



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

**WA Health Networks Strategic Direction**

# **Online Consultation: Phase 1**



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## 1. Background

WA Health Networks enable everyone with an interest in health to connect with others, share their expertise and experience to improve the health system and the health of all Western Australians. WA Health Networks are unique in that they bring together diverse partners across health to identify a shared vision for health reform and to improve service quality and care.

In April 2015 the WA Health Networks commenced the development of the WA Health Networks Strategic Direction 2015-2020. The aim of the Strategic Direction is to ensure the WA Health Networks continue to play an important role in identifying opportunities to create a culture of collaboration and to influence positive change to the health system.

In May 2015 a broad consultation was undertaken with WA Health Network stakeholders to gather data to inform the priorities and guiding principles for the Strategic Direction.

The consultation was undertaken in two stages:

- Stage One: Face to face interviews with key strategic stakeholders across the WA health system
- Stage Two: Online consultation via a Citizen Space survey with stakeholders registered on the WA Health Networks Database<sup>1</sup>.

This report details the findings from stage two of the consultation with the broad stakeholder group registered on the WA Health Networks database.

## 2. Aim and Objective

The overall aim of the survey was to gather data to inform the direction and priorities of the WA Health Networks and to support the implementation of the Strategic Direction.

The specific objective of the survey was to collect information across three key areas of action:

- enhancing care in the community
- improving the patient journey
- collaborating for change across the health system.

## 3. Methodology

### 3.1 Survey

Stakeholder input for the WA Health Networks Strategic Direction 2015-2020 was collected using a self-completion questionnaire. A copy of the questionnaire is provided in Appendix 1.

The questionnaire included four open-ended and eight closed-ended questions.

Citizen Space, an online consultation tool, was used to design and collect survey responses. A hard-copy of the survey was available on request.

### 3.2 Sampling

The sampling frame included all persons and/or organisations listed on the WA Health Networks database of interested stakeholders including: clinicians, consumers and carers, policy makers, planners and researchers across the public and private health sectors.

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<sup>1</sup> The WA Health Networks Database is a registry of organisations and individuals who have previously indicated an interest in one or more of the WA Health Networks.

### 3.3 Data collection

Respondents were invited to participate via an email invitation, which included a link to the online survey tool. The survey was open for three weeks from 30 April to 21 May 2015.

### 3.4 Data analysis

Quantitative data from the self-completion questionnaires was downloaded from Citizen Space and analysed using SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Sciences). Qualitative data was analysed using the software program NVivo10 (QSR International). Thematic analysis was used to identify recurring themes that represented common views of the respondents.

## 4. Results

### 4.1 Responses

In total 206 survey responses were received, including 44 received from organisations.

### 4.2 Demographics

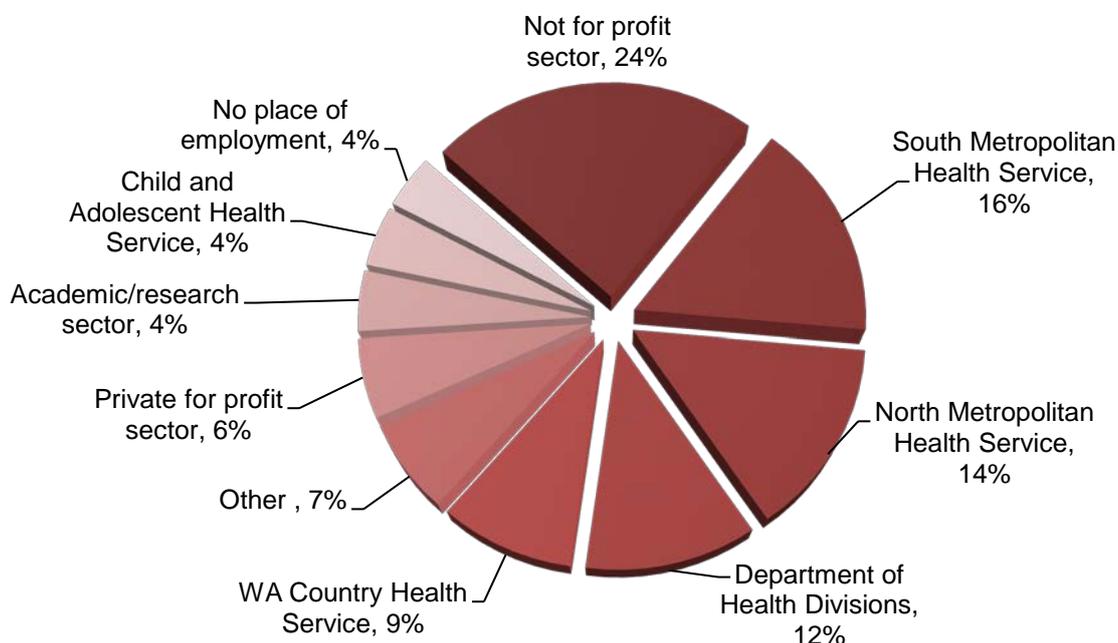
Respondents to the survey were asked to provide basic demographic information about their:

- primary work related role (Figure 1)
- primary place of work (Figure 2)
- involvement with WA Health Networks (Figure 3).

