

South Western Sydney Local Health District

# Environmental Sustainability Framework to 2028



## Acknowledgement of Country

South Western Sydney Local Health District (SWSLHD) acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the ancient and sacred land that falls within the District's boundaries – the peoples of the Darug, Dharawal and Gundungurra Nations. We also acknowledge that all of the health facilities across the District are built on their traditional lands and we pay our respects to Aboriginal Elders past, present and emerging and extend that respect to all Aboriginal peoples.

Our District identifies Care of Country as a key principle of our direction in our pursuit of environmental sustainability, acknowledging the stewardship, care and continuing connection to lands and waters of Traditional Custodians.



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## Foreword

Caring for our community also means caring for our environment.

South Western Sydney Local Health District is working to enhance the environmental sustainability of our facilities and services, as well as for the communities within our region.

We are reviewing our supply chains, our energy sources, our waste and our models of care for ways we can lessen our impact on the planet. Environmental sustainability is an important part of ensuring the services we provide can continue well into the future.

We have already made great strides. In the past six years we have reduced our energy carbon footprint by 24 per cent by installing solar panels, upgrading infrastructure and equipment and installing more efficient lighting. We have added new waste recycling streams, planted thousands of trees and are transitioning our fleet to electric vehicles.

Our redevelopments at Bowral & District Hospital, Campbelltown Hospital and the ongoing Liverpool Health and Academic Precinct redevelopment all support our sustainability commitments, with energy efficiency features deeply embedded from the design phase onwards. This sustainable commitment will continue with Bankstown-Lidcombe and Fairfield Hospital redevelopments.

A new focus area of this framework is more sustainable models of care, considering all aspects of care from procurement to clinical practices, energy efficiency, waste disposal and recycling. Two of NSW Health's Net Zero clinical leads, Critical Care Director Professor Deepak Bhonagiri for intensive care and Dr Anthony Hull for anaesthesia work in our District, steering sustainable improvements across the state in those disciplines. The District has initiated its own Net Zero Champions program to foster collaboration with the other Net Zero Leads across the state and start their own projects.

We will continue to work with our staff, partners and the community to make a positive contribution to the environment of south western Sydney. Establishing safe and healthy environments where good health can flourish is an important focus of the District's Strategic Plan 2022-2027 Framework, and builds on our vision of leading safe, sustainable care for healthier communities.

We would like to thank our staff for their efforts to create a more sustainable healthcare system. We look forward to implementing more new initiatives as we continue to champion environmental sustainability.



**Mr Sam Haddad**  
Board Chair









**Ms Sonia Marshall**  
A/Chief Executive



**Mr Dimi Palamidis**  
Director Finance &  
Corporate Services

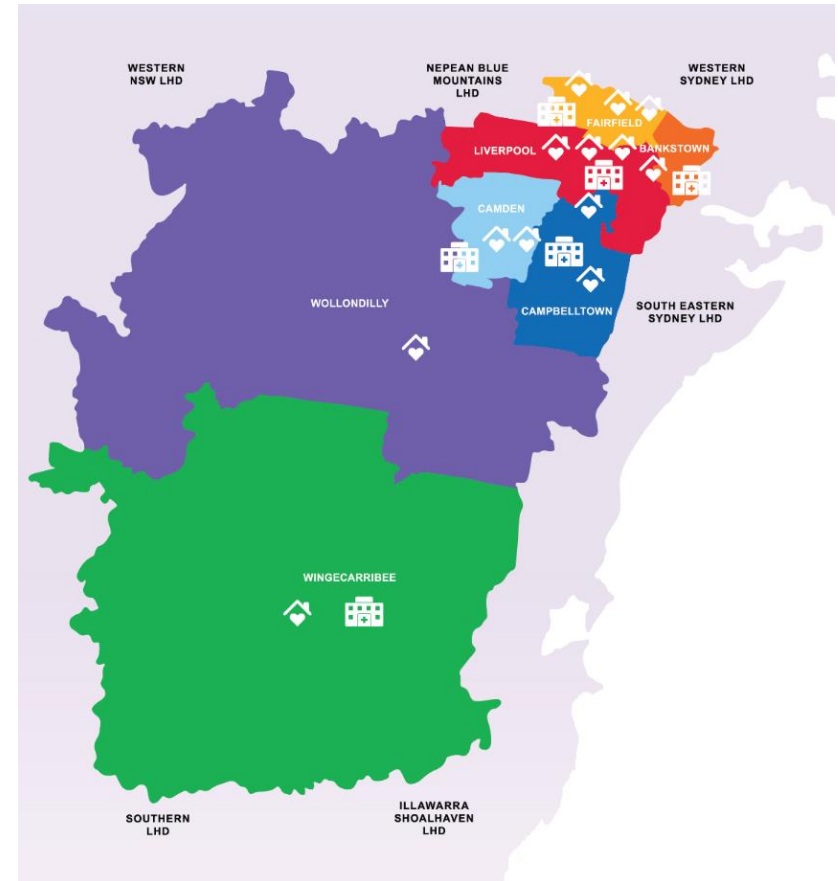
## SWSLHD Environmental Sustainability Framework to 2028 at a glance

