

SERVICE PLAN 2019-29



Service Plan Summary

Introduction

Rochester and Elmore District Health Service (REDHS) is committed to ensuring better health outcomes for the local community and has developed a 10 year service plan in close consultation with the community, stakeholders and staff. The plan focuses on the current and future health service needs of the local community.

The REDHS Service Plan (2019-29) highlights the actions the organisation will take to address the changing needs of the community and outlines the new service delivery model needed to ensure the provision of safe, high quality services into the future.

Rochester and Elmore District Health Service is a small rural health service providing urgent care, primary care, aged care and inpatient acute services for people living in the townships of Rochester, Elmore, Lockington, and surrounds. The catchment area includes Rochester District in Campaspe Shire and Elmore – Rural North area in the City of Greater Bendigo.

Demographics

The catchment for Rochester and Elmore District Health Service spans two Local Government Areas, Campaspe Shire and City of Greater Bendigo.

- The population of Rochester District was about 7,500 in 2016 and is forecast to remain steady to 2031 (*Source: Victoria in Future*).
- The population of Elmore Rural North area is about 3,500 in 2018 and is forecast to increase to about 3,800 by 2036. (*Source: forecast.id*).
- In total, the combined communities have about 11,000 people in 2018 and will increase to about 11,300 during the 2030s.
- Demographic data forecasts a significant growth in the 65+ age group over the next 10-15 years. There is expected to be a net increase of 840 people by 2031 in Rochester District. (*Source: Victoria in Future*).

Priorities

- Strengthening urgent care and acute services.
- Increasing primary care, home care, aged care and outreach services.
- Enhancing health promotion, education and prevention services.
- Building our workforce through training, recruitment, retention and development strategies.
- Fostering regional partnerships to enhance service delivery.
- Review essential infrastructure to inform annual capital budget.



Health Profile

- An increasing population over 65+ age group means a greater demand on health service providers for age-related illnesses including chronic disease, cancer and others, as well as the need for more home-based aged care services.
- Campaspe Shire, City of Greater Bendigo and Loddon Shire had higher rates of avoidable deaths for all causes, cancer, cardiovascular disease and respiratory disease (2009-2012) than the State average.
- A higher than average percentage of persons surveyed in Campaspe Shire reported having a high/very high degree of psychological distress when compared with Victoria.
- The Shire also recorded a higher than state-average rate of alcohol and drug treatment services and registered mental health clients.
- The Victorian Cancer Registry reported that in 2014 the rate for newly diagnosed cancers in Campaspe Shire and neighbouring City of Greater Bendigo and Loddon Shire was higher than the State average. Participation rates for breast, cervical and bowel cancer screening in Campaspe Shire were higher than the state average.

Community Engagement

The Service Plan was developed in consultation with the community, stakeholders and staff.

The community has told the health service what they want through a series of public meetings, surveys and a 'listening post'.

Some of key themes in the feedback included the need for more aged care, outreach and acute services, improved aged care facilities, more allied health services, use of telehealth, more doctors, increased staff, and more education/preventative health care.

Suggestions through the community survey included:

- New facilities in residential care, including single rooms and larger dining room.
- New home-care options including respite care, and better support for older people making the transition into care.
- Broader outreach to the community with more community based health services.
- Better access to medical care and better medical models for urgent care including telehealth and videoconferencing options.
- Enhanced allied health services including falls prevention, exercise and strength-building, physiotherapy, occupational therapy, social work, psychology, speech pathology. Creation of more allied health assistance roles.
- Enhanced collaboration between the aged care services and the acute services.
- More access to diagnostic services, specialist consulting services and public dentistry.
- Dialysis and oncology services.
- More health-related education services for the community and enhanced health promotion.
- Easier referral systems.

Community feedback is being addressed through the actions in the service plan.

Addressing Challenges

The service plan aims to address the following challenges that have been identified:

Ageing Population

While the combined catchment area is not expected to significantly grow over the next 15 years, the population is expected to age; more older people means a greater demand on health service providers for age-related illnesses including chronic disease, cancer and others, as well as a need for further home-based aged care services.

