

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE NORTHERN NEW SOUTH WALES LOCAL HEALTH DISTRICT BOARD HELD ON WEDNESDAY 29 MARCH 2023 COMMENCING AT 8.45am GRAFTON BASE HOSPITAL, ARTHUR STREET, GRAFTON.**

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The Chair opened the meeting and Mr Monaghan acknowledged the Traditional Owners of this Land. He also paid his respects to Elders both past and present. He extended his respect to other Aboriginal people and colleagues present today.

**1. In-camera Session**

An in-camera session was not required.

A moment of silence was held in honour of Dr John Moran, Board Member, who passed away in February 2023. Several Board Members shared brief reflections regarding their friend and colleague.

**2.1 PRESENT AND APOLOGIES:**

**Board Members:**

Mr Peter Carter (Chair), Mr Scott Monaghan, Dr Andrew White, Dr John Griffin, Mr Michael Carter, Professor Susan Nancarrow, Dr Alasdair Arthur, Ms Carolyn Byrne, Dr Cathy Adams, Ms Naree Hancock

**Via Microsoft Teams:**

Nil for this meeting

**Apologies:**

Mr Thomas George  
Mr Pat Grier

**In Attendance:**

Ms Lynne Weir, Acting Chief Executive  
Mr Ged May, Community Engagement Manager  
Ms Liz Blake, Manager Chief Executive Unit  
Ms Kate Greenwood, Board Secretariat

**In Attendance for part of meeting:**

Dr Will Davies, Grafton Base Hospital Medical Staff Council

**2.2 Declaration of Pecuniary and/or Conflicts of Interest:**

There were no new declarations of pecuniary and/or Conflicts of Interest to declare.

**2.3 Previous Minutes:**

- 2.3.1** The Minutes of the Board Meeting held on 22 February 2023 as circulated were **ENDORSED** as a true and accurate record:

**Moved:** Dr John Griffin

**Seconded:** Ms Naree Hancock

**CARRIED**

- 2.3.1a** The Minutes of the Board Meeting held on 31 January 2023 as circulated were **ENDORSED** as a true and accurate record:

**Moved:** Dr John Griffin

**Seconded:** Ms Naree Hancock

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**CARRIED**

Ms Hancock provided a brief update on a possible guest speaker at the next Combined Board meeting (LHD/PHN) and a date will be advised in the near future.

**2.3.2 Business Arising from the minutes:**

**2.3.2.1 Ms Weir to provide an update on Patient Reported Measures via the CE report to the 29 March 2023 Board meeting.**

Ms Weir provided an overview on the Patient Reported Measures report.

The Board noted the information in the brief and Ms Weir advised further updates will be provided through the CE report in November.

**2.3.2.2 Ms Weir and Mr Scott Monaghan to draft a joint letter on behalf of the LHD and Bulgarr Ngaru Medical Aboriginal Corporation to Justice Health/NSW Corrective Services regarding health care funding for Balund-a Corrective Services.**

The Board noted this letter will be finalised in the coming week.

**2.3.3 Other Matters Arising from the minutes**

Nil for this meeting.

**3. Matters for Decision**

**3.1 Clarence Valley Clinical Services Plan**

Ms Weir provided an update on the information in the Clarence Valley Clinical Services Plan.

Discussion followed on the population projections for the Clarence Valley. Ms Weir advised that the Master plan includes future expansion options.

The Board **ENSORSED** the Clarence Valley Clinical Services Plan.

**4. Board Strategic Priorities**

**4.1 Workforce and Culture** – no update for this meeting.

**4.2 Patient Flow** - please refer to Item 5.1 CE Report.

**4.3 Environmentally Sustainable Healthcare** – Dr Griffin spoke of the recent Ministry of Health funding allocation for the proposed installation of electrical supply infrastructure and electric vehicles for Byron Central Hospital.

The Chair acknowledged the excellent work being undertaken in this space by Mr Steven Hunt, Manager Environmentally Sustainable Healthcare and Mr Matt Long, Director Corporate Services.

**4.4 Aboriginal Health** – Mr Monaghan provided a brief update on the Aboriginal Medical Services and acknowledged the critical work of Ms Kirsty Glanville, Director Aboriginal Health in working together to engage relevant stakeholders regarding Aboriginal health matters.

