

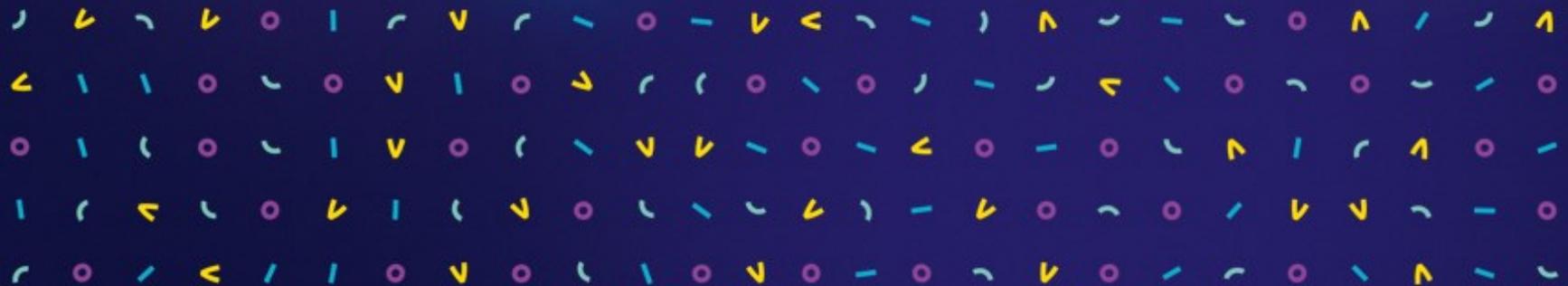


Western Health

# QUALITY ACCOUNT

2023 - 2024

*live* BEST CARE



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*Western Health acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of all the lands and waterways on which Western Health staff, volunteers, consumers and caregivers come together. As we work, learn and grow, we pay our deep respects to the Elders and Traditional Custodians past, present and emerging of the Wurundjeri Woi-Wurrung, Boon Wurrung, Bunurong and Wadawurrung Countries of the greater Kulin Nation. We are committed to the healing of country, working towards equity in health outcomes, and the ongoing journey of reconciliation. Western Health is committed to respectfully listening and learning from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and we are truly guided by the values of relationship, responsibility and respect.*

# FOREWORD



**At Western Health we are committed to quality care that is safe, person-centred, right and co-ordinated – we are committed to Best Care.**

Our Quality Account outlines how Western Health - in partnership with our consumers, their families and carers; building on the strengths of our clinical and health support staff; and supported by managers, the Executive and the Board - continues to strive for our vision of Best Care.

Our ability to adapt and innovate is a source of pride at Western Health. As we provide care for the very diverse communities of one of the fastest growing regions of Australia, our agility and teamwork across our sites and departments is vital to our everyday operations.

We have undertaken an unprecedented agenda of growth, activity and change over the past 12 months. Major milestones include becoming a designated mental health service provider, taking over the provision of primary healthcare with a women's custodial service, implementing the second phase of our electronic medical record, and the continued planning and building of a number of major new hospital developments.

We have also undertaken our first organisation-wide Survey against the newly introduced National Safety and Quality Health Service (NSQHS) Standards Short Notice Assessment model. Assessors commented on how apparent it is that innovation is in Western Health's DNA, with many examples of innovative practice improvement included in this year's Quality Account.

We are enormously proud that despite significant events and competing priorities over the past 12 months, our staff have continued to demonstrate that first and foremost we are an organisation of people that are here to care for members of our community in their greatest time of need.

Providing Best Care is what we do, and we do it well! Every day we make a tangible difference to many lives.

Our initiatives to provide Best Care receive positive feedback from those who matter most – our consumers, our staff and volunteers, and our community. Each project, initiative or action we put in place aims to enhance our practice as we continue to strive to live Best Care.

We were also pleased to receive external recognition of our Best Care initiatives, with five innovative programs being announced as finalists for the 2024 Victorian Public Healthcare Awards.

This report is a companion document to our Annual Report and is available on our website at [www.westernhealth.org.au](http://www.westernhealth.org.au)

Consumer feedback is very important to us. We hope you will find this report informative and interesting and we look forward to hearing your feedback and what you would like to see included in the future. You can leave feedback via our email address: [Feedback@wh.org.au](mailto:Feedback@wh.org.au).



*Adj Prof Shane Crowe,  
Executive Director Nursing  
& Midwifery,  
Western Health*



*Professor Russell  
Harrison  
Chief Executive,  
Western Health*



# About Western Health



Western Health is the major healthcare provider to one of the fastest growing - and most diverse - regions of Australia.

## OUR COMMUNITY:

The catchment population surpassing 1,000,000 and the birth rate and movement into this region means that strong growth will continue in the years ahead, and at a greater rate than the rest of Victoria.

Our communities are culturally rich, with members speaking more than 150 different languages and dialects. It is home to more than 10,000 people identifying as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander.

While proudly diverse, people from across our suburbs face significant challenges. Some groups within our community have particular needs that need to be considered holistically, including refugee and asylum seekers, multicultural groups, First Nations, those with vulnerability, disability and LGBTIQ+. Many experience substantial social and economic disadvantage, with higher-than average unemployment, and a large proportion of our population experience financial hardship.

Our population has high risk factors in obesity, smoking and low rates of exercise, and higher than-average rates of cancer, heart disease, stroke, mental illness and diabetes. Our community is ageing, with frailty and dementia becoming a significant challenge to independent, healthy living. We are committed to providing Best Care for communities across Melbourne's West, improving equity in access to care, and health outcomes for all.

## OUR PEOPLE:

Employing more than 12,500 staff and over 700 volunteers, we are focused on enabling and supporting the culture and capability of all people across the organisation. A large proportion of our staff are from the western suburbs, or live locally, further entrenching Western Health in the communities we serve.

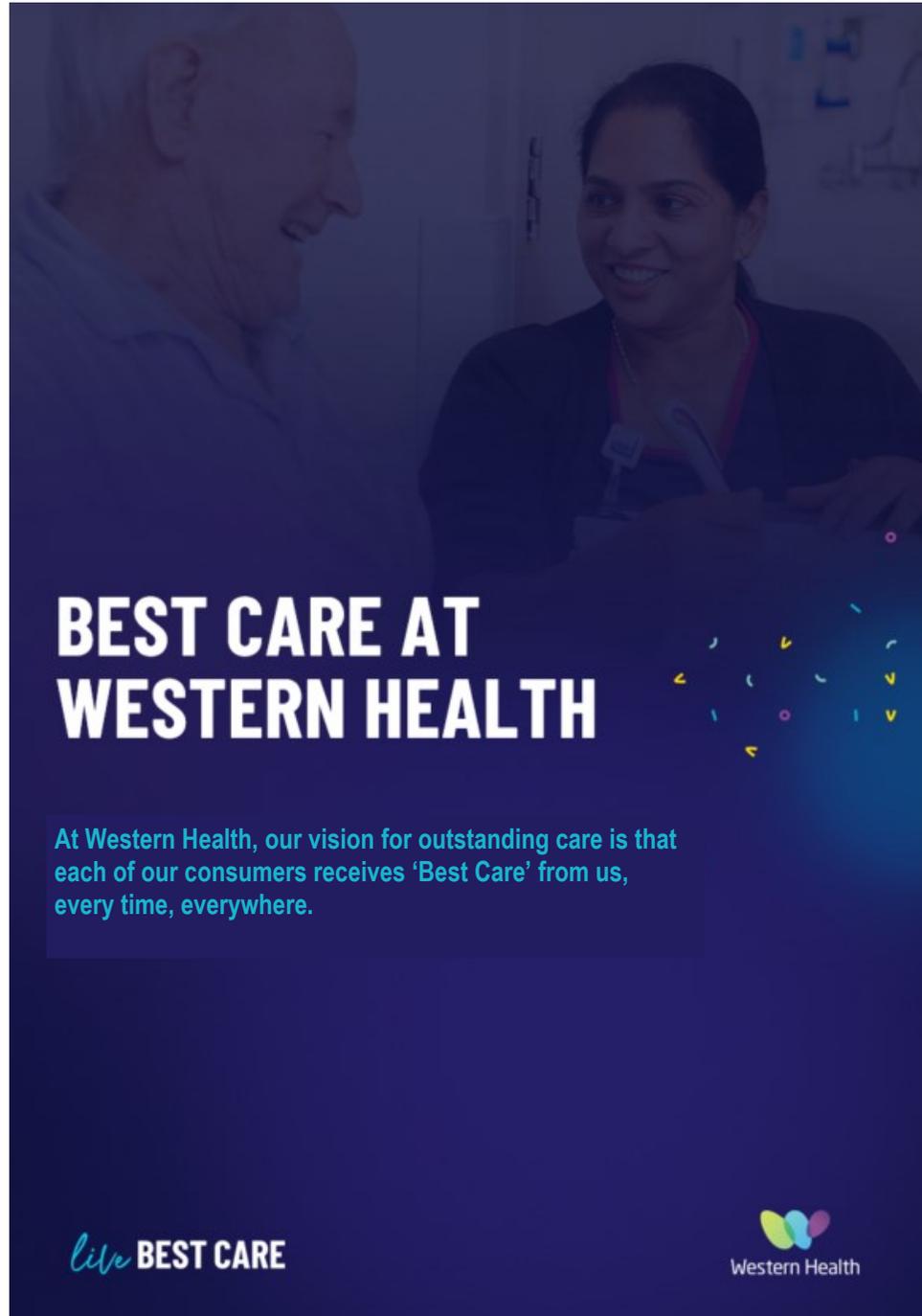
## OUR SERVICES:

Western Health provides a comprehensive, integrated range of clinical services from our various sites ranging from mental health and wellbeing services, and acute tertiary services in areas of emergency medicine, intensive care, medical and surgical services, through to subacute care and onsite and virtual ambulatory clinics. Our specialised services include oncology, renal, women's health including maternity, chronic disease, geriatrics and cardiology.

We provide a combination of hospital, community based and in-reach services for aged, adult and paediatric patients and newborn babies. Western Health also provides the primary health care service at the Dame Phyllis Frost Centre, and offers drug health and addiction medicine support through our inpatient service and community Drug Health Service. Population health and disease prevention programs are developed by the Western Public Health Unit.

Western Health continues to grow, striving to deliver the best care for our community. With exponential growth in our activity, in 2023-24 Western Health cared for over 800,000 patients, performed over 14,000 planned and 10,000 emergency surgeries and managed over 150,000 Emergency Department (ED) presentations. Western Health proudly delivers over 27,000 clinic appointments monthly and welcomes over 7,000 babies annually.





## live BEST CARE

What is important to consumers and their families about receiving Best Care is the foundation of our Vision.

The following statements reflecting what best care means to consumers guides how our point of care staff provide Best Care, how our managers and senior clinicians lead Best Care, and how the Executive and Board govern Best Care.

To receive best care ... it is important to my family and I that:

- **I am seen, heard and treated as a person (Person-Centred Care)**
- **I receive help, treatment and information when I need it and in a co-ordinated way (Co-ordinated Care)**
- **I receive care that improves my health (Right Care)**
- **I feel safe (Safe Care)**

To ensure we can provide the Best Care, we need to translate these statements into day-to-day behaviours and actions to improve and apply quality systems supporting person-centred, co-ordinated, right and safe care.

Our Vision for Best Care at Western Health was developed in consultation with consumers and staff and is outlined in the diagram on the following page.

# BEST CARE AT WESTERN HEALTH

We will demonstrate the Western Health values in all that we do... compassion, accountability, respect, excellence, safety



## CONSUMERS

TO RECEIVE BEST CARE...

It is important to my family and I that:

## POINT OF CARE STAFF

TO PROVIDE BEST CARE...

## MANAGERS & SENIOR CLINICIANS

TO LEAD BEST CARE...

## EXECUTIVE & BOARD

TO GOVERN BEST CARE...

### PERSON-CENTRED CARE

I am seen, heard and treated as a person

I communicate with consumers and their families and am sensitive to their needs and preferences

I engage with and put consumers first when making decisions

I oversee the development, implementation and ongoing improvement of organisation-wide systems and culture supporting Best Care

### CO-ORDINATED CARE

I receive help, treatment and information when I need it and in a co-ordinated way

I am an active team player and look for ways to do things better

I look for ways to support staff to work efficiently and as part of a team

### RIGHT CARE

I receive care that improves my health

I am competent in what I do and motivated to provide the best care and services possible

I guide, engage and support staff to provide best clinical care and improve health outcomes

### SAFE CARE

I feel safe

I keep consumers from harm

I promote a culture of safety



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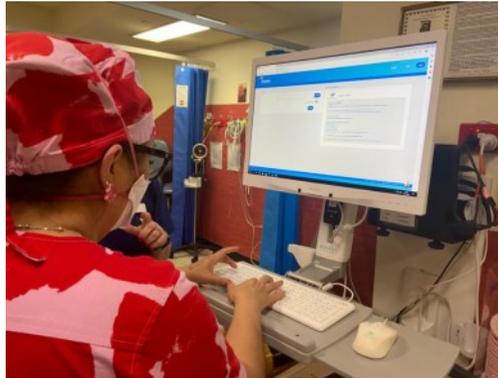
# QUALITY SYSTEMS

Quality systems that support our staff to lead, drive and create Best Care are grouped under five headings, with 'Consumer First' at the centre.

A number of initiatives have been undertaken over the past 12 months to enhance our Quality Systems supporting Best Care.

These include:

- > Completion of a comprehensive project to enhance Western Health's Performance Dashboards supporting Best Care. This project provided an exciting opportunity to develop, test, and deploy a prioritised set of online dashboards. We have been able to convert extensive amounts of data into easy to navigate overviews, enabling staff to monitor, analyse and enhance Best Care.
- > Western Health in partnership with Victoria University completing a project to develop a digital Recommendations Register which now supports a co-ordinated approach to following through on recommendations from adverse patient events, audits, coronial findings and other sources.
- > The launch of two new committees that integrate divisional and organisation-wide clinical practice monitoring and improvement - a Clinical Council and a Best Care Performance Meeting. We also redesigned our Committee focusing on the introduction of New Technology & Clinical Practice.



- > Completion, in partnership with the Victorian Managed Insurance Authority (VMIA), of a 'Best Care in Excellence & Improvement Program' (BCEIP). This program has enabled staff to utilise learning modules aimed to move the organisation from contemporary quality and safety thinking to a proactive thought process using Safety-II methodology.

- > The development of PowerBI Foundational Training Dashboards to improve ward to board monitoring and review of staff engagement in education supporting Best Care.
- > The ongoing upgrade of our Riskman system to support timely incident and feedback reporting and review across Western Health. We have also integrated our Best Care Feedback and Best Care Co-ordinator Teams to enhance the support we provide for incident management and consumer feedback.
- > Planning for introduction of a new organisation-wide Audit Platform that will support staff audit and enhance the practices supporting Best Care.
- > Showcasing our localised performance and improvement activity through our redesigned Knowing How We are Doing (KHWD) Boards in our wards and clinical units.



# CONSUMER EXPERIENCE



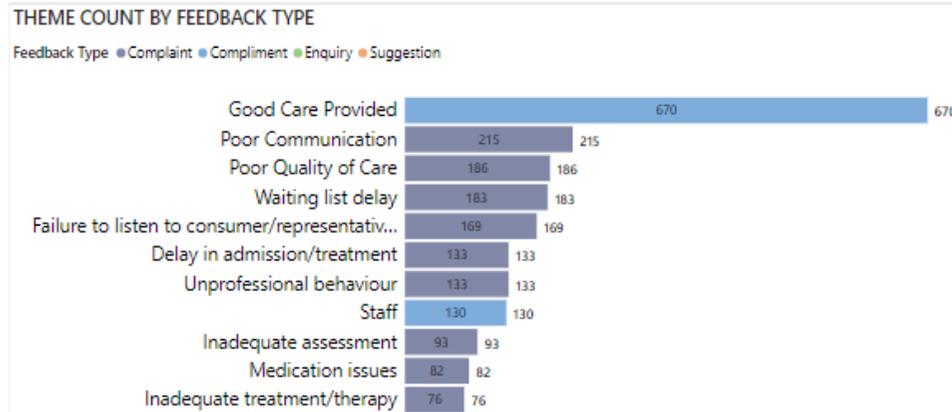
To provide Best Care, we must be able to see care from the perspective of our consumers, their families and carers, and the community we serve.

