

Sunshine Hospital and Western Local Health Network, Melbourne, Victoria

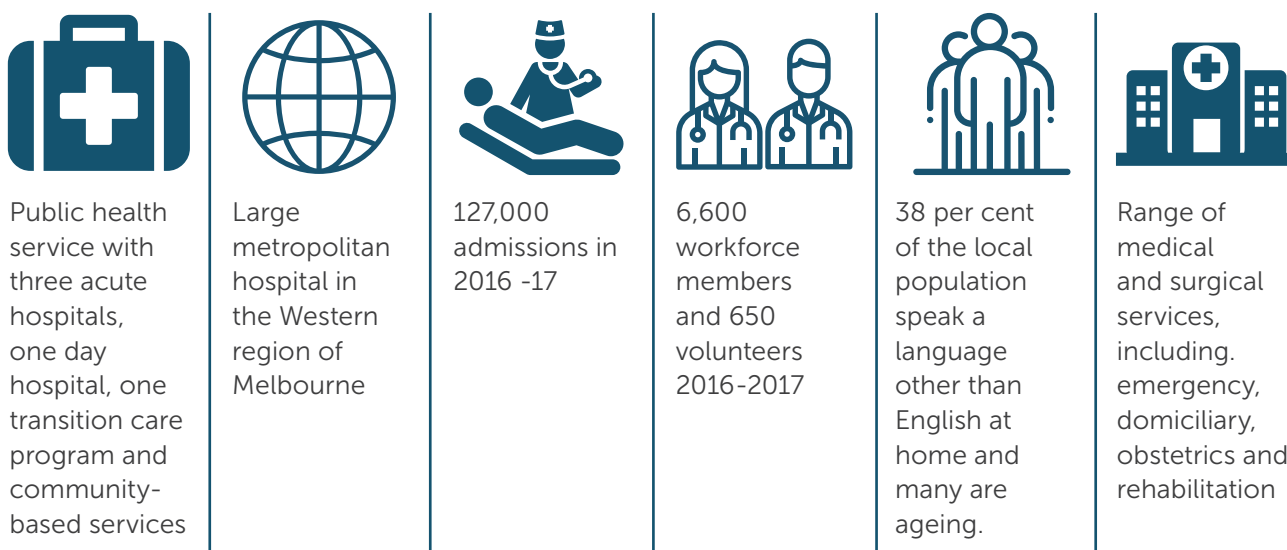
Overview of the organisation

Western Health is a major public health service in Melbourne. It covers a population of over 800,000 people in one of the fastest growing and most culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) areas of Australia.

Western Health offers a comprehensive and increasingly integrated range of healthcare services – ranging from acute tertiary services in areas of emergency medicine, intensive care, medical and surgical services, obstetrics and paediatrics through to sub-acute care and specialist ambulatory clinics.

Sunshine Hospital is one of three public hospitals in Western Health. It has 600 beds and its services include cardiac care, women's and children's services, surgical, medical, mental health, aged care and rehabilitation. Sunshine Hospital has one of the busiest emergency departments in Victoria and the third largest number of births of any hospital in the state.

Figure 1: About Western Health Local Health Network



Person-centred care at Western Health

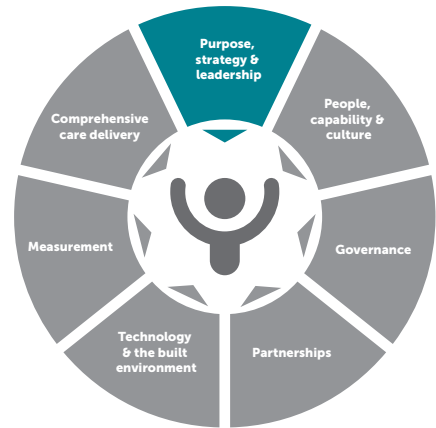
Western Health has embarked on a major journey to improve performance and embed person-centred care in recent years. The health service previously had a mixed reputation in the community with moderate performance. It is now recognised as a well-performing health service with a strong rapport in the local community and growing reputation for best practice in person-centred care.

Person-centred care has been embedded in Western Health through the Best Care Framework, introduced in late 2013 and the beginning of 2014. This is the health service's framework for quality, safety and improved patient experience. The intent of the framework is to achieve the best outcomes for every patient through four dimensions: person-centred care; co-ordinated care; right care; and safe care.