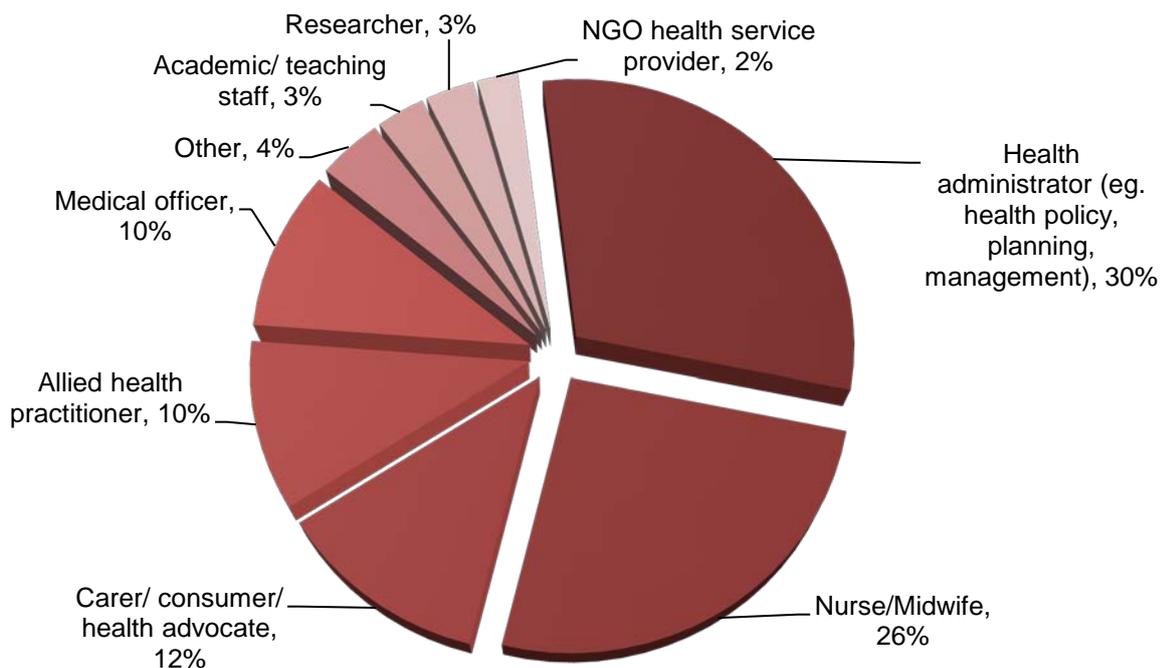
The following response patterns are noted in the demographic responses:

- 79 per cent of responses were received from individuals and 21 percent were received from organisations.
- 43 per cent of respondents worked in the WA Health Services (either the South Metropolitan, North Metropolitan, WA Country or Child and Adolescent Health Service).
- 55 per cent of respondents were employed by the WA Department of Health.
- 48 per cent of respondents reported that their primary work role involved the provision of health services (nurse/midwife, allied health practitioner, medical officer or non-government service provider).
- 12 per cent of respondents reported their primary role as either a consumer, carer or health advocate.
- 80 per cent of respondents were involved with one or more of the WA Health Networks.

