



3. Significant Issues and Trends

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It is important that HaDSCO is adequately placed to respond to changing environments. By working with stakeholders, HaDSCO can identify and evaluate emerging issues, position the Office to respond to change, and adapt service delivery to meet the needs of the community now and into the future.

The Western Australian Sustainable Health Review (SHR) published its Final Report in April 2019. The Final Report has eight Enduring Strategies and 30 Recommendations which seek to drive a cultural and behavioural shift across the health system.

The release of the Interim and Final reports of the SHR, provided HaDSCO with the opportunity to review and refocus its services considering the specific Enduring Strategies and associated Recommendations of:

- Commit and collaborate to address major public health issues – reduce disparities in health outcomes and access to care, especially for Aboriginal people and culturally and linguistically diverse communities.
- Improve mental health outcomes – efforts focused on improving the patient journey and greater transparency of quality, safety, patient experience and outcomes.
- Person-centred, equitable, seamless access – focusing care on the needs of the individual, ensuring preferences, needs and values guide clinical decisions, and providing care that is respectful of and responsive to them.
- Culture and workforce to support new models of care – build workforce capability and behaviour with a focus on system integrity, transparency and public accountability.

HaDSCO continued to receive and resolve complaints about disability services, including services provided through the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS), during the transition period to the NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission in July 2020.

HaDSCO continues to consult with the Department of Communities and, through its membership of the NDIS Interface Steering Committee, established by the Department of the Premier and Cabinet, will work towards:

- Transition of the complaints jurisdiction to the NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission.
- Confirmation of ongoing complaint oversight arrangements for non NDIS participants.
- Confirmation of the future of the statutory reporting function under section 48A of the *Disability Services Act 1993* and the *Disability Services Regulations 2004*.





The Review of the Clinical Governance of Public Mental Health Services in Western Australia commenced in late 2018. HaDSCO met with members of the Review Panel during the consultation period and submitted a reference document. The document provided information about HaDSCO's role in contributing to the clinical governance framework for mental health services in Western Australia. Proposed initiatives were identified for future implementation. This included a project to prescribe mental health service providers to provide their external complaints data to the Director of HaDSCO each year under section 309 of the *Mental Health Act 2014*.

In December 2018, the Western Australian Government established a Ministerial Expert Panel (the Panel) to provide expert advice on the development of voluntary assisted dying legislation. The Panel released its *Ministerial Expert Panel on Voluntary Assisted Dying Discussion Paper* in March 2019. The Panel identified key questions and issues and sought input from experts and across the community. The discussion paper was part of a consultation process which took place from March to May this year.

As part of the consultation process, HaDSCO attended two Roundtable meetings convened by the Department of Health, as the lead agency on the development of the Voluntary Assisted Dying Bill. The first considered the oversight mechanisms in relation to the voluntary assisted dying process and the second focused on the disability sector, specifically on the topics of eligibility, access and safeguards.

HaDSCO is a member of the Independent Oversight Working Group (the Working Group) established by the Department of the Premier and Cabinet to address the recommendations on independent oversight of child related services as a result of the recommendations from the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse. Through the Working Group, HaDSCO will contribute to policy development being led by the Department of the Premier and Cabinet, who will provide advice to Government on options for an independent oversight system.

Progressing the implementation of the *National Code of Conduct for health care workers* (National Code) in Western Australia has been a key focus for HaDSCO. Timing for the implementation of the National Code in Western Australia is dependent on legislative change.

Reform initiatives in the health, disability and mental health sectors have impacted on commencing a review of the *Health and Disability Services (Complaints) Act 1995* and Part 6 of the *Disability Services Act 1993*. The review will occur as soon as practicable.

HaDSCO will continue to implement strategies to ensure its services are accessible to all Western Australians and people in the Indian Ocean Territories. As identified in HaDSCO's Stakeholder Engagement Strategy January 2019 – June 2020 there will be a key focus in the areas of Aboriginal communities; children and young people; and culturally and linguistically diverse communities.

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