

2000
2005

Strategic Directions for Health

Strategic Directions for Health is the result of an interactive collaboration of people working for NSW Health and the many community and health professional organisations who work closely with us.

Incorporating a top-down and bottom-up approach to planning, *Strategic Directions for Health* represents a shared commitment to continuously improve and build on quality health care and service for the people of NSW.

Recognition and appreciation is given to the support and assistance given by the facilitators within the Department and Health Services and the contribution of people from all levels across the system in the development of a shared strategic direction for NSW Health.

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NSW Health is an important part of the NSW community and a major responsibility of the NSW Government. Around 100,000 people work in or directly with NSW Health.

NSW Health provides Public Sector Health Services and is made up of Area Health Services – rural and metropolitan, the New Children’s Hospital, Corrections Health Service, the Ambulance Service of NSW and the NSW Department of Health. In this document, we use the term ‘Health Service’ to represent all of these services.

Health Services provide a comprehensive range of health and health related services covering health protection, health promotion and education, health screening, diagnosis, treatment, transport, acute care, rehabilitation, continuing care for chronic illness, counselling, support and palliative care. These Services are provided in a wide range of settings from primary care outposts in the remote outback to metropolitan based tertiary health centres.

Additionally, Health Services for the people of NSW are provided through a range of people and organisations, including general practitioners and other clinicians, Public Sector Health Services, non-government organisations, private hospitals and day surgeries, a wide range of health practitioners in private practice, aged care hostels and nursing homes.

Strategic Directions for Health is about creating a corporate direction that will include everyone in NSW Health working towards achieving

Better Health *Good Health Care*

Better Health *Good Health Care*

The document *Strategic Direction for Health 1998 – 2003* was published and introduced into NSW Health in August 1998. Its purpose was to establish key attributes and goals that would direct NSW Health towards our common purpose of achieving 'Better Health *Good Health Care*'.

That document was the result of interactive collaboration of people working for NSW Health and the many community and health professional organisations who work closely with us.

Incorporating a top-down and a bottom-up approach to planning, *Strategic Directions for Health 1998 – 2003* represented a shared commitment to continuously improve and build on quality health care and service for the people of NSW.

In keeping with the concept of a living document, *Strategic Directions for Health 2000 – 2005* revises and updates the earlier version to take account of a changing landscape.

This revised strategic plan has been developed within the existing framework whilst expanding into significant areas of reform highlighted in a number of documents that have evolved since 1998.

These documents are:

- *Report of the NSW Health Council*
- *Report from the Ministerial Advisory Committee on Smaller Towns* (the Sinclair Committee)
- *Second National Mental Health Plan*
- *NSW Aboriginal Health Strategic Plan*
- *Healthy People 2005 – Strategic Directions for Public Health in NSW*

The common and unique themes, values and priorities from these documents have all been incorporated into *Strategic Directions for Health 2000 – 2005*.

The **six key attributes** of NSW Health

- 1 Sharing a clear direction
- 2 Skilled, valued workforce
- 3 Engaging the community
- 4 Working partnerships
- 5 Informed decision making
- 6 Embracing innovation

The **four key goals** of NSW Health

- A Healthier people
- B Fairer access
- C Quality health care
- D Better value.

Strategic Directions for Health 2000 – 2005 sets out strategies that have been developed through consultation with representatives from all areas of NSW Health.

In the years 2000 – 2005 we will see some strategies progress under more than one attribute or goal. Progress on a number of fronts will move us more quickly towards our purpose 'Better Health *Good Health Care*'.

Strategic Directions for Health 2000 – 2005 is the umbrella document for our planning and performance management. It will continue to form the context for NSW Health corporate and business planning documents. The development of performance indicators is crucial to linking local plans with *Strategic Directions for Health*.

This document is for everyone working in or with NSW Health. It is a document for community health staff, people working in our hospitals, doctors, nurses, allied health, clerical and support service staff and all who lead and manage a team in NSW Health. Shared commitment to *Strategic Directions for Health 2000 – 2005* will ensure that we continue to meet our targets of success and achievement.

This edition of *Strategic Directions for Health* will again be reviewed in two years time.

By evaluating what we have achieved and determining what is required for the future, innovation and service excellence will be embraced and implemented.

I am confident that the themes, values and priorities detailed in *Strategic Directions for Health 2000 – 2005* will become evident in your local plans.



Michael Reid
Director General

A time of review and evaluation

Since 1998 NSW Health has participated actively in reviews and evaluations completed by stakeholders. The result of this work builds on our existing achievements and has expanded into additional areas of reform. Some key achievements include:

- Significant improvements in the health status of the general population.
- Increase in the number of people being assisted by NSW Health. Similarly there have been increases in the number of Emergency Department attendances and Community Health Services.
- Recognised performance of NSW Health as compared to international standards. A key feature of this success is the dedication, commitment and professionalism of those who work within it.
- Quality initiatives are being implemented across Health Services in line with the *Framework for Managing the Quality of Health Care Services in NSW*.
- NSW Health has been improving its capital infrastructure.
- Directions set by the *National Mental Health Strategy* have resulted in changes in public sector mental health service mix. This has reduced the reliance on stand alone psychiatric hospital, expanded delivery of community based care integrated with inpatient care and mainstreamed Mental Health Services with other components of health care.
- Improved collection and analysis of mental health information, development of data systems, accountability and monitoring mechanisms.
- A commitment to improving the collection of data in mainstream and Aboriginal community controlled Health Services and a *NSW Aboriginal Health Information Strategy* has been developed.
- Aboriginal Health Strategic Plans are now being developed in each Area Health Service and Aboriginal Health Partnerships are being established.
- Improved consumer and carer participation in decision making and advocacy.

- Together with the rest of Australia, NSW has made significant gains in areas of prevention and health promotion.
- Health Services have received a range of awards for health improvement, Aboriginal Health, patient care and service delivery, corporate services and human resources.