<b>SWSLHD Vision</b>	Leading safe, sustainable care for healthier communities					
<b>SWSLHD Strategic Direction</b>	Build a sustainable future					
<b>SWSLHD Strategic Objective</b>	Pursue environmental sustainability across the organisation					
<b>Principles</b>	Care of country	Strengthen and enhance high-quality, safe care		Satisfy community and staff expectations	Meet legislative requirements	
	Improve outcomes through optimal use of resources and system capabilities	Resilient future-focused initiatives and practices		Progress through partnerships and collaboration		
						
	<b>Utilities, assets, capital works and infrastructure</b>	<b>Waste reduction and recycling</b>	<b>Greener travel</b>	<b>People, engagement and clinical care</b>	<b>Sustainable procurement</b>	<b>Sustainable leadership, governance and planning</b>
<b>Action Areas</b>	Energy and water use reduction Greener buildings, facilities and developments Green spaces	Waste reduction Waste segregation improvement Recycling improvement Efficient use and re-use of resources	Fleet environmental impacts reduction  Efficient fleet management  Encourage public and active transport	Environmentally responsible Models of Care  Workforce engagement, capability and understanding  Engagement of consumers and partners  Climate change impacts for healthcare	Sustainable products	Aboriginal stewardship  Data, monitoring and reporting  Communication and promotion
<b>Targets</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Desflurane:</b> Reduce use of desflurane to less than four per cent of fluorinated anaesthetic gas vials, thereby reducing carbon emissions from this potent volatile anaesthetic gas.</li> <li>• <b>Nitrous Oxide:</b> Reduce direct emissions attributed to nitrous oxide use in emergency departments, intensive care, oral health, paediatrics, theatres and birthing units (CO2e reduced five per cent).</li> <li>• <b>Waste Streams:</b> Meet or exceed the National Waste Policy Action Plan target of 80 per cent average resource recovery rate from all waste streams (excluding hazardous waste) by 2030.</li> <li>• <b>Waste Streams:</b> Reduce the amount of waste disposed to landfill by increasing the amount of waste diverted to non-landfill disposal by a minimum of five per cent per annum compared to the previous reporting period.</li> <li>• <b>Energy Use:</b> Reduce stationary energy consumption to reduce carbon emissions in line with State objectives.</li> <li>• <b>Energy Use:</b> Minimize spend and generate financial savings for the District.</li> <li>• <b>Passenger Vehicle Fleet:</b> Cost savings and reduced fleet operational burden through global fleet size reduction with a target three per cent decrease for:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Annual leasing or equivalent purchase costs where for purchased vehicles the cost of purchase will be dispersed over the lifespan of the vehicle (e.g. cost of purchase over a four-year lifespan),</li> <li>○ Annual fuel costs</li> <li>○ Annual servicing costs</li> <li>○ Annual registration costs and</li> <li>○ Annual insurance costs.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>					

## About South Western Sydney Local Health District <sup>i</sup>

South Western Sydney Local Health District (SWSLHD) is one of the largest LHD's in NSW and is responsible for providing health care to more than one million people across seven local government areas (LGAs) of Camden, Campbelltown, Canterbury-Bankstown, Fairfield, Liverpool, Wingecarribee and Wollondilly. The region's culturally and linguistically diverse population is rapidly growing and ageing and includes suburban and rural communities within its geographic span of 6,243 square kilometres. SWSLHD employs about 17,000 staff, with 70 per cent providing direct clinical care to patients, consumers and carers.

