



Summary Transforming healthcare for women and newborns

The Women's Strategic Plan 2016-2020



the women's
the royal women's hospital
victoria australia

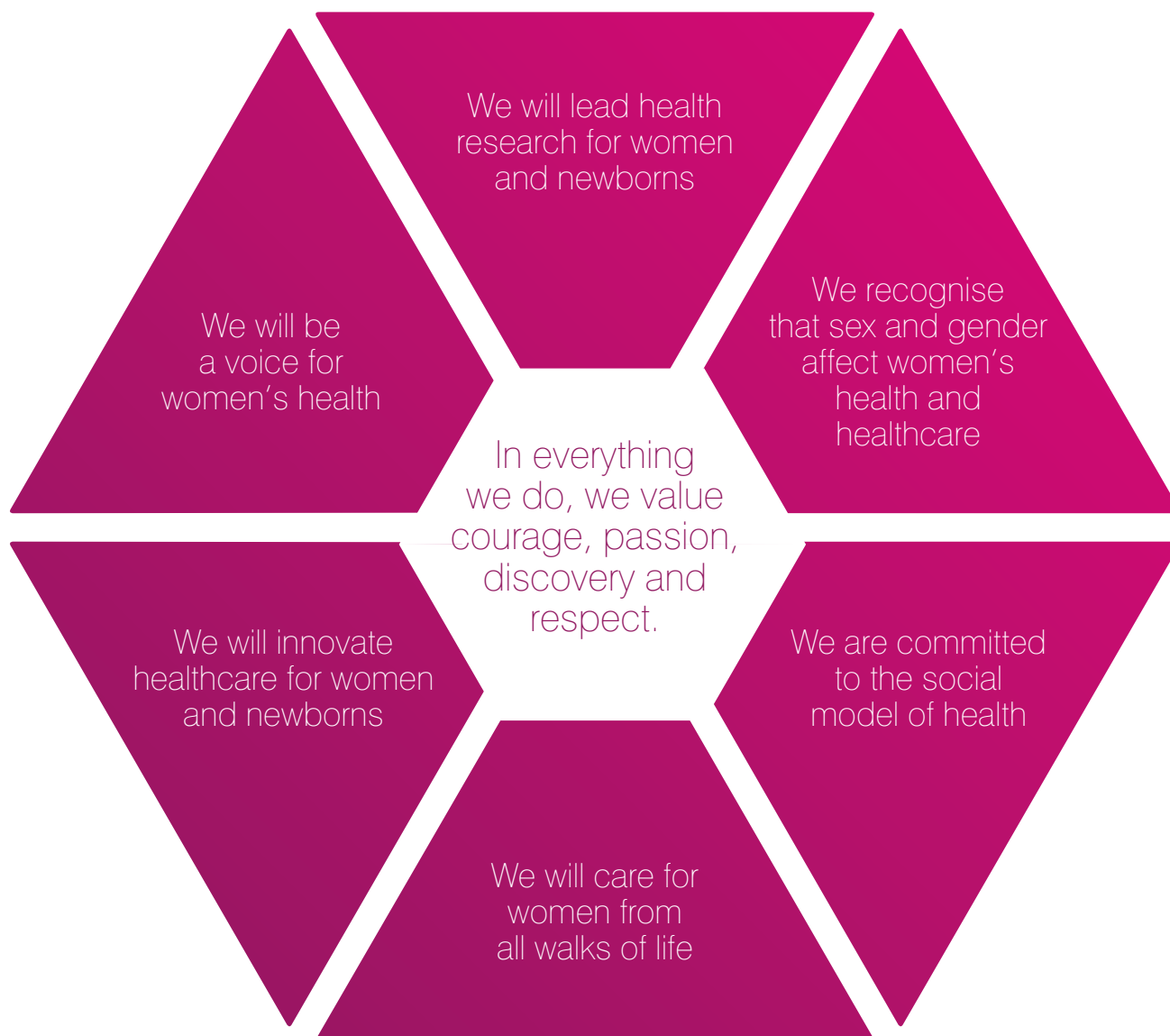
The Women's Declaration

For more than 160 years, the Women's has led the advocacy and advancement of women's health and wellbeing across Victoria and further afield.

Our origins as the first hospital in Australia for women who were pregnant, vulnerable and often destitute and our founders' commitment to evidence based medicine has created a proud legacy of excellence in care for the most disadvantaged in our community.

This culture has endured through more than a century of transformations in health and health care as well as major changes in the social, economic and legal status of women.

Our Declaration, which reflects the principles and philosophies fundamental to our hospital, captures the essence of who we are and what we do.