Health Working as a Team – *The Way Forward*

In March 2000, the Minister for Health announced significant changes to the NSW Health system following consideration of the recommendations of the *Report of the NSW Health Council* and the *Report from the Ministerial Advisory Committee on Smaller Towns (the Sinclair Report)*.

The *Government's Action Plan for Health* is the key driver of this change and NSW Health will be responsible for its implementation. The changes are being led by the Director-General with a team of consumer representatives, clinical leaders, Chief Executive Officers, senior executive staff from the NSW Department of Health and representatives from Area Health Services and the NSW Health Department.

The *Plan* will build on the strengths of the health system and ensure statewide consistency and implementation of the most effective aspects of health care delivery and organisation throughout the NSW Health system.

The *Government's Action Plan for Health* focuses on:

- Improvement to the organisation and delivery of Health Services, specifically in the areas of acute care, chronic care, emergency departments and intensive care.
- Consumer and community involvement in the health system.
- Funding models, including the introduction of episode funding and new funding arrangements for health priority areas.

- Metropolitan Health Services, including the establishment of a coordinated network of clinical services across Sydney.
- Rural Health Services, including access for communities to appropriate, quality health care and the development of new service delivery models.
- Information management, including the development of an Electronic Health Record and Unique Patient Identifier, underpinned by appropriate privacy and security standards.

The improvements to NSW Health outlined in the *Government's Action Plan for Health* are incorporated into the revised *Strategic Directions for Health 2000 – 2005*.

NSW Health in 2005

- NSW Health will be a responsive and adaptable health system, providing a diverse and comprehensive range of Health Services to the people of NSW.
- The provision of clinical care and other Health Services is underpinned by an effective quality improvement framework.
- Communities of NSW have access to appropriate and quality health care, delivered with compassion and sensitivity, preserving autonomy and dignity.
- Our health system better meets community needs. Consumers and the community have access to better information and have a more active role in decision making about their health care.
- Collaborative partnerships exist with the medical, nursing and allied health professions, relevant industrial associations and consumer groups. We effectively link with other agencies and health providers and actively pursue opportunities to strengthen these links.

- Our workforce is mobile, multi-skilled and motivated. Clinicians in NSW Health demonstrate leadership in setting and maintaining standards of clinical practice with innovation and excellence being valued and rewarded.
- We have taken hold of technology and research, and are using information and evidence-based clinical best practice as building blocks to our future.
- We hold a shared commitment to the efficient use and fair distribution of available health resources to population groups and the people who need them. There is greater research into the social and environmental determinants of ill-health and the delivery of quality health care.
- The gaps in health status between Aboriginal people and non-indigenous people are no longer widening but reducing.
- NSW Health responds effectively to key health issues and continues to lead the development of health and human services policy for our community.



Healthier People

Health status is monitored and origins of health and ill-health are identified

- Health Services are aware of the health status and causes of health and ill-health of their population groups.
- A systematic approach to risk assessment and hazard identification informs health priorities and health care activities.

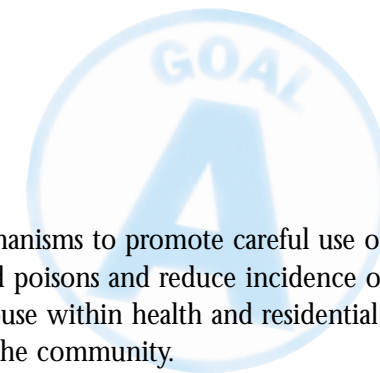
Healthy physical, emotional and social environments are promoted

- People better understand how their lifestyles and physical, emotional and social environments affect their health.
- The quality of environmental health for rural and remote Aboriginal communities has significantly improved.
- NSW Health in partnership with the Environment Protection Authority (EPA) is promoting a healthy environment.
- Communities are more safety aware with fewer people being injured on the roads, at work and at home.

Promotion, prevention and early intervention programs have been strengthened

- Fewer children than in 2000 contract diseases preventable by immunisation.
- More young people participate in programs to promote their mental health.
- More young people, adults and older people with mental health problems and disorders, such as depression, anxiety, behavioural problems and psychosis, are identified early and receive appropriate treatment.
- In consultation and partnership with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, the *NSW Health Aboriginal Health Strategic Plan* is being implemented and evaluated in order to effectively meet their health needs in a sensitive and culturally appropriate manner.
- More people than in 2000 are demonstrating behaviour supportive of better health, including regular exercise, nutritious diet, moderate consumption of alcoholic beverages and decreased levels of smoking and abuse of illicit substances.
- Policies and programs to address inequalities in health status have been strengthened.

Strategies for shaping the future



- A1** Continued commitment to the National Mental Health Strategy through the implementation of the *Second National Mental Health Plan* ensuring significant improvements to treatment, care and quality of life for people with mental health problems and disorders in NSW.
- A2** Mental Health service plans are to be developed and implemented in each Health Service, with a focus on Eating Disorders, Mental Health Inpatient Care for Children and Young People and Non-Acute Mental Health Care Services.
- A3** Implement and evaluate Aboriginal health plans in consultation and partnership with Aboriginal people in order to effectively meet the health needs of Aboriginal people in a culturally appropriate and sensitive manner.
- A4** Develop and evaluate evidence based disease screening programs and report data by socioeconomic status and attributes in the *Chief Health Officer's Report*.
- A5** Implement the agreed recommendations arising from the NSW Drug Summit, acknowledging comorbidity with mental health problems and disorders.
- A6** Review existing environmental management practices within Health Services and facilities to identify areas for improvement.
- A7** Strengthen public health programs to promote public awareness of the benefits of regular physical activity, good nutrition, sun protection, quitting smoking and injury prevention.
- A8** Develop and implement a disability action plan in each Health Service in order to ensure the provision of services appropriate to the needs of people with disabilities and their carers.
- A9** Implement a chronic disease prevention strategy to reduce the early on-set of chronic disease.
- A10** The agreed health improvement initiatives, as documented in *Healthy People 2005 – Strategic Directions for Public Health in NSW*, are being implemented.
- A11** Maintain and enhance a comprehensive readily accessible population health information resource database which reflects the social determinants of health to support health providers and the community in decision-making and health planning.
- A12** Improve mechanisms to promote careful use of medicines and poisons and reduce incidence of misuse and abuse within health and residential facilities and the community.
- A13** Educate, encourage and support people in taking responsibility for their own health, and promote better self-management of ill health.
- A14** Work with parents, general practitioners and other agencies to expand community based immunisation programs and increase community understanding of the benefits and need for immunisation.
- A15** Work with other Departments, health professionals and consumers to implement a healthy ageing framework.

