

Minutes for NSW Health Pathology Board

28 June 2023 | 10:00 AM - 01:30 PM, 1 Reserve Road, St Leonards, and Microsoft Teams

Attendees

Nigel Lyons, Carmen Rechbauer, Cathryn Cox, Darren Turner, David Currow, Elizabeth Salisbury, Gayle Murphy, Michael Legg, and Nicholas Hawkins.

Apologies: Jason Ardler and Carmen Rechbauer

In Attendance: Robert Lindeman, Martin Canova, Michael Whiley, Tammy Boone, and Ben Watts for Item 4, Wendy Cooper and Tracey Hoitink for Item 6, and Stephen Braye for Item 11.

Secretariat: Tanya Dunn

Welcome, Acknowledgment of Country and Emergency Management

The Chair opened the meeting with acknowledgement of country and welcomed all in attendance.

The Chair **NOTED** the apologies received.

A quorum of Board members was present, and the meeting proceeded with business. The Secretariat recorded the minutes.

Declarations of Conflict of Interest

The Conflict of Interest (CoI) Register was noted.

The Board Chair requested that all attendees declare or remove any conflicts of interest at the meeting.

No new conflicts of interest were declared at the meeting.

Confirmation of previous Minutes and Review of Action Log

Board members were invited to comment on the minutes.

The members of the Board **APPROVED** the draft Board meeting minutes of 26 April 2023 as an accurate record of the meeting.

The Action Log was reviewed and noted. The pending actions were reviewed, and a verbal update was provided.

Action: Nicholas Hawkins to be provided with a copy of the Tissue Release Policy when available.

Acting Chief Executive Update

The Acting Chief Executive report was taken as read.

Robert Lindeman provided a verbal update to the Board.

Noting:

- The recent SLT site visits to Mid North Coast pathology laboratories, sharing the positive experiences and insights into the laboratories' operations and functionality.
- Continuing efforts to enhance research support and engagement, particularly in regional areas. Regular meetings have been scheduled between the Office of Health and Medical Research and Luke Sloane, Regional Coordinator for NSW Health.
- The significance of the Prospect Study (Study), which will focus on cancer patients across Australia, was discussed. The role of OMICO in conducting the study, with support from the Federal and State Governments, including NSWHP, was acknowledged. The purpose of the study is to sequence malignancies of 23,000 patients over the next three years. Concerns were raised regarding the ability to provide reporting for the study, emphasising the importance investing in bioinformaticians and biomathematicians. Further discussions on this study will be planned for future Board meetings.
- The ongoing meetings with Chief Executives from Local Health Districts (LHDs) to address financial performance and performance monitoring. The meetings are aimed to gain clarity on reporting requirements and strengthen collaboration between NSWHP and LHDs.
- The ongoing engagement with Agency Clinical Innovation (ACI) specialty groups was highlighted, noting the importance of aligning proposed strategies with the expertise and perspectives of clinicians in various specialties.
- The ongoing award reform process and engagement with the Ministry of Health (MoH) and the Health Service Union (HSU) were discussed. Concerns were raised regarding the absence of an award for Clinical Scientists, limiting their roles and potential contributions, and not aligning with the current landscape.
- Trainee Anatomical Pathologists and concerns raised by the Royal College Pathologists Australasian (RCPA) regarding the training requirements for Anatomical Pathologists were discussed. Noting the decision to create additional positions for dissection scientists was noted, but backfilling these positions presented temporary challenges. Noting an agreement was reached limiting pathologist's cut-up hours. Regular monitoring will be implemented to ensure compliance with the agreed upon hours.
- The increasing complexity of Anatomical Pathology (AP) and the rise in MDT participation. The cost, pricing and attendance at MDT attendance was discussed, which is anticipated to increase over time. It was agreed that addressing the issue with LHDs and developing a NSWHP response was needed.

