

# Collaborating for our Patients & Communities

IMPACT REPORT 2021-2023



**West Metro  
Health Service  
Partnership**



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# Message from the Chair and Executive Director



## Professor Shelley Dolan

The West Metro Health Service Partnership is not a story about any single health service, but a story of what we can achieve when we work together. I am pleased to have been part of this Partnership as Chief Executive of the Peter MacCallum Cancer Centre, and I am very pleased to be continuing this work as the incoming Chief Executive of the Royal Melbourne Hospital. Over the two years since the West Metro Health Service Partnership was established, the team – along with clinicians and operational leaders from across the Partnership – have worked together to make excellent progress on each of our reform priorities. I'd also like to acknowledge and express my deepest thanks to outgoing Chair, Professor Christine Kilpatrick AO, for her exemplary leadership and for guiding our HSP through its formative years. I look forward to contributing as the Partnership enters its next stage, with deeper collaborations and connections, to collectively deliver a better and more robust health system for our patients, our people, and our communities.



## Suyin Ng

Health Service Partnerships were introduced during a difficult time in the health system's history. Since our establishment a little over two years ago, we have had to learn the role of the HSP in the system, what value we can bring and how to effectively deliver that value for our health service members. This journey is ongoing. With a shared commitment to improving the health system for the benefit of patients and a focus on creating the right conditions for collaboration, we have established the foundations of a strong and effective partnership. The results we've been able to achieve in a relatively short amount of time are testament to the investment, quality of leadership, innovative mindset, and commitment to patients across all our health services. Partnerships are not easy but can deliver great outcomes. We are up for that challenge and look forward to working with you in the year to come.





**"With a shared commitment to improving the health system for the benefit of patients and a focus on creating the right conditions for collaboration, we have established the foundations of a strong and effective partnership."**



# About the West Metro Health Service Partnership

The West Metro Health Service Partnership (WMHSP) is part of a Victorian Government initiative to build a more resilient health system through collaboration and reform.

We bring together some of Victoria's premier health services and organisations around a shared commitment to the health of our communities. Our members include Werribee Mercy Hospital (WMH), Peter MacCallum Cancer Centre (Peter Mac), the Royal Children's Hospital (RCH), the Royal Melbourne Hospital (RMH), the Royal Women's Hospital (the Women's), and Western Health. The North Western Melbourne Primary Health Network (NWMPHN) is an associate member.

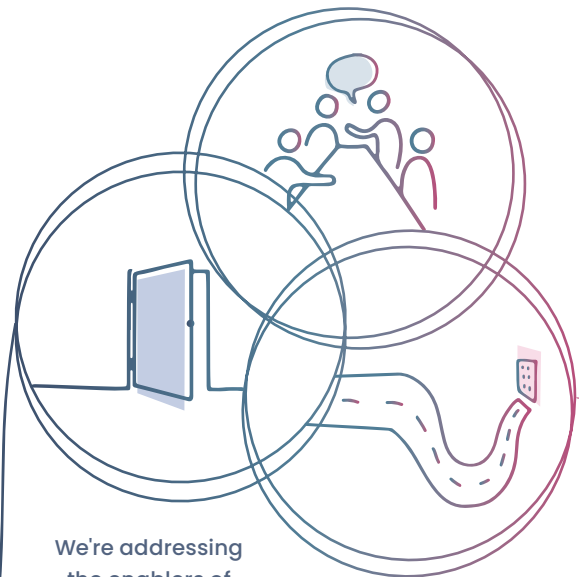
Since our establishment in 2021, we've led the COVID+ Pathways program for our region, established and grown the Better@Home Program, begun delivering the Victorian Government's Planned Surgery Recovery and Reform Program, and undertaken a Population Health Study.

## The WMHSP Office Team

We're here to provide the support and resources our health service members need to collaborate with impact for the benefit of our patients, staff, and communities.

As we head into our third year, the WMHSP team is focusing on three strategic priorities: →

We're fostering a common understanding of WMHSP's role across our member health services



We're addressing the enablers of collaborative system reform

We're supporting collaborative projects that enable reform and deliver value for our health services and system

# Our Collaboration at a Glance

Across the Partnership, our health services are working together to reform and strengthen our services and the health system for the benefit of patients, their carers, and communities.

