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Message from the CEO



Jane Miller Chief Executive

I am delighted to introduce our Community and Consumer Engagement Plan (CCEP) 2023-2028.

The CCEP is an important companion plan for our Strategic Plan 2023-2028, which states that we believe that everyone has the right to access quality and effective patient-focused healthcare so that they can live their best lives.

The CCEP will support us to deliver on our commitments across our four strategic plan pillars: People, Patients, Impact and Connection. However, the CCEP is particularly important for connection, enabling us to strengthen our relationships with each other, our patients, our partners and across our healthcare system.

At the heart of this connection is our commitment to meaningful engagement, which means understanding lived experiences and working together to provide high quality ambulance services to all Victorians. This engagement will support us to effectively partner and make decisions that lead to better outcomes.

The vision, as outlined in the CCEP, is to provide fair and easy access to ambulance and healthcare services, foster healthy and resilient communities, and continuously improve our service in partnership with Victorians.

The CCEP has been developed in partnership with consumers and community members and I thank them for their leadership and guidance.

We have set out how to achieve this; it includes collaborating on research, advocacy and innovation and embracing opportunities to co-design solutions. Critically, we are committed to deep listening to obtain the insights to help us better understand healthcare needs and how we best deliver our services.

I am committed to leading the effective implementation of the CCEP and I am confident that it will enable Ambulance Victoria to make a significant and positive difference.

I look forward to working with you, our community and healthcare partners, guided by our Community Advisory Committee, as we work together to bring this plan to life, playing an important role in delivering world-leading, patient-focused, out of hospital, mobile and emergency health care to the Victorian community.

Message from the Chair



Colleen Furlanetto OAM

Community Advisory Committee Chair

I am privileged to Chair Ambulance Victoria's Community Advisory Committee, a diverse committee, which plays an important role in ensuring the needs and experiences of communities are understood, respected and integrated across Ambulance Victoria's work and services.

Members are appointed by the Ambulance Victoria Board and act as advocates for and representatives of the Victorian community. The diverse membership of the Committee ensures a range of perspectives and experiences are considered, and that Ambulance Victoria reflects the community it serves. The Committee's experience and contributions are highly valued by the Board and the organisation.

The achievements of the previous Community and Consumer Engagement Plan, released in 2020, are a testament to the value of community engagement and consultation. Despite the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on all aspects of our organisation, we made some significant achievements, including the expansion of the Heart Safe Communities program into a further 17 locations, as well as ongoing work with consumers on our Best Care committees, who have made significant contributions to service design and delivery.

We also conducted annual campaigns to support the community in responding to health emergencies, including three heat health 'Play Your Part, Be Summer Smart' campaigns. These campaigns improved community knowledge and understanding of how to prepare for, respond to and recover from summer-related emergencies, illnesses and injuries.

The Committee has played a critical role in the development of this plan, engaging in an iterative process of co-design with Ambulance Victoria's people, partners, and community members. Through this collaborative approach, we identified key areas for improvement, developed strategies to enhance the quality of our services, and ensured the voices of all Victorians were heard and reflected in this plan.

We are proud to present the Ambulance Victoria Community and Consumer Engagement Plan 2023-2028, as it sets our way forward for the next five years to ensure inclusive place-based engagement. This plan reflects our ongoing commitment to engaging with and listening to our consumers and our community. The Committee looks forward to working together with our communities to enhance the quality of ambulance services and continue to improve health care across Victoria.

Who we are

Ambulance Victoria is a unique and trusted organisation in Victoria's healthcare system. We provide out-of-hospital medical treatment and ambulance transport for people in emergencies and draw on our clinical expertise and experience to provide advice for less-urgent medical issues for all members of the community by connecting them to the appropriate care they need. We collaborate with our community to deliver the best care possible to our patients.

In 2022, we provided over one million emergency responses state-wide and supported a workforce of over 7,900 staff, made up of operational, corporate and volunteers. Patients and their lived experiences inform our service design pathways. We pride ourselves on providing patients the right care, at the right place, at the right time – our Best Care.

