



Echuca Regional Health

Strategic Plan

2019-2024





Foreword

We are proud to introduce the Echuca Regional Health (ERH) Strategic Plan 2019-24.

Our plan provides a clear direction for the next five years and describes the six strategic priorities and initiatives that we will pursue to achieve our purpose of '*supporting everyone to be healthy and live well*'. The plan also identifies a number of organisational capabilities that will be strengthened to support the delivery of our strategy.

There are many significant forces shaping ERH and transforming our delivery of care. Meeting the needs of the patients, residents, clients and communities we serve in an environment of increasing demand and complexity, rising community expectation and advances in technology, requires us to think differently about the way we deliver care. Over the next five years we will deliver a bold new approach to care that we are confident will result in improved consumer outcomes and experiences.

Strong collaboration with our consumers, neighbouring rural and regional health services, community providers and government will be integral as we strive to pursue person-centred, seamless and integrated care. Improved partnerships will result in better health outcomes for our community by supporting individuals to keep healthy and live well.

The dedication and pursuit of excellence of our board, staff, visiting medical officers and volunteers, is critical to the success of this strategic plan. To support our people to achieve our ambition, we will strengthen our capabilities, our organisational engagement and our culture of inclusiveness and leadership.

On behalf of the ERH Board of Management and executive team, we would like to thank our staff, visiting medical officers, volunteers, consumers, community and healthcare partners for their contribution to our plan and the development of our strategic priorities. We know that ongoing engagement with all stakeholders will be fundamental to delivering the plan, and we are committed to working together to realise our strategic objectives by 2024.



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About Echuca Regional Health

ERH is a public health service, governed by an independent board. It is designated as an 'outer regional health service' by the Victorian Department of Health and Human Services, providing health care for people living in the Campaspe Shire (Victoria) and Murray River Council (New South Wales) areas. ERH operates in central Echuca, with the following facilities:

- inpatient units: 26 medical beds including 6 high dependency beds, 18 surgical beds, 8 maternity beds, 24 sub-acute beds
- same day medical services: 6 renal dialysis chairs, 4 chemotherapy chairs, 4 dental chairs
- emergency department: operating 9 cubicles, 4 short-stay beds
- surgery: 3 operating theatres, 5 recovery beds, and a central sterile services department
- aged care: 60 residential beds including 15 high-care places for people with dementia
- specialist consulting rooms
- community health services are co-located on campus, including the Hopwood Centre, Lumeah and Kinsey House.

Awarded the Premier's Medium Health Service of the Year in 2018, ERH employs over 819 staff, the largest employer in Campaspe Shire. In 2018/2019 the health service had an operating budget of \$74 million. Each year it returns in excess of \$44 million to the community in salaries, wages and purchases from local businesses.

The health service has recently undergone a redevelopment, which was funded in 2011 and included a new emergency department and short stay unit, new inpatient units, new perioperative unit, installation of Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI) and a new foyer with a café and gift shop. The final stage was opened during 2015.

The \$6 million Cancer and Wellness Centre will provide day medical services including chemotherapy, as well as flexible facilities for individual consultations and group programs to support people during and after their cancer treatment. The new centre will also include dialysis services and specialist consulting rooms.

Federal funding has also been committed for a Headspace facility in Echuca to help improve the mental health of our young people.



About the catchment

ERH services the Campaspe Shire, which encompasses an area of 4,518 square kilometres, and the cross-border Murray River Council, with an area of 11,865 square kilometres. Campaspe Shire is located in Victoria's Loddon Mallee Region, 208km north-west of Melbourne. Townships and small settlements in Campaspe Shire include Echuca, Kyabram and Rochester, amongst others. The estimated population in 2016 was 36,814.

Murray River Council is located along the southern border of New South Wales, with an

estimated population of 11,500 in 2016 with approximately 53 per cent of the population residing in Moama. The council was formed in 2016 following the amalgamation of Murray Shire and Wakool Shire. Major townships in Murray River Council include Barham, Mathoura, Moama, Moulamein, Murray Downs, Tooleybuc and Wakool. The Moama and Echuca townships are located directly across the state border from one another, separated by the Murray River.

Executive summary

ERH has been very successful in redeveloping its hospital facilities and delivering high quality healthcare

The challenges in healthcare continue to be increasingly complex and will require ERH to be more agile and innovative, and to function differently to deliver this strategic plan. The increasing health needs of our community, growth of personalised medicine, advances in digital technologies, and demand from consumers for person-centred care, all in a financially constrained environment, requires us to develop smarter ways to deliver better treatment and care. Establishing a clear view of our future is imperative to delivering sustainable healthcare.

Over the next five years, ERH will aim to strengthen its role as a designated outer regional health service by leading the delivery of acute care services, and education and training across the Loddon Mallee region. We will support other smaller health services within our region to ensure their patients have improved access to clinical services and expertise. ERH is committed to partnering with the community and other service providers to ensure more of our patients are cared for in their own home.

