

Clinical Reference Group Communiqué

December 2018

This update highlights key discussions and considerations from the meetings of the Sustainable Health Review (SHR) Clinical Reference Group held on 21 June, 25 July and 22 August 2018 respectively, as well as a joint meeting with the SHR Consumer and Carer Reference Group held on 18 September 2018.

Final Report Narrative (June meeting)

For their June meeting, the Panel asked Reference Group members to provide advice on crafting a narrative for the SHR Final Report which would resonate with a clinical audience. The meeting was facilitated by Tuna Blue and resulted in a one page narrative which was submitted to the Panel for consideration.

Key elements of the narrative;

- *Currently, West Australians are on a global journey of increased choice and expectations in their everyday life, driven by a mixture of technology and changing business models in major institutions. In ten years, our communities will likely be accessing their health information, advice and services through a futuristic blend of virtual reality, wearable devices and artificial intelligence.*
- *To ensure sustainability, our health system must start a dynamic journey of convergence beginning now. We must continuously reorient the WA health system to become patient-centred and community-focused, enabling active patients in an active system. This is the path of convergence, from two parallel narratives of the patient and clinical systems, to a single journey of choice and experience.*
- *Convergence cannot occur within the WA health system without integration. The health system of 2018 operates in multiple silos and domains, making the journey of convergence with patient and community expectations perilous. Over the next ten years, the WA health system must integrate its myriad pathways, dead-ends and gaps into a seamless journey.*
- *With integration and convergence on both the community and clinical sides, both streams will begin to integrate and eventually converge to a sustainable, people and community driven system that ensures the wellbeing of all West Australians.*

Clinical Variation discussion (July meeting)

For their July meeting the Reference Group explored a system wide approach that would support a reduction to unwarranted clinical variation and improve patient outcomes. Presentations were delivered by Mr Rob Anderson (Executive Director, Information & System Performance Directorate DOH) and Dr Simon Towler (SHMS Clinical Futures Lead; and Chair, High Value Healthcare Collaborative) providing background information on current projects in this area.

Members made the following recommendations;

- **Standardise pathways for clinical care** where we have the ability to measure and report variations to a pathway.
- **Change culture/approach to data** – let the data start the conversation - why is there variation? Enable greater clinical team discussions to improve service and culture regarding clinical variation. This may require education programs in the community.
- **Develop and integrate clinical data systems into clinical care** - digital disruption.
- **Capability and capacity for data analytics** - look to New South Wales and Victoria. Consider a state-level agency for data.
- **Transparent/ public reporting of outcomes** including safety and quality.

- **Establish a data health agency in WA** similar to that of New South Wales (Bureau of Health Information).
- Consider using clinical variation as a starting point for performance management.

Outpatients and Elective Surgery discussion (August meeting)

At their August meeting, Reference Group members were asked to provide advice on how the health system can manage the scope for specialist outpatient services and elective surgery procedures within public hospitals in a more sustainable way. The Reference Group referred to a number of background materials, case studies and presentations to support their discussion, which included consideration of work already underway.

Key comments on outpatients;

- Support for the position that all Category Three requests for specialist outpatient services are managed in primary care (targeting specialties with high volumes).
- Explore alternatives for patients, this may include telehealth.
- Align specialist outpatient reforms with workforce reforms which may include changes to the models of care for outpatient services.
- Ongoing optimisation should continue (e.g. waitlist auditing and management).

Key comments on elective surgical services;

- Support for the position that a number of restricted procedures identified by evidence are added to the WA health excluded procedure list.
- Requirement for a clinical review committee that looks to set the policy framework for identification of 'restricted' procedures.
- Enforcement of the excluded procedure policy undertaken at a local Health Service Provider level.

Feedback on the Draft Final Report Recommendations

A Joint Reference Group meeting was held in September 2018 to provide general advice to the Panel on whether Draft Final Report Recommendations were;

- comprehensive (*did they cover enough ground?*);
- balanced (*did they target the right areas and to the right depth?*);
- bold (*will they produce long term change?*); and
- meaningful (*do they resonate with both consumer and clinician audiences?*).

Tuna Blue facilitated a 'world café' style meeting to ensure that Reference Group members had the opportunity to provide feedback on all of the recommendations. As a result of this meeting, a number of changes to the Final Report recommendations were made.

Closure of the Reference Group

In December 2018 Reference Groups were invited to an afternoon tea, hosted by the Reference Group Chairs, to thank Members for their service and contribution to the Sustainable Health Review.

Reference Groups held monthly/bi-monthly meetings totalling more than 40 hours from August 2017 to November 2018 and played a significant part in shaping the Final Report strategies, recommendations and narrative. In addition, many Reference Group Members attended SHR events, supported the work of Health Consumer Council to engage vulnerable, hard to reach groups and became members of SHR Working Groups involved in specific areas of work under the Review.

Further information

Email: SHR@health.wa.gov.au

Website: <http://ww2.health.wa.gov.au/Improving-WA-Health/Sustainable-health-review>