Consumers can share their experiences and suggestions for improvement through the avenues described on this page.

To enhance these methods of feedback, we have implemented a consumer centred phone service with direct answer of calls during business hours.

We have also developed online feedback dashboards that help us to provide timely response to feedback and identify feedback themes.

The key feedback themes from the last 12 months are noted in the graph below.



Provide feedback via survey, phone, email, or in person



Talk to a staff member or volunteer



Talk to our feedback team on 1800 31 96 31



Ask to be contacted by a Best Care Co-ordinator



Email us at: [feedback@wh.org.au](mailto:feedback@wh.org.au)



Fill in a consumer experience survey if selected through the Victorian Health Experience Survey process



Join our Consumer Register and be invited to consumer forums and onto hospital committees which review and improve care



Share your consumer experience if approached by staff as part of our Consumer Story Program & co-design improvement initiatives



Join the conversation by engaging in our social media mediums such as Facebook

# ASSESSING BEST CARE



## We are continuing our journey to enable a business as usual model for compliance with external Standards for Best Care

### National Safety and Quality Health Service (NSQHS) Standards

Western Health had a successful accreditation survey against the eight National Safety and Quality Health Service (NSQHS) Standards in December 2023.

There was high praise from Assessors about the standard of care, commitment to being person-centred, our culture of respect and teamwork, and involvement and empowerment of consumers in their care. Assessors commented on how apparent it is that innovation is in Western Health's DNA, and they were unanimous in their praise for our people.

Assessors also commented that Western Health had implemented a 'gold standard' methodology for undergoing survey against the newly-implemented short-notice assessment model.

We continue to progress business as usual activity to support ongoing compliance with the NSQHS Standards and meet Surveyor needs for evidence when we have our next short-notice accreditation survey. We may be assessed again anytime between now and the end of 2026.

### National Aged Care Standards

An assessment contact visit was also conducted at our Grant Lodge Residential Aged Care Service within the past 12 months. All requirements for this assessment were met, with assessors noting residents are provided with support to optimise their independence, health and wellbeing.

The Australian Government assesses the quality of care at all government-funded aged care homes with residential aged care homes receiving a Star Rating for Compliance, Quality Measures, Residents' Experience, and Staffing. When star ratings were introduced in December 2022 Grant Lodge was assigned a 3-star rating. The team have worked incredibly hard over the last 18 months on several improvement and compliance initiatives with Grant Lodge successfully achieving their first 5-star rating in July 2024. This is the highest level that can be achieved.

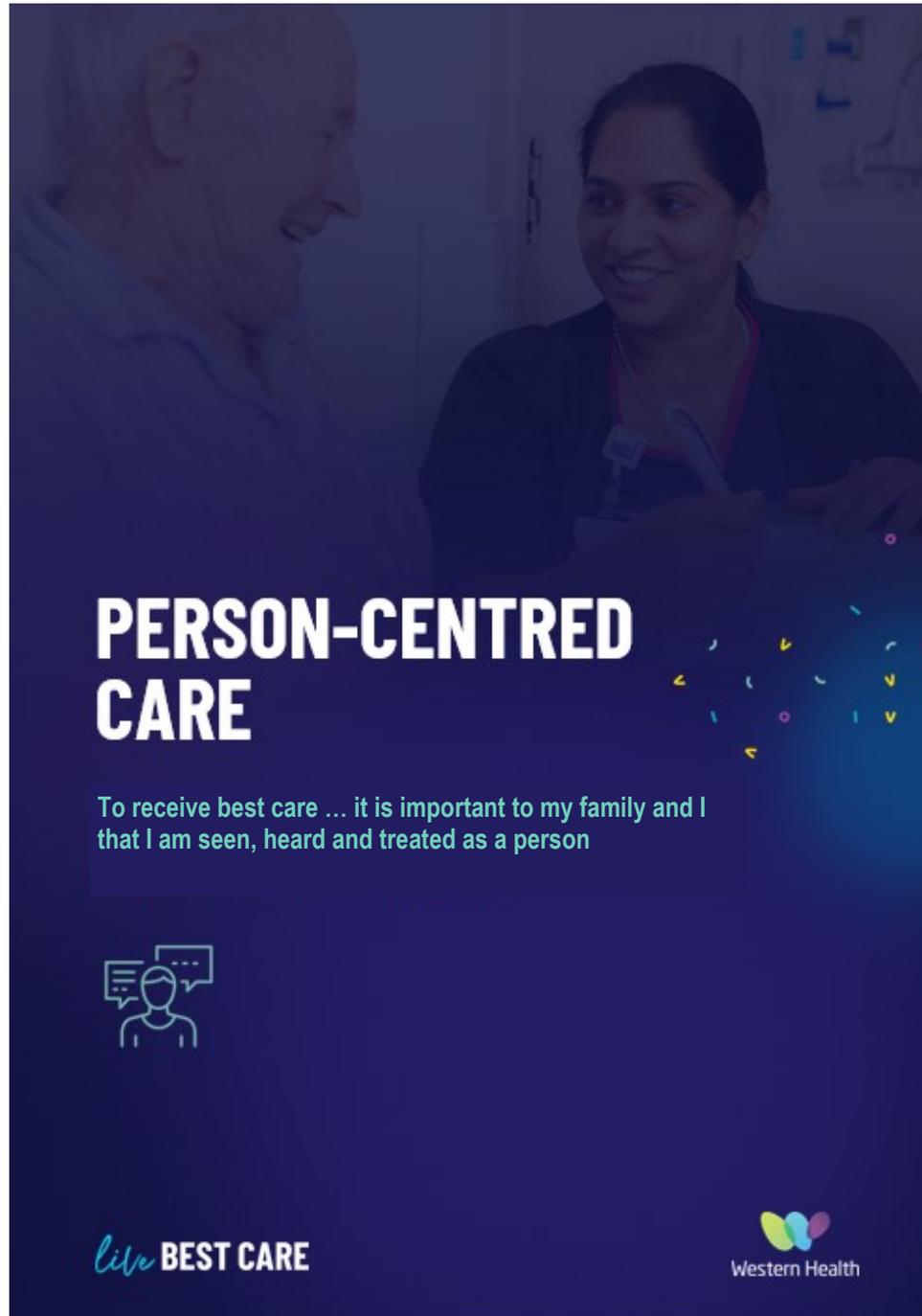


In addition, an Aged Care Standard Audit was conducted in February 2024 for the Bacchus Marsh Community Health: Commonwealth Home Support Program (CHSP). Assessors were complimentary of care and service delivery for CHSP consumers. Compliance with all criterion was met, with no specific areas identified in which improvements needed to be made.

Looking forward, a new Aged Care Bill is expected to commence on 1 July 2025. The bill aims to improve the lives of older people who are accessing aged care services, whether in their homes, community settings, or residential aged care.

Western Health has been preparing for this reform over the last 18 months through various improvement initiatives and frequent gap analysis assessments. Senior management continue to engage with the Department of Aged Care, Department of Health Victoria Public Sector Residential Aged Care Services and the Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission to ensure Western Health services are well placed when the new Act comes into effect on 1 July 2025.





**“I AM SEEN AND TREATED AS A PERSON”**

The following statement on what person-centred care means to consumers and their families was written in partnership with our consumers, and guides how our point of care staff provide person-centred care, how our managers & senior clinicians lead person-centred care, and how the executive and board govern person-centred care.

*To receive best care ... it is important to my family and I that:*

> *I am seen, heard and treated as a person*

To ensure we can provide person-centred care, we aim to see the person in the consumer and provide care that is welcoming, respectful and designed to engage consumers in care decisions and management of care.

This section of the Quality Account focuses on activities and achievements that support improved outcomes against the Best Care goal of Person-Centred Care.

# Comprehensive Care

Person-Centred Care is strongly focused on comprehensive care - that is, co-ordinated care assessment, planning and delivery that engages consumers and families and supports management of the risk of harm during health care.

## OUR APPROACH

The National Comprehensive Care Standard supports Western Health to provide Person-Centred Care.

Programs and strategies that support comprehensive care at Western Health include:

- > Comprehensive policies, procedures and guidelines to support delivery of Comprehensive Care
- > A Person-Centred Care Committee and aligned Advisory Groups responsible for overseeing the processes adopted across Western Health to support clinicians deliver comprehensive care
- > Comprehensive Risk assessments to identify consumers at increased risk of harm.
- > Comprehensive Care Plans (IPOC) and Electronic Medical Record (EMR) order sets to help support delivery of Comprehensive Care
- > Performance Dashboards providing real time data on the elements of comprehensive care outlined in the diagram to the right
- > Specialist staff supporting the elements of Comprehensive Care
- > Online Comprehensive Care WeLearn modules
- > Bimonthly Western Health newsletters on elements such as Falls and Pressure injury prevention
- > Annual training days for Falls, Pressure injury, Delirium and Nutrition champions.



## Comprehensive Care cont ...



### A heartfelt compliment from a Consumer's support person underscores the powerful impact of collaborative Comprehensive Care goal setting at Western Health.

*"I recently supported a loved one to access the Emergency Departments of Williamstown and Footscray during a mental health crisis. This person has an especially hard time presenting in acute crisis because of harms experienced as an inpatient previously.*

*I came to ensure that the staff were aware of this person's trauma history and to give tips on how to engage. I found the nursing and medical staff at Williamstown ED were exceptional in the way they responded, they really listened to what both of us were communicating. Handled the stressful presentation really well whilst maintaining a sense of respect and safety. They communicated what was happening and why at all times. I especially felt listened to and heard as a carer which I had not experienced in previous similar situations.*

*When we ended up being seen by the senior Mental Health nurse consultant at Footscray ED we were equally impressed. The staff member went above and beyond to be gender and trauma sensitive. Clarified my friend's goals and priorities, gave options and really, really helpful information.*

*Considering how quickly things have gone south escalation wise with previous presentations with my loved one I was blown away and really happy with the care provided. I know a little bit of trust in the hospital space has been restored for my friend and they got the care they needed without unnecessary harm.*

*Thank you to the teams so much, we are really grateful."*

### Measuring a positive consumer experience



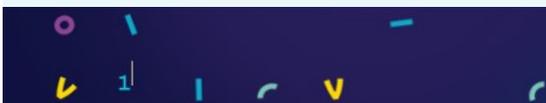
The Victorian Health Experience Survey (VHES) is a statewide survey that reviews people's experience of receiving health care in Victorian public hospitals. The survey is sent to a random selection of consumers one month after leaving hospital. Responses are collected by an independent company contracted by the State Government and are anonymous.

Data collected from the survey is provided to Western Health on a range of measures of consumer experience.

We use overall consumer care ratings from the survey as part of a person-centred care performance dashboard presented to our Best Care Committees and the Board.

The following graph reflects the VHES overall experience rating for people discharged from our adult inpatient wards from 1 July 2023 – 30 June 2024.

The following graph shows consumer satisfaction ratings on overall hospital care have been around the 90% mark over the past 12 months, slightly below the average of Victorian public hospitals.



# Comprehensive Care cont ...

## OUR IMPROVEMENT

We are proud of the following achievements for 2023/24:

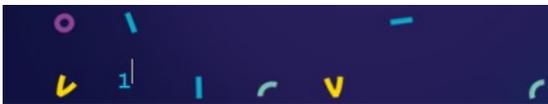
- > Our pressure injury, falls prevention, nutrition and delirium champion programs supporting implementation of organisational initiatives and engagement in ward-based improvement activities
- > Improvements to the Electronic Medical Record Ward Overview Page to communicate the identified risk profile of ward patients
- > The development and roll-out of a suite of new and revised Comprehensive Care WeLearn (staff education) Modules
- > Launch of new Comprehensive Care performance dashboards to support the identification of variances, subsequent review and improvement of care
- > Development and/or progression of a suite of Comprehensive Care Clinical Practice Improvement Plans
- > Multiple optimisations of our Electronic Medical Record to improve the quality and completion of risk assessments
- > Collaboration with staff to improve additional documentation to streamline and standardise approaches to shift notes and Behaviour Safety Support Plans

- > Co-ordination in July 2023 of an Occupational Violence & Aggression (OVA) International Conference to share interventions to break the cycle of OVA in healthcare
- > Launch of our innovative, custom built 'Reframe your response' OVA virtual reality training package
- > Relaunch of our Bariatric Committee to support person-centred care
- > Facilitating a Health Service Falls Collaborative with 15 other health services to discuss barriers and enablers in implementing World Hospital Falls Prevention Guidelines
- > Supporting local ward Comprehensive Care projects to improve patient outcomes
- > Upgrade of Fall Prevention, Pressure Injury and Advanced Care Planning Intranet sites



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- > Facilitating both Falls Champion and Pressure Injury Champion Collaboratives enabling our champions from various clinical areas to share their learnings and celebrate successes
- > Creation of a new Delirium study day focussing on the 3D's – Delirium, Depression and Dementia
- > Supporting the development of Comprehensive Care plans (IPOCS) across the whole patient journey
- > Appointing a malnutrition dietician to identify and support patients at high risk of malnutrition
- > Appointing a new Delirium Clinical Nurse Consultant
- > Developing a new suite of Comprehensive Care risk assessment and care planning tools at Bacchus Marsh Hospital to support comprehensive risk assessment and care planning
- > Supporting implementation of the 'AICED' education program, supporting ongoing refinement/improvement of Comprehensive Care assessment and planning at the bedside



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# Comprehensive Care cont ...

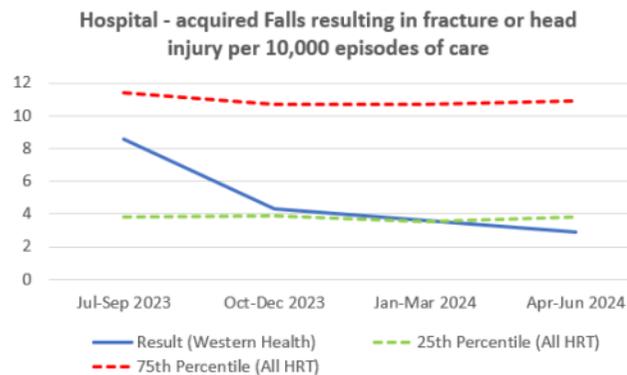
## WHAT OUR DATA TELLS US

The following graphs provide a snapshot of how well Western Health performs against key comprehensive care clinical indicators compared to other health services / hospitals who submit data to the Health Roundtable. This is an organisation which brings together healthcare leaders to share insights and benchmarked data aimed at improving care.

*With these types of graph, it is positive to be below the green line or between the green and red lines.*

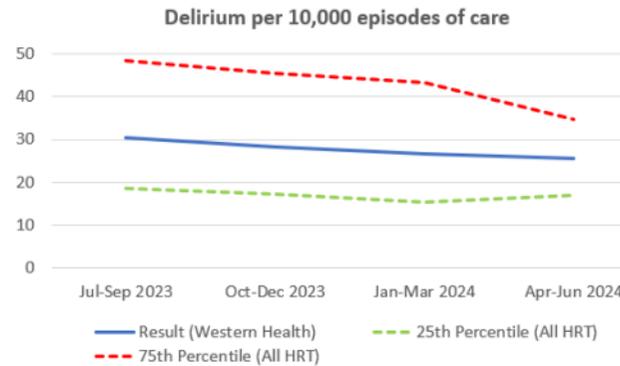
### Falls Management

Following a downward trend in falls resulting in serious injury, Western Health now compares favourably with other health services / hospitals. This is a reflection on clinical practice improvement and availability of resources to mitigate the risk of falling, and sustaining serious injury when falls occur.



