

# Eastern Melbourne Primary Health Network Strategic Plan

2020–2025

May 2023 update



Eastern Melbourne Primary Health Network's (EMPHN) Strategic Plan outlines our strategic priorities, transformative strategies, indicators, targets and outcomes we aim to achieve between 2020 and 2025.

# Message from our Chair and CEO

Our Strategic Plan 2020-2025 is an ambitious plan to transform the primary health care sector in eastern and north-eastern Melbourne. We have expanded our strategic agenda to include Aged Care and incorporated new measures and targets to achieve our goals in a post-COVID world. Together with our partners, we have developed a strategic agenda to achieve four main goals:

- Improve the health and care experience for people with multiple chronic conditions and/or significant mental health problems.
- Create a primary care system that delivers person-centred, team-based, holistic, comprehensive and effective care.
- Deploy digital health and other technologies to enhance care, support evidence-informed decision-making, increase self-management and monitoring capabilities, and to improve communications.
- Work with partners to create a true system with unity of purpose and focused on person-centred care.

It is widely acknowledged that primary care is poorly designed to meet the needs of people in the most precarious health circumstances, as outlined in the recently released *Strengthening Medicare Taskforce Report*. The more complex the needs, the greater the risk of gaps in services, poor communication among providers, and delays in care. The system aspires to being person-centred but the design is anything but.

None of this is new. There have been calls for transformation, particularly in primary care, in Australia and internationally for decades. Healthcare systems are large and complex. They are difficult to change, even when there is consensus they need to. There are indeed pockets of innovation, and incremental improvement is the natural

state of health care evolution. But incremental change is no longer adequate. Too many people are ill-served and too many resources are deployed ineffectively. The call for transformation is not idle rhetoric; it is a suitable response to the reality of an ageing population and a great deal of avoidable health breakdown.

EMPHN can be an advocate for, and a catalyst of change. On our own we have limited capacity to create a truly integrated, comprehensive, and consumer-focused primary healthcare system. We will realise our ambitions only to the extent that we are able to inspire, motivate, and mobilise a broad array of partners to work together as one system.

At the core is primary care. A redesigned and reinvigorated primary care system holds the key to the wellbeing of people with high needs and the sustainability of the broader health care system.

By transformation we mean an unprecedented pace, scope and scale of change. To be transformed is to be unrecognisable from the original state. It cannot be achieved with business as usual. If we pursue transformation as we always have, we will fall short. We need to change how we work if the system is to change how it works. Transformation is a collective enterprise dedicated to making the changes required at all levels to convert rhetorical aspiration into concrete achievement.

Transformative change is complex and we are building a coalition to achieve the aspirational level of change required, as we cannot do it alone. In addition, co-design is the fundamental principle for successful transformation.

As one of 31 Primary Health Networks Australia-wide we have the opportunity to demonstrate how a transformative agenda can bring about real change to people's health, healthcare experiences, and the healthcare system.

Dr Stephen Duckett  
EMPHN Chair



Janine Wilson  
EMPHN CEO



# About us

EMPHN is a Primary Health Network largely funded by the Australian Government to improve the care and support people receive from health services. We aim to improve the health of our community by ensuring people receive the right care, in the right place, at the right time.

## What we do

### Commissioning

By working closely with health professionals, consumers and carers and using health related data, we identify emerging community needs and gaps in the health care system. We develop our commissioning plans informed by our stakeholder engagement and the best evidence available. Increasingly, we are 'co-commissioning' – working with partner organisations to develop new services that address these needs and gaps, which we commission together. In all our work we are contributing to the evidence about what works to improve health experiences and outcomes.

### Supporting general practice

We support general practices with quality improvement, whether that be through professional development, providing practices with summary data reports, or helping practices become future-ready.

## Digital health

We use technology to make the broader health system work more efficiently. This includes implementing electronic referral systems, supporting the rollout of My Health Record, and providing and developing resources, such as HealthPathways Melbourne for practitioners to use.

## Health priorities

We invest in a range of initiatives to make a difference in our priority areas including:

- Aged and palliative care
- Chronic disease
- Mental health
- Alcohol and other drugs
- Digital health
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health
- Immunisation
- General practice support.