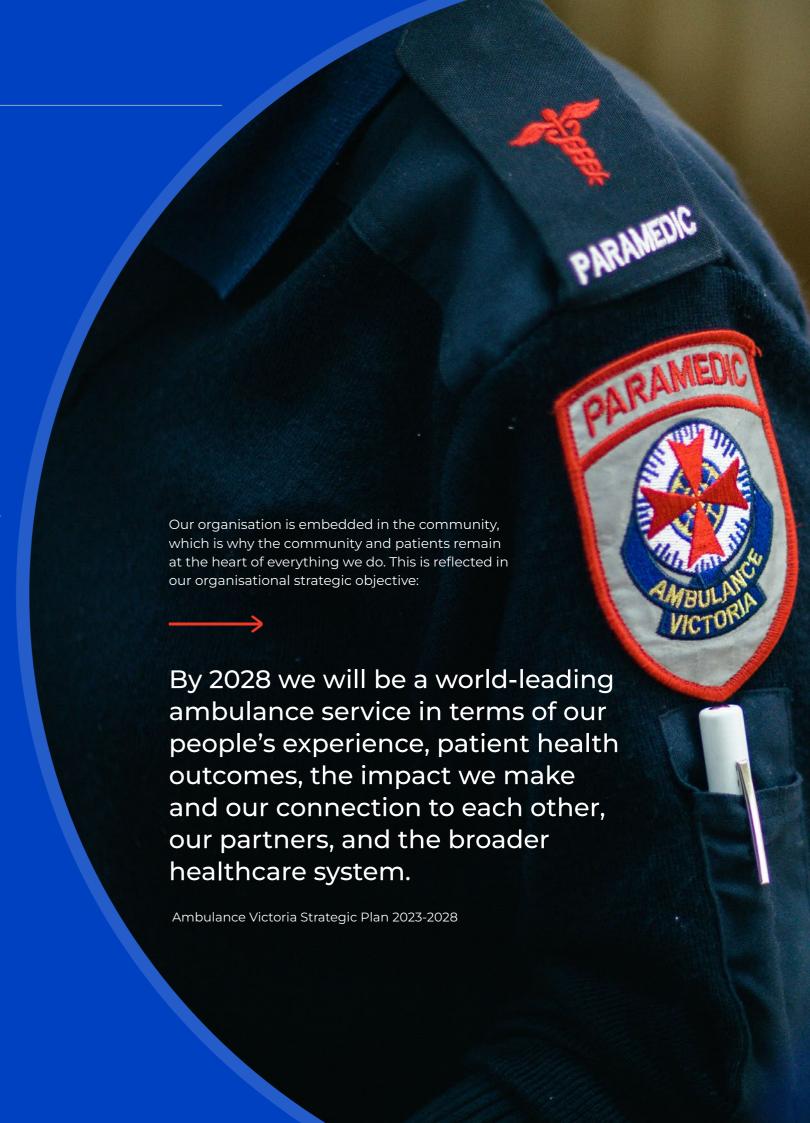
We are also a key connector within the health and emergency service systems including with community, primary health and social services, hospitals and health and aged care providers, and emergency services.

First Responders are an integral component of Ambulance Victoria's ability to deliver Best Care. Ambulance Community Officers (ACOs), Community Emergency Response Teams (CERTs) and First Responders are strongly embedded within local communities to enable a timelier response to medical emergencies in rural areas through early intervention and support for patients while awaiting the arrival of an ambulance.

Ambulance Auxiliaries have a proud history that dates to 1918, when the first Auxiliary was established in Maryborough. Funds generated by Auxiliary committees contribute towards infrastructure improvements, new equipment and additional training, beyond governmental allocations. Volunteer auxiliaries are part of our fabric. Over the decades they have supported paramedic teams, educated communities and strengthened our ability to deliver exceptional service in regional areas.

Operating since 1935, the Ambulance Victoria Membership Subscription Scheme provides Victorians with protection against the cost of using ambulance services, including emergency and clinically necessary non-emergency transports. There are over 2.8 million Ambulance members, covered by 1.4 million membership policies, and our membership call centre speaks directly to almost 400,000 people per year.

We will continue to communicate with our communities and consumers to gather their feedback and input on our services and to empower them with health information so that they can make informed decisions.



Our communities and consumers

Better health outcomes are achieved when we work together. This is why we will continue to build our capability to design, implement and measure the outcomes of community and consumer engagement across Ambulance Victoria.



Health Consumers are people who use health services, as well as their family and carers. This includes people who have used a health service in the past or who could potentially use the service in the future.

Community

Community is defined as people living in one particular area or people united through common interests, social or cultural connections.

