



**South East Health**  
*South Eastern Sydney Area Health Service*

**COMMUNICABLE DISEASES**

**STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS STATEMENT**

**1999 - 2002**

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**Acknowledgement:** The Steering committee and sub committee working groups were integral to the development of this plan however the efforts of a number of key personnel warrant individual mention. Ms Reta Creegan, Director, Nursing & Community Development, provided the leadership and vision to steer a population health approach to the development of the communicable diseases plan. A/Professor Sue Hanson, Area Manager Nursing Education Research and Development, undertook the complex task of synthesising the volumes of information into a coherent and well considered document. Ms Sue Stewart provided executive support to the committee. Their invaluable contributions are reflected in the high calibre of the document.

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## Foreword

The SESAHS *Communicable Diseases Strategic Directions Statement* represents a significant milestone in the planning, development and management of communicable disease services in the Area.

A comprehensive consultative approach was adopted for the development of the document, which involved numerous providers and consumers of services. This approach was time consuming though essential, as fundamental to the plan is a philosophical shift from service structures and inputs towards philosophies and outcomes of care. The results of this process are demonstrated by the quality of the document.

The *Communicable Diseases Strategic Directions Statement* was developed under the guidance of the Communicable Diseases Strategic Plan Steering Committee, who contributed considerable time and expertise. Thanks are extended to those involved.

*The Communicable Diseases Strategic Directions Statement* sets the framework for the future of communicable disease prevention and management in the Area. To achieve the goals and objectives outlined in the document will require on going commitment from all involved in the management and provision of services. I commend this document to you.



**Deborah Green**  
**Chief Executive Officer**

*March 1999*

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## Executive Summary

Historically the South Eastern Sydney Area Health Service (SESAHS) has undertaken service planning for communicable diseases on an individual disease basis rather than through an integrated population needs approach. The strategic plan for the period 1999-2002 detailed here provides an integrated and coordinated response to the communicable disease threats to the community of the SESAHS. The scope of the Communicable Disease Strategic Directions Statement incorporates services provided to the resident population of the SESAHS with regard to surveillance, prevention, treatment and long term care of communicable diseases. Specifically, it seeks to integrate, where appropriate, programmes targeted at the needs of people at risk of, or suffering from HIV/AIDS, Hepatitis C and other blood borne infections, sexually transmitted diseases (STD), tuberculosis, vaccine preventable diseases and nosocomial infections. It has been developed within the broad context of national and state health service policies and strategic frameworks.

Integration at the strategic level will flow on to the development of integrated approaches to service planning and delivery, and improving the effectiveness and efficiency of targeted programmes. Integration of specific communicable disease programmes will establish closer planning and evaluation links between services providing care to similar groups of people. Adopting an integrated approach to the planning of services for the prevention, surveillance and where appropriate treatment of communicable diseases provides an opportunity for collaborative case management approaches between government and non-government services and care providers.

### **Epidemiology of Communicable Diseases in SESAHS**

There is an estimated 10,000 persons living with HIV in NSW, of whom 60% or approximately 6,000 individuals live in the SESAHS. Approximately 40% of notifications of new cases of HIV infection in NSW are reported in residents of the SESAHS. Of the new cases in the SESAHS, 93% were males and 5% females. The notification rate for males in the SESAHS is more than three times greater than for males in NSW.

AIDS notifications in NSW appear to have peaked in 1994. Notification of AIDS by the SESAHS was almost 4 times that of the rest of NSW for males and twice as high for females. Crude AIDS notification rates between 1992-96 within SESAHS were highest for males aged between 30 and 34 years (142/100,000). Women aged between 25 and 29 years had the highest notification (4.6/100,000). NSW notification rates for AIDS averaged 7.0/100,000 over the same period.

There is an estimated 40,000 people living with Hepatitis C virus (HCV) in NSW of which an estimated 16% (6,500) live in the SESAHS. The notification rate for Hepatitis C in the LGA of South Sydney was 933.8/100,000 compared to 121/100,000 for NSW.

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Notification rates for syphilis and gonorrhoea are both higher in SESAHS males when compared with NSW as a whole. The majority of notifications of gonorrhoea were in males aged between 20 and 39. Gonorrhoea notifications have continued to increase in 1997 and 1998.

Notifications of tuberculosis from SESAHS represent almost 20% of the total notifications in NSW. The notification rate for SESAHS overall is 11.4/100,000.

### **Strategic Directions**

The aims of the SESAHS Communicable Disease Strategic Directions are to:

- Provide best practice standards of surveillance, health promotion, prevention, clinical care and treatment for communicable diseases to all patients.
- Ensure health care providers and the community are informed regarding the most effective available treatments and approaches.
- Ensure the cost-effective delivery of health promotion, prevention and treatment services.

The following goals and objectives have been identified as critical in achieving the goals established for these strategic directions.

#### **1. To provide a framework for an integrated, coordinated and comprehensive approach to the planning, provision and evaluation of services in the field of communicable diseases.**

- 1.1. Improve the integration and coordination of communicable disease services and programmes to enhance service effectiveness and to maximise the capacity to reach target or at risk populations.
- 1.2. Develop integrated practice partnerships where aspects of communicable disease have a clear and direct relationship with other policy or programme areas (eg. General Practitioners, Mental Health, Drug & Alcohol, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander, Housing)
- 1.3. Develop an integrated approach to the prevention of communicable disease that facilitates the development of partnerships between community based health promotion and communicable disease prevention programmes.
- 1.4. Develop a framework for the evaluation of communicable disease programmes that are population needs based and that incorporate measures of service effectiveness and efficiency.

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- 2. To establish a standard data set and comprehensive database for communicable diseases throughout the SESAHS.**
    - 2.1. Develop and implement a comprehensive Communicable Diseases database that is accessible to all health care services and practitioners; meets consumer and legislative requirements for confidentiality and privacy; provides timely, comprehensive and clinically useful reports and that is supported by a comprehensive structural and procedural framework..
  - 3. To reduce the burden of illness and to improve the quality of life of those already living with communicable diseases in the SESAHS.**
    - 3.1. Develop practice partnerships with consumers, non-Government Organisations and communities to facilitate effective, cooperative effort and joint decision making.
    - 3.2. Adopt an approach to the development of services that recognises the chronic nature of many communicable diseases and that is oriented toward assisting the community maintain optimal health status.
  - 4. To eliminate discrimination in health service planning and delivery and to ensure the protection of the human rights and dignity of people affected by or living with a communicable disease.**
  - 5. To affirm a systems wide commitment to excellence with the provision of communicable disease services.**
  - 6. To establish financial accountability in the allocation of resources within communicable disease services/programmes.**
    - 6.1. Ensure resource allocation is based on established measures of population need.

The implementation of the strategic goals and objectives set out in this document will be undertaken by a formal, accountable and participatory process with defined lines of accountability and communication. The Communicable Diseases Advisory Committee will provide the mechanism and structure for the integration and coordination of communicable diseases services across the area and will enable Area-wide analysis of trends, patient flows and service utilisation. The Communicable Diseases Advisory Committee will report to the SESAHS Health Outcomes Council.