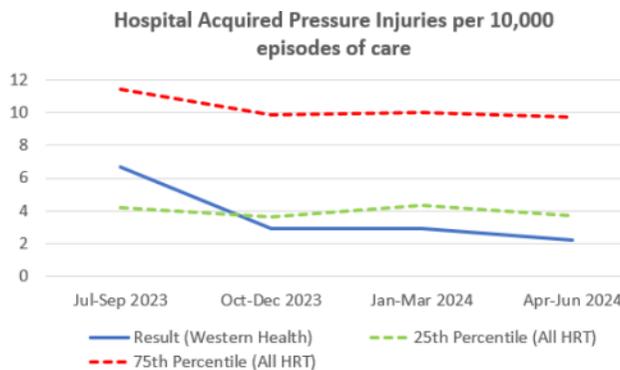
### Delirium Management

Western Health compares favourably with other health services / hospitals for instances of delirium in hospital, a reflection on the risk assessment and management tools in place across our organisation.



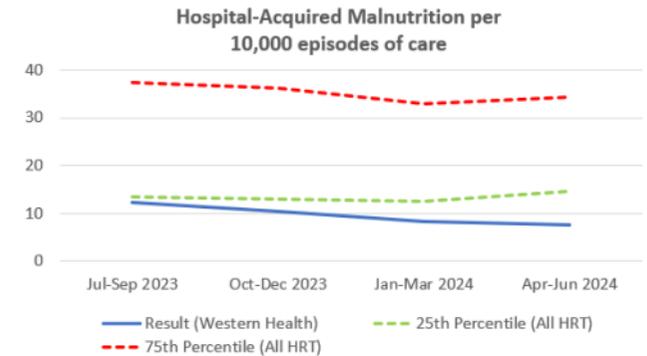
### Pressure Injury Management

We have made some good inroads into reducing our rate of hospital-acquired pressure injuries and Western Health now compares favourably with other health services / hospitals.



### Nutrition Management

Western Health also compares favourably with other health services / hospitals for instances of hospital-acquired malnutrition, a reflection on our practices such as weighing of patients, menu choices and meal time assistance for consumers, as well as referral to our Dieticians.



## Living Person-Centred Care - Piloting a Power Shift through Food

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A dietitian-led project developed and implemented a person-centred framework to enhance and optimise the food, nutrition and dining experience for all residents at Western Health's residential aged care facility, Grant Lodge (GL). This project focused on three key areas - Governance, Individualised Care and Cultural Change.

The establishment of a Menu Review Committee engaged residents along with advocates, dietitians, nursing and foodservices staff. This has given residents a voice in their menu and dining experience.

The resident-led freshly cooked menu provides 30% more energy and protein and aligns with the Victorian Department of Health - Nutrition & quality food standards for adults in Victorian public hospitals and residential aged care services (NQFS).

Food wastage has reduced by 12% and the percentage of residents meeting their energy needs has increased from 49% to 87%. Residents have maintained or gained weight. Staff foster a daily focus on the importance of food, nutrition and creating a home-like dining experience for residents.

The project has created a positive food and dining culture amongst residents, relatives, nursing and the foodservice team.

### Resident Story

*Meet Joan\* who has been calling Grant Lodge her home for the past 6 years.*

*When we first met Joan she was sitting in a princess chair in the dining room during breakfast and lunch or eating her dinner in her bed. It was noted she did not like assistance with meals and could get agitated if staff tried to assist her. She would play with her meal without purpose and little food reached her mouth. Previous dietitian assessment had recommended regular oral nutritional supplements for Joan, which she would rarely drink.*

*Despite the efforts of staff, Joan's intake was minimal, she was frail, with a high risk of malnutrition.*

*With the introduction of the Dietitian-led food and dining experience project, staff embarked on a mission to empower residents like Joan and revolutionise their mealtime experience. They learned to provide encouragement from afar, giving Joan the space and the time she needed to eat at her own pace.*

*Special cutlery and crockery were provided to assist Joan's independence. The dining room was re-furnished, becoming a warm and inviting space where residents gathered for mealtimes. All nursing staff were present at mealtimes to assist with meals, encourage or talk with residents. The menu was redesigned with a food first approach to ensure both nutrition and safety.*

*As Joan began to eat and drink more, she smiled and laughed at mealtimes. Within a year, her intake doubled; no longer does she need routine nutritional supplements and her weight has been gradually increasing.*

*Joan's journey serves as a testament to the power of person-centred care through food and innovative approaches in enhancing the lives of older adults.*

*(\*real name not used)*



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# Improving Care for Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islanders



At Western Health, we are proud of our achievements to partner with and support our Aboriginal Community.



Western Health has a growing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander (Aboriginal) community and is committed to self-determination.

As part of our efforts to close the gap we are incredibly proud of the culturally responsive care options we have designed to ensure that Aboriginal consumers receive respectful, high-quality care with greater access and choice.

These include award winning programs such as our:

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Outpatient Clinic, developed to address barriers experienced by Aboriginal consumers in accessing and attending outpatient care.
- Galinjera program, developed to offer continuity of midwifery care to Aboriginal consumers that is culturally safe.
- Engagement in the Babaneek Booboop Program which promotes the health and developmental outcomes of Aboriginal children in Melbourne's Western Suburbs (the City of Melton and Moorabool Shire). Establishing and building on strong networks, the program supports children and their families in their engagement with child health and promotes cultural safety in health.

From September 2023, Western Health has provided an Aboriginal Health after-hours service. This is a key deliverable of our Aboriginal Health Cultural Safety Plan 2022-2025 which provides support to patients identifying as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander People who:

- > discharge against medical advice;
- > require cultural safe end of life care;
- > are experiencing complicated cases that require extra support; and
- > supporting staff during these situations.

To improve the way we assist consumers and their families seeking support with their mental health and wellbeing, we have also appointed our first Aboriginal Mental Health Liaison Officer.

### Emergency Presentations

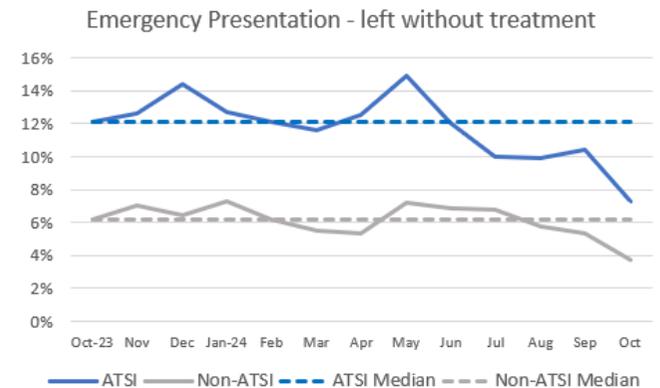
Two percent of people attending Western Health Emergency Departments (ED) identify as First Nations people. However, Aboriginal consumers are over represented in people that leave Emergency Departments without being seen. This is representative of all major and tertiary hospital Emergency Departments in Victoria.

Our Wilim Berrbang (Aboriginal Health) Team has conducted interviews of randomly selected First Nations people who left Western Health Emergency Departments without being seen. The key issues for leaving included not feeling culturally safe, long waits, presenting complaint resolved, and issues to manage at home.

A number of strategies have been introduced in 2024 to enhance support for First Nations people presenting to our Emergency Departments. These include:

- > Implementation of a Wilim Berrbang on-call service
- > Increased training of ED staff on 'asking the question' to identify First Nations people
- > Increased Aboriginal Health Liaison Officer hours provided at Footscray Hospital
- > Recruitment of an Aboriginal mental health practitioner for mental health services

As demonstrated in the graph below, these strategies have helped to decrease the percent of Aboriginal consumers leaving the ED without being seen. Work continues to consolidate and enhance initiatives.



# Volunteers providing support for Person-Centred Care



**Western Health is committed to recruiting and retaining volunteers who actively support person-centred care.**

The Western Health Volunteer Program focuses on engaging with our local community by offering relevant and worthwhile volunteering opportunities.



Community members are encouraged to share their time, skills and life experiences through a range of diverse and innovative volunteering roles, working alongside health care professional staff to support person-centred care and enable best possible outcomes for consumers and their families.

Western Health is immensely grateful to the 700+ volunteers who, as well as a number of local schools and community groups, generously donate their time and resources to support our consumers and staff.

Our volunteers are a vital part of our workforce and play an important role in supporting patients, staff and visitors in many and varied activities across Western Health. Our volunteer roles span: visitor guides, social support, meals assistance program, library trolley, patient transport, auxiliary and opportunity shops, administrative support, and assisting in our busy Emergency Departments. Our volunteers' smiling faces, helpfulness and warm words – often in other languages that reflect the diversity of our community – are vital to supporting patients and visitors to our large, complex health service.

## Volunteer Commitment

The Bacchus Marsh Ladies Auxiliary's history of fundraising for Bacchus Marsh Hospital dates back 75 years.

Over this time, the Auxiliary has raised hundreds of thousands of dollars to support the hospital and the healthcare needs of patients, including raising funds for much-needed clinical equipment.

In 2022 alone, their donations in equipment to the hospital totalled \$287,020.

Within the past year the Auxiliary has already purchased \$39,000 worth of equipment, including mobile recliner chairs, and have provided a new vehicle for use by the Community Transport

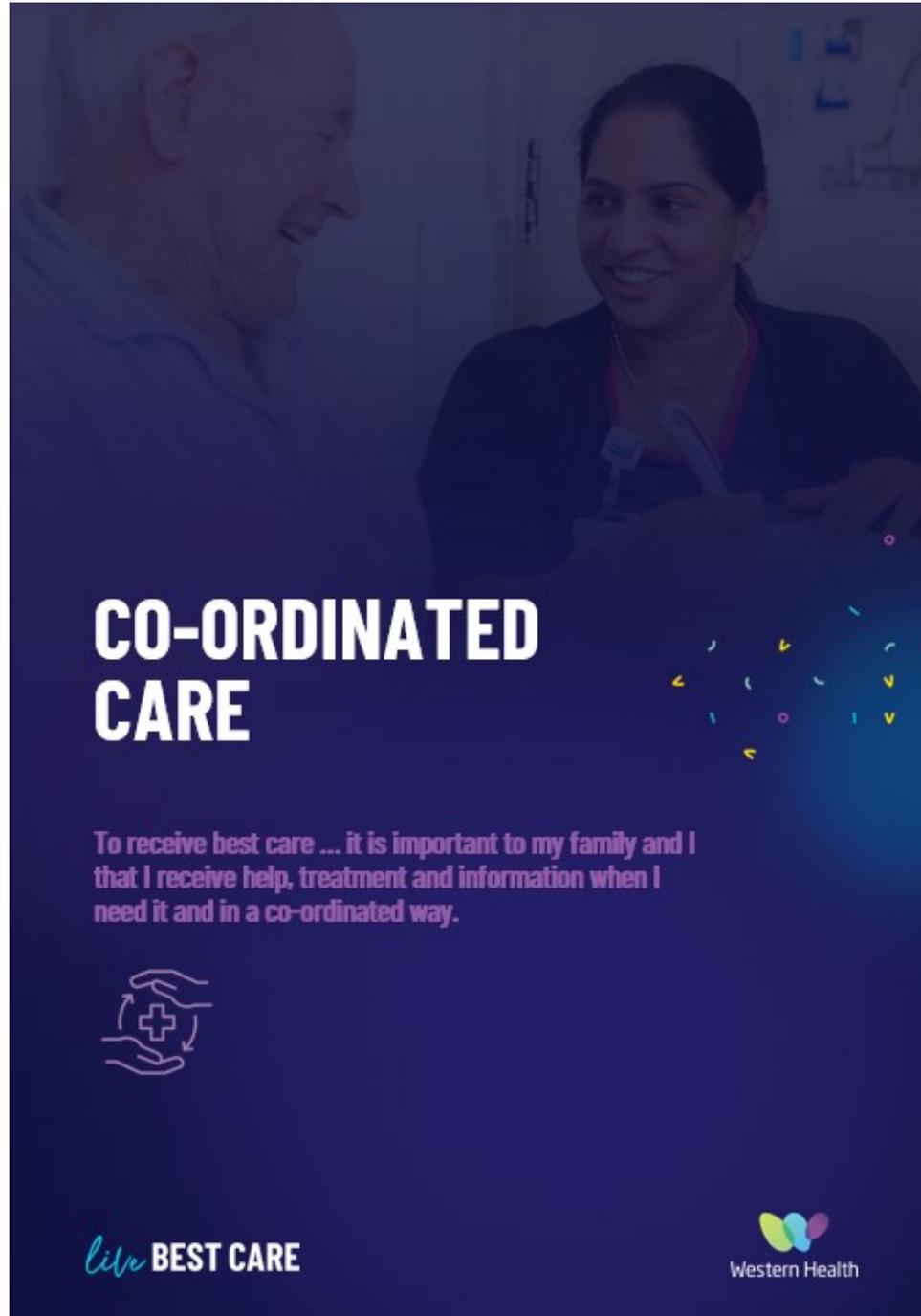
Volunteers who take isolated clients to medical appointments and shopping.

The Auxiliary operates a popular op shop that raises funds for the hospital and Grant Lodge Residential Aged Care, now operated by Western Health.

With the current high cost of living, demand for second-hand goods has increased and the Auxiliary works to keep prices as low as possible to assist the local community.

The Auxiliary also provides meaningful volunteering opportunities for the women of the region. From all walks of life, the women come together, combining their time, energy and expertise towards the common goal of fundraising for important institutions dedicated to the health and safety of the local community.





# CO-ORDINATED CARE

To receive best care ... it is important to my family and I that I receive help, treatment and information when I need it and in a co-ordinated way.



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**“I RECEIVE HELP, TREATMENT AND INFORMATION WHEN I NEED IT AND IN A CO-ORDINATED WAY”**

The following statement on what co-ordinated care means to consumers and their families was written in partnership with our consumers, and guides how our point of care staff provide co-ordinated care, how our managers & senior clinicians lead co-ordinated care, and how the executive and board govern co-ordinated care.

*To receive best care ... it is important to my family and I that:*

- > *I receive help, treatment and information when I need it and in a co-ordinated way*

To ensure we can provide co-ordinated care, we aim to provide prompt access to consumer services, with a smooth journey that is designed to optimise time to care through efficient service provision.

This section of the Quality Account focuses on activities and achievements that support improved outcomes against the Best Care goal of Co-ordinated Care.

## Emergency Care



Over the past year, we have continued with a range of initiatives to enhance consumer flow supporting timely emergency care.

With a rapidly growing community placing significant demand on our healthcare services, Western Health prioritises the continuous review and enhancement of timely and responsive emergency care that reflects consumer needs.

Western Health's involvement in the state-wide Timely Emergency Care Collaborative (TECC) has resulted in several improvement projects being tested and implemented across the organisation over the last 12 months.

Improvement cycles (Plan Do Study Act (PDSAs)) focusing on 'fast track' in Sunshine Emergency, wards 'pulling' patients from the Emergency Department (ED) and pharmacy-led discharge scripts are continuing with positive results.



As a result of our improvement initiatives, we have seen sustained improvement in a number of key areas including timely offload of consumers from Ambulances, time to treatment and a decrease in the length of stay in the Emergency Department (ED) for our admitted patients.

At the March 2024 TECC Learning Session, we received an award for outstanding progress in the ED workstream.

Other partnerships supporting timely emergency care include diversion work with the Priority Primary Care Centres located in Sunshine, Footscray and Melton and the Victorian Virtual Emergency Department.

### Western Health becomes a Mental Health Service Provider

On 1 July 2023, Western Health became a designated Mental Health Service provider and a number of mental health services previously run by NorthWestern Mental Health and some of the Mercy Health services in our catchment officially became part of our health service. Over 700 staff spread across 16 mental health services joined Western Health.