## Filter Projects

**Our story is one of partnership and collaboration to improve outcomes for our patients, staff and the communities we serve.**

**501.1**

Bed days saved by Planned Surgery program (January - June 2023)

**13**

Collaboration projects

**988**

Patients treated and removed from waiting list (January - June 2023)

**32,000**

32,000 episodes of care across services receiving Better@Home funding (June 2021 - December 2022)

**6**

Knowledge sharing and collaboration forums

**280+**  
Stakeholders





# OUR IMPACT





# Better At Home Program

Our **Better at Home Program** is supporting our health service members to increase access to home-based care across our region. From hospital-in-the-home to telehealth services, across cancer, maternity, paediatrics, and diabetes and endocrinology, we have worked together to enable more people to have care in their home.

Our program is increasing the total volume of home-based care, including through the development of new pathways and services across our HSP. Through our communities of practice and working groups, we're increasing collaboration and delivering several collaborative projects. We're reducing unnecessary duplication by sharing learning and models of care, developing services together, and delivering shared services. The result is more patients able to receive care in their home.



## Establishing a City Hub for home-based services

### PARTICIPATING HEALTH SERVICES

Peter MacCallum Cancer Centre

Royal Melbourne Hospital

Royal Women's Hospital

The City Hub initiative is a collaboration across Peter Mac, RMH and the Women's. It is a hub for hospital-in-the-home care for the adult Parkville health services, delivered by RMH@Home. It includes a sub-acute hospital in the home service for Peter Mac and an adult hospital-in-the-home service for patients referred from the Women's. The team is now working on making the service available 24/7, which will **reduce avoidable emergency department presentations and improve patients' experience of at home care after hours**. In 2022, the WMHSP worked with our health services and consultants to design the City Hub after hours model. The WMHSP team have worked alongside the participating health services to support the planning and implementation of the service which will launch in in FY23/24.

# Providing specialist telehealth services for diabetes and endocrinology patients

## PARTICIPATING HEALTH SERVICES

Royal Melbourne Hospital

Western Health

RMH and Western Health have collaborated to implement Diabetes and Endocrinology Telehealth Rapid Access Clinics (Endo TRACs) with the support of the WMHSP team. **These clinics are providing rapid access to specialist diabetes and endocrinology management via telehealth services.** This is relieving pressure on outpatient services and ensuring that patients get the timely care they need. The model is based on rapid intervention to address acute issues with a clear and timely path back to primary care. In 2022, the WMHSP commissioned a joint service review of Endo TRACs and developed a service improvement plan. The service improvement plan — agreed with Western Health and RMH — has provided a roadmap for Western Health, RMH and WMHSP to work together to strengthen the TRACs model.

Over FY 22/23, our Endo TRACS initiative has grown at RMH to include 4 medical clinics and 5 nursing/allied health clinics supporting patients with diabetes and other endocrine conditions.

**“The service improvement plan... has provided a roadmap for Western Health, RMH and WMHSP to work together to strengthen the TRACs model.”**



## Extending home based care to hundreds of aged care residents

### PARTICIPATING HEALTH SERVICES & PARTNERS

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Werribee Mercy Health

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Royal Melbourne Hospital

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Western Health

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North Western Melbourne  
Primary Health Network

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Our Residential in Reach (RiR) initiative is supporting residential aged care facilities across our region to access non-life-threatening emergency and palliative care at home, reducing unnecessary transfers to hospital. In 2022, the WMHSP team set up a community of practice to share learning across participating health services and explore opportunities to collaborate. We worked with RiR teams at each health service, Ambulance Victoria, the Victorian Virtual Emergency Department (VVED), and over 90 residential aged care facilities to design an integrated pathway, develop the materials and roll-out the implementation, which will be completed in early FY23/24. **The initiative has extended service to 81 facilities and hundreds of residents**, avoiding duplication, reducing unnecessary Emergency Department transfers, and reducing system costs.





# Supporting women with better maternity care at home

## PARTICIPATING HEALTH SERVICES

Werribee Mercy Health

Royal Children's Hospital

Royal Women's Hospital

Our maternity hospital-in-the-home initiative has created **3 new pathways and models of care in maternity services**. It's supporting women with better maternity care at home and helping improve access. The new pathways include enhanced recovery after surgery for caesarean sections, at home labour induction, and at home antenatal monitoring. We also implemented at home labour induction and at home antenatal monitoring for patients at the Women's. The WMHSP community of practice provided important support for these outcomes, encouraging collaboration, and sharing learning.



