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## CORPORATE GOVERNANCE ATTESTATION STATEMENT BUREAU OF HEALTH INFORMATION

The following corporate governance attestation statement was reviewed by the Audit and Risk Management Committee and endorsed by a resolution of the Bureau of Health Information (BHI) Board at its meeting on 20 July 2023.

The Board is responsible for the corporate governance practices of the Bureau of Health Information. This statement sets out the main corporate governance practices in operation within the entity for the 2022-23 financial year.

A signed copy of this statement is provided to the Ministry of Health by 31 August 2023.

Signed:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Carol Pollock".

Professor Carol Pollock AO  
Chair

8 August 2023  
Date

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Diane Watson".

Dr Diane Watson  
Chief Executive

4 August 2023  
Date

## STANDARD 1: ESTABLISH ROBUST GOVERNANCE AND OVERSIGHT FRAMEWORKS

### Role and function of the Board

The Board carries out their functions, responsibilities and obligations in accordance with the *Health Services Act 1997*, *Government Sector Employment Act 2013*, and the determination of function for the entity as approved by the Minister for Health.

The Board has in place practices that ensure that the primary governing responsibilities of the Board are fulfilled in relation to the following standards:

- Ensuring corporate governance responsibilities are clearly allocated and understood
- Setting the strategic direction for the entity and its services
- Monitoring financial and service delivery performance
- Maintaining high standards of professional and ethical conduct
- Involving stakeholders in decisions that affect them
- Establishing sound audit and risk management practices.

### Board Meetings

For the 2022-23 financial year the Board consisted of a Chair and four members appointed by the Minister for Health, and the fifth member being the Chief Executive is an ex-officio member.

The following Board members concluded their tenure during the period:

- Professor Adam Elshaug on 31 August 2022
- Mr Ian Gillespie on 30 April 2023

A new appointment made by the Minister is as follows:

- Mr Robert Lagaida from 15 March 2023

The Board held five meetings during this period and meeting attendance is summarised below.

Board Member	28/07/2022	27/10/2022	02/12/2022	16/03/2023	18/05/2023
Professor Carol Pollock (Chair)	√	√	√	√	√
Mr Ian Gillespie	√	√	√	√	n/a
Mr Robert Lagaida				√	√
Professor Adam Elshaug	√	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Ms Katherine Boiciuc	x	√	√	√	√
Dr Karen Luxford	√	√	√	√	√
Professor Sallie Pearson	x	√	√	√	√
Dr Diane Watson (ex officio as Chief Executive)	√	√	√	√	√

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### **Authority and role of senior management**

All financial and administrative authorities that have been delegated by a formal resolution of the Board and are formally documented within a Delegations Manual for the Entity.

The roles and responsibilities of the Chief Executive and other senior management within BHI are also documented in written position descriptions.

### **Regulatory responsibilities and compliance**

The Board is responsible for and has mechanisms in place to ensure that relevant legislation and regulations are adhered to across the organisation, including statutory reporting requirements.

The Board also has a mechanism in place to gain reasonable assurance that BHI complies with the requirements of all relevant government policies and NSW Health policy directives and policy and procedure manuals as issued by the Ministry of Health.

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**STANDARD 2: ENSURING CLINICAL RESPONSIBILITIES ARE CLEARLY ALLOCATED AND UNDERSTOOD**

The Bureau of Health Information does not provide clinical services.

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### **STANDARD 3: SETTING THE STRATEGIC DIRECTION FOR THE ENTITY AND ITS SERVICES**

The Board has in place strategic plans for the effective planning and delivery of its services to the communities and individuals served by the Entity. This process includes setting a strategic direction in a 3- to 5-year strategic plan for both the Entity and the services it provides within the overarching goals of the 2022/23 NSW Health Strategic Priorities.

