



Private and Confidential

Mr Gerard Hayes
Secretary - HSU
Health Services Union
Locked Bag 3
Australia Square, Sydney NSW 1215

Attn: Tom Stevanja, Deputy Manager, Industrial Division, tom.stevanja@hsu.asn.au

Delivered via email

Re: Proposed changes to the Core Laboratory at The Children's Hospital at Westmead

Dear Mr Hayes,

The purpose of this letter is to inform you of proposed changes that are being made to the Core Laboratory operating model within The Children's Hospital at Westmead (CHW), The Sydney Children's Hospitals Network (SCHN).

The Core Laboratory provides 24/7 routine and urgent testing for haematology and biochemistry and the supply of critical blood products from the blood bank which is supported by pre-analytical services who provide phlebotomy and administrative support services. The Core Laboratory handles almost two-thirds of total Pathology activity (excluding genomics) and has grown 28% since 2014. A growing population, increasing complexity and expansion of infrastructure and services is expected to further drive demand.

The proposed changes have been drafted utilising staff feedback, consultation with other organisations with similar models alongside local knowledge, strategic direction and organisational need. These changes will be made to improve staff workloads, provide staff skill-expansion and career opportunities, develop a more collaborative team culture and improve overall service agility and responsiveness.

Under the proposed changes, Core Laboratory staff reporting lines will be realigned from the Senior Scientists to a new position of Core Laboratory Manager. This proposed change will simplify the governance of the Core Laboratory and provide a single point of

operational contact to the Core Laboratory Manager. During the staff consultation process, specific positions for inclusion in this team will be identified. All other positions will not be impacted by these changes.

The proposed model will combine technical and scientific staff into a single, cross-trained team under a new reporting structure. This will facilitate greater rostering flexibility, skill expansion, and development and career opportunities. The changes will unify functions across the Core Laboratory to simplify processes, empower staff and build capacity to meet future service demands. As part of this proposed change, Core Laboratory staff will be required to work a rotational 24/7 roster and all other conditions of employment will remain unchanged.

The Consultation Document for the proposed changes to the Core Laboratory operational model is enclosed. It is important to note that there will be no loss of positions or FTE as a result of the proposed changes.

Staff in departments affected by these changes have been provided with the Consultation Document and the opportunity to provide formal feedback by within two weeks. Please provide any additional feedback to the proposal within **two weeks** from the date of this letter.

If you wish to provide feedback or require further information, please contact Justine Trpezanovski, Acting Clinical Program Director, Diagnostics at justine.trpezanovski@health.nsw.gov.au.

Yours sincerely,



Sam Galluccio
Director of People and Culture

Date: 25 - 6 - 2021

Attachment:

1. *Core Laboratory Consultation Document*

Core Laboratory Model

Staff and Union Consultation Document
The Children's Hospital at Westmead - Pathology

June 2021

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1. Context

The Children's Hospital at Westmead (CHW) Pathology service provides routine and highly specialist paediatric pathology services locally, state-wide and internationally.

A growing local population, increasing patient acuity and on-boarding of further specialist testing is growing demand for Pathology services at Westmead. Further expansion of facilities such as the commissioning of Block K completed in early 2021 and the commissioning of the Stage 2 redevelopment in 2026 is expected to generate further inpatient demand.

The existing Core Laboratory at CHW handles almost two-thirds of testing completed on-site (excluding genomics) and has grown 28% since 2014 – this trajectory sets us on a path to complete over 900,000 tests annually in this environment by 2025 and over a 1.2 million annual tests by the early '30s.

Meeting the challenge of increased testing demands, the expectations of our community and the needs of our staff relies on reviewing our business practices, seeking improvements and modernising our service delivery. This challenge will be met by improving the efficiency of our operations and ensuring staff are well supported with the right mix of workforce, expertise and instrumentation.

To prepare for this challenge, a review of the existing service and alternative Core Laboratory models used elsewhere in the country has been undertaken. These learnings, alongside knowledge of our unique needs, challenges and culture, have been translated into a new proposed Core Laboratory model for CHW.