Fairer Access

Barriers to access have been reduced

- Health Services are readily accessible in relation to location, hours of service, cultural sensitivity, disabled access, physical layout and signage.
- Health care is provided by NSW Health according to patient or client need and not financial status.
- People in NSW have immediate access to health advice and information.

Fair distribution of health resources

- Health resources are allocated fairly between and within Health Services according to the health needs of their populations.
- Everyone in NSW will have access to the care they need, irrespective of where they live, when they enter the health system or their social and cultural background.
- People living in rural and remote locations will have greater certainty and predictability in Health Service delivery, and access to quality comprehensive Health Services, including appropriate referral and transport to specialist services. After consultation with communities, the role and function of small rural hospitals is defined and clarified.
- Specialist statewide services are well coordinated, readily accessible and responsive to needs of patients.

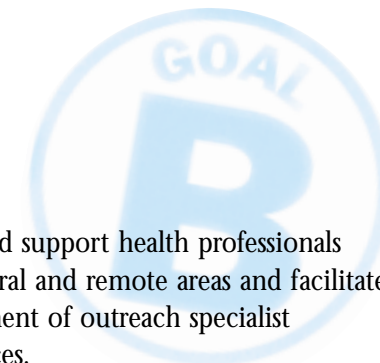
Health of groups with poor health status has improved

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have measurably improved access to Health Services delivery that is of high quality and culturally sensitive.
- People working for NSW Health have undertaken education in cultural awareness and are able to provide culturally sensitive Health Services to the different population groups in NSW, including Aboriginal Torres Strait Islander people, people from culturally diverse backgrounds, people of all ages and people who are homeless.

Waiting times for Health Services are well managed

- Patients and clients receive appropriate and timely care at the first point of contact.
- Established best practice benchmarks for service delivery in clinical areas including targets for admission on day-of-treatment/surgery and day-only admissions.

Strategies for shaping the future



- B1** Implement policies and initiatives to promote equity, and undertake initiatives designed to reduce health inequities in specific communities.
- B2** Implement the statewide plan for Aboriginal health in partnership with local Aboriginal communities.
- B3** Further advance the fair allocation of available funding within Health Services and incorporate funding arrangements that promote continuity of care and support clinicians and managers to provide good quality and timely Health Services and meet local population health needs.
- B4** NSW Health to develop a long term plan for Intensive Care Services for NSW to ensure the appropriate location of Intensive Care Units statewide.
- B5** Continued commitment to funding non-government organisations, which provide effective Health Services to the community.
- B6** Develop and implement planning guidelines for the identification and provision of statewide specialist Health Services and technologies.
- B7** NSW Health to develop and implement a three year Emergency Care Plan which incorporates projected demands, role delineation, location of Emergency Departments in metropolitan Sydney and improving links with hospital and Community Services.
- B8** Improve access and examine opportunities for networking outreach to allied Health Services, especially counselling, physiotherapy, speech therapy and podiatry, for rural and remote communities and examine opportunities for networking outreach services to reduce demands on patient travel.
- B9** Identify the core services and procedures most frequently performed in Health Services and develop benchmarking guidelines for access to each service.
- B10** Collaborate with relevant agencies to consolidate the management of community transport to provide Health Services with one point of contact to coordinate transport and Health Services.
- B11** Continue to expand telehealth across the state to underpin the networking of clinical services and improved access and equity to quality health care.
- B12** Encourage and support health professionals to work in rural and remote areas and facilitate the establishment of outreach specialist support services.
- B13** Establish single access points for consumers to obtain advice and information about health, health problems, Health Services and support services.
- B14** Incorporate awareness on cultural and health needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and people from culturally sensitive and diverse backgrounds into orientation programs for all people working in NSW Health.
- B15** Increase access through provision of Health Services at times that meet lifestyle needs and working patterns of client groups.
- B16** Continue to target resources towards areas of greatest need and fair allocation of resources across the State.
- B17** Develop and implement strategies to improve certainty and predictability in rural Health Service delivery.
- B18** Further develop networking arrangements between rural and metropolitan Health Services.



Quality Health Care

Service provision is based on principles of quality

- Service provision in NSW is planned, delivered and evaluated according to the principles described in *A Framework for Managing the Quality of Health Services in New South Wales* and the six dimensions of quality: safety, effectiveness, appropriateness, consumer participation, access, and efficiency.

Service provision is safe, appropriate and effective

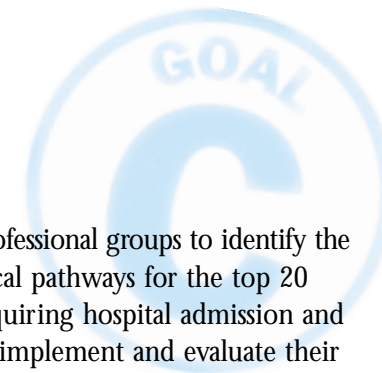
- Patient safety has been improved through a better understanding of the nature of unintended injuries and complications caused by health care management (adverse events). A comprehensive system is in place to minimise their occurrence and to assist the Health Service to share information with patients who have suffered an adverse event.
- Appropriateness of care has been improved through an increasing use of interventions and medications that have been shown to produce the desired health outcome and a decreasing use of those known to be inappropriate. The gap between Health Services with the highest and lowest rates of hospital admissions for certain procedures has been reduced.
- Effectiveness of interventions has been improved through the greater use of evidence about their clinical and cost-effectiveness. Effectiveness data are readily available to clinicians to assist them make decisions about care in collaboration with consumers.

