers and carers will assume a key leadership role for WA Health Networks. The Forum's objectives over the next five years are to stimulate cross-network activities, provide strategic advice to the WA health system and to influence system change.

“Health reform is more successful where there is multilevel investment in leadership development.”

John Clark, Institute for Health Leadership

Consultation

The development of this Strategic Direction has been informed by multiple levels of consultation across all key partners. Feedback from the various consultations was used to inform the priorities and activities of the Strategic Direction, as well as to support its implementation. Further details on the consultation process and outcomes can be found at www.health.wa.gov.au (under Improving WA Health).

Making it happen

WA Health Networks has reflected on the value of Network activity to date, particularly the development of 56 Models of Care and 9 Frameworks, in a report that can be found at www.health.wa.gov.au (under Improving WA Health). Over the next five years, the Networks will build on the achievements of these policies and operationalise future activities under the four key action areas identified in this Strategic Direction. An overarching operational plan outlines the specific strategies which will be undertaken by the WA Health Networks including the development of an engagement strategy, pathway development process, planning framework and leadership program. The PRINCE2 methodology is used for project management across relevant areas.

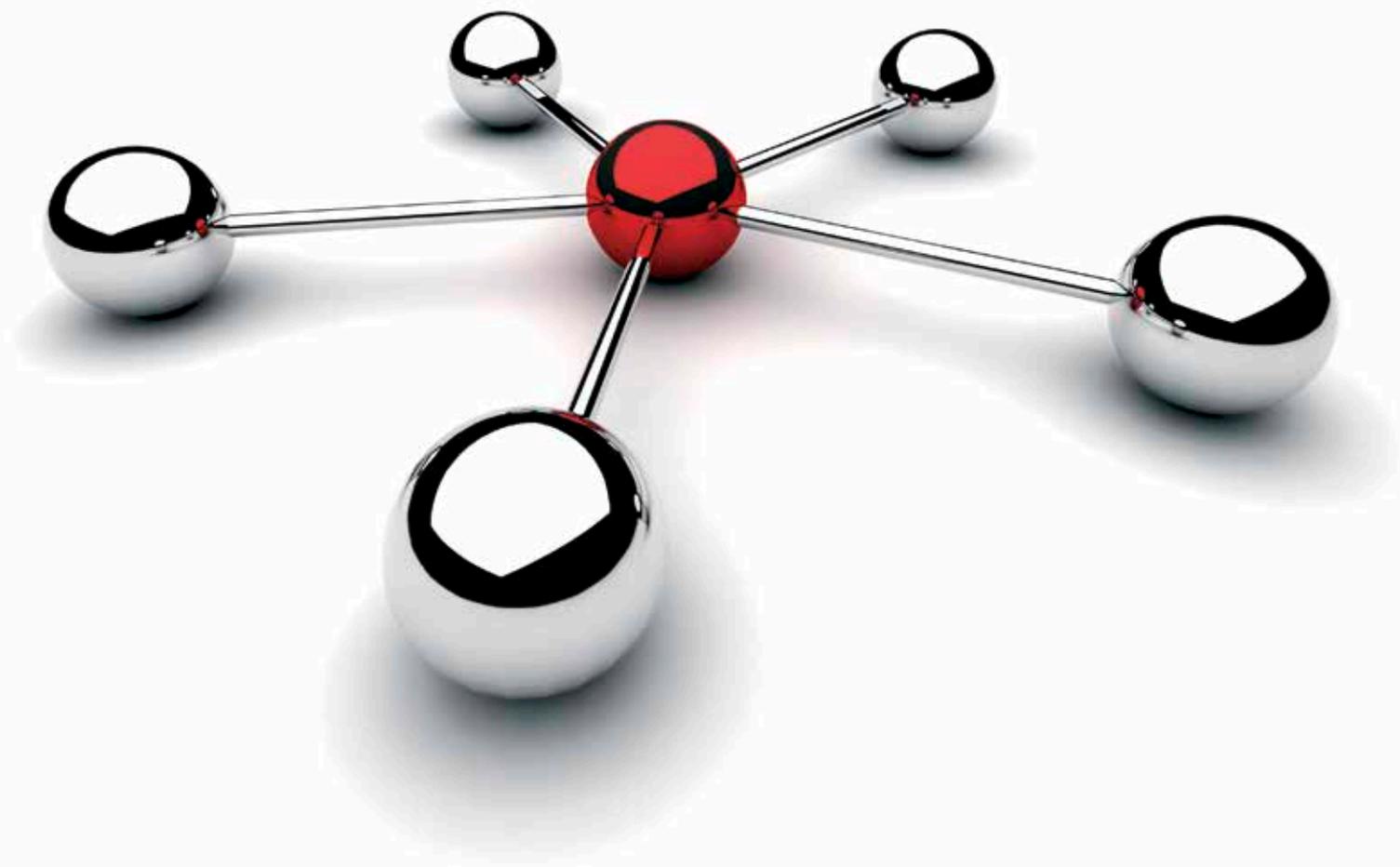
The operational plan is cognisant of challenges faced across the system. Providing equitable access to services and equitable outcomes for a growing number of people with complex and chronic health conditions, and an ageing population is an ongoing challenge. Limitations in workforce supply and distribution and increasing financial constraints in health are further restraints to implementing health reform. The split roles and responsibilities for health care across Australian and State Governments, and the private sector also create an additional level of complexity. All of these considerations underpin the activity across WA Health Networks.