We will continue to partner with community and consumers in a meaningful way to inform service design and quality care that is safe, person- and family-centred, equitable and clinically effective.

The voice of our communities and consumers (and the people who support them) informs everything from service design to delivery of service and governance.

Ambulance Victoria's Community Advisory Committee (CAC) was established to provide advice and direction to the Board of Directors. CAC members are our communities' advocates. and their experience and contributions are highly-valued by the Board and the organisation. They ensure the voice of the Victorian community is heard, understood, and that we partner with consumers to integrate across the work and services of Ambulance Victoria. The CAC is key to informing and monitoring the success of our Community and Consumer Engagement Plan.

There is good evidence that working in partnership with consumers and fostering person-centred approaches to care can help improve the safety and quality of care.



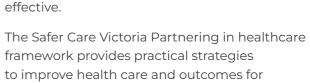
Better patient and community experience



Better workforce experience and improved well being



Better clinical outcomes, safety and quality



design and quality care that is safe, person-

and family-centred, equitable and clinically

framework provides practical strategies to improve health care and outcomes for Victorians by better involving consumers, their carers, and their families. Engaging with consumers and community partners is a requirement of the National Safety and Quality Health Standard and is reflected across various Victorian legislative and policy frameworks and Ambulance Victoria's own Strategic Plan and related policies.



Ambulance Victoria staff are committed to developing and maintaining strong, collaborative relationships with local communities. They are in the community every day listening to community and consumer needs and developing and delivering programs. This is supported centrally by our Operational Community Engagement Coordinators (OCELCs), who exist in each of our six regions. We will continue to strengthen our partnerships with communities and consumers.

Growing partnerships

We will continue to partner with community and consumers in a meaningful way to inform service





Better value care through lower cost care

Partnering with Consumers Standard, National Safety and Quality Health Service Standards 2021 (second edition)

A diverse and growing Victoria

Victoria is one of the most culturally diverse societies in the world and among the fastest growing states in Australia.

That is why we are ensuring our people and communities have a voice in the design and delivery of healthcare services.

We will use their feedback about their health needs to improve our service delivery.

We are committed to delivering inclusive service models that respond to the needs of our diverse communities, including Aboriginal and Torres Straight Islanders, and people living in rural communities.

This map shows the population by region from the 2021 Census.

Loddon Mallee 348,221

Grampians

Hume 306,157

Metro

Our services span six regions and cover the whole of Victoria.

At the 2021 Census, Victoria's population was

6.5 million

This was up from 5.93 million in 2016 and is forecast to increase to 7.74 million by 2028.

In 2021, almost four out of five people in Victoria lived in the capital city area of Greater Melbourne (4.9 million).

Ambulance Community Officers, Community Emergency Response Teams, remote Area Nurses provide emergency response in rural areas while awaiting the arrival of an ambulance.

Operational Community Engagement Liaison Coordinators and Paramedic Community Support Coordinators based in each region build community capability and enable consumer co-design.

Regional Best Care Committees are local engagement committees including consumer representation to ensure delivery of Best Care.



Barwon South West 440,016

Gippsland 300,534

Complex health needs



of Victorians identify as having a long-term health condition with 8.8 per cent having a mental health condition.

5.9%

of people need assistance with core activities.

Diversity

30%



this has increased from 28.3 per cent in 2016.



54%





1 in 5 Australians identify as having a disability.

Ageing population

In 2021-22...



62% were between 15-75 years

7% were under 15 years



speak a language other

27.6%

Delivering the Plan

This Plan supports a strategic shift from an activity-focused plan to an outcomes-focused one, which is essential for measuring the impact of our work.

This Plan supports delivery of the **Ambulance Victoria's Strategic Plan 2023-2028** by contributing to the Strategy's four strategic pillars of People, Patients, Impact and Connection and associated outcomes.







Patients



Impact



Connection



Connection will enable us to understand, trust and collaborate with each other. This will lead to better and sustainable performance.

By 2028 we will be seamlessly connected to each other, our patients, our partners and to the wider

Strategic Plan Pillar Four: Connection.

healthcare system.

Our *connection* to our community and patients

Will enable us to better meet their needs through deeper and ongoing engagement and participation.

Our **connection** to partners

Will enable us to work together and share assets and resources for improved community outcomes, and to ensure patients can access care that is right for them. We are part of a system across both healthcare and emergency services. We will influence and advocate for broader system innovation and improvement.