**“We will be working together to develop more targeted and effective patient communication to support our at-home services across our HSP.”**

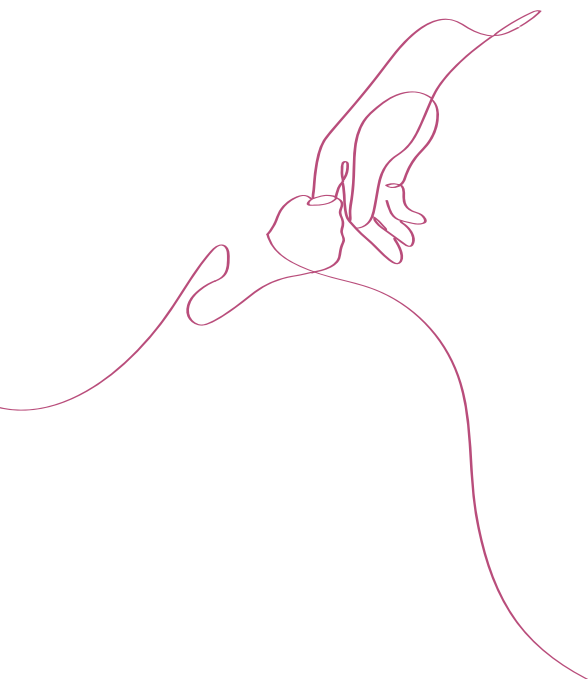
# Researching community perceptions of at-home care

## PARTICIPATING PARTNERS

South East Metro Health Service Partnership

North East Metro Health Service Partnership

In 2022, the WMHSP, in partnership with the other metropolitan health service partnerships, commissioned research into consumer attitudes towards at-home care. Led by the South East Metro Health Service Partnership, the research aimed to uncover misperceptions, reveal triggers, and better understand the barriers for patients accessing care in the home. Both qualitative and quantitative analysis was undertaken, including focus groups and a survey of 1,352 respondents. The results were shared with our health service members and **informed a workshop with over 40 clinicians and operational leaders from across 15 metropolitan health services**. The workshop explored ways to improve communications and engagement with patients for at-home care. In coming months, we will be working together to develop more targeted and effective patient communication to support our at-home services across our HSP.





# Evaluating our success

## PARTICIPATING HEALTH SERVICES

Werribee Mercy Health

Peter MacCallum Cancer Centre

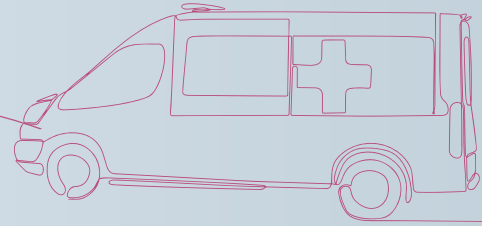
Royal Children's Hospital

Royal Melbourne Hospital

Royal Women's Hospital

Western Health

Our Better at Home Program has recently been evaluated after two years of operation. Spanning 18 months (July 2021 to December 2022), and covering more than 32,000 episodes of care, the evaluation included 550 survey responses, and 43 interviews. It considered the appropriateness of the design of the Program, how well it was implemented, how effective it was in delivering the intended outcomes and how the Program could be improved and sustained over time. The data included survey responses from more than 350 patients, 112 staff and 80 referring clinicians from across our 6 health services. **It found that the design of the Program was key to its success and that health service leaders valued the benefits the WMHSP team brought through a structured approach to implementation.** Our approach helped stakeholders understand what we were trying to achieve and provided a focus on collaboration and knowledge sharing. The evaluation also found that 89% of patients reported a positive experience of receiving home-based care, and carers also reported a largely positive experience. 92.4% of health service staff also reported a positive experience of providing home-based care.



## Clear vision the key to Endo TRACS success

As Director of the Department of Diabetes and Endocrinology at RMH, Associate Professor Spiros Furlanos had first-hand knowledge of the hundreds of complaints received by patients annually, who were lost in mainstream clinics or dissatisfied with ambulatory care in endocrinology.