Figure 1: Location of SWSLHD Health Facilities



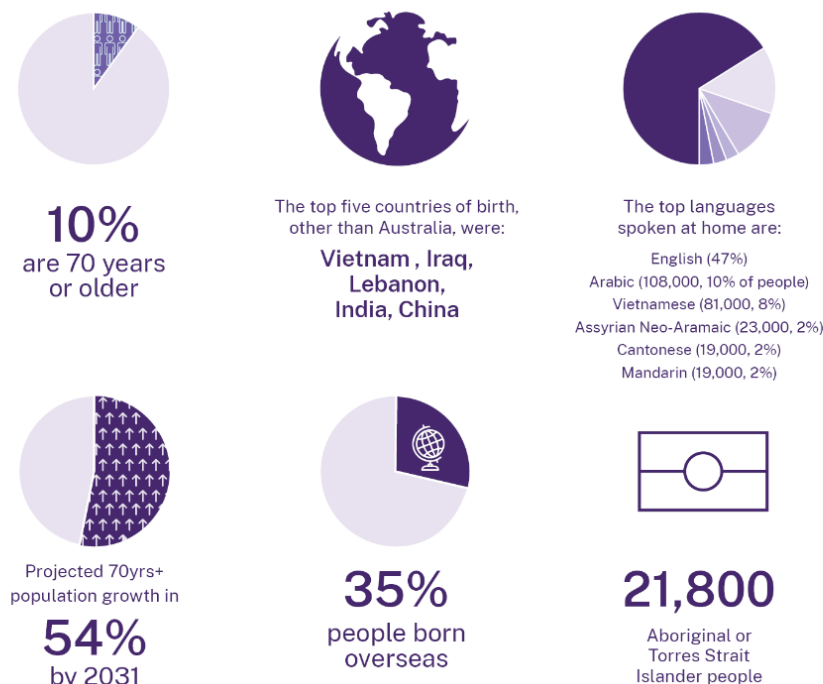
## Our Community

Although the population is relatively young, with 62 per cent of residents aged 44 years or less, there is a rapidly growing aged population. The population aged 70 years and older is expected to increase over the next decade (2021-2031) by 83 per cent. Substantial population growth is projected over the next decade, ranging from 34 per cent in Camden, followed by 21 per cent in Wollondilly and 17 per cent in Wingecarribee to 6 per cent in Fairfield LGA, driven by high fertility rates and urban development.

In 2021, around 22,000 people in south western Sydney identified as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander (2.2 per cent of the total population). The Aboriginal population is characterised by high numbers of young people and very few people aged over 65, reflecting the gap in life expectancy between Aboriginal people and other Australians.

Around 40 per cent of the population was born overseas compared to around 30 per cent for NSW. Close to 50 per cent of SWSLHD residents speak a language other than English at home, compared to close to 30 per cent of NSW residents. Around 10 per cent of the population identify they speak English 'not well or not at all' which is around double the state average (4.5 per cent). Most humanitarian entrants who arrive in NSW settled in south western Sydney, predominantly in Fairfield and Liverpool local government areas.

Figure 2: Our Community



South western Sydney is an area with significant social and economic disadvantage with 50 per cent of the population over 15 years of age with mean weekly income under \$650 compared to 45 per cent for NSW and only five per cent with a weekly income over \$2,000 compared to nine per cent for NSW. Seventy percent of the population live in areas of relative socioeconomic disadvantage. Around 61,000 people in the region have a profound or severe disability.