- The quality of life for people with chronic and complex health conditions is improved and there is a reduction in crisis situations and urgent admissions to hospital.

Service provision is accessible and co-ordinated

- Each Health Service has set up a network of services covering health promotion, prevention, diagnosis, treatment, rehabilitation and palliative care that is based on an assessment of the population's need. The networks have been clearly defined for clinicians and the community.
- A framework for the future structure, location and capacity of intensive care and emergency services exists in NSW.
- Better hospital pre-admission planning and increased same-day admissions and day-of-surgery admissions have been introduced.
- There is a coordinated statewide approach to achieving best-practice standards of health care for people of all ages with chronic and complex needs in NSW.
- Formal links exist between acute, primary health care and general practitioners through the development of a unique patient identifier and an electronic health record, providing a coordinated approach to health care delivery, subjected to appropriate privacy and security standards.

Strategies for shaping the future



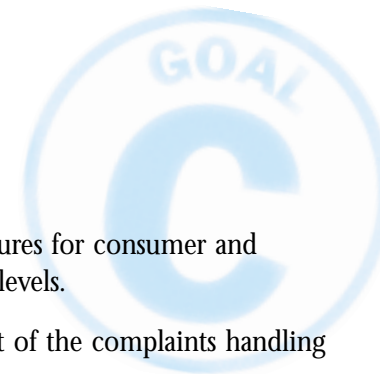
- C1** Introduce quality of health care indicators that are widely accepted within NSW Health as a sound basis for comparison of Areas, hospitals and community health centres and as 'flags' of issues that need to be addressed.
- C2** Actively pursue the development of a national health performance framework, agreed with other States Territories and the Commonwealth and commit to the regular publication of relevant performance information on effectiveness, quality, safety and efficiency.
- C3** Review the process, standards and objectives for the accreditation of Health Services, and the relationship between achieving the standards required and continuously improving the quality of care.
- C4** Develop a comprehensive education and support program for quality and clinical practice improvement, with appropriate implementation tools. The program would embrace undergraduate teaching and courses for clinicians and managers.
- C5** Build a leadership group and a local faculty in New South Wales for advancing the quality of health care through the Clinical Practice Improvement program. Establish similar mechanisms for other major education initiatives.
- C6** Promote safer health care and a reduction in adverse events by implementing and evaluating mechanisms such as:
 - better systems for reporting incidents, reviewing patient charts when something goes wrong with a view to preventing it happening again, better systems for preventing medication errors that might cause complications for patients; and
 - effective processes for clinicians to review each other's work, ensuring clinical staff are competent to practice in the settings in which they are employed, and using the experiences of special committees.
- C7** Develop and implement a comprehensive patient safety improvement program.
- C8** Examine patterns of variation in procedure rates and introduce effective mechanisms for addressing situations where rates are very much greater or less than the State average rate.
- C9** Fund research into the appropriateness of care and how we should address variations. Encourage an increasing use of appropriate interventions and discourage the use of inappropriate interventions.
- C10** Work with professional groups to identify the need for clinical pathways for the top 20 conditions requiring hospital admission and then develop, implement and evaluate their effectiveness.
- C11** Develop and evaluate models of care for ways of delivering more effective services in smaller towns of NSW.
- C12** Work with general practitioners, community Health Services, hospitals, private health service providers, Aboriginal community controlled health organisations and other human services providers to trial and refine models of care to ensure that chronically ill people, people with disabilities, the frail aged, people with mental illness and children with special needs receive coordinated care.
- C13** Establish three models of service delivery for chronic and complex conditions – cardiovascular disease, respiratory illness and cancer in each Health Service.
- C14** NSW Health to develop and implement Mental Health Service Guidelines for responding to disasters, early identification of illness and for care in Emergency Departments.



Service provision is efficient and has consumer and community participation

- Consumer and community participation has been improved through
 - Involving consumers in the planning, delivery and evaluation of Health Services.
 - Ensuring patient rights to
 - make decisions about their own care,
 - receive information upon which to base decisions about their health management,
 - provide feedback and
 - make complaints about services.
- Efficiency has been improved through a better understanding of what factors produce the highest quality services for the lowest cost, and the best possible mix of services to achieve the best health outcomes from available resources.

Strategies for shaping the future



- C15** Gather and publish information regularly about Health Service performance and compare this against the outstanding practice of leading edge organisations in the State.
- C16** Exploit advances in communication technologies to facilitate collaboration between primary and secondary care and rural and metropolitan settings, including electronic transfer of information, case conferences, and advanced clinical training.
- C17** Implement guidelines to enhance consumer and community participation in service planning and the evaluation of improvements in health care quality and safety and to ensure consumers are involved in the interpretation of such material.
- C18** Develop and implement performance measures for consumer and community participation at local and State levels.
- C19** Ensure the continued effective management of the complaints handling system in all Health Services.
- C20** Embark on an education program that informs the community how to read and interpret health care information.

Better Value

Resources to deliver health care are used optimally

- We have innovative ways of maximising the use of available resources to get the best results for our patients, clients and the community.
- The people working for NSW Health are valued as contributors in achieving better value.
- The community understands how resources are allocated in NSW Health.

