

# North West Area Health Service Network

Community Forum  
North and South

## Why form an Area Network when...

- Communities have their own hospitals – there are 5 in the North West?
- Communities have their own GP's?
- Communities have their own aged care facilities?
- Communities have their own community health services?

## Why form a Network when...

- We should be building up local resources – everyone has needs?
- Travel is so expensive and many reasons people move around the region now is because services are not local – they used to be?
- People in their communities have worked hard to create local autonomy and that will never change?

## Form a Network Because:

- People expect to live longer than they used to – they want treatment and care.
- Medical services are more quality controlled and litigious.
- People expect a work life balance including clinical staff.
- Technology is available and requires specialist interpretation.

## Because.....

- The cost of health care is rising and our population is aging – there are increasingly fewer people to fund it.
- There are a lot more career options open to our young people and many are not choosing to work in the health sector

## Because:

- Living longer means our medical needs are complex – more than one problem at a time.
- There are many people involved in care and treatment so communication needs to be strong
- Tax payers fund this sector so transparency must be available.

## Because...

- Complex decisions need to be made in the sector and consultation is essential – the more minds involved the better the “fit” of solutions.
- There is not a single community, City, State in Australia that can provide the total needs of all it’s population within the current resources it has – we need to work together

## And mostly because....

- Health is everyone’s business
- Illness is very scary and we need to have a forum to talk about changes if they are required and how they will impact on people
- Because we do want to make some changes in how we do things and we want our communities to support these – it’s impossible to support something you don’t know about.

## The purpose?

- Communication
- Consultation
- Prioritisation

## Why make any changes?

- We have had feedback that we have not engaged our communities well.
- Because without community involvement we will not meet community, consumer needs.
- To improve we need external input.

## Some of what we have

- Strong communities
- Beautiful environment
- Committed staff
- Amazing volunteers
- Very high incidence of cancer
- Very high incidence of cardiac disease
- Very high incidence of diabetes

## What we have

- Poverty/ relative and real
- Lower education levels than other States and within Tasmania
- The population is ageing
- An increasing birth rate
- High levels of alcohol and drug dependency

## We have

- High incidences of domestic violence
- We have housing issues
- We have waiting lists for hospitals and specialists
- We have high teenage pregnancy

## We have

- In effect a large number of problems that although they can result in health problems are in fact social issues that we as communities need to own and work together to resolve

## We have

- Political, policy and financial support to create a new environment.
- Good reason to change what we do and how we do it
- Learnt from history that we must stay engaged with the community and let all stakeholders know what we are doing.

## Proposal for the Area

- Deliver health services on budget
- Reduce and over time eliminate waiting times greater than recommended
- Integrate primary and secondary services
- Improve communication
- Use technology to improve access to and quality of health services

## Proposal...

- Be transparent in our reporting to the community.
- Focus our work on the patients and not the health service or hospital needs
- Develop services that influence life styles.
- Create a health service that acts like a magnet to new staff

## But most of all.....

- Improve the health status of the communities we serve by working together and focussing on our patients/clients.

## Processes

- Invited over 60 community groups to participate
- Meeting every three months in the evening
- Challenge to get geography right
- Agenda set by the Network but includes annual report.
- Feedback from group is so far positive

## Some feedback

- "a good meeting easier to get to from West Coast if at Burnie"
- "very informative – I learned a lot about services I didn't know existed"
- " would have had more people if agenda went out sooner – good meeting"
- "worth coming to – will share with my group"