More aged care services are needed and planned. A new service model is proposed.

Staffing

Rochester and Elmore District Health Service's small size and rural location makes it harder to recruit and maintain appropriately-qualified staff, senior staff, positions that require working out-of-hours, aged care nurses and some allied health disciplines.

Workforce strategies, education, training, recruitment and retention, and partnership initiatives are planned to address staffing needs.

Day Procedure Unit

There has been a significant drop in elective procedures since 2016. Two or three sessions for day procedures were being scheduled per month (with capacity limited to endoscopy and minor surgery) with visiting surgeons and staff travelling from Echuca or Bendigo.

The Day Procedure Unit has not been commissioned at REDHS since February 2019 when the outsourcing of services was transferred to Echuca Regional Health, due to declining use.

A total of only 17% of procedures were for local Rochester and Elmore patients. The majority of admissions, 54%, were from Echuca and Bendigo.

The REDHS Board and Executive Staff will continue to explore safe and financially viable options for the future use of the DPU.

Infrastructure

There is an ongoing requirement that our Infrastructure supports user needs:

- The two residential aged care services, in some sections, do not meet contemporary models of care. In particular, double rooms in the Nursing Home need to be replaced with single rooms.
- There is a lack of appropriate consultation space for clinicians.
- Lack of easy-to-adjust space for community use including covered outdoor space.
- The general practice requires layout improvements and space for training medical students.

Redevelopment of sections of the aged care infrastructure is scheduled to commence this financial year.

Current Services Provided

The following services are currently provided by Rochester and Elmore District Health Service (REDHS):

Acute Health Services

- REDHS has an acute unit with 10 beds including two Transition Care beds and a palliative suite with family facilities.
- An Urgent Care Centre is managed by the acute inpatient unit, with medical on-call support.
- Ultrasound and x-ray services are available three days per week.

Rochester and Elmore District Health Service is committed to enhancing acute services and urgent care to meet the needs of the whole community.

Aged Care Services

- REDHS operates two residential services on-site in Rochester, with a total of 60 beds (Rochester and District Hostel and Rochester Nursing Home Annexe). During the last four years, occupancy of residential aged care beds at Rochester and Elmore District Health Service facilities has remained consistently high.
- Home support services are also provided for older people in Rochester, Lockington, Elmore and surrounds.

Aged care services will continue to be strengthened. Residents of the community will be supported to stay at home as long as reasonably possible.

Primary Care, Community Health and Allied Health

An allied health team supporting all inpatients and residents; and providing home based and outreach care. These include:

- Occupational therapy, Podiatry, Physiotherapy, Dietetics, Diabetes education.
- Social work.
- District Nursing Services.
- Services funded under the National Disability Insurance Scheme are provided.
- Drug and alcohol withdrawal services.
- Health promotion services.
- Respite for carers.
- Group sessions on site including fitness for older adults; strength and balance; supervised gym; cardiac rehabilitation.
- Social Support Group.
- Home Care Services
- Home Care Packages.

Primary care, community health and allied health services will continue to be enhanced. There is a high demand for outreach services and home-based care.

Service Profile Changes

Rochester and Elmore District Health Service has proposed the following changes to the service profile to meet community needs:

- Continuing development of enhanced models of aged care.
- Continuing development of flexible home-based and community-based services (aged care and disability services).
- Continuing development of service models that can be provided in partnership with Bendigo Health, Echuca Regional Health and other providers, including existing services - Hospital in the Home, Transition Care Program, Short Term Restorative Care, and Rural Drug Withdrawal services, as well as additional services such as dental and oral health care, mental health services, chronic disease management services, Post Acute Care, etc.
- A telemedicine service will be developed in partnership with a health provider to support urgent care and specialist appointments.
- Strengthening health promotion and preventive services including rehabilitation.
- Enhancing primary care services.
- Strengthening partnerships with other health, community, aged care and disability organisations and private providers to enhance care.

Consultation on the Service Plan is ongoing and we encourage further feedback.

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