Services are efficient

- Managers and clinicians work together to understand the link between cost, clinical practice and services provided.
- Funding for Health Services is linked to the achievement of agreed levels of activity, based on the principles linking funding to activity and performance improvement.
- Health Service planning and decision-making are based on evidence of best practice, comparisons of results, trend analysis, local community needs and available resources.
- NSW Health maximises opportunities to access a diverse range of funding sources to improve Health Services for the community.

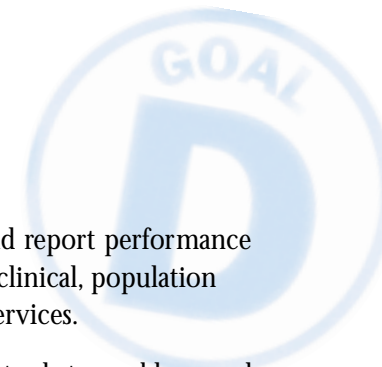
Incidence of inappropriate care has been reduced

- Health providers are responsible for the quality of their own practice and the appropriateness of services provided.
- Health care is based on the best evidence available on what works.
- Quality standards are used for planning, delivering and evaluating population Health Services.

Assets are well managed

- Assets are managed in the context of the most effective delivery of Health Services.
- Proven technology is used effectively.
- Equipment is current, well maintained and reflects health needs.
- The cost of capital is recognised by the health system.
- Capital investment is soundly based on service need and cost effective use of capital resources.

Strategies for shaping the future



- D1** Develop a coherent framework that better links service planning, asset management, capital funding and resource allocation across NSW Health.
- D2** Work together to provide services that achieve the best results for patients and clients in a cost-efficient manner, in keeping with efficiency indicators particularly in the areas of Intensive Care Services, Emergency Departments and for the management of chronic and complex diseases.
- D3** Increase community awareness of appropriate use of general practice, community – based on Health Services and other alternatives to hospitalisation.
- D4** Develop a capital funding strategy to underpin service delivery, based on best practice and integrated care models.
- D5** Monitor service utilisation to identify emerging trends and develop mechanisms to enable resource allocation to reflect changing health needs.
- D6** Enhance access to sources of external research and development funds through the development of skills and expertise in submitting successful competitive proposals.
- D7** Develop Health Service clinical and information technology management plans to ensure the best use of technology and equipment.
- D8** Incorporate incentives into Health Service performance agreements for efficient provision of quality clinical care and support services.
- D9** Empower staff to change processes, work patterns and resources to more effectively satisfy patient and client service needs.
- D10** Establish mechanisms for the development and maintenance of industrial agreements that facilitate efficient use of resources and maximise beneficial outcomes for staff and the organisation.
- D11** Establish, monitor and report performance indicators for major clinical, population health and support services.
- D12** Develop appropriate tools to enable sound planning and evaluating of population health programs.
- D13** Implement a budgeting model for Area Health Services to allocate funds to Health Services on the basis of services provided, including episodic funding for acute services.
- D14** Continue development of Health Service classification and costing to better understand link between cost and activity.
- D15** Develop and implement a funding model for the allocation of funds for Emergency Departments statewide.
- D16** Co-ordinate and implement funding models which support achievement of better value, integrated care and improved performance.

Sharing a clear direction

Leadership in Health

- *Strategic Directions for Health* facilitates effective collaboration within Whole-of-Government discussions concerning health issues, which lead to practical and measurable actions for improved health care.
- NSW Health actively contributes to health policy development, implementation and setting future health direction at all levels the community.
- Managers create an environment for staff that encourages and supports staff and recognises innovation.

Fostering teamwork

- People working for NSW Health are recognised for their enthusiasm, vision and commitment.
- People working in teams create greater collaboration across disciplines, Departments and Health Services.
- People working in teams are encouraged to participate in service development and have a greater capacity for problem solving and innovation.

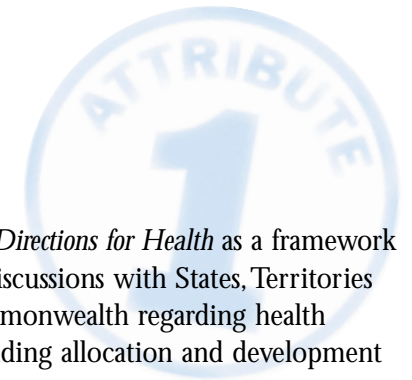
Commitment to Strategic Directions for Health

- People involved with NSW Health are aware of, share and contribute to our direction.
- The community is educated, contributes and actively supports *Strategic Directions for Health*.

Planning and performance management driven by *Strategic Directions for Health*

- Our vision for healthcare evolves through Health Service planning, decision making and resource allocation across Departments, Health Services and local services and this processes and facilitates the achievement of *Strategic Directions for Health*.
- NSW Health actively involves clinicians, staff and the community working as part of a team in the planning of Health Services.

Strategies for shaping the future



- 1.1 Implement and measure an effective long-term communication strategy to promote awareness and understanding of our purpose 'Better Health *Good Health Care*' that focuses on working collaboratively with people within NSW Health, community groups, professional organisations, the private health care sector and the media.
- 1.2 Establish routine forums for communication and discussion of policy direction and service development, involving representation from clinicians and managers, community advisory groups, peak bodies in the public and private sector, other agencies, clinical colleges and professional associations.
- 1.3 NSW Health will consolidate the management development program that focuses on recruitment, professional training and performance review, which will foster leadership, management of teams and working in partnerships.
- 1.4 Within the context of government policy, use *Strategic Directions for Health* as a basis of regular review and development of a legislative, regulatory, policy and industrial framework that supports 'Better Health *Good Health Care*'.
- 1.5 Use *Strategic Directions for Health* as a framework to enhance discussions with States, Territories and the Commonwealth regarding health priorities, funding allocation and development of joint service agreements.
- 1.6 Develop a joint commitment to *Strategic Directions for Health* with educational bodies and clinical colleges to enable incorporation of the attributes and goals in undergraduate and postgraduate programs for all disciplines.
- 1.7 Joint implementation of the *NSW Government's Action Plan for Health* with the community and leading clinicians.

