



South West Hospital and Health Service

# Equity and Diversity Action Plan

2024 – 2026

# Acknowledgement of country

South West Hospital and Health Service acknowledges Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the Traditional Owners and Custodians of this country and recognises their connection to land, wind, water and community. We pay our respects to them, their culture and Elders, both past and present.

We recognise that the lands of South West Queensland hold great significance and meaning to the Bidjara, Bunthamarra, Gugguri, Kamilaroi, Kongabula, Kooma, Kullilli, Kunja and Mandandanji peoples and other local interests, and we strive to do all things with utmost respect to that significance.





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# Introducing our new Equity and Diversity Action Plan

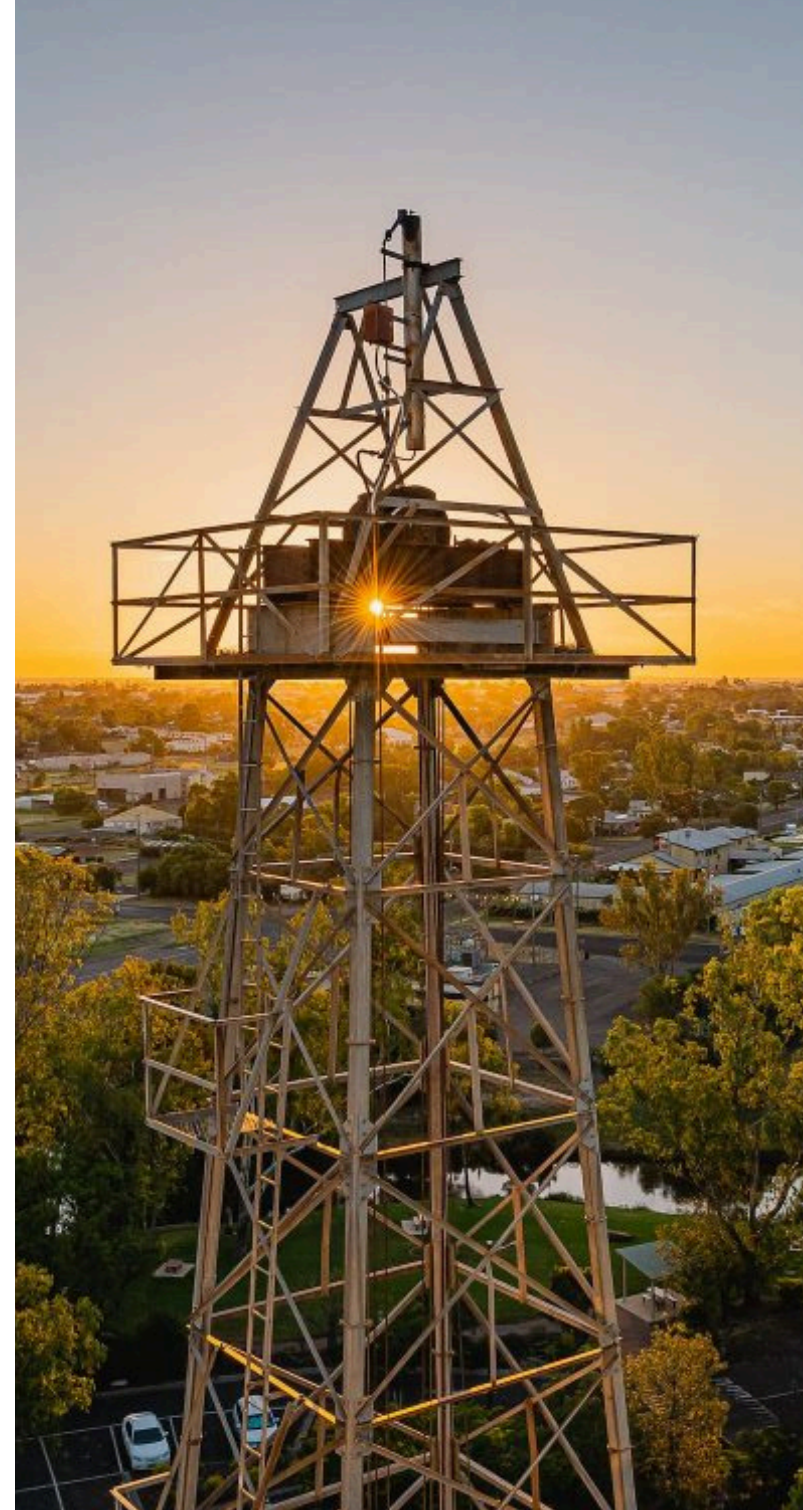


**Anthony Brown**  
Chief Executive

I am proud to introduce a significant milestone in our journey towards creating a more inclusive and equitable environment at South West Hospital and Health Service – our new Equity and Diversity Action Plan.

