

30 November 2023

Mr Gerard Hayes
Secretary
Health Services Union
Locked Bag 3
Australia Square NSW 1215

Dear Gerard

Move of Immunology Sutherland to the NSWHP Randwick site in 2024

This letter is to provide an update on the staff consultation that has been occurring between NSWHP, the HSU and staff representatives from the Immunology Laboratory at Sutherland.

To date NSW Health Pathology has undertaken the following consultation:

- Met with the Immunology Laboratory staff and the HSU on 13 September 2023 recording and providing notes from the meeting to staff and the HSU.
- Held a USCC meeting on 25 October 2023 at the Sutherland Laboratory
- Associate Director of HR met with each staff member individually to understand their concerns
- Held a USCC meeting on 15 November 2023 at the Sutherland Laboratory

Some of the key concerns raised by staff at these meetings have included:

- Laboratory supervision
- Parking at the Randwick Campus
- Space available at the Randwick Campus including: Laboratory space, key facilities such as tearooms and bathrooms

The primary reason for moving the Immunology Laboratory to the Randwick Campus is in relation to its status as a GX Laboratory as per the NPAAC Guidelines.

The Immunology Laboratory is currently considered a Category B (Branch) Laboratory due to being located at the Sutherland Hospital and not having a 1 FTE pathologist.

Moving the Laboratory to Randwick, will upgrade the laboratory from a Category B Laboratory to a Category GX Laboratory. This means being located at a site with other specialty laboratories such as Chemistry, Haematology, Anatomical Pathology and Microbiology with each of these specialist laboratories having sub-specialties.

Other requirements of a Category GX Laboratory is the onsite supervision of a 1 FTE supervising pathologist. NSWHP is working towards having 1 FTE supervising pathologist by recruiting to the appropriate supervising pathologist requirements and have the Laboratory functional and meeting the NPAAC requirements.

Currently all other Immunology Laboratories within the NSWHP structure are Category GX Laboratories located at our major sites which includes Liverpool Hospital, Royal Prince Alfred Hospital, Royal North Shore Hospital, Westmead Hospital and John Hunter Hospital.

Being a Category GX Laboratory could also mean that the laboratory will be able to expand its testing area, expanding its specialty testing, expanding its supervising pathologist numbers and potentially including registrars in the make-up of the team to support growth.

Locating the Laboratory in Randwick will benefit the majority of patients whose specimens will be processed at a Randwick Laboratory with nearly 40% of all immunology tests originating in Randwick. Only 15% of patient samples originate in Sutherland.

Immunology specimens that must be tested in an Immunology Laboratory do not have short (less than 24 hour) turnaround times and NSWHP aims to undertake these tests as fast as possible.

The benefits to patients of moving the laboratory to Randwick include:

- Improved turnaround times for Randwick immunology specimens (majority of specimens) and linked to the only Immunology related clinics in the South East Sydney/Illawarra Shoalhaven area. Currently the 39.9% of Randwick specimens are couriered to Sutherland Hospital.
- Locating the laboratory at the same hospital (Prince of Wales) where all Immunology Clinics for the area are located.

NSWHP would also like to acknowledge that at the commencement of this process they were of the understanding that the Multi-function Laboratory and the Blood Collections area were to be moved to the main hospital and the current building was to be demolished. Sutherland Hospital Executive have advised that there is currently no available funding to undertake any further redevelopments at this stage.

NSWHP has now met with the HSU and staff representatives on a number of occasions and confirm that they will be continuing with plans to move the Immunology Laboratory to the Randwick Campus by mid 2024.

NSW Health Pathology will establish a project team led by Teresa Hewlett, A/Senior Operations Manager South East Sydney to progress the move to the Randwick Campus and will also start meeting with all staff regularly to continue ongoing conversations and provide project updates from January 2024. NSWHP will also provide regular written updates to all staff on the progress of the project.

If the HSU would like to be involved in quarterly meetings, NSWHP can facilitate this additional meeting, equally an update will be provided at the East Network Consultative Meetings.

If you have any queries please feel free to contact me.

Yours sincerely



Siobhan Cunliffe
Associate Director of HR Metro
NSW Health Pathology