2. Purpose of this Consultation Document

This consultation document outlines proposed changes to the Core Laboratory governance structure and provide rationale for a new model. This document has been developed to provide staff and unions with details for your consideration and feedback.

This model has been developed in consultation with seniors across Haematology, Biochemistry, Endocrinology and Serology alongside industry research undertaken by the planning team. This document explains the case for change and expected benefits and contains relevant organisational charts and background information for your review and consideration.

Feedback by staff and unions on the proposal is essential in developing a successful final future model. This document outlines how to provide feedback and all responses will be collated and considered for the ongoing development of the model.

3. Current Model

The Core Laboratory provides 24/7 routine and urgent testing for haematology and biochemistry and the supply of critical blood products from blood bank. The Core Laboratory is supported by pre-analytical services who provide phlebotomy and administrative support services. Each of these services share physical infrastructure but operate as distinct units.

3.1 Organisational Structure

Haematology, blood bank and biochemistry operate two separate reporting lines through their disciplines. Both disciplines manage separate staffing pools reporting to a Senior Scientist in the area and a Head of Department. Pre-analytical services comprises of specimen collection and the centralised specimen reception which report through a team leader and the service manager. Some pre-analytical staff are shared across functions.

Each department manages an independent roster, of which staff are generally not shared across disciplines. Overnight technical staff are managed by the pre-analytical service and sit distinct from discipline reporting structures, unlike the day and evening staff shifts. The existing governance structure is illustrated in Appendix 1 Existing Structure.

3.2 Training Model

Staff across the Core Laboratory are typically single discipline trained (with the exemption of overnight staff) and therefore limited in capacity to provide support across disciplines. Training is currently provided by each of the disciplines.

3.3 Performance

The performance of the Core Laboratory in regards to turnaround time is generally well performing and meets the expectations of the hospital and external clients. However performance during peak demand or unexpected events is less optimal. This indicates that the service is susceptible to fluctuations in demand and this performance volatility will increase with service growth without intervention.

Equipment utilisation within the Core Laboratory sits between 10-50% of instrumentations total capacity. Much of this additional capacity is due to secondary failover instruments but presents an opportunity to re-evaluate the assays performed, the testing locations, and composition of instruments available.

4. Case for change

The creation of a new Core Laboratory model is a key change needed to continue meeting demand growth, sustain performance, and to meet the expectations of the Hospital and our external clients.

Under the Children's Hospital at Westmead Redevelopment Stage 2 Project, an injection of funding will offer Pathology an opportunity to expand its physical footprint which will likely see floor space growth in the routine testing environment. Expansion of the physical layout is a one-time opportunity to review specimen flows throughout Pathology and reconsider the testing needs and flows in this space.

Feedback from staff depicts high workloads which feel unmanageable; as demand increases this will likely increase without workflow changes or workforce injections. Meeting the needs of our service, our financial responsibility and to manage the workloads of staff can be managed with careful review of workforce numbers, the composition of our workforce and continuous improvement to our service delivery.

The existing model does not facilitate cross-training of employees across platforms or methods, and this restricts the laboratories ability to respond to fluctuation in workforce need. Training limitations currently do not allow for staff from one particular method or instrument with low activity to temporarily assist another in a period of high activity – leading to situations where available workforce are unable to assist employees with high workload. This arrangement restricts skill expansion and career development needs of employees.

Due to the current segregation of departments across Pathology, there are also incidents of duplicated equipment with low utilisation. By consolidating suitable assays into a shared zone, utilisation of instrumentation can increase whilst decreasing total expenditure and reducing staff workload.

Last year, in response to these findings and review, CHW Pathology begun investigating potential Core Laboratory models. During this process it was found that similar models to the one proposed were successfully deployed at other public pathology services across the country, with strong benefits to both employees and the organisation.

5. Proposed Model

The proposed model aims to build on the established principles of a fast-turnaround, high-quality and safe 24/7 service whilst strengthening workforce support. With these principles in mind, routine Endocrine and Serology testing is well positioned to be conducted in the Core Laboratory – this is to be supported by changes to our business practices.

