



## ***South Western Sydney Health Network: The Way Forward 2004-2008***

June 17 2004

# **BACKGROUND**

**The *South Western Sydney Health Network: The Way Forward 2004-2008* is a new health plan for people of south western Sydney.**

The comprehensive report was compiled by a team of clinical leaders led by the clinical associate dean, South Western Sydney Clinical School, University of NSW Professor Jeremy Wilson.

The implementation of an area-wide clinical service plan for South Western Sydney Area Health Service (SWSAHS) was a key priority of the expert review team headed by Professor Bruce Barraclough in October last year following an inquiry into patient care and safety at Campbelltown and Camden hospitals.

The plan meets a key recommendation of the Barraclough review that clinical services in SWSAHS be provided on an area-wide basis, rather than the existing sector basis.

In other words, patients entering the SWSAHS system will have improved access to all the health services and facilities they need wherever they are located in the area health service, regardless of where they present.

The key objectives of the *South Western Sydney Health Network* are to advance healthcare in a very real way for the people of south western Sydney.

Under the sector model, services have been provided to the geographic area of an individual hospital, rather than on an overall area-wide basis.

Under the new area-wide structure, clinician-led area-wide departments will be formed to create a one service, multi-campus service delivery system across SWSAHS, led by an area director who may also be a senior (clinical) academic appointment.

The aim of the four-year plan is to:

- create area-wide services, that is one service with multi-campus delivery led by an area director
- define roles/centres of expertise for each hospital that are complementary
- cross appoint staff (as many already are), to ensure quality and consistency in patient care
- introduce training rotation of registrars
- build stronger hospital to primary care connections
- boost training and quality of staff
- develop an area-wide admissions policy
- establish SWSAHS as a teaching area, not a series of disconnected teaching sites
- establish systems for monitoring the safety and outcomes of care
- develop common protocols of patient management; and
- respond to the increasing specialisation of medicine by supporting general medicine through academic appointments.

The *South Western Sydney Health Network* focuses on achieving significant improvements in health outcomes for the people of South Western Sydney by:

- Improving **patient access** to local tertiary and secondary services health services within the South Western Sydney area;
- **Ensuring safety and quality** through significantly boosting clinician and academic leadership and importantly, improving the adequacy and distribution of medical and surgical registrar cover;
- **Developing a network of services** such that across the Area patients have access to the best specialist care available;
- **Establishing clear directions and plans** for over 60 clinical services over a four to five year horizon. For each clinical service there will be a plan for service access, workforce strategies, agreed policies and clinical approaches, consistent care standards, cross-appointments of medical staff and improved communication systems right across South Western Sydney.

*South Western Sydney Health Network* plan sets forth a series of recommendations that define new approaches and standards for the delivery of clinical care in SWSAHS.

In making its findings and recommendations, the following were fundamental priorities:

- patient care and safety
- adequate 24 hour medical coverage
- complementary hospital roles
- the importance of hospital-community partnerships
- equity of access
- seamless transfer and transport for acute patients
- cross accreditation and appointment of clinicians
- clinical standards and governance
- education and training; and
- research.

## **Key recommendations:**

### **Resources:**

- Hospital bed capacity study be undertaken to assist integrated approach to acute care capacity to respond to growing activity for emergency services and longer waiting lists for planned procedures
- Feasibility planning be undertaken to assess health service impact of the Bringelly urban release which will add an estimated 18,000 people a year to the population of SWSAHS
- Capital asset plan be finalised to develop the capital assets of SWSAHS and support funding of capital items for service developments
- Review of operating theatre uses to define where further efficiencies could be achieved.

### **Patient safety and medical cover:**

- NSW Health to take action to promote fairer access to registrar allocations to bring SWSAHS into line with other metropolitan Area Health Services by 2005.

### **Education and Training:**

- It is recommended that clinical leadership should be improved with appointments of academic chairs in the specialties of Emergency Medicine, Maternal and Fetal, Paediatrics, Cancer, Aged Care, General Medicine, Anaesthetics, Rheumatology, Trauma and Emergency, Surgery and ENT
- Training registrar rotations to occur across all relevant sites
- Directors of Physician Training, Clinical Superintendent, Senior Medical Registrars be appointed at Bankstown, Liverpool and Campbelltown to provide a leading edge teaching program for all SWSAHS registrars
- Nurse educations and clinical nurse educators be enhanced
- Clinical academic leadership in nursing and allied health be enhanced

SWSAHS is one of the fastest growing areas of Australia, with a population of about 800,000, set to rise to 842,000 by 2006. It has the most culturally and demographically diverse population of any Area Health Service in NSW.

The Area comprises seven local government areas, parts of which are amongst the most socio-economically disadvantaged areas in Australia. The Area includes the major suburban centres of Liverpool, Bankstown and Fairfield and the outer urban centre of Campbelltown, as well as comparatively isolated locations in Camden, Wollondilly and Wingecarribee shires.

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