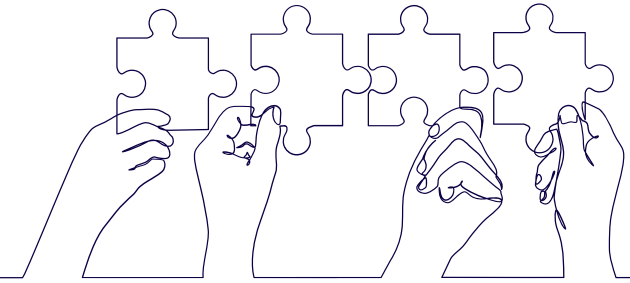
As a rural health service provider, we are uniquely positioned to address the disparities and challenges that exist within our communities. Our mission has always been to deliver exceptional care to everyone, regardless of their background, identity, or circumstances. This Plan is a testament to our commitment to that mission and to how we will drive greater equity and diversity in our region.

The Equity and Diversity Action Plan outlines a series of actionable steps that we will take to ensure that our services are accessible and equitable and that our workplace is welcoming and inclusive for all.



# About the Equity and Diversity Action Plan

South West Hospital and Health Service (South West HHS) is dedicated to fostering an inclusive workplace that reflects the diverse views, experiences and backgrounds of the communities we serve in the South West region, ensuring all employees feel valued, respected and empowered to contribute their unique perspectives.



The South West HHS Equity and Diversity Action Plan 2024-2026 (the Action Plan) focuses on four key areas:



By focusing on these four key areas, the Action Plan aims to:



- Create inclusive and supportive workplace cultures, which instil a sense of belonging for all employees
- Build strong support mechanisms for employees
- Develop leadership and career opportunities



- Grow capability for collection of data to better understand diversity within South West HHS



- Identify and dismantle barriers to recruitment of a diverse workforce
- Attract quality employees to achieve outstanding healthcare services for our South West communities



- Build awareness and understanding of diversity within the workplace and its benefits

The Action Plan has been developed from the findings of our 2024 Equity and Diversity Audit Report.

This annual audit will continue to provide a basis for understanding our workforce composition and identify opportunities and/or challenges to providing equitable access and positive employment experiences for all employees.

The Action Plan will be reviewed and updated regularly to ensure it continues to reflect the audit's findings and other sources of information regarding diversity within South West HHS.

The Plan supports the intent of key South West HHS strategies and plans including:

- Strategic Plan 2022-2026
- Workforce Strategy 2023-2026
- First Nations Health Equity Strategy 2022-2025
- First Nations Health Equity 2023-2026 Implementation Plan
- Workforce Implementation Plan 2024-2026.

It also supports legislation, strategies and plans within the Queensland Government, Public Sector (PSC) and Queensland Health, which focus on improving the work life of employees, including:

- Public Sector Act 2022
- Even Better Public Sector for Queensland Action Plan 2024-2025
- PSC Inclusion and Diversity Strategy 2021-2025
- Queensland Health Workforce Mental Health and Wellbeing Framework 2023
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Workforce Strategic Framework 2016-2026
- Managing the risk of psychosocial hazards at work Code of Practice 2023



# Equity and Diversity Action Plan 2024 – 2026

## 1. The workplace

The workplace is the first of four focus areas that targets how we support and enable equity and diversity in the South West. For this focus area, our approach is to ensure that work arrangements and other supporting mechanisms are fit-for-purpose in ensuring that wellbeing, inclusivity and our culture is empowering for all.

