



**SYDNEY CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL  
AND COMMUNITY SERVICES**

**STRATEGIC PLAN**

**2001 – 2004**



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# SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 BACKGROUND

Sydney Children's Hospital (SCH) and Community Child Health Services encompass an acute care facility as well as associated outreach and community based services. The acute facility is one of three tertiary centres for child health in New South Wales. Accordingly, the most complex level (level 6) and comprehensive range of services are provided in child health and adolescent medicine and surgery as well as child protection. The facility is located on the Randwick Hospitals Campus, adjoining and closely linked with the University of New South Wales. The Hospital performs the roles of regional resource for eastern Sydney, lead agent for South Eastern Sydney Area Health Service (SESAHS) and a critical hub in both metropolitan and rural state wide networks of services. It maintains strong national and international relationships in clinical, research and organisational domains.

The annual budget approximates \$74 M with over 1,000 members of staff and a bed capacity of 160. A majority of human and financial resources are directed to referrals generated by the tertiary, statewide role. The inpatient component generates 14,000 separations per annum with nearly half as day stay and an overall length of stay of 2.9 days. There are in excess of 200,000 non inpatient occasions of service, including 63,000 community contacts, 27,000 emergency attendances and visits to a range of 49 outpatient clinics. An extensive system of outreach and partnership provides over 1,000 service visits per annum to district units throughout NSW.

SESAHS was formed in August 1995 from the amalgamation of the Eastern Sydney Area Health Service and most of the Southern Sydney Area Health Service. SESAHS extends from Sydney Harbour in the north, through Botany Bay and Port Hacking to the Royal National Park in the south. SESAHS serves a population of approximately 750,000 people (increasing to 1.5 million daily through movements through the city, universities, airport and beaches) with a total expenditure budget in excess of \$1 billion. Sixteen percent of the population of SESAHS is aged between 0 and 14 years. SESAHS operates 4 business units (group services), 10 hospitals and their associated community health services, at least one third of which are tertiary services for the whole state. The hospitals range in size and provide comprehensive general and specialist health services with more than 11,200 staff servicing patients within facilities of SESAHS. The aims and objectives of SESAHS are centred around providing better health and good health care to the community. "Corporate Directions" produced by SESAHS to define the framework, direction and priorities for population based services, provides a valuable contribution to the SCH strategic planning process.



## 1.2 STRATEGIC DOMAINS IN HEALTH

The New South Wales (NSW) Health Department has established strategic directions for health care services throughout the state. The priorities are to provide services that promote:

- Healthier children, youth and families
- Fairer access
- Quality health care, and
- Better value.

In March 2000, the Minister for Health, Mr Craig Knowles announced significant changes to the NSW Health system following the recommendations of the 'Report of the NSW Health Council' and the 'Report from the Ministerial Advisory Committee on Smaller Towns (the Sinclair Report).

The Government Action Plan (GAP) for Health is the key driver of the reforms. The change is being led by the Director General with a team of leading clinicians, consumers and Executive staff from NSW Health and Area Health Services. The plan will build on the existing strengths of the health system and ensure statewide consistency and implementation of the most effective means of delivering health services throughout NSW.

The NSW Health Department strategic directions have been affirmed by the SESAHS and there will be a period of redevelopment and reorganisation as the improvements to the service structure are implemented.

The specific directions for SESAHS include:

- An increase in consumer participation
- Establishment of clinical streams with budget and management responsibilities
- Alignment of existing and future management structures to better serve clinical service delivery
- Integration of hospital care with community care.

One important feature of the health care plans is an emphasis on development of "A Framework for Managing the Quality of Health Services in NSW" as a response and means for achieving a statewide coordinated approach for evaluating and improving the quality of health services through a focus on:

- safety
- effectiveness
- appropriateness
- consumer participation
- efficiency and
- access

The strategic directions set by NSW Health and the SESAHS represent the framework by which SCH has developed its Strategic Plan.



### 1.3 LINKS WITH EXTERNAL STAKEHOLDERS

SCH and Community Services is a service of the SESAHS and the New South Wales Health Department. SCH is a lead agency in the achievement of SESAHS child health strategic goals. The service is also a vital hub in the Paediatric Network of New South Wales.

The Statewide Paediatric Network is divided into three areas with SCH leading the Greater Eastern Paediatric Network (GEPN). Aligned with the recommendations of the NSW Health Council Report, (2000) the NSW paediatric networks are aiming to ensure:

- the highest quality health care services in the most appropriate location
- that all people of NSW have access to required care irrespective of where they live and where they enter the health care system
- the fundamental right of patients to treatment according to need, regardless of where they live
- that travel times are minimised, particularly for those living in rural and remote communities and
- networking of services within area health services, across the state and metropolitan Sydney.

In addition, the NSW Health Council Report (2000) and the Government Action Plan for Health have renewed the emphasis on integration of services across primary care and acute hospital sectors and the appropriate networking of services, particularly for rural NSW communities.

Representatives of the hospital take their place on many statewide, national and international boards and committees as well as working groups and advisory groups. This is exemplified by leadership roles in Children's Hospitals and Paediatric Units Australasia, an organisation committed to improvement of child health through benchmarking, advocacy and collaboration.

SCH recognises the strategic importance of maintaining and furthering a series of partnerships with other health bodies and communities. Through the GEPN, SCH will become more responsive to the needs of diverse communities, will be in an optimal position to learn from colleagues and will be well placed to disseminate information, research and innovative practices to other health providers and patients. Nurturing and extending the network will allow SCH to extend its clinical and education services to individuals unable to access the facility because of distance and other obstacles.

Current partnerships and networks include other child health and public health facilities, child health professionals, government agencies, non-government organisations, support groups and consumers. SCH is currently expanding its consumer participation strategy to ensure our services are responsive to the needs and expectations of the community we serve.