We aim to reinforce our role as a regionally recognised health service centre of excellence that delivers exceptional, consistent, high quality patient care. We will mature our digital capability and review our models of care, linking them to infrastructure and other investment priorities.

The ERH Strategic Plan 2019-24 sets the pathway to achieve these goals. Central themes are innovation, specialisation, digital transformation and greater connectivity and collaboration with patients, and our current and future partners. The talent and dedication of our people underpin our successes to date and they remain our most important asset.





What we will focus on in the next 5 years

To achieve the ambitions set out in this strategy, we must support our workforce to thrive. Building the capability of our leaders will be central to this, as will leveraging our existing positive culture across our workforce of more than 819 staff and 120 volunteers.

Ensuring we have the right skills and knowledge to adapt to a rapidly changing environment is critical. We will achieve this by providing our people with strong development support while also enhancing our recruitment practices, planning for critical role succession and the development of talent.

ERH provides care for the health needs of its community at every life stage and is committed to inclusive practice that intersects with age, gender, disability, ethnicity and cultural diversity. ERH continues to implement the 'Closing the Gap' strategy for our relevant services, and equity of access to Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander (ATSI) people.

ERH is ready to meet the challenges ahead. Throughout the strategic planning process, our staff have emphasised a need to be visionary, aspiring to raise our profile as an outer regional health service. As part of our strategic plan, we articulate a clear vision which reflects our ambition to support everyone to be healthy and live well.

Our strategic plan for 2019-24 will involve concerted action across six interdependent priority areas. Over the next five years we will focus on:

- 1. safe, effective, person-centred care**
- 2. talented, capable, engaged people**
- 3. community integration and collaboration**
- 4. digital transformation**
- 5. outer regional health service education and research leader**
- 6. innovation in care.**

In this plan we set out the initiatives that we will pursue in each priority area. Collectively they will reposition ERH over the next five years.

ERH will concurrently strengthen the key organisational capabilities needed to deliver the strategy. We know that boldness and ambition require an organisation to be sustainable and underpinned by effective governance and sound commercial management. We will continue to be a health service that listens to its people and utilises data and feedback in our decision-making.

Developing the clinical services plan through to the strategic plan has involved extensive consultation and contribution from across our organisation, community and our health system partners. Strong engagement with these stakeholders is fundamental to delivering the plan effectively. Ultimately our success will be measured by the outcomes and experience we achieve for each person who entrusts us with their care.



What will Echuca Regional Health look like in 5 years

Over the next five years, ERH will deliver a new approach to care that delivers better outcomes and the best experiences for every person in every area of the health service, through the priority areas and initiatives set out below. Our community's expectations and beliefs about health and healthcare are growing. We understand our community is ageing and healthcare needs are becoming more complex. Our strategic plan considers the changes we need to make to continue to provide high-quality care.

This includes:

- an increased shift towards community-based care
- technological advancements, changing the way we deliver and interact with patients
- personalised medicine, with future improvements in diagnosis and treatment
- a service delivery model that focuses on care outside the acute setting.

PARTNERSHIP

Safe, effective person-centred care

Partner with consumers to create a distinct approach to care that is reliable, safe and puts patients at the centre

- design a person-centred model of care with consumers and staff
- ensure facilities and environment support our model of care
- redesign and optimise our service models
- provide culturally safe care for our ATSI people

Community integration and collaboration

Collaborate with local partners to improve the lives of people in our community

- implement the clinical service plan
- improve access to general practice, community health and local care across the Campaspe Shire and Murray River Council areas
- partner to deliver integrated care for all patients with complex chronic conditions

TRANSFORMATION

Digital Transformation

Transform our infrastructure in line with service delivery requirements

- strengthen our core information technology infrastructure, services and functions
- selectively invest in new and emerging technologies
- work towards a single electronic medical record

GROWTH

Outer regional educational leader

Support the delivery of training and support across the Loddon Mallee region

- become the Rural Generalist Doctor Training Centre of northern Victoria
- strengthen undergraduate medical and dental student teaching
- expand undergraduate and postgraduate nurse and allied health training
- expand secondary work experience and learning opportunities
- ATSI Training & Employment Pathway

Innovation in Care

Grow our delivery of care

- focus on clinical services where we can be most effective and efficient
- improve access and care for clinical and community services for all patients and consumers across the region
- strengthen the delivery of specialist care in the Loddon Mallee region.

Talented, capable, engaged people

Take our team to the next level with the right support and culture

- leverage our positive culture through workforce engagement
- build leadership excellence and capability
- support personal growth of our people through education and training
- value diversity and inclusion to bring richness to our work environment
- employ members of our Indigenous community will be a priority in a culturally safe workplace

Our Purpose

Supporting everyone to be healthy and live well

Our strategic plan is aligned with our purpose. Together this brings a clear, strong direction, and strategic priorities which will differentiate ERH as an outer regional health service within the Loddon Mallee region.

