



Government of Western Australia  
Child and Adolescent Health Service



Child and Adolescent  
Health Service

Strategic Plan  
2023-2025

# Wandju wandju, nidja

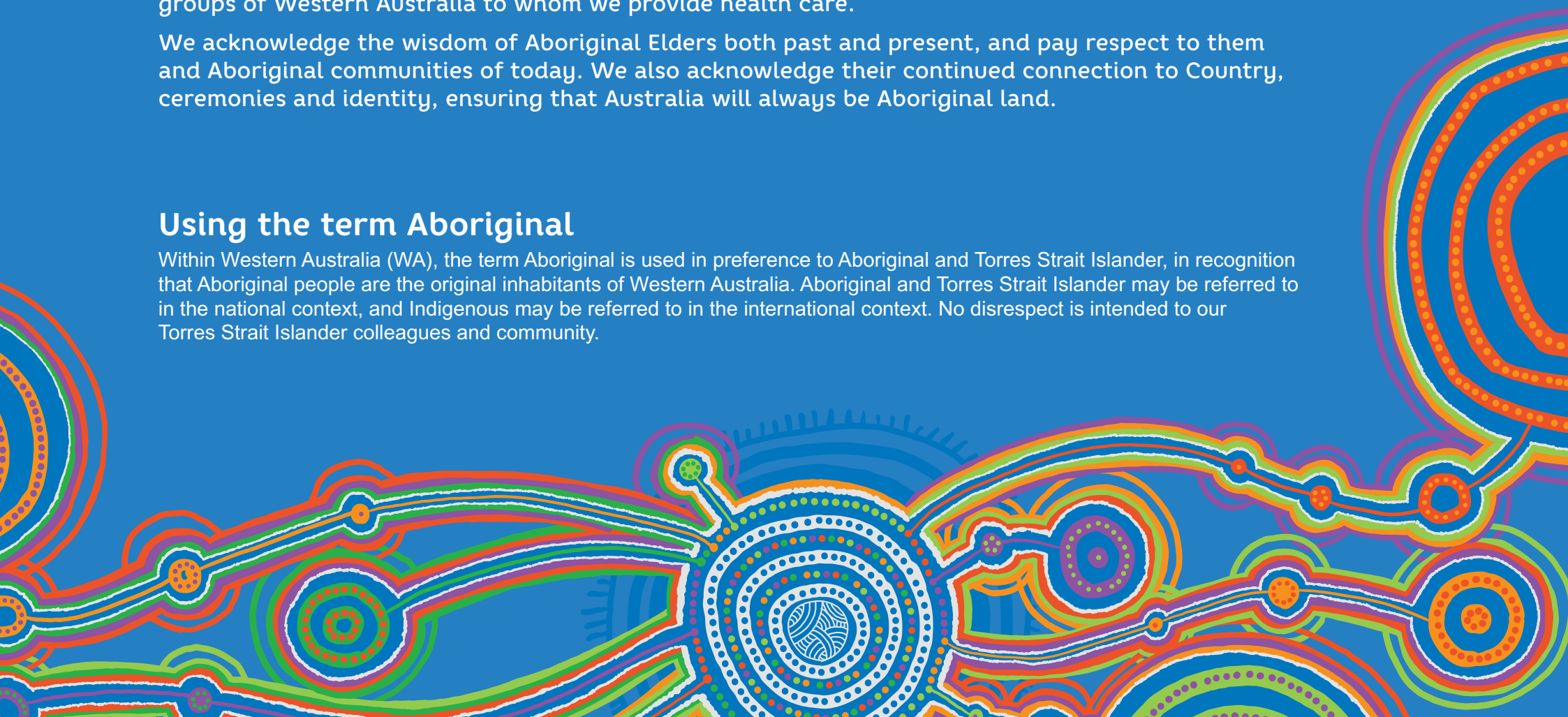
## Acknowledgement of Country

The Child and Adolescent Health Service acknowledges the traditional custodians of the land on which our health service is based, the Whadjuk Noongar people (Whadjuk Noongar Country) and the Aboriginal children, young people and families of the many traditional lands and language groups of Western Australia to whom we provide health care.

