



27 October 2015

## STATEMENT FOR PUBLICATION

### Dr John Ballard, Administrator of Djerriwarrh Health Services

Today, I was appointed Administrator of Djerriwarrh Health Services by Hon Jill Hennessy, Minister for Health.

The Minister determined that in order to be confident in the standards of care and safety delivered by this health service, a much stronger system of clinical governance, complete with new leadership, is required.

The Minister has appointed me on the basis of nearly 25 years experience of leadership and governance leading healthcare organisations. My role is to support the Chief Executive Officer to continue the change process underway, developing rigour and accountability in the organisation and its systems.

When clinical governance fails, the consequences can be tragic. We cannot diminish the grief being experienced by the women and families involved in the deaths of babies at Djerriwarrh Health Services, and they have our most profound and sincere apologies.

Without trust, Djerriwarrh Health Services cannot function effectively. I appreciate it will take time and hard work to rebuild the trust of the local community, but we are committed to doing so.

It is clear Djerriwarrh maternity services at times operated beyond the scope of its capabilities. There were significant gaps in skills and training of some staff, and multi-system failure to recognise and act on early warning signs.

We have new leadership, new clinical governance, additional support, training and education for staff, and new resources and equipment.

For the community, we can give assurance of a safe, secure and fully-functioning maternity service, with the substantial support of the Royal Women's Hospital and Western Health, now and into the future.

I will continue to keep the community informed as we work to implement the recommendations highlighted in Professor Euan Wallace's report.

Anyone with concerns about maternity care received at Djerriwarrh Health Services before March 2015 can call the Nurse-On-Call Djerriwarrh Support Line on 1800 675 398, 24 hours a day.

Patients concerned about the level of care they may receive or the care they are currently receiving should discuss this first with their doctor or midwife.

### The role of an administrator

The Health Services Act 1998 (Sec 61) states that an administrator "has and may exercise all the powers and is subject to all the duties of the board". For the term of the appointment, the administrator is taken to constitute the board instead of the members.

**ends**

### Further information:

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