

PathWest Board Communiqué

This communiqué highlights key discussions and considerations from the Board's April Board meeting and our first regional Board visit.

Member attendance:

Prof. Christobel Saunders (Chair)
Ms. Samantha Elder
Mr. Kevin Taylor
Ms. Michele Dolin
Dr. Sue van Leeuwen

Prof. Tarun Weeramanthri
Prof. Gelareh Farshid – *via VC*
Mr. Robert McPhee
Ms. Angie Paskevicius
Dr. Kim Hames

In attendance

Mr. Joe Boyle (Chief Executive)
Mr. Jeffrey Calver
Mr. Michael McIntyre

Ms. Nicola Chisholm
Mr. Shane Bolton
Ms. Marion Cutforth

April 2021 Board meeting

The Board travelled to Bunbury for the first regional Board engagement meeting.

Marion Cutforth, A/General Manager Regional Network and Michael McIntyre, Managing Scientist in Charge presented to the Board. It was captivating to learn the history of the laboratory and to see the site as it is today.



Image: PathWest Board meeting at Bunbury Hospital



Image: PathWest Board members being shown around the Bunbury PathWest laboratory

The Board were also lucky enough to meet with Jeffrey Calver, Director Bunbury Hospital and Shane Bolton, Regional Manager, Infrastructure and Support, who provided valuable insight regarding the interface between the Bunbury hospital and PathWest, as well as some of the key drivers behind the Bunbury Hospital Redevelopment Projects.

It will be very important as the expansion of services occurs in Bunbury that our diagnostic capabilities can match the ambitious plans.

Following the Board meeting, we toured the laboratory to understand the key functions undertaken at the Lab, and meet the staff, who really impressed with their breadth of

knowledge, skills and “can-do” ethic. It is clear that working in regional labs means you need to be able to turn your hand to all manner of tasks (fixing broken machines in the middle of the night...!) and be prepared to work very hard, and we really appreciate the service these individuals deliver to the community of Southwest WA.

We also shared a lovely Easter tea with staff and would always welcome communication from our colleagues in regional WA, as we realise we cannot get around all regional labs and services

On behalf of the PathWest Board we would like to thank Marion Cutforth, Dr Michael Leung, Michael McIntyre and the dedicated team at the Bunbury laboratory for organising a very informative tour and for hosting the Board for our first regional engagement meeting.



Image above and below: PathWest Board members being shown around the Bunbury PathWest laboratory



Image: PathWest Board, Chief Executive, Marion Cutforth, Michael McIntyre with Bunbury Laboratory staff.

Key matters for discussion

Following discussions at the Board and Executive Strategic Planning session in December 2020, Deputy Board Chair Professor Tarun Weeramanthri led a valuable discussion on sustainability. PathWest provided a paper regarding the promotion of environmental sustainability, including mitigation and adaption strategies. The Board was very impressed with the proposed initiatives and the opportunity for PathWest to take a leadership role in environmental sustainability and choosing wisely.

Committee updates

Finance Committee

The Risk and Audit Committee (Chaired by Ms Michele Dolin) held its first meeting for the year on Thursday, 11 March 2021, with the main discussions relating to:

- Key Performance Indicators and performance culture.
- PathWest leave liability.

Safety and Quality Committee

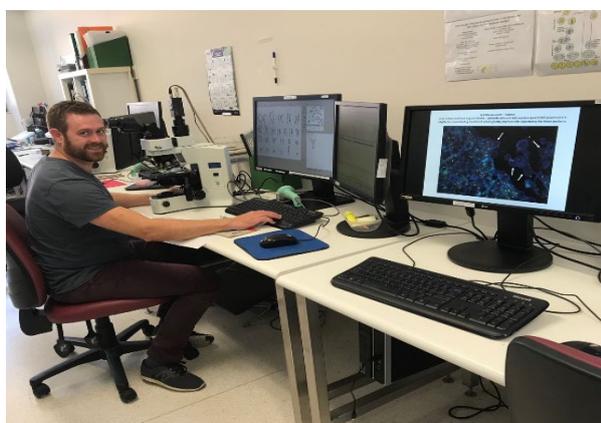
The Safety and Quality Committee (Chaired by Mr. Kevin Taylor) held its first meeting for the year on Tuesday, 30 March 2021. The main focus items of the meeting were:

- Forensic Biology quality systems.
- PathWest Occupational Health and Safety.
- Clinical governance structure update.

Board Walks

Members of our Board Finance Committee (Michele Dolin, Chair and Samantha Elder) took the opportunity to visit the Diagnostic Genomics department at QEII in March. Please see their recount below:

Karen Carpenter and Dr Dimitar Azmanov showed us around providing a valuable overview of some of the activities performed by the department.



Above images: Finance Chair, Michele Dolin learning about chromosomes under the microscope with Karen, Dimitar and Stephen Lukeis.

The tour centred around three key service areas of genetic testing and analysis and we were interested to understand not only the workings of the lab environment, but also the substantial amount of work now performed by analysts. It was explained that roughly 60 per cent of the workload in the department now has an analytical and reporting requirement using software and databases that share and draw upon information worldwide.

A number of clear themes were evident:

- Diagnostic Genomics is fast developing area, with advances in technology necessitating the need for ongoing investment and opening up the need for participation in ethical dialogues.
- While technology is very important in this space, the knowledge and expertise of our highly skilled teams is the most critical factor in supporting our community, and the work is still quite labour intensive.
- Ongoing investment in training and recruitment of appropriately qualified staff is a challenge and there is a keen desire to undertake more research within the department.

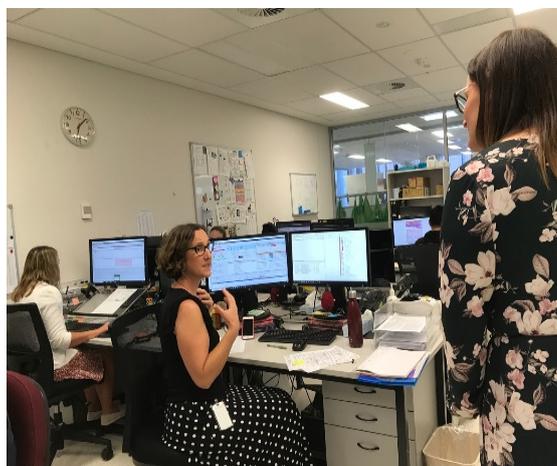


Image: Samantha Elder discussing the Analytical functions with Karen Woodward

- As the Australian government identifies and approves more medical treatments associated with work in this space, the volume and range of tests performed will continue to grow at a fast pace. Many of the tests that can be performed, do not currently receive a rebate by Medicare.
- Significant future opportunities exist not only in servicing the local State based population, but also nationally and perhaps internationally as our reputation continues to strengthen.



Image: Rebecca Gooding sharing some of the complex data analysis aspects of the work performed in the lab.

We both really appreciated the snapshot and insights we received from the teams working in the Diagnostic Genetics lab and certainly gained a better understanding of the technology capability and some of the challenges and opportunities.

Next meeting

The next scheduled Board meeting will be held at QEII Medical Centre on Thursday, 6 May 2021.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Christobel Saunders'.

Professor Christobel Saunders
Chair, PathWest Board
 8 April 2021



Christobel Saunders



Tarun Weeramanthri



Sue van Leeuwen



Kevin Taylor



Michele Dolin



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