Our goal, strategic directions and areas of strategic focus

The Women's is committed to transforming healthcare for women and newborns. The goal of the Women's Strategic Plan 2016-2020 is that our patients and consumers are at the heart of everything we do. The strategic plan is made up of four strategic directions plus four areas of strategic focus. Together, these capture the breadth of our work across our clinical streams: maternity, neonatal, gynaecology and women's cancer and our associated services at Parkville and Sandringham.



The Royal Women's Hospital (the Women's), founded in Melbourne in 1856, is Australia's first and largest specialist public hospital dedicated to improving women's and newborn's health and wellbeing. The Women's is a tertiary hospital for women and newborns who require specialist care at our purpose built hospital in Parkville, as well as a local hospital for women and newborns in the surrounding communities. In October 2013 we became a multi-campus hospital, with the transfer of management of maternity and gynaecology services at Sandringham and District Hospital from Alfred Health. This step was taken to bring our specialist support to women living in the Bayside area of Melbourne.

The Women's Strategic Plan 2016-2020 captures the breadth of our work across our clinical streams - maternity, neonatal, gynaecology, and cancer - and our associated services at Parkville and Sandringham. Every year we care for women who come from 190 countries, speak 96 different languages and follow 70 different faiths. Our social model of health recognises that women need more than just clinical care. Through our multidisciplinary teams we provide a range of services and supports that takes account of a woman's family and social circumstances and other issues affecting her health, wellbeing and access to care.

Extensive consultations with our staff, community, stakeholders and leaders have informed the development of our strategies and areas of focus set out in this plan. Over the next five years this plan will guide the development of our services, inform new initiatives, activities and resource decisions, as well as re-orient and re-focus our approaches to our care. Building on our reputation as a high performing hospital in Victoria and a recognised leader in women's and newborn's health, our plan sets out our exciting vision for transforming healthcare for women and newborns.

Our Challenges and Opportunities

Analysis of projected population growth, demographic shifts and changes in our environment indicate that over the next five years, demand for our specialist services will grow beyond our current capacity (particularly for maternity at Parkville) as funding for public hospitals comes under increasing pressure. Rapid advances in technology and research will impact on our clinical practices and models of care, and we will care for more women and newborns with complex care needs. We will

see more women who expect choice, flexibility and active involvement in their healthcare and for services to be tailored to their individual and family needs. These factors will drive changes in our role and how we approach delivering our services and our care to women and newborns.

Our Plan

The Women's Strategic Plan positions us to respond to these challenges as well as embrace new opportunities as they arise over the next five years.

We will focus on developing our tertiary services and our specialist expertise, balanced with serving our local communities in the inner north and west suburbs of Melbourne and the Bayside area. We will develop new and innovative ways of delivering high quality and responsive healthcare to women and newborns. Our goal of putting our patients and consumers at the centre of everything we do will drive innovative and flexible approaches to providing our care and services as we strive to provide an exceptional experience of healthcare at the Women's.

As a state-wide leader in women's and newborn's health we will build capacity across the health system by partnering with other health services and sharing our expertise, skills, knowledge and research so that more women and newborns can access high quality healthcare closer to where they live. We will also look at options for increasing delivery of our services beyond the walls of the hospital so that women can access care in, or closer to home. Sandringham will set the standard in care for women and newborns at a community hospital.

Our commitment to reducing inequities in healthcare and our care for vulnerable and disadvantaged women and newborns has always been an important part of our leadership in the health system. We will continue to advocate and lead on sensitive

and important women's health issues including addressing violence against women as a health issue, and improving access to sexual and reproductive healthcare.

Our workforce is at the heart of the high quality care and services we provide. Building on our culture of a shared sense of purpose, compassion and commitment, we will invest in our staff through professional development, training and support, to deliver responsive person-centred services and care. We will refresh and revise our workforce strategy to ensure we maintain the supply of appropriately skilled professionals in all disciplines to deliver our core services, and to identify those skills required to deliver our new and emerging strategic priorities.

Our Strategic Goal: Our patients and consumers are at the heart of everything we do.

Over the next five years we will focus on our patients' and consumers' experiences of our care, our services and the physical environment in our hospitals. Seeing services through the eyes of our patients and consumers will set new standards for our care. By listening to and learning from our patients and consumers about what is important to them, we will improve our systems and processes, and provide more responsive person-centred services and care. This will include greater integration and coordination with ongoing providers of women's healthcare and support.