Western Health management of Mental Health Services provided the opportunity to review and improve the operational structures and work flows supporting timely emergency care. This work plus the opening of the Sunshine Mental Health and Wellbeing Centre has informed a substantial decrease in the number of mental health patients waiting more than 24 hours in our emergency departments.

### Consumer Story

*I have a chronic condition, atrial fibrillation [AF], that I am aware can be a bit of a pain for EDs [Emergency Departments] as it's usually non-life threatening yet can be quite unpleasant for the person experiencing it and does carry risks in the long term.*

*My condition has unexpectedly worsened recently, and I have found it hard to find the balance between avoiding burdening a busy ED, and being responsible about my health by getting timely help when things seem serious (due to the severity or duration of the AF episode).*

*I have had two recent attendances at Footscray ED and really appreciated the attitude and care of the health care team. I felt like the dilemma I experienced was acknowledged and respected. Interestingly knowing that I would be taken seriously (after the first presentation), made the second presentation a far calmer and more orderly experience. I suspect this helped me to contain my symptoms.*

*I await an operative procedure that I hope will be successful. However, in the meantime we arrived at a plan to avoid further ED attendances and to define more clearly when they might be needed.*

*I felt like this was something we worked out collaboratively and respectfully in the interests of both myself and the appropriate future use of the ED.*



## Planned Surgery



### PLANNED SURGERY TARGETS

A number of initiatives have supported Western Health to be one of a handful of Victorian health services to achieve planned surgery targets for 2023/2024.

These initiatives include the 'Public in Private' initiative of providing planned surgery for public patients in private hospitals, improved theatre start times, increasing planned surgery activity, and continuing innovative initiatives such as the Same Day Case Program and our Enhanced Recovery after Surgery (ERAS) Program.

Inspired by successful practices in other countries, the Same Day Case Program introduced a new approach for patients undergoing laparoscopic cholecystectomy (or hernia repair surgery). The program resulted in the conversion of 308 patients who would have stayed overnight to day surgery cases in its first year.

The ERAS program improves the patient experience following hip and knee arthroplasty surgeries. Launched in March 2023, ERAS has achieved significant reductions in length of stay and the freeing up of hospital beds.

Innovative care pathways are also supporting timely assessment of the need for and urgency of surgery options. One of these is the 'Audiology Advance Practice Pathway to Care'.

### Audiology Advance Practice Care Pathway

Wait times for Ear Nose and Throat (ENT) specialist outpatient assessment are extensive across Victoria and nationally. Western Health Audiology designed, developed and tested an Audiology Advanced Practice Paediatric Ear (AAPPEAR) Clinic model and associated competency package to support timely and effective assessment of children on the routine ENT Specialist Outpatient waitlist.

This advanced practice model has supported the audiologist to extend their existing highly technical skills in diagnostic assessment to make complex and autonomous management decisions.



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Following assessment, the audiologist will refer the child to one of 4 core management pathways; Discharge (without requiring medical management); Referral to ENT Medical clinics on either an urgent or return to routine pathway; or review in AAPPEAR Clinic. Parents and carers attending the AAPPEAR Clinic have indicated high levels of satisfaction with the clinic model.

This innovative, cost-effective model of care has demonstrated that almost 50% of eligible children can be diverted away from ENT medical clinics creating additional capacity in medical run clinics. In addition, children assessed in AAPPEAR Clinic who require specialist ENT assessment often require surgery and are supported onto surgical pathways of care in a timely and efficient manner.

Most importantly, children seen in AAPPEAR Clinic are equipped to reach their full potential of hearing, speech and language development and academic performance.

### A Child's Story from the AAPPEAR CLINIC

*Enricho\* (5 years) was initially placed on the routine ENT waitlist and triaged to be seen within 3 months. After 8 months on the waitlist, he was referred a second time. By this time, AAPPEAR had commenced and his referral was diverted. He was found to have bilateral conductive hearing loss and the audiologist referred him to ENT Urgent. He was seen by ENT on the same day and booked for adenoid and grommet surgery. He underwent surgery one month later and his hearing has returned to normal.*

*(\*real name not used)*



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# Living Co-ordinated Care - Enhanced Recovery after Surgery (ERAS) Pathway

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The COVID-19 pandemic disrupted planned orthopaedic surgeries, creating a backlog and demanding innovative solutions. Western Health (WH) adopted the Enhanced Recovery After Surgery (ERAS) pathway for hip and knee arthroplasty to optimise patient care, reduce hospital stays, and improve outcomes.

Following extensive planning and stakeholder engagement, WH implemented a multi-phased approach. Governance structures were established, multidisciplinary teams assembled, and ERAS protocols tailored to local needs. The program initially launched at Williamstown in March 2023, expanding to Footscray Hospital in August. Data collection and ongoing evaluation were central to continuous improvement.

ERAS has yielded significant benefits:

**Reduced Length of Stay (LOS):** Average LOS decreased by 1.9 days (hip: 5.24 to 2.24 days; knee: 4.45 to 2.91 days), freeing up 668 additional bed days annually.

**Improved Patient Outcomes:** Readmission rates dropped by 50% across campuses (from 10% to 5%), indicating faster recovery and fewer complications.

**Standardised Care:** Standardised protocols ensured consistent high-quality care and facilitated continuous program refinement.

**Impact:** WH's ERAS program serves as a model for efficient surgical practices. Its success has inspired broader adoption across Victoria, promoting efficient and patient-centred healthcare delivery.

## Consumer Story

*Prior to the deterioration of my knee joints due to severe arthritis, I was a fit and healthy person.*

*Following deterioration, normal activities such as walking, climbing stairs, bathing, driving, and dressing had become very difficult. My regular exercise regime was impossible, and work was also a huge challenge.*

*Once my operation was confirmed I received follow-up calls from the allied health team that were encouraging, informative and supportive. The visit to the Williamstown hospital outpatient clinic to speak to a physiotherapist prior to my operation was amazing. My initial fear was alleviated by her calm and professional responses to my questions and her attention to detail.*

*Every aspect of this initial discussion unfolded to plan. I felt supported and cared for and this really helped me in many ways. I was treated respectfully and provided with a high degree of care by the anaesthetists, the surgery team, allied health staff and nursing staff.*

*The initial education session with the physiotherapy staff and the supporting written material was very helpful, as was the advice post operation.*

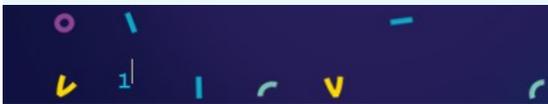
*The rehabilitation process was well organised and contributed to my recovery. The hydrotherapy sessions were the most beneficial as the environment contributed to reducing stress and alleviating anxiety.*

*I was very grateful for the opportunity to access reduced rates for taxi services.*

*The recovery plan was tailored to suit my needs and the advice I received provided me with solutions for my day-to-day activities. This included medical aids and practical advice with medications and activities. The physiotherapy staff provided me with goals, and I appreciated the feedback.*

*I have fully recovered from my operation and my life has improved dramatically. I am exercising again, and am working full time.*

*Once my surgery was confirmed the process was easy to navigate and I was provided with support at every step. My journey with Western Health has been life changing and I am in much better shape physically and mentally.*



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# Women's Health



We are dedicated to improving accessible, inclusive, high-quality services for women.

## Supporting the Journey to Motherhood

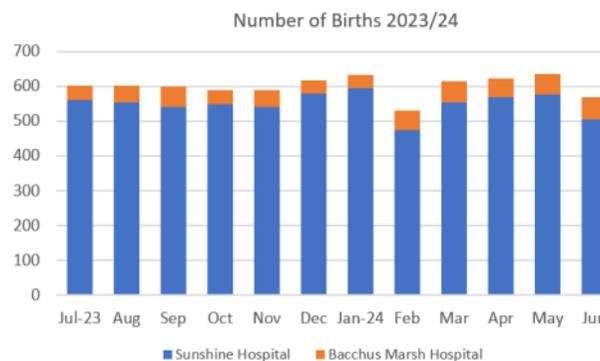
Over the past 12 months Western Health has introduced Reproductive Choice Services and partnered with the Royal Women's Hospital to provide Public Fertility Services. This partnership aims to improve access to free, comprehensive, world-class fertility treatment to women in our catchment.

Over the past year, we have also shared a new tool our researchers created to help women with kidney disease on their journey to motherhood. A team of Western Health and Deakin University researchers developed a question prompt list (QPL) that has helped women communicate with healthcare professionals about childbearing and pregnancy.



## Welcoming babies

Over 7,000 babies have been delivered over the past year at Sunshine and Bacchus Marsh Hospitals. Over 6,500 of these births occurred at Sunshine Hospital. As a Level 6 (Tertiary) Service, this facility is the second largest single site maternity service in Australia.



## Diabetes Prevention

Western Health has a high rate of gestational diabetes mellitus with around 1 in 4 pregnancies having this condition.

We have established a Type 2 Diabetes Prevention Telehealth Clinic targeting prevention of type 2 diabetes in women with a history of insulin-requiring gestational diabetes.

Clinics are well attended and led by a team of dietitians who screen, assess, educate and follow up these high-risk women from 10 weeks postpartum, and offer targeted lifestyle support.

## Gynaecological Care

Western Health provides a range of services to support the gynaecological care of women; medical services focused on the female reproductive system.

To address service demand and improve timely access to care for women using vaginal pessaries, women's health physiotherapists at Western Health designed and implemented a designated Pelvic Organ Prolapse Physiotherapy Led (POPPY) pessary clinic in 2023.

This innovative model of care has improved access to necessary regular review appointments for women who are managing pelvic organ prolapse (POP) +/- urinary incontinence (UI) with a vaginal pessary, and reduced the risk of pessary related complications.



## Living Co-ordinated Care - Advanced Practice Pelvic Organ Prolapse Physiotherapy (POPPY) Led Pessary Clinics

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Pelvic Organ Prolapse (POP) and Urinary Incontinence (UI) are common, affecting up to 20-40% of adult women. These conditions have a significant impact on women's physical, sexual and emotional health and wellbeing.

Accepted first line management of these conditions is conservative management, including vaginal pessaries.

Vaginal pessaries are silicone or plastic devices placed internally to restore the position of organs to reduce POP and UI symptoms.

Pessary care has traditionally been provided by Urogynaecology and Gynaecology medical staff at Western Health. Rising service demand and the impact of the COVID19 pandemic has resulted in increased wait times for pessary care.

To address service demand and improve timely access to care for women using vaginal pessaries, women's health physiotherapists at Western Health designed and implemented a designated Pelvic Organ Prolapse Physiotherapy Led (POPPY) pessary clinic in 2023.

Western Health's POPPY pessary clinic is the first public health designated Physiotherapy led clinic in Australia. Supported by a pessary training program with medical supervision, women's health physiotherapists have now established competency in the necessary key skills and are credentialed in the safe fitting of a range of pessary styles and ongoing review of patients with a pessary insitu.

This innovative model of care has improved access to necessary regular review appointments for women who are managing pelvic organ prolapse (POP) +/- urinary incontinence (UI) with a vaginal pessary, and reduced the risk of pessary related complications.

Both key stakeholder staff and women using pessaries are highly satisfied with the care provided in the POPPY clinic and 90% of women have been managed without requiring medical escalation.

### Consumer Story

*Mrs V is a 65 year old Vietnamese speaking lady who is fitted with a pessary by the medical team to manage a bothersome pelvic organ prolapse.*

*She is anxious and has many questions regarding her pessary after the initial fitting. She is reviewed in the POPPY clinic to check the pessary is working and is provided with reassurance, education and support to address her concerns and adjust to pessary use.*

*Six weeks later, Mrs V develops vaginal pain and is finding it difficult to walk and stand. There is no immediate medical review available, but she is able to be seen immediately in the POPPY clinic.*

*The Physiotherapist changes the pessary and she is comfortable again. This avoids a visit to the Emergency Department.*

*Mrs V will continue to use a pessary with ongoing regular review and support in the POPPY clinic. This means she can avoid or delay surgical management of her prolapse.*



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# Community Connected Services



**We continue to increase our community and home-based care, where appropriate and preferred, by consumers.**

Western Health's community based care services have continued to evolve under our Western Health at Home Division.

## Hospital in the Home Expansion

In a bid to enhance person-centred care and provide acute medical attention within the comfort of patients' homes, we have taken a significant stride forward with the expansion of our Hospital in the Home (HITH) service.

The service, which offers crucial medical care that would otherwise necessitate an inpatient stay, now has two established units and a bed capacity that has tripled in size over 3 years.

## GEM@Home Expansion

We have doubled our 'GEM@Home' bed capacity to deliver increased subacute care to elderly patients in their homes, and through training have increased the capacity for patients to dialyse at home.

## Health Service Partnership

We have also successfully implemented a falls pathway and a Residential in Reach pathway with the Victorian Virtual Emergency Department, and completed a Patient Reported Measures pilot project as part of our West Metro Health Service Partnership.



## Discharge Support

We have undertaken a trial of the rostering of our Complex Discharge Support Team in our Emergency Departments and Short Stay Units overnight to support safe discharge and ongoing care in the community.

This successful initiative saw the Team connecting patients to supportive @home services, providing homeless patients with crisis housing information and supplies, and providing other assessment and community referrals.

## Consumer Story on improving referral to HITH Services

*On the 23rd of May 2024, the organisation was at full capacity, but there was availability in the Hospital in the Home (HITH) Service. We identified 3 potential consumers in the Emergency Department under the plastics team with simple hand/thumb lacerations requiring theatre, IV antibiotics and analgesia who would have been suitable for HITH. Unfortunately, due to certain barriers, these consumers were not referred to the HITH program, resulting in the consumers staying overnight in the Emergency Department. All 3 of these consumers could have been admitted and cared for by the HITH team in their homes, returning to hospital at their allocated theatre time, saving hospital beds and aiding in access and flow.*

*A Plastics Pathway to HITH has now been developed and is operational, addressing barriers to referral and aiding the more efficient use of hospital beds and a more positive patient experience for consumers.*

*A time we did this well was when a consumer presented to the Emergency Department with a laceration to the head and a puncture below the right eye. The consumer was referred to plastics for surgical care. As a theatre was not immediately available, the consumer was referred to HITH, with a plan for IV antibiotics and fasting, returning to Sunshine Hospital in the morning for theatre. This benefited the Emergency Department/Short Stay Unit and organisation as it created capacity in those departments as well as in the organisation.*



# Communicating for Safety



We recognise the importance of effective communication to support continuous, co-ordinated and safe care for consumers.



## OUR APPROACH

Western Health's comprehensive approach to Communicating for Safety draws upon the requirements of National Standard of the same name and supports the monitoring, review and improvement of safe care.