That's why in FY2021/22, he launched a pilot service to deliver rapid intermittent specialist care in diabetes and endocrinology with fast integration back to primary care. After the pilot was established at RMH, he reached out to collaborate. "The WMHSP was initially suggested by Christine Kilpatrick, CEO of RMH and Jackie McLeod our COO, because they understood there were similar issues occurring at Western Health and were keen for us to work together," Spiros said.

"The WMHSP helped foster the collaboration and dialogue between our two health services and helped us map the barriers and challenges to delivering more efficient ambulatory care in endocrinology."

Spiros said the process helped them understand that they needed greater symmetry in their approach and in their communications with primary care.

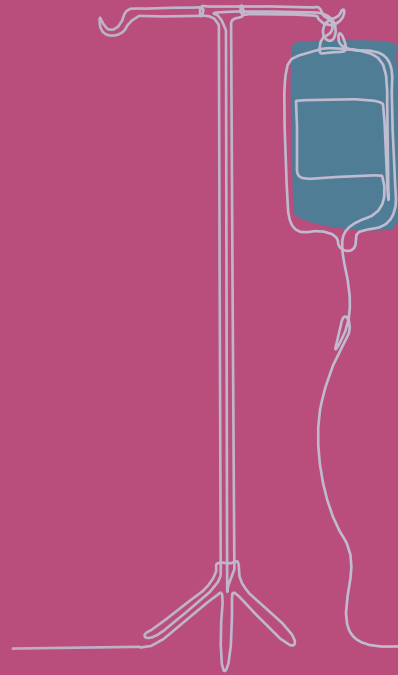
"Could we have gotten there on our own (without the HSP)?" Spiros said. "Yes, but it wouldn't have been as refined or powerful. It wouldn't have been as good. It's better this way."

Spiros said the key to successful collaboration was a clear vision of what they wanted to achieve and an openness to refinement and input. "A clear idea of the end product is really important, but you also need a strong collaborative mindset. The outcome for patients is safe care delivered more efficiently."

**"The WMHSP helped foster the collaboration and dialogue between our two health services and helped us map the barriers and challenges to delivering more efficient ambulatory care in endocrinology."**



# Planned Surgery Recovery & Reform



## Program

Our health services share a goal to improve patient access, experience, and outcomes in planned surgery. In FY22/23, the **Planned Surgery Program** has developed into one of significant scale and impact.

The Planned Surgery Recovery and Reform Program has four priorities: reduce length of stay and readmission rates; optimise our total theatre capacity; strengthen non-surgical pathways; and improve referral and waitlist management practices.

# Enhancing patient recovery after surgery

## PARTICIPATING HEALTH SERVICES

- Werribee Mercy Health
- Peter MacCallum Cancer Centre
- Royal Melbourne Hospital
- Royal Women's Hospital
- Western Health

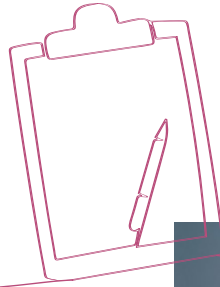
While thousands of Victorians have surgery every year, up to a third will suffer post-operative complications.<sup>1</sup> This risk increases by three to five-fold in patients who are deconditioned (unfit and malnourished).<sup>2</sup> As our population ages and comorbid disease increases, risk from surgery is increasing through delayed access to care and late diagnosis of patients impacted by the pandemic. Our Enhanced Recovery After Surgery (ERAS+) project, launched in FY 22/23, brings together five of our health services to co-design and deliver a systematic and scalable approach to solve this problem. Targeted surgical pathways include head and neck, colorectal, hip and knee replacement, benign gynaecology, and gynaecological oncology. To deliver the project, we've partnered with the ERAS Society and Encare, who are providing a structured implementation training and support program and auditing system to help monitor compliance with ERAS pathways. We've established robust clinical oversight of the project through our ERAS Clinical Council and a community of practice to support clinicians implementing the pathways. An independent evaluation of the project has also commenced. **As at the end of FY22/23 697 additional prehabilitation appointments have been delivered and 160.1 bed days saved.** The WMHSP has also developed 22 patient education videos as part of a Virtual Surgery School. These were developed with input from our members and consumers and feature senior clinicians from across our HSP.