Figure 3: Top five health conditions

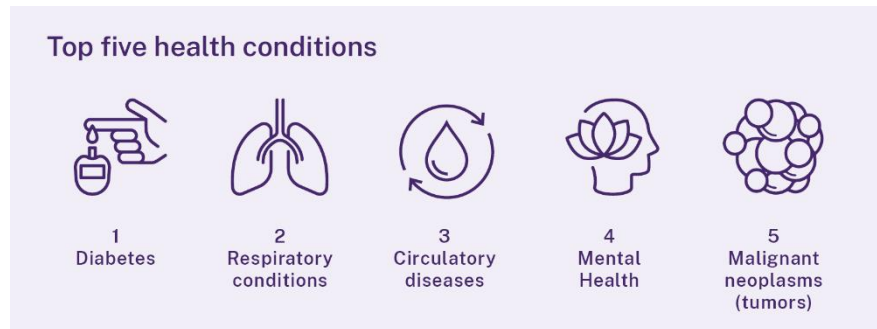
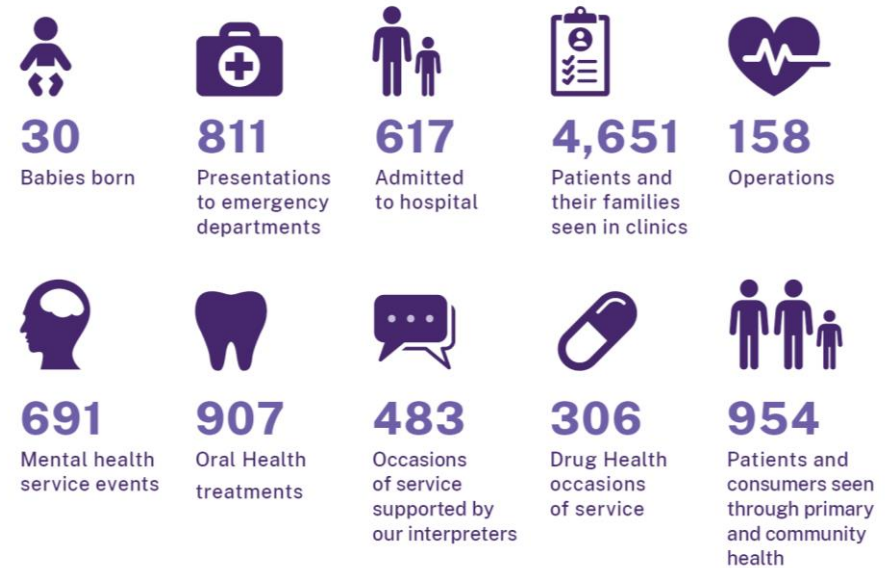


Figure 4: On a typical day

On a typical day across SWSLHD hospitals and health services there are:





## Strategic Context: Enabling Policies, Frameworks and Plans

### Future Health<sup>ii</sup>

NSW Health's commitment to sustainability is outlined in Future Health under the strategic outcome:

The health system is managed with an outcomes-focused lens to deliver a financially and environmentally sustainable future.

The following key objectives will guide implementation:

- Drive value-based healthcare that prioritises outcomes and collaboration
- Commit to an environmentally sustainable footprint for future healthcare
- Adapt performance measurement and funding models to targeted outcomes
- Align our governance and leaders to support the system and deliver the outcomes of Future Health

### SWSLHD Strategic Plan<sup>iii</sup>

Building on the identification of environmental sustainability as a Strategic Objective in the SWSLHD Strategic Plan 2022 – 2027 Framework, the SWSLHD Environmental Sustainability Framework to 2028 sets out the key priorities for the District in pursuing environmental sustainability across the organisation. The Framework builds on the successes of previous sustainability action plans and seeks to elevate and enhance our District's commitment to environmental sustainability.

### Transforming Your Experience<sup>iv</sup>

Transforming your experience (TYE) is a road map to transform how consumers, carers, families, staff and communities experience health provision in south western Sydney. This strategy provides a clear direction for leading safe sustainable care for healthier communities. TYE was developed in partnership with consumers, carers, families, staff and communities to promote patient centred positive experiences, and support and empower staff to achieve their potential in the delivery of health care.



Green space: The Ngalawau Nag-ah-mi Aboriginal garden at Fairfield Hospital

## Environmental Sustainability in SWSLHD

### *The practice of environmental sustainability*

Environmental sustainability is the practice of continuous action to minimise the environmental impact of the health system on the community and make positive changes to protect the environment. The practice of environmental sustainability focuses on:

- Caring for and improving our environment
- Ensuring efficiencies, effectiveness, productivity, resiliency and lowering costs
- Increasing knowledge and capacity-building practices, and
- More sustainable models of care.