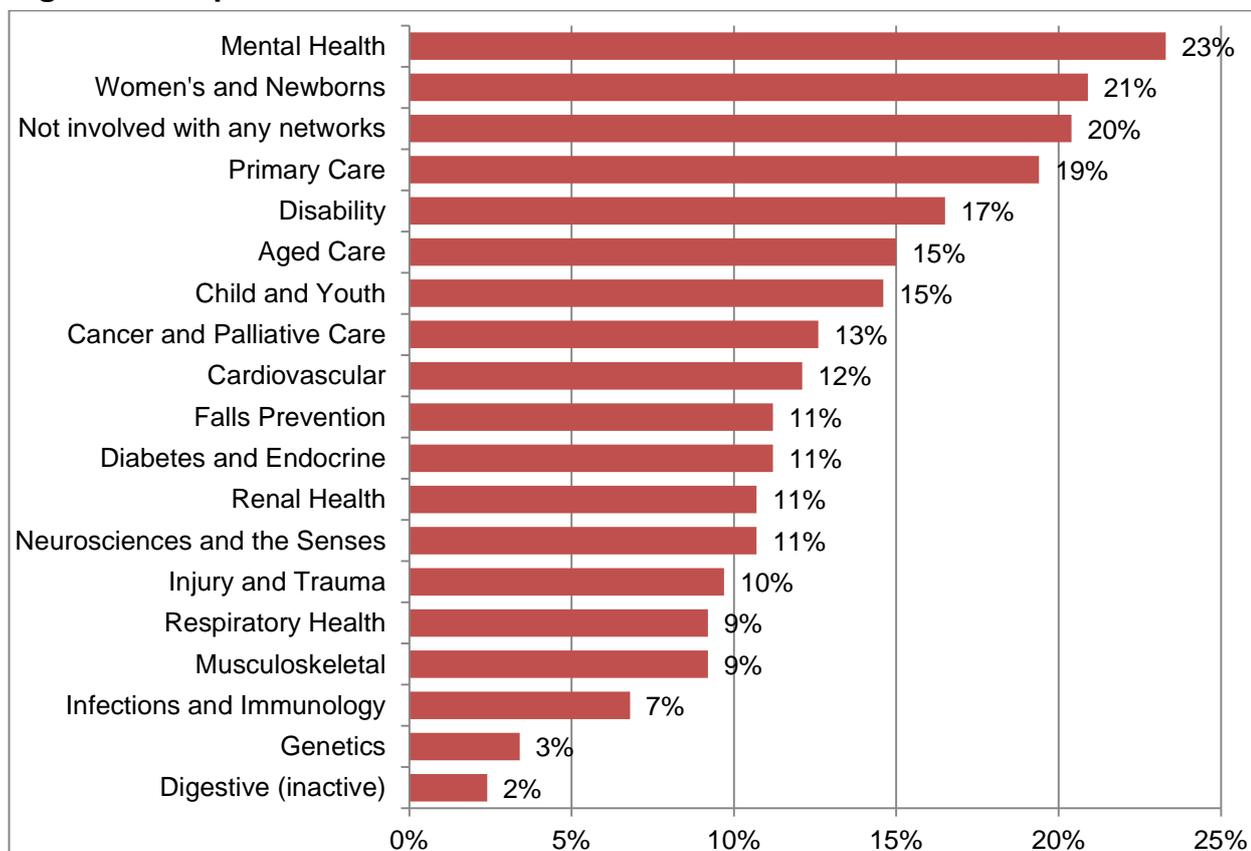
**Figure 1: Respondents' role in the health sector**



**Figure 2: Respondents' primary place of work**



**Figure 3: Respondent's involvement in Health Networks\***



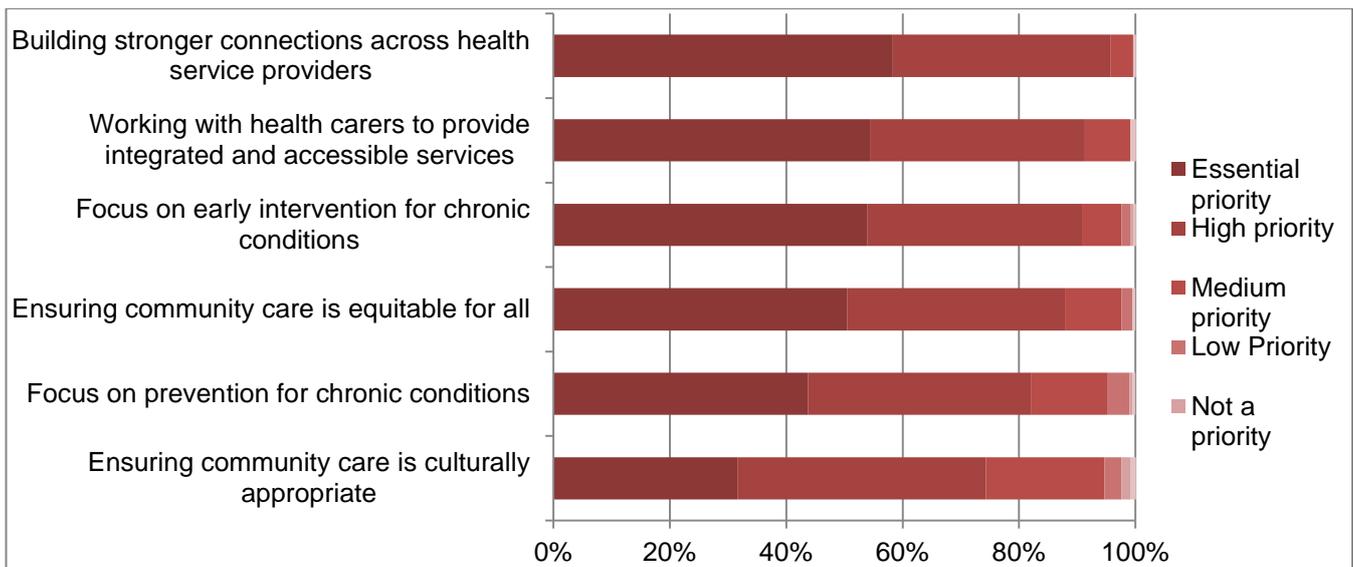
\* Totals exceed 100% as respondents were able to nominate involvement with multiple Health Networks