“The challenge for the leadership team is to make person-centred care simple for the frontline”
 Executive

Embedding the Best Care Framework has had a number of challenges, including resistance among some clinicians, implementing change alongside major growth in the size of the health service and securing resources for ongoing implementation. Western Health has made strong progress embedding person-centredness in the leadership and management team; however, there has been mixed progress in relation to frontline clinicians, with examples of excellence among some and resistance to change from others.

The Western Health executive team recognise that embedding person-centred care requires a concerted, organisation-wide effort over a long time period. Their achievements to date are widely recognised in the community and in the broader health system. The health service is strongly committed to continuing its transformation under the Best Care Framework.



Key examples of person-centred care

Western Health has many attributes that support the delivery of high-quality, person-centred care. This case study is not intended to be a comprehensive account of all these attributes. Rather, it seeks to highlight some key examples that other health services can learn from.

A clear and simple strategy for person-centredness is well communicated and implemented across the health service

Western Health has focused on developing a strategy that is both simple to understand and well communicated across the organisation. The Best Care Framework provides a clear strategic direction for the health service on how to deliver care that is personal, coordinated, safe and right for patients’ needs. Person-centred care is both a domain of the framework and embedded in other domains. Of note, the Best Care Framework sets out the specific expectations and responsibilities of all people in the health service, from patients through to the Board (see **Table 1**). The framework was developed through a detailed consultation process with patients and their families, the workforce and the Board, to ensure it was highly relevant to and easy to understand for both the community and people working for the health service.

Table 1: Western Health’s Best Care Framework

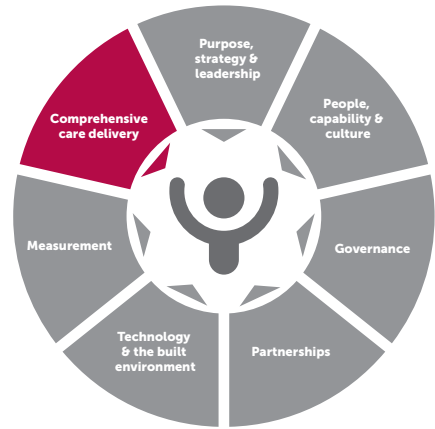
PATIENTS To receive the best care...	FRONT LINE STAFF To provide beset care...	MANAGERS & SENIOR CLINICIANS To lead best care...	EXECUTIVE & BOARD To govern best care...
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I am seen and treated as a person • I receive help, treatment and information when I need it and in a coordinated way • I receive care that makes me feel better • I feel safe 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I communicate with patients and their families and am sensitive to their needs and preferences • I am an active team player and look for ways to do things better • I am competent in what I do and motivated to provide the best care and services possible • I keep patients from harm 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I engage with and put patients first when making decisions • I look for ways to support staff and work efficiently as part of a team • I guide, engage and support staff to provide best clinical care • I promote a culture of safety 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I oversee the development, implementation and ongoing improvement of organisation-wide systems supporting Best Care

Leaders and managers at Western Health put considerable ongoing effort and resources into articulating and implementing the Best Care Framework. A dedicated Best Care Committee is responsible for implementing the framework, with support from *Person-Centred Care, Right Care, Coordinated Care and Safe Care* Committees. The framework is embedded in strategy, clinical and organisational documents and reinforced through ongoing capacity building, leadership training and communications with the workforce and patient representatives. As a result, the framework is well understood and has become part of the everyday language of the workforce and patient representatives.

Services and processes are often co-designed with patients and the community

Western Health has utilised co-design methodologies to design several services and processes. Co-design reflects Western Health’s commitment to the principle of ‘Doing It With Us – Not For Us’, which is a strategy of the Department of Health and Human Services, Victoria. Western Health has used co-design methodologies on a number of services, systems and processes. Of note, the health service recently conducted pilots to co-design several quality improvement projects. This includes:

- **A co-designed peer support program with Intensive Care Unit (ICU) survivors.** This pilot used a novel methodology – ‘experience-based-co-design’ – to develop a peer support program to improve recovery of survivors of critical illnesses and their families
- **Health Links – a new innovative model of integrated care.** This pilot builds on advanced discharge programs and aims to provide integrated care in the community to keep patients at home as much as possible
- **Planning for the new Joan Kirner Women’s and Children’s Hospital.**



Western Health has also commissioned a co-design expert to provide training and ongoing mentoring to its workforce on how to use and implement co-design methodologies. Co-design has been used in a limited number of initiatives, and it has led to the development of services, systems and processes that better meets the needs and preferences of its diverse patient cohort. Co-design is complemented by broader efforts to partner with consumers and engage their input into service design and delivery.

