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Your Ref: 76-22094

Enquiries: J Verbeek

Hon Amber-Jade Sanderson MLA  
Minister for Health; Mental Health  
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**Via Email:** [Minister.Sanderson@dpc.wa.gov.au](mailto:Minister.Sanderson@dpc.wa.gov.au)

Dear Minister

## **STATEMENT OF EXPECTATIONS – PATHWEST STATEMENT OF INTENT**

Thank you for your Statement of Expectations dated 2 March 2023 for PathWest Laboratory Medicine WA (PathWest).

On behalf of the PathWest Board, I am pleased to provide you with this Statement of Intent in response to your stated expectations. The PathWest Board continues to support PathWest in its provision of high-quality pathology and forensic services to the Western Australian community and the Board commits to reporting to you on a quarterly basis against your stated expectations.

### **COVID-19**

PathWest continues to support the Western Australian community across its network of laboratories by providing scalable COVID-19 testing as a business-as-usual activity. COVID-19 testing has been fully integrated into PathWest's routine respiratory testing panels, with this service supported by a team of specialist clinical pathologists and dedicated laboratory professionals. During 2022, while the focus was understandably on supporting the Western Australian community by providing ready access to COVID-19 testing across the State, PathWest continued to progress its core functions and internal projects without any appreciable delays. PathWest similarly remains fully committed to participating in the reset WA Health projects and supporting any expedited project timelines.

Throughout the pandemic, PathWest continually innovated, researched and developed new ways of high-volume testing and surveillance methods, as well as collaborated fully across Western Australia (WA) Health to support the community. The learnings from the pandemic have reinforced the continual drive at PathWest for innovation, collaboration and service improvement and this will continue to benefit the community that we serve for years to come.

### **Sustainable Health Review – revised priorities**

The PathWest Board remains committed to the delivery of the Sustainable Health Review (SHR). The Board will continue to actively promote and support PathWest in its work against the six focus recommendations over the next one to two years which address timely access to outpatient services, models of care for people with complex conditions who are

frequent presenters, funding approaches to support models of care and joint commissioning, 10-year digitisation, culture and innovation, and workforce improvements. Further, the Board and PathWest will ensure that Aboriginal cultural governance, Aboriginal health outcomes, mental health outcomes, health equity across diverse and vulnerable population groups, preventative healthcare and partnership approaches will be emphasised and embedded within all six focus recommendations.

PathWest continues to support the System Manager and partners through active engagement and participation as a part of the Health Executive Committee and as a key stakeholder to support the delivery of the SHR.

### **Safety and Quality**

Safety and quality of services provided by PathWest continue to be a priority for the Board, Executive and broader organisation. During 2022, the *PathWest Clinical Governance Framework* (the Framework) underwent a review and update to reflect the governance role of the PathWest Board Safety and Quality Committee in monitoring patient safety and clinical risk. It was also brought into alignment with the changes in the National Pathology Accreditation Advisory Council (NPAAC) *Requirements for Supervision in the Clinical Governance of Medical Pathology Laboratories* (2021). In addition, the *PathWest Clinical Incident Management Policy* was subject to review and updated in line with the changes in the Framework.

The PathWest Director, Quality and Safety was appointed at the end of 2021 and has restructured the Quality and Patient Directorate into a single corporate function to provide centralised surveillance and monitoring of patient safety and accreditation compliance and reporting of same to the Executive and Board Safety and Quality Committee. A dedicated quality and patient safety intranet page has been introduced for PathWest staff to easily access resources on clinical incident and consumer feedback reporting and management, information on quality system processes, accreditation requirements and sharing of lessons learnt.

PathWest's ongoing National Association of Testing Authorities (NATA) accreditation and compliance with the NPAAC standards gives consumers, families, carers, clinicians and service providers the confidence that PathWest services meet the safety and quality expectations of the public and the Australian healthcare system.

### **Work Health and Safety**

PathWest is committed to the transition to the Work Health and Safety (WHS) legislative changes and this is a priority for the Board, Executive and the organisation. Integration of system improvements from the WHS audit will continue and contribute to the WHS strategic plans and operational directions. Recent changes to the PathWest WHS portfolio have seen growth in resourcing and realignment of the portfolio, which now reports directly to the Executive Director, People Capability and Culture.

The establishment of Network WHS Committees is key to ensuring PathWest's compliance with legislation. Particularly, the separation of the Regional Services Network enables key safety and health factors to be addressed that are unique to regional laboratories. Improving overall safety and health culture and the review of Work Groups and Health and Safety Representatives has been, and will continue to be, a focus for 2023.

### **Increased Job Security**

PathWest continues to work with managers to reduce the use of fixed term contracts where possible by recommending recruiting at the earliest time to positions that are substantively vacant. The conversion to permanent contracts will be continuously reviewed to ensure PathWest is in line with the relevant industrial agreements.

Given the complexity of our employees specialising in differing disciplines, PathWest is working with relevant unions to consider alternative options to maximise the achievement of permanent employment. Where there are increases in the use of casual employment, PathWest continues to review and consider other modes of employment to ensure job security is a priority.

### **Procurement**

As the Board Chair, I confirm that all procurement activity is undertaken in accordance with relevant legislation and the WA Procurement Rules. Sustainability and use of local suppliers are appropriately considered as a standard part of procurement activity.

PathWest will continue to work with the Department of Health, Department of Finance and Health Support Services (HSS) towards the goal of achieving sustainability of procurement and supply chains. This includes identifying opportunities to reduce our carbon footprint and developing a targeted product substitution strategy in consultation with other HSPs.

PathWest actively participates in strategic forums and is contributing to the development of procurement sustainability guidelines, led by HSS, to assist agencies in implementing affirmative action in this area.

Contracts for servicing and maintenance of instruments across the extensive PathWest pathology fleet contain requirements for vendors to maintain appropriate levels of local skilled resources that can be readily deployed across all WA locations.

### **Implementation of election commitment and key ICT and infrastructure projects**

The Board receives regular reports pertaining to the Laboratory Information System (LIS). The delivery of the Forensic Pathology module is one of the focus areas for PathWest for this coming year, with this module expected to 'go live' in July 2023.

### **Independent Governance Review**

The Board supports the recommendations of the Independent Governance Review and will work with the System Manager to ensure recommendations are implemented and compliance maintained.

### **Advice to Government/Statement of Intent**

I acknowledge that as the Board Chair of PathWest, I am accountable to you as the responsible Minister.

The PathWest Board remains committed to providing accurate and timely advice to the Minister for Health and Government on significant issues in its core areas of business and will ensure progress is made in achieving the Government's priorities. The Board will continue to ensure compliance with the board assurance processes and will submit an Annual Governance Attestation Statement at the conclusion of the financial year.

The Board will provide you with a quarterly report outlining progress and achievements against this *Statement of Intent*.

The Board looks forward to continuing to support PathWest as the provider of public pathology services to the Western Australian community and in delivering the strategic priorities outlined in your correspondence.

Yours sincerely

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

Ms Angie Paskevicius

**BOARD CHAIR**

**PATHWEST LABORATORY MEDICINE WA**

16 May 2023