Our Values

Our values reflect what is most important to us. They support us to deliver this strategic plan by driving the qualities and behaviours that we will need individually and collectively to be successful. Our values define who we are. They shape our culture and the behaviours, practices and mind-sets of our people. They guide the way we work with one another, with consumers, the wider community and our partners.



Our four CARE organisational values are:

			
Collaboration	Accountability	Respect	Excellence
<i>Together we achieve -</i> our culture of collaboration means we work with a team focus. We cooperate with others to gain input and support to achieve objectives and shared goals.	<i>We bring our best -</i> we monitor the impact of one's own behaviour on others, and support a 'no blame' culture in reporting incidents to effectively resolve them.	<i>Our actions show we care -</i> we treat people fairly, openly and with dignity. We demonstrate personal standards of consistency, tolerance and patience.	<i>We shape the future -</i> we consistently support and follow organisational policies and procedures and actively participate in identifying opportunities to improve what we do.

A new direction

Our consumers expect and need more from us

As our community is growing and its healthcare needs become more complex, our relationship with consumers is changing. Our consumers are better informed and increasingly expect greater involvement in what, how and where they receive care. They want to participate in decision-making and expect choice and value for money.

In response, we are continuing to focus on person-centred care; care that is respectful of and responsive to the preferences, needs and values of patients and the community.

Our approach to person-centred care is underpinned by effective communication. We are committed to working in partnership with consumers to develop a deep understanding of the needs and expectations of each person and the community.

We need to think differently to provide better care

More complex health needs, increasing consumer expectations and advances in technology are challenging the status quo at ERH. These changes require us to think differently about the future of care.

To fulfil our commitment to person-centred care, we must develop better ways to coordinate care and support each patient. This encompasses the hospital service, community services, aged care and community support services. An integrated approach to care will require ERH to re-think its method of service delivery. We need to be aware of the diversity and vulnerability of our community and be responsive to its needs.

Enhancing community-based and outpatient care will become an increasing focus of ERH. We know that most people would prefer to have access to care that includes service provision within the outpatient setting or in their home rather than stay in hospital.

Community-based care is already part of our current service provision but technological

advances in telehealth, remote monitoring, and the establishment of greater partnerships between metro, regional and rural areas will enable more services to be delivered from beyond ERH's physical hospital boundaries. The roll-out of the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) is a key opportunity for us to strengthen our role as a provider of community services.

Safety and quality remains fundamental to all we do

Despite the rapid change that is taking place, our fundamental commitment to consistently provide safe, effective, person-centred care to every person remains unchanged. ERH is committed to further developing its clinical expertise to support the delivery of safe care to our community. We also recognise a need to continually improve our services and to be more transparent with the community about our performance, particularly when things go wrong.

Fulfilling the recommendations and ambitions of Targeting Zero (the review of safety and quality assurance in Victoria) will remain a central focus of our work over the next five years. Equally we recognise the potential for ERH to share the expertise of our clinical leaders with other health services within our region to support system-wide improvements.

The safety, health and wellbeing of our staff and volunteers will also continue to be paramount

ERH is committed to supporting and promoting the psychological wellbeing of our staff and volunteers. This includes the implementation of our *CARE Matters* program, enhancing our focus on the wellbeing of our workforce and continuing to review and improve our *Employee Assistance* program. Over the next five years we will



extend these important initiatives across ERH and build leadership capability to support the health, safety and wellbeing of our people.

Improving clinical practice

ERH recognises education, learning and research are integral to improving clinical practice and providing better care. To achieve these important outcomes we must continue to attract talented individuals to ERH who are passionate about excellence. This will enable us to continue building knowledge that informs clinical practice and teaching to ensure our work is evidence-based and leads to improvements in healthcare, patient outcomes and patient experience. We must also work collaboratively with other health services to leverage our collective efforts.

Advances in technology are transforming healthcare

At ERH, advances in medical and digital technology are shaping the way we provide care, manage our workforce and teach our students.

New digital technologies spanning connectivity and mobility are creating innovative ways to

plan and deliver services and interact more closely with patients. Digital technology will enable better information sharing and multi-disciplinary collaboration, both inside ERH and across the health system. With established expertise and experience in the development and rollout of health technology, ERH understands the potential opportunities created by new technologies and a strong data analytics capability. Our strategic plan ensures that those opportunities are pursued.

Our strategic priorities

Change and innovation continue to be essential if we are to provide safe, outstanding care that fulfils the needs and expectations of our patients and consumers.

We must also strengthen our contribution as an outer regional leader in health care and education. ERH is prepared to meet this challenge. Over the next five years ERH will become a more specialised, responsive, innovative, holistic and better connected health service.

A new strategic plan requires a clear focus and our priority areas establish that intention for 2019-24. The priority areas are interdependent and all will require concerted action for success to be achieved.