## EMPHN's values



# Our community

Our community of almost 1.62 million people in Melbourne's east and north-east represents 24 per cent of the Victorian population, covering from the inner-eastern suburbs of Melbourne, to the Yarra Valley in the east, and semi-rural communities as far north as Kinglake.



**These LGAs are entirely within EMPHN's catchment:**

- City of Banyule
- City of Boroondara
- City of Knox
- City of Manningham
- City of Maroondah
- City of Monash
- Shire of Nillumbik
- City of Whitehorse
- City of Whittlesea

**EMPHN's catchment also covers part of:**

- Shire of Mitchell (35% of population)
- Shire of Murrundindi (27% of population)
- Shire of Yarra Ranges (portion which falls outside the EMPHN catchment is largely uninhabited national park)

# Understanding our Strategic Plan

Our Strategic Plan (on the next page) provides our clearly articulated strategy for achieving our vision under our five strategic priorities:

1. Addressing health gaps and inequalities
2. Enhancing primary care
3. Leveraging digital health, data and technology
4. Partners working as a single service system
5. A high performing organisation

Under each strategic priority are transformative strategies to achieve the strategic priorities.

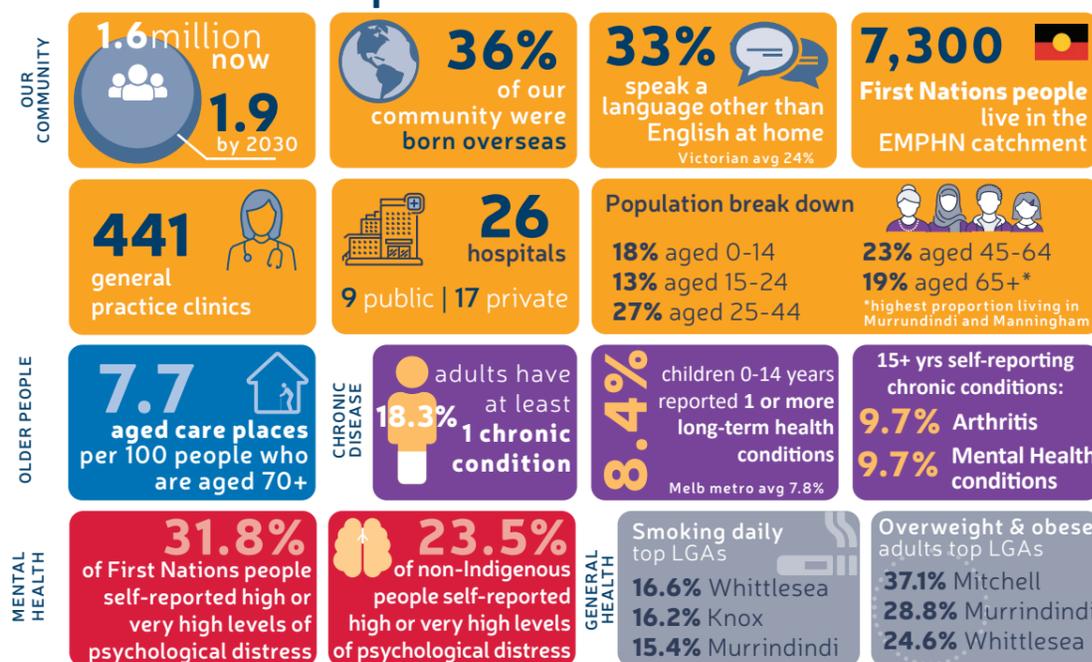
Linked to each transformative strategy is an indicator to track performance on important measures that reflect the joint ambitions of EMPHN and our partners, and a target to aim towards between now and 2025.

The outcomes demonstrate the value to people using our healthcare system and our healthcare system as a whole, by achieving transformational change.

By deliberately setting an aspirational agenda, we recognise we may not achieve all of our targets. If transformation is the goal, targets must be ambitious and not achieving them yet is not (necessarily) failure.

Following the global pandemic and with new responsibilities in the delivery of services in Aged Care, EMPHN has revised its strategic measures and targets for the upcoming period leading to 2025. These revised measures and targets will serve as a new guiding principle for the organisation to pursue as it prepares to develop a fresh strategic plan for the period of 2025 to 2029.

