

Minutes for NSW Health Pathology Board

25 October 2023 | 10:10 AM - 01:30 PM, 1 Reserve Road, St Leonards, and Microsoft Teams

Attendees

Nigel Lyons, Cathryn Cox, David Currow, Elizabeth Salisbury, Gayle Murphy, Jason Ardler, Michael Legg, and Nicholas Hawkins.

Apologies: Carmen Rechbauer and Darren Turner

In Attendance: Vanessa Janissen, Robert Lindeman, Martin Canova, Michael Whiley, Tammy Boone, and Deanna Paulin for Items 6 and 7, Lyn Baker for Item 10, and Juliana Iles-Mann for Item 12.

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 welcomed Vanessa Janissen, incoming Chief Executive to the meeting. The Chair referred to the recent result of the Referendum on the Voice to Parliament and highlighted the importance of continued efforts in supporting our Aboriginal colleagues and NSWHP's ongoing commitment to creating an environment that is both inclusive and supportive.

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 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 23 August 2023 as an accurate record of the meeting.

Moved: Gayle Murphy

Seconded: David Currow

The Action Log was reviewed and noted. The pending actions were reviewed and discussed.

- There was discussion regarding Multi-Disciplinary Team (MDT) meetings and the possibility of exploring options for optimising MDT workflow and meetings to ensure a more efficient use of time.
- The ongoing collaboration with the Royal College of Pathologists of Australasia (RCPA) to define registrar responsibilities that are more closely aligned with registrar training requirements and enhance the value of the registrar's experience. In particular, relieving registrars of cut-up responsibilities and the provision of reporting during the final years of training, as well as offering conditional offers to registrars prior to their Fellowship exam. The Board will be provided with an update at a future Board meeting.
- Noting the distribution and implementation of the Anatomical Pathology Tissue Release Policy **and ongoing discussions with the Local Health Districts.**

Action: An update to be provided to the Board at a future meeting regarding registrar recruitment and training.

Chief Executive Update

The Chief Executive report was taken as read.

Vanessa Janissen provided a verbal update to the Board.

Noting:

- Noting recent priorities, which included laboratory site visits, meeting with stakeholders including Local Health District (LHD) Chief Executives, the Ministry of Health, Board members, Board subcommittee Chairs, Pillars, and other key stakeholders. Noting ongoing discussions with LHDs regarding activity and efficiency savings, as well as current events in each LHD and how NSWHP can support LHDS in managing costs and activity.
- The impact of the Referendum and ongoing collaboration with the Aboriginal Workforce Team and the People and Culture Team around identifying a clear strategy for NSWHP to ensure that the necessary resources and support are in place. Acknowledging the impact that the last few years of COVID have had on the development of this work.
- Recognition to Jason Ardler for his invaluable contributions and dedication to the Board, the SLT, the Aboriginal Workforce Team, and the People and Culture Team. Jason's contributions have been held in high regard and have made a significant impact on NSWHP.
- The importance of balancing NSWHPs long-term initiatives for creating laboratories of the future towards 2035, with short-term initiatives, while addressing immediate and iterative changes and requirements to support the longer-term vision. Highlighting the ongoing work and discussions with LHDs regarding sustainable ordering and activity management, which are crucial for sustaining long-term initiatives and ensuring efficient operations.

- Acknowledging the milestones and achievements that the Fusion Project Team has made in relation to the Fusion project. There was a discussion regarding the potential risks associated with the sequencing of rollout extended timeline and cost blowout implications on the capital budget. Noting a commitment to closely monitor the progress of the Fusion Project and continue discussions with all relevant stakeholders.
- NSWHP's proposed submission to the Special Commission of Inquiry into HealthCare Funding; submission due 31 October 2023. Noting Gary Sturgess' ongoing work and its alignment with NSWHP's narrative and submission. It was agreed that the Board will be provided with a copy of the draft submission for review and feedback.
- The Board **NOTED** the updates provided.
- The Chair acknowledged and thanked Vanessa Janissen for her excellent efforts over the past few weeks. Rob Lindeman received praise from the Chair and the Board for his leadership role of NSWHP. His work over the past eight months has been commendable, and the Board expressed their appreciation for his dedication and efforts.
- **Action: A copy of the proposed Special Commission of Inquiry into HealthCare Funding submission to be provided to the Board.**

Creating Labs of the Future

Martin Canova and Rob Lindeman provided an overview of the connection between the short-term work and longer-strategies around creating laboratories of the future.