Specific initiatives have been identified to provide a clear plan of action. In this section we describe each of our priority areas and the strategies that will support their achievement. The initiatives provide an ambitious but achievable program of work. However, they

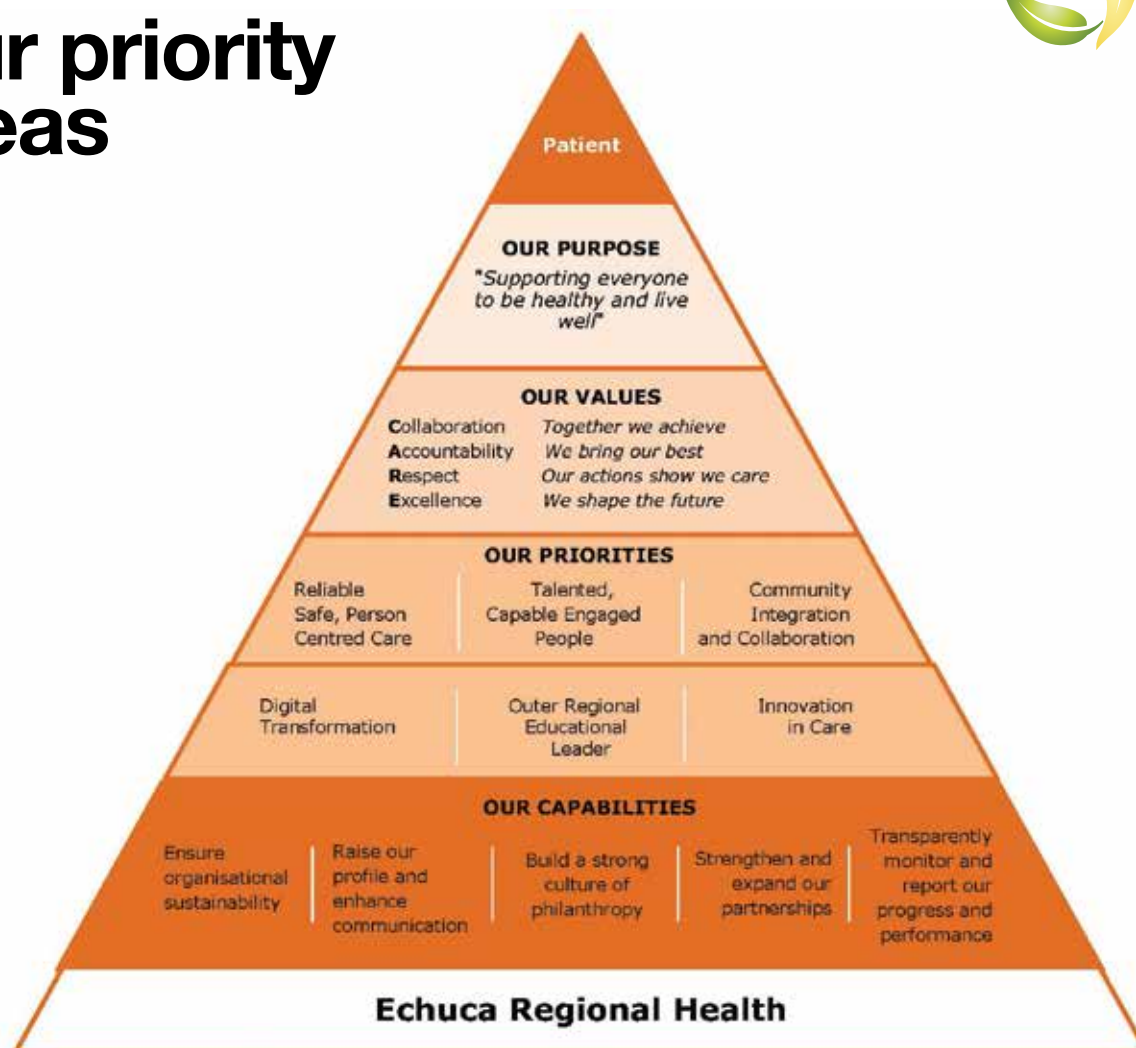
are not intended as a prescriptive pathway and are not by any means an exhaustive list. We appreciate that constant change is part of our environment and we will be equipped to adapt and respond to new opportunities and challenges that emerge over the next five years.

For our strategic plan to be successful it must also be measurable. ERH measures, monitors and reports an extensive range of clinical and operational performance measures. Alongside this reporting framework, a smaller number of measures have been identified to track our progress in the priority areas. The measures will provide the high-level means by which to monitor overall progress against the plan. The indicators will be supervised and monitored by the ERH Board and staff.





Our priority areas



Safe, effective, person-centred care

Partner with our consumers to create a reliable, quality system that is safe, effective and prioritises patients and residents at its core

Creating and sustaining high quality care within the complexity of a health service requires an elevated mindset, clarity of purpose, unwavering focus and the ability to develop systems that support consistently high quality care and great experiences for every consumer.

The strategic quality system balances standardisation with respect for staff knowledge. It is designed to support us in defining what high quality care means to our staff, and importantly our consumers.