We acknowledge the wisdom of Aboriginal Elders both past and present, and pay respect to them and Aboriginal communities of today. We also acknowledge their continued connection to Country, ceremonies and identity, ensuring that Australia will always be Aboriginal land.

## Using the term Aboriginal

Within Western Australia (WA), the term Aboriginal is used in preference to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander, in recognition that Aboriginal people are the original inhabitants of Western Australia. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander may be referred to in the national context, and Indigenous may be referred to in the international context. No disrespect is intended to our Torres Strait Islander colleagues and community.





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# Message from the Board and Executive

**Together, the Child and Adolescent Health Service (CAHS) Board and Executive are delighted to share our CAHS Strategic Plan 2023-2025. This plan sets our health service on a path of renewal and continued growth for the next 3 years.**

We are humbled by the profound responsibility and accountability that comes with proudly being Western Australia's only health service provider dedicated solely to infants, children, and young people. Since CAHS released its previous strategic plan in 2018, the landscape in which we deliver healthcare services has changed considerably. We have faced many challenges, embraced ongoing change, and stayed true to our journey of cultural transformation. First and foremost, we have continued to care for children and families at their most vulnerable, and we have strived to deliver better outcomes and experiences for every person we serve.

This new CAHS Strategic Plan 2023-2025 signals our commitment to being **a safe, trusted, and professional leader in child and adolescent health and wellbeing, which truly partners with children and young people to best meet their needs.** It includes 8 strategic priority areas, which are all equally important. It reinforces our 6 values and introduces 4 guiding principles that will be central to the way we work. It also clearly articulates how we will achieve success through measurable outcomes.

Over the next 3 years we will strengthen our foundations, continuously improve our performance, and ensure that every child and young person in our care is at the centre of every decision we make, both as individuals and as an organisation.

We promise to listen to, learn from, and partner with our consumers, carers, and broader community to make CAHS inclusive and equitable for all, but especially for people who are Aboriginal, culturally and linguistically diverse, LGBTQIA+ or who have disability. Staff and volunteers are the beating heart of CAHS and are our greatest asset. Their diversity, skill, compassion, and professionalism is what will drive our success, and we promise to support them as they deliver and enable safe, high-quality, person-centred care.

There are many exciting opportunities ahead for CAHS. Work is underway to implement the recommendations of the Sustainable Health Review and the Ministerial Taskforce into Public Mental Health Services for Infants, Children and Adolescents. These initiatives, as well as the roll-out of the Digital Medical Record, will enable us to better support children and families with timely and sustainable access to high-quality, convenient care and services.

The development of this strategic plan was a collaboration between the Board, Executive, our staff and volunteers, key strategic partners, and our consumers and carers. We sincerely thank everybody who shared their stories, insights, and expertise with us. We look forward to continuing to work together to **serve all children and young people across WA so they can achieve their best health and wellbeing, now and into the future.**



**Associate Professor  
Rosanna Capolingua**  
Board Chair





## Our health service

The Child and Adolescent Health Service is Western Australia's only dedicated health service provider for children and young people. CAHS is unique in that it offers a range of services that support children from birth to young adulthood – from caring for them when they are sick to helping them to have their best health possible.

At CAHS, our staff, our volunteers, and our partners are integral to what we do. They work across our 4 service areas:

- **Community Health**
- **Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS)**
- **Neonatology**
- **Perth Children's Hospital (PCH)**

Together, we are committed to delivering high-quality, safe, and person-centred care to children and young people across the state.

CAHS is proud to support a diverse WA community. Our workforce, and many of the children and young people that we provide care to, come from different backgrounds and parts of WA. We respect, value, and embrace this diversity, and see it as a key strength for our health service. As we look to the future, we will continue to work towards building a better and more united CAHS for children, young people, and the WA community.



## Community Health

Community Health provides a comprehensive range of community-based early identification and intervention services to children, young people, and their families across the Perth metropolitan area.

## Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services

CAMHS provides mental health services to children, young people, and their families across the Perth metropolitan area.

CAMHS operates an inpatient unit at PCH, community-based services, and specialised services for children with complex mental health conditions.

## Perth Children's Hospital

PCH is WA's only dedicated paediatric hospital, providing medical care to children and adolescents who are 15 years old or under.

The hospital provides inpatient, ambulatory and outpatient services, and is WA's only paediatric trauma centre.

## Neonatology

Neonatology provides state-wide specialised neonatal services to meet the needs of newborn babies and infants who need specialist treatment in the first few months of life.

Neonatology operates 2 neonatal intensive care units at PCH and King Edward Memorial Hospital (KEMH) as well as the mobile intensive care unit, the Newborn Emergency Transport Service.

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***The term children, young people, and their families*** is used throughout the CAHS Strategic Plan 2023-2025 and is inclusive of infants, children, adolescents, young adults, and their families (including a child's immediate family, extended family, adoptive family, peers and others that share an emotional bond and caregiving responsibilities), carers and supporters.







# Why we exist

We serve all children and young people across WA so they can achieve their best health and wellbeing, now and into the future.



Healthy kids, healthy communities





# Living our values

Our values are the promises we make to our consumers, our colleagues, our partners, and the broader community. They define who we are, what we stand for, and how we behave.

As we continue to become a values-based organisation, we will act, lead, and make decisions in alignment with our shared values every single day.

## Compassion

We treat others with empathy and kindness.

## Excellence

We take pride in what we do, strive to learn, and ensure exceptional service every time.

## Collaboration

We work together with others to learn and continuously improve our service.

## Accountability

We take responsibility for our actions and do what we say we will.

## Equity

We are inclusive, respect diversity, and aim to overcome disadvantage.

## Respect

We value others and treat others as we wish to be treated.

# The purpose of our strategic plan

Our strategic plan clearly sets out a vision for where we as an organisation expect to be in the future.

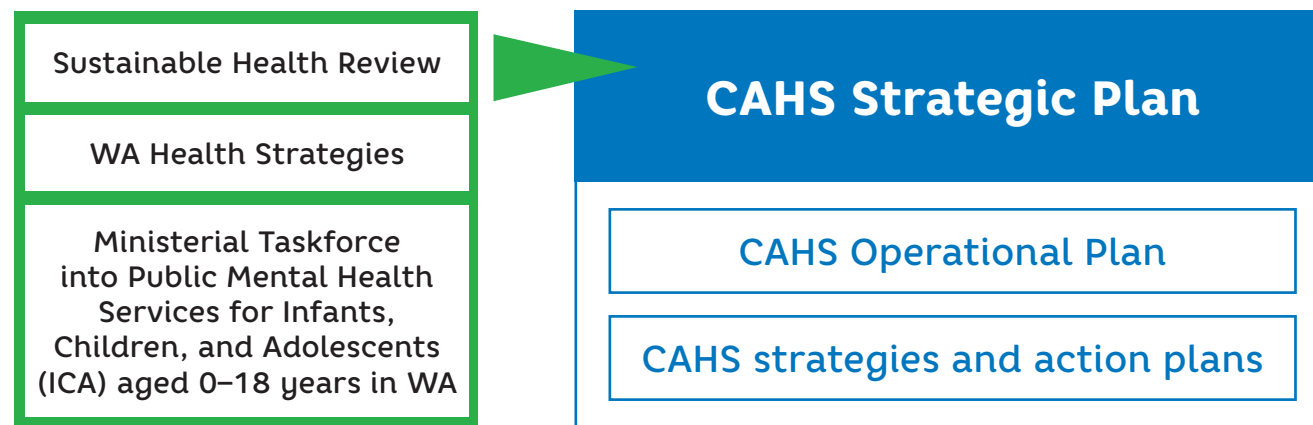
It describes the key priorities for investment and focus in the communities we serve, in our workforce, and in our capabilities as a health service.

Our strategic plan recognises that we need to strengthen our foundations, reflect on lessons learned, and quickly address some of the challenges CAHS has faced. This involves investing in our people, our core capabilities, and our services.