This plan also supports the Ambulance Victoria Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP).

The RAP determines our vision for reconciliation, explores our sphere of influence, and supports our organisation and our people to build strong, sustainable, and meaningful relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, and increase awareness and appreciation of culture. We will implement our RAP with support, knowledge, expertise, and guidance from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people from both inside and outside Ambulance Victoria.



Embedded within everything we do are Ambulance Victoria's values, which create a shared purpose and understanding of who we are, what we stand for, and how we act. Our purpose, values and belief guide us every day to be successful in achieving our strategic objectives and meet community needs and expectations.

Our purpose

To provide fair and easy access to ambulance and healthcare services, to build healthy and resilient communities, and to continuously improve our service in partnership with Victorians.

We believe

- People deserve health care that is responsive, easy to access and meets their needs.
- Communities thrive when people know when and how to seek help.
- Services work best when they are shaped by the people who use them and the partners who deliver them.



Our focus

1. Health education



We will educate people:

- → about how to access information to look after their health and get the care they need.
- → to help them find the right healthcare service for their needs.
- → in a way that is appropriate for our diverse communities.

2. Service co-design



We will:

- → consult with people to design and deliver our healthcare services.
- → design services that meet the needs of diverse groups, including rural communities and people who speak languages other than English.
- → respond to the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.
- → listen to community feedback so we can continuously improve our services.

3. Organisational capability

We will:

- → develop our employees' skills and knowledge to engage effectively with our communities.
- → measure the outcomes of our engagement activities.
- → use what we learn to improve our services.
- → continuously improve the way we engage.

4. Collaborative

partnerships



We will:

- → work with people, organisations and communities to improve health outcomes.
- → build partnerships based on trust, respect, integrity, and fairness.
- → continuously improve and strengthen our partnerships, making them more effective.



- → Effective leadership
- → Communicating impact
- → Sustainable delivery
- Skilled employees
- → Data and innovation

We are committed to being:

- → Genuine
- Inclusive
- Responsive
- → Purposeful
- Respectful

Our key outcomes

Health education

- Communities are resilient and capable to respond to health emergencies.
- Access to health information for all.

Organisational capability

- Staff are capable, skilled and confident in engagement.
- Engagement is responsive, sustainable and informed by evidence.

Service co-design

- Services shaped by the people and communities who use them.
- Easy-to-access healthcare based on individual need.

Collaborative partnerships

- Identify the partnerships that will assist us to address community health needs.
- Effective partnerships that provide impact.



Engagement approach

Consumer and community engagement is an intentional process with the specific purpose of working across organisations, stakeholders and communities to shape the decisions or actions of the members of the community, stakeholders or organisation in relation to a problem, opportunity or outcome.

International Association for Public Participation (IAP2)



Ambulance Victoria's approach to community and consumer engagement is guided by the International Association of Public Participation (IAP2) Spectrum of Engagement, which is recognised world-wide as the best practice tool for engagement.

The Spectrum outlines five levels of participation that can be used when engaging with community and consumers. Each level has a different impact on the decision-making and each comes with a promise about what Ambulance Victoria will do.

Clarifying and communicating with community and consumers the degree of participation and influence they will have are vital to building and maintaining trusting and effective relationships.



Increasing impact on the decision

Inform Consult Involve Collaborate **Empower Public Participation Goal** To provide the public To obtain public To work directly with To partner with To place final decision with balanced and feedback on analysis, the public throughout the public in each mainly in the hands objective information alternatives and/or the process to ensure aspect of the of the public. to assist them in decisions. that public concerns understanding the and aspirations the development of problem, alternatives, are consistently alternatives and the opportunities and/or understood and identification of the solutions. preferred solution. **Promise to the Public** ✓ We will ✓ We will keep you ✓ We will keep you ✓ We will work with ✓ We will look to informed. informed, listen to you to ensure that you for advice implement and acknowledge and innovation what you decide. concerns and in formulating aspirations, and solutions and provide feedback incorporate on how public developed and your advice and input influenced provide feedback recommendations on how public into the decisions the decision. to the maximum the decision. extent possible.