Our Strategic Directions

Our four strategic directions are pivotal to achieving our vision of transforming healthcare for women and newborns. They position us to anticipate and respond to our immediate challenges, as well as to embrace new opportunities and innovative ways of delivering high quality and responsive healthcare to more women and newborns over the longer term.

We will provide an exceptional patient and consumer experience that delivers improved health outcomes for women and newborns.

Our objective: Develop and embed a commitment to an exceptional patient and consumer experience in everything we do.

We will reorient our care and services with a greater focus on understanding the diverse expectations, needs and preferences of our patients and consumers. We want all women, along with their partners, families and carers to experience prompt and effective treatment, with continuity of care at referral points in and out of our services.

We will provide state-wide leadership in women's and newborns' healthcare.

Our objectives:

- Work in partnership with health services to build capacity across the health system so that women and newborns receive better healthcare closer to home
- Advocate and lead on best practice in women's and newborns' healthcare, with a focus on sensitive and complex health issues.

Taking a greater state-wide leadership role, we will share with other health services our expertise in specialist maternity, neonatal, gynaecology and women's cancer care, and be a more assertive voice for women's health on sensitive and complex issues. We will explore innovative approaches to sharing our expertise across the health system, including the use of technology and we will review our models of care to identify services that could be better delivered in a community setting. We will work collaboratively with governments to inform health policy.

Our research, knowledge translation and innovation will lead and drive better health outcomes for women and newborns.

Our objective: Strengthen our research, knowledge translation and innovation to improve the health outcomes of women and babies.

We will strengthen our systems and processes to support research and accelerate translation of evidence into our clinical practice and models of care. We will encourage and facilitate innovation, taking advantage of opportunities in the Parkville precinct, and beyond, to extend our partnerships and promote our expertise.

We will invest in our people and our systems to meet the changing needs of our patients and consumers.

Our objectives:

- Develop, empower and support staff to deliver an exceptional patient and consumer experience
- Strengthen the capacity of our IT systems and processes to deliver a seamless patient experience and improved decision support for clinicians
- Improve our financial stability and long-term sustainability.

We will train and develop our staff to deliver an exceptional patient and consumer experience. We will invest in improving our systems and processes so that our patients and consumers enjoy seamless access, continuity of care, and a great customer experience of our services. We will identify opportunities for continuous improvement and efficiency, as well as innovative ways of raising revenue to invest in our priorities and services.

Our Areas of Strategic Focus

We have a proud legacy of advocacy and leadership on a range of sensitive, complex and challenging women's health issues. Through our consultations in developing this plan, our peers and partners in the health sector thought we could strengthen our role and raise our profile in the areas of violence against women, mental health, and responding to the healthcare needs of young women and women in midlife and later years.

Violence against women: we will take the lead in addressing violence against women as a health issue.

We will continue to advocate and lead on the role of hospitals in responding to violence against women as a health issue. We will partner with the family violence sector to improve our services and our programs and to build capacity in other hospitals to provide sensitive and appropriate responses to women experiencing violence.

Young women: we will strengthen our approach to improving the health and wellbeing of young women with a focus on diverse and disadvantaged communities at a local and state-wide level.

We will be a champion for young women's health, strengthening our local and state-wide role through partnerships, to address inequities in healthcare for young women. We will maintain our leadership role in sexual and reproductive health and maternity care for young women. We want young women to have an active voice in our hospital and in their care, and to have access to up to date and accessible health information so they can make informed choices about their health and wellbeing.

Mental health: we will enhance and innovate our mental health care for women and newborns who are patients of the Women's.

Recognising the importance of taking a prevention and early intervention approach to mental health, we will continue to integrate mental health into our clinical care for women, families and newborns and strengthen our expertise in infant-parent attachment and infant mental health and development.

Women in mid life and later years: we will develop best practice models of care that meet the needs of women in mid life and later years.

Providing specialist healthcare to women in mid life and later years is an important part of our role. As the baby boomer generation accesses the health system in greater numbers, we can expect to see more women in mid life and later years seeking health information and care on a range of issues, including breast and gynaecological cancers, chronic pelvic pain, menopause, incontinence and sexual assault support. We will develop best practice models of care and strengthen our partnerships and collaborations to meet the health and wellbeing needs of women in mid life and older.

Conclusion

Our strategic plan has been developed in a dynamic and evolving policy environment. We are confident that it is flexible enough to enable us to respond and adapt to shifts and changes as they emerge. Our experienced and dedicated Board are committed to meeting the highest standards of governance. With support from subcommittees, the Board will work closely with management to provide the stewardship necessary to accomplish the objectives of this strategic plan.