Programs and strategies to help support communicating for safety include:

- > Communication learning packages to support staff knowledge and use of effective communication techniques
- > Reviewing clinical incidents to look for themes around clinical communication and identify areas for improvement
- > Clinical handover protocols to support good communication between our healthcare teams and clear documentation of consumer information

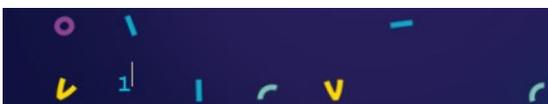
- > The use of an electronic medical record to help ensure consumer information is easily accessible and up-to-date, which can improve communication between the healthcare team
- > Key roles and responsibilities related to consumer identification processes across clinical and clerical workflows

## OUR IMPROVEMENT

We are proud of the following achievements for 2023/24:

- > Following significant design, development and testing, we went live with Phase 2.1 of our Electronic Medical Record (EMR) in July 2023. Our EMR platform now digitally links emergency departments, inpatients, outpatients and theatres so that clinicians can see the whole patient journey across our health service.
- > We have also progressed planning for the introduction of the EMR at Bacchus Marsh Hospital in late 2024
- > Continuing with promoting routine audits (eg Consent, Handover) to inform improvement approaches
- > Ongoing support for staff to publish ward round information on EMR in a more timely and effective manner

- > Our WeLearn package to set the standard for Clinical Handover has been rewritten to make it contemporary and applicable to all craft groups
- > Replacement of the electronic program to allow discharge summary and clinician letters to go straight to the GP
- > Clarifying key roles and responsibilities related to patient identification processes across clinical and clerical workflows
- > Monitoring the use of appropriate electronic communication platforms
- > The roll-out of new communication boards to all wards



# Communicating for Safety cont ...

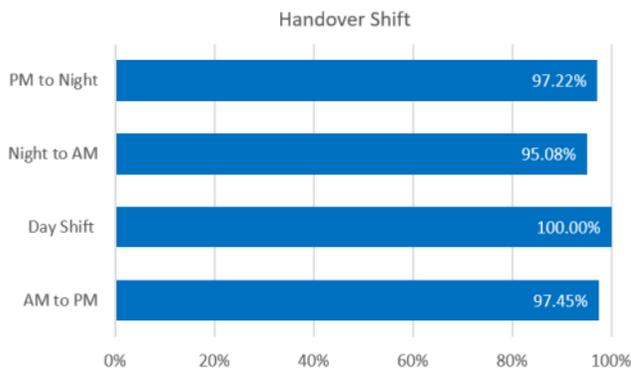


## WHAT OUR DATA TELLS US

### Clinical Handover

Clinical handovers are vital for co-ordinated care and consumer safety. They enable clinicians to exchange important information about a consumer’s condition, treatment, and needs when there is a change of staff shift or transitioning care. Effective handovers ensure continuity of care.

Discussion of critical information at handover covering all staff shifts is audited. As displayed by the following graph, latest audit results show critical information is discussed at handover across a 24 hour period over 95% of the time.



The ISBAR tool is a valuable asset in clinical handovers. It stands for Identify, Situation, Background, Assessment and Request. Western Health uses ISBAR to help clinicians communicate efficiently and ensures crucial information is passed accurately.

It’s a simple but effective way to support best care. Following expansion of the use of our Electronic Medical Record (EMR), more staff and services are supported to consistently apply the principles of ISBAR to clinical handovers.

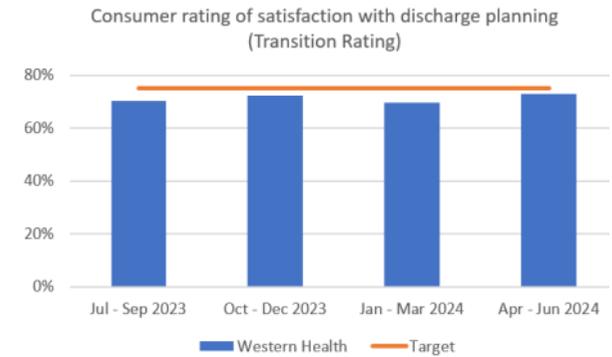
### Discharge Planning

Discharge planning and communications are essential for Best Care. They help ensure a smooth transition from the hospital to home or another care setting. By co-ordinating post-hospital care and medications, it enhances consumer recovery, reduces readmissions, and promotes overall well-being. In essence, discharge planning is a key part of comprehensive and effective healthcare.

The Victorian Health Experience Survey (VHES) includes questions for consumers on discharge planning from our inpatient services. These questions are translated to a ‘Transitions Index’ developed with the aim of improving processes relating to discharge planning. It incorporates the average of the positive scores for three adult inpatient questions relating to discharge.

The Department of Health has a target of 75% of very positive responses to questions on the Transition Index.

The following graph shows the percentage of our consumers who provided very positive responses to questions on discharge planning, care and communication from 1 July 2023 to 30 June 2024. Our results have been close to, but consistently below, the Department of Health target.



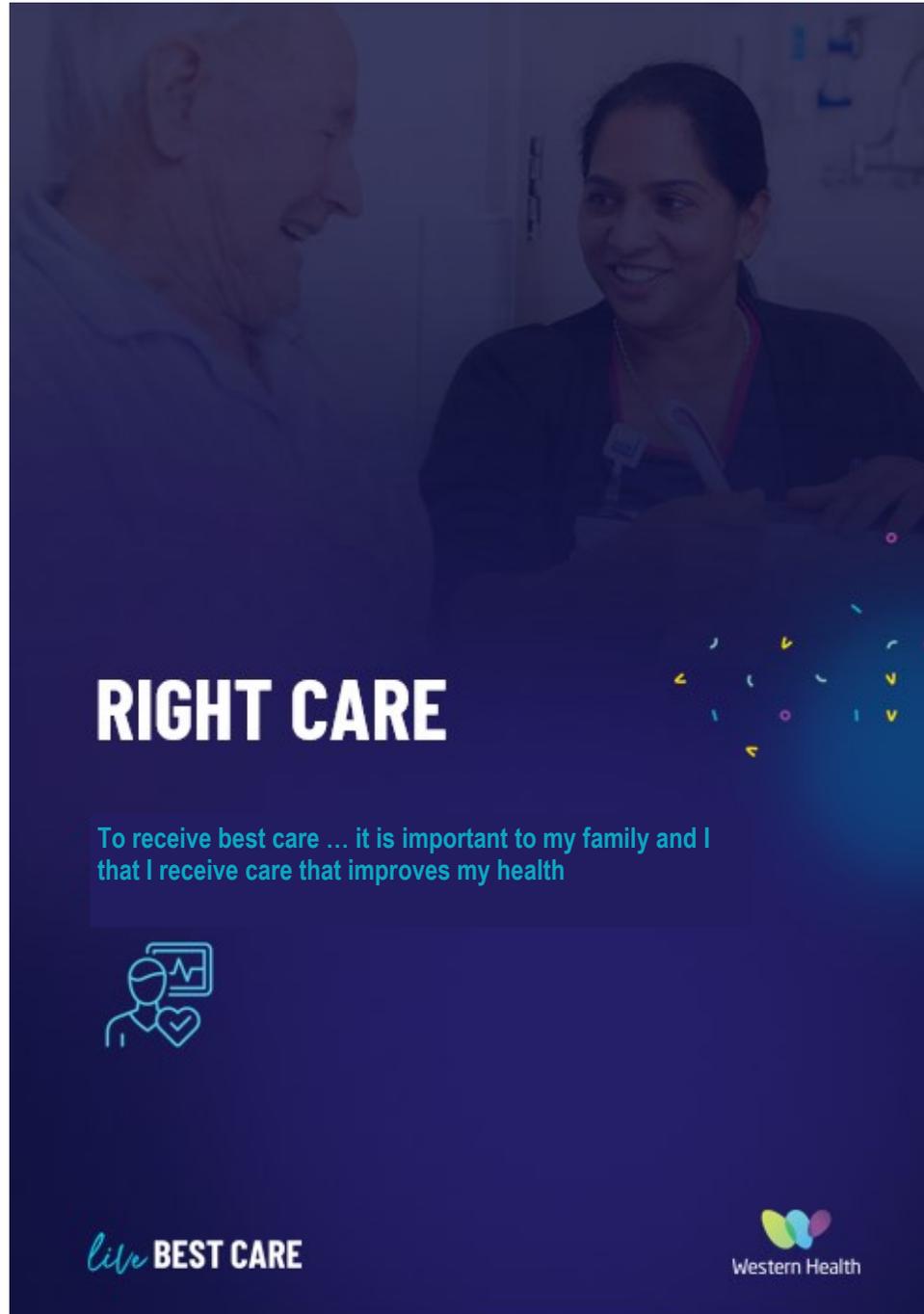
Western Health continues to explore better ways of supporting discharge planning that meet the needs of consumers, including sharing health care information with their General Practitioners (GPs).

We launched our new Secure Message Delivery Platform to GPs and clinicians caring for consumers post-discharge from our services in October 2024.

From this date we began sending a range of clinical documentation to GPs and clinicians via ‘HealthLink’. This includes discharge summaries, pharmacy medication lists and outpatient appointments.

During our pilot phase conducted in partnership with GPs and clinicians, HealthLink proved to be highly reliable in delivering documents, contributing to the vital role of communicating with our external clinical colleagues to ensure continuity of care for consumers.





# RIGHT CARE

To receive best care ... it is important to my family and I that I receive care that improves my health



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## “I RECEIVE CARE THAT MAKES ME FEEL BETTER”

The following statement on what right care means to consumers and their families was written in partnership with our consumers, and guides how our point of care staff provide right care, how our managers & senior clinicians lead right care, and how the executive and board govern right care.

*To receive best care ... it is important to my family and I that:*

> *I receive care that improves my health*

To ensure we can provide right care, we aim to provide appropriate, equitable and effective care for each person.

This section of the Quality Account focuses on activities and achievements that support improved outcomes against the Best Care goal of Right Care.

# Fit-for-purpose Facilities



The planning and implementation of new facilities supports the provision of right care in a setting designed to provide the best care possible.

## IMPROVING THE ENVIRONMENT FOR MENTAL HEALTH CARE

With construction completed, the new Sunshine Mental Health and Wellbeing Centre opened in October 2023. The 52-bed facility has been purpose-built to provide safe and supportive care for people experiencing an acute phase of mental illness.

The centre provides a welcoming and responsive environment for consumers and staff, featuring contemporary design; access to courtyards and greenery; warm, inviting materials and furniture; and a range of spaces for social, therapeutic and recreational activities.

In addition, Westside Lodge, our dual-diagnosis residential rehabilitation facility at Sunshine Hospital opened its new expanded 10 additional beds in late February 2024. The increased capacity and refurbishment provides a more comfortable experience for clients receiving specialist mental health and alcohol and other drug treatment at the facility.



## NEW FOOTSCRAY HOSPITAL

The new Footscray Hospital will provide us with a modern facility needed to support the best care possible.



The opening of our new \$1.5 billion Footscray Hospital draws closer, with all five buildings of the new facility at full height and internal fit out underway.

The new Footscray Hospital will have more than 500 beds, with capacity to treat almost 15,000 extra patients and almost 20,000 extra people to be seen by the emergency department each year.

There will also be the capacity to provide more outpatient, mental health, palliative care and surgical services.

The new Footscray Hospital is on track for opening in late 2025.

## DEVELOPING COMMUNITY HOSPITALS

Main works are close to completion for the Sunbury Community Hospital to deliver Western Health services as part of a broader and seamless patient journey within the community.

In 2024, we also look forward to commencing construction on the new Point Cook Community Hospital.

## NEW MELTON HOSPITAL

A new hospital for Melton will make sure more Victorian's in the state's booming west can get the care they need.

The successful consortia for the development of the \$1 billion+ Melton Hospital was announced in July 2024.

The Hospital will be operated by Western Health, supporting the growing and diverse communities of Caroline Springs, Rockbank, Melton and Bacchus Marsh. Once completed, it will have the capacity to treat 130,000 patients each year and see almost 60,000 patients in a 24-hour emergency department. Construction is expected to start in late 2024 and be finished in 2029.



# Living Right Care - A Tiered Approach to Mental Health Care



The Sunshine Mental Health and Wellbeing Centre (SMHWC) at Western Health opened on 19 October 2023, marking a significant development in the provision of mental health and wellbeing services for our community.

The SMHWC facilitated the introduction of our contemporary model of care which was co-designed with consumers and families. This visionary model of care is the first in the state to provide a three-tiered service model to ensure each consumer receives specialised care, tailored to their needs and stage of their recovery.

The model is defined by three distinct areas: Intensive Care (ICA), Medium Care (MCA), General Care (GCA).

A significant component of the new model of care is the standardised intake assessment that occurs on admission. The service has a designated admissions team who undertake a holistic assessment including a psychiatric assessment and trauma informed assessment recognising past history of trauma, triggers and perpetuating factors.

This supports a consistent orientation for consumers, recognising the distress and anxiety an admission can cause and provides a focus on consumer recovery goals. The rights of the consumers are an important component and wherever possible, the admission involves a family/carer and a lived experience worker.

Based on referring information and subsequent assessment consumers are then streamed to the most appropriate area for treatment, GCA, MCA or ICA.

A fundamental component of the new care model is the provision of contemporary, evidence-based treatment and interventions provided by a multidisciplinary team comprised of medical, nursing, allied health and lived experience workforce.

A core component of consumer care and treatment is the provision of comprehensive therapeutic group programs including: Health Promotion and Personal Development, Creative Expression, Productivity and Vocation, Social and Recreational.

These groups provide consumers with skills, knowledge and the opportunity to identify interests and hobbies which further promote and support their ongoing recovery post discharge.

Results to date of the new model of care demonstrate a significant improvement in the care we are providing, with a 56% reduction in seclusion rates, a 20% decrease in codes for aggressive behaviour and a 65% reduction in extended length of stay in the Emergency Department.

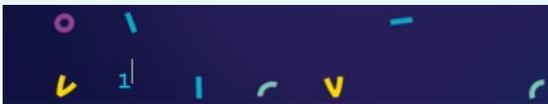
## Consumer Feedback

*"I feel safer in MCA, less aggressive and noisy people (sensory overload)"*

*"I feel I can have my own space, and it feels safer for me"*

*"People actually listen to you. Even if it's for small things."*

*"It FEELS, looks and is maintained in a way that PROMOTES long-term healing and recovery"*



# Partnering with Consumers for Right Care



Western Health is committed to partnering with consumers in the design, delivery and evaluation of our healthcare systems and services.

## OUR APPROACH

Western Health’s comprehensive approach to Partnering with Consumers draws upon requirements of the National Standard of the same name and supports the monitoring, review and improvement of quality care. Programs and strategies to help support partnering with consumers include:

- > Our Consumer First Framework (pictured right) and supporting Systems
- > Frameworks and Plans supporting Diversity, Equity and Inclusion
- > Dedicated roles such as the Operations Manager of Diversity and Inclusion, and the Manager of Consumer Partnerships
- > A Consumer First Committee with consumer representation and a board level Community Advisory Committee
- > Resources and procedures to support Consumer First Systems
- > Orientation and Learning Packages designed to support staff understand the value of partnering with consumers and how to do this effectively
- > A consumer advisor workforce to engage in and support consumer participation activity
- > In-house and externally sponsored opportunities for consumers to provide feedback on best care
- > Engagement of consumers in service co-design and development activity



## OUR IMPROVEMENT

We are proud of the following achievements for 2023/24:

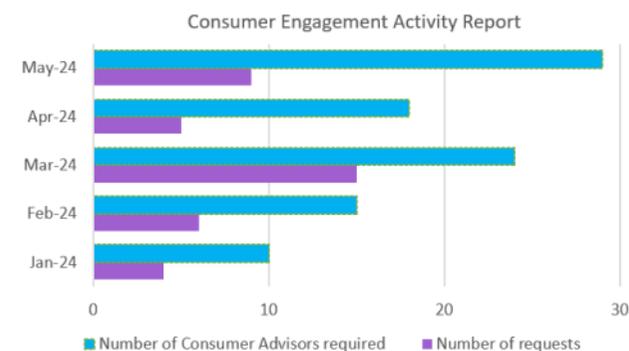
- > Launch of ‘Your Healthcare Journey’ Booklet, designed for all inpatients to provide essential information to consumers and families during their hospital stay.
- > Streamlining of our consumer engagement process, ensuring that all activities are co-ordinated through the Consumer Partnership Team to allow for accurate reporting of consumer engagement activities and timely remuneration for consumers
- > Go-live of a Consumer Engagement site on our Live Best Care microsite to provide the most up-to-date information to support staff in partnering with consumers at both the systems and services level
- > Implementation of the Lived Experience Advisor Program (LEAP) within our mainstream services,

enabling consumers with a variety of lived experiences of health care and diversity to work closely with clinicians to ensure more consumer-focused outcomes

- > Collaboration of specialist support teams across Western Health to create a more equitable and accessible health service for the community we serve. These teams include Disability Liaison Service, Aboriginal Health Liaison Service, Interpreter services, Spiritual Care team, and Gender, Sex and Sexuality liaison Service.

## ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITY SNAPSHOT

The graph below shows the number of consumer engagement requests in the first five months of 2024, as well as the number of consumer advisors provided. 39 requests were received, with a total number of consumer advisors used to support the monitoring, review and improvement of care at just under 100.



## Living Right Care - Taking the LEAP

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At Western Health, our mission is to provide safe, effective, consumer-centred, and equitable care.

We understand the profound influence of a consumer's lived experience in healthcare. This understanding prompted us to introduce the Lived Experience Advisor Program (LEAP) within our mainstream health services.

LEA roles, although well-known in mental health and the disability space, are a new venture in mainstream health with Western Health being the first Victorian health service to support these roles.

This initiative was identified as a priority by Consumer Advisors who experienced power imbalances during project participation and through the Western Health Diversity Equity and Inclusion (DEI) Framework consultation which aims for self-determination and increased voice of health system users.

LEAP integrates consumers as Lived Experience Advisors (LEAs), cultivating partnerships and fostering a culture of engagement.

Our LEAs, sourced from diverse backgrounds, leverage advanced co-design methods to prioritise the consumer voice in all projects.

To ensure inclusivity and diversity, LEAs actively engage with a community of practice to gather varied perspectives for their projects.

They also collaborate with our Consumer Advisor network, which comprises over 130 individuals from diverse backgrounds, including different ethnicities, genders, sexual orientations, and abilities.



This innovative approach, blending subject matter expertise with lived experience, has effectively addressed historical power imbalances inherent in clinician-led initiatives.

The resounding success of LEAP is evident in the enhanced quality of our consumer-centred projects, garnering widespread recognition from both consumers and staff.

Some of the examples of how LEAP has humanised healthcare include:

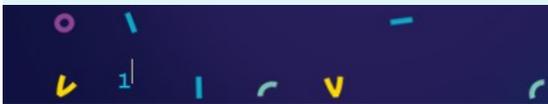
- > Equity Impact Assessments: By incorporating lived experiences, we better address the needs of inmates in custodial health, fostering more equitable service
- > Redesign of Youth Drug Health Service Platforms: Engaging a young person ensures the service resonates with youth, creating effective, relatable educational materials

- > Carers Project: Leveraging carers' lived experiences, we developed an overnight stay program addressing their needs, making it more successful and sustainable
- > Consumer Information Review: Involving consumers in reviewing educational materials ensures clarity, eliminating medical jargon

This program exemplifies our unwavering dedication to seamlessly integrating lived experience into professional healthcare practice.

### Lived Experience Advisor Story

*I have been a part of the LEAP for about a month and I can positively say it is the best job I have had. I have never felt more respected for my opinions and supported with my work. I fit under multiple different lived experience catchments, including, LGBTQIA+, gender diverse, neuro-divergent, young person, and also young carer. I feel that I am able to make helpful suggestions for each of the different categories and feel that my voice is heard and implemented. I am also a Co-Chair of the Western Health Youth consumers committee (WHY) where we give young consumers opportunity to have their voice heard and their ideas implemented. The LEAP managers provide all of the support I could possibly need and are very understanding of my inexperience and try their very best to help me to improve my skill set. I have done lots of work with the diversity, equity and inclusions team over the last 18 months as a consumer advisor and now as a lived experience advisor and I have seen my ideas and input come to life. (Phoenix)*



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# Supporting vulnerable members of our Community



Western Health is committed to ensuring vulnerable people within our community are assisted, not only with their health care but are linked with appropriate service systems when needed.



## Supporting Healthcare in the Custodial Setting

From 1 July 2023, Western Health began providing primary health care at Victoria's only maximum-security women's prison, located in Ravenhall. Our Custodial Health team of more than 80 staff, are involved in delivering this new service at the Dame Phyllis Frost Centre. Among them are General Practitioners, registered and enrolled nurses, Aboriginal liaison officers and allied health professionals.

Western Health has developed a Model of Care to support women in custody who often have complex and interrelated health and wellbeing needs. The Model is based on principles of health equity and reflects our commitment to provide consumers with opportunities to improve their health and wellbeing.

Since 1 July, Western Health has worked to imbed this Model of Care, including enhancing support for consumers with diabetes, thyroid and endocrine issues, and implementing a comprehensive range of Addiction Medicine programs.

## Leading and Supporting Family Violence Initiatives

We have also continued our commitment to lead and support Family Violence initiatives both locally and across partner services within the Western Metropolitan region.

Our podcast, *If Only Someone Asked*, provides practical and evidence-based advice to health professionals to better support victim-survivors.

It also delves into the drivers of family violence.



## Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

Globally, trans and gender diverse communities are also disproportionately affected by prejudice-motivated violence and discrimination.

This is also prevalent in a healthcare setting. At Western Health, these experiences are unacceptable and we are committed to providing a safe environment, and appropriate care, to trans and gender diverse members of our community. We foster an inclusive place where patients and staff are supported to live as their authentic selves.

Our Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Team has introduced a staff education program on understanding sex, gender and gender diversity, pronouns and inclusive language. Inclusion is all of our responsibility and we are so pleased to be able to continue learning.

Over the past 12 months, we have also been working on a new Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Framework for Western Health. This Framework includes our consumers and our workforce.

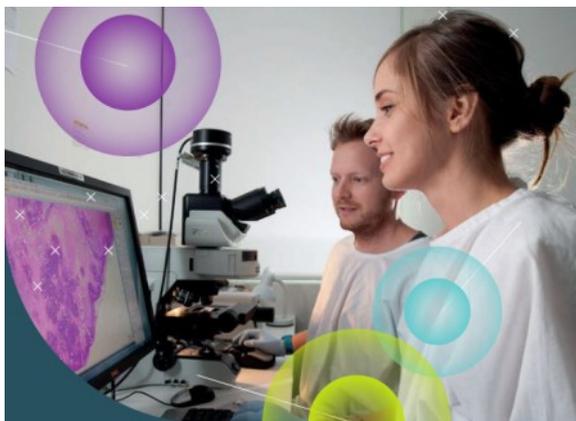
The Framework recognises that more than a series of activities and events is needed to achieve our ambitions. We recognise that structural and cultural shifts are necessary to create significant, life-changing and permanent change.



# Improving Health Outcomes



By focusing on health outcomes, we can identify areas for improvement, allocate resources more effectively, and implement strategies that promote overall community well-being.



## RESEARCH FUNDING

Western Health continues to secure funding grants to support the important research that can benefit prevention and health promotion.

Within the past 12 months, Western Health researchers received almost \$2 million from the Medical Research Future Fund (MRFF) for two innovative health research projects.

Our team are working with partners at Deakin University to co-design a self-management program with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples with type 2 diabetes.

Researchers and clinicians are also implementing and evaluating a falls prevention education program for patients and staff in a project led by the University of Western Australia.

## ADDRESSING CHRONIC DISEASE

With pockets of extreme disadvantage, the diverse communities in Western Health’s catchment are prone to higher-than-average rates of deadly conditions including cancer, diabetes, kidney disease, heart disease and stroke.

But the story is beginning to change as our staff study the worst affected communities in a bid to revolutionise treatment, management, diagnosis and prevention of many of these chronic diseases.

Our efforts are gaining traction with a range of promising research and innovation underway, ranging from world-first cancer trials to digital tools in GP clinics and grassroots initiatives to prevent falls.

The Future Health Today (FHT) Program is a partnership between the University of Melbourne (UoM) and Western Health to build and implement a digital tool that uses medical records to warn GPs when a consumer is at risk of cancer, chronic kidney disease, diabetes, heart disease and stroke.

The technology automates the detection of disease, so it can be picked up and treated earlier in the primary care setting. Analysis of its randomised controlled trials of chronic kidney disease and cancer risk modules is underway.

Now in its sustainability phase, over 120 general practices were engaged with FHT on an ongoing basis by the end of 2023.

## Diabetes Management

Western Health is supporting more children diagnosed with diabetes to receive care closer to home following the launch of a new Paediatric Diabetes Service.

Inpatient and outpatient care is being provided to eligible patients with a new diagnosis of type 1 or type 2 diabetes. Patients receive care and education from a range of health professionals, including: paediatric endocrinologists, general paediatricians, clinical nurse consultants - diabetes, paediatric nurses, pharmacists, dietitians and social workers.

## Asthma Management

We have also engaged in Department of Health supported projects to optimise the management of asthma in inner west communities.

Western Health in collaboration with primary care, pharmacies, and schools worked with consumers over 3 workshops as part of a systems change process. This has resulted in an increase in GP, pharmacy and self-referrals to our Paediatric Community Care Coordinators, as well as updated action plans, online resources for clinicians and young people and their families.



## Improving Health Outcomes cont ...

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### WESTERN PUBLIC HEALTH UNIT

Western Health runs one of three local Public Health Units (LPHUs) in Metropolitan Melbourne.

December 2023 saw the successful transition of the Department of Health Communicable Disease Integration Project. LPHUs (including WPHU) are now completing case, contact and outbreak management for 84 of the 87 notifiable conditions under the Public Health and Wellbeing Act (2008).

WPHU's Population Health Catchment Plan (launched in July 2023) sets out priorities and proposed actions for population health promotion over the next 6 years.

Three focus areas for initial action cover: improving food systems and healthy eating; reducing tobacco-related harm and vaping; and climate change and its impact on health.

These focus areas are directly connected to preventing avoidable chronic diseases such as heart disease, type 2 diabetes, some cancers and dental caries.

In line with this plan new in-language resources promoting healthy lifestyle habits early in life were launched in February 2024.

In an Australian first, Western Health culturally adapted Deakin University's INFANT (Infant Feeding, Active play and NuTrition) Program handouts and videos into community languages, reaching Punjabi, Hindi, Urdu, Arabic, Mandarin, and Vietnamese-speaking families.



Western Health also upskilled bicultural workers to deliver INFANT to communities, combined with support for local government.

The goal is to enable INFANT to reach all 51,000 children aged 0-2 years in the WPHU catchment.

WPHU has also partnered with Deakin Health Economics to model the impact of small changes to eating habits in children in the WPHU catchment, including cost savings to the economy and reduction in the demand for health services for nine different chronic conditions. The validated health economic tool can be applied to a range of population health promotion initiatives and has been offered to other local public health units, health services and health promotion agencies to support economic evaluation of initiatives.

Over the past year, WPHU investigated where vapes are sold. Conversations with community members revealed misinformation about vaping harms and a lack of accessible information for young people.

These insights informed bespoke community sessions on vaping harms and public health advocacy for reform. WPHU's focus on vaping continues, with incremental changes underway to convert "no smoking" to "no smoking and vaping" signage across health services, community health and on local government assets.

WPHU supported Melton City Council to submit a VicHealth Vaping grant through the provision of epidemiological data and contribution to project proposal. WPHU also prepared a submission for the Victorian Parliamentary Inquiry into vaping and tobacco controls.

## Living Right Care - the INFANT Project

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Western Health is delivering culturally appropriate support for families at a critical juncture in their lives, to set their children up for lifelong healthy habits.

At the Western Public Health Unit (WPHU), a division within Western Health, we serve 1.34 million people living across eight local government areas to deliver and support evidence-based population health promotion programs, including a strong focus on healthy eating.

Our work aims to reduce preventable chronic disease such as heart disease and diabetes by supporting the health and wellbeing of our communities from the very beginning.

Our diverse population has almost half of its households (44%) speaking a language other than English at home. Existing health promotion programs may not be as acceptable and impactful when delivered only in English.

To better support our young families, we took action to ensure our programs were in the languages our communities speak.

Our innovative work adapted an existing evidence-based program, INFANT (Infant Feeding, Active play and NutriTion) for the top six spoken languages for Punjabi, Hindi, Urdu, Arabic, Mandarin, and Vietnamese-speaking families.

We accelerated support to reach new parents and carers in our multicultural communities by proactively engaging the Multiculture Centre for Women's Health.

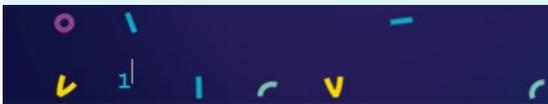
So far, we have created 72 new resources, including 24 pictorial and 48 videos in six languages, which feature real local families and are culturally representative of the communities we serve.

We have embedded INFANT within our local government area experiencing the greatest need. There has been a 285% increase in trained INFANT facilitators across our catchment.

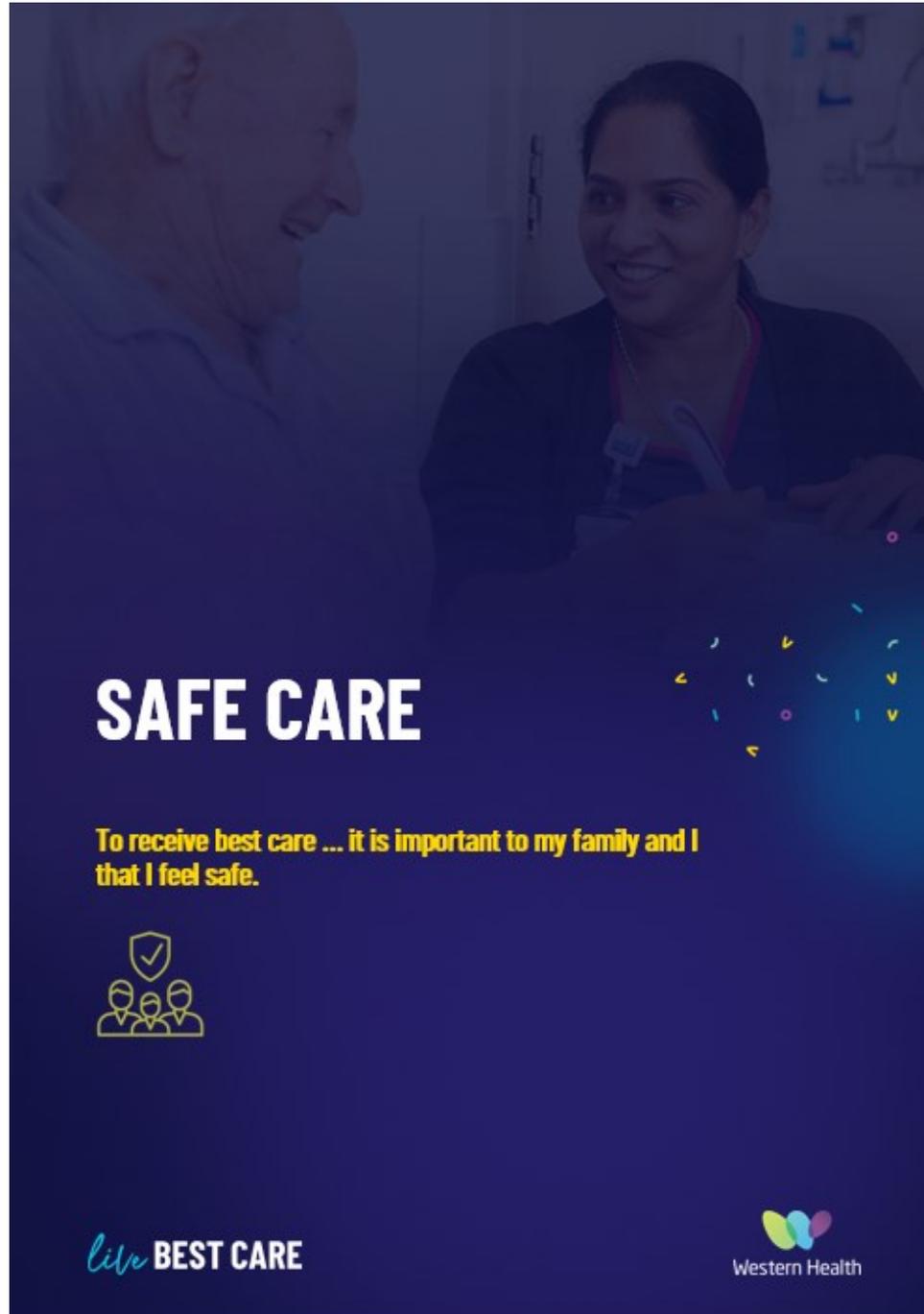
Western Health's adaptation and implementation of INFANT delivers culturally appropriate support for families and their children to set them up lifelong healthy habits.

