

Sustainable Health Review Interim Report

15 March 2018

WA Primary Health Alliance (WAPHA) welcomes the recently released Sustainable Health Review's *Interim Report* in which the Government of Western Australia confirms the need for better system integration to improve health outcomes for all Western Australians.

As WA's peak primary health care commissioning body, WAPHA is a key participant in the review process and its implementation.

The interim report highlights the pivotal role of primary healthcare in ensuring a sustainable health system for WA. It also foreshadows greater collaboration of State and Commonwealth health agencies, specifically in joint planning, funding and commissioning of health services.

WAPHA CEO Learne Durrington said many of the report's findings are aligned with WAPHA's strategic priorities, particularly the need for whole of system integration to deliver connected, person-centred care in the community, and a focus on prevention and early intervention.

"We expect this will translate into strong Commonwealth and State Government partnerships that utilise health practitioners in the community setting to allow more people to be treated closer to home and decrease the need for hospitalisation.

"This will go a long way towards improving health equity for some of the most disadvantaged people in our community, including those living in rural and remote areas, Aboriginal people and those experiencing social and / or financial hardship," Ms Durrington said.

These groups are also among the most likely to be living with multiple, chronic and complex conditions and therefore stand to benefit most from these changes.

"Of course, this will require better integration between hospitals and general practice, which WAPHA, as the operator of all three Primary Health Networks (PHN) in WA, is well placed to facilitate, given its close links with general practices and Area Health Services across the state," Ms Durrington said.

WAPHA will continue to engage closely with stakeholders in the primary care setting, to further the report's interim recommendations and input their views into the final report.

The recent Council of Australian Government's Heads of Agreement on public hospital funding and health reform, to which Western Australia was an early signatory, also points to an increased shared responsibility for health.

"WAPHA looks forward to working closely with WA Health to explore new, appropriate and sustainable models of care that may change the setting where care is delivered," Ms Durrington said.

All health professionals, consumers and other interested parties are encouraged to have their say on the Sustainable Health Review and keep informed of future engagement opportunities here: <http://ww2.health.wa.gov.au/Improving-WA-Health/Sustainable-health-review/Get-involved>

The Final Report is due to Government in November 2018.

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About WAPHA: WAPHA oversees the strategic commissioning functions of the Perth North, Perth South and Country WA Primary Health Networks (PHNs). The WA PHNs are three of 31 PHNs established by the Australian Government nationally to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of medical services for the community. We work across the WA healthcare system with doctors, allied health professionals, Area Health Services and service providers to improve the coordination of care for people who are at risk of poor health outcomes. For more information, visit www.wapha.org.au