**“[Our project] brings together five health services to deliver a systemic and scalable approach to solve this problem...”**



<sup>1</sup>Ghaferi AA, Birkmeyer JD, Dimick JB. Complications, failure to rescue, and mortality with major inpatient surgery in medicare patients. *Ann Surg* 2009; 250(6): 1029-34.

<sup>2</sup>Lee CHA, Kong JC, Ismail H, Riedel B, Heriot A. Systematic Review and Meta-analysis of Objective Assessment of Physical Fitness in Patients Undergoing Colorectal Cancer Surgery. *Dis Colon Rectum*. 2018;61(3):400-409.



# Improving the way we manage waitlists

## PARTICIPATING HEALTH SERVICES

- .....  
Werribee Mercy Health
- .....  
Peter MacCallum Cancer Centre
- .....  
Royal Melbourne Hospital
- .....  
Royal Children's Hospital
- .....  
Royal Women's Hospital
- .....  
Western Health



While demand for planned surgery is driven by a range of factors, strong referral practices and waitlist management can help us better manage our surgical demand. Our Waitlist Management Improvement Project is working to improve the way we manage our waitlists, starting with reviewing current waitlist management and referral practices at each of our health services. These practices were reviewed against Government policy and best practice guidelines relevant to management of waitlists across both specialist clinics and planned surgery.

The review has helped identify opportunities to strengthen the way our health services manage planned surgery waitlists. The review has also identified common challenges and opportunities to work together. **WMHSP also developed a model that can forecast planned surgery waitlists at a health service and regional level, providing health services with a way to model their own waitlists into the future.** This forecasting tool is being used by health services and the WMHSP to understand how changes to demand and surgical throughput rates could impact waitlists.

# Strengthening non-surgical programs and pathways

## PARTICIPATING HEALTH SERVICES

Royal Children's Hospital

Royal Melbourne Hospital

Western Health

Peter MacCallum Cancer Centre

Royal Women's Hospital

Part of the way we can reduce surgical waitlists is improving access to non-surgical options for patients. Across five of our health services, the WMHSP has a diverse portfolio of work underway to achieve this, including the design and delivery of an Australian-first Pelvic Dysfunction Clinic at Peter Mac. With support from WMHSP funding, Peter Mac has designed and delivered a model of care that is improving patient outcomes and reducing unnecessary surgical procedures and specialist clinic reviews. The clinic is now taking referrals from other WMHSP health services and **has already delivered over 100 appointments to patients**. Other WMHSP funded projects are also underway across our HSP, including Feet First, Hand Therapy, Pain Management, Back Assessment Clinic, Perioperative Care of Older People Undergoing Surgery, and Advanced Practice Physiotherapy at RMH; Chronic Pelvic Pain at the Women's; Osteoarthritis Hip and Knee Service, Neurosurgical and Women's Health Clinics at Western Health; and a Naso-Endoscopy Clinic, and Nurse-led Peri-Operative Care Coordination at the RCH.





# Optimising our available theatre space to improve access to surgery



## PARTICIPATING HEALTH SERVICES

Royal Children's Hospital

Werribee Mercy Health

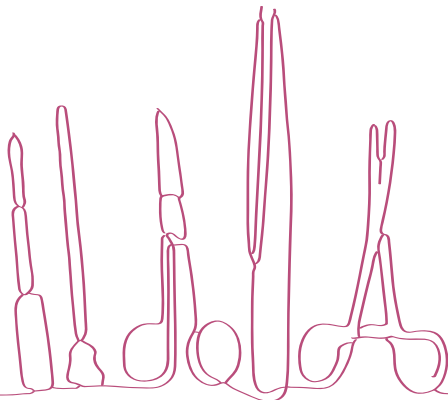
Royal Melbourne Hospital

Western Health

Peter MacCallum Cancer Centre

Royal Women's Hospital

With demand for planned surgery at an all-time high, we're partnering to share available theatre spaces and procedure rooms. In FY 22/23 the WMHSP worked with WMH to develop and launch a Rapid Access Hub for endoscopy. Since its launch in March 2023, it has become a hub for endoscopy procedures for patients from WMH, Western Health, RMH and RCH, and **delivered care to 669 patients**. The development of the Rapid Access Hub has freed-up operating theatre capacity at WMH. WMHSP also worked with WMH and RCH to commence a new 'RCH at Werribee Mercy Hospital' service. The service began with children's urology cases, improving access to urology day surgery and specialist care for kids in the Wyndham LGA. To date, **21 paediatric surgeries have been delivered**. Peter Mac and the Women's are also partnering to utilise available theatre capacity at Peter Mac for targeted gynaecology cases from the Women's, with **12 patients treated so far**.



