

e-news Healthtalk

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A new Sustainable Access Plan has been produced

Progress Report

The planning units of SWSAHS and CSAHS recently worked together to produce a Sustainable Access Plan 2005 for the new Sydney South West Health.

Development of the Plan involved two working parties, one for each area. Each working party included key clinician leaders and facility managers. On November 17 Dr Diana Horvath chaired a combined meeting of the two working parties at Bankstown Hospital.

The Plan has been provided to NSW Health and addresses waiting times for elective surgery and urgent patient care within all hospitals in Sydney South West Health. Based on information from all facilities, the Plan outlines what additional resources are required to meet target levels for access to hospital services eg additional beds, infrastructure (diagnostic and other equipment) and resources required in the community.

It is anticipated that NSW Health will respond by early 2005.

In addition, the planning units are developing another two major projects together: a health profile of the population of Sydney South West Health and a set of Key Performance Indicators. The latter is aimed at monitoring our performance in improving health and meeting NSW key targets in other areas of health service delivery; it has been distributed for consultation.

Professional Practice

The role of the Professional Practice Unit (PPU) is to look at serious complaints and grievances in a transparent, fair and objective manner. The unit plays an important role in the daily business of SWSAHS.

The PPU was formed in December 2003, as a direct result of the Barraclough Review, to resolve serious grievances and complaints and to assist the Health Care Complaints Commission, the Coroner and professional bodies such as the medical and nursing boards.

Unit manager Mary Dowling said the PPU had legal, clinical and mediation skills.

"In the last year, the PPU has worked to restore the workforce and the community's trust in the health service," said Ms Dowling

The PPU makes recommendations to improve quality care and communication between doctors, nurses, patients and their families.

The PPU is the first unit of its kind in a NSW area health service and is the model for a system being introduced across the state.

The PPU looks forward to working with our colleagues at CSAHS on the resolution of complaints and grievances.



Laboratory and pathology services

SWAPS and CSLS are currently investigating integrating their IT systems. CSAHS uses PathNet Millennium, and SWSAHS is due to install the upgraded version of PathNet Millennium shortly. The two teams are in discussions to ensure that test names and ranges will match. Matching test names and ranges will provide a continuity of results for patients. For example, a patient from RPA may undergo further tests at Liverpool and now these tests will be comparable to any previous tests from RPA Hospital.

Workshops are currently underway to identify differences in work practices. Analysis from these workshops will allow for a smoother transition into one laboratory system.

The clinical directors and business managers of the two health services have completed their transition management plan and submitted it to Dr Horvath.

Paediatrics

The two paediatric health services met recently at Canterbury Hospital to share ideas and to discuss issues such as newborn care services, community paediatrics, and paediatric surgery.

A newborn care clinical improvement working party has been put in place. The party comprises medical and nursing representatives from RPA, Canterbury, Fairfield, Bankstown/Lidcombe, Liverpool, Campbelltown, Camden and Bowral hospitals. Issues being considered include:

- Accreditation and training in resuscitation
- Education of parents
- Improvement of transport referral systems ie returning mothers and babies to hospitals closer to home
- Allocation of level 2 "special" nursery cots

Other collaborations are beginning to occur in relation to child protection, child development and rehabilitation, and the *NSW Families First* program.

The Transitional plan for Child Protection has been completed and submitted to the Transition Steering Committee.

Research together, work together

Staff from the orthopaedic teams of Fairfield Hospital and RPA's Institute of Rheumatology and Orthopaedics (IRO) already know each other well, having jointly participated in a multi-centred clinical drug trial HIPAID coordinated by the International Institute of Health. Fairfield Hospital's orthopaedic department NUM Leeanne Gray and IRO's Clinical Nurse Consultant Margaret Windolf were the principal research nurses at their respective institutions.

Since the announcement of the amalgamation, the two health services have established more formal communication links.