### 4.3 Priority Area 1: Enhancing care in the community

Survey respondents were provided with an introductory video and text broadly explaining that the goal of enhancing care in the community is to provide quality care within the community to enable people to remain independent in their own home for longer, or to be discharged from hospital at an earlier stage in their recovery.

Survey respondents were then asked to rate the level of priority that should be given to each of six guiding principles in order to achieve the priority of ‘enhancing care in the community’. Respondents were instructed to use their knowledge of the health system, and opportunities for change, to rate each guiding principle. The rating results are presented in Figure 4.

**Figure 4: Priority ratings for Guiding Principles to Enhance Care in the Community**



Respondents were also asked to list any other guiding principles they believed were important to enhance care in the community. In addition to the suggested guiding principles (listed in Figure 4) respondents believed that the patient journey would also benefit from:

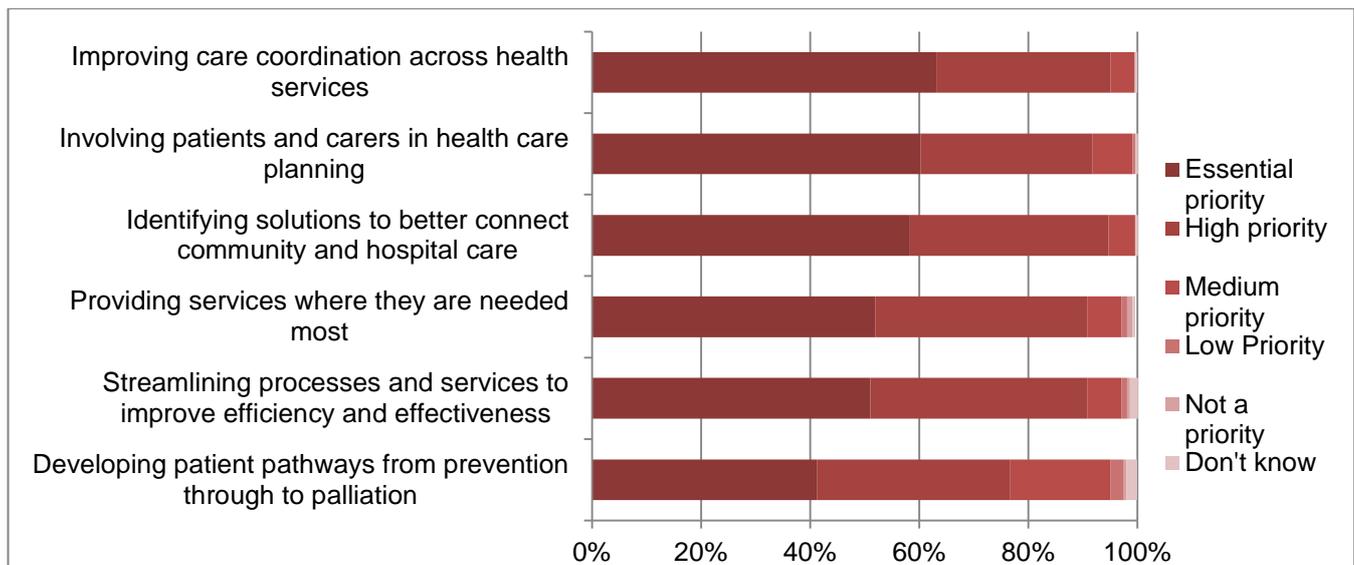
- improvements in the coordination and continuity of care
- improvements in access to care, with a focus on issues of affordability, transportation and the ‘acceptance criteria’ for care
- ensuring that care is person-centred, responsive and flexible
- fostering multidisciplinary teamwork and cooperation between service providers
- providing information and education to improve health literacy in the community
- ensuring the health workforce is well supported, with a focus on professional training and development opportunities
- providing meaningful engagement opportunities for all members of the community to participate in health care planning.