Based on the theory and practice of high performing organisations, improvement science and governance, it identifies the change management required to engage all staff in creating consistently 'great care' for every consumer.

Our quality system will drive improvements in consumer safety, outcomes and experiences. It will create development opportunities for staff and drive efficiencies in our use of resources.

The strategic quality system model

Comprises three components:

Purpose: The clear and concrete definition of the 'great' consumer experience we want to provide as described by consumers and staff.

People: The specific roles, skills and behaviours required for our workforce at each level of the organisation to create this experience.

Pillars: Quality governance systems that support staff to lead, drive and create the defined consumer experience.

While our services are diverse, our model will be guided by common principles.

The way we provide care at ERH will:

- be developed in partnership with our consumers
- be culturally safe and appropriate for our Indigenous community
- be consistently warm and welcoming
- improve the consumer experience and consumer-reported outcomes
- be highly reliable
- explore innovative ways of achieving better outcomes and experiences
- be informed and supported by our digital capability
- be collaborative, involving a coordinated effort from every team member, including volunteers
- be connected to health professionals and services in the broader health system
- reduce variation in practice.

Translating these principles into action will be central to our strategy and the focus of the key initiatives.

Initiatives

1. Partner with consumers and staff to define what high quality care means to them

ERH's new model of care will be developed in partnership with consumers and staff to ensure it meets the specific needs of our community and is 'owned' by our staff.

We will:

- define and implement our purpose: a great (high quality) consumer experience across all ERH services
- identify the characteristics of staff, visiting medical officers and volunteers at each level of the organisation to provide and support a great experience for every consumer
- ensure our governance and systems support staff to create great consumer experiences
- implement the *Consumer Engagement Plan* to ensure consumers participate in and support new initiatives, including the development of models of care
- implement a daily operating system (DOS) that engages staff at all levels of the organisation in ensuring consistency and transparency of outcomes across the health service.

2. Become a leading outer regional health service

ERH has proven capability and a strong record in safety and quality. We care about and strive for more than just compliance.

Our ambition is to go even further and to be recognised as a leading outer regional health service.

We will:

- develop and support clinical leaders to drive quality improvements and culture change to achieve the highest levels of consumer and staff safety
- strengthen our safety and quality governance across the organisation
- accelerate the implementation of safe, evidence-based guidelines and research findings into clinical practice to improve the safety and quality of healthcare at ERH
- expand the transparent, public reporting of our performance
- undertake initiatives that drive a culture of respect and collaboration to enhance staff and volunteer safety and wellbeing



- develop a safety scorecard for ERH that defines our measures of success for patient and staff safety.

3. Ensure our models of care are supported by our facilities and environment

To provide great consumer outcomes, experiences, and efficient service delivery, we require the right facilities, technology and environment. Our environment has the potential to create a better experience for all consumers and staff, and it should reflect our values.

We will:

- pursue the infrastructure priorities as determined by a facility planning process
- prioritise improvements to our existing patient environment to positively impact patient experience.

4. Redesign and optimise our service models to deliver care more efficiently

New models of care will substantially change our infrastructure requirements. In the longer term, this creates opportunities for ERH to redesign the way services are delivered.

We will:

Work with DHHS and the Victorian Health and Human Services Building Authority to:

- progress facility planning following our clinical services model of care redesign
- pursue feasibility and business case development to support service redesign and care delivery optimisation
- develop a cancer and wellness centre for the benefit of the region.

Measures of success:

- leading patient experience results
- leading clinical outcome measures
- adoption of patient reported outcome measures
- reduced incidents of preventable harm
- consistent achievement of system performance targets.

Talented, capable, engaged workforce

Take our team to the next level with support

ERH understands and values the critical contribution our people make in caring for the needs of our community. Our people achieve excellence in consumer care and teaching.

We recognise that our people are key to realising our ambitions for this strategic plan.

Initiatives

1. Leverage our positive culture through workforce engagement

We will strengthen our level of organisational engagement as a critical aspect of our positive culture.

We will:

- undertake initiatives to lift our level of staff engagement
- regularly measure our organisational culture using *People Matter* and industry benchmarks and transparently share those results with our staff.

2. Build leadership excellence and capability

Bold and capable leadership will be required to guide ERH into the future. We will develop excellence in leadership to match our reputation as a leading outer regional health service.

We will:

- define what leadership is at ERH across all disciplines
- develop our current leaders and the next generation of leaders
- identify critical leadership roles and develop succession plans for each.

3. Support personal growth and development of our people

ERH has a workforce of outstanding people. We are committed to strengthening the skills and capabilities of our team members.

We will:

- prepare a medical workforce plan that identifies new models for blended specialist / generalist medical teams in high-priority services including emergency medicine, paediatric medicine, surgery, critical care, and obstetrics
- identify the capabilities needed for the future
- support our people to develop these skills through a focus on development
- build feedback, growth mindsets and capabilities.