“People need to stop designing the solution and start co-designing the solution.”
Executive

Feedback and transparency is promoted through organisation-wide processes

Western Health recognises that feedback and transparency are key requirements of person-centredness, safety and quality. The health service has implemented a number of mechanisms to increase its accountabilities to patients and the community, and to increase transparency in all aspects of its performance (see Table 2). This includes mechanisms to gain patient feedback and share it across the organisation.



“A strength is that we are pretty honest as an organisation – we’re honest when there are complaints”
Senior clinician

Table 2: Initiatives to promote feedback and transparency at Western Health

<p>Encouraging feedback</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trained patient representatives to seek feedback • Training for members of the frontline workforce to receive and respond to feedback • Feedback forms and boxes • Dedicated feedback email address and 1800 phone number
<p>Managing complaints</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trained patient representatives to provide complaints and advocacy services • Benchmarking of responses to complaints through the Health Roundtable • Complaints shared with the workforce to increase awareness, learning and co-design solutions
<p>Transparency on the patient experience</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regular collection of patient experience surveys – including internal surveys (Patient Experience Dashboard) and the Victorian Health Experience Survey • Patient Story Program and sharing of patient stories at Board meetings, governance committee meetings and within local services • Patient experience dashboards, with data on patient compliments and complaints • Best Care Committee responsible for analysing and responding to patient Experience dashboard data, and sharing information across the organisation • <i>'Knowing how we're doing'</i> boards on public display in wards, with information on how the ward is performing and patient experience

The health service actively caters to its diverse local community

Western Health is located in one of the most diverse areas of Melbourne, with a population that speaks more than 135 different languages and dialects. The health service recognises that providing person-centred care requires an understanding of the people who they care for and ability to provided culturally-sensitive, safe and tailored care. Western Health has implemented a range of initiatives to cater to its diverse community. Key examples are provided in **Table 3**.

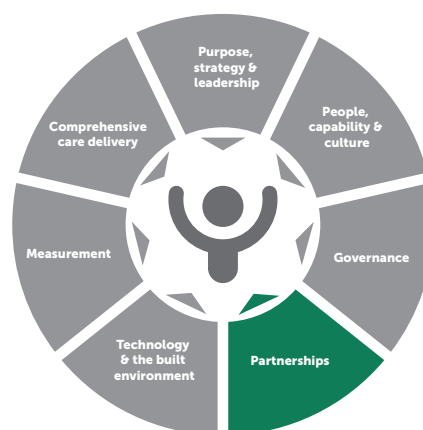






Table 3: Examples of Western Health initiatives to respond diversity

 <p>Culturally and linguistically diverse populations</p>	 <p>Lesbian, gay, bisexual transgender and intersex (LGBTI) populations</p>	 <p>People with disabilities</p>	 <p>Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities</p>
<p>Western Health provides accredited interpreters for those patients who need one. The health service has increased the number of interpreters and implemented an improvement program to increase the use of interpreters for inpatients.</p>	<p>Western Health is using the Rainbow Tick Audit Guide to review its systems. The Rainbow Tick Standards and associated resources were developed by Gay and Lesbian Health Victoria and Quality Innovation Performance and support organisations to develop inclusive practices for the LGBTI community.</p>	<p>Western Health is committed to understanding the experiences and needs of people with disabilities. One way the health service does this is to deliver Disability Awareness Education each year to graduate nurses. The sessions are delivered in partnership with a patient at Western Health.</p>	<p>Western Health is implementing the Victorian Government’s Improving Care for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Patients Program. Key initiatives include the development of an Aboriginal Health Roadmap, cultural awareness training for the workforce, partnerships with Aboriginal health services and organisations and Aboriginal employment initiatives.</p>