**5. Matters for Discussion**

**5.1 Acting Chief Executive's Report**

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Ms Weir referred to the issues that were covered in the Chief Executive's report including:

#### 5.1.1 Current and Significant Issues

- **Visits** - Mr Luke Sloane Co-ordinator General for Rural Health visited the LHD on 27 and 28 March 2023. Ms Weir provided a brief update on his visit to several locations around the District including Bulgarr Nagru Aboriginal Medical Services and Rekindling the Spirit. The LHD ran an online forum for staff to participate with Mr Sloane which was well attended by approximately 200 attendees.  
The ELT and Media Manager continue to explore new ways to effectively communicate with staff across the LHD and will look at using this mode of communication for other matters moving forward.
- **Nursing Recruitment** – A second overseas campaign to recruit nursing staff will travel to the UK and Ireland in April to conduct interviews.
- **State Election** – NSW State Election was held on 25 March 2023 and the caretaker mode has now ceased. Mr Ryan Park has been appointed as the new Minister for Health.
- **COVID** – The COVID risk rating remains at Yellow Status.
- **Patient Flow Unit** - now fully operational. Ms Weir provided a brief update on the workings of the new unit and will provide further data around this in the April 2023 CE report.
- **Ballina Clinical Services Plans** – The draft Ballina Clinical Services Plan has been provided to the NNSWLHD Board for information and will now be provided to the MOH.

#### 5.1.2 Update on Strategic Issues

- **Strategic Priority: Integration Through Partnerships:**  
Healthy North Coast, Mid-North Coast LHD and NNSWLHD will partner to develop the North Coast Joint Regional Mental Health & Alcohol and Other Drug Plan.

#### 5.1.3 Matters for Approval

- **Audit and Risk Committee:**  
The Board **ENDORSED** the request to appoint Mr Richard Jones and Mr John Culleton to the NNSWLHD Audit and Risk Committee subject to the pending criminal record check being satisfactory.

#### 5.1.4 Major Key Performance Indicators

- Emergency Treatment Performance (ETP) during February 2023 NNSWLHD did not meet the ETP target of 50% (admitted) with a result of 29.3%.
- Elective Surgery Access Performance during February 2023 was Category 1 94% against a target of 100%, Category 2 62% against a target of 97% and Category 3 was 63% against a target of 97%.
- Elective Surgery overdue numbers for February 2023 were Category 1 – 2, Category 2 – 446, Category 3 – 732.
- Triage – NNSWLHD met triage Category 1 target, Category 2 February 2023 result was 75% with a target of 95% and Category 3 result was 73% against a target of 85%.
- Transfer of Care target for February 2023 was 90% with a result of 84%.

#### 5.1.5 Security, Risk and Compliance Update

- Nil for this meeting.

**5.1.6 Governance Update**

- Nil for this meeting.

**5.1.7 Digital Health Update**

- An update was provided on Digital Health progress across the LHD.

**5.1.8 Capital Works/Planning Projects**

- An update was provided on the capital works and planning projects across the LHD.

**5.1.9 Matters for Noting**

- Nil for this meeting.

**5.1.10 Important Meetings/ Diary Commitments**

- Board Workshop – 26 April 2023 Ballina Byron Islander Resort.
- Save the Date - 13 July 2023, all day workshop with ELT and Tier 3 Managers.

**5.1.11 Questions for the Chief Executive without Notice**

- Ms Weir provided an update on the anticipated scheduled plan for handover and commissioning of the Tweed Valley Hospital.
- Following a brief discussion, it was agreed that all Board members will have access to current Board Sub-committee papers via their NNSWLHD computers.
- Responding to a query regarding retention of staff, reasons for leaving the LHD and the number of staff completing exit interviews, Ms Weir advised there are a number of reasons including pay disparity with Queensland, staff wanting to work fewer hours and/or retirement. Ms Weir indicated she will provide further information and data regarding this matter to the 26 April 2023 Board meeting.

**ACTION:**

**Ms Weir to provide data regarding the retention of staff, reasons for leaving and the number of staff completing exit interviews to the 26 April 2023 Board meeting.**

- Responding to a query on pay disparities between QLD and NSW Health, Ms Weir advised that following the announcement of the new State Government, the LHD would need to adopt and watch and wait approach regarding this matter.

The Board **ENDORSED** the Chief Executive's Report.

**5.1 Committee Minutes (discussed on exception basis, otherwise noted)**

**5.2.1 Health Care Quality Committee (HCQC) – 14 March 2023.**

Mr Peter Carter provided a brief update on the information in the minutes.

A lengthy discussion ensued around the importance of clinical coding across the District. It was reiterated the need for the documentation from the clinicians to be accurate enough for the coders to be able to identify what the diagnosis or treatment is. A significant amount of education is being rolled out across the LHD to increase the knowledge and expertise around this matter. Ms Weir explained how coding relates to NWAUs.

Securing clinical coding staff across the District continues to be a challenge with the pay

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disparity and work to attract staff is ongoing.

Dr Adams provided a brief overview of the discussion at HCQC regarding the Consumer Complaints Evaluation Survey, querying its value to the committee. It was agreed at the HCQC meeting that further discussion would follow offline.

The Board noted the unconfirmed HCQC minutes.

**5.2.2 Finance and Performance Committee (F&PC) – 22 March 2023.**

Mr Michael Carter provided an overview of the F&PC minutes.

