

Future Health

Guiding the next
decade of care in NSW
2022-2032

Summary





Foreword from the Minister for Health

**The Hon. Brad Hazzard MP,
Minister for Health**

The standards of healthcare in NSW are unquestionably among the best in the world, as demonstrated throughout our pandemic response. In the face of countless challenges, our health system and its workforce has shown time and again, the ability to adapt and change to deliver high quality care to the people of NSW.

The pandemic has been a watershed for health networks worldwide. Treatments and technologies which would have taken years, if not decades to materialise, are now embedded.

We are building on those learnings and advancements, and looking to do more. Future Health is a roadmap for how NSW Health meets the increasing health demands and needs of our community.

It has been informed by the viewpoints and experiences of thousands of people who either work in, or work closely with the NSW Health system, as well as from the many patients it cares for.

Activity across the health system in NSW will almost double over the next decade, if today's trends in disease and demand continue. This is a sobering statistic. Rising demand for health services and an ageing population with more complex and chronic conditions are just some of the many challenges we face over the coming decades.

At the same time, advances in technology, ongoing investment in preventative health and innovative models of care will present significant opportunities to build an even stronger, more flexible, patient-centred health system in NSW.

Presently, around two-thirds of the current disease burden in NSW is due to conditions that could be managed outside a hospital setting. Future Health looks to position our health system to support this through greater home and community-based care. At the same time there is continued investment in acute hospital services to ensure patients requiring hospital-delivered treatment receive it as soon as possible.

Crucially, our highly skilled health workforce will be encouraged and supported to deliver high quality and innovative care that meets patients' needs, not only today, but into the future.

I have been privileged to meet thousands of clinicians during my time as NSW Minister for Health. I have every confidence in their dedication and commitment to their patients, to their profession, and to their community in delivering health services fit for the future.



A Message from the Secretary, NSW Health

Susan Pearce,
Secretary, NSW Health

Our health system is high performing and provides excellent outcomes and high-quality care to the people of NSW.

Its ability to continue to perform as well over the next 10 to 20 years will be challenged if the system does not continue to adapt. Health system improvement is never, and never should be, static. While many of the changes our health system needs to make are already under way there is much more to do.

When we first started thinking about what our future health system could look like, some key elements were often mentioned – an enhanced patient experience, the wider use of data and analytics, as well as a growing role for virtual care.

Our experience from the pandemic has shown us how agile and flexible our health system can be.

The Future Health plan builds on the foundations of the previous NSW State Health Plan and continues the work we've done over recent years in areas such as value-based healthcare, the integration of care and in improving the patient experience.

It brings together the collective experience and wisdom of those who use our health services, the people who work in our system, as well as that of our partners in providing care.

The key strategic objectives outlined in this plan have been developed through the input of thousands of individuals who have generously shared their views and aspirations for our health system throughout 2020-21. In particular, I would like to acknowledge the vision and leadership of my predecessor Elizabeth Koff (former Secretary NSW Health) and the significant guidance from the Future Health Steering Committee, co-chaired by Ms Koff and Professor Andrew Wilson.

This wealth of knowledge and expertise has helped us define how we can best address future matters such as:

- the importance of involving patients in their own care, helping them to make their own decisions about the health outcomes that matter most to them
- the value of collaboration and partnerships, and how we can enhance this
- the potential of virtual care tools such as telehealth in our future health system, and what it means for both patients and clinicians
- the need for more choice of care settings in the future – in the community, in the home and virtually.

Future Health provides the strategic framework and priorities for the whole system over the next decade. Realising our vision requires effort from all of us and all parts of NSW Health will have a role to play in leading change.

We will implement the key objectives set out in Future Health and monitor and report on progress across three horizons from 2022 to 2032. A series of Delivery Plans will be developed, with the strategic outcomes and key objectives embedded across the health system through Service Agreements, Annual Business Plans, and local strategic planning. This will enable us to work towards our shared goals.

We will harness our experience to date as we look forward to developing health services over the next decade to meet the needs of patients, the community and our workforce.

Together, we can help make our remarkable health system even stronger and ready to deliver for the next decade.

The Strategic Framework

The Strategic Framework is the roadmap for our health system to achieve NSW Health's vision.

It will help guide our next decade of care in NSW, while adapting to and addressing the demands and challenges our system faces. The framework is also a reflection of the aspirations of the community, our patients, workforce and partners in care for how they envisage our health system by 2032.