The model combines technical and scientific staff into a single, cross-trained team under a new Core Laboratory reporting structure. A combined staffing model provides rostering flexibility to meet the needs of the organisation and provides further development and career opportunities for staff.

Benefits of a new Core Laboratory model include:

- Simplified governance of the Core Laboratory, including a single point of operational contact to support overall flexibility, improvement in processes, laboratory performance, and improved rostering.
- Retaining efficient and safe clinical oversight by utilising the existing expertise of Senior Scientist and Heads of Departments.
- Supporting job satisfaction and career development by offering cross-training on methods and instruments across disciplines. This in turn provides greater workforce flexibility to respond to service needs and allows Pathology to respond to high workloads more effectively.
- Consolidating and simplifying instrumentation across the site to improve turnaround times and capacity for 'first-pass' testing. This will provide opportunities to improve the patient experience with smaller blood draws, improved cost efficiency and free workforce that previously staffed these instruments.
- Unifying functions across the Core Laboratory to simplify processes, empower employees and build capacity to meet future service demands.

The model has been developed upon successful models inspected across the country and adapted to meet the specific needs of the Children's Hospital at Westmead.

5.1 Organisational Structure

A draft initial organisation structure (*See Appendix 2 Proposed Structure*) shifts Core Laboratory staff reporting lines from the Senior Scientists to a new position "Core Laboratory Manager". Transitioning to a single reporting line will allow for a single roster across the Core Laboratory operations which will improve flexibility of staff rostering, support cross-discipline training and career development opportunities whilst embed agility into the Core Laboratory team. Discipline specific oversight will still be required, and the Core Laboratory Manager will maintain strong relationships with the Senior Scientists and Heads of Department for clinical guidance.

To support this change, all identified technical roles within the Core Laboratory environment will receive training to effectively and safely function across instruments and disciplines. These staff will form a rotational 24/7 roster. Staff preference for shifts will continue to be considered in rostering practices however some rotation will be required to ensure appropriate upskilling, relief, and supervision of all staff. This will ensure that staff are well trained on all shifts, supporting high quality of services, reporting, and professional development.

The movement to a single roster will utilise consistent rostering practices, developed in consultation with staff and following NSW Health's best practice recommendations.

5.2 Multi-skilling and Training Opportunities

A critical component of this proposal is to provide staff with development and career opportunities through cross-skilling. Cross-skilling of staff provides greater flexibility of staffing to meet variation in

demands and has been successfully implemented in a range of publically provided pathology facilities across Australia.

This training model will be supported by each discipline and overseen by the Core Laboratory Manager. Staff will only be rostered onto new methods and platforms once training has been undertaken and clinical leads are satisfied with their competency.

5.3 Core Laboratory Services and Test Profile

The test menu offered by the Core Laboratory will continue to evolve to meet the needs of the Network and our external customers. Identification of tests that are better served in the Core Laboratory will be continually identified to simplify processing, reduce blood draw volumes, reduce staff workloads and increase the proportion of samples that can be completed 'first-pass'.

Under this proposed model, Serology and Endocrinology automated testing will be delivered in the Core Laboratory. This will be provided with consolidation of testing platforms, procurement of new instrumentation, and review of associated processes to support this delivery.

Further testing menus of other departments may be considered in the future. This will be managed through separate consultation pieces.

5.4 Changes to Workforce

There will be no loss of positions as a result of these proposed changes. There will be a realignment to the workflows and met within the existing workforce to support the needs of the organisation and patient care. The model identifies technical roles in haematology, biochemistry, serology, endocrinology and pre-analytical services for potential inclusion in the new Core Laboratory staffing pool.

Consultation will occur as appropriate and required with any staff and their associated unions if any significant changes are required, again noting that there will be no loss of positions. Throughout the process, no position will have diminished responsibility or a reduced scope of practice, rather it is expected these positions will have further opportunity for skill expansion and responsibility.

6. Implementation of Proposed Future Model

The proposed model will be implemented in a staged approach to achieve the final model within a one-year period following finalisation of the consultation phase.