IAP2 International Federation 2018

To support delivery of this plan, Ambulance Victoria will strengthen its focus through:

 The culture within Ambulance Victoria will be supportive and empower genuine and robust consumer and community engagement. Leaders will champion long-term commitment to consumer and community engagement. Clear governance structures will be established to ensure accountability for outcomes in community and consumer engagement.
 We will track and measure the impact of community and consumer engagement across Ambulance Victoria. Achievements and progress will be communicated and celebrated consistently across our Victorian regions. People across Ambulance Victoria will be motivated to drive community and consumer engagement.
 Consumer and community engagement will be appropriately resourced. This will include ensuring guidelines to streamline processes and aligned tools and systems, including a consumer registry, and allocation of adequate financial resources.
 The right people with the right skills will be resourced for community and service user engagement from design to implementation and measurement. People will be trained to provide community and consumer engagement for safe and professional best practice outcomes.
 The infrastructure for data collection will be well integrated across our community and consumer engagement. Innovation with community and consumer engagement will be captured in a growing evidence base of both qualitative and quantitative data, and scaled where appropriate opportunities exist.

Principles

These are Ambulance Victoria's principles for community and consumer engagement.

They are the standards we commit to in building consistent, open and respectful working relationships; we understand that services are better when they are shaped by the people and communities that use and help to deliver them.

Genuine	 We are open and honest in our engagement with the community, consumers and our partners. We provide information so that the community, consumers and our partners can participate in a meaningful way. We foster a culture of open dialogue and knowledge exchange.
Inclusive	We encourage the community, consumers and our partners' participation in what we do, irrespective of language, culture, age or disability.
Responsive	 We involve the community, consumers and our partners from the outset. We talk about how and when to engage. We set and manage expectations throughout the engagement process.
Purposeful	 We begin all engagements with a clear understanding of what we want to achieve. By planning our communication and engagement, we manage expectations and build trust and goodwill with the community, consumers and our partners.
Respectful	 We acknowledge and respect the expertise, perspectives and needs of the community, consumers and our partners. We are committed to ensuring engagement is a two-way process. We always consider alternative views.

Measuring success

We will focus our effort and investment to achieve our outcomes.



Focus 1 Health education



Focus 2 Service co-design



Focus 3
Organisational
capability



Focus 4
Collaborative
partnerships





- about how to access information to look after their health and get the care they need.
- to help them find the right healthcare service for their needs.
- in a way that is appropriate for our diverse communities.

A shared understanding connects communities.

Outcome statements and indicators

1.1 Communities are resilient, prepared and capable to respond to health emergencies and can effectively navigate the health system

As a result of health education, communities in Victoria have learnt skills and acquired knowledge which enables them to recognise and appropriately respond to different health emergencies and access alternative health care pathways.

- Increased knowledge and skills to recognise and respond in a health emergency, including when to call Triple Zero (000) and when to use alternate care pathways.
- Increased community training in bystander cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR).
- Increased number of publicly accessible automated external defibrillators (AED) registered.



1.2 Diverse communities have access to health information

Health information is tailored to diverse audiences across Victoria and aims to be culturally safe, accessible, and inclusive to ensure that everyone has the information they need to make informed health decisions.

- Increased engagement with diverse communities.
- Increased cultural competence of the Ambulance Victoria engagement workforce.
- Increase the voice and representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island people...

We will:

- consult with people to design and deliver our healthcare services.
- design services that meet the needs of diverse groups, including rural communities and people who speak languages other than English.
- respond to the needs of
 Aboriginal and Torres Strait
 Islander communities.
- listen to community feedback so we can continuously improve our services.

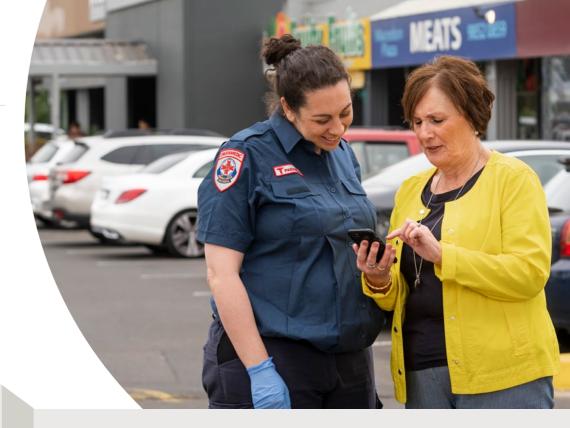
For our community, with our community.

