

# NSW Health - Improvements to Security in Hospitals

November 2018

## 1.0 Introduction

1.1 The Ministry of Health (the Ministry) is engaging a consultant (the Consultant) to identify and consider whole of NSW Health strategies for security in hospitals (including those in the Justice Health and Forensic Mental Health Network) to ensure staff, patients and visitors are kept safe from violence and aggression (the Project).

## 2.0 Background

2.1 In January 2016, a violent incident occurred in the emergency department of Nepean Hospital when a police officer and a member of the security staff were shot by a patient who seized the police officer's gun.

2.2 In February 2016 a Roundtable was convened and involved unions, frontline staff and managers. A *12 Point Security Action Plan on Hospital Security* was developed and endorsed by the then Health Minister ([Attachment 1](#)).

2.3 Action has been taken to implement all actions within the *12 Point Security Action Plan on Hospital Security*, noting that some actions, such as embedding a stronger work, health and safety culture and rolling out the new incident management reporting system (ims+) are of a long term nature.

2.4 Action 3 from the *12 Point Security Action Plan on Hospital Security* required an audit of 20 emergency departments (the remainder of the emergency departments completed a security self-assessment). Every emergency department then developed a plan (the Remedial Action Plan) to address areas of non-compliance identified through the external or the self-assessment.

2.5 Every emergency department also implemented actions arising from the recommendations from the external ED audit report (the Implementation Plan).

2.6 In February 2018 the Government submitted its response to the *Legislative Assembly Committee of Law and Safety - Report of the Inquiry into Violence Against Emergency Services Personnel*. A number of the recommendations reflected and reinforced the value of the work that was already underway as part of the *12 Point Security Action Plan on Hospital Security*.

2.7 Recent incidents at Blacktown Hospital, where a nurse was stabbed after a patient gained access to an unsecured staff meal room, and Nepean Hospital, where a person adjacent to the entrance of the emergency department wielded a knife, have further highlighted the risks present for staff, patients and visitors when exposed to individuals exhibiting threatening or disturbed behaviours

## 3.0 Scope and purpose of the Project

The Consultant will, in undertaking the Project, have regard to but will not be limited by the matters listed below:

3.1 Consider the impact of the *12 Point Security Action Plan on Hospital Security* in setting a framework for improving hospital security.

3.2 Invite submissions from relevant stakeholders, including but not limited to the Health Services Union, the NSW Nurses and Midwives' Association, Australian Salaried Medical Officers' Federation and the Australian Medical Association.

- 3.3 Consider any additional state-wide strategies that are required to achieve further improvements to security in NSW hospitals (including those in the Justice Health and Forensic Mental Health Network), with a particular emphasis on any changes required to NSW Health policies, practices and legislation.
- 3.4 NSW Health and its staff acknowledge that the responsibility for public safety always remains the role of NSW Police. Nevertheless the future role of NSW Health security staff and contractors will be examined.
- 3.5 Have regard to previous inquiries and reports and the decisions taken by Government and NSW Health in response.
- 3.6 Have regard to the relevant best practices in other Australian and NZ health jurisdictions and the appropriateness or otherwise for their adoption in NSW.
- 3.7 Specifically consider the effectiveness of the TAFE/NSW Health training program on security and safety that has been implemented under the 12 point action plan.
- 3.8 Recommendations are to take account of the fact that NSW Health retains as its core function the provision of health services to promote, protect, develop, maintain and improve the health and wellbeing of individuals. Care still needs to be provided to people who are coping with serious illness and injury which may impact on behaviour, while ensuring that the workplace is safe for staff, patients and members of the public.
- ### 4.0 Key deliverable and work product, completion timeframe and key contacts
- 4.1 The Project requires that the Consultant provides a report addressing the specified scope and purpose.
- 4.2 The Project Report will contain recommendations, with commentary on the rationale for each recommendation.
- 4.3 The Consultant will be supported throughout the Project by an internal Departmental Working Party and appropriate administrative support provided by the Ministry of Health.
- 4.4 The Project Report will be submitted to the Secretary of the NSW Health by no later than **Wednesday 14 February 2019**. Any potential slippage in the timeframe for submission of the Report should be advised at the earliest possible opportunity.
- ### 5.0 Policy Context
- 5.1 The Consultant will have due regard to the following relevant NSW Health Policy Directives:
- Protecting People and Property NSW Health Policy and Standards for Security Risk Management in NSW Health Agencies (the Security Manual).
  - PD2018\_013 Work Health and Safety Better Practice Procedures.
  - PD2015\_001 Preventing and Managing Violence in the NSW Health Workplace - A Zero Tolerance Approach.
  - PD2017\_043 Violence Prevention & Management Training Framework for NSW Health Organisations.
  - PD2012\_035 Aggression, Seclusion & Restraint in Mental Health Facilities in NSW.
  - PD2015\_004 Principles for the Safe Management of Disturbed and/or Aggressive Behaviour and the Use of Restraint.
  - Memorandum of Understanding – NSW Health and NSW Police Force (2018)
  - PD2010\_024 Fire Safety in Health Care Facilities.
  - PD2014\_004 Incident Management Policy.
  - PD2015\_043 Risk Management - Enterprise-Wide Risk Management Policy and Framework - NSW Health.
  - GL2015\_007 Management of patients with Acute Severe Behavioural Disturbance in Emergency Departments.
  - GL2013\_002 Management of NSW Police Force Officers' Firearms in Public Health Facilities and Vehicles.
  - GL2006\_014 Aged Care – Working with People with Challenging Behaviours in Residential Aged Care Facilities.