

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Why are Hepburn Health Service and Kyneton District Health considering a proposal to join services? What are the changes involved?

Hepburn Health Service and Kyneton District Health are exploring a proposal to join health services to improve patient care and community health outcomes. We invite community and staff input from 15 February to 15 March 2019.

The proposal aims to enhance the capability of the health services to meet the needs of our community, and improve access to personalised, high quality health care - close to home.

For the last two years, Hepburn Health Service and Kyneton District Health have been operating with a shared CEO and a memorandum of understanding in place to enable the two health services to work in partnership to address the health needs of towns and communities across the region.

The proposal to join health services aims to combine the management and governance of the two organisations under one entity, pending Ministerial approval. Hospitals and facilities will remain in place in their current locations at Kyneton, Daylesford, Creswick, Clunes and Trentham. No local community will be disadvantaged. There will be no reduction in services, staffing or funding.

Communities are reassured that their local health service will continue to service local needs.

A due diligence analysis is also being undertaken to assess the clinical, governance, financial, human resource, technological and regulatory impacts of the proposal before any decision is made.

This proposal builds on and formalises the co-operative structure which has already been in place for the past two years, with the one CEO responsible for both health services. The last two years has given us an excellent trial run on co-operatively running the hospitals and facilities and the knowledge that it can be done efficiently without any loss of services, staff or funding. Should the proposal lead to a new structure, the key change will be the creation of a new Board. We would also expect that any financial efficiencies which result from an amalgamation would be available to improve or expand services for our clients and patients.

What are the benefits of joining services?

Joining health services will enable us to:

- Improve access to a range of health services and enhance quality of care.
- Share knowledge, skills, expertise and training of nursing, medical, allied health and other staff in the local area.
- Enhance opportunities for workforce and professional development.
- Improve operational effectiveness – over time this will allow us to invest more in patient/client care.
- Ensure future sustainability and addressing challenges such as: attracting and retaining staff and specialists; securing funding for new services; meeting changing patient needs/services; new legislative requirements; infrastructure; technology, etc.

Will we lose local hospitals, services and beds?

No.

- The aim is to improve service quality, access to care, and patient outcomes.
- Hospitals and facilities will remain in place in their current locations at Kyneton, Daylesford, Creswick, Clunes and Trentham. No local community will be disadvantaged.
- There will be no reduction in services, staffing or funding. Bed numbers will be maintained.

What are the impacts on staff. Will there be staff/job cuts? What will happen to entitlements? Will staff have to work at other locations?

- Staff are valued members of the organisation and community. Existing staff will all be part of the new entity.
- There will be no reduction in staff.
- There will be opportunities for career development.
- Staff will remain in their current location and may have the opportunity to work in other locations if they choose.
- Staff entitlements will remain in place.

What will happen to residential aged care services? Will patients/clients be moved to other facilities?

- Residential aged care facilities and services will remain in place. They will continue to provide care in their current locations.

What will happen to Commonwealth Home Service Package (CHSP) services?

- Commonwealth Home Service Package (CHSP) services will continue and will be subject to Commonwealth Aged Care Policy changes.

What will happen to Boards and Board Members?

- A new entity means that a new Board will be created.
- There is a state government policy around the appointment of Boards, and all board appointments are approved by the Minister. In any future combined Board, there will mainly be representatives from our combined communities.

What will happen to Finances? Would there be one budget? Will some communities/locations be better off? Will we lose donations?

- Existing and future donations and items will remain with each facility/location.
- The Board will consider the current financial reserves at each organisation and recommendations will focus on local priorities for each health service.

Why do we need to change, what would happen if we did nothing?

- Rural and regional hospitals face challenges such as: attracting and retaining staff and visiting medical officers and specialists; securing funding for new services; meeting changing patient needs/services; new legislative requirements; infrastructure; technology, etc.
- By working together and combining our resources and skills, we would have a stronger health system to meet current and future community needs and ensure ongoing sustainability.

Will staff and the community be consulted?

Consultation is taking place with staff and the community to gain feedback before any decision is made.

How can I find out more information?

Visit the Websites:

www.kynetonhealth.org.au

www.hhs.vic.gov.au