### *Environmental sustainability as a health priority*

Environmental sustainability has been identified as a priority for our District as we recognise the impact healthcare has on the environment and the influence the environment has on our health and health service delivery. In pursuing environmental sustainability, SWSLHD will comply with its legal and ethical obligations; seek to minimise pollution and successfully meet targets for carbon emissions, energy, waste, and, resource use and create sustainable procurement practices.

### *Impact of healthcare on the environment*

Globally, the health sector is responsible for 4.4 per cent of greenhouse gas emissions, more than double the emissions of the aviation industry. In Australia, in 2014-15, healthcare was responsible for seven per cent of total emissions. Within NSW Government, NSW Health has one of the highest energy needs<sup>iii</sup>. The Australian Federal

and NSW Governments have committed to a net zero carbon emissions target by 2050. Developing a fully sustainable and net zero carbon emitting healthcare system will be fundamental to delivering this goal.

Hospital facilities operate 24 hours a day, seven days a week and therefore have large amounts of waste and account for more than a third of health-related emissions.<sup>iv</sup> Hospitals consume high levels of energy and resources, requiring power for medical equipment, lighting, heating, cooling, laundry and kitchen services. As a result, there is a need for greater carbon efficiencies in health care to reduce the environmental impact. Additionally, reducing the preventable burden of disease on the community and thus reducing related hospital admissions also plays a role in decreasing the impact of health care on the environment.<sup>v, vi</sup>

The demand on health services is growing globally and climate change is an operational risk to the health service in terms of infrastructure, legislative compliance, supply lines, the health of the community and associated costs.

### *Impact of climate change on the health of the community*

Climate change has direct impacts on the health of the community as a result of high temperatures and heat waves, storms, floods and drought and indirect impacts as a result of air quality, water quality and quantity, food quality and quantity and changes in ecosystems. The health-related impacts of climate change include heat stress and heat stroke as a result of high temperatures, respiratory illness and burns from bushfires, insect borne infections as a result of increased

rainfall, temperature increases and river floods, and mental health challenges linked to changing and uncertain environments. Action is necessary to address the causes of climate change, to mitigate the current and future threats to human health and to monitor risks and adaptations.

Whilst climate change directly and indirectly impacts all our community, people who experience disadvantage experience additional vulnerabilities related to social, health, and climate impacts and incur an increased burden of disease due to climate change.<sup>vii</sup> This includes people experiencing socioeconomic disadvantage; Aboriginal people; older people; those with culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds; women and children and people with mental health conditions or disabilities.

### ***Climate-related health equity***

Addressing accessibility and supporting people with additional vulnerabilities to increase good health is a priority as climate change increases the disparities in health inequalities across our community. Climate-related health consequences demands increased skills and knowledge for health professionals and medical practitioners to be able to identify and manage these health risks in areas of respiratory conditions, mental health, biosecurity, emerging infectious diseases, and public health.<sup>viii, ix</sup>

### ***Planning for environmental sustainability***

Environmental sustainability plans need to consider:

- the impact of infrastructure, supply lines, and higher electricity costs
- compliance with climate change legislation and governance
- increased financial and strategic risks for unplanned or unanticipated climate change events
- anticipated health impacts on our community, including cardiovascular and respiratory disease, infectious diseases (water, food, and vectors), allergies, injuries and mental health.

The Framework provides consistent direction for our efforts as we seek to achieve environmental sustainability across the District. Cost of service provision is a critical driver in future healthcare and environmental sustainability strategies will allow us to meet the rising costs of energy, water and waste management. In addition, environmental sustainability strategies produce resource efficiencies through changes in procurement practices and decision-making.<sup>x</sup>

The following principles underpin the SWSLHD Environmental Sustainability Framework through to 2028:



## SWSLHD Environmental Sustainability

### Framework

The SWSLHD Environmental Sustainability Framework to 2028 outlines six priorities and key actions to guide implementation of environmental sustainability approaches and development of operational plans. Within this document, Service Development strategies are identified as SD and Service Enhancement strategies as SE. Service development (SD) strategies are situated within the design, delivery and improvement of services, whereas service enhancement (SE) strategies require supplementary financial resources for their implementation.