Noting:

- The refreshed Strategic Plan was presented, highlighting the four core priority areas agreed by the Strategic Leadership Team.
- The Board was informed of proposed service delivery improvements as part of short-term strategies aimed at achieving sustainable service provision.
- The importance of guiding appropriate testing and laboratory activity, including guiding minimum testing intervals was discussed, as was the need to consult with pathologists and specialised groups in guiding appropriate test ordering. Harmonisation and benchmarking of ordering practices and using the Atlas of Variation to highlight variation between sites was outlined, as were the environmental benefits of constraining test ordering. The importance of engaging with interstate colleagues and professional colleges to achieve consensus was highlighted.
- The Board was informed of long-term service reconfiguration strategies and Towards 2035 laboratory design proposals. Plans for an integrated statewide service were discussed, as were service delivery principles that will inform the future design of laboratory services.
- Benefits of automating laboratory sample storage, which could simplify the use of add-ons and reduce costs to LHDs and prevent unnecessary blood collections, were presented.

- It was noted that the Service Design Delivery Committee will oversee the entire program of work, including the short-term and long-term strategies.
- The Board acknowledged the ongoing laboratory workforce program, aimed to support the delivery of services with the refreshed Strategic Plan and service delivery models.
- The Board discussed the inclusion of FASS in the strategic blueprint. It was decided that FASS remain separate from the long-term strategic blueprint work to ensure its unique aspects are not lost.
- Other items discussed included the need to ensure that Children's Hospital Westmead Pathology is included in short- and long-term initiatives including sustainable ordering practices to ensure that the needs of paediatric patients are met, as well as the importance of the introduction of digital infrastructure to provide access to expertise and minimise unnecessary duplication.
- The Board acknowledged the potential for leveraging point of care and remote blood to manage smaller laboratories, and the consequences for changed service models, and acknowledged the importance of involving local clinicians and LHD executives in discussions concerning changed services and, in the governance, and sequencing of making changes.
- Emerging areas of focus, including genomics and other omics (including microbiome analysis) were acknowledged as part of the Towards 2035 plan, as were the need to include a bioinformatic skilled workforce in future laboratories and alignment with universities providing training for the future workforce.
- The Board agreed to the next steps around developing the service change business case(s) and reporting progress back to the Board.

Action: Development of the supporting business cases for each major service change and reporting progress back to the Board.

People Matter Employee Survey (PMES)

Deanna Paulin presented a high-level summary of the NSWHP PMES results. The People and Culture Team is in the process of receiving detailed reports which will be shared with the Board at the December Board meeting.

Noting:

- A total of 2314 staff members contributed feedback, resulting in a 43% completion rate, a 2% increase from last year.
- An overview of outcome measures, including engagement, satisfaction, wellbeing, and a sense of belonging. A key area of focus identified by NSWHP is the sense of belonging, which has seen a 3% increase in the number of staff who feel they belong.
- The Board acknowledged strengths and areas of significant improvement including ethics, values, risk and innovation, customer service and new ways of working. Efforts are underway to

redefine the concept of flexible working in NSWHP and supporting staff in balancing a health work-life balance.

- The Board acknowledged the positive aspects of working at NSWHP, including working with a positive and effective team, connecting with NSWHP's purpose, diversity, job security, and stability
- Other focus areas include improvements in performance management, development in conversations, role clarity, support, and improvement in professional development for technical and scientific staff, inclusive recruitment, and fair decision-making processes.
- Employee wellbeing remains low due to issues such as fatigue, mental health, and a decline in overall positive emotions.
- There is ongoing commitment to reducing negative behaviours, such as bullying and racism.
- Increasing overall engagement requires investments in the development and capability building of managers. Noting, the significance of visibility of senior leadership was highlighted.
- Reference was made to the Australia Workplace Wellbeing Index of 2023, which shows a decline of 4% in wellbeing across Australian workplaces.
- The lowest favourable scores include wellbeing, pay, recruitment, and change management.
- The primary causes for leaving NSWHP were identified as lack of career progression and progression salary, senior leadership, exhaustion, wellbeing, fatigue, and role expectations.
- The implementation of the new People Strategy is set to occur early next year. This strategy aims to incorporate feedback into an overarching strategy rather than having a separate action plan. Noting the next steps around communication and ongoing exploration of the results, as well as the process of analysing qualitative data and how this data can be used to identify themes.
- The Board acknowledged the communication strategies and actions taken in response to the PMES results. There is ongoing work to create a safe and inclusive environment for all, particularly, for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and people with disabilities.
- The Board discussed the importance of comparing NSWHP's results to those of other statewide services, such as HealthShare, for useful benchmarking.
- Investigation into the salary packaging issue with the Ministry of Health concerning FASS's non-DGR status.