#### 4.4 Priority Area 2: Improving the patient journey

Survey respondents were provided with an introductory video and text broadly explaining that the WA Health Networks can help to connect up parts of the health system to make a patient's journey smoother. Looking to the future there are opportunities for the WA Health Networks to improve the communication between different types of health professionals and to identify pathways to improve the patient journey.

Survey respondents were asked to rate the level of priority that should be given to each of six guiding principles in order to achieve the priority of 'improving the patient journey'. Respondents were instructed to use their knowledge of the health system, and opportunities for change, to rate each guiding principle. The rating results are presented in Figure 5.

**Figure 5: Priority ratings for Guiding Principles to Improve the Patient Journey**



Respondents were also asked to list any other guiding principles they believed were important to improve the patient journey. In addition to the suggested guiding principles (listed in Figure 5) respondents believed that the patient journey would also benefit from:

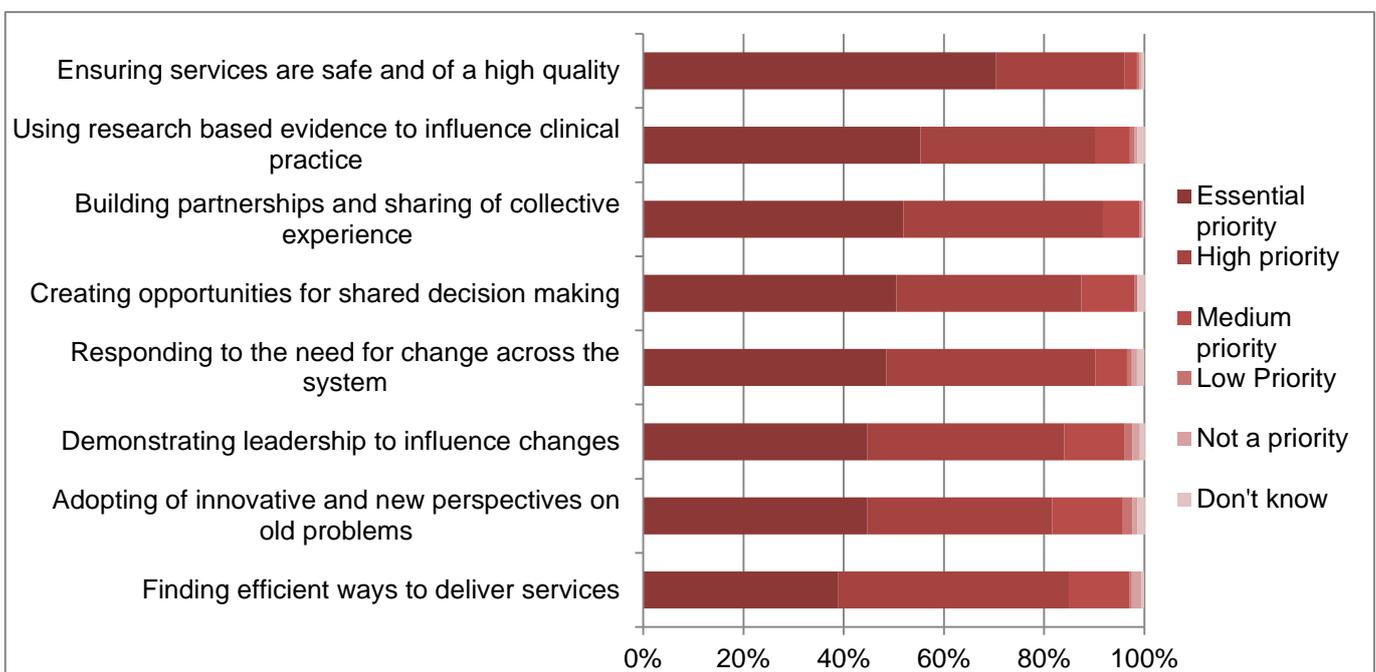
- encouraging and supporting the delivery of multidisciplinary care
- optimising the use of information and communication technology, including the use of electronic health records and state wide clinical information sharing systems
- encouraging a more holistic approach to health care and recognition that multiple and complex factors impact on a person's health
- increased collaboration across all sectors that influence the determinants of health, with a focus on housing, education and justice
- improving the quality and range of patient information and education resources.

