Local Primary Health Care Protocol

Between

Darling Downs South West Queensland Medicare Local

And

South West Hospital and Health Service
1. **PARTIES**

The Parties to this Local Primary Health Care Protocol are:

South West Hospital and Health Service, and

Darling Downs South West Queensland Medicare Local.

2. **PURPOSE**

2.1. The purpose of this protocol is to promote cooperation between the South West Hospital and Health Service and the Darling Downs South West Queensland Medicare Local in the planning and delivery of services.

2.2. The protocol is established in line with the requirements of the *Hospital and Health Boards Act 2011*, and *Hospital and Health Board Regulation 2012*.

2.3. The Parties also agree to work in the spirit of goodwill and mutual respect in adhering to the terms set out in the protocol.

3. **SERVICE DESCRIPTION**

**South West Hospital and Health Service**

**Our Vision**

- To be a respected leader and partner organisation to improve and maintain the health and wellbeing of patients, staff and our communities.

**Our Purpose**

- The South West Hospital and Health Service is responsible for the development and provision of sustainable health care services to meet the needs of the communities.

**Our Values**

- Caring – providing safe quality care for our communities as well as each other;
- Respect – to respect our clients, families, and our peers;
- Integrity – be open honest and transparent in our decision making processes;
- Responsibility and Accountability – recognising the need to follow through and make sure things happen - this applies to all staff;
- Teamwork – the need to work together as a team within each professional stream, multidisciplinary teams, and across a range of health care providers. Team work is an essential element to sustaining quality health care in rural and remote locations; and
- Innovation – a demonstrated willingness to try new things, develop new initiatives and position South West Hospital and Health Service as a leader in rural and remote health service delivery.
• The South West Hospital and Health Service (SWHHS) provides public health and hospital services across the Local Government Areas of the Maranoa Regional Council, Balonne Shire Council, Murweh Shire Council, Paroo Shire Council, Bulloo Shire Council, and Quilpie Shire Council.

The Health Service will operate it major facility at Roma, which is a medium size hospital with smaller hospitals at Charleville, St George and Cunnamulla. A significant number of small rural hospitals or multipurpose health services are located in the Health Service’s rural centres including Surat, Injune, Dirranbandi, Mungindi, Mitchell, Augathella and Quilpie. There are three outpatients’ centres at Thargomindah, Morven and Wallumbilla. Community and Allied health services are based in Roma, Charleville, Cunnamulla and St George and provide outreach clinics to the smaller centres.

The South West Hospital and Health Service also provides two residential aged care services. These facilities are located at Roma and Charleville.

Darling Downs South West Queensland Medicare Local

The Darling Downs South West Queensland Medicare Local became operational from 1 April 2012. This followed its establishment by the Australian Government as part of a network of Medicare Locals throughout Australia to coordinate primary health care delivery, tackle local health care needs and fill identified service delivery gaps.

VISION
To deliver demonstrable improvements in the health outcomes for Darling Downs South West Queensland individuals, families and communities through coordinated primary health care

MISSION
Connecting health to meet local needs

STRATEGIC DIRECTION
We will achieve our vision and mission by:

• understanding the needs of our communities and participating in strategies to address the social determinants of health

• fostering relationships and partnerships that build on the region’s history and successes

• identifying and responding to local needs and service gaps with innovative, sustainable and collaborative solutions

• enhancing equitable access to care by facilitating seamless patient pathways and service integration

• supporting primary health care providers to empower people to improve their health

• empowering consumers and patients through health promotions and health education to improve their health
- being recognised as a lead organisation in the coordination of integrated primary health care in the region and an employer of choice
- advocating for better health policy and practices locally, regionally and nationally

The organisation covers approximately 23 per cent of the total area of Queensland. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people comprise 4.5 per cent of the population of the catchment and approximately half of the population reside in non-metropolitan and geographically isolated rural and remote areas.

Through collaboration and coordination with communities across the region the organisation strives to:
- Help everyone to access the health services they need and are in close proximity to their residence.
- Access to services by using existing and new relationships to better link health professionals with the communities at need.
- Working closely with the two Hospital and Health Services in our region to make sure that primary health services and hospitals work together for improved patient outcomes.
- Offer a variety of key services to the region including the ‘Closing the Gap’ program, Early Intervention and Prevention program, Diabetes Education & Chronic Disease program, Mental Health program, ehealth and Rural Primary health.
- Plan for and implement an After Hours Health Service for the entire region.
- Support for not only the community but for health care providers to adopt and meet quality standards.
- Be accountable to our communities to make sure that services are effective, affordable and of high quality.

4. TERMS OF THE AGREEMENT

4.1. All Parties agree this Protocol does not create any legal relations between them. However, the matters set out in this Protocol are agreed to in principle between the Parties.

4.2. The Protocol between the Parties will commence on 01/01/2013 and shall continue for a period of three years unless earlier modified in accordance with this agreement.

4.3. The Protocol will be reviewed within three years. The review will be conducted by the South West Hospital and Health Service and Darling Downs South West Queensland Medicare Local.

4.4. The Protocol will be published in such a way that it is accessible to members of the public.
5. **OBJECTIVES**

The South West Hospital and Health Service and the Darling Downs South West Queensland Medicare Local recognise that improved service delivery and health outcomes will be achieved by strengthening relationships and integration of health services across government providers, non-government providers, private providers and the community. The South West Hospital and Health Service and the Darling Downs South West Queensland Medicare Local have agreed that the vision for the working relationship will be the objective of both groups working towards ‘Seamless Continuum of Care’.

Key issues for collaboration include:

5.1. Joint Service Planning

5.2. Joint Consumer Feedback/Engagement

5.3. Joint Support Strategies – workforce, recruitment and retention

5.4. Joint Data Sharing

5.5. Joint Care Co-ordination – Planning: Service Delivery (best capable/sustainable)

5.6. Other Service Provider Engagement/Collaboration

5.7. Form Seamless Communication Systems

5.8. Joint Board engagement

5.9. Joint Proposals – Marketing and communication

5.10. Joint Advocacy

5.11. Put Health Consumer at Centre of Planning
6. **Performance Outcomes**

6.1. All Parties recognise that communication is an integral component in ensuring the success of the Protocol. The Parties will meet on a quarterly basis to discuss issues, strategies and progress on initiatives.

6.2. The Parties will form a Joint Clinician Reference Group to support consistency and flow of information between the Health Service and the Medicare Local and its clinician members.

6.3. Parties will be jointly responsible for identifying and monitoring key indicators for the protocol and developing policies, procedures and strategies.

6.4. All programs implemented under this protocol are to be aligned with the South West Hospital and Health Service Clinician Engagement Strategy and the South West Hospital and Health Service Consumer and Community Engagement Strategy.

6.5. All programs implemented under this protocol are to be aligned with Darling Downs South West Queensland Medicare Local and South West Hospital & Health Service strategic and annual plans.

6.6. A summary of the key issues discussed and decisions made in each Board meeting relevant to the protocol will be made available to the Service’s local primary healthcare organisations.

7. **SIGNATORIES TO THE PROTOCOL**

(Name)
(Position)
(South West Hospital and Health Service)
(   /   / 2012 )

(Name)
(Position)
(Darling Downs South West Queensland Medicare Local)
(   /   / 2012)