It also identifies where there are opportunities for greater improvement and innovation that we need to continue to take advantage of.

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**Our strategic plan connects what we do within CAHS to a range of other strategic developments in the wider health system, and sets the direction for the actions we will take within our health service over the next 3 years.**





# Where we want to be

**A safe, trusted and professional leader in child and adolescent health and wellbeing, which truly partners with children, young people and their families to best meet their needs.**

As a health service, we aspire to be more consumer-focused in how we deliver care to children, young people, and their families, and live up to our promise of being a workplace where our people feel valued, included, and supported.

**To us, where we want to be encompasses being:**

## **A safe health service**

**We will provide care to children and young people that is culturally, psychologically and physically safe.**

## **A trusted health service**

**We will be transparent with our consumers, our people, our partners, and the community, and build trust by being upfront and honest.**

## **A professional health service**

**We will hold ourselves to the highest possible standards and work towards continuously improving how we work.**

## **A leader in child and adolescent health and wellbeing**

**We will be a health service that is seen as a national and international leader in all aspects of child and adolescent health and wellbeing.**

## **A health service that truly partners with children and young people**

**We will empower children, young people, and their families to shape the care they receive from us by creating an environment where they can feel comfortable and safe to share their feelings, thoughts and needs.**



# The way we work

We have established 4 guiding principles that we will apply to everything we do and every decision we make. They will be central to how we implement our strategic plan and underpin our 8 strategic priority areas.

## Child first

**We place children, young people, and their families first and foremost in everything we do.**

We adopt a person-centred approach where we partner with children, young people, and their families to provide care and support that is tailored to their needs, preferences and values.

## Safety and quality

**We do not compromise the safety and quality of the care we provide.**

We provide care that is culturally, psychologically and physically safe, and of high quality. We are committed to ensuring that all children and young people receive the best care possible.

## Professionalism

**We always hold ourselves to the highest possible standards.**

We take ownership of our performance and work hard to continuously improve how we do things at CAHS. We do this by holding ourselves to account, being transparent, listening and acting on consumer feedback, and providing open and honest feedback to each other.

## Sustainability

**We strive to use our resources responsibly.**

We use all our resources wisely and are committed to embedding financially and environmentally sustainable work practices for the benefit of future generations.



# We will focus on 8 priorities



## Person-centred care

**We will meaningfully engage and partner with children, young people, and their families. We will place them at the centre of every decision and provide care that is based on their needs and preferences.**



## Inclusivity, diversity and equity

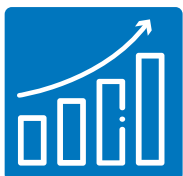
**We will respect, embrace and champion the diversity of our community. We will uphold equal opportunity and we will not tolerate racism or discrimination.**

**Our care will be culturally safe and inclusive for people who are Aboriginal, culturally and linguistically diverse, LGBTQIA+ or who have disability, and we will work towards equal health outcomes.**



## Organisational culture

**We will continue to shape our culture so we live our values, realise our aspirations, and create a workplace where our people feel safe, included, respected, and valued.**



## High performance

**We will continuously improve how we work by setting clearer expectations, strengthening our clinical governance, and better using data, benchmarking and performance reporting.**



## Prevention and early intervention

**We will lead and deliver integrated, multi-disciplinary, and cross-sector initiatives that target prevention and early intervention for all children and young people, and particularly in Aboriginal health and mental health.**



## Contemporary models of care

**We will plan and implement models of care that are informed by children, young people, and their families, and are grounded in leading practice, research, evidence, and data.**



## Workforce capability, capacity and development

**We will plan for and grow a sustainable workforce whose skills and experiences are harnessed in the best possible way, and create an environment where our people can sustain a balanced work and personal life.**



## External partnerships

**We will develop and maintain mutually beneficial external partnerships to collectively achieve better health outcomes for children and young people.**





# Person-centred care

**We will meaningfully engage and partner with children, young people, and their families. We will place them at the centre of every decision and provide care that is based on their needs and preferences.**

## What success will look like

- Our consumers will report their experience and satisfaction as high.
- Children, young people and their families are always connected to services when needed.