Clean energy: solar panels installed on Liverpool Hospital car park roof

Utilities, assets,  
capital works and  
infrastructure

Waste reduction  
and recycling

Greener travel

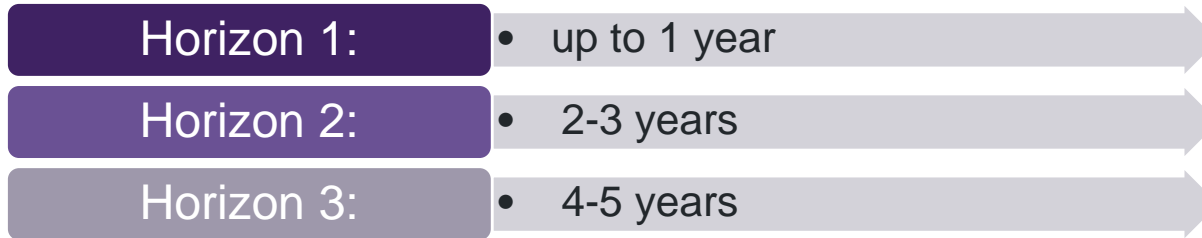
People, engagement and  
clinical care

Sustainable procurement

Sustainable leadership,  
governance and planning

**Horizons for actions**

The actions are linked to horizon timeframes across the 5 year plan:



Priority 1: Utilities, assets, capital works and infrastructure

Key Actions	Horizon
1.1 Identify and implement energy and water reduction strategies across SWSLHD facilities and services. (SD/SE)	1, 2, 3
1.2 Plan and design greener health infrastructure across SWSLHD. (SE)	1, 2, 3
1.3 Build and maintain green spaces in SWSLHD sites. (SE)	1, 2, 3

Priority 2: Waste reduction and recycling

Key Actions	Horizon
2.1 Develop and implement strategies to improve waste reduction and recycling. (SD/SE)	1, 2, 3
2.2 Monitor waste management compliance and benchmarking across SWSLHD and other agencies. (SD)	1, 2
2.3 Identify opportunities for use and reuse of resources. (SD)	1,2,3

Priority 3: Greener travel

Key Actions	Horizon
3.1 Reduce the environmental impact of fleet across SWSLHD. (SD/SE)	1,2,3
3.2 Implement efficient fleet management processes at all SWSLHD facilities and services. (SD)	1
3.3 Encourage staff and visitors to use alternative travel options including public transport and active transport. (SD)	1, 2, 3

Priority 4: People, engagement and clinical care

Key Actions	Horizon
4.1 Strengthen workforce understanding of environmental sustainability, encouraging engagement and capability building. (SD)	1, 2, 3
4.2 Engage consumers, partners and the broader community in environmental sustainability initiatives and strategies across SWSLHD. (SD)	1, 2, 3
4.3 Develop and implement environmentally responsible models of care. (SD)	1, 2, 3

Priority 5: Sustainable procurement

Key Actions	Horizon
5.1 Develop and implement sustainability evaluation criteria for all procurement processes. (SD)	1
5.2 Encourage sourcing and use of environmentally sustainable products where possible. (SD/SE)	1, 2, 3