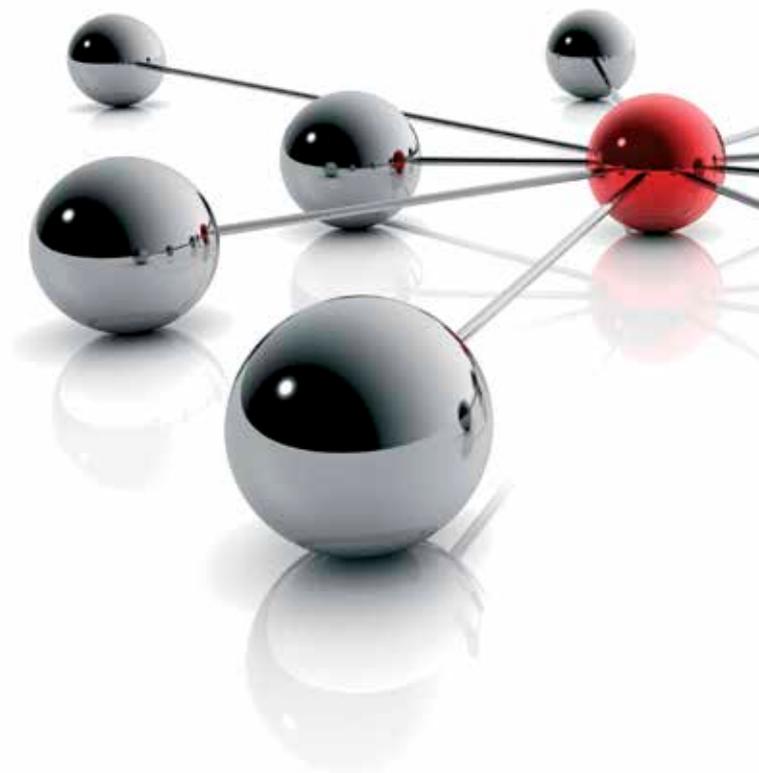
Defining success

WA Health Networks recognises the importance of accountability, evaluation and performance reporting. WA Health Networks annually monitors and reports on performance indicators aligned with the operational activities that support the Strategic Direction. The performance indicators are used in a cycle of continuous quality improvement to ensure that WA Health Networks remains responsive to emerging trends and is effective in contributing to a more sustainable and integrated health system with improved health outcomes.

Be part of the change

The success of WA Health Networks relies on connecting people with an interest in improving our health system to work together to advise and inform improvements in system-wide policy, planning and purchasing. If you're not already involved in WA Health Networks visit www.health.wa.gov.au (under Improving WA Health) and join us in making a difference.





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