

Feedback on “A review of hospital safety and quality assurance in Victoria” discussion paper.

Introduction

Thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback on the discussion paper and review of “hospital safety and quality assurance in Victoria.”

The Lorne Community Hospital Board of Management (“LCH”) believes this is a valuable opportunity to review and refine this critical aspect of our health services.

Involvement to date

LCH provided Board and Executive representation at the review forum on 18 March and tabled the discussion paper and themes from the review at a LCH Board meeting on 23rd March.

General supported themes from consultation

Throughout the consultation process there have been some recurring themes which LCH endorses and supports. These themes include;

1. Clinical governance frameworks should be able to be tailored to small services.

LCH has in-place a robust system of clinical governance based on a strong workforce culture and a strategic approach led by the Board of Management. A clearly articulated ‘Governance plan for safety and quality’ outlines what is measured, how and by whom, and where it is reported. Measurement and evaluation is conducted both internally and externally. There is an executive culture of transparency and partnership with the board in relation to risk, quality and safety.

Recommendation; where there are frameworks provided they need to be suitable to be tailored to a range of service sizes.

2. Expertise should be available and accessible. LCH supports creating greater accessibility of clinical governance expertise. The regular reviews that we conduct of the systems and processes for clinical governance ensure that the health service remains contemporary in its approach. However, the current limited availability of a ‘Director of Medical Services’ resource is problematic and needs to be addressed a systems level.

Recommendation; to take a system-wide approach to improving the availability of clinical governance expertise.

At the review forum on 18 March a question was raised regarding regional and rural health services supporting each other. Barwon South West, including LCH has been a clear leader in creating a regional strategy approach to achieving this through the CEO council structure. This type of collaboration should be supported and encouraged.