The goal is to enable INFANT to reach all 51,000 children aged 0-2 years in the West. Meeting this goal would save \$419 million in healthcare costs and avoid 14,620 cases of diabetes in the WPHU catchment alone, if children consumed the equivalent of two fewer sweet biscuits per day over their lifetime.

*To view and access the culturally adapted resources, please visit the following website: [Mums, Dads, and Carers | INFANT \(infantprogram.org\)](https://www.westernhealth.org.au/infantprogram.org). You will need to enter your postcode to access the resources.*



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### “I FEEL SAFE”

The following statement on what safe care means to consumers and their families was written in partnership with our consumers, and guides how our point of care staff provide safe care, how our managers & senior clinicians lead safe care, and how the executive and board govern safe care.

*To receive best care ... it is important to my family and I that:*

> *I feel safe*

To ensure we can provide safe care, we aim to design and deliver care and services to minimise the risk of consumer harm.

This section of the Quality Account focuses on activities and achievements that support improved outcomes against the Best Care goal of Safe Care.

# Living Safe Care

## PATIENT SAFETY CULTURE

We provide our staff with the opportunity to have their say on a wide range of matters that relate to working and caring for consumers at Western Health through participation in the state-wide People Matter Survey.

Within this Survey are a set of questions specifically focused on consumer safety. Staff responses against these questions help us to check whether systems and culture for Safe Care are strong.

2023 results showed Western Health rated in line with the average for Victorian health services for individual safety questions and met the Department of Health target for 'percentage of staff with an overall positive response to safety and culture questions'.

## ADVERSE EVENTS

Adverse events in consumer safety are identified as preventable incidents resulting in harm to consumers. Such harm may include an adverse event as a result of a medication error. This is a preventable complication from care provision that was not as planned and intended that necessitates additional treatment and extended hospital stays.



Western Health is dedicated to fostering a culture that encourages:

- > All staff to report adverse events
- > Prompt, open and honest communication with consumers and their families when an adverse event occurs, including the provision of a genuine apology and open disclosure
- > A robust review of adverse events to assess whether the care provided was appropriate and to utilise insights from the review to identify opportunities for improvements to enhance clinical systems and practices.

All adverse events at Western Health are documented in the Victorian Health Incident Management System (VHIMS) Riskman, as mandated by the Department of Health. These events are thoroughly investigated by the treating team. Events that result in moderate to severe harm are classified as Severe Adverse Patient Safety Events (SAPSE) and have a more rigorous review process, often involving external subject matter expert reviewers.

In 2023/2024, Western Health reported 19 consumer adverse events with a severity rating of 1 (severe harm) and 50 events with a severity rating of 2 (moderate harm). Of these, 36 events met the criteria for a SAPSE.

Sentinel Events are potentially wholly preventable adverse events that result in permanent harm or death of a consumer. These require notification to Safer Care Victoria.

Western Health has remained compliant with Safer Care Victoria requirements for reporting and investigating these incidents. There were eight events that met criteria for a Sentinel Event in 2023/24.

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Of note, all sentinel events are a subset of SAPSEs, and while all sentinel events meet SAPSE criteria, not all SAPSEs will be sentinel events. This is based on the level of harm sustained.

The following changes have been implemented in 2023/24 in relation to the management and review of adverse patient safety events:

## Clinical Council

A Clinical Council has been established and commenced in October 2023 to replace the former Serious Adverse Events Committee. It is now embedded within our Best Care Committee structure and is an essential element of our clinical governance framework.

The Council oversees investigations and reviews related to SAPSEs, but most importantly plays a vital role in offering governance and oversight to progression of recommendations that have been developed as a part of serious incident review. Recommendation review has been supported by the implementation of a digital Recommendations Register.

## Consumer involvement

Western Health continues to prioritise consumer involvement in the review of adverse patient safety events. For sentinel events, an external consumer is always included on the review panel, and this practice is often extended to panel reviews of SAPSE events as well.

In a significant enhancement to our approach, we are now also incorporating consumer participation in non-panel SAPSE reviews. This ensures consumer insights and perspectives are integrated across all levels of review, allowing a more comprehensive understanding of the events and fostering a culture of transparency and accountability.

# Preventing and Controlling Infection



Healthcare-associated infections are complications of healthcare that have a significant impact on the health and wellbeing of individuals.

## OUR APPROACH

Western Health's comprehensive infection prevention and control program is responsible for the monitoring, prevention and control of hospital acquired and/or healthcare-associated infection.

Procedures and strategies to help reduce the risk of infection include:

- > A dedicated Infection Prevention and Control Service and Committee
- > Infection prevention and control programs, such as hand hygiene, use of personal protective equipment (PPE), staff immunisation and invasive device management
- > Strategic consumer placement and accurate recording of consumer records on admission
- > Vigorous antimicrobial stewardship to control inappropriate use of antibiotics and deliver ongoing education and training
- > Audit of the hospital environment cleaning level to maintain accepted quality



## OUR IMPROVEMENT

We are proud of the following achievements for 2023/24:

- > The successful introduction of the Business as Usual (BAU) COVID Matrix which has played a vital role in maintaining safety within our hospitals
- > Infection Prevention gap analysis and development of Link groups to support the transition of Mental Health and Custodial Services to Western Health
- > The launch of Infection Prevention online dashboards which support real-time monitoring
- > The introduction of a computerized tracking system for reusable medical devices (RMDs) at Bacchus Marsh Hospital
- > The introduction of the WH DIVA (Difficult IV Access) pathway which demonstrates our commitment to improving patient experiences and

outcomes, especially in challenging intravenous access situations.

- > The introduction of consumer information screen savers for Peripherally Inserted Central Catheters (PIVC) which serve as a valuable educational tool, ensuring that patients are well-informed about their medical procedures and care
- > SAB Taskforce actions, with key focus on improving peripheral intravenous management in alignment to the National Clinical Care Standard to reduce preventable infections from PIVC, improved EMR documentation and dashboard reports to identify overdue and high risk PIVCs for removal, updated WeLearn module
- > CPO Taskforce and Incident Management Team actions to address ongoing CPO Transmission Risk Area events with improved risk assessment of patients on admission with timely isolation and screening, ICU MRO screening, signage, improved equipment and room cleaning
- > The introduction of a Westernised hand hygiene WeLearn module
- > Ongoing efforts to reduce risk of infections related to biofilm in clinical handbasins with improved audit results, awareness and risk mitigation strategies



# Preventing and Controlling Infection cont ...



## CONSUMER STORY

A member of the Infection Prevention team received a phone call from the wife of a consumer who had been identified as part of a Carbapenemase-producing organism (CPO) Transmission Risk Area event and had been tested.

During this phone call the consumers's wife made several complaints about the cleaning on the ward where the consumer received care.

This consumer story was shared at our Infection Prevention Committee, which triggered an internal investigation.

This led to the identification and rectification of issues related to equipment and environmental cleaning, and Personal Protective Equipment practices.

Prompt action was taken, and the Unit Manager contacted the consumer's wife with an apology and conveyed the outcomes to the concerned family member, who greatly appreciated the response.

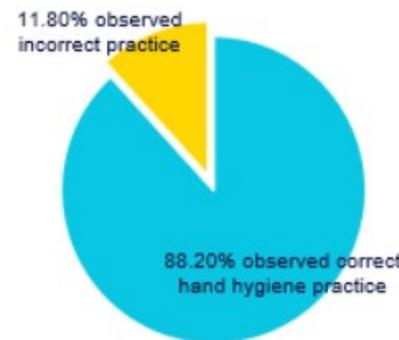
## WHAT OUR DATA TELLS US

### Monitoring effective hand hygiene practices

**As reflected in the graph below, the Western Health rate for observed correct hand hygiene practice for 2023/24 was 88.2% against a target of 80%**

Effective hand hygiene is a leading strategy in the prevention of healthcare associated infection.

**Rate of correct hand hygiene practice 2023/24  
Department of Health Target = 80%**



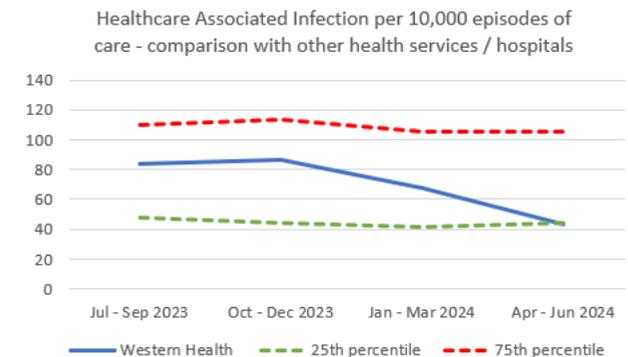
Maintaining good hand hygiene practice is taken seriously at Western Health and consumers are encouraged to enquire about whether their healthcare worker is following good hand hygiene practice.

## Healthcare Associated Infections

Western Health submits data on infections acquired in hospital to the Health Roundtable, an independent knowledge-sharing group that provides detailed reports on a number of clinical indicators that compares our results against other health services.

**As reflected in the graph below, Western Health's rate of healthcare associated infection compares well against other health services/hospitals**

*Note: with this type of graph, it is positive to be below the green line or between the green and red lines.*



## Preventing and Controlling Infection cont ...



### Fighting the Flu and other vaccine preventable diseases

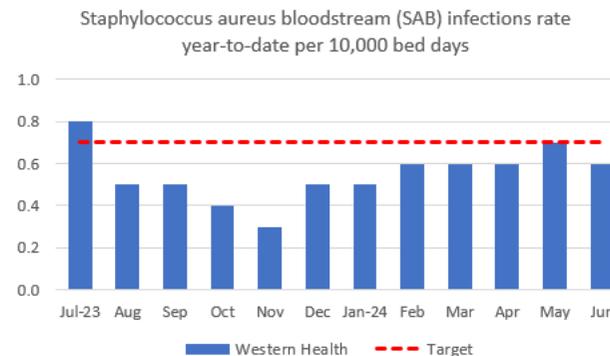
Vaccine preventable diseases such as measles, chickenpox and influenza are serious and contagious diseases that can lead to hospitalisation or even death. Healthcare workers may be exposed to, and pass on these diseases to consumers. Maintaining immunity in the healthcare worker population helps prevent transmission of these diseases to and from healthcare workers and consumers. Every year Western Health staff are encouraged to receive an annual influenza vaccination.

*The overall influenza vaccination uptake for Western Health staff in 2024 was 96% against the state target of 94%.*



### Staphylococcus aureus Bacteraemia (SAB)

*In 2023/24 Western Health's SAB rate was 0.6, a favourable result against the state-wide target of no higher than 0.7*



Staphylococcus aureus, also known as 'golden staph', is a common bacteria that lives on the skin and in some people's noses. It is a leading cause of community and hospital acquired blood stream infections causing significant illness and sometimes death.

Staphylococcus aureus bacteraemia (SABs) or blood stream infections in hospitals are usually associated with invasive devices used in hospitals and healthcare services, in particular with peripheral intravenous catheters.

All healthcare associated SABs that occur at Western Health are investigated by the Infection Prevention and Infectious Diseases teams, and the doctors working in the area.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, we observed an increase in SAB cases, likely influenced by the heightened use of gloves.

Following a range of strategies, the SAB rate significantly fell in the first half of 2023/24. Whilst remaining under Department of Health target, the rate increased during the second half of 2023/24.

Our dedicated SAB Taskforce has reinforced and progressed strategies to keep the SAB rate under target.



# Medication Safety



Western Health is committed to ensuring all medications are prescribed, dispensed, administered and stored safely.

## OUR APPROACH

Western Health's comprehensive approach to Medication Safety draws upon requirements of the National Standard of the same name and supports the monitoring, review and improvement of safe medication management practices. Programs and strategies to help support safe medication management include:

- > Medication Safety Clinical Governance Structure
- > Regular medication safety audits such as the Medication Safety Initiatives Audit and Drug Security Audit
- > Processes and procedures to support appropriate documentation of allergies and adverse drug reactions
- > Processes and procedures to support medication review of high risk consumers and to manage storage and supply of high risk 'APINCH' medication

APINCH spelled out is:

A: Anti-infectives (antibiotics, antifungals, antivirals)

P: Potassium and electrolytes

I: Insulin

N: Narcotics, other sedatives, antipsychotics, Lithium and neuromuscular blocking agents

C: Chemotherapeutic agents (including immunosuppressants) and Clozapine

H: Heparin and other Anticoagulants (including antiplatelet agents)

Our Medication Safety Committee (MSC) oversees the safe management of medications at Western Health.

This multi-disciplinary quality and safety committee is responsible for the monitoring of medication performance measures and issues. The Committee also oversees the development of strategies and improvement initiatives to promote safe medication practices.

Active consumer representation on MSC assists with implementation of systems for medication management with a 'Consumer First' perspective when designing person centred care.

There are a number of sub-committees reporting to MSC:

- > Adverse Drug Reaction Committee (ADRC),
- > Chemotherapy Governance Committee (CGC) and
- > Drug & Therapeutics Committee (DTC).
- > Our Antimicrobial Stewardship Working Group (AMS WG) also reports to DTC.



**CONSUMER FOCUS** ... we talk to consumers about their experiences with medication management and share this information to improve care.

Shanika\* presented to the Sunshine Hospital Emergency Department. From there, she was admitted to the Short Stay Unit for ongoing treatment and observation. (\*not real name)

### Tell me about your experience with how you are provided your medications

*Shanika does not normally take any medications at home but is allergic to Nurofen as it upsets her stomach. Shanika stated the main type of medication she had been prescribed while in the Short Stay Unit was to relieve her pain. The medication Endone was the most effective in relieving her pain.*

### Do the staff check and scan your ID wristband before administering medication?

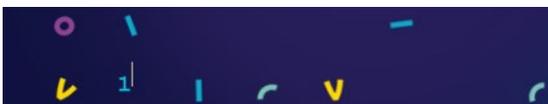
*Shanika said the nursing staff check her ID band and ask what she is allergic to before giving medication. Shanika said that two nurses always do the checks if she is being given Endone.*

### Have you been provided with any information about your medications while in hospital?

*Shanika said she had been provided with information related to her pain medications and was aware that Endone is likely to cause constipation.*

### Is there something you would like us to improve related your medications?

*Shanika said all the staff had been very good and were very responsive when she asked for pain relief.*



# Medication Safety cont ...



## OUR IMPROVEMENT

We are proud of the following achievements for 2023/24:

- > Strong links to our education and training team with regular medication safety slides and communication to our intern training program and nursing and midwifery educators
- > Continual engagement with consumer representatives on the Medication Safety Committee (MSC)
- > Collaboration with our capital development team to plan and improve medication management at future sites
- > Growing our digital capability with the expansion of our Electronic Medical Record (EMR) systems
- > Embedding our medication safety champion program across Western Health wards and departments
- > Ongoing use of our Medication Safety Dashboard for staff to review, analyse and work towards reducing the number of medication errors in their areas.
- > Completion of annual Medication Safety and Security Audit (MSSA) across all WH clinical areas
- > Improvement in compliance of monthly register checks for Controlled Drugs
- > Scheduling of Medication Safety Leadership Walkarounds in clinical areas
- > IV Line Labelling quality improvement projects
- > Adverse Drug Reaction Recording Process
- > Pharmacist involvement in generating discharge prescriptions - pilot study
- > Enhancements to Venous Thromboembolism Prophylaxis (VTE) Risk assessment form

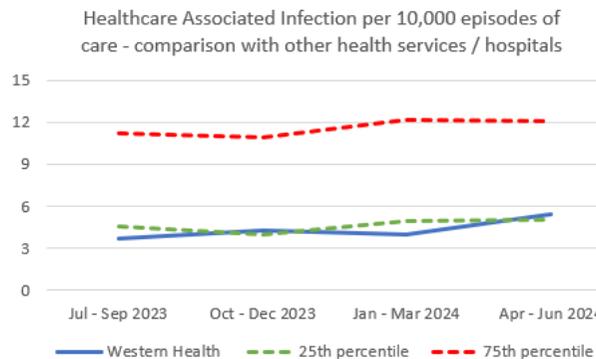
- > Planning of automated medication dispensing cabinets at the new Footscray Hospital
- > Promotion of weekly Medication Safety Slides at 'Grand Rounds' meetings with clinicians
- > Development of Medication Safety Alerts and posters

## WHAT OUR DATA TELLS US

### Medication Complications

*The following graph shows Western Health's rate of medication complications in 2022-23 compares well against other health services / hospitals.*

*Note: with this type of graph, it is positive to be below the green line or between the green and red lines.*

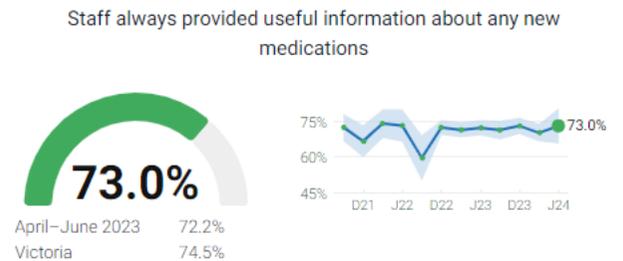


## Consumer Information

The Victorian Health Experience Survey (VHES) includes consumer feedback on information provided on new medications.