Skilled valued workforce

Support for a healthy workforce

- People working within NSW Health are provided with a safe, healthy and discrimination-free workplace.
- Staff enjoy flexible work practices, which support innovation and continuous improvement in the workplace.
- Industrial awards and conditions of employment are flexible and are designed to meet the needs of the individual without compromising the performance of the health system.

Consultation, communication and collaboration

- People are consulted and informed of key priorities for health and know their ideas for achieving best practice in service development and delivery are valued.

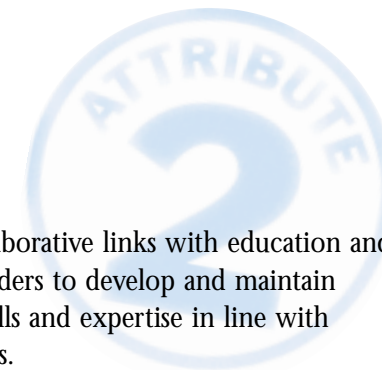
The right skills and tools for the job

- Recruitment, orientation and performance management systems are in place and support leadership and management development.
- Learning and development programs are widely available, coordinated and link to the learning needs of NSW Health.
- Timely and appropriate information and technological support is available to all people working within NSW Health to enhance decision making, planning and health service delivery.

A shared strategic direction

- All people working in NSW Health have a sense of sharing in the purpose of the health system.
- People want to work in NSW Health because of its reputation as providing a satisfying and healthy place to work.

Strategies for shaping the future



- 2.1 Develop workforce strategies for the NSW Health Department and for each Health Service that focus on recruitment and retention of appropriately qualified staff, and a commitment to organisational learning.
- 2.2 Enhance communication and reduce the isolation experienced by people working in a large dispersed health system by maximising NSW HealthNet and E-mail access and use, making electronic training packages and reference material more available and ensuring electronic access to specialist and peer support.
- 2.3 Implement an effective orientation program for all people working in NSW Health.
- 2.4 Develop and implement innovative and efficient work practices, which improve both service delivery and job satisfaction.
- 2.5 Actively enhance implementation of flexible working conditions at the service level and further improve access to local childcare facilities, public transport links and parking areas, health and lifestyle programs and counselling services.
- 2.6 Monitor workforce trends relating to retention, workforce skills mix and service development and promote opportunities for trial of innovative work practices.
- 2.7 Implement an appropriate succession planning process, ensuring considerations of equity and access are met.
- 2.8 Develop an effective performance and management process for staff and visiting clinicians to allow formal feedback on a regular basis and an opportunity for them to discuss their performance and goals.
- 2.9 Develop and implement mechanisms that facilitate and expand structured opportunities for staff learning and development through work-based learning, secondments and exchange programs across NSW Health.
- 2.10 Establish a regular program of both formal and informal forums to enable staff to meet with their senior managers.
- 2.11 Establish collaborative links with education and training providers to develop and maintain workforce skills and expertise in line with industry needs.
- 2.12 Implement mechanisms to support professional practice and development of people working in rural and remote settings, including clinical supervision, electronic access to professional support and advice and access to a range of education modes.
- 2.13 Improve staff health and workplace satisfaction through implementation of best practice Occupational Health and Safety principles.
- 2.14 Develop and use a Health System Employee Relations Framework for Human Resource Management and Employee Relations in NSW Health to guide effective people management at the local level.

Engaging the community

An involved community

- People working for NSW Health welcome and listen to the views of the community.
- The community has a sense of satisfaction with services in NSW Health and actively supports collaborative partnerships with health service providers.
- Community participation is an integral component in policy development, health service planning and quality improvement across NSW Health.

An informed community

- Communities are informed about emerging health trends and the important social and economic factors related to health status.
- The community better understands the complexity involved in the delivery of Health Services.
- Communities have access to sufficient information to actively engage in consumer participation structures and contribute to health decision making.
- People in NSW have access to advice and information to assist them in making decisions about their health and health care.
- NSW Health has a well-developed system for disseminating information about health and support services to the community.

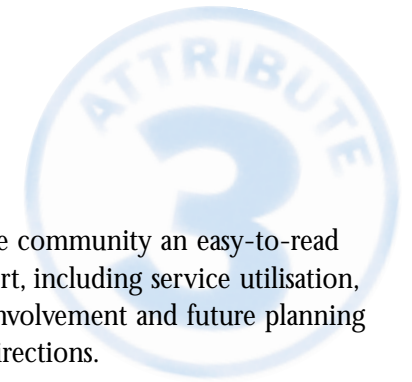
NSW Health an active community member

- NSW Health actively participates in a broad range of community development activities and assists in achievement of community goals.
- NSW Health advocates preservation of the environment through efficient land use, effective waste management and energy conservation processes.
- NSW Health leads by example in the provision of disabled access to its services and facilities.

A responsive health system

- Health Services have effective mechanisms for addressing identified community needs.
- There are formal structures for community participation in place across NSW Health.

Strategies for shaping the future



- 3.1 Use a range of communication and information media to assist people in making informed choices about their health, potential health risk factors and effective health treatments.
- 3.2 In partnership with the Aboriginal Health and Medical Research Council of NSW, other Aboriginal organisations, groups and community members, plan health service responses to health and social issues of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.
- 3.3 Enhance development of community awareness about mental illness, including access to information and advice and support services for families, carers and friends.
- 3.4 Regularly disseminate information to general practitioners, community advisory groups, population groups and the community regarding health service activity and quality.
- 3.5 Work collaboratively with community groups, other agencies and the private health sector in planning, promoting and implementing community development projects.
- 3.6 Establish a Statewide Consumer and Community Participation Group with defined roles and terms of reference, to provide opportunities for consumers and the community to be involved in health service decision making.
- 3.7 Support and encourage environmental awareness in each health facility to enhance the local environment.
- 3.8 Provide to the community an easy-to-read Annual Report, including service utilisation, community involvement and future planning and service directions.
- 3.9 Ensure people in NSW have easy access by telephone and the Internet to health advice and information on Health Services and support/self help groups and other social and community support services.
- 3.10 Ensure appropriate use of the health system by consumers and increase consumer knowledge of changes to the health system.

