

SHI Board Communiqué – December 2023

The SHI Board met on 5th of December 2023 and discussed the following matters:

Board Chair – topics for discussion

- The CEO opened the meeting and welcomed the new President and Board Chair, Dr Edward Upjohn, together with new Board members A/Professor Peter Foley, Dr Flora Poon, and Dr Sarah Smithson.
- Dr Upjohn addressed the Board and briefly outlined his priorities and focus on ensuring the Institute thrives.
- The Board noted A/Prof Rosemary Nixon was in attendance to support transition and acknowledged her outstanding leadership as SHI President over the past four years.
- The Board noted Mr Hamish Walton's resignation from the Board due to work commitments and thanked him for his expert guidance and contributions to the Institute.

Practice Modernisation Project

- The Board received an interim presentation from Mr James Foxall of Evolve Health Digital, on the review of SHI's clinical services operations currently underway. The presentation focused on insights gathered from information and data captured to date, and preliminary observations regarding digital capabilities and patient journey mapping.
- It was noted that a comprehensive final report, including recommendations, would be presented to the Board in February 2024.

Board subcommittees

- The Board ratified membership and chairing arrangements for the FARM (Finance Audit & Risk Management), and Governance Board subcommittees in 2024.

Registrars

- The Board discussed operational challenges with respect to the Victorian registrar roster, noting the unavailability of registrars was at times causing clinics and surgery lists to be capped or cancelled.
- The Board expressed its support for registrar education, noting the unique training opportunities available through SHI subspecialty clinics and surgery lists. The Board also discussed the impact of rural out-reach clinics on registrar travel requirements, and expressed strong support for efforts to improve registrar welfare.
- The Institute's Medical Director, A/Professor Patrick Mahar, briefed the Board on consultant retention and clinical governance risks associated with registrar availability.
- The Board strongly supported SHI continuing to work with the Victorian Faculty of the ACD to better align registrar rosters with the Institute's clinical activity. Increasing the on-site presence of the Institute's home registrars is also a key priority.

Operational updates

- The Board received a progress report on the Financial Sustainability Plan, and reaffirmed the plan would continue to serve as the primary strategic framework for the Institute at this time. The Board noted ongoing priorities and activities to improve financial performance.
- The CEO briefed the Board on the recent regulatory inspection from the Department of Health (Victoria), including matters relating to the credentialling of visiting clinicians and the potential registration of recovery beds/chairs.
- The Board noted the relatively low facility fees for surgery paid by Medibank Private and supported the introduction of facility gap fees for Medibank and ahm members from January 2024.
- The Board discussed the Institute's involvement in the VECTRA/ACEMID study.
- A number of new SHI membership applications were approved by the Board.

Sub-committee reports – Finance, Audit and Risk Management committee

- The FARM chair, Mr Jim Power, briefed the Board on YTD performance compared to budget.

Approved by Dr Edward Upjohn, Chair of the SHI Board