Leeanne Gray and Nurse educator Susan Dietsch visited Margaret Windolf last week to gather ideas for the addition of a high dependency ward within the elective orthopaedic unit at Fairfield Hospital. The IRO already has a well established high dependency unit which allows patients who have undergone major joint replacement surgery to be cared for in the orthopaedic setting. This decreases the risk of cross infection when these patients are sent to a general high dependency ward or ICU. Discussion between the NUMs of each area took place comparing staffing numbers, resources, and processes of care.

Ethics: while some things remain the same

The Chairmen and Executive Officers of the two CSAHS human research ethics committees (RPA Zone and CRGH) and the SWSAHS's ethics committee met with SWSAHS's Patrick Bolton to discuss the feasibility of merging the three committees.

RPA's Ethics Review Committee Chairman, Dr Rob Loblay said that it was decided not to merge the three committees, particularly as they involve volunteer members from the community. "However, there is plenty of scope for sharing the expertise between our institutions and for harmonising our ethics review processes."

Phone directory

An interim phone directory has been distributed to Area Executive and General Managers. An updated electronic directory will be available to all staff after 1 January 2005.

Matching test names and ranges across SSWH will benefit patients.

Health
south
west
sydney

SYDNEY AREA
HEALTH SERVICE





Dr Horvath
paid tribute
to the staff of
CSAHS and
SWSAHS at
our final
AGMs as
separate
services

Chief Executive update

We held the final annual general meetings for SWSAHS and CSAHS on November 25 and 26 respectively.

The last SWSAHS annual general meeting was held in the Thomas & Rachael Moore Auditorium at Liverpool Hospital on 25 November 2004. It was a well-attended event with 150 staff and community members attending.

I was delighted to present the 2004 SWSAHS Quality Awards for outstanding achievement in improving the quality and safety of healthcare. The winning trophy was awarded for the SWSAHS Community Participation Framework which was developed to enable effective community involvement in health service planning and decision-making. Two Highly Commended Awards were also presented, one to Bankstown Health Service for development and implementation of Certificate III in aged care work, providing practical work opportunities for years 11 and 12 students to develop a nursing career path and to Liverpool Health Service for their entry *The Bare Essentials of Nursing Care: Pressure ulcer prevention strategies*.

The annual general meeting for CSAHS, was held on November 26 at Canterbury Hospital and attended by over 100 staff and guests. I took the opportunity to revisit some of our achievements of the past 12 years including our redevelopment of services and facilities which has already seen the rebuilding and redevelopment of our hospitals and is now well into stage two. In that time we have also opened a world-class burns unit at Concord Hospital; developed the State's first Division of Population Health and developed a telepsychiatry mental health strategy to better serve remote populations

particularly large Aboriginal communities.

This year we celebrated three milestone birthdays: Canterbury's 75th, Sydney Dental Hospital's 100th and Balmain's 10th as an aged care facility. I look forward to many more "birthdays" as a joint service.

The two AGMs marked the end of our journeys as separate health services and the beginning of our exciting journey together, where I am confident we will achieve great things.

The amalgamation of Central Sydney with South Western Sydney is barely a month away. It represents change and change is uncomfortable, but as I move around this vast new area health service which will be called Sydney South West I get more excited about it everyday.

I see the possibilities and opportunities for our staff and for our patients.

And I have been truly gratified by the enthusiasm, which many of you are already showing in getting to know your new colleagues and working out ways in which we join our services together to better benefit our patients and to improve our own skills.

I can't put a crystal ball to the future. But I do know it is full of opportunity.

Copies of the SWSAHS annual report are available from Public Affairs at the Area office. The CSAHS annual report is available at www.cs.nsw.gov.au.



Dr Diana Horvath AO
Chief Executive

How we're working together

SWSAHS has invited Canterbury Hospital paediatrician Dr Alan Kelly to participate in the *Paediatric Ambulatory Care Service (PACS) Working Party*.

The six-month old working party has been developing a program for short stay and community follow-up of children and their parents/carers. In addition to a call from the local hospital PACS nurse the following day, the service provides home visits and gives parents a 24-hour phone number to call for prompt service following discharge.