## Health snapshot



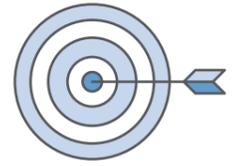
### Our community's hotspots

EMPHN has a very mixed catchment. Interspersed among some suburbs of high affluence are hot spots of very high need that require a focused response such as:

- Pockets of entrenched socioeconomic disadvantage including West Heidelberg and parts of Knox
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities in Whittlesea-Wallan, Yarra Ranges, Knox and Banyule
- Concentrations of non-English speaking groups in the inner-east, particularly Monash
- Lag in access to services in the rapidly expanding northern growth corridor of Whittlesea-Wallan and the Yarra Ranges in the outer-east
- High numbers of older persons in the inner-east.



# Strategic Plan 2020-2025



## Our Mission

With our partners, we facilitate health system improvement for people in eastern and north eastern Melbourne.

### TRANSFORMATIVE STRATEGY

- Listen to the consumer voice and design new aged care, mental health and chronic disease management approaches that are truly person-centred.

### INDICATOR

Consumers with mental health, AOD, aged care or chronic disease concerns experience care that meets their needs and supports recovery.

### OUTCOMES

- Improved access to the right care, in the right place, at the right time, particularly for at-risk and vulnerable groups.
- More effective care for people with chronic complex diseases and those at risk of poor health outcomes.

### TRANSFORMATIVE STRATEGY

- Build a positive culture of high performance.

### INDICATORS

- Continuous year-on-year improvement in organisational culture.
- External recognition of a high performing PHN.

### OUTCOMES

- EMPHN is recognised and highly valued by funders, partners and our community.
- A healthy, highly skilled and sustainable organisation.
- Accountable governance and effective stewardship of commissioned funds and contracts.
- Our business systems, processes and infrastructure enable highly effective ways of working together.

### TRANSFORMATIVE STRATEGIES

- Support and encourage primary care to adopt collaborative interdisciplinary care approaches that are person-centred
- Increased use of practice-based evidence.

### INDICATORS

- Consumers report improved experience with their convenient, multidisciplinary, coordinated care.
- Tier 1 and 2 general practices participating in PHN-led, data informed quality improvement.

### OUTCOMES

- Primary care providers deliver person-centred integrated services.
- Primary care providers deliver timely, high quality and safe health care.

**OUR VISION**  
Better health outcomes  
Better health experiences  
An integrated health care system

Addressing health gaps and inequalities

A high performing organisation

Enhancing primary care

Partners working as a single service system

Leveraging digital health, data and technology

### TRANSFORMATIVE STRATEGY

- Ensure commissioning and system change strategies encourage integration from a consumer perspective.

### INDICATORS

- No. of significant demonstration projects with pooled Commonwealth and State funding.
- Increase in practices participating in a integrated care network.

### OUTCOMES

- Joint planning and co-ordinated investment results in better integrated, person-centred, service delivery.
- Service system improvement occurs through co-design processes that are person-centred, clinician-led and provider informed.
- Strategic commissioning delivers better outcomes for people and an improved service system.

### TRANSFORMATIVE STRATEGY

- Encourage health information continuity between providers.

### INDICATOR

- Leveraging data and technology to inform service design and enhancing digital health capability in delivery of health services.

### OUTCOMES

- Health data, economic analysis, planning and evaluation drives impactful service and system development.
- Improved use of data and technology to support providers in delivering high quality co-ordinated care, and people in managing their own health.

# Acknowledgements

Eastern Melbourne PHN acknowledges the Wurundjeri people and other people of the Kulin Nations on whose unceded lands our work in the community takes place. We pay our respect to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures; and to Elders past and present. EMPHN is committed to the healing of country, working towards equity in health outcomes, and the ongoing journey of reconciliation.

We recognise and value the knowledge and wisdom of people with lived experience, their supporters and the practitioners who work with them. We celebrate their strengths and resilience in facing the challenges associated with their recovery and acknowledge the important contribution that they make to the development and delivery of health and community services.



## Australian Government

The Australian Government is the principal funding body for Primary Health Networks.

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