Working partnerships

Shared responsibility for improving health (and reducing health inequalities)

- NSW Health has a culture of sharing and building partnerships with community groups, other health care providers, other government organisations and industry.
- People better understand how they can support their own health.

People work together to improve services

- People working for NSW Health provide valued input into the planning and development of public and private Health Services.
- Effective links exist between NSW Health and the Departments of Education and Training, Community Services, Ageing and Disability, Juvenile Justice, Corrective Services, Office of Aboriginal Torres Strait Islander Affairs, Housing, Police, Department for Women and Sport and Recreation to ensure comprehensive and integrated service provision to the community and population groups with special needs.
- Health Services are delivered at conveniently situated facilities and located together where appropriate, with other community services.

Shared knowledge

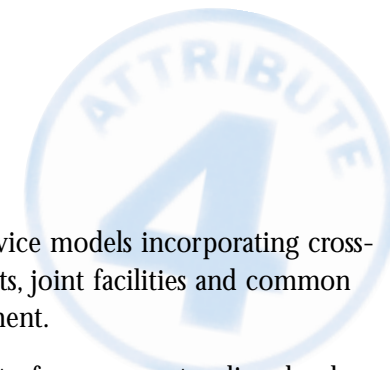
- NSW Health works closely with the tertiary sector and other education providers in meeting industry and workforce needs.

- NSW Health actively promotes information flow to and from community advisory groups, public and private health sector peak bodies and professional speciality associations regarding health outcomes and best practice.
- NSW Health establishes partnerships with Aboriginal communities to bring the expertise of Aboriginal people to the planning, implementation and evaluation of Health Services.

Partnerships enhance Strategic Directions

- NSW Health and Non Government Organisations are working in partnership to achieve better health and to deliver good health care.
- Private sector health care providers have a collaborative working relationship with NSW Health.
- Alliances with major business groups contribute to health gain.
- NSW Health works with suppliers and service contractors who demonstrate a commitment to quality.
- Effective delivery of government human services with the collaboration of other agencies and strong integration of services at the local level.
- NSW Health working together with the Commonwealth Government to address the problems of communities and groups with particular needs, for example, rural communities, the aged and the people with chronic and complex care needs.

Strategies for shaping the future



- 4.1 Develop links to better coordinate planning and provision of comprehensive integrated services to all groups in the community with the Departments of Education and Training, Community Services, Ageing and Disability, Juvenile Justice, Aboriginal Affairs, Corrective Services, Housing, Urban Affairs and Planning, Police, Sport and Recreation and Local Government.
- 4.2 Develop beneficial cross-border partnerships and cross-service arrangements among Health Services.
- 4.3 Develop an organisational culture that promotes collaborative planning, practice and evaluation within and across professional boundaries and between organisations.
- 4.4 Expand shared-care programs and increase the involvement of general practitioners in pre-hospital assessment, inpatient management and discharge planning.
- 4.5 Actively contribute to greater coordination of government health and community welfare policy enabling reduced health inequalities and improved health status of the population.
- 4.6 Develop an effective and accessible integrated electronic information, knowledge and skills network, so people who make health-related decisions can use the best information.
- 4.7 Develop effective electronic information systems, which can be used by human service providers to refer clients within and between agencies.
- 4.8 Research and implement telehealth trials in new communication technologies to improve access to healthcare for patients, inter-agency collaboration and training and support programs to improve recruitment and retention of staff.
- 4.9 Ensure relevant planning committees, working groups and project teams have appropriate participation by a cross-section of staff, general practitioners, other health service providers, consumers, ambulance, government departments, local government and community groups.
- 4.10 Maximise opportunities for electronic communication and commerce activities with health service suppliers.
- 4.11 Pilot new service models incorporating cross-agency budgets, joint facilities and common case management.
- 4.12 In the context of government policy, develop collaborative working relationships with private sector organisations to advance *Strategic Directions for Health*.
- 4.13 Work with the tertiary sector and professional colleges to ensure that all graduates who wish to work in NSW Health are aware of *Strategic Directions for Health* and understand the importance of effective partnerships with other agencies.
- 4.14 Develop effective joint planning and common data standards with private sector providers to create a more integrated service across both public and private settings.
- 4.15 NSW Health to develop together with the Commonwealth Department of Health and Aged Care a *Rural Residential Aged Care Policy* to ensure shared objects and the provision of services in the most effective way.

Informed decision making

The information we need for decision making is readily accessible

- There is widely available information on health care services and health outcomes.
- The wide dissemination of information is promoted to allow informed decisions to be made through a variety of media.
- Electronic patient and client health records are widely used.
- People working in NSW Health are readily able to access E-mail and the NSW HealthNet, and where appropriate, the NSW HealthWeb (Internet).

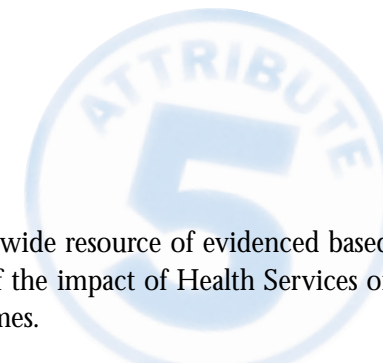
Information is collected and used optimally

- Information collected centrally is relevant, accurate and timely and is readily available to Health Services and the community.
- NSW Health uses information as a mechanism for improvement and decision making.
- Staff have the skills and resources to turn data into meaningful information.
- The use of information is guided by the *Information Policy and Privacy Management Plan* and protects the rights of consumers.