## Our strategic initiatives

### **1. We will elevate the voices of children, young people, and their families, and use their insights to improve our care**

- Partner and engage with children, young people, and their families to improve their experience, empower them to make informed decisions about their care, and co-design services.
- Provide accessible feedback mechanisms to all children, young people, and their families, so all individuals feel comfortable and safe to express what they need and how they feel.

### **2. We will make the consumer journey seamless to enable continuity of care**

- Provide seamless pathways for children and young people as they transition between our services and into other services, such as general practice and youth or adult services.
- Deliver holistic and integrated care, regardless of which CAHS service children and young people access first.

### **3. We will deliver convenient care that is closer to home and/or more accessible for children, young people, and their families**

- Deliver care that is convenient and flexible, using technology to meet the needs of children, young people, and their families, regardless of where they live.
- Collaborate with other health service providers and organisations to improve the ways children, young people, and their families can access care closer to home.



# Inclusivity, diversity and equity

**We will respect, embrace and champion the diversity of our community. We will uphold equal opportunity and we will not tolerate racism or discrimination. Our care will be culturally safe and inclusive for people who are Aboriginal, culturally and linguistically diverse, LGBTQIA+ or who have disability, and we will work towards equal health outcomes.**

## What success will look like

- There is greater diversity in our workforce.
- We better understand the diversity of our consumers and improve the cultural safety of our health service.
- Aboriginal children and young people report a high level of cultural safety and inclusivity with our services.

## Our strategic initiatives

### **1. We will celebrate and champion the diversity of our community**

- Foster a welcoming and accessible environment where consumers and staff feel respected, safe, and included.
- Build awareness and advocate for equity, diversity, and inclusion in everything we do, so that we provide culturally appropriate and inclusive care for each child, young person, and family.
- Increase the representation of diverse groups within our workforce to reflect the diversity of our community.

### **2. We will collaborate with the Aboriginal community to deliver culturally safe care and improve health outcomes**

- Listen to Aboriginal children, young people, and their families and use their expertise to deliver culturally sensitive and accessible care.
- Partner with the Aboriginal community to adapt our practices to reflect their needs and strive to close the gap in health outcomes for Aboriginal children and young people.

### **3. We will improve the accessibility and cultural safety of our services to meet the needs of culturally and linguistically diverse children and young people**

- Improve how we partner with culturally and linguistically diverse children, young people, and their families to understand their needs and deliver culturally appropriate care.
- Strengthen our cultural awareness and competencies to improve the accessibility and cultural safety of CAHS' services for culturally and linguistically diverse children, young people, and their families.

### **4. We will deliver care that is more inclusive for LGBTQIA+ children and young people**

- Co-design inclusive engagement and feedback mechanisms that improve our ability to meet the needs of LGBTQIA+ children, young people, and their families.
- Deliver supportive and welcoming health services that improve the experiences and inclusion of LGBTQIA+ children, young people, and their families.



# Organisational culture

**We will continue to shape the culture within CAHS so we live our values, realise our aspirations, and create a workplace where our people feel safe, included, respected, and valued.**

## What success will look like

- We live our values consistently.
- There is an increase in staff engagement, satisfaction and wellbeing.

## Our strategic initiatives

### **1. We will continue to become a values-based organisation**

- Empower our people to champion our values by providing them with the tools and management support needed to speak up and address behaviours or decisions that do not align to our values.
- Connect the many silos within our health service by adopting values-based leadership, open communication, and greater collaboration between and amongst our services.

### **2. We will create a workplace that is safe, inclusive, and positive**

- Create an environment where our people feel physically and psychologically safe and supported to speak up about all safety and quality risks and issues they encounter and know they will be taken seriously, escalated, and acted upon – without prejudice or blame.
- Support our people's health and wellbeing and enable them to bring their whole selves to work and achieve work life balance.

