

9 December 2019

Rural and Sub-regional Sustainability Working Group

Purpose

The Rural and Sub-regional CEO Working Group on sustainability initiatives will consist of a cross-section of health service CEOs working in partnership with the Department of Health and Human Services and the Victorian Healthcare Association to provide advice and recommendations on strategies to improve health system sustainability, efficiency and productivity in the immediate to short-term.

Term

The term of the reference group will be to 30 June 2020, at which point the group's ongoing role will be reviewed.

Membership

The working group will:

- Provide ideas and guide departmental analysts on improvement opportunities that can potentially be operationalised across the system to deliver sustainable improvement, greater efficiency and productivity, and improve value for patients.
- Support the development of and provide rigorous advice on system improvement strategies and identify those which services can pursue either: individually; through partnerships and/or with the support of the Department of Health & Human Services.
- Represent the sector in its consultation with the department, to ensure that breadth of ideas and views are represented, and that robust, practical and effective strategies to improve sector performance are developed.

Outcomes and recommendations from the working group will be provided to the Deputy Secretary of Health and Wellbeing Division and the CEO forum where appropriate.

The working group's comments and recommendations will be incorporated into the department's advice when providing its recommendations to Ministers, program areas in the department, and the sector.

Roles and responsibilities

A chair and co-chair will be appointed and will work with the VHA on the development of agendas and directions. The VHA will provide secretariat support.

The membership of the reference group will commit to:

- attending scheduled group meetings
- providing input on documents out of session
- acting on behalf of and championing the special interest group in the sector
- declare any conflicts of interest.

Members of the group will expect:

- to be provided with complete, accurate and meaningful information in a timely manner
- open and honest discussions
- ongoing 'health checks' to verify the overall status of the group
- information shared during meetings to be treated confidentially.

Given the tight inter-relationships between the issues being considered as part of this work, the group will be required to consider and closely align its outputs with the work of the VHA and the metropolitan and regional workforce reference group.

Guiding principles

The guiding principles outline the approach to working and making decision to ensure optimal outcomes for the development of solution-focused, thought-leadership positions and include:

- Focus on low-cost, high access solutions: identify solutions that reduce costs to the system, are low cost or cost neutral and improve access to high-quality, safe care for Victorians.
- Drive clear and relevant outcomes: design solutions that will deliver impactful outcomes to the health system.
- State-wide focus: think about ways to integrate and unite efforts across the state.
- Consider intersection and impacts of change in one area of the system on other areas of the system including the impact of the provision of rural health services.
- Think globally: the health system exists as part of a broader social, political, economic, geographic and technological environment which must be considered in directing health system reform.
- Avoid jumping to solutions instead question everything to understand the 'why' and problem-solve.
- Think outside the box and innovate brand new solutions to familiar problems.

Reporting

The group will, through the chair and co-chair, will provide a written and verbal update to each rural CEO meeting. The VHA will include updates in its fortnightly VHA Update newsletter, as appropriate.

Meetings

Meetings will be held face-to-face though members may join via teleconference.

Meetings will be held at least bi-monthly and may be held more frequently if required with invitations distributed via email.

Members of the group will not be reimbursed for any costs incurred that are associated with attending meetings (i.e. travel, accommodation).

Meetings will be conducted subject to an agenda that has been endorsed by the chair.

Amendment, modification or variation

The terms of reference will be reviewed, amended, varied or modified in writing after consultation and agreement by the group on an annual basis.

Review date – 30 June 2020