4. Value diversity and inclusion to bring richness to our work environment

We must ensure diversity is reflected in our workforce so we can meet the needs of our community. We will increase our diversity through our openness and inclusiveness.

We will:

- develop initiatives to increase the diversity of our workforce
- strengthen our culture of inclusiveness
- build upon our ATSI strategies and employment plan, and improve cultural safety for our ATSI employees.

Measures of success:

- increased levels of staff engagement in the *People Matter* survey
- increased capability and confidence in leaders
- increased age, gender and cultural diversity in ERH's workforce
- succession plans in place for key leadership roles.



Community integration and collaboration

Collaborate with local partners to improve the lives of people in our community

We will focus on our expanding catchment to understand who it is in the community we are servicing.

This will enable more targeted care to be delivered within the community, to produce better health outcomes. Equally, it will enable ERH's specialist skills to be available to deliver high value care.

ERH will enhance its community services team to deliver a system of integrated, community-based care with acute services.

Initiatives

1. Implement our clinical service plan to help keep people healthy and out of hospital

Our approach to integrated care will be in collaboration with our community partners, including general practice.

We will:

- work with general practice and our neighbouring health service partners to deliver integrated care for the region
- work with local healthcare stakeholders, general practice and our neighbouring health service partners to promote an agreed regional approach to prevention, early detection and early intervention strategies, which will improve our population health outcomes
- work in partnership to implement the population health-based strategic priorities identified in the Murray PHN Strategic Plan
- develop innovative partnership initiatives and population health strategies to improve the health outcomes of our community, particularly our ATSI community.

2. Improve access to local health care for people in the Campaspe region

We will continue to care for our local community.

We will:

- review the community services model and build an integrated chronic conditions management strategy lead by the community service team in partnership with primary care, allied health and acute health programs
- develop and promote referral pathways for medical and other health practitioners and health services to standardise and simplify the referral process and improve access to all our services
- enhance partnerships with our neighbouring health services to better coordinate access to care for people in our local communities. Conversely, we will refer our patients to be safely treated close to their home.

3. Partner with primary care, community health services and general practice to deliver integrated care for all patients with complex chronic conditions

More can be done to improve the population health of our local community. People with multiple or chronic complex conditions frequently seek care at ERH which could be avoided or better managed in the community. We will also work with our ATSI community services to improve the health of our ATSI community.

We will:

- explore the potential for new ways of providing support for evidence-based integrated chronic disease management
- trial new approaches to community-based chronic disease management, which integrates community services and secondary care expertise

- develop tools to predict 'at risk' patients so we can make the most difference through early identification, service integration and connecting care
- seek out new technologies that may help patients better manage and monitor their care outside the hospital and help them navigate their way through the health system
- develop an ERH subcommittee on ATSI health and measure the 'Closing the Gap' milestones.

Measures of success:

- increased proportion of services provided in the community
- reduce potentially preventable hospital admissions and unplanned re-admissions
- improved outcomes for patients with multiple or chronic complex conditions
- stronger, more sustainable and beneficial relationships with partners.





Digital transformation

Transform Echuca Regional Health's digital environment

ERH understands that technology has the potential to significantly advance the work we do, improve the way we interact with our consumers and enhance their experience at our health service.

Our strategic focus is to ensure that our information technology infrastructure, services and functions enable us to deliver our services and pursue our strategic priorities.

ERH will develop a brief action plan for information and communication technology (ICT) innovation across the organisation for the duration of the strategic plan.

Initiatives

1. Work towards a single electronic patient record

A single electronic medical record is key to delivering person-centred care and improving safety and quality.

An integrated system increases efficiency, improves patient outcomes and experiences and reduces risk.

We will work towards implementation of an electronic patient record across the whole organisation.

We will:

- integrate our systems, processes and workflows to create a connected and coordinated system
- design and deliver our systems in collaboration with users to ensure they meet their needs and expectations
- provide our clinicians and other system users with the education, tools, training and responsiveness required to maximise their use of our systems.

2. Improve health data analytics to support sustainable clinical care, innovation and research

ERH is committed to the use of data and analytics to improve the financial sustainability of the health service including

quality of patient care. Our large volumes of data are an important asset that we can use to improve our financial sustainability, and support clinical care.

We will:

- strengthen our data collection and analytics reporting systems, processes and tools.

3. Selectively invest in new and emerging technologies which improve outcomes for consumers, support clinicians and improve efficiencies

The pace of change in digital health means we must be continuously learning, trying new tools and scanning the horizon for the latest technologies.

New technologies have the potential to substantially improve both the experience and outcomes for consumers, as well as support our clinical care.

We will:

- prepare a technology strategy that prioritises investment in clinical, administrative and resource-management systems, as well as medical equipment
- adopt contemporary technologies which will improve outcomes for consumers, support clinicians and advance our clinical programs
- ensure our investments are evidence-informed, deliver value and balance risk.

4. Strengthen our ICT infrastructure, services and functions to support our clinical care, operations and strategic priority areas

ERH's ICT environment is the backbone of many operational and financial systems and processes. A strong ICT foundation will support us to deliver more efficient, safe and high-quality care, and be a significant enabler for many of our strategic goals.



