



Culture Connect

Welcome to Culture Connect – keeping you updated and informed about the Culture Review Implementation across the ACT public health system.

Message from the Minister

During the May Culture Review Oversight Group, we strengthened our focus on thriving workplaces.

A new vision for the Group was identified: Building a better health system through organisational reform that respects our workforce, our patients and the community.

Three new working groups have been established to provide focus and draw on the extensive expertise within the group. Together, we're committed to tackling culture reform with a workplace that brings out the best in everyone.



Minister for Health
Rachel Stephen-Smith

The nurses and midwives making a positive impact

For clinical nurse manager Kirsty Cummin, being named 2021 ACT Nurse of the Year came after a significant 18 months. From opening the Weston Creek nurse-led walk-in centre, to transforming it into a dedicated COVID-19 testing centre. Throw in a stint working in hotel quarantine, and it's easy to see how she was recognised for her caring and person-centred approach.

But for Kirsty, winning the award is acknowledgement of her entire team's efforts, where every action counts - something heightened during the pandemic.

“What COVID proved is that we care for the people that come to our service, but we also care for each other. And I think that's a culture that we've tried to foster.”



The annual ACT Nurses and Midwives Excellence Awards celebrate the contribution of nurses and midwives to the health and wellbeing of the Canberra community. For a full list of the 2021 winners, visit www.health.act.gov.au/NMAwards



A focus on culture for new DG

In April, the Health Directorate welcomed Rebecca Cross as Director-General. And in her first DG All Staff Forum, she took the opportunity to outline the vital role culture plays within an organisation.

“Culture is absolutely crucial, Rebecca said.”

“Whether that's access to good training and development or career opportunities. Or if it's flexible working, or simply being recognised and appreciated for the work that we do. I think if we can get those things right, then people will love working here and we will achieve great things together.”

Culture in action

Across the system, there's some great work happening on the ground. In this issue, we focus on some of the training initiatives underway to support a thriving culture.

Speaking up for Safety Update

Our last issue featured the roll-out of the Speaking Up for Safety (SUFS) initiative across Canberra Health Services (CHS) and Calvary Public Hospital Bruce (CPHB).

Focused on empowering staff to support each other and raise concerns of patient safety, over 1000 staff from CHS have attended an SUFS workshop. Here's what one of the participants had to say:

“I really liked the promotion that ‘someone has got your back’. We are in this together and want to get it right.”

And at CPHB, 75 training workshops have been conducted with over 700 staff trained. The initiative has also been integrated into CPHB's employee orientation for new staff members.

Building a culture of respect in surgery

The Royal Australasian College of Surgeons (RACS) recently released the 2020 progress report on its Action Plan: Building Respect, Improving Patient Safety.

Since its 2015 launch, more than 8,000 Fellows, Trainees and SIMGs have completed training that raises awareness and understanding of discrimination, bullying and sexual harassment in surgery. This includes the Operating with Respect (OWR) course, which gives surgeons the skills they need to create a safer and more respectful workplace.

Comprising an e-learning module and face-to-face course, 92 per cent of ACT based surgeons who are mandatorily required to complete the course have. And a total of 46 per cent of all ACT based surgeons have completed OWR. Five delegates are registered for the mid-July OWR course.

And to complement the course, RACS has also developed the Speak Up app. For more information visit www.surgeons.org/about-racs/about-respect

Interprofessional Health Challenge

This year, 36 final year allied health, medicine and nursing students from the Australian National University (ANU) Medical School and the University of Canberra united for the Together in Health Canberra Interprofessional Health Challenge.

A collaboration between the University of Canberra, ANU and Canberra Health Services (CHS), the initiative aims to promote interprofessional learning between the region's health students.

The challenge saw the students form six multi-disciplinary teams to collaborate and provide a treatment plan for a person-centred case study. Each team was supported by a CHS clinical mentor, and they presented their plans to an expert panel of judges in May.

CHS Interprofessional Learning Coordinator, Sarah Chapman, said the collaboration had benefits for both the students and the workforce in Canberra.

“We know that when we work well together in teams, we get better outcomes for not only our patients and consumers, but the workers in our healthcare teams and that's what we want to encourage,” she said.

Black Dog's TEN coming to ACT Health

A new e-health hub and mobile app is set to be available across the ACT public health system, aimed at supporting the mental health of healthcare workers.

The Black Dog Institute's TEN e-health hub was developed as part of the Australian Government's COVID-19 response. TEN is re-imagining mental health care for frontline workers, offering discrete and convenient access to mental health screening, resources and person-to-person support. For more, keep an eye out in our next issue or visit www.blackdoginstitute.org.au/the-essential-network/

Want more?

Visit www.health.act.gov.au/about-our-health-system/culture-review-implementation or get in touch with the Culture Review Implementation Branch by emailing ourculture@act.gov.au