Action: Investigation into the salary packaging issue with the MoH concerning FASS's non-DGR status.

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:

- An increase in claims with the top three mechanisms for claims remained body stressing, mental stress and hitting objects with a body part. Noting the mental stress are costly in terms of impact and psychological safety. Noting that the 7 claims highlighted are interpersonal relationships in the workplace.
- The Ministry of Health Rehabilitation, Recovery and Return to Work Policy Directive launched and reviewed by SafeWork and was issued with a performance improvement notice. Notice for Information provided under 238AA in relation to provisional of suitable duties as per our return - to-work program and psychosocial risks, respectively. In collaboration with the MoH responses have finalised and forwarded to SafeWork.
- Work around vaccination requirement changes under the OASV Policy 2023 and compliance.
- An update on the Health Service Union (HSU) and Forensic Medicine dispute.
- An update on the Health Service Union dispute around Technical Officers classification. Ongoing discussion and collaboration with the HSU, NSWHP and MoH.
- 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.

Gayle Murphy, Acting Chair of the Finance and Performance Committee provided an overview of the Scorecard and financial performance of NSWHP.

Noting in relation to financial performance:

- Highlighting the importance of meeting our budget and efficiency targets.
- The importance of return on investments for all initiatives and activities.
- Collaborating with Local Health Districts and refining our approach to communication.
- Recognition to the Finance Team for their efforts and dedication.
- The Board **NOTED** the updates provided.

Quality and Clinical Safety Committee

- The Board were reassured that the performance against KPIs has remained consistent and there have been no significant changes or issues arising.
- A new risk associated with critical results and miscommunication of results has been added to the Risk Register. A workshop will be convened to discuss the process and procedures involved in notifying critical results.
- Fusion reporting was provided to the Committee.

- Invite Judy Kempton-Webb to a future Committee meeting to discuss the progress and work being implemented for the frontline and pre-analytical collections staff.
- The Committee Charter requires the membership of three Local Pathology Directors (LPDs). There are currently vacancies. An EOI will be distributed. Consideration to revising the Charter revising the membership to two LPDs.
- Nick Hawkins and Michael Legg to review the Committee Charter and provide a marked version of the Charter to the Board for approval.
- A recommendation to increase workforce and frontline participation in Committees, and the benefits of transparency, a two-way channel of communication that can be used to disseminate information throughout NSWHP, and an opportunity to hear of valuable insights into issues. The idea of including emerging leaders, including middle management in the Committee proposed.
- Tammy Boone referred to work underway around evaluation of the SLT or executive level Committees in relation to their purpose and engagement, transparency, effective reporting, and decision making and their alignment with the Delegations Manual.
- Review of the Committee meeting schedule to achieve greater alignment with Board meetings and preparation for meetings
- **Audit and Risk Management Committee**

Lyn Baker, Chair of the Audit and Risk Management Committee, provided an update.

Noting:

- The completion of the NSWHP 2022/23 Internal audit plan and the commencement and progress of the 2023/24 Internal Audit Plan.
- Noting that the Committee was provided comprehensive information about the Fusion program's risk and governance. The Committee had input on the Fusion reporting and agreed on a format for regular reporting to the Committee that would be beneficial to the Committee.
- The Committee requested more information about the ICT Business Continuity Planning and Disaster Recovery, with further details expected at the November Committee meeting.
- Attendance at the Health Audit and Risk Committee Chairs Forum where discussions were held about system-wide risks and improvements in communication from the MoH. The overall Risk Management Framework is expected to be finalised by the end of the year. Other areas of discussion included budgetary issues and constraints and the move to standardisation to deliver savings. Lyn Baker to share the ARC presentation slides to Tammy Boone for dissemination to the Board.

