

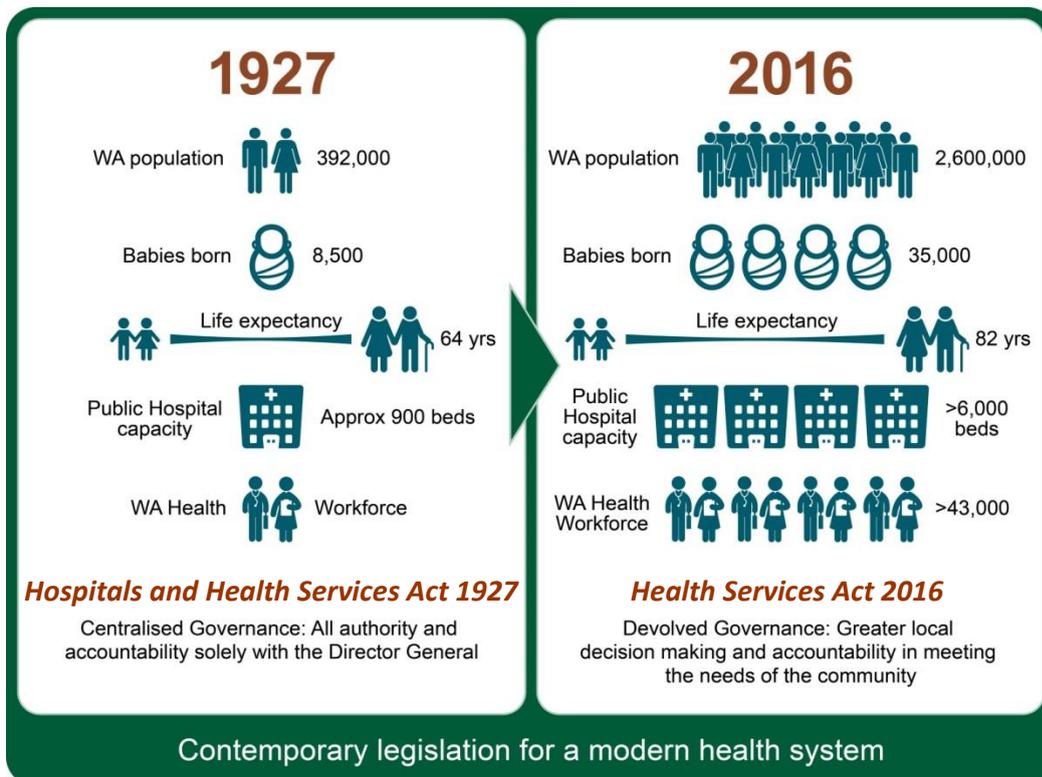


The Health Services Act 2016: A Snapshot

New legislation to modernise the way we govern and manage the public WA health system

Why is new legislation in place?

- Western Australia's population stands at over 2.6 million people – five times the size of the population when the *Hospitals and Health Services Act 1927* was passed.
- The *Health Services Act 2016* (the Act) commenced on 1 July 2016, providing a modern legal framework for clear roles, responsibilities and accountabilities at all levels of the system and a devolved model of governance that will enable decision-making closer to service delivery and patient care.



A comparison of statistics in 1927 (under the *Hospital and Health Services Act 1927*) and in 2016 (under the *Health Services Act 2016*).

What are key features of the Act?

- The Act supports WA Health's vision to deliver a safe, high quality, sustainable health system for all Western Australians including:
 - to promote and protect the health status of Western Australians
 - to identify and respond to opportunities to reduce inequities in the health status
 - to provide access to safe, high quality, evidence-based health services
 - to promote a patient-centred continuum of care in the provision of health services
 - to coordinate the provision of an integrated system of health services and health policies
 - to promote effectiveness, efficiency and innovation in the provision of health services and teaching, training, research and other services within the available resources
 - to engage and support the health workforce in the planning and provision of health services and teaching, training, research and other services.

- The Act defines clear roles, responsibilities and accountabilities across public WA health system.
- The Department of Health, led by the Director General, has been established as the System Manager responsible for the overall management, performance and strategic direction of WA Health. The Director General will issue binding policy frameworks, enter into service agreements with health service providers and ensure the ongoing performance of all aspects of the WA Health.
- Health Services have been established as health service providers that are separate, board-governed statutory authorities, legally responsible and accountable for the delivery of health services for their local areas and communities.
- Health Support Services (HSS) has been established as a chief executive-governed health service provider that is a statutory authority accountable for the delivery of support services.
- Health Services and Health Support Services have become separate employing authorities.
- The Director General and each health service provider are legally required to enter into Service Agreements that set out the services to be delivered. These agreements establish a health service provider's budget, performance measures and operational targets.
- The Act provides a framework for the purchasing of mental health, alcohol and other drug services by the Mental Health Commission from the WA public health system.
- Other features of the Act include provisions to safely and effectively share information across WA Health for better care, and a consistent, transparent and equitable approach to staff performance consistent with public sector standards.
- Subsidiary legislation including the Health Services (Fees and Charges) Order 2016 and Health Services (Conduct and Traffic) Regulations 2016 also come into effect from 1 July 2016.

What are the benefits for patients, workforce and the community?

- The delivery of better health, better care and better value through:
 - *Improved accountability to the community*
Strong governance foundations with clear delineation of roles and responsibilities will enable stronger system decision-making, operation and risk management.
 - *More responsive, flexible and innovative health services to the community*
Greater authority and innovation in Health Services in meeting the needs of local communities, including greater local decision-making and strengthened partnerships.
 - *Greater transparency and assurance of safety and quality of health services*
Robust systemwide policy and standards, aligned to national and international best practice to assure the quality and safety of health services.
 - *A more sustainable health system*
Strengthened financial management and business intelligence so that resources are allocated fairly and used efficiently to deliver the best health outcomes.

Where can I find further information?

- Fact Sheets:
 - *Changes to the governance of WA Health*
 - *The Role of the Department of Health*
 - *The Role of Health Services and Boards*
 - *The Role of Health Support Services*
 - *Functional Review and Readiness Assessment*
 - *Policy Frameworks*
 - *The WA Health Reform Program 2015-2020*
- Email: health.reform@health.wa.gov.au.