### 4.5 Priority Area 3: Collaborating for change across the health system

Survey respondents were provided with an introductory video and text broadly explaining that the WA Health Networks provide an opportunity to bring together diverse groups of people with an interest in health to improve the system. It is important that the WA Health Networks have representation across all systems of care including hospital and community services to ensure we are able to influence change. WA Health Networks are the glue to join up all parts of the system.

Survey respondents were then asked to rate the level of priority that should be given to each of eight guiding principles in order to achieve the priority of 'collaborating for change across the health system'. Respondents were instructed to use their knowledge of the health system, and opportunities for change, to rate each guiding principle. The rating results are presented in Figure 6.

**Figure 6: Priority ratings for Guiding Principles to Collaborate for Change Across the Health System**



Respondents were also asked to list any other guiding principles they believed were important to 'collaborate for change across the health system'. In addition to the suggested guiding principles (listed in Figure 6) respondents believed that collaborative efforts directed towards change would also benefit from:

- clearly defined organisational structures, systems and procedures to support collaboration
- a common and agreed vision for the future of health
- shared ownership of the need for, and direction of change across the entire health system
- empowering all members of the community and the health system to be involved
- a strengthened commitment to implementing/enacting change.

## 4.6 General feedback

The last question in the survey provided respondents with the opportunity to provide general comments about the future direction of the WA Health Networks. Overall respondents indicated that they were very supportive of the work to clarify the strategic direction of the WA Health Networks. It was described as a valuable exercise that would enable the Networks to maximise their collective efforts to improve the health of all Western Australians. Respondents also valued the opportunity to contribute to the development of an agreed 'way forward' for the WA Health Networks.

Four major themes were identified in the general comments provided by respondents:

- engagement
- leadership
- challenging the status quo
- developing mechanisms to influence change.

### Engagement

Respondents commented that the WA Health Networks are uniquely placed to facilitate the positive interaction and cooperation of a broad range of stakeholders across WA. Many respondents suggested that the WA Health Networks must continue to provide, and possibly expand the range of, opportunities for stakeholders and organisations to work together to improve the health system.

*"Health Networks is an essential strategic mechanism within the Health Department to maximise collective effort and partnership in building a more responsive health system"*

*"(Health Networks) should be playing an integral role in connecting the various stakeholders together"*

*"Health Networks are just that - networked - they can also bring together key players who do not usually work together"*

Respondents also suggested that it is important for the WA Health Networks to be inclusive of the broadest possible range of stakeholders and that the continued involvement of individuals, carers and consumers was a key component of the value of the WA Health Networks.

*"The (Networks) framework needs to be far wider reaching....inclusive and driven by the community, not just the agencies."*

*"Consumers and carers must be included at all levels. Listen to what they have to say and use the information to continually improve the health service in WA."*

*"Networks need to take a bottom up approach to problem solving in order to unearth the innovative solutions developed by those working directly in patient care environments."*

### Leadership

Respondents emphasised leadership as a key element for the future success of the WA Health Networks. Respondents suggested that strong leadership is a critical success factor for keeping diverse partners connected and for achieving change across the health system.

*"In looking forward Health Networks should explore opportunities for identifying champions (individuals or organisations) who would lead change."*

*"(The Health Networks) are in an ideal strategic place to be able to facilitate a statewide transformative process."*

## Challenging the status quo

Respondents described a myriad of current and future challenges for WA Health and many commented on the value of moving towards a more holistic and community based model of health care. Respondents also suggested that the WA Health Networks are well placed to facilitate the linkages and productive partnerships required to support change across the health sector and beyond.

*“(Health Networks) are in an ideal strategic place to be able to facilitate a statewide transformative process. I believe they should be playing an integral role in connecting the various stakeholders together.”*

*“Receiving care where appropriate means shifting the paradigm of ‘community care as outreach’ to ‘community care as centre’”*

*“I feel the barrier to change is attitudinal and cultural, we need to look at things differently and strive for good quality servicing using an integrated, connected approach.”*

## Development of mechanisms to influence change

Many respondents commented that the WA Health Networks have provided many opportunities for people to come together and develop ideas and proposals. There was less agreement however about the degree to which the networks have been able to follow through on these proposals. As one respondent commented:

*“it is essential that the Network(s) becomes more than a talking shop and (are) able to demonstrate improvements in the health system.”*

Respondents suggested that WA Health Networks require stronger mechanisms to influence change. Respondents suggested that the ability of the Networks to deliver tangible change and outcomes would be enhanced if Networks had more authority to direct resource allocation and/or had a dedicated project budget to fund Network priorities.

