



Changes to the governance of WA Health – Overview

Why are changes being made to the governance of WA Health?

- Currently the governance of WA Health is concentrated centrally, with all authority and accountability resting with the Director General of the Department of Health.
- With an annual budget of more than \$8 billion, approximately 44,000 staff and more than 90 hospitals, WA Health is now too large and complex to operate under this model of governance.
- There is an opportunity for WA Health to be more responsive and innovative in meeting the health needs of local communities and of a growing and ageing population.
- Changes to the governance of WA Health are required to deliver a safe, high quality, sustainable health system for all Western Australians.

What are the changes?

- Four areas of reform are being undertaken to modernise the governance of WA Health and enable greater accountability and decision-making closer to service delivery and patient care.

The Health Services Act 2016 commenced 1 July 2016, replacing the *Hospitals and Health Services Act 1927* to define clear roles, responsibilities and accountabilities for the Department of Health and health services providers.

The Department of Health is being established as the **'System Manager'** to provide strategic direction and leadership for the WA public health system and to ensure the delivery of quality health services.



A Functional Review and Readiness Assessment of non-clinical functions was undertaken to ensure the system is ready to begin transitioning to new governance arrangements while maintaining excellence in care, teaching and research.

Health Services and Health Support Services are being established as **health service providers** that are separate statutory authorities governed by a board or chief executive, with greater responsibility for delivery of health and support services.

What are the benefits for patients, workforce and the community?

- Improved accountability and transparency to the community.
- More responsive, flexible and innovative health services to the community.
- Greater assurance of safety and quality of health services.
- A more sustainable health system.

Related Fact Sheets:

- *The Health Services Act 2016: A Snapshot*
- *The Role of the Department of Health*
- *The Role of Health Services and Boards*
- *The Role of Health Support Services*
- *Functional Review and Readiness Assessment*
- *The WA Health Reform Program 2015-2020*

For more information email health.reform@health.wa.gov.au.