Outcome statements and indicators

2.1 Ambulance services and patient care pathways are informed by patients and the community

We aim to ensure patients and their lived experiences are at the centre of informing all Ambulance Victoria's service design and patient care pathways. To ensure communities and patients feel satisfied with their engagement with Ambulance Victoria we will ensure they are represented and can provide feedback in a process that will be transparent, valued and adequately considered through continuous improvement processes.

- Increased consumer and community participation in ambulance service design, governance and patient pathways.
- Increased ongoing participation and partnerships with lived experience and diverse consumers and communities.
- Increased satisfaction from consumers who have engaged in Ambulance Victoria programs.



2.2 Our pathways better meet people's health needs (leading to better patient experience)

The experience of interacting with Ambulance Victoria is enhanced, by ensuring all pathways better meet the health needs of consumers when they engage us. By engaging with consumers and the community, we use their feedback and input about their health needs to improve our health pathways and service delivery and programming.

- Increased opportunities and avenues for input and feedback from consumers and the community.
- Increased representation of diverse voices including people from non-English speaking backgrounds, LGBTQIA+, people with disabilities and other priority groups.
- Increased the voice and representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island people.

Focus 3 Organisational capability

We will:

- develop our employees' skills and knowledge to engage effectively with our communities.
- measure the outcomes of our engagement activities.
- use what we learn to improve our services.
- continuously improve the way we engage.

Engagement is at the heart of what we do.

Outcome statements and indicators

3.1 Ambulance Victoria staff are capable, skilled and confident in community and consumer engagement

A specific skill-set is needed to design, implement and measure community and consumer engagement effectively. By providing tools, processes and training we seek to upskill our community and consumer engagement teams across Victoria to create safe and meaningful outcomes.

Increased effectiveness of people delivering community and consumer engagement.



3.2 Engagement is evidence informed, agile and sustainable

Engagement approaches will be driven and informed by best practice and global standards in community and consumer engagement. Our engagement will be sustainable and robust, processes will be integrated and streamlined. Support from design, to monitoring and evaluation will be provided to deliver effective and efficient place-based programs.

- Increased oversight and assurance of community and consumer engagement processes and activities.
- Increased strategically aligned community and consumer engagements that are informed by data.
- Increased monitoring and evaluation of community and consumer engagements.

Focus 4 Collaborative partnerships

We will:

- work with people, organisations and communities to improve health care.
- build partnerships based on trust, respect, integrity, and fairness.
- continuously improve and strengthen our partnerships, making them more effective.

Together, we go further.

Outcome statements and indicators

4.1 Partnerships better identify and address community health needs

Partnerships with organisations will help Ambulance Victoria understand the needs of different communities and consumers across the state. Being mutually beneficial is a key trait of effective partnerships, therefore we will seek to maximise our impact by pursuing and maintaining the right partnerships.

✓ Increased understanding of Ambulance Victoria's partners and their effective contributions.



4.2 Partnerships are effective and efficient

Partnerships that are effective and efficient will bring increased connectivity within our health ecosystem. We will track our partnerships and create opportunities for greater integrated connectivity across the Victorian health system in different regions. We will ensure we are continuously improving our approaches by measuring the impact of our partnerships on our programs and services.

- Increased sharing of health messaging from both Ambulance Victoria and partner organisations.
- Increase effective mutually beneficial engagements with partners.

Implementation and monitoring

Strong leadership and governance across all levels of Ambulance Victoria are essential to the successful delivery of the Community and Consumer Engagement Plan 2023-2028.

- The Outcomes Framework enables focused delivery of the Plan through a set of quantifiable outcomes, indicators and measures. Teams responsible for implementation will develop and deliver localised placebased plans aligned to the Framework with clear accountabilities.
- We will regularly review the Outcomes Framework and delivery plans to ensure that we are responsive to changing community needs and continue to deliver on our commitments.

- The governance model will drive achievement of the strategic outcomes, we will report on our progress, celebrate and learn from our successes, and hold ourselves accountable for delays or inhibited results.
- The Board will be provided with progress reporting against the Community and Consumer Engagement Plan's Outcomes Framework, supported by regular oversight by the Executive Committee, Executive Sponsor, Quality and Safety Committee and the Community Advisory Committee.





We will continue to communicate with our communities and consumers to gather their feedback and input on our services and to empower them with health information so that they can make informed decisions.