*“In the absence of any budget or decision making authority (the Networks) produce documents and policies which may or may not be implemented.”*

*“Dedicated resources for implementation of priority projects (rather than having to rely on Area Health Services to fund work) would enhance Networks' ability to influence system change.”*

*“Funding Models of Care will ensure that the valuable work undertaken in development of the Models is capitalised through action.”*

## 5. Next Step: Developing a Strategic Direction for WA Health Networks

The responses to this consultation were used to develop a draft Strategic Direction for WA Health Networks. This draft document was then discussed further with key strategic stakeholders and members of the WA Health Networks Leads' Forum. Following this a second round of consultation was undertaken with stakeholders registered on the WA Health Networks database, and through the Department of Health weekly newsletter Health Happenings. The purpose of the second phase of consultation was to collect feedback on the overall vision and proposed activities of the draft Strategic Direction. The report of this consultation will be made publicly available once it is finalised. It is also anticipated that much of the feedback from all phases of the Strategic Direction consultation will be used in the development of an operational plan for the WA Health Networks.

## 6. Appendices

### 6.1 Appendix 1: Survey Instrument

Citizen Space - Print Survey



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

## WA Health Networks Strategic Framework

### Overview

The Health Networks branch are currently preparing a WA Health Networks Strategic Framework for 2015-2020. The framework will provide direction for the WA Health Networks over the next five years. It will also ensure the WA Health Networks continue to play an important role in identifying opportunities to create a culture of collaboration to influence changes to the health system.

To help inform the development of the strategic framework, this targeted consultation provides an opportunity for individuals within the WA Health community to provide their feedback.

We encourage clinicians, consumers and carers, policy makers, planners and researchers across public and private domains to contribute to the defining of the direction of Health Networks by participating in this consultation.

#### About the WA Health Networks

WA Health Networks enable everyone with an interest in health to connect with others, share their expertise and experience to improve the health system and the health of all Western Australians. WA Health Networks are unique in that they bring together diverse partners across health to identify a shared vision for health reform and to improve service quality and care.

### Why we are consulting

We invite you to contribute to the WA Health Networks Strategic Framework via a brief online survey. This survey is designed to collect information across three key areas of action:

- Enhancing care in the community
- Improving the patient journey
- Collaborating for change across the health system.

Your responses will be considered and used to inform the priorities and directions of the framework as well as supporting its implementation.

The targeted consultation process is open until Thursday 21st May 2015.

A report outlining feedback received from the consultation process will be available at: <http://www.healthnetworks.health.wa.gov.au/home> <<http://www.healthnetworks.health.wa.gov.au/home>> .

#### About the Survey

The survey is expected to take about 10 minutes to complete. All responses to this survey will remain private and confidential.

To begin the survey, click on the 'Online Survey' link in the blue box below.

If you have any queries about the survey or plan or for further information please contact the Health Networks branch at [healthpolicy@health.wa.gov.au](mailto:healthpolicy@health.wa.gov.au) or phone (08) 9222 0200.

Thank you for participating in the survey. Your interest and feedback is very much appreciated

1. Providing your email address below.

This is optional, but if you enter your email address then you will be able to return to edit your consultation at any time until you submit it. You will also receive an acknowledgement email when you complete the consultation.

Email

Demographics

Please provide the requested demographic information. It is used to ensure we receive feedback from a broad range of stakeholders.

2. Please select the category below that best describes your PRIMARY role in the health sector.

Please select only one item

- Medical officer
- Nurse/Midwife
- Allied health practitioner
- Researcher
- Academic/ teaching staff
- Health administrator (eg. health policy, planning, management)
- Carer/ consumer/ health advocate
- Other (please specify below)

3. Please select the category below that best describes your PRIMARY place of employment.

Please select only one item

- 
- 
- 
- 

4. Do you identify as an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander?

Please select only one item

- Yes
- No

5. Which (if any) of the WA Health Networks listed below are you involved with?

Please select all that apply

Involvement includes, but is not restricted to:

- receiving emails about network(s)
- attending network forums/events
- being part of a network executive/working group.

- None, I am not involved with any of the listed networks
- Aged Care
- Cancer and Palliative Care
- Disability
- Mental Health
- Respiratory Health
- Women's and Newborns

6. Does your feedback represent an individual or group / organisational perspective?

Please select only one item

- An individual response
- A group / organisational perspective (please specify the name or the group / organisation below)

## Priority Area 1: Enhancing Care in the Community

Patients in the community often feel frustrated that the health system doesn't seem to be connected and that they would prefer to receive services in the community rather than in hospitals.