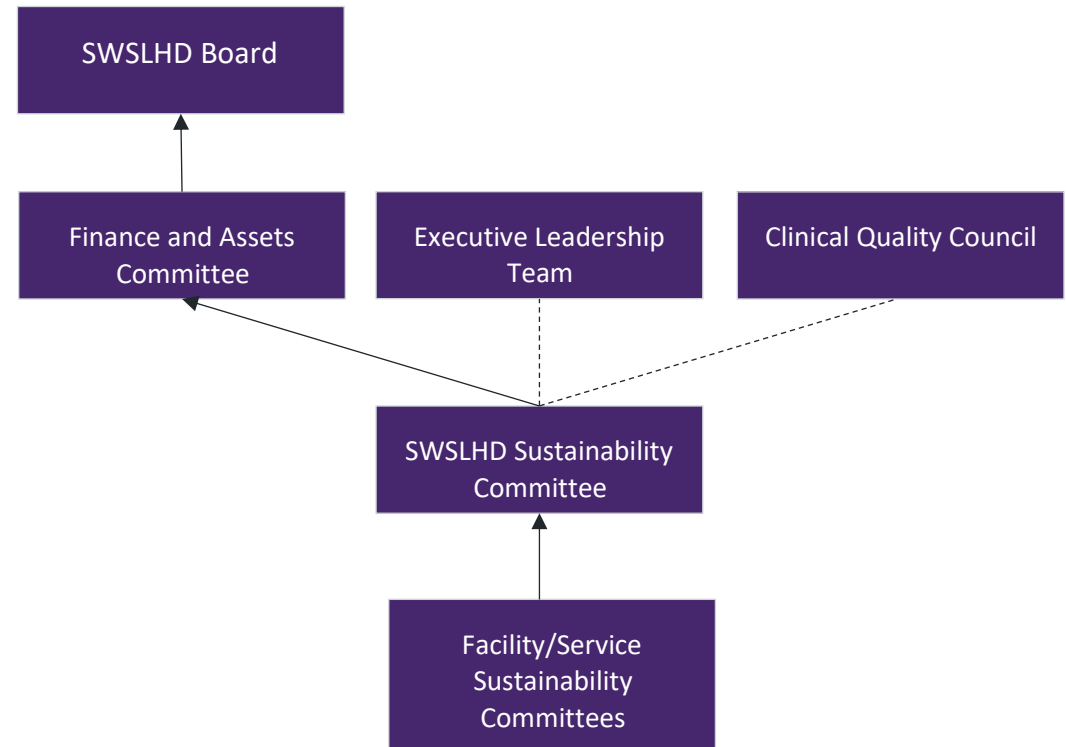
Priority 6: Sustainability leadership, governance and planning

Key Actions	Horizon
6.1 Incorporate Aboriginal stewardship, connection to country and respect of the land and natural resources into decision making practices. (SD)	1, 2, 3
6.2 Monitor and report impact targets and environmental performance data and key performance indicators via a sustainability dashboard. (SD)	1
6.3 Develop and implement an environmental sustainability communication strategy across SWSLHD to raise awareness, promote initiatives and programs and highlight organisational achievements. (SD)	1

## Governance, implementation and monitoring

Implementation of the SWSLHD Environmental Sustainability Framework to 2028 is a shared responsibility across SWSLHD, led by the SWSLHD Sustainability Committee. Over the five years of the Framework, detailed implementation planning will be developed annually, identifying activities for inclusion in directorate, facility and service operational plans. The SWSLHD Sustainability Committee will be supported in local implementation by Facility and Service Sustainability Committees.

As implementation progresses, the SWSLHD Sustainability Committee will monitor outcomes against performance measures, targets and timeframes. The Committee will report on these on a bi-annual basis.



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<sup>i</sup> NSW DPE (2022) Population Projections <https://www.planning.nsw.gov.au/Research-and-Demography/Population-Projections/Explore-the-data>

<sup>ii</sup> NSW Health (2022) Future Health: guiding the next decade of healthcare in NSW 2022-2032. <https://www.health.nsw.gov.au/about/nswhealth/Publications/future-health-report.pdf>

<sup>iii</sup> NSW Government, Sustainability initiatives in NSW Health <https://www.health.nsw.gov.au/sustainability/Pages/initiatives.aspx#energy>

<sup>iv</sup> Malik et al (2018) The carbon footprint of Australian health care in *The Lancet Planetary Health* 2(1), e27-235

<sup>v</sup> Malik et al (2018) The carbon footprint of Australian health care in *The Lancet Planetary Health* 2(1), e27-235

<sup>vi</sup> Peng B, et al (2018) Carbon emissions and public health: an inverse association? in *The Lancet Planetary Health* 2(1), e8

<sup>vii</sup> Australian Academy of Health and Medical Sciences Climate change: an urgent health priority <https://aahms.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/06/Health-impacts-of-climate-change.pdf>

<sup>viii</sup> World Health Organization (2021) Climate change and health <https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/climate-change-and-health>

<sup>ix</sup> Australian Academy of Health and Medical Sciences Climate change: an urgent health priority <https://aahms.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/06/Health-impacts-of-climate-change.pdf>

<sup>x</sup> NSW Health Resource Efficiency Strategy 2016-2023 <https://www.health.nsw.gov.au/assets/Publications/resource-efficiency-strategy.pdf>