The final model and implementation timeline may change depending on the feedback received throughout the consultation period. A comprehensive implementation package, including organisational changes and timeline will be provided to staff at the conclusion of this phase.

7. Consultation Process and Feedback

The release of this consultation document marks the initiation of the consultation process relating to the proposed Core Laboratory model. The consultation period is critical for ensuring all staff are able to raise concerns with the proposed model and ongoing engagement will ensure the success of implementation.

All feedback received throughout the consultation period will be collated and carefully considered. The feedback considered may impact or change the final model for implementation.

Staff are urged to provide their feedback and are able to do so by providing written correspondence by 9 July 2021. Correspondence shall be forwarded by email to:

[Justine Trpezanovski](mailto:justine.trpezanovski@health.nsw.gov.au)

Clinical Program Director, Diagnostics

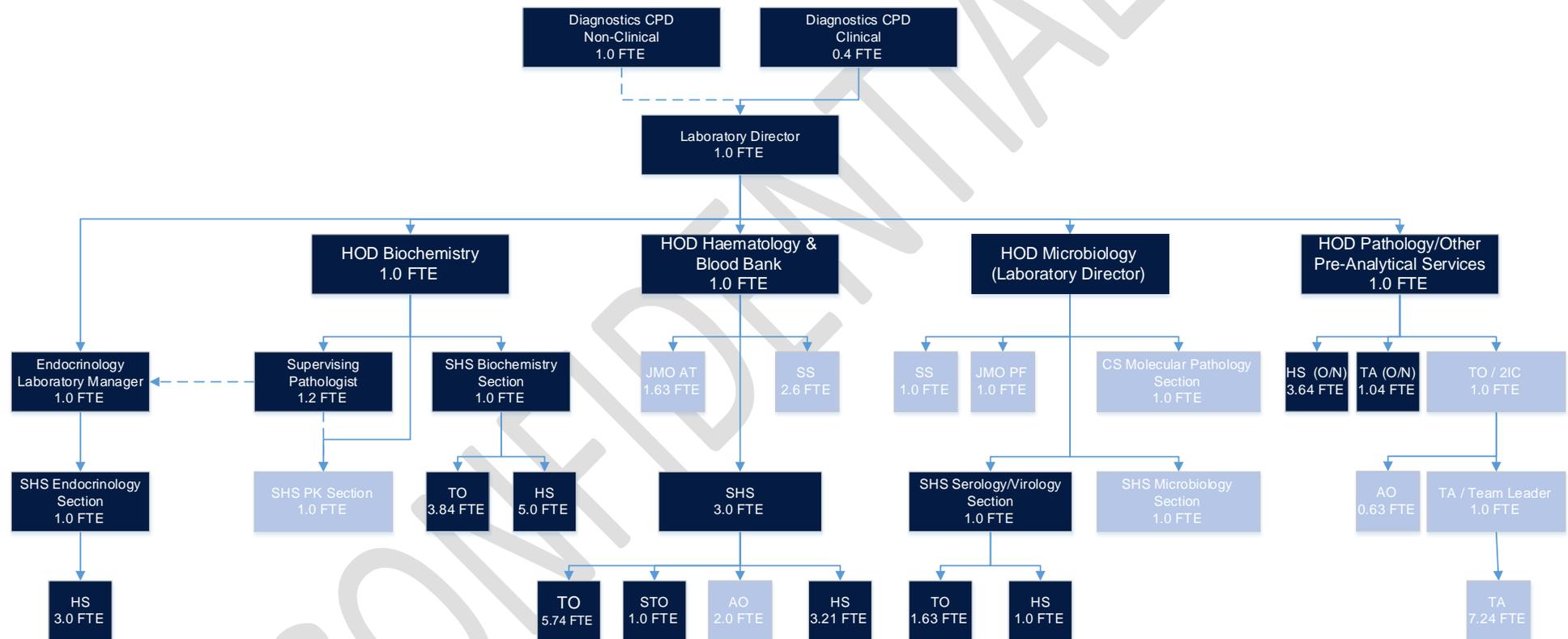
justine.trpezanovski@health.nsw.gov.au

CC: angus.mcdowell@health.nsw.gov.au

Following consultation, a final model will be provided to staff, unions and other key stakeholders for planned implementation later in 2021.

