

## **PATHWEST Board Communiqué**

*This Communiqué highlights key discussions and considerations from the May 2023 Board Meeting.*



### **Living our values – RESPECT and CARE**

The PathWest Board receives presentations from internal business units that demonstrate how PathWest is meeting the values underpinning its Strategic Plan. The values to be highlighted in May are the Values of RESPECT and CARE.

Ms. Suzie Clews, PathWest Aboriginal Workforce Consultant, presented to the Board on upcoming events to mark important Aboriginal cultural occasions including National Sorry Day, National Reconciliation Week and National NAIDOC Week.

Suzie spoke of how the diversity of Aboriginal culture is fundamental to the health and wellbeing of Aboriginal people. Acknowledging, respecting and recognising Aboriginal people's connection to country including diverse language groups, family, kinship systems and the importance of incorporating a holistic view of health (encompassing the physical, spiritual, cultural, emotional and social wellbeing) is vital in providing a culturally responsive health service for the Aboriginal health workforce and to the Aboriginal community.

The Board discussed and acknowledged the importance PathWest's work to employ more staff of Aboriginal descent. As part of this discussion, the issue of training and education about Aboriginal culture for new and existing staff members was raised. Opportunities for Aboriginal Cultural Awareness training are currently available to staff and the Board will continue to work towards other training opportunities such as this for PathWest staff.

### **KEY MATTERS:**

#### **LIS Infrastructure Modernisation project**

The Chief Technology Officer (CTO), Tim Evans, presented the Board with further information in regards to PathWest's rollout of the Laboratory Information System (LIS) Infrastructure modernisation project. The Board had a robust discussion with the Tim Evans, CTO, Sash Tomson, A/Chief Executive and Dr Ee Mun Lim, A/Chief Pathologist. Options and associated risks related to LIS back up and restoration were presented and the Board was supportive of the CTO's recommendation to proceed with an LIS upgrade.

#### **Health Research Management System project**

The plan to implement recommendations made during the Research Governance Audit was presented to the Board by A/Chief Pathologist, Dr Ee Mun Lim. The Board was informed of the minimal risks identified with scope for improvement and the action plan that has been developed to address these risks. The A/Chief Pathologist will continue to work with the Research Governance Coordinator and relevant committees including the Clinical and Scientific Governance Committee to improve PathWest's processes and establish an internal research governance framework.

## Finance Report

The Board received an update on the Finance Performance Report by Mr Sandy Kerr, Executive Director Finance, Procurement and Commercial Services. The Board was impressed with the improvements to the Finance report and look forward to further enhancements including benchmarking being incorporated into the next report.

Discussions took place about the need for PathWest to begin charging for certain services that PathWest is not currently charging for. Also discussed was the impact COVID-19 legacy services are having on PathWest's financial position and the consistent pressure from certain services including Regional Services, Genomics and Anatomical Pathology.

## Acting Chief Executive Report

Mr Sash Tomson, Acting Chief Executive, provided an update on progress regarding structural and relocation issues at Osborne Park Laboratories and advised on actions taken to improve conditions for staff and patients at the Geraldton Collection Centre. The Board heard that future action is to be taken to identify repairs and maintenance at all regional collection centres.

Risk assessments will need to be undertaken for testing of Department of Justice (DoJ) patients to ensure the safety of PathWest staff. Discussions with DoJ are ongoing to help monitor processes and improve testing arrangements for PathWest staff.

The Whole Genome Sequencing Service was discussed. PathWest Genomics is currently experiencing a backlog in testing. To relieve this, tests are being sent to Victorian Clinical Genetics Services for the next three months to allow sufficient time of PathWest Genomics to return to business as usual.

## COMMITTEE UPDATES:

### Forensic Biology Advisory Council Meeting

The Forensic Biology Advisory Council reported from its meeting in April 2023, a proposal to facilitate improved collaboration between WA Police and PathWest on research and development projects. There was also discussion on the potential for PathWest to expand education of relevant matters across the Judiciary profession.

Lease extension discussions managed by the Department of Finance are in progress to extend the lease for the Forensic Biology facility. The next meeting of the Forensic Biology Advisory Council is on 10 July, 2023.

## MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD CHAIR

I am also pleased to advise that Professor Tarun Weeramanthri, Professor Christobel Saunders, Professor Gelareh Farshid and Ms Samantha Elder, have all been reappointed to the PathWest Board. We also have a new Board member that commenced on 17 April 2023, Mr Paul O'Farrell. Congratulations to the reappointed Board members and welcome to Paul. I look forward to continuing to work with our entire Board for the benefit of PathWest.

As Board Chair, I have met with the Director General, Department of Health to discuss key issues and met with colleagues at the Health Service Providers' Chairs' meeting. I will be working with the PathWest Executive Director Finance, Procurement and Commercial Services on budget forecasting for the 2023/24 financial year.

## NEXT MEETING

The next scheduled Board meeting will be held in Perth on 1 June 2023.



Ms. Angie Paskevicius  
**Chair, PathWest Board**  
17 July 2023