

Leading WA's health system renewal

In 2004, the Reid Report¹ set out a clear direction for the Western Australian public health system for the next decade and beyond. It determined how our hospitals and health services should be reconfigured to cater for the State's growing population and future demand for health services. Successive State governments have since committed to the most ambitious and widespread health reform program ever undertaken in Western Australia.

The South Metropolitan Area Health Service network

The changes to our hospital system will make it easier for people to access health care for a wider range of conditions closer to home. Under the current hospital system, there are four tertiary hospitals in the metropolitan area, two of which are located within five kilometres of each other. More than a quarter of residents in the southern metropolitan area often travel long distances north of the Swan River for tertiary care.

Fiona Stanley Hospital will be part of a broader network of hospitals across the South Metropolitan Area Health Service that will see more appropriate care provided closer to home and more efficient use of health resources.

When complete, the \$2 billion Fiona Stanley Hospital will be the major tertiary hospital in the south, and includes the Australian Government funded new State rehabilitation service. The hospital will offer comprehensive health care services to communities in the south of Perth and across Western Australia. People with the most serious illnesses and injuries will be treated at Fiona Stanley Hospital. The other, smaller, tertiary hospital in the South Metropolitan Area Health Service network will be Royal Perth Hospital.

Fiona Stanley Hospital will be supported by general and specialist hospitals that will provide for most of the health needs of the local community. The general hospitals in the network will be Armadale Kelmscott Memorial Hospital and Rockingham General Hospital (including Murray Districts Hospital). The specialist hospitals will be Fremantle Hospital and Bentley Hospital.

What is a tertiary hospital?

A tertiary hospital is a teaching and learning facility that provides specialised acute health care and offers highly specialised services. Tertiary hospitals usually deal with conditions that are rare, complex, unusually severe, or complicated by other disorders. Cutting-edge research is also usually undertaken at tertiary hospitals. Tertiary hospitals provide a leadership role for integrated clinical services. The State burns service and State rehabilitation service will be part of Fiona Stanley Hospital.

What is a general hospital?

A general hospital typically provides for most of the health needs of its population and includes an emergency department, 24-hour anaesthetic cover, high dependency units, general surgery capacity (including day surgery), obstetrics, general medical and geriatric services, general paediatrics, some rehabilitation and mental health services and a centre for diagnostics, treatment and ambulatory care.

What is a specialist hospital?

Specialist hospitals provide some general hospital services, but will mainly focus on mental health, aged care, rehabilitation services and elective surgery. Specialist hospitals may also undertake high numbers of less complex surgery which may be done on an outpatient or overnight basis. These hospitals do not have emergency departments.

¹ *A Healthy Future for Western Australians*, Report of the Health Reform committee, March 2004.



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