	01	Patients and carers have positive experiences and outcomes that matter
	02	Safe care is delivered across all settings
	03	People are healthy and well
	04	Our staff are engaged and well supported
	05	Research and innovation, and digital advances inform service delivery
	06	The health system is managed sustainably

01. Patients and carers have positive experiences and outcomes that matter



Our future

People have more control over their own health, enabling them to make decisions about their care that will achieve the outcomes that matter most to them.

Why it's important

Person-centred care and patient experience are valued strengths of which we are proud.

We need empowered patients and carers who are confident and informed partners in decision-making throughout their care. Their confidence and ability to engage in their care is often linked to their past experiences and interactions with the health system and can be enabled or limited by their health literacy and access to health information. A person who is engaged in their care is more likely to demonstrate better adherence to treatment, which leads to improved outcomes.

Consumers, including people with lived experience, are regularly engaged by NSW Health to represent the voice of patients and communities during the co-design of new healthcare strategies and models.

Our key objectives:

Partner with patients and communities to make decisions about their own care

Bring kindness and compassion into the delivery of personalised and culturally safe care

Drive greater health literacy and access to information

Partner with consumers in co-design and implementation of models of care



Patients as
co-pilots, not
passengers.

45% of admitted adults wanted to be more involved in decisions about their care and treatment.

— Bureau of Health Information 2020 Adult Admitted Patient Summary

Western NSW Living Well Together Aboriginal Yarning Tool

The Living Well Together Aboriginal Yarning tool helps clinical leaders to have culturally appropriate conversations with Aboriginal patients and carers. It is a collaborative approach to healthcare and means patients:

- are empowered with a better understanding of clinical care and their illness
- are supported by staff and engaged in shared decision-making
- feel their values and needs are considered through culturally appropriate conversations
- improves Aboriginal patient experience and builds stronger relationships with patients and carers
- identifies barriers Aboriginal people face when accessing services

World class health is centred around consumer feedback and co-design. It is about working through the entire patient journey with the consumer at every stage of the end-to-end journey.

— Communities of Practice virtual care session

I don't think mainstream services such as hospitals make you feel welcome. I feel like my local Aboriginal Medical Service is more set up and culturally appropriate... I feel comfortable there.

— Aboriginal patient

02. Safe care is delivered across all settings



Our future

Safe, high quality, reliable healthcare is delivered in a sustainable and personalised way, within our hospitals, in communities, at home and virtually.

Why it's important

Clinical safety is everyone's responsibility. Better patient safety relies on the ongoing commitment from patients, families, carers and all staff to work collaboratively through trust, openness and mutual accountability.

Moving care to non-hospital environments such as in the community and virtually can help to provide more options for patients in how they receive care, achieve better outcomes and experiences for patients, and reduce the burden on acute care and prevent avoidable hospitalisations. There is a preference amongst patients and the community to be treated closer to home where possible, whether this is in the community, or virtually in the comfort of their home. Our clinicians have also expressed a need to explore new ways of working, to connect health professionals across teams and settings. The collective expertise of a multi-disciplinary clinical team enables care for a patient over the course of their care, promotes continuity of care and supports patients to navigate the system more easily. NSW Health promotes and supports equity and inclusion in the design and delivery of care for our patients, particularly our rural, regional and priority populations.

Our key objectives:

Deliver safe, high quality reliable care for patients in hospital and other settings

Deliver more services in the home, community and virtual settings

Connect with partners to deliver integrated care services

Strengthen equitable outcomes and access for rural, regional and priority populations

Align infrastructure and service planning around the future care needs



There should be greater access for those that are more vulnerable in our community where access to care is restricted, be it our ageing population, those residing in rural areas, people with mental health issues and our Aboriginal population.

— Survey respondent

Some of our mob say that they won't go to the hospital as they don't want to be sent away to Lismore, away from their family.

— Aboriginal patient

Better integration with primary care to provide more holistic care to community.

— Nepean Blue Mountains LHD clinicians virtual care session

The NSW Telestroke Service gives patients in rural NSW areas rapid access to life-saving stroke diagnosis and treatment. It does this by connecting local doctors to specialist stroke physicians via video consultation in an emergency department.

Stroke is one of Australia's biggest killers and a major cause of disability. Every year around 19,000 residents in New South Wales will have a stroke. More than a third of these residents live in regional, remote or rural areas.

The service is already providing consultations to patients at 18 hospitals across regional and rural NSW, with a further five hospitals joining the service by June 2022.

A quarter of patients said virtual care gave them more timely access to healthcare and that they did not have to take as much time off work, and 30% said it saved them money.