### **3. We will build a stronger learning and safety culture, focused on providing safe and high-quality person-centred care**

- Create a learning culture where our people feel confident to identify, share, and apply what they have learnt.
- Embed a stronger safety culture by improving our processes, procedures, and the guidance we provide to our people.





# High performance

We will continuously improve how we work by setting clearer expectations, strengthening our clinical governance, and better using data, benchmarking, and performance reporting.

## What success will look like

- Consistent achievement of system performance targets.
- There is a reduction in preventable harm.
- Children and young people access the right services, at the right place, and at the right time.

## Our strategic initiatives

### 1. We will strengthen our clinical governance

- Strengthen our clinical governance framework and standards, including setting and communicating clear roles, responsibilities, and expectations.
- Our staff participate in clinical governance processes and systems (for example morbidity and mortality meetings) to improve the quality of our clinical care.

### 2. We will drive evidence-based continuous improvement and evaluation across CAHS

- Continuously improve service delivery and the consumer experience by evaluating how we deliver services, implementing learnings from clinical incidents, and responding to emerging performance or population health trends.
- Strengthen our approach to research and innovation, with a focus on health outcomes and share our research with our partners to shape and promote leading practice in child and adolescent health.
- Build our organisation-wide planning capabilities, to improve how we plan for future service delivery and meet the growing and changing health needs of our community.

### 3. We will grow our digital and data capability to improve our decision making, performance and impact

- Build our capacity and capability to collect and analyse data, so that we can make data-driven decisions that enhance the care and experience we provide for children and young people and maximise efficiency across our health service.
- Use objective benchmarks to evaluate and compare our performance, so that we can improve the consumer experience and health outcomes.
- Establish a performance reporting framework that encompasses a comprehensive range of quantitative and qualitative measures, across multiple dimensions, (including safety, quality, service delivery, and health outcomes), and use this to track, measure, and improve our performance.



# Prevention and early intervention

We will lead and deliver integrated, multi-disciplinary, and cross-sector initiatives that target prevention and early intervention for all children and young people, and particularly in Aboriginal health and mental health.

## What success will look like

- The developing child and their family have the greatest opportunity to improve the child's health outcomes.
- We are a leader in delivering initiatives that contribute to closing the gap targets for Aboriginal children.
- We support the provision of primary care for children in local communities to reduce the need for hospital services.

## Our strategic initiatives

### 1. We will deliver interventions tailored to the needs of children, young people, and their families

- Establish a tiered service intervention model that corresponds to a child's level of need, so that we provide the appropriate support to each family.
- Build the capacity of families to help them to identify health issues early, access support, and work with CAHS to enhance intervention efforts.

### 2. We will strengthen our focus on prevention and intervention

- Evaluate the effectiveness of current service models in providing prevention and early intervention services, particularly in Aboriginal health, mental health and the health of culturally and linguistically diverse children and families.
- Identify the specific challenges children, young people, and their families face in accessing our services, and use these insights to improve and increase pathways to early intervention, preventing the need for intensive treatment or hospitalisation where possible.

- Advocate for and support health promotion and prevention initiatives to identify and address health risks early to improve the future health and wellbeing outcomes of our children and young people.

### 3. We will take a lead in early years prevention and population health across WA

- Drive a whole-of-government agenda to promote integrated support for children, young people, and their families during the early years.
- Develop stronger linkages between CAHS, primary care, and telemedicine, and assist GPs to coordinate and manage the care their patients receive.



# Contemporary models of care

We will plan and implement models of care that are informed by children, young people, and their families, and are grounded in leading practice, research, evidence, and data.

## What success will look like

- We provide infant, child and adolescent health services responsive to the changing needs of the community we serve.
- Research and innovations are translated to positively impact the services we provide and improve our care.

## Our strategic initiatives

### 1. We will invest in clinical planning for children and adolescents

- Lead the development of a 10-year Clinical Services Plan for children and young people across Western Australia, so that we have a blueprint for how we will deliver services to meet community demand now and into the future.