We will:

- work with Bendigo Health to identify and invest in ICT infrastructure, services and functions with the most potential to improve quality, safety and operational efficiency or reduce risk
- connect and integrate our ICT infrastructure and systems to improve efficiencies
- create an ICT service delivery model, including structure and policies, that supports our people, clinical care, operational efficiency and strategic priority areas that link in with Bendigo Health.

Measures of success:

- increase the use of data and information to improve financial sustainability, care, teaching and research
- embrace and harness contemporary technologies and new methods to more efficiently and effectively deliver our services
- strengthen ICT's value to the organisation through greater team cohesion and collaborative approaches.

Become an outer Regional Health Service education and research leader

Advance regional education and training opportunities in the Loddon Mallee Region

ERH is proud of its education centre, its committed staff and strong partnerships with universities and regional education providers. We are developing a strong reputation as a teaching health service. Our clinical education programs are aimed at developing our students and health professionals to be leaders in clinical practice.

However, we recognise there is an opportunity for ERH to do much more within the Loddon Mallee region. The development of a regional teaching centre in Echuca will improve clinical care and learning outcomes critical to continuing to improve the health of the community.

Initiatives

1. Continue to strengthen our university and educational partnerships to support the development of our education centre

ERH's university partnerships are vital to the achievement of our teaching ambitions. We seek to enhance our university partnerships to ensure they continue to be strong and aligned with ERH's strategic goals and priorities.

We will:

- work with our university and educational partners to develop and maintain the infrastructure needed to support excellence in health service education and training
- commit to increasing ERH's research portfolio by applying for medical, nursing and allied health grants that directly improve rural consumer care
- develop a research culture that supports and strengthens partnerships with leading research universities

- develop a recruitment strategy to attract the most capable and accomplished leaders to ERH
- establish an ongoing scheme to track performance and benchmark against other health services.

2. Embed a consistent, inter-disciplinary approach to education and training across all ERH services

Education and training can take a more prominent and consistent role in the way we provide all services at ERH. We will draw on best practice principles to more closely link our education programs with clinical and other services that ERH provides.

We will:

- embed education and training requirements for all staff across the organisation.

3. Become the health service of choice for undergraduate and postgraduate medical, nursing and allied health students

ERH will build on its strong foundations in teaching to deliver excellent learning experiences and attract the best and brightest students. Excellence and leadership in education will benefit patients, students, staff, the health service and Echuca Moama community.

We will:

- consider development of a Medical School in Echuca during the next five to ten years. This would particularly support local young people through medical undergraduate training, internships, and registrar training; and may help to attract more young rural people into medical careers.

- work with students to understand their learning needs and expectations and develop and implement initiatives to continue to improve their experience at ERH
- strengthen our communications about teaching at ERH to help patients, future students and the community understand the role and significance of teaching and learning.

Measures of success:

- all staff involved in teaching
- increased undergraduate and postgraduate placements and appointments
- increased participation in research projects relevant to rural health
- strengthened partnerships with universities to provide an employment pathway for students and employees interested in research.





Innovation in rural generalist care

Grow our delivery of rural generalist care services

ERH will further strengthen its role as an outer regional health service by leading the delivery of rural generalist and specialist services. We will draw on our expertise to ensure patients from across our catchment have access to high quality care.

We have formalised links with our neighbouring health services in the Murray partnership in our region. This will establish a coordinated system where patients have access to higher levels of complex care which is not available locally. Our role as an outer regional health service and a clinical leader will also include the provision of expertise, support and clinical advice to strengthen clinical decision making, and to ensure patients are receiving the appropriate care in the right place.

While we already have several leading clinical services, we will continue to improve our services and patient experience by further linking teaching and learning to clinical practice.

Initiatives

1. Strengthen our clinical services, including cancer services within the region

A proactive approach to the development of services will allow greater access to expertise, delivering better outcomes for patients and greater efficiency and value for the health system.

We will:

- review the scale, current capability and future potential for each of our services
- prioritise the further development of a select number of clinical services and ensure there is a strong link between teaching and clinical practice within each service.

2. Focus on the clinical services where we can be most effective and efficient

We will review our role across our practices and services to allow us to focus our resources

in those clinical areas where the evidence shows we can be most effective.

We will:

- review the Victorian capability frameworks for maternity and neonatal services and discuss with Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) what action would need to be taken to achieve Level 4 maternity services and Level 3 neonatal services. It may be necessary to upgrade the high-dependency unit as part of this process
- identify activity and services with potential for change or transition in line with our new models of care
- review our role in areas of clinical care which are no longer supported by new research and evidence, or where the activity can be provided more effectively and/or efficiently elsewhere.

3. Work with our neighbouring health services to strengthen our partnerships to deliver high level care within the Loddon Mallee region

A coordinated and collaborative approach to the delivery of speciality procedural care in our region will ensure patients requiring access to a higher level of care will receive it within clinically appropriate timeframes.