The Board **NOTED** the updates provided.

Action: Lyn Baker to share ARC presentation slides to Tammy Boone for dissemination to the Board.

Clinical Council

Report only by exception. No update provided.

Medical Staff Executive Council

Report only by exception.

Noting:

- Vanessa Janissen informed the Board of her attendance at the recent Medical Staff Executive Council. Discussion included challenges ahead, work around creating labs of the future, sustainable pathology ordering, budget efficiencies and Rights of Private Practice (RoPP) Noting the agreement from the MSEC that the work performed by Tracey Dwyer be revisited to establish an agreed position on the RoPP. It was also noted the importance of involving the MSEC in upcoming decisions was discussed.

The Board **NOTED** the 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.

Fusion and Single Digital Patient Record Update

- Juliana Iles-Mann presented an update to the Board regarding the Fusion Program and the Single Digital Patient Record program. Contracts have been signed and announced, allowing for more engagement with EPIC.
- Noting that the Statewide LIMS is currently tracking Amber due to its schedule and link to SDPR. Noting that the original business case was for an independent statewide LIMS, but that is now incorporated into a broader program of the SDPR initiative.
- Noting that a budget reconciliation activity and rebaseline are in progress in response to EPICs resource requirement.
- An update was provided on the progress made with regard to readiness and resources, communities of practice, and standardisation to inform the project's design.
- A proposal was made to implement the entire LIMS footprint simultaneously when going live with the first LHD, rather than implementing laboratory by laboratory. This would enable systems to be retired earlier.
- The next steps of the 100-day plan, including design, testing, and training, were noted by the Board. Two ongoing tenders currently underway for the instrument management connectivity solution and blood bank solution were acknowledged. An update on the e-reporting program and engagement in the process around validating and defining requirements.

The Board **NOTED** the updates provided.

Board Membership

- The membership of the NSWHP Board was discussed. Noting the recommendation to the Secretary, NSW Health Pathology regarding Michael Legg's reappointment to the Board.
- Acknowledging Jason Ardler's final Board meeting and expressing the Board's appreciation and recognition for his services to the Board, the Finance and Performance Committee and NSWHP.

Board Meeting Dates 2024

The Board endorsed the proposed Board meeting dates for 2024.

Board Evaluation

It was noted that work is currently underway to revise the Board evaluation process in an effort to streamline and enhance the evaluation process. An update will be provided to the Board at the December meeting.

Items without notice

The Acting Board Chair thanked 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 1.01pm.

For Information

NSWHP Scorecard

The Scorecard was provided for information and taken as read.

Statement of Service Schedules

Noted for information.

Strategic Plan Refresh

Noted for information.

Transformation Program Status Report

Noted for information.

Medical and Dental Appointments Advisory 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 Minutes

Noted for information.

Quality and Clinical Safety Committee Meeting Minutes

Noted for information.







Medical Staff Executive Council Committee Meeting Minutes

Noted for information.

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

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

Action Log NSW Health Pathology Board

26/10/23 Item 10.	Lyn Baker to share ARC presentation slides to Tammy Boone for dissemination to the Board.	Lyn Baker		Completed
26/10/23 Item 6.	Investigate the salary packaging issues concerning the non-DGR FASS status. * Update: Working with the Ministry of Health Principal Taxation advisor on the submission to the Australian Taxation Office for a binding private ruling on whether these FASS staff are eligible to salary package. This submission is expected to be lodged with the ATO early in 2024 so we will expect a ruling prior to the end of the financial year.	Vanessa Janissen		Ongoing
26/10/23 Item 5.	Revision of the supporting business case around creating labs of the future and reporting progress back to the Board.	Martin Canova		Completed On agenda
26/10/23 Item 4.	A copy of the proposed Special Commission of Inquiry into HealthCare Funding submission to be provided to the Board.	Vanessa Janissen		Completed
26/04/23 Item 11.	Evaluation of the Statewide Billing Project Audit post implementation to be undertaken.* Update The SIMBA project close report is included in the meeting papers for the December F&P Meeting.	Nick Dunn		Completed December F&P agenda
26/04/23 Item 5.	The Board will be provided with a copy of the Minister's briefing and value proposition for information. (Noting Minister visit is still to be scheduled).	Vanessa Janissen		ONGOING