The best available evidence is used

- Health professionals working with and outside of NSW Health are using evidence to improve both the process and the outcome of care provided for their patients and clients.
- Health Services link policy and clinical practice decisions to formal assessment and evaluation processes.
- NSW Health policies and their implementation are regularly reviewed to ensure that they remain relevant and appropriate.

Strategies for shaping the future



- 5.1 Identify and evaluate processes for the efficient and effective dissemination of information, including formal and informal networks and use of electronic and hard copy media.
- 5.2 Continue to implement the Aboriginal Health Information Strategy to significantly improve the quality and availability of information needed to improve health and health care for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.
- 5.3 Establish a regular policy review process that incorporates evidence-based practice in directing services, patient and client care and service development.
- 5.4 Expand the use of a common health record for each patient or client, in consultation with consumers, which is accessible to authorised health providers to enable improved service provision.
- 5.5 Extend the availability of statewide statistical collections information, including epidemiological and aggregate data on services provided and patient groups.
- 5.6 Implement skills development programs for all health professionals in research and data analysis and accessing the NSW HealthNet and NSW HealthWeb.
- 5.7 Develop links between Health Services and relevant tertiary institutions for the ready exchange of information research outcomes and changing clinical and management practices.
- 5.8 Establish a statewide strategy to develop an Electronic Health Record for every individual in NSW.
- 5.9 Implement core patient management and clinical systems for all settings in the continuum of care across the State.
- 5.10 Expand and manage the content of the Health Information Exchange to ensure the consistent and timely production of key outcomes, performance and management information.
- 5.11 Establish lead sites for the implementation of best practice in clinical information management.
- 5.12 Build capacity of health system and staff to undertake benchmarking for performance improvement.
- 5.13 Establish statewide resource of evidenced based assessments of the impact of Health Services on health outcomes.
- 5.14 Expand classification and costing beyond acute inpatient care to all Health Services so we understand the link between costs and outputs.
- 5.15 Support the implementation of the *Government Action Plan for Health* through the development and implementation of clinical information management systems and standards to facilitate cross area and sector information based networking.
- 5.16 Establish a cost effective technology and telecommunications infrastructure throughout the State in collaboration with intersectoral and national initiatives.
- 5.17 Introduce a Unique Patient Identifier for use through the NSW Health system to allow access by providers to all relevant clinical information, within a framework of informed consumer consent and protection of individual privacy.

Embracing innovation

Clear priorities for research, development and innovation

- Supporting research as a clear priority for NSW Health.
- State and Health Service research policies work with Commonwealth and industry policies to promote ethical health research and translate research results into clinical practice.
- NSW Health encourages a mix of investigator-initiated and priority-driven research and development projects.

Early implementation of effective models of care

- Information on best practice is widely and quickly disseminated and taken up.
- Worthwhile innovations are rapidly identified, implemented and evaluated.

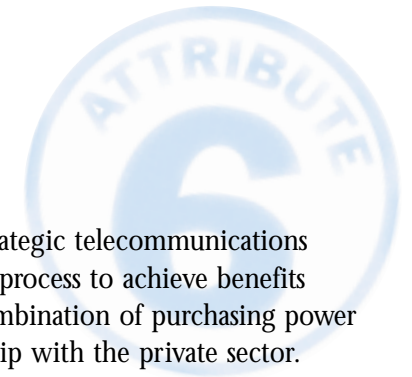
A responsive system open to new ideas and consolidating on successful approaches.

- NSW Health and the community support innovation in health care to meet changing needs.
- NSW Health embraces ideas from consumers which support innovation in health care.

Active shaping of the future

- Health outcomes are improved for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.
- Cultural, legislative and industrial barriers to change are decreasing.
- Service planning encourages the constant and rapid implementation of effective innovations including corporate partnerships.

Strategies for shaping the future



- 6.1 Identify and implement key Health Service innovations recommended by high level evidence that have not yet been adopted in NSW Health.
- 6.2 Develop and implement Health Service research and development plans.
- 6.3 Determine appropriate models for funding teaching and research and incorporate them into the Resource Distribution Formula and allocation of funds by the Department and Areas.
- 6.4 Explore alternative models of care involving general practice, community health and hospitals and share the best practice models.
- 6.5 Formalise policy partnerships with universities and with other health systems to ensure access to current research and scholarship.
- 6.6 Develop mechanisms that facilitate system-wide collaboration in the development and uptake of new technologies, products and knowledge to improve health care delivery and outcomes.
- 6.7 Develop an organisational culture that values new ideas as worthy of consideration.
- 6.8 Develop collaborative mechanisms to identify knowledge needs and link research investment to needs.
- 6.9 Promote and facilitate evaluation of current health care activity.
- 6.10 Facilitate the adoption across NSW Health of proven clinical pathways for common procedures.
- 6.11 Exploit the opportunities arising from developments in telecommunications to enhance service delivery, information exchange, response times, job satisfaction, work practices and cost effectiveness.
- 6.12 Develop a Resource Allocation Policy and Funding Formula that informs and enables an equitable distribution of targeted Aboriginal health funding in NSW to improve access to primary health care.
- 6.13 Encourage identification, assessment and management of young people with depression and related disorders. Encourage the consolidation of pathways to care from school to adolescent Mental Health Services and roles and responsibilities of school and health service staff.
- 6.14 Establish a strategic telecommunications procurement process to achieve benefits through a combination of purchasing power and partnership with the private sector.
- 6.15 Review and rationalise the existing data centre infrastructure to provide the most cost effective support for the information needs of the health system.
- 6.16 Develop a best practice, commercially oriented, State Strategic Asset Plan for the NSW Health system.
- 6.17 Develop a re-engineered process of procurement for Area Strategic Asset Plans, major works, structured around partnerships with the private sector.

