

Health Service Delivery in Western Sydney Community Information Meeting Minutes

Shalvey PCYC Thursday 24 September 2015



Health

Acknowledgement of Country

Acknowledgement of Country provided by Uncle Wes.

Meeting Opens

Meeting facilitated by Mareese Terare.

Michael Jones, Jones Partners, Liquidator of AMS Western Sydney

Michael Jones reported on:

- events leading up to the liquidation of AMSWS.
- Fair Entitlement Guarantee (FEG) process for former AMSWS staff to access their entitlements. The liquidator indicated most staff had now submitted their claims.
- the sale of AMSWS buildings, including purchase of main premise by Indigenous Business Australia for long term provision of health delivery for Aboriginal people in western Sydney.

Commonwealth Department of Health Representative

Roz Lucas reported on:

- the key objective of the Commonwealth was to ensure continuity of care for former AMSWS patients, including supporting an interim service arrangement and maintaining the former AMSWS building.
- the importance of community consultation and input into the service model with support from the Steering Committee and Aboriginal Advisory Committee.

Centre for Aboriginal Health, NSW Ministry of Health Representative

Geri Wilson-Matenga reported on:

- commitment of funding from the Ministry of Health to the western Sydney region into the future.
- summary of the current interim service offering including primary care, mental health, drug and alcohol, mums and bubs, and dental.
- the importance of keeping community informed on the progress of the interim service and the future. This includes another community information meeting as well as ongoing updates on the NSW Health website, Koori radio and through hardcopy factsheets.
- the importance of the current governance arrangements to assist in meeting local needs.

WentWest Primary Health Network Representative

Walter Kmet reported on:

- WentWest's role as supporting service continuity through a partnership with the Commonwealth, the Ministry, Local Health Districts and local Aboriginal organisations including Marrin Weejali.
- the current staffing arrangement at the interim service including GPs, nurses, administration and reception, Aboriginal Health Workers and a transport driver, and highlighted that many former AMSWS staff have been re-employed in these roles and a number of other former AMSWS staff are now being employed at WentWest.

Jamie Matthews

- Invited community members to visit the interim service both for health needs and to provide suggestions and ideas they may have on local needs and service provision.

Darryl Wright, CE, Tharawal AMS-

Darryl expressed his board's sadness at the current situation regarding AMSWS and thanked the Ministry, Commonwealth, WentWest and LHDs for their support in ensuring interim service provision following the closure of AMSWS. Darryl offered his support and that of the Tharawal Board in supporting and mentoring the community to prepare for the future service tendering process.

Questions

Was there a forensic audit done on AMSWS?

Liquidator - No, but it is the role of the liquidator to conduct a thorough investigation and report on its findings, including reporting on any failures and offences to Australian Securities and Investments Commissions (ASIC).

This is not the first time the community has asked for government to do a forensic audit. There is a need to hold the previous administration accountable.

As above.

Will the service that returns deceased Aboriginal people back to country continue?

Ministry - The Ministry acknowledges that this is a crucial service for the community and is exploring, along with the Commonwealth, options for the future. There is currently no clear answer on continuity of the program. However the Ministry and Local Health Districts are involved in supporting an interim arrangement to transport deceased persons until a longer term strategy is delivered.

Is the Government and WentWest aware that AMSWS catered to members of the broader western Sydney community beyond Mt Druitt?

WentWest - Yes and the interim service will cater for any Aboriginal person who wishes to access the service.

What does the word 'interim' mean with regard to WentWest providing an interim health service?

WentWest - This refers to an interim arrangement to allow services to continue to be provided to patients until a structure can be put in place for longer term.

Who are the members of the Steering Committee and Aboriginal Advisory Committee and what is the role of each committee?

Steering Committee - To provide operational support to establish the interim service

- Centre for Aboriginal Health NSW
Ministry of Health
- Commonwealth Department of Health
- Aboriginal Health and Medical Research Council
- Representatives of the Aboriginal Advisory Committee
- Western Sydney Local Health District
- Nepean Blue Mountains Local Health District
- WentWest - Western Sydney Primary Health Network
- Nepean Blue Mountains Primary Health Network
- Gilgai - Member to be confirmed
- Yenu Allowah - Member to be confirmed

Aboriginal Advisory Committee –
to provide expertise and advice on
establishing the interim health service

Ms Geri Wilson-Matenga
A/Director / Co Chair
Centre for Aboriginal Health
NSW Ministry of Health

Ms Sandra Bailey
CEO / Co-Chair
Aboriginal Health and Medical Research
Council

Mr Adam Stuart
A/Manager
Centre for Aboriginal Health
NSW Ministry of Health

Mr Darryl Wright
Chief Executive Officer
Tharawal Aboriginal Corporation

Mr Nathan Jones
Director, Aboriginal Health
South Western Sydney LHD

Mr Jamie Matthews
Aboriginal Health Manager
WentWest Limited

Mr Tony Hunter
Chief Executive Officer
Marrin Weejali Aboriginal Corporation

Ms Jennifer Beale
General Manager
Butucarbin Aboriginal Corporation

Ms Patricia Heal
Coordinator
Aboriginal Health Unit
Nepean Blue Mountains LHD

Mr Craig Brown
Senior Aboriginal Mental Health Worker
Nepean Blue Mountains LHD

Mr David Simmonds
Western Sydney Local health District

Prior to being appointed, did Jones Partners have a professional relationship with AMSWS?

Liquidator – No.

What is the timeline for returning the service to community control?

Commonwealth – There is no date set for actioning the future service as there are a number of stages that will need to occur including consolidating the interim service, community consultation and following this, going out to market through a tender process. It is important not to set a date as this could limit the time required to undertake consultation.

Why do patients have to provide proof of Aboriginality to access dental services at the interim service?

WentWest – Question taken on notice. Triage process to be explored and streamlined.

If former AMSWS patient records are available to WentWest why do patients need to re-identify as Aboriginal?

WentWest – The service needs to be sure that they are accessing the correct patient record and as part of this process ask a number of questions about a patient's identity. However this process will be explored and streamlined to minimise patients needing to re-identify as Aboriginal.

How long did the board and management of AMSWS know they were insolvent?

Liquidator- Trading while insolvent is one of the most common offences for businesses. This is a matter for ASIC to consider following submission of a report by Jones Partners (liquidator). The liquidator is not able to comment on the length of time the board and management of AMSWS were aware they were trading while insolvent at this time.

In 2010 an audit of AMSWS showed that the service was in the process of being insolvent. Who is accountable to this and why didn't Government step in?

Liquidator - The issue of a 2010 audit is being explored by the liquidator.

Commonwealth - The Government did not have evidence that the organisation was trading while insolvent until May 2015.

If audits are not submitted by Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Services by their due date why continue to fund the service and not step in?

Commonwealth - As above.

Is there a new AMS in Penrith?

Commonwealth - The Commonwealth has not provided any funding for the establishment of a new service in Penrith.