1. Purpose

The purpose of this bulletin is to describe the direction and operation of Public Health programs with particular emphasis on the purchasing of activities for the financial year 1999/2000.

2. Background

Public Health distinguishes itself from other parts of the health system by focusing on the health and wellbeing of populations, rather than on individuals. Public Health disciplines define populations at risk, ensure the safety of the health of the population, contribute to maximising the quality of life, and ensure preventive interventions and health promotion programs are delivered to a large proportion of these populations.

In purchasing public health programs, the Public Health Division is committed to the maintenance and improvement of public health as part of total health care. Levels of activity to be purchased will be determined on the basis of evidence and sound information about population and environmental factors and trends of acute and chronic illness.

The Public Health Division will ensure, through the HDWA program model of ten health conditions, that the promotion and prevention intervention level of the purchasing matrix is included in all program planning. Programs will reflect the Department’s mission to promote, protect, maintain and restore the health of the people of WA.

The key principles that will guide public health purchasing in 1999-2000 are consistent with the principles of health provision adopted by HDWA. They are care closer to home, purchasing for value and innovative service delivery. The major theme for public health purchasing is for continuing reform of existing services. There will be an increasing involvement of Public Health Units in providing public health core activities in parallel with regional requirements. The challenge will be to develop new initiatives and direction whilst maintaining traditional essential activity.

3. Purchasing Activities

The Public Health Division will concentrate on ensuring that core activities are covered. The core activities are: public health planning, policy development and advice; environmental health; communicable disease control; chronic disease and health enhancement; injury control and prevention; health promotion/education and legislative compliance.
Public Health Planning, Policy Development and Advice - involves providing advice and information to Health Services and to the Department on current activities and emerging public health issues. Public Health will contribute to regional planning, priority setting and decision making in public health issues and will continue to progress cooperation with Aboriginal public health programs.

Environmental Health - includes ensuring the safety and quality of air, food and water, ensuring reactive capacity to incidents/disasters threatening the environment, and progressing Aboriginal environmental health.

Communicable Disease - includes infectious disease surveillance, outbreak control, HIV prevention as well as community development programs, sexual health education programs and immunisation coordination.

Chronic Disease and Health Enhancement - incorporates programs addressing nutrition and physical activity, in the particular prevention and detection of Type II diabetes; programs addressing cancer prevention and detection, in particular cervical and breast cancer, and programs addressing alcohol and drug abuse and smoking.

Injury Control and Prevention - involves programs which have the potential to reduce the incidence and severity of injury, in particular those which focus on older adults (aged 65 and over); injuries in the home; road safety and those related to interpersonal violence.

Health Promotion/Education - involves providing programs/activities that illustrate an extension of health promotion skills and strategies to other agencies and organisations. Programs that focus on health capacity building and on the transfer of health promotion skills and expertise are a significant part of this activity.

Legislative Compliance – legislative and statutory review and compliance issues are carried out within the Public Health Division and impact on purchasing decisions within public health services.

The Public Health Division will support the continuation and development of selected activities. These include activities chosen by the Public Health Unit that contribute to specific statewide and national programs/campaigns. The development and expansion of regional activities, particularly those which are priorities for local health services but are not featured in selected activities, also receive support.

The Public Health Division will purchase services from regional and metropolitan public health units through a Health Service Agreement (HSA) for all public health programs and services from statewide provider services (Public Health Division Branches) through individual service agreements. The Public Health Policy and Outcomes Program will manage the HSAs and individual service agreements with the Contract Management Unit.

4. Core Activity Health Outcomes

The core activities will aim to achieve the following health outcomes:

Health Planning, Policy Development and Advice:
- Informed stakeholders, managers and community
- Provision of priority public health programs and policies
Environmental Health
- Reduce the risk of enteric disease contributed to unsafe methods in food handling and food exposure
- Reduce the incidence of waterborne infectious diseases occurring in public recreational facilities
- Reduce the potential for injury occurring in public recreational facilities
- Minimise the risks from mosquito borne disease
- Minimise harm to health in the advent of or following a disaster/emergency
- Reduce the hazards in the environment that pose a risk for Aboriginal communities

Communicable Disease Control
- Full participation in the Australian Childhood Immunisation Register
- Reduce the incidence of vaccine preventable disease in children and young adults
- Reduce the incidence of vaccine preventable disease in adults aged over 65 years
- Reduce the incidence and health impact of sexually transmissible diseases
- Reduce the transmission time of infectious diseases
- Reduce the incidence and prevalence of communicable diseases
- Minimise the harm to health following a disease outbreak
- Reduce the incidence and health impact of HIV

Chronic Disease and Health Enhancement
- Reduce the risk factors for developing Diabetes Type II and cardiovascular disease
- Reduce the incidence and impact of breast and cervical cancer
- Minimise the harmful effects of alcohol and other drugs
- Reduce the incidence and impact of diseases caused by active and passive smoking
- Reduce the incidence and impact of injury

Health Education/Promotion
- Maximise health promotion activity within the roles of health professionals and community members
- Reorientate health services, organisations and agencies towards health gains activity.

5. Reporting requirements

Health Service performance in this program will be gauged against performance measures. This will involve clear reporting on both ‘process’ and ‘health outcome indicators’. Process indicators will include price, volume and quality measures (this will include the measurement of the population involved in programs). It is recognised that mechanisms to measure risk awareness and risk behaviour change will need to be developed in the future as health outcome indicators relate to changes in long-term risk behaviours and changes in proximate indicators used for long-term changes.

The General Manager of the Public Health Division is to be provided with the following information:
- A monthly financial report on the status of the Public Health Unit
- A quarterly progress report of the output/performance measures (listed below) achieved in the previous quarter
- An annual performance report of the outputs/performance measures and a statement on progress towards achieving the health outcomes (listed above).
Core Activity Output Based Performance Measures:

Health Planning, Policy Development and Advice
- Number of executive meetings with health services within the region
- Public health issues evident in regional plans

Environmental Health
- Number of food and water monitoring occasions
- Number of untested water sites in the region
- Number of Local Government Area contacts
- Incidence of enteric disease notifications
- Participate in regional disaster management and presence of up to date collaborative plans
- Number, type and location of Aboriginal environmental health programs

Communicable Disease Control
- Percentage of childhood immunisation participation in the ACIR by school entry age
- Percentage of adult immunisation uptake for influenza and pneumococcal
- Number, program type and location of sexual health education programs delivered
- Number of GPs trained in contact tracing
- Percentage of contacts traced and estimated time to reach contacts
- Incidence of notifiable diseases
- Up to date disease outbreak plans available
- Number, program type and location of HIV prevention and community development programs delivered

Chronic Disease and Health Enhancement
- Number, program type and location of Diabetes Type II and cardiovascular prevention programs delivered
- Percentage of target women recruited for breast screening
- Percentage of target women recruited for cervical screening
- Number, program type and location of alcohol and other drugs community programs delivered
- Number, program type and location of smoking and health community programs delivered

Injury Control and Prevention
- Number, program type and location of road safety community programs delivered

Health Education/promotion
- Evidence of health promotion programs/activities in organisation strategic/business plans
- Number of health promotion professional development programs attended
- Number of capacity building programs/activities undertaken with health professionals and community members

No longer Applicable