Entity-wide planning processes and documentation is also in place, covering:

- Detailed plans linked to the Strategic Plan for the following:
  - Reports and Surveys
  - Information management and technology – including data governance and digital strategy implementation
  - Workforce management – through a Workforce Action Plan focused on supporting and developing our workforce
- Corporate Governance Plan
- Aboriginal Employment and Culture Safety Plan 2023-26

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## **STANDARD 4: MONITORING FINANCIAL AND SERVICE DELIVERY PERFORMANCE**

### **Role of the Board in relation to financial management and service delivery**

The Board is responsible for ensuring compliance with the NSW Health Accounts and Audit Determination and the annual Ministry of Health budget allocation advice.

The Board is also responsible for ensuring that the financial and performance reports it receives and those submitted to the Finance and Performance Committee and the Ministry of Health are accurate and that relevant internal controls for the Entity are in place.

To this end, the Board certifies that:

- The financial reports submitted to the Finance & Performance Committee and the Ministry of Health represent a true and fair view, in all material respects, of the Entity's financial condition and the operational results are in accordance with the relevant accounting standards
- The recurrent budget allocations in the Ministry of Health's financial year advice reconcile to those allocations distributed to units and cost centres.
- Overall financial performance is monitored and reported to the Finance and Performance Committee of the entity.
- Information reported in the Ministry of Health monthly reports reconciles to and is consistent with reports to the Finance and Performance Committee.
- All relevant financial controls are in place.
- Write-offs of debtors have been approved by duly authorised delegated officers.

### **Service and Performance**

A written Performance Agreement was in place during the financial year between the Board and the Secretary, NSW Health, and the Board is aware there is a performance agreement between the Chair and the Chief Executive which incorporates advice from all Board members. In turn, the Chief Executive has performance agreements between herself and her senior management team.

The Board has mechanisms in place to monitor the progress of matters contained within the Performance Agreement and to regularly review performance against agreements between the Board and the Chief Executive.

### **The Finance and Performance Committee**

The Board has established a Finance and Performance Committee to assist the Board and the Chief Executive to ensure that the operating funds, capital works funds, resource utilisation and service outputs required of the entity are being managed in an appropriate and efficient manner.

The Finance and Performance Committee receives monthly reports that include:

- Financial performance of each major cost centre
- Subsidy availability
- The position of Restricted Financial Asset and Trust Funds
- Activity performance against indicators and targets in the performance agreement for the entity
- Advice on the achievement of strategic priorities identified in the performance agreement for the entity
- Year to date and end of year projections on capital works and private sector initiatives.

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Letters to management from the Auditor-General, Minister for Health, and the NSW Ministry of Health relating to significant financial and performance matters, are also tabled at the Finance and Performance Committee.

During the 2022-23 financial year, the Finance and Performance Committee comprised of:

- Mr Ian Gillespie, Chair (to 30 April 2023)
- Mr Robert Lagaida, Chair (from 1 May 2023)
- Professor Adam Elshaug (to 31 August 2022)
- Professor Sallie Pearson

The Chief Executive and Director of Finance attended all meetings of the Finance and Performance Committee except where on approved leave.

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## **STANDARD 5: MAINTAINING HIGH STANDARDS OF PROFESSIONAL AND ETHICAL CONDUCT**

BHI has adopted the NSW Health Code of Conduct to guide all staff and contractors in professional conduct and ethical behaviour.

The Code of Conduct is distributed to, and signed by, all new staff and is included on the agenda of all staff induction programs. The Board has systems and processes in place to ensure the Code is periodically reinforced for all existing staff. Ethics education is also part of the entity's learning and development strategy.

BHI has implemented models of good practice that provide culturally safe work environments and health services through a continuous quality improvement model.

There are systems and processes in place and staff are aware of their obligations to protect vulnerable patients and clients – for example, children and those with a mental illness.

The Chief Executive, as the Principal Officer, has reported all instances of corruption to the Independent Commission Against Corruption where there was a reasonable suspicion that corrupt conduct had, or may have, occurred, and provided a copy of those reports to the Ministry of Health.

During the 2022-23 financial year, there were no cases to the Independent Commission Against Corruption.

Policies and procedures are in place to facilitate the reporting and management of public interest disclosures within the entity in accordance with state policy and legislation, including establishing reporting channels and evaluating the management of disclosures.

