

# Maternal and Child Health Service Statement



Date of