

Victorian Clinical Council

Communique from initial meeting
14 December 2016

The initial meeting of the Victorian Clinical Council was held on 14 December 2016. The purpose of this foundational meeting was to support the establishment of the Victorian Clinical Council in preparation for the first meeting of the full Council early in 2017.

The meeting considered the role of the Council as an important reform initiative that will enable clinicians and consumers to provide collective clinical leadership and strategic advice on the delivery of high quality health care in Victoria. We heard from the Minister for Health, the Hon Jill Hennessy MP, the Secretary to the Department of Health and Human Services (the Department), Ms Kym Peake, the Chief Executive Officer of Safer Care Victoria, Professor Euan Wallace, and the Deputy Secretary, Health Service Performance and Programs, Mr Terry Symonds. It was agreed that the Council provides an important and new opportunity for dialogue between the Department and practising clinicians from across Victoria.

It was agreed that the Council should take a 'whole system' approach including public and private, acute and primary care, and give particular consideration to the important interface between health and social care. It would have a bias towards system-level issues.

Suggested topics for future Victorian Clinical Council meetings included variation in care across Victoria, integration of care across different health settings, the role of outpatients in 21st century health care, how to improve the culture to ensure high reliability health care across Victoria, the opportunity of digital health, chronic disease management in the interface between primary and acute care, the translation of research into practice, the proposed new model for clinical networks in Safer Care Victoria, ensuring sustainable workforce models, addressing the social determinants of health, strengthening partnerships between clinicians and patients / carers, system design including referral relationships, and key opportunities for improvement in service delivery and how these could be incentivised and spread. These ideas will be explored and prioritised for 2017.

Associate Professor Christine Jorm from the University of Sydney presented her scoping paper on clinician engagement in the Victorian health care system, and a lively discussion followed. Effective clinician engagement is necessary for improvement to occur and be sustained. Currently clinician engagement across Victoria is highly variable, and there are opportunities to improve consistency and effectiveness.

Lead clinicians were calling for more opportunities to work on a statewide basis to improve care and outcomes. Victoria needs to: invest in skills, capabilities and opportunities to lead change; provide better patient outcomes data to inform and motivate clinician engagement; and facilitate clinician engagement by addressing barriers to participation.

A brief report on the meeting will be prepared and circulated out of session for approval by those present, before being presented at the first meeting of the full Council in early 2017.



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jill Sewell".

Associate Professor Jill Sewell AM
Chair, Victorian Clinical Council