	Action	Outcome	Measure of success	Responsible area	Timeframe
1.1	<b>Flexible work arrangements</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Clarify and promote the range of options available under the Flex-connect framework.</li> <li>Build their awareness of how these options can support people who identify with a diverse group.</li> <li>Develop and publish a Mental Health and Wellbeing Framework for SWHHS.</li> <li>Increase awareness of parental leave entitlements available to men – promote paid parental leave options for spouses including the development of a fact sheet outlining parental leave entitlements.</li> <li>Promote awareness of recent changes                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Payment of superannuation on unpaid parental leave</li> <li>Introduction of reproductive health leave</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	Greater awareness and application of the flex connect framework within SWHHS.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increase in staff perception of being able to utilise flexible work approaches confirmed through biannual SWHHS Culture Survey results.</li> <li>Greater range of staff accessing flexible work arrangements across the HHS.</li> <li>Publication of SWHHS Mental Health and Wellbeing Framework.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All line managers</li> <li>People and Culture</li> <li>Communications</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mental Health and Wellbeing Framework by November 2024.</li> <li>Promotion of options and initiatives ongoing.</li> </ul>
1.2	<b>Ensure employees are supported and feel confident in discussing their wellbeing</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop and publish a SWHHS Mental Health and Wellbeing Framework (refer Action 1.1).</li> <li>Monitor Culture Survey results for the category of work demands, including hours of work, work that is emotionally and physically demanding and employees feeling burnt out.</li> <li>Collect and report trends in leave.</li> <li>Continue to provide and promote employee access to Employee Assistance Program (including availability of TELUS Health App), workplace health and safety representatives and resources.</li> </ul>	Continue to build an inclusive workplace culture that supports workforce wellbeing.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improved sentiments reported in Culture Compass survey results.</li> <li>Positive trends in leave patterns.</li> <li>Increased employee participation in health and wellbeing initiatives.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>People and Culture</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Analysis and development of action plans from 2024 Culture Survey currently underway.</li> <li>Monitoring of trends ongoing.</li> <li>Promotion of EAP, WH&amp;SR and supporting resources ongoing.</li> </ul>
1.3	<b>Develop strategies to provide support, professional development and network opportunities for women in senior leadership roles</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review career and professional development pathways to identify possible impediments.</li> <li>Develop strategies and implement actions that support progression of women to senior leadership positions.</li> <li>Share success stories that recognise and value the skills, knowledge and experience of women within the HHS.</li> </ul>	<p>Understanding of issues/barriers for the development of strategies and actions.</p> <p>Increase skill and development pipeline in readiness for roles at higher levels.</p> <p>Improve perceptions and role model examples to other women.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improved career progression and representation of women in more senior roles.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>People and Culture</li> <li>Communications</li> <li>All Executive Directors and senior line management.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2024-2025</li> </ul>

South West Hospital and Health Service  
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# 1. The workplace (cont.)

	Action	Outcome	Measure of success	Responsible area	Timeframe
1.4	<b>SWHHS Exit Survey</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Encourage employees who are separating from SWHHS to complete the exit survey.</li> <li>Review the survey questions to ensure they capture feedback on areas that matter most to SWHHS.</li> </ul>	Availability of data that can be used to provide additional insights on engagement, inclusion, relationships and career development.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increase number of exit surveys completed by separating employees.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>People and Culture</li> <li>Line managers of exiting staff</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2024 - 2025</li> </ul>
1.5	<b>SWHHS Culture Survey</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Encourage employees to participate in the survey.</li> <li>Review the survey questions to ensure that they capture feedback on areas that matter most to SWHHS.</li> </ul>	Availability of data that can be used to provide additional insights on engagement, inclusion, relationships and career development.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increase number of participants in the culture survey.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>People and Culture</li> <li>All Executive Directors and Line managers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Undertaken on a bi-annual basis – next survey 2026.</li> </ul>
1.6	<b>Update information, resources and education for employees and managers in relation to workplace adjustments.</b>	Employees understand workplace adjustments are available and feel comfortable to access them.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Positive results/ trends in the Culture Survey.</li> <li>Tracking and monitoring the number of workplace adjustments in place.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>People and Culture</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ongoing</li> </ul>
1.7	<b>Develop and implement a formalised Leader Rounding process, in conjunction with the ongoing promotion of 'Ask Executive' to assist early identification of issues/concerns within the workplace.</b>	Strengthen visibility of all line and senior managers within the workplace.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Positive results/ trends in the Culture Survey.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>People and Culture</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>December 2024</li> <li>Promotion of 'Ask Executive' ongoing.</li> </ul>



# Equity and Diversity Action Plan 2024 – 2026

## 2. People

Our people are essential to all that we do in the South West. To support them beyond enabling a highly inclusive and supported workplace, our focus is on raising the awareness of the diversity census with our staff in the region.