The following graph shows the percentage of our inpatients who said staff **always** provided useful information about any new medication they were provided as part of their care. The figure of 73.0% covers consumer responses from April - June 2024. The line graph shows responses between December 2021 and June 2024.

*The following graph shows consumer satisfaction with being provided useful information about new medication is similar to the average of health services across Victoria but there is still room for improvement.*



## Appropriate use of blood and blood products

The use of blood and blood products needs to be correctly assessed as appropriate, and procedures followed for their safe and efficient use.

Treatment with blood and blood products can be lifesaving; however their use is not without risk and can lead to complications and adverse outcomes for consumers. Risk generally falls into two main categories: procedural errors and reactions.

### OUR APPROACH

Western Health’s comprehensive approach to Blood and Blood Product Management draws upon requirements of the National Standard of the same name and supports the monitoring, review and improvement of safe care.

Programs and strategies to help support Blood Management include:

- > Informed consumer consent for blood and blood products, with consumer information in multiple languages available on the Western Health Internet
- > Use of key performance indicators, incident and adverse reaction reporting, and audits to review and enhance blood and blood product management
- > Blood and blood product policies, procedures and protocols which support clinical practice in line with National Consumer Blood Management Guidelines
- > Participation in the Victorian State Haemovigilance Reporting Scheme
- > Blood product and transfusion medicine educational resources for clinical and ancillary staff

- > Optimisation and conservation of consumer’s own blood
- > Equipment and processes to minimise blood and blood product wastage

### OUR IMPROVEMENT

We are proud of the following achievements for 2023/24:

- > Regular WH Blood Management Newsletters distributed to all staff members, providing new information and updates on upcoming changes
- > Continued development and education of the new Blood Management Team
- > Collaborating with our colleagues in communicating for safety in managing risk and improving patient identification routines
- > The integration of Bacchus Marsh & Melton blood management processes and forms into WH systems and policies
- > Launching our new blood management dashboard for data reporting
- > Innovation to ensure emergency supplies of blood and blood products are available at Bacchus Marsh Hospital
- > Planning progressive methods of blood management education
- > Improving the systems and equipment used for transport and storage of blood and blood products



- > The WH Blood Champion portfolio initiative including team meetings, individual & group development days.
- > 100 ‘Patient experience and understanding of consent’ surveys
- > Transfusion alert cards & information pamphlets
- > The planning and development of an Advanced Scope of Practice course for Nurse Practitioners
- > A 12-month Massive Transfusion Protocol audit in collaboration with the Anaesthetics Department
- > Communication boards in patient facing spaces across all sites
- > Managing Blood Transfusion reactions – procedure for clinical staff.
- > The completion of the Lifeblood external audit validating all O neg use for the past 12-months

# Appropriate use of blood and blood products cont ...



## WHAT OUR DATA TELLS US

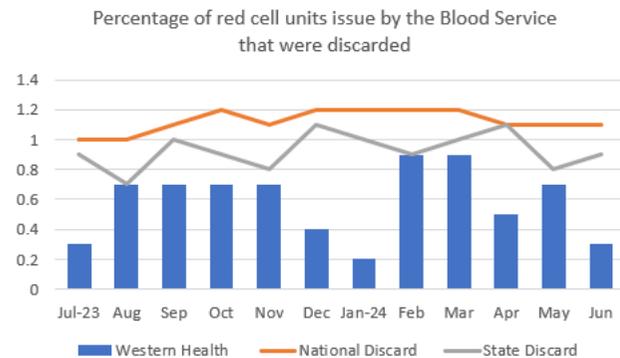
### Wastage of Blood Products

Red blood cells which are prescribed for consumers who have anaemia are the most frequently transfused blood product at Western Health.

Donated red blood cell units have a life span of 42 days after which time they cannot be given to consumers and must be discarded. For this reason, we work very closely with our pathology service providers to continually review the stock (inventory) of blood products especially red blood cell units we keep onsite in the laboratories and closely monitor our wastage.

We measure our performance against the State and National discard rates that are provided by the Blood Service monthly.

*As can be seen from the graph below, Western Health's red cell unit discard rate is consistently lower than one or both of the State or National discard rates.*



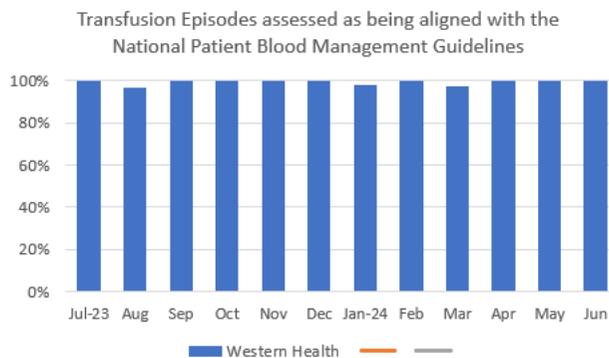
### Appropriate Use of Blood Products

Australia has one of the safest blood supplies in the world, however the transfusion of blood products is not without risk and can lead to complications and adverse outcomes for consumers. Blood transfusions should only be given if the potential clinical benefits outweigh the potential risks to the consumer.

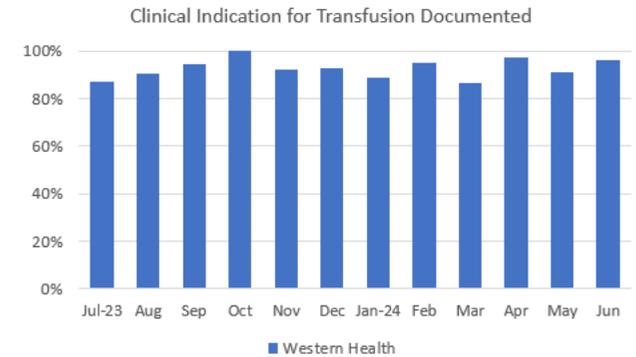
As part of our Blood Management clinical audit program we undertake regular audits of transfusion episodes to review:

- > Alignment of our practice against the National Consumer Blood Management Guidelines
- > Documentation of clinical indication for transfusion

*Of the four hundred and sixty seven red cell transfusion episodes audited between July 2023 and June 2024, 99.3% were assessed as being aligned with the National Consumer Blood Management Guidelines.*



*Of the three hundred and eighty three transfusion episodes audited between July 2023 and June 2024, 92.7% had clinical indication for transfusion documented.*



# Managing Recognition and Response to Acute Deterioration



Ensuring consumers who have unexpected deterioration in their medical condition receive appropriate and timely care through early recognition, early escalation and early intervention is a key safety and

## OUR APPROACH

Western Health's comprehensive approach to Recognising and Responding to Acute Deterioration draws upon requirements of the National Standard of the same name and supports the monitoring, review and improvement of safe care.

Programs and strategies to help support recognising and responding to acute deterioration include:

- > Screening, assessment and comprehensive care planning to identify consumers at risk of acute deterioration, and develop appropriate monitoring, treatment and escalation plans
- > Escalation and emergency assistance processes (eg Urgent Clinical Review, Medical Emergency Team (MET) response, and Code Blue response. These include roles, responsibilities and accountabilities of multidisciplinary team members in recognising and responding to acute deterioration
- > Consumer and family escalation systems through 'Call for Help'.
- > Supporting multidisciplinary programs that train staff in recognition and response to clinical deterioration inclusive of all consumer cohorts and ages available in multiple languages. The programs are supported by WH's Simulation facilities. Instructional videos available on intranet and internet. WeLearn training packages are available on the WH Rapid Response System and Call for Help procedures.

## OUR IMPROVEMENT

We are proud of the following achievements for 2023/24:

- > Our standardised systems across all WH sites, including acute resuscitation forms, rapid response systems, first responder and code trolleys, and emergency bedside equipment
- > Our commitment to multidisciplinary training in recognition and response of deteriorating patient including simulation training, Welearn modules, increased junior doctor training and ongoing financial support to fund specialist training
- > Data and performance dashboards which inform improvement initiatives, such as the Patient alert dashboard for the ICU Liaison team
- > Investment in the Critical Care outreach Team
- > IT upgrades to support rapid response eg paging upgrades, Ascom upgrades
- > External collaborations focusing on improved outcomes for deteriorating patients, such as delirium identification and management, sepsis management, post partum haemorrhage project, subacute and non-acute access and pathways (SNAP)
- > Improving focus on crisis resource management and communication skills during clinical emergencies

- > Revamp of consumer communication boards to include call for help information (no longer stickers)
- > Review of Clinical Code Call system at Western Health
- > Establishment of a WH sepsis working group. An enormous amount of work has been undertaken by various divisions and clinical areas in this space. This working group will allow WH to have an organisational focus on improving patient outcomes in this space.
- > Ongoing work in the mental health space to introduce a 3-tier escalation process
- > Introduction of a track and trigger process in dialysis units



# Managing Deteriorating Consumers cont ...

## WHAT OUR DATA TELLS US

### Calls for Help

We are committed to developing staff understanding of the importance of the consumer, family and carer's role in noticing and voicing concerns regarding a change in clinical condition.

Our 'Call for Help' response works as a three step process:



Our consumers played a key role in the development of the Call for Help program, and visual displays showing the process to make a 'Call for Help' call are placed in key areas.

The graph below shows the number of Calls for Help received per month. Following this graph is a breakdown of Calls for Help reasons.

*These tell us clinical deterioration tends not to be the reason for the majority of Calls for help but it is encouraging that consumers are using the system to raise and see action against their concerns.*

Calls For Help by Month



Top 5 Reasons for Call for Help over 2023/24:

1. Concern or worry
2. Communication
3. Delay in care
4. Other
5. Clinical Deterioration



# Managing Deteriorating Consumers cont ...



## WHAT OUR DATA TELLS US

### Rapid Response System

Western Health’s Rapid Response System for staff works by identifying consumers with signs of early medical deterioration and initiating the appropriate level of response. This may include a specialist Medical Emergency Team (MET) attending the consumer if they are not improving after review by a healthcare worker.

The Rapid Response system is vital to identify deteriorating consumers.

The objective of the Rapid Response System is to decrease the number of Code Blue calls required through staff identifying and escalating early signs of a consumer’s deterioration and facilitating appropriate management such as Urgent Clinical Review or MET Call.

Code Blues are called in response to a consumer having cardiac and respiratory arrest or becoming unconscious.

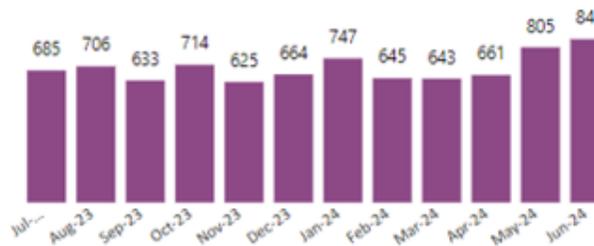


### Medical Emergency Team (MET) Calls

The graph below shows the Adult Consumer MET (Medical Emergency Team) Calls per month.

*This graph shows that in 2023/24 there was strong use of the MET Call system, a sign that staff are identifying and escalating early signs of a consumer’s deterioration and facilitating appropriate management.*

Adult MET Calls by Month



Top 5 Primary Reasons for MET Calls over 2023/24:

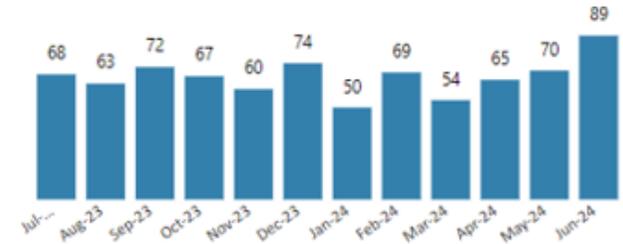
1. Hypotension (low blood pressure)
2. Tachycardia (heart beats faster than normal)
3. Worried
4. Tachypnoea (abnormally rapid breathing)
5. Hypoxia (not getting enough oxygen)

### Code Blue Calls

The graph below shows the number of Adult Code Blue Calls per month.

*Code Blues should be called in response to a patient having cardiac and respiratory arrest or becoming unconscious. The graph below shows that in 2023/24 the number of Adult Code Blue calls per month was significantly lower than the number of MET calls. In addition, 92% of calls over 2023/24 were stood down on arrival.*

Number of Code Blue Calls by Month



Top 5 Primary Reasons for MET Calls over 2023/24:

1. Altered consciousness
2. Worried
3. Hypotension
4. Cardiac Arrest
5. Escalation for Medical Support





*Together. caring for the West*



FOOTSCRAY HOSPITAL  
Gordon Street  
Footscray VIC 3011  
Locked Bag 2  
Footscray VIC 3011  
8345 6666

SUNSHINE HOSPITAL  
Furlong Road  
St Albans VIC 3021  
PO Box 294  
St Albans VIC 3021  
8345 1333

SUNSHINE HOSPITAL RADIATION  
THERAPY CENTRE  
176 Furlong Road  
St Albans VIC 3021  
8395 9999

WESTERN CENTRE FOR HEALTH  
RESEARCH AND EDUCATION  
Sunshine Hospital  
Furlong Road  
St Albans VIC 3021

JOAN KIRNER WOMEN'S AND  
CHILDREN'S AT SUNSHINE HOSPITAL  
Furlong Road  
St Albans VIC 3021  
PO Box 294  
St Albans VIC 3021  
8345 1333

SUNBURY DAY HOSPITAL  
7 Macedon Road  
Sunbury VIC 3429  
9732 8600

WILLIAMSTOWN HOSPITAL  
Railway Crescent  
Williamstown VIC 3016  
9393 0100

BACCHUS MARSH HOSPITAL  
29 - 35 Grant Street,  
Bacchus Marsh VIC 3340  
5367 2000

GRANT LODGE RESIDENTIAL AGED CARE  
6 Clarinda Street  
Bacchus Marsh VIC 3340  
5367 9627

MELTON HEALTH & COMMUNITY  
SERVICES  
195 - 209 Barriers Road,  
Melton West VIC 3337  
9747 7600

COMMUNITY MENTAL HEALTH & WELLBE-  
ING  
Harvester Clinic, Sunshine VIC 3020  
St Albans Community Care Unit, Albanvale  
VIC 3021  
Burnside PARC, Deer Park VIC 3023



DAME PHYLLIS FROST CUSTODIAL  
CENTRE  
101-201 Riding Boundary Road,  
Ravenhall VIC 3023  
9217 8400