- Acknowledgment was given to Alex Eigenstetter, Director Planning and Performance, and his team for providing the templates for local operations for performance monitoring. The templates have improved the overall performance monitoring process, and their effectiveness well received.
- The importance of exploring potential system benefits through infrastructure and IT investment was highlighted. Further discussions and prioritisation of potential initiatives were recommended.
- The non-coronial autopsy service will commence 1 July 2023. The Board acknowledged the great work of Michael Symonds and his teams in establishing the service. The funding of the non-coronial autopsy service was clarified.
- The ongoing efforts to address concerns raised by the Medical Staff Council (MSC) regarding business processes, engagement, and information dissemination. The Board acknowledged the willingness and receptiveness of the SLT and management to resolve the identified issues. The Board will be updated on progress.
- There are ongoing discussions to provide support for research and developing overarching agreements with LHDs. Intellectual property (IP) and custodianship related issues are being addressed.
- The upcoming retirement of Professor Roger Wilson, Chief Pathologist, Executive Director, Quality and Clinical Safety. The Board acknowledged Professor Wilson's significant contributions to NSWHP, which included defining the clinical governance structure, providing research support, and establishing the Biobank. A letter of appreciation from the Board to be sent to Professor Wilson for his contributions.
- The Board Chair provided an update on the progress of the recruitment process of the Chief Executive role. The application period has closed, and a selection panel comprised of Board members and LHD representatives, has been established. Shortlisting will take place, and interviews are scheduled for mid-July. The Board will be kept informed on progress and the outcome of the selection process.
- The Board Chair thanked Professor Robert Lindeman for his leadership as interim Chief Executive and Martin Canova for relieving Robert during his recent leave.
- The Board **NOTED** the updates provided.

Action: Professor Robert Lindeman to distribute the local operations templates to interested Board members.

Action: Dr Michael Whiley to provide the Board with a copy of the 2023 Anatomical Pathology Review as part of the August report, specifically addressing the number of cases presented to MDTs.

Refresh Strategic Plan

Martin Canova, Director Strategy and Transformation updated the Board on the refresh of the NSW Health Pathology Strategic Plan.

The Board **NOTED** the progress made on the refreshed strategic plan since the last Board meeting. The draft plan was made available for online and facilitated consultation.

The generated feedback was most consistent across strategic priorities, with sustainability generating the most interest. The feedback was compiled, and revisions were presented to the SLT, resulting in plan modifications. Suggestions were activities already implemented within NSWHP, indicating the need for improved internal communication regarding ongoing projects. The strategic priorities were well-received, with feedback focusing on existing activities and measures.

The Board noted that the program around the statewide scientific graduate program was broad. It was suggested to increase engagement with university students to make them aware of the career opportunities within NSWHP, as well as to explore partnerships with universities for staffing and secondment roles, particularly in bioinformatics and informatics. Consider including the term investment in the strategic plan. LHD liaison, education, and the provision of additional services to the health system were identified as significant areas for inclusion in the refreshed plan. The Board proposed that management review and clarify project prioritisation and sequencing.

The refreshed strategic plan will include a supporting narrative and broader commentary addressing concerns regarding research, training, education, and other initiatives. This will provide additional context and address the issues raised.

The Board noted the next steps for the refreshed strategic plan and noted that the plan will be distributed to the SLT for final endorsement. Once endorsed, a copy of the plan to be provided to the Board. A communication strategy will be developed for staff engagement.

Action: A copy of the endorsed refreshed Strategic Plan to be provided to the Board.

AP Futures Workshop and AP Service Configuration Update

Martin Canova, Director Strategy and Transformation, presented an update to the Board on the Anatomical Pathology (AP) Service configuration work. The AP Service Configuration work is intended to set a long-term vision for sustainable approaches to AP service through 2034.

The discussion focused on service delivery, sustainable approaches to AP service, future demand increases, addressing an aging and short-staffed AP workforce, managing high infrastructure demands, and leveraging on technology advancements. Long-term objectives include the creation of a road map, with the establishment of a high-throughput central processing laboratory functioning as the primary focus of the design phase.

The core design principles and assumptions were outlined. Three models of service delivery were proposed: a distributed model, a highly consolidated model, and a slightly less consolidated model.

Following discussions with the SLT, the middle ground strategy has been determined to be the preferred option.

To understand mega trends in the field of pathology, the Shaping Future Team of the Department Premier and Cabinet (DPC) was consulted.

It was noted that comprehensive workload modelling, the establishment of a strategy for managing expectations, and communication between staff and other stakeholders are required.

It was recommended that the Strategic Asset Management Plan (SAMP) be reviewed to determine the current investment priorities and potential implementation timelines.

The workforce components and management structure, and the need to refine the list of specimens appropriate for a central processing laboratory, were discussed, along with the inclusion of patients in the stakeholder mix, potential funding sources, and sustainability assessments.

A proposal for a workshop to discuss the projects principles and models was discussed. Prior to facilitating broader consultation and managing expectations, the Board recommends preparing additional detail on return on investment and considering capital commitment.