During the 2022-23 financial year, there were no public interest disclosures.

The Board attests that BHI has a fraud and corruption prevention program in place.



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## STANDARD 6: INVOLVING STAKEHOLDERS IN DECISIONS THAT AFFECT THEM

The Board is responsible for ensuring that the rights and interests of BHI's key stakeholders are incorporated into the plans of the entity and that they are provided access to balanced and understandable information about the entity and its proposals.

During the development of its policies, programs and strategies, the Entity considered the potential impacts on the health of Aboriginal people and, where appropriate, engaged with Aboriginal stakeholders to identify both positive and negative impacts and to address or mitigate any negative impacts for Aboriginal people.

Information on the key policies, plans and initiatives of the Entity and information on how to participate in their development are available to staff and to the public at [www.bhi.nsw.gov.au](http://www.bhi.nsw.gov.au).

The Entity has the following in place:

- A stakeholder engagement plan to facilitate broad input into the strategic policies and plans.
- Extensive pre-release strategies with proper timing of various stakeholders so that they are informed and prepared to respond to media about their area(s) of responsibility.
- Mechanisms to ensure engagement of relevant stakeholders or representatives in relation to report on special topics, such as Aboriginal people or culturally and linguistically diverse communities.
- Workforce Action Plan to recognise and respect workforce diversity.
- Mechanisms to ensure privacy of personal and health information.
- An effective complaint management system.

## STANDARD 7: ESTABLISHING SOUND AUDIT AND RISK MANAGEMENT PRACTICES

### Role of the Board in relation to audit and risk management

The Board is responsible for supervising and monitoring risk management by the Entity and its facilities and units, including the system of internal control. The Board receives and considers all reports of the External and Internal Auditors for the Entity, and through the Audit and Risk Management Committee ensures that audit recommendations and recommendations from related external review bodies are implemented.

BHI has a current Risk Management Plan that identifies how risks are managed, recorded, monitored and addressed. It includes processes to escalate and report on risk to the Chief Executive, Audit and Risk Committee and Board.

The Plan covers all known risk areas including:

- Leadership and management
- Health of population
- Finance (including fraud prevention)
- Communication and information
- Workforce
- Legal
- Work health and safety
- Environmental
- Security
- Facilities and assets
- Emergency management
- Community expectations

### Audit and Risk Management Committee

The Board has established an Audit and Risk Management Committee, with the following core responsibilities:

- to assess and enhance the entity's corporate governance, including its systems of internal control, ethical conduct and probity, risk management, management information and internal audit
- to ensure that appropriate procedures and controls are in place to provide reliability in the BHI's financial reporting, safeguarding of assets, and compliance with BHI's responsibilities, regulatory requirements, policies and procedures
- to oversee and enhance the quality and effectiveness of BHI's internal audit function, providing a structured reporting line for the Internal Auditor and facilitating the maintenance of their independence
- through the internal audit function, to assist the Board to deliver BHI's outputs efficiently, effectively and economically, so as to obtain best value for money and to optimise organisational performance in terms of quality, quantity and timeliness; and
- to maintain a strong and candid relationship with external auditors, facilitating to the extent practicable, an integrated internal/external audit process that optimises benefits to BHI.

BHI completed and submitted an Internal Audit and Risk Management Attestation Statement for the 12-month period ending 30 June 2023 to the Ministry without exception.

The Audit and Risk Management Committee comprises of two independent members and a third member who is a Board Observer. All three members are appointed from the NSW Government's Prequalification Scheme for Audit and Risk Committee Independent Chairs and Members.

During the 2022-23 year, the ARMC met on five occasions, and there was a change in membership. The membership was comprised as follows:

- Julie Newman PSC, Independent Member (to 14 March 2023), Independent Chair (from 15 March 2023)
- Mr Robert Lagaida PSC, Independent Chair (to 14 March 2023)
- Mr Ian Gillespie, Board Observer (to 30 April 2023)
- Mr Henry Capra, Independent Member (from 1 February 2023)