	Action	Outcome	Measure of success	Responsible area	Timeframe
2.1	<b>Workforce Diversity Census</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Raise awareness of the Workforce Diversity census and encourage all employees to complete/update their profile.</li> <li>Develop a promotion campaign to raise awareness of the census data and the benefits of its collection.</li> </ul>	Increased diversity data will assist in building an accurate understanding of diversity within SWHHS to better inform strategies for further supporting the development of an inclusive workplace.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increase in SWHHS diversity data capture.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>People and Culture</li> <li>All business areas</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Annual</li> </ul>

## 3. Recruitment

Our recruitment practices and process are our third focus area, where our aim is to remove barriers to recruitment and selection and to explore alternative and non-traditional pipelines to improve accessibility and diversity.

	Action	Outcome	Measure of success	Responsible area	Timeframe
3.1	<b>Review recruitment and selection processes to identify barriers (e.g. accessibility issues and potential for bias)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide recommendations to address identified barriers.</li> <li>Ensure that panel chairs and members are aware of and supported to meet their responsibilities in relation to inclusive and transparent recruitment strategies.</li> </ul>	Recruitment strategies and processes are focused on recruiting a diverse and high-performing workforce enabled through transparent and contemporary selection processes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increase in trust and satisfaction with SWHHS recruitment processes evidenced through improved SWHHS Culture Survey results.</li> <li>Candidate/new starter data reflects recruitment was a positive and respectful experience.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>People and Culture</li> <li>Recruitment Panel Chairs and Members</li> <li>All leaders and managers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2024 - 2025</li> </ul>
3.2	<b>Explore non-traditional pipelines to attract and access talent from diverse groups</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Promote SWHHS as a diverse and inclusive employer through external websites and diversity networks.</li> <li>Diversity and inclusion statements in role description and job advertisement templates.</li> <li>Explore opportunities to expand advertising of vacancies to reach diversity groups.</li> <li>Continue to facilitate and support SWHHS participation in Deadly Start School Based Traineeships.</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increased number of applicants/employees from diverse groups.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>People and Culture</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2024 - 2025</li> </ul>





# 4. Training and capability

For our final focus area, the South West is aiming to ensure we upskill the capacity and capability of our leaders through the delivery of diversity and equity training and to enable staff to celebrate the events and activities for all diverse groups.

	Action	Outcome	Measure of success	Responsible area	Timeframe
4.1	Provide access and promote equity and diversity training, including cultural capability.	Ensure all employees and line managers have an awareness and understanding of what inclusion means and the value of diversity within the workplace.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Number of training opportunities provided.</li> <li>Number of attendees.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>People and Culture</li> <li>ATSIHE</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ongoing</li> </ul>
4.2	Continue to participate, recognise, promote and celebrate key dates and events that raise awareness of other diverse groups within SWHHS through internal events and activities.	Ensure all SWHHS employees are aware of and have the opportunity to acknowledge significant cultural dates.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Number of key dates communicated.</li> <li>Number of employees and senior leaders attending or participating in events and activities.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>People and Culture</li> <li>Communication</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ongoing</li> </ul>
4.3	Provide access to and promote training to foster a greater understanding of the obligations of all staff regarding sexual harassment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop an awareness training program.</li> <li>Develop a communication program.</li> </ul>	Ensure all employees and managers have an awareness and understanding of our obligations to prevent sexual harassment within the workplace.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Number of training opportunities provided.</li> <li>Number of attendees.</li> <li>Culture survey outcomes monitored.</li> <li>Complaints monitored.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>People and Culture</li> <li>Communication</li> <li>All leaders and managers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2024 - 2025</li> </ul>