The Board acknowledged appreciation for the ongoing work and acknowledged the efforts of the project team.

Action: Martin Canova to circulate a copy of the Shaping Futures AP Report to the Board.

Action: Martin Canova and the Project Team to draft a document outlining the high-level benefits, risks, costs, and savings associated with AP Service Configuration for broader discussion with the MoH, SLT and the Board.

Hunter Valley Incident

Michael Symonds, Director, Forensic and Analytical Science Service provided an update on the incident that took place in the Hunter Valley and the response from the Forensic Medicine (FM) Team and the Disaster Victim Identification (DVI) team. Recognising the collaborative response by Forensic Medicine, NSW Police, and other agencies that were involved in the response. Noting that the staff's dedication and professionalism were exemplary, despite the challenging circumstances.

The Board Chair thanked Michael Symonds for providing the update, and the Board acknowledged and commended the exceptional performance of both the FM and DVI teams, requesting that appreciation be extended to the respective teams for their efforts.

Culture, Safety and Wellbeing

The Culture, Safety and Wellbeing report was taken as read.

Dr Deanna Paulin, Director, People and Culture provided an update to the Board.

Noting:

- NSWHP is on track to achieve a 5% reduction in KPI workers compensation claims. Noting that body stressing, slips, trips, and falls were the main contributors of incidents.
- The recent mandatory training for managers on work, health, and safety and ongoing monitoring.
- An increase in Employee Assisted Program (EAP) usage, particularly related to work-related stressors, which was a new trend.

The Board **NOTED** the updates provided.

Finance and Performance Committee

The Finance and Performance Committee report was taken as read.

The Scorecard highlights summary was provided and taken as read.

Darren Turner, Chair of the Finance and Performance Committee provided an overview of the Scorecard and financial performance of NSWHP.

Noting in relation to financial performance:

- Business as Usual (BAU) measures were performing well, with Forensic Analytical and Scientific Services (FASS) turnaround times and the Forensic Medicine Information System (FMIS) showing improvement.
- Continuing increases in overtime expenses reflect a broader trend within NSWHP.
- Noting that the withdrawal of COVID positions and efficiency targets are being addressed and noting that there is still a budget shortfall. Noting the importance of focusing on strategic initiatives that align with the Ministry of Health (MoH) objectives.
- Due to improved tendering and buying power, the price of goods and services has not increased as much as anticipated.
- Noting wage constraints and percentage increases for the current year were under consideration by the MoH.

The Board **NOTED** the update provided.

Quality and Clinical Safety

Professor Nicholas Hawkins provided a verbal update of the recent Quality and Clinical Safety Committee meeting. Noting the additional attendance of Gayle Murphy and Dr Harvey Lander.

Noting:

- Discussion of three harm one score incidents. Noting that two of these harm score incidents were linked to a breakdown in communication of critical results across boundaries, between NSWHP and LHD. The acting Chief Executive addressed the Board regarding the harm one score

incidents. The importance of ensuring that every effort is made to improve procedures and communication protocols for both critical and notifiable results was emphasised.

- Professor Nicholas Hawkins updated the Board on the status of Fusion’s reporting and the Quality Management Information System (QMIS). Noting that additional clarity is needed regarding the Fusion implementation and the mapping process. The Quality and Clinical Safety Team and the IT Team will discuss options for tendering or building the QMIS in-house at the upcoming SLT meeting to achieve a functional system in the immediate future.
- Feedback to be provided to the relevant reporting leads regarding the provision of comprehensive Fusion reporting to the Quality and Clinical Safety Committee and the Audit and Risk Management Committee.
- The Board **NOTED** the update provided.

Clinical Council

Report only by exception. No update provided.

The Board **NOTED** the update provided.

Medical Staff Executive Council

Report only by exception. No update provided.

Medical and Dental Appointments Advisory Committee

The Medical and Dental Appointments Advisory Committee report was taken as read.

Report only by exception. No update provided.

ICT Update

Stephen Braye provided an ICT update on the following:

Noting:

- SDPR/Fusion/EPIC
 - The Change Lead position has been appointed, appoint change managers for the SDPR/Fusion.
 - Workforce training and certification processes to be scheduled for EPIC training in October and November 2023.
 - Continue engagement with GPs and external referrers for the eReporting program.
 - Negotiations with EPIC, contract anticipated to be signed end of June 2023.
- ICT Restructure
 - Finalise the appointment of a Clinical Operations ICT Lead for the Operations ICT reconfiguration.
 - ICT restructuring is underway.

