

Women's, Children's & Adolescents Services CAG

Paediatric Surgery

Response to Green Paper

The Paediatric Surgeons as co-opted members of the WACs CAG is pleased to have this opportunity to provide this response to the Government's Green Paper.

Service Profile

Current Service Overview

Based on the Service Descriptions provided in the draft Tasmanian Role Delineation Framework (TRDF) the CAG believes that the following levels of service are being provided in Tasmania:

- Royal Hobart Hospital – Level 5
- Launceston General Hospital – Level 4
- North West Regional Hospital – Level 3
- Mersey Community Hospital – Level 1

Recommendation 1

Please refer to Attachment 1 for proposed changes to the TRDF.

Service Description – Levels 3 to 6

No inpatient paediatric surgical services are provided at Levels 1-2.

The CAG has reviewed the service descriptions for Levels 3-6 and considers the descriptions to be appropriate.

Service Requirements – Levels 3 to 6

The service requirements specified for Levels 3 -6 are appropriate. No improvements required.

- There are no 'minimum service volumes' for Paediatric Surgical procedures. The Department of Paediatric Surgery at The Royal Hobart Hospital has excellent intra- and

inter-department professional relationships across the State; ensuring that the best care is provided at all times.

- There are regular multidisciplinary meetings e.g: Perinatal Management Group, Radiology, Urology teleconference with colleagues at Monash Medical Centre, which enable maintenance of competence and professional skills.
- The RHH Department of Paediatric Surgery performs approximately 600 procedures per year, and provides a 24/7 On-Call service for emergencies.

Future demand

- Demand for the service is expected to increase in line with national and international trends, as the provision of Paediatric Surgery and Anaesthesia in healthcare settings becomes more regulated.
- Also, the lack of exposure to Paediatric Surgery training for General Surgery trainees will lead to a deficit in service provision in Regional hospitals by General Surgeons.

Workforce Requirements – Levels 3 to 6

The workforce requirements specified for Levels 3-6 are appropriate.

- The service has proven over the last 4 years to be of the highest quality, providing safe and sustainable Paediatric Surgery.
- The service is currently provided by the three (3) Staff Specialists.
- This is the minimum requirement to run a 24/7 state-wide Neonatal and Paediatric surgery on-call rota.

Support Service Requirements – Levels 3 to 6

The support service requirements specified for Levels 3-6 are appropriate. No suggestions to improve the service requirements.

- A Paediatric Surgery Clinical Nurse Specialist role is being developed to provide community-based support for complex patients who require ongoing surgical input e.g.: care of patients with gastrostomies, other surgical/urological tubes or catheters requiring care (e.g. nephrostomy tube), appendicostomy care, stoma and stoma bag care.
- Some of these nursing care roles are currently filled by the Paediatric Home Care team on an ad hoc basis. The role should include the establishment of an education program to empower the next generation of nursing staff with the necessary paediatric surgical nursing skills, and to ensure continuity of care for this group of patients when the nurse specialist is on leave.

Tasmanian Clinical Service Profile Considerations

Gaps, issues or barriers that need to be considered to ensure the successful implementation of the Tasmanian Clinical Service Profile (TCSP)

The Paediatric Surgeons as co-opted members of the WACS CAG identified the following factors that need to be considered for the successful implementation of the TCSP:

- Budget cutbacks at the RHH have seriously limited access to theatre for elective patients, with resulting extension of waiting lists. The Paediatric Surgery service requires full funding to ensure children do not wait for their procedures.

Integration of services across regions/hospital campuses:

The Paediatric Surgeons as co-opted members of the WACS CAG provided the following responses on how best to ensure the proper integration of services across regions/hospital campuses:

- Paediatric Surgery is a consultant-delivered service which guarantees timely and appropriate access to services when properly funded.
- A ring-fenced budget is needed to help strengthen patient access to services.
- There are six (6) outreach clinics at LGH per year which bolster the relationships among the stakeholders in this state-wide service.
- A regular Paediatric Surgery forum with both Paediatric and General Surgeons contributing will commence this year.
- The service currently utilises video-conferencing for multidisciplinary team meetings.
- Face-to-face contact in a clinic environment is preferable for new patients and patients requiring review.