8. Attachments and Appendices

8.1 Existing Governance Structure

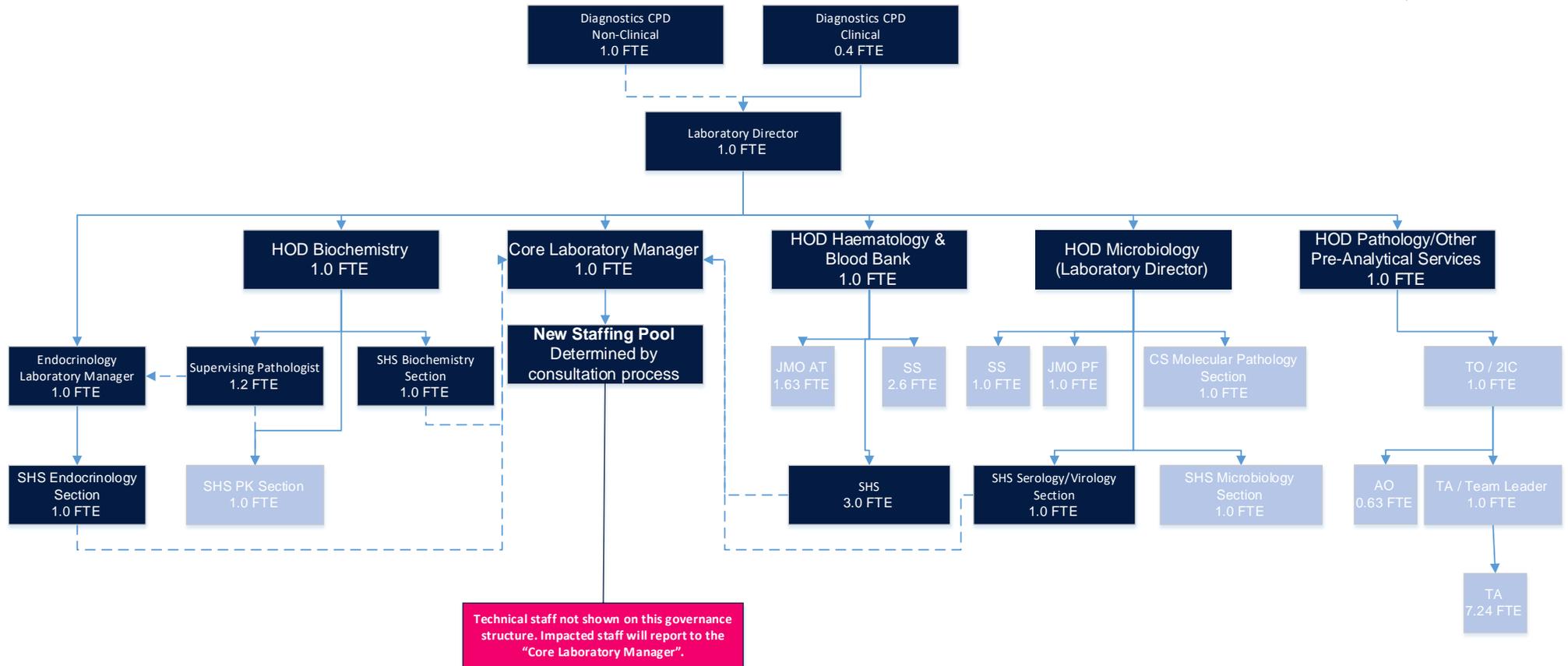


1 Existing Structure

Positions Out-of-
Scope (Proposed) Positions In-Scope
(Porposed)

Note: Departmental structures outside of scope are omitted from this organisational chart.

8.2 Proposed Governance Structure



2 Proposed Structure

Note: Departmental structures outside of scope are omitted from this organisational chart.