We will:

- develop referral pathways to and from neighbouring health services for patients requiring access to a higher level of care
- develop agreed time-based metrics for patient access to ERH for emergency care and community services.

Measures of success:

- increased scale and depth of rural generalist care
- increased proportion of regional activity
- meeting agreed access key result areas.

How we will achieve success

In addition to our strategic priorities, we will develop a number of capabilities which will support the effective and efficient achievement of our strategic objectives.

Raise our profile and enhance communication

ERH's profile and reputation as an outer regional health service is critical to attracting the best workforce, volunteers, partnerships and funding. Therefore, a strong profile and positive reputation within our community, across the region and the sector is key to the successful delivery of our strategic plan.

We will:

- develop our communications capability and capacity, including digital communications, to improve how our communications contribute to excellent patient care, well informed staff and a positive workplace culture
- enhance our profile and reputation so we have the greatest influence possible, attract and retain the best staff and encourage community support
- strongly advocate key elements of our strategic plan to help consumers, the community, staff, policy makers and other stakeholders understand our initiatives and work with us to deliver them
- ensure our service and identity is unified to create the greatest possible impact and influence for ERH.

Strengthen and expand our partnerships

Successful delivery of our strategic plan will require strong partnerships with government, universities and other health services including regional, rural health and human service agencies, such as the NDIS.

While ERH has a number of clinical, teaching and research partners, our approach to investing in future partnerships will be stronger, more strategic, coordinated and driven by organisational priorities.

We will:

- invest in partnerships that are aligned with our strategic priorities and are mutually beneficial, leveraging off the capabilities and learning of each organisation
- support our staff to partner and collaborate effectively, at all levels of the health service.

Ensure organisational sustainability

Our strategic plan reflects our ambition. To achieve it, and to be sustainable, we need effective leadership and management underpinned by robust governance. This will ensure we have the means and structures to invest strategically and effectively in our priority areas.

We will:

- prepare unit-by-unit plans based on the overall forecasts and strategies discussed in this document. Each plan needs to consider future demand profiles, workforce needs, technological innovation and change. Particular attention should be paid to general medicine, which plays a key role in reducing the time spent by older people in particular in the emergency department
- based on the unit-by-unit plans, consider an infrastructure strategy which allocates priority to investment in upgrades, modernisation and expansion of facilities
- drive greater value in the way we plan and deliver our services, ensuring they are underpinned by a structured evaluation for new programs and models of care
- deliver financial performance that will support investment in our strategic plan
- explore new revenue sources and commercial opportunities

- maximise opportunities for philanthropic engagement and support for our services
- align our investments and resource allocation with our priority areas
- maintain and continuously improve our governance
- improve our organisation-wide approach to innovation
- link our infrastructure to our models of care and other investment priorities
- ensure our structures and systems are adaptive and responsive.

Build a strong culture of philanthropy

ERH has a proud history within our community and we understand that building on this foundation is important to achieving our goals.

We will:

- engage our staff and volunteers so they understand we are all ambassadors for ERH
- engage our staff in managing the organisation in a financially responsible way
- build connections between what we are given and what we are striving to achieve.





Implementing our strategic plan

Delivery of our strategic plan will be governed by the ERH reporting cycle

Delivery of our strategic plan will be monitored by our board, led by the executive, and will require the commitment of all staff.

Our strategic plan will be a 'live' document that is consistently referred to and provides strong direction and focus for the organisation over the next five years. It will drive our activity and investment.

A strong and robust implementation and reporting plan will be developed to lead delivery of the five-year strategic plan. The implementation and reporting plan will be developed in consultation with staff. It will set out detailed activities that will need to take place, timing of delivery and assign accountabilities across the organisation.

The implementation and reporting plan will also provide high-level financial forecasts that help us understand the financial investment required and highlight dependencies across initiatives.

The implementation plan will also inform annual business plans. The annual business planning cycle will capture the specific projects, budgets, timing and accountabilities associated with each strategy (some of which are already underway). Our annual planning cycle will include a review process which, where necessary, will allow us to adjust or amend our implementation plan and strategic plan to ensure they remain relevant.

We will transparently monitor and report our progress and performance

ERH measures, monitors and reports an extensive range of clinical and operational performance benchmarks. Alongside this reporting framework, the performance measures set out in our strategic plan will be used to track and report on our progress against our priority areas. More detailed performance indicators and measures will also be included in our annual business plans and in business cases that support major investments and activities.

Our performance will be transparently shared with our consumers, staff and stakeholders. Our reporting will be consistent and will provide the data and analysis required to ensure we are individually and collectively accountable.

We will commence discussions with DHHS on appropriate role delineation and care pathways within the Loddon Campaspe Mallee.



Echuca Regional Health

226 Service Street Echuca VIC 3564
Phone 03 5485 5000 Fax 03 5482 5478
www.erh.org.au