A recent allocation of funding has been approved to help with the impact of the Premium Nurse Agency costs. It is anticipated the impact of this will decrease around April/May due to the new contractual arrangements.

General discussion followed on the pay inequities with Queensland and the challenges around recruiting staff. Global workforce shortages seem to have impacted health significantly creating challenges with recruitment, retention and culture.

The Chair indicated he would like to take a more innovative look at workforce possibilities and will further discuss the matter with Professor Nancarrow and Ms Hancock who have an interest and expertise in workforce.

The Board noted the unconfirmed F&PC minutes.

**5.2.3 Medical and Dental Appointments Advisory (MDAAC) Committee – 9 March 2023.**

Dr Arthur provided a brief overview of the recent resignations and appointments across the LHD.

The Board noted the unconfirmed MDAAC minutes.

**5.2.4 Audit and Risk Committee Special Finance (ARC) – next meeting TBA.**

The Board noted the next ARC meeting date is to be advised.

**5.2.5 Clinical Planning and Clinician Engagement Committee (CPCEC) – to be advised.**

**5.2.6 Community Partnership Advisory Council (CPAC) – next meeting to be held 3 April 2023.**

The Board noted the next CPAC meeting will be held on 3 April 2023.

**5.2.7 Research and Innovation Committee (RIC) – next meeting 5 April 2023.**

The Board noted the next RIC meeting will be held on 5 April 2023.

**6. Matters for Noting/Information (discussed only on exception basis)**

Nil for this meeting

**6.1 Major correspondence**

Nil major correspondence

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**6.2 NNSWLHD Seal**

There were no items requiring the NNSWLHD Seal to be applied.

**6.3 Calendar**

**6.3.1 Chairman's Calendar**

The Board noted the Chair's Calendar.

**6.3.2 Updated Board Calendar**

The Board noted the updated Board Calendar.

**6.4 Other matters for noting**

**6.4.1 Draft Ballina Clinical Services Plan**

The Board noted the draft Ballina Clinical Services Plan.

**6.4.2 Quarterly Patient Feedback Report**

The Board noted the Quarterly Consumer Feedback Report for October – December 2022.

**6.5 Business without notice**

- The Board Chair provided an update on recruitment for a new CE.
- Ms Byrne advised that the Kingscliff Chamber of Commerce had been invited the Chair and Acting Chief Executive to attend a future meeting to present on the new TVH.
- A brief update was provided on the Urgent Care Centres.

**7. Meeting Finalisation**

Dr John Griffin provided a critique of the meeting.


**7.1 Next Meeting**

26 April 2023  
Ballina

**7.2 Meeting closed**

There being no further official business, the Chair declared the meeting closed at 12.05pm

I declare that this is a true and accurate meeting record.

Signed  .....

Date 26 04 2023 .....

Mr Peter Carter  
Chair  
Northern NSW Local Health District Board

**9.05am- 9.30am Dr Will Davies, Grafton Base Hospital**

The Board welcomed Dr Davies to the meeting and he provided an overview of his discussion points.

Dr Davies discussed Grafton Base Hospital capacity especially in relation to the next anticipated COVID surge and flu season approaching. He provided an overview of patient flow and gave

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examples of the how this works in relation to moving patients through Emergency Departments to wards when deemed necessary.

Referring to the Clarence Valley Clinical Services Plan, Dr Davies indicated that the Medical Staff Council (MSC) question the proposed bed capacity. He raised that the MSC believe bridging funding would need to be considered whilst the new hospital is constructed.

Responding to the possibility of bridging funding, Mr Michael Carter indicated that at present he does not envisage an increase in funding whilst the challenges around the overall Health budget continues, further discussion would need to occur around this matter.

Dr Davies spoke of the following:

- Alternate Models of Care and the role of Maclean District Hospital.
- Wait times for surgical consults in the specialists' rooms.
- Challenges around the increased complex medical conditions, especially with the increase in the ageing population.
- Radiology services in the Clarence.
- Importance of staff retention and ensuring a working culture that is conducive to staff wishing to stay with the organisation.

Ms Weir responded to a query regarding the number of presentations to Emergency Departments increasing substantially, compared to pre-COVID numbers. There have been occasions when patients awaiting Nursing Home placement have remained in Grafton Base Hospital due to unavailability of GP's to accept their care.

Ms Weir agreed with Dr Davies, indicating that the roles of other hospitals could be reviewed, however this is a significant discussion which would require community and staff collaboration.

The Board thanked Dr Davies for attending the Board meeting today.

**ACTION:**

**Ms Weir to organise a meeting including Dr Davies, Dr White, Professor Nancarrow and the Board Chair to discuss the strategic issues raised today by Dr Davies.**

**Board Development: Update by individual Board members**

As an action from the NNSWLHD Board Development Plan, Dr Cathy Adams and Dr Andrew White provided a brief overview on their professional background and the strengths they bring to the Board.