### 2. We will increase the accessibility of our services in the community

- Partner with consumers and those with lived experience to inform or co-design contemporary models of care that focus on the consumer journey and improve the access to care for children, young people, and their families.
- Invest in modern, adaptable, and fit for purpose physical infrastructure and technology that supports the delivery of contemporary models of care, including virtual care.
- Work with other health services to provide wraparound support to children, young people, and their families, particularly during the transition from maternity to child health, and from youth to adult services, so that at-risk children do not fall through the gaps.

### 3. We will share our expertise and expand our research efforts in contemporary models of care

- Use our centres of expertise to support the provision of coordinated and collaborative paediatric care across the state.
- Invest in research and innovation that focuses on contemporary models of care and emerging treatment, so that we can deliver the best possible outcomes for children, young people, and their families.

### 4. We will transform how we support child and adolescent mental health

- Implement the recommendations from the Ministerial Taskforce into Public Mental Health Services for Infants, Children, and Adolescents, adapting our models of care and growing our CAMHS workforce to embed the new models into our service delivery practices.





# Workforce capability, capacity and development

**We will plan for and grow a sustainable workforce whose skills and experiences are harnessed and developed in the best possible way and create an environment where our people can sustain a balanced work and personal life.**

## What success will look like

- There is a stable and sustainable workforce.
- All staff are supported to participate in training and professional development programs.
- CAHS is recognised as an employer of choice by both current and prospective staff.

## Our strategic initiatives

### **1. We will be a rewarding and supportive workplace**

- Reform our employee value proposition to be contemporary, attractive, and compelling for our people and those looking to join our health service.
- Support our people to have a balanced work and personal life and greater job security.

### **2. We will invest in our workforce's capability and skill development**

- Provide vocational training and professional development opportunities that are relevant and contemporary, grounded in leading practice, and support our people to build on the skills and capabilities that enable them to grow and achieve excellence.
- Partner with educational institutions and training organisations to develop and deliver world-class training and education to our people.

### **3. We will uplift our leadership capability across all levels and clinical and non-clinical roles**

- Invest in developing our leaders across our medical, nursing, allied health, support services, and corporate teams so that they can most effectively manage their team, and lead continuous improvement in our performance and a culture of safety.

### **4. We will adopt a strategic and proactive approach to workforce planning**

- Enhance our approach to workforce planning so that we can meet our capacity and capability needs, now and in the future.
- Build our capacity and capability by delivering a CAHS workforce strategy and implementing the Ministerial Mental Health Taskforce into Public Mental Health Services for Infants, Children and Adolescents.



# External partnerships

**We will develop and maintain mutually beneficial external partnerships to collectively achieve better health outcomes for children and young people.**

## What success will look like

- Improved experience for our partners when collaborating on common objectives with CAHS.
- We have established closer working practices with HSPs, health providers, child protection and youth justice services, and schools.

## Our strategic initiatives

### **1. We will work with our partners to collectively advocate for the health and wellbeing of children and young people**

- Partner with organisations to understand and advocate for the needs of children, young people and their families, in particular advocating for the removal of barriers that prevent children and young people from accessing care and support, and in addressing the determinants which impact on health.
- Develop a partnerships framework so that we have a formal and consistent approach to how we partner and collaborate with other organisations.
- Develop and grow meaningful partnerships with other organisations to collaborate in research and innovation.

### **2. We will collaborate with the System Manager, other Health Service Providers (HSPs) and health providers**

- Share our knowledge and learnings with the System Manager and support other HSPs to deliver better health outcomes for children, young people, and their families.

- Take advantage of our proximity to other healthcare organisations, including effectively sharing facilities where it makes sense.
- Collaborate with the WA Country Health Service to increase the access to specialist services for children and young people across regional WA.

### **3. We will work closely with other organisations that support children and adolescents across WA**

- Partner with government agencies to collectively provide the holistic support and care that our most vulnerable children, young people, and their families need, particularly in early intervention for emerging mental health issues.
- Streamline how we work with our partner organisations including Telethon Kids Institute and Perth Children's Hospital Foundation, and ensure our working relationships are based upon shared principles that collectively deliver our strategic priorities.