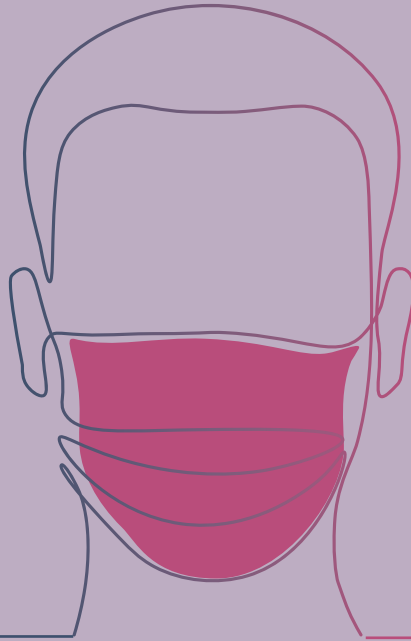
## Fast-forwarding treatment for gynaecology oncology patients

The WMHSP Planned Surgery Reform Program provided an opportunity for partner health services to work together and provide cross partnership support for planned surgery. An opportunity to use space at Peter Mac to treat gynaecology oncology ESIS waitlist cases from the Women's was identified.

The initiative looked at predominantly Category 2 cases, including total laparoscopic hysterectomies, and bilateral salpingo-oophorectomies. The result is a true collaboration, with staff at the Women's conducting prescreens, seeking patient approval and preparing patients for transfer to Peter Mac, and Peter Mac staff admitting and discharging patients.

While there have been teething problems, patients are seeing the benefits with patients from the Women's being treated sooner, the shared EMR facilitating patient information sharing, and a single surgical consultant supporting continuation of the patient oncology journey. The team have also identified the opportunity to treat more complex cases that may require planned or unplanned surgical input from a second oncology surgical specialty. The team said the weekly planning and debriefing meetings held by the Women's and Peter Mac had been helpful in working through the challenges early and enabling teething problems to be resolved.

**“The result is a true collaboration with staff at the Women's conducting prescreens...and Peter Mac staff admitting and discharging patients.”**



# Other Work

In addition to our flagship programs, the WMHSP team has brought together our health service partners on two important regional initiatives. The **Pandemic Response** and **Population Health Project**.

# Pandemic Response

## PARTICIPATING HEALTH SERVICES AND PARTNERS

- Werribee Mercy Health
- Royal Children's Hospital
- Royal Melbourne Hospital
- Royal Women's Hospital
- Western Health
- North Western Melbourne Primary Health Network

The West Metro COVID+ Pathways (CPP) program has been a key part of the pandemic response since 2020. WMSHP partnered with cohealth and NWMPHN to **manage over 87,000 patients in FY 21/22**, providing social and clinical support to patients who may otherwise have presented to an Emergency Department. Our unique integration of primary care benefited patients and their GPs, health services and the system. In FY 22/23 the CPP program shifted to a model where cohealth managed the bulk of the patients in the pathway. Due to the already established relationships, clear escalation pathways to health services were available and GPs were experienced and confident in the management of COVID positive patients. The WMHSP office supported the collaboration across the partnership and guided the program through various adaptations and changes over the past 12 months.

# Population Health Project

## PARTICIPATING PARTNERS

- North Western Melbourne Primary Health Network
- Western Public Health Unit

In FY 22/23, we pursued a Population Health Project with our partners at the NWMPHN and Western Public Health Unit. Together we undertook a comprehensive Health Needs Assessment for our local catchments to better understand the health needs of our community. **The results of the Population Health Project will help inform future reform initiatives for the region.** The project is also supporting more coordinated prioritisation and implementation across our regional networks.



# Thank You

The West Metro Health Service Partnership office team would like to thank our health service partners for their commitment and support, including our HSP Steering Committee and Program Steering Committees. We'd also like to thank our colleagues for their passion and collaboration, and our staff for their tireless efforts over the past two years.

