



# Significant issues and trends

## Overview

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While the Peel Health Service is a legal reporting entity service planning, administration and management is carried out by the South Metropolitan Area Health Service. The South Metropolitan Area Health Service forms part of the Metropolitan Health Service legal entity for annual reporting purposes.

Therefore, please refer to the Metropolitan Health Service Annual Report 2006-07 for area-wide significant issues and trends, and major achievements and highlights.

## Major Achievements 2006-07

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WA Health's Strategic Directions 2005-10 provide the framework for strategic and operational planning for the health system. The strategic intent is to apply the recommendations and principles of the Health Reform Committee to deliver a 'Healthy WA'. The strategic directions being followed to deliver this intent are:

- Healthy workforce
- Healthy hospitals, health services and infrastructure
- Healthy partnerships
- Healthy communities
- Healthy resources
- Healthy leadership

## Healthy workforce

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The Peel Health Service recognises the importance of maintaining a healthy workforce in order to deliver high quality health care services to that part of the Western Australian community it serves.

The Peel Health Service is committed to ensuring a skilled, healthy and sustainable workforce. Achievements and highlights for 2006-07 are outlined below.

### *Workforce redesign*

A 0.5 full-time equivalent nursing position was established in community health in Falcon to increase clinical services to children in the 0-5 years age group. This area has a growing number of births.

The successful recruitment of a full-time Director of Clinical Services for the Rockingham Peel Group has resulted in the appointment of Dr Geoffrey Williamson, commencing July 2007.



## Healthy hospitals, health services and infrastructure

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A significant proportion of health system activity relates to hospitals and health services, a key thrust of the reform agenda is to move the focus of patient care away from hospitals.

Accordingly, the key strategic intent of *Healthy Hospitals* is not only to improve hospital quality, efficiency and access, but also to reduce demand on traditional hospital services by such means as increasing non-hospital ambulatory care services and preventing patient readmissions.

### *Deployment of the Capital Infrastructure Plan*

The appointment of a Security Coordinator in the Rockingham Peel Group has facilitated improvements to security at Murray District Hospital. Alterations to the reception area and the installation of an electronic alarm system have improved safety for staff and patients.

Facilities at Murray District Hospital have been upgraded to provide a private retreat for visitors and carers.

The business case for the development of a Murray Community Health Centre within Murray District Hospital has been endorsed and this project is in the planning phase. The Murray Community Health Centre will incorporate facilities for General Practitioners and visiting specialists, in addition to a range of allied health clinicians, health promotion staff and community mental health and child health nurses.

The Office of Safety & Quality has provided additional funding to assist in the implementation of programs to improve patient safety. The Safety & Quality Incentives for Reform (SQulRe) Program has been implemented at Murray District Hospital. Initiatives include falls minimization, pressure area care, medication reconciliation and infection control practices.

### *Reducing demand on traditional hospital services*

The Residential Care Line Program has expanded to incorporate all Commonwealth funded residential aged care facilities within the Peel Region. This service supports nursing homes to provide care to clients within their place of residence.

## Healthy partnerships

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The Peel Health Service is committed to a vision of strong co-operation between the WA health system and other health care-related bodies to improve service delivery, research and development, capital infrastructure investment and workforce planning strategies.

These partnerships may be with the Australian Government Department of Health and Ageing or other Australian Government agencies, other State Government agencies, non-government organisations, academic institutions and colleges and, increasingly, consumers and carers.

## Healthy partnerships (continued)

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The *Patient First Booklet* is an initiative of the Office of Safety & Quality aimed at providing education for consumers and carers about their role as a partner in optimising their health. This booklet has been introduced into Murray District Hospital.

### *Improving access for rural and remote communities*

In conjunction with a local GP, Peel Community Mental Health has appointed a Senior Rural Registrar in Psychiatry for an initial six-month term. The program has been very successful and has made a significant difference for clients who previously had to travel to Perth for medication review or psychiatric assessment.

The Community Emergency Response Team for patients with mental health illness has been located at Rockingham Kwinana District Hospital. This enables a quicker response time for patients located in the Peel Health Service for out of hours care.

South Metropolitan Public Health Unit (SMPHU) worked in partnership with the City of Mandurah and other stakeholders to deliver 'healthy lifestyle' initiatives promoting regular exercise and healthy eating in the Mandurah community. Examples included:

- 'Bike Week' - over 500 community participants, plus local clubs and businesses were involved in eight events
- eight community walking groups and a 'walk to school' program
- a youth festival (YOH Fest) developed by young people to raise awareness about the importance of healthy lifestyle behaviours
- implementation of a healthy food and drink policy at Coodanup Community College

The SMPHU also worked in partnership with the Department of Education and Training, Mandurah Senior Campus and other key stakeholders to deliver the Bilyidar Leadership and Cultural Awareness program in Peel. This program provides leadership opportunities for at-risk youth and promotes Indigenous cultural awareness. In 2007, 13 Indigenous and 13 non-Indigenous youth aged 15 – 19 years were enrolled in the program.

