

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD CHAIR



I'm pleased to present the **Child and Adolescent Health Service 2025–26 Annual Report.**

It is an honour to serve as Chair of the **Child and Adolescent Health Service (CAHS) Board**, along with my fellow Board members.

As Western Australia's only dedicated health service provider for infants, children and young people, CAHS plays a critical role in shaping the health and wellbeing of future generations.

Our focus is clear: to deliver high-quality care that enables children and young people to lead healthy, fulfilling lives.

We are committed to providing equitable access to world-class health care, advancing research and innovation, strengthening clinical excellence, and delivering family-centred care. We also remain focused on building a skilled workforce and fostering partnerships that drive better outcomes for WA families.

The Board provides strong governance and strategic oversight to support CAHS operations. Working alongside the CAHS Executive team and across our 3 service areas, we are focused on continuous improvement and ensuring that CAHS is well positioned to respond to emerging challenges and changing community expectations.

We deliver a comprehensive and equitable health service that families can trust, underpinned by compassion, clinical excellence and professionalism. We embrace complexity and are always looking to do better to meet the needs of those we serve.

Building on past achievements, we are progressing the development of a new strategic plan that will set clear priorities and direction for CAHS. At the same time, we are enhancing our approach to risk and governance to ensure we maintain a solid and resilient operating foundation.

The Board is committed to strengthening engagement with frontline staff, patients, clients, families and partners to maintain a clear line of sight to service delivery, operational challenges and the issues that matter.

Over the past year, there have been several changes to the Board. I thank outgoing Board members – Pamela Michael (Chair), Professor Daniel McAullay, Dr Shane Kelly, Dr Alexius Julian and James Jegasothy – for their valuable contribution, leadership and guidance.

I also welcome new members Tracey Brand, Professor Eli Gabbay, Amit Khullar, Dr Peter Steer, Mary Anne Stephens and Kelly Worlock, who join me and continuing members, Meghan Maor, John McLean and Professor Karen Strickland.

The 2025–26 annual report outlines the key achievements, challenges and milestones of the past 12 months and reflects the scale and impact of CAHS' work across WA.

By telling the story of how CAHS is advancing better health for children, young people and their families across WA, our annual report is a powerful reflection of the extraordinary efforts of our workforce.

Thank you to the more than 7,000 staff and volunteers whose commitment, expertise and professionalism underpin everything we do.

I also thank our many partners and stakeholders in academia, research and service delivery for their ongoing collaboration in championing paediatric health care and bringing joy to young Western Australians who engage with our service.

There are also many valued partners at CAHS and I especially acknowledge the generosity of the Stan Perron Charitable Foundation as well as the Channel 7 Telethon Trust and the Perth Children's Hospital Foundation for their ongoing support, brought to us by thousands of Western Australians who support these charities.

Finally, I acknowledge the children, young people and families who put their trust in CAHS. We exist to serve you, and we remain focused on always improving health outcomes now and into the future.

Dr Neale Fong
Board Chair
Child and Adolescent Health Service



I am delighted to present the **2025–26 Annual Report for the Child and Adolescent Health Service.**

Each year, I am reminded that at the heart of everything we do are the children, young people and families who place their trust in us. Supporting their health, wellbeing and future is both a privilege and a responsibility we take seriously every day.

MESSAGE FROM THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE

Over the past year, we have continued to make meaningful progress by strengthening our services, responding to growing demand and finding new ways to deliver care that is accessible, compassionate and responsive.

A defining achievement for WA has been the development of Sandcastles (Boodja Mia), the state's first children's hospice, which will soon welcome children and families. This has been made possible through our valued partnership with the Perth Children's Hospital Foundation. The purpose-built service will provide comfort, care and support for children living with life-limiting conditions and their families. It represents something truly special for our community.

We have also continued to expand access to mental health support for young people. Through the growth of our CAMHS Crisis Connect helpline, along with investment in clinician training and lived experience roles, and our Acute Care and Response Teams, we are ensuring young people can access support when they need it most, in a way that is safe and respectful.

At Perth Children's Hospital, increased theatre capacity and an expanded surgical workforce are already making a difference by improving access to care and reducing wait times for families.

We are also focused on the everyday experiences that matter. Initiatives like Meals on Demand are transforming hospital stays by giving patients and families more choice, flexibility and comfort. These are small changes that can make a big difference.

Listening remains central to our approach. We continue to learn from children, young people and families, using their feedback and insights to shape how we grow and improve our services. In child development, this has included expanding access and creating practical online resources to support families navigating concerns such as attention, regulation and ADHD.

Our commitment to research ensures we continue to look ahead, better understand emerging health challenges and identify new ways to prevent, diagnose and treat illness and injury.

We are also working to strengthen how we connect with the diverse communities we serve. Programs like our Consumer Ambassador initiative, along with more accessible and translated information, are helping to break down barriers and build stronger, more inclusive relationships. Engaging with and learning from Aboriginal consumers helps us build understanding and adapt our services to ensure care is culturally appropriate for Aboriginal children, young people and their families.

As an organisation, CAHS is on an exciting journey of discovery, refreshing our strategic direction to ensure we have the right foundation to continue to deliver on our promise to the community.

The progress outlined in our annual report reflects not only the scale and complexity of our services, but also the incredible dedication of our people. I am continually inspired by the skill, compassion and dedication of our staff, the generosity of our volunteers and the strength of our partnerships.

Finally, I would like to thank the children, young people and families who have shared their journeys with us this year. Your voices are at the centre of everything we do, and they continue to guide and inspire our commitment to delivering the best possible care.

Valerie Buić
Chief Executive
Child and Adolescent Health Service