ICT

- Continue discussions and develop a business case for the Internet of Things (IoT) proposal in collaboration with eHealth.
- The Service Now initiative is in progress. When completed, the project will align with the structure of NSW Health and eHealth for ICT support service management. The ICT Service Now Project Team was recognised for their well-managed and efficient project.

The Board **NOTED** the updates provided.

Action: Refine Fusion reporting to the Quality and Clinical Safety and the Audit and Risk Management Committee meetings.

Board Meeting Offsite

The Board agreed to host the October Board meeting offsite at Wollongong.

Reappointment of Board Chair

The Board Chair informed the Board of his recent reappointment to the role of Board Chair until November 2024.

Board Evaluation

It was suggested that the Board meeting evaluation be reviewed to allow for greater feedback and to make any necessary modifications to the evaluation process.

Action: The Board Secretariat will coordinate with relevant parties to review and update the Board 's evaluation and process to allow for greater feedback.

Items without notice

The Board has requested a Biobank update at a future Board meeting. It was agreed that the update will be provided at the August Board meeting.

The Board Chair thanked the Board members and NSWHP representatives for their participation in the meeting. With no other business to come before the meeting, the meeting was closed at 1.16pm.

For Information

NSWHP Scorecard

The Scorecard was provided for information and taken as read.

Medical and Dental Appointments Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes

Noted for information.

Quality and Clinical Safety Committee Meeting Minutes

Noted for information.

Finance and Performance Committee Meeting Minutes

Noted for information.

Audit and Risk Management Committee Meeting Minutes

Noted for Information.

Clinical Council Committee Meeting

Noted for information.












Transformation Program Status Report

Noted for information.


Endorsed by Dr Nigel Lyons, Board Chair, NSW Health Pathology

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Nigel Lyons', is positioned below the endorsement text.

Action Log NSW Health Pathology Board

28/06/23 Item 4.	Professor Robert Lindeman to distribute the local operations templates to interested Board members.	Robert Lindeman		COMPLETED
28/06/23 Item 4.	Dr Michael Whiley to provide the Board with a copy of the 2023 Anatomical Pathology Review as part of the August report, specifically addressing the number of cases presented to MDTs.	Michael Whiley		ONGOING
28/06/23 Item 5.	A copy of the endorsed refreshed Strategic Plan to be provided to the Board.	Martin Canova		ONGOING Strategic Comms preparing final version
28/06/23 Item 6.	Martin Canova and the Project Team to draft a document outlining the high-level benefits, risks, costs, and savings associated with AP Service Configuration for broader discussion with the MoH, SLT and the Board.	Martin Canova		ONGOING
28/06/23 Item 6.	Martin Canova to circulate a copy of the Shaping Futures AP Report to the Board.	Martin Canova		COMPLETED
28/06/23 Item 9.	Refine Fusion reporting to the Quality and Clinical Safety and the Audit and Risk Management Committee meetings	Stephen Braye		ONGOING Meeting held with Julianna Iles Mann
28/06/23 Item 14.	The Board Secretariat will coordinate with relevant parties to review and update the Board 's evaluation and process to allow for greater feedback.	Tanya Dunn		ONGOING Redrafted evaluation Meeting with SCHN
26/04/23 Item 11.	Evaluation of the Statewide Billing Project Audit post implementation to be undertaken.	Nick Dunn		ONGOING FY23/24
26/04/23 Item 5.	There was a request for information regarding access to data regarding the increase in market share or the number of referrals to private pathology, which was taken on notice. * Noting NSWHP does not have access to information to enable it to calculate its share of the private pathology market.	Nick Dunn		COMPLETED
26/04/23 Item 5.	The Board will be provided with a copy of the Minister's briefing and value proposition for information.	Rob Lindeman		ONGOING MoH to advise date in August 2023
14/12/2022 Item 6.	NSWHP Risk Appetite Statement to be provided at a future meeting.	Lyn Baker Tammy Boone		ONGOING On agenda

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26/10/2022 Item 3.	The Tissue Release Policy will be made accessible to the Board once it is officially published. Work is in progress with an update to be provided June 2023. * Noting an update to be provided to Nicholas Hawkins when finalised.	Shaun Roman Louise Wienholt Rob Lindeman		ONGOING
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