

## **Minutes of the Hunter New England Local Health District Board**

**One hundred and thirty fourth meeting**

**20 September 2023**

**Venue: Meeting room 2, District headquarters building / MS Teams**

**Present**

Dr Martin Cohen (Chair), Mr Kevin Dupè, Dr Patrick Farrell, Ms Meagan Hudson, Ms Anita Kauffmann, Dr Kirsten Molloy, Ms Elizabeth Nicol, Prof Peter O'Mara, Prof Penny Paliadelis, Dr Stephen Pryde, Mr Robert Hawes and Mrs Wendy Wilks.

**Apologies**

Dr Rob Pickles.

**In attendance**

Ms Tracey McCosker, Dr Mary Morgan, Dr Paul Craven, Ms Elise Jochinke, Mr Phillip Way, Dr Robert Tait, Ms Natasha Cornick.

## BUSINESS OF THE MEETING

### 1. By consent item registration

The Board DISCUSSED if there were any items for attention from the Board committee reports.

### 2. Acknowledgement of country, declaration of conflicts of interest, welcome invitees/executive

The Board Chair, Dr Martin Cohen opened the business meeting at 9:35am. The Chair ACKNOWLEDGED the traditional owners of the country on which members were participating, and paid respects to Elders past and present.

- The acknowledgement of country prompted a discussion around the referendum about whether to change the Constitution to establish the Aboriginal and Torres Straight Island Voice and merits of voting for and against.

There were no conflicts of interest declared by Board members.

### 3. Confirmation of previous minutes, review of action log

The minutes of the meeting held on 16 August 2023 had been circulated.

The Board resolved that the minutes are a true record of the meeting, - with a small typo on page 7.

The minutes were adopted, by Dr Patrick Farrell and Dr Stephen Pryde. The minutes will be published on the Hunter New England Local Health District internet site.

ACTION: Ms Kylie O'Meagher

Previous action items were DISCUSSED and NOTED by the Board.

### 4. Chief Executive update

The Chief Executive's report had been circulated in the business papers and were DISCUSSED. Matters included:

- Engaging in positive conversations around people and culture – positive outcomes with clinicians and progress towards initiatives to improve performance and the services we offer our patients, consumers and stakeholders.
- Meetings continuing with local MP's from across the district, including :
  - Roy Butler – Member for Barwon
  - Meryl Swanson – Member for Paterson
  - Yasmin Catley – Member for Swansea
  - Kate Washington – Member for Port Stephens
- Attended the HNE Kids Graduation Ceremony.
- Walkthrough and informal meet and greet held on Friday, 15 September at Quirindi and Murrurundi Hospitals.
- Patient Flow Unit 24/7 access – trial for 6 months. Initial few weeks look positive.
- Minister Park and Deputy Secretary Rural Health, Luke Sloan recently spent time visiting facilities at Tamworth, Narrabri and Wee Waa – Minister Park announced the opening of a further 8 staff accommodation facilities at Tamworth, and discussed the Single Employer Model aimed at Junior doctors being rolled out across our district.
- People Matter Employee Survey closed on 15 September 2023.
- The 2023 HNE Excellence Awards were held on 24 August in Tamworth.

## **5. Board Chair report**

The Board Chair, Dr Martin Cohen, provided a verbal update to the Board.

- The Board Chair's meeting has been postponed until 6 October 2023.
- Farewelled and acknowledged Patrick Farrell's commitment to the Board.
- Acknowledged the Chief Executive's advice that the budget will most likely not be met, and acknowledged that patient care is the district overriding priority.
- No new appointments to the board this year ... looking at early next year.
- Discussed the importance of families and in their support for our staff, discussed the cultural importance of acknowledging this support through COVID.
- Board retreat agenda will go out in the next couple of weeks. Executive staff will have the opportunity to raise issues and discuss challenges. Dr Cohen discussed wanting to get a sense of what the personal vision of the Executive is moving forward.

## **6. Presentation – Voluntary Assisted Dying (VAD)**

Dr. Paul Craven (Executive Sponsor), Mr Phillip Way (Clinical Network Manager) and Ms Elise Jochinke (VAD Project Officer) attended the meeting to discuss the Voluntary Assisted Dying Project.

The presentation was NOTED by the Board. The Board DISCUSSED the presentation, and the Board Chair THANKED the VAD project team for their hard work on the implementation of this project.

The presentation is to be uploaded to diligent for Board member reference.

ACTION: Ms Natasha Cornick

## **STANDING ITEMS – COMMITTEE REPORT (by exception discussion)**

### **8. Finance and performance**

The Finance Management reports for the month ending 31 August have been circulated in the business papers. Mr Kevin Dupe provided a verbal update to the Board, the report was NOTED by the Board.

- The Finance and Performance Committee have discussed the expected financial challenges for FY24, and the high unlikelihood that the district will meet budget.
- Collaborative Care arrangements are due to be rolled back commencing end of August 2023.
- Workforce shortages continue to impact on financial and clinical performance.
- A full-year forecast is expected to be delivered by the Director of Finance in October.

### **9. Health Care Quality Committee**

No meeting has been held to provide an update for this month. The next meeting is being held next week.

- Ms Elizabeth Nicol discussed on-going struggles with Hospital Acquired Complications and the deteriorating patient.

### **10. Medical Staff Executive Council**

Dr Mary Morgan provided a verbal update to the Board.

- Have been in contact with Medical Staff Council chairs across the district.
- Working on Providing MSEC representation at the MDACC meetings.

### **11. Report by exception only: Discussion items**

- District Clinical Council – Dr Farrell will distribute the TOR. A new chair will be required.
- Medical and Dental Appointments Advisory Committee
- Aboriginal Health Committee
- Community and Patient Partnership Committee

## **12. Dr. Robert Tait – Clinical Lead Trans and Gender Diverse Health Services**

Dr Robert Tait attended the meeting to give an update on the Trans and Gender Diverse Specialist Health Service for Young People

## **OTHER BUSINESS**

### **13. Governance Review Update**

Ms Kirsten Malloy provided a verbal update on the Governance Review :

- A large amount of work has been undertaken on raising and responding to the issues.
- Examining the governance structure around operating theatres and looking at how they work.
- Undertaking a review of surgery procedures and how this service is delivered.
- A review into the 'Excellence Tool' has uncovered that it mostly provides an embedded structure that is not implemented well. Looking at where supporting culture with the excellence tool can be used better.
- Exploring how the Board can influence culture across the district.

Ms Malloy also met with the Director of Finance and his team to explore the needs of the medical coding team. Significant processes are in place around medical coding, training and auditing requirements. Focus is on the partnerships between clinicians and coders.

## **FOR INFORMATION**

### **14. Finance and Performance Committee meeting minutes**

A brief and minutes from the meeting held on 15 August 2023 had been distributed in the Board papers. The brief and minutes were NOTED by the Board.

### **15. Medical and Dental Appointments Advisory Committee meeting report**

There were no papers for this meeting.

### **16. Audit and Risk Management Committee meeting minutes**

There were no papers for this meeting.

### **17. District Clinical Council Committee meeting minutes**

A brief and minutes from the meeting held on 9 August 2023 had been distributed in the Board papers. The brief and minutes were NOTED by the Board.

### **18. Community and Patient Partnership Committee minutes**

There were no papers for this meeting.

### **19. Aboriginal Health Committee minutes**

There were no papers for this meeting.

### **20. Sustainability Committee minutes**

There were no papers for this meeting.

The Board Chair, Dr Martin Cohen closed the meeting at 1:35pm.