## Our Health Service Partnership

Mercy Health

Peter MacCallum Cancer Centre

Royal Children's Hospital

Royal Melbourne Hospital

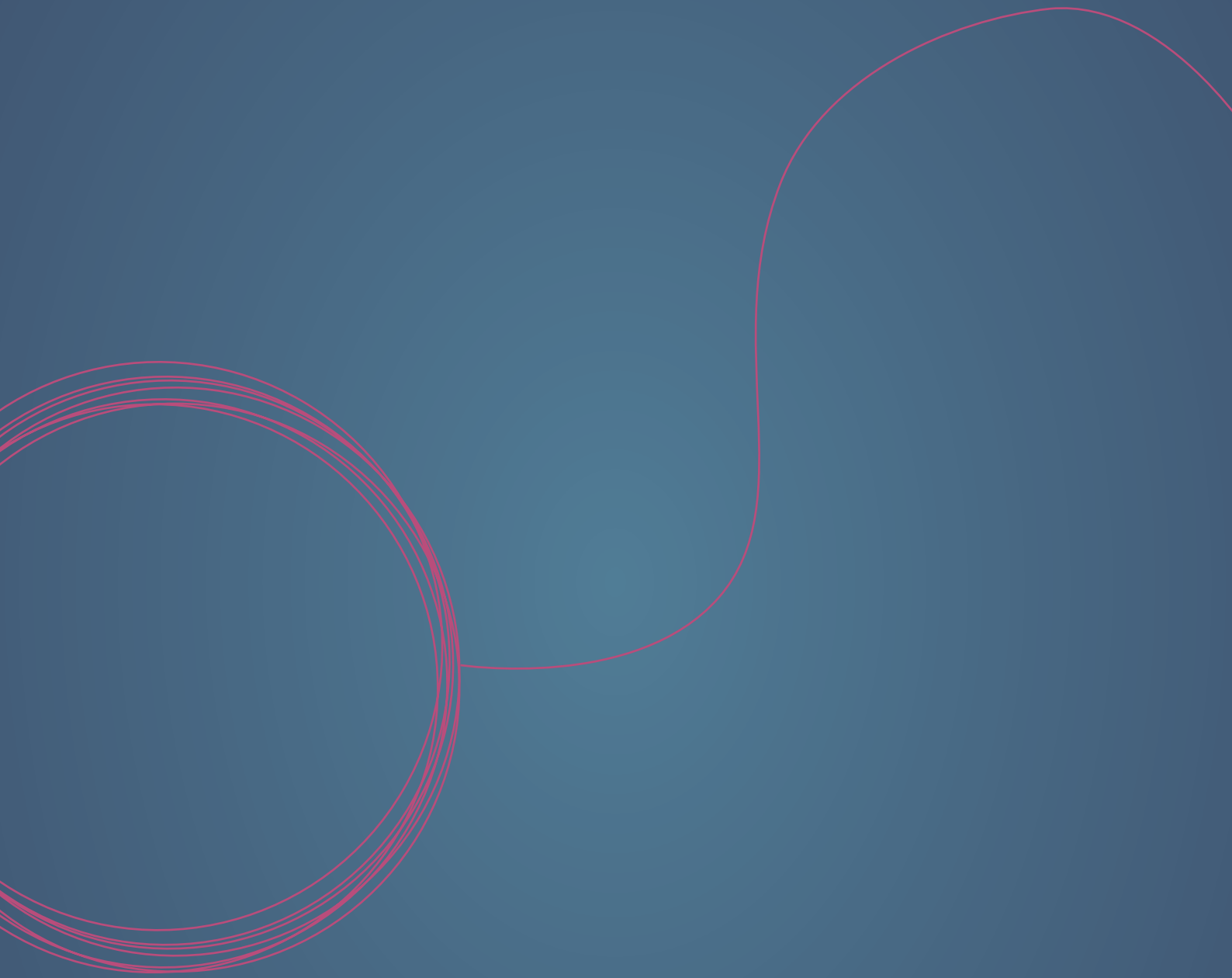
Royal Women's Hospital

Western Health

North Western Melbourne Primary  
Health Network

The Planned Surgery Recovery and Reform Program work was financially supported by Western and Central Melbourne Integrated Cancer Service (WCMICS). Find out more about WCMICS at: [www.vics.org.au/wcmics](http://www.vics.org.au/wcmics).





**West Metro  
Health Service  
Partnership**