The goal of enhancing care in the community is to provide quality care within the community to enable people to remain independent in their own home for longer, or to be discharged from hospital at an earlier stage in their recovery.

WA Health Networks is a mechanism for bringing people together to identify opportunities to improve access to quality care within the community. This means people can receive the care they most need where they most want it.

### 7. Please rate the level of priority you believe should be given to each guiding principle listed below to 'ENHANCE CARE in the COMMUNITY'.

Please use your knowledge of the health system, and opportunities for change, to rate each priority.

	Essential priority	High priority	Medium priority	Low priority	Not a priority	Don't know/ can't say
Building stronger connections across health service providers	<input type="radio"/>					
Working with community health carers to provide integrated and accessible services	<input type="radio"/>					
Ensuring community care is culturally appropriate	<input type="radio"/>					
Ensuring community care is equitable for all	<input type="radio"/>					
Focus on prevention for chronic conditions	<input type="radio"/>					
Focus on early intervention for chronic conditions	<input type="radio"/>					

### 8. Please list below any other guiding principles you believe are important to enhance care in the community.

## Priority Area 2: Improving the Patient Journey

WA Health Networks can help to connect up parts of the health system to make a patient's journey smoother. We also recognise that providing high quality services to patients and communities will increasingly require hospitals to work in partnership with other local organisations, including primary care, social care and other community-based services.

Looking to the future there are opportunities for WA Health Networks to improve the communication between different types of health professionals and to identify pathways to improve the patient journey.

### 9. Please rate the level of priority you believe should be given to each guiding principle listed below to **IMPROVE the PATIENT JOURNEY**.

Please use your knowledge of the health system, and opportunities for change, to rate each priority.

	Essential priority	High priority	Medium priority	Low priority	Not a priority	Don't know/ can't say
Involving patients and carers in health care planning	<input type="radio"/>					
Developing patient pathways from prevention through to palliation	<input type="radio"/>					
Improving care coordination across health services	<input type="radio"/>					
Streamlining existing processes and services to improve efficiency and effectiveness	<input type="radio"/>					
Identifying solutions to better connect community and hospital care	<input type="radio"/>					
Providing services where they are needed most	<input type="radio"/>					

### 10. Please list below any other guiding principles you believe are important to improve the patient journey.

### Priority Area 3: Collaborating for Change Across the Health System

WA Health Networks provide an opportunity to bring together diverse groups of people with an interest in health to improve the system. Together we can share our different expertise and experience to find solutions and to adopt innovative approaches to improve standards of care.

It is important that WA Health Networks have representation across all systems of care including hospital and community services to ensure we are able to influence change. WA Health Networks are the glue to join up all parts of the system.

11. Please rate the level of priority you believe should be given to each guiding principle listed below to **COLLABORATE** for **CHANGE** across the health system.

Please use your knowledge of the health system, and opportunities for change, to rate each priority.

	Essential priority	High priority	Medium priority	Low priority	Not a priority	Don't know/ can't say
Finding efficient ways to deliver services	<input type="radio"/>					
Demonstrating leadership to influence changes	<input type="radio"/>					
Adopting of innovative and new perspectives on old problems	<input type="radio"/>					
Building partnerships and sharing of collective experience	<input type="radio"/>					
Responding to the need for change across the system	<input type="radio"/>					
Using research based evidence to influence clinical practice	<input type="radio"/>					
Creating opportunities for shared decision making	<input type="radio"/>					
Ensuring services are safe and of a high quality	<input type="radio"/>					

12. Please list below any other guiding principles you believe are important to collaborate for change across the health system.

### General Feedback

13. Please provide below any comments or other feedback you have in relation to the future direction of WA Health Networks.

## 6.2 Appendix 2: Invitation to participate in the survey

### WA Health Networks Strategic Framework – Consultation

Health Network members are invited to contribute to the development of the WA Health Networks Strategic Framework for 2015-2020 by completing a brief online survey. The survey is designed to collect information across three key areas of action:

- enhancing care in the community
- improving the patient journey
- collaborating for change across the health system.

Once completed, the framework will provide direction for Health Networks over the next five years.

Survey link: <https://consultation.health.wa.gov.au/strategy/wa-health-networks-strategic-framework>

The consultation closes Thursday 21 May.

If you have any questions, please email [Joanne Cronin](mailto:joanne.cronin@health.wa.gov.au).



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