— Bureau of Health Information 2020 virtual care Patient Survey

3. People are healthy and well



Our future

Investment is made in keeping people healthy to prevent ill health and tackle health inequality in our communities.

Why it's important

Patients and clinicians share the view that our system should be geared towards keeping people healthy and well, rather than treating illness.

Some 38 per cent of the disease burden is preventable and due to modifiable risk factors such as tobacco use, being overweight or obese, high blood pressure or poor diet. An increased focus on promoting positive health behaviours across the population, delivering early risk-based interventions supporting people to manage chronic conditions and being responsible for their own health across their lifespan, will not only help strengthen the opportunity for people to benefit from wellness no matter their age, but relieve some of the pressure on the system.

Our key objectives:

Prevent, prepare for, respond to and recover from pandemic and other threats to population health

Get the best start in life from conception through to age five

Make progress towards zero suicides recognising the devastating impact on society

Support healthy ageing ensuring people can live more years in full health and independently at home

Close the gap by prioritising care and programs for Aboriginal people

Support mental health and wellbeing for our whole community

Partner to address the social determinants of ill health in our communities



“Wellness is not just physical health but mental and emotional health.”

**General Public,
Metro**

Get Healthy Information and Coaching Service provides information and ongoing health coaching support.

Get Healthy in Pregnancy is a free, confidential telephone-based coaching service which supports improved health outcomes for mums and babies. The service provides phone coaching and information, usually referred by midwives and other health professionals.

The program has been focusing on engaging Aboriginal women and providing yarns on breaking down barriers for referral into the service.

We cannot apply a generalised approach to mentally healthy living – think about this from an Aboriginal system.

— **Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Services session**

Consider community care as the starting point for the wellness journey, use it proactively to support early diagnosis detection rather than a responsive care model.

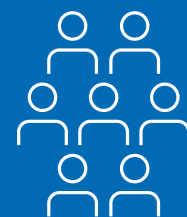
— **NSW Health Pathology Aboriginal Reconciliation Committee and Aboriginal Workforce virtual care session**

Brighter Beginnings initiative

Many factors can create and exacerbate challenges throughout a child's life, impact their physical and mental health and limit their future opportunities to engage in education and meaningful employment. These include individual, family, environmental and community factors.

The Brighter Beginnings initiative aims to give every child in NSW the best start to life from conception to five years (the first 2000 days of life). This is a critical period for physical, cognitive, social and emotional health, and provides the foundation for health, wellbeing and learning throughout a child's life.

4. Our staff are engaged and well supported





Our future

Staff are supported to deliver safe, reliable person-centred care driving the best outcomes and experiences.

Why it's important

It is important to support and empower our staff to deliver the best outcomes and experiences for patients and promote and support continuous improvement for clinical safety and quality.

A positive workplace environment and psychological safety is important to staff wellbeing, and in supporting collaborative working, innovation and learning for all clinicians, non-clinicians and volunteers. A diverse workforce will help ensure the way we design and deliver services and care resonate and are responsive to the needs of our communities, reflect the values and behaviours in those communities, and deliver the outcomes that matter. To keep up with changing health needs and rapid advances in technology and scientific innovations, a program of learning and development, combined with more flexible structures and ways of working will be required to enable collaborative, multidisciplinary and digitally-enabled models of care.

Our key objectives:

Build positive work environments that bring out the best in everyone

Strengthen diversity in our workforce and decision-making

Empower staff to work to their full potential around the future care needs

Equip our people with the skills and capabilities to be an agile, responsive workforce

Attract and retain skilled people who put patients first

Unlock the ingenuity of our staff to build work practices for the future



“Our workforce diversity should be reflective of the diversity of our communities.”

eHealth session

People feel like their view is important now – people are getting heard, and people are now more willing to work outside silos and allow their staff to venture beyond the immediate team to capture emerging new knowledge and ways of working.

— **Communities of Practice virtual consultation**

...staff have time, space and energy to be innovative and invest in quality improvement.

— **Hunter New England LHD session**

Investing in cultural change and prioritising creating a workplace where staff can work at their best will improve the delivery of quality healthcare.

— **Future Health Survey**

Using pharmacists at the top of their scope reduces medical, nursing and clinic workload. NSW needs to review staffing at a fundamental level to improve patient outcomes and reduce medication errors.

— **Mid North Coast LHD virtual care session**

5. Research and innovation, and digital advances inform service delivery



Our future

Clinical service delivery continues to be transformed through health and medical research, digital technologies, and data analytics.

Why it's important

Research, innovation and digitisation are critical to improving safety and quality outcomes, enabling virtual care, and improving experiences for patients and the community.

Research and innovation create exciting new opportunities for prevention, diagnosis and treatment, builds our evidence base for informing how we develop and deliver the best care possible, and improves outcomes that matter to patients. Research is energised and enabled through collaboration between multiple organisations and research bodies, and the development of health precincts by NSW Health is aimed at supporting this innovation environment. Health data and analytics has become essential to the system and used extensively to inform health and service planning and delivery, and leveraged to achieve better patient experience and outcomes. There is also increasing capacity to provide targeted healthcare through personalised and precision medicine and to enable virtual care through new technology tools and applications. The technology-led innovation within health needs to be supported with accelerated investment in systems, infrastructure, security and intelligence.

Our key objectives:

Advance and translate research and innovation with institutions, industry partners and patients

Ensure health data and information is high quality, integrated, accessible and utilised

Enable targeted evidence-based healthcare through precision medicine

Accelerate digital investments in systems, infrastructure, security and intelligence



The Westmead Health Precinct is one of the largest health, education, research, innovation and training precincts in Australia, featuring four major hospitals, four world-leading medical research institutes, two university campuses and the largest research-intensive pathology services in NSW:

“This is the first time we’ve brought together Western Sydney Local Health District with the Sydney Children’s Hospitals Network, as well as University of Sydney, to create a space of high-quality care, learning and innovation.”

Build patient and clinician feedback into every interaction and use it to learn and improve.

— NSW Health Survey, November 2020

Investment in ICT infrastructure is a good start, but still a way to go – simple things like a web cam and mic on every computer enables telehealth to occur without needing to find a machine, book a room etc.

— Sydney LHD virtual care session



“It’s stressful starting again with each new doctor/specialist, the more information they know on you the better... not having to start from the beginning... when you’re really ill and you are not capable of sharing all of the necessary information.”

Patient

6. The health system is managed sustainably



Our future

The health system is managed with an outcomes-focused lens to deliver a financially and environmentally sustainable future.

Why it's important

We are committed to achieving system-wide, long-term structural and cultural change and managing the business with an outcomes-focused lens to deliver a financially and environmentally sustainable future.

In NSW, value-based healthcare means continually striving to deliver care that improves the health outcomes that matter to patients, patient experiences of receiving care, clinician experiences of providing care as well as the effectiveness and efficiency of care.

This change in focus will have positive impacts for the health and wellbeing of our citizens and reduce the environmental impact of the health system.

Traditional volume or activity-based funding reforms over the past decade have driven gains in technical efficiency and productivity, increased transparency about the true cost of procedures, and improved patient access by incentivising throughput. However, these funding models in isolation are not well suited to incentivising care that focuses on outcomes.

Our key objectives:

Drive value-based healthcare that prioritises outcomes and collaboration

Commit to an environmentally sustainable footprint for future healthcare

Adapt performance measurement and funding models to targeted outcomes

Align our governance and leaders to support the system and deliver the outcomes of Future Health



Value-Based Healthcare initiatives

Value-based healthcare is about delivering outcomes that matter to patients and using our resources to improve patient and clinician experience, how and where care is delivered, and ensure safe, quality care.

In NSW, this approach involves creating the environment, frameworks, structures and culture that enable delivery of patient-centred care. Work is underway to support this approach, through a number of statewide programs and initiatives which complement each other and focus on improving outcomes and measuring impact across the four essentials of value.

Future health strategy should have a ‘whole of government’ leadership and governance, not just ‘one team’ within NSW Health. Preventing illness begins by collaborating with Councils, Police/Justice, Education, Planning, Transport and Industry to keep our communities healthy.

— North Sydney LHD virtual care session

(we need) less focus on KPI benchmarks and more on actual patient outcomes.

— Emergency Department Community of Practice

Acknowledgements

NSW Health gratefully acknowledges the thousands of individuals who have shared their knowledge and expertise throughout the development of Future Health.

Patients, members of the general public, staff from across the NSW Health entities, as well as those from our partners in care including the primary care sector, community managed services, Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Services and other affiliated health organisations have shared useful insights during our consultations with them.

Future Health would not have been possible without the support, input and guidance of members of the Steering Committee and NSW Health's Senior Executive Forum.

Thank you for the energy and commitment to helping ensure every NSW citizen benefits from a stronger, more effective public health system.