## Healthy communities

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A common misconception about health services is that they are restricted to the administering of treatment and care when a person becomes ill or injured. However, the health promotion function of the WA health system aims to inform the public about prevention of illness and injury, self-management of conditions and healthy lifestyles.

### *Promotion of health and wellbeing*

The SMPHU provides local, customised health promotion services to the Peel community. This includes a health information and resource service, known as "Health Matters" at Mandurah Community Health Centre. This year the service responded to over 700 requests for health information, health education resources or information about local social and health services.

## Healthy communities (continued)

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The SMPHU delivered a program for young people to learn about drug and alcohol issues, health and risky lifestyle behaviours. The program involved training 12 young people to provide peer education on drug and alcohol misuse. Program participants held a community awareness display at the local Mandurah shopping centre and developed and launched a health education DVD for youth. A local drug action group has been established to continue to address drug and alcohol issues in the Peel region. The program is a partnership with WA Police, South Metropolitan Community Drug Services Team and Local Drug Action Groups Inc.

A program to enhance the life skills of clients with Borderline Personality Disorder (BPD) has been established by Peel Adult Mental Health Services. This program has been shown to be the most effective treatment for BPD, reducing self-harm/suicidal behaviours and other risk-taking behaviours, decreasing hospital admissions and lengths of stay and improving mood and coping skills.

The Peel Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS) has recommenced a family therapy reflective team approach to provide therapy to children, adolescents and their families. The initiative aims to enhance services for shared clients of the CAMHS and adult mental health services, build communication between the two services, improve outcomes for families and enhance relationships and knowledge through ongoing supervision and training.

The Peel Adult CMHS is implementing a Wellbeing Support Program that promotes physical wellbeing in people with severe mental illness by:

- providing education (through group work or individual consultation) to support weight management in patients who have been identified as having gained weight on medication
- providing physical activity advice through individual consultation or group activity
- identifying patients at risk of developing hyperglycaemia or diabetes and referring where appropriate, to a GP or diabetologist as agreed locally
- identifying patients with elevated serum prolactin, which can lead to clinical implications such as sexual dysfunction or hormonal imbalance
- performing regular general health checks to document body mass index (BMI), Liverpool Neuroleptic Side Effect Rating Scale (LUNSERS) to chart side effects to medication, blood pressure (BP), pulse rates, smoking rates and general health

The Wellbeing Support Program covers three key elements of patient health, which are monitored and managed to improve overall wellbeing:

- lifestyle assessment and advice
- side effect assessment and management
- physical health check

The program is actioned by qualified mental health practitioners, assessments and interventions will be documented and monitored, external resources will be used as much as possible to maintain community integration. Success will be measured by patient satisfaction with the service and support received and improvements in the treatment to control their symptoms.

## Healthy communities (continued)

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Success factors already noted are:

- weight neutral or weight loss through nurse intervention
- identification of diabetes and treatment where appropriate
- identification of hormonal side effects and improvements shown due to intervention
- general physical health improvements such as reduced blood pressure

### *Fostering community involvement in health system performance*

In 2005 the Peel Health Services Task Force was established to guide the development of health services in the region, aimed at ensuring the future health needs of the Peel population are adequately planned for and an appropriate level of service is provided to the region.

As part of this process, a demographic and health profile of the Peel Health District was undertaken, and strategic and targeted consultation was conducted with clinicians and key community stakeholders. The Murray Waroona Health Needs Analysis identified the sustainability of general practice, community mental health, allied health and other outreach services as the most significant health needs of the area.

The Murray Community Health Centre will provide improved access for the community to those health services specifically identified in the Murray Waroona Health Needs Analysis.

## Healthy resources

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Health expenditure around Australia is growing at a rate faster than Gross Domestic Product and general inflation. In Western Australia, Department of Health expenditure is some 25 per cent of total general government expenditure.

It follows that the Department of Health must maintain a sustainable and equitable health system through measured resource management, building programs and structural reforms and efficiencies. The Department must also ensure there is accountability and transparency in all health resource management.

The healthy resources strategic direction has to ensure that the Peel Health Service exercises effective stewardship of the resources available to it and identifies opportunities to deliver services more efficiently via a range of initiatives.



## Healthy leadership

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The creation of an environment that identifies nurtures and promotes strong leadership at all levels is vital to the effectiveness of the health system into the future. Reform of the health system, consistent improvement in service delivery and cost savings will not be possible without strong leaders to oversee their implementation.

The Department of Health has developed leadership programs for its employees as well as an Alumni program to allow participants to continue to develop their leadership potential. Additionally, the Department continues its successful Graduate Development program, which recruits and develops talented graduates from the university sector to become part of the health workforce. Peel Health Service employees have the opportunity to take part in these programs.

## Priorities for 2007-08

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Peel Health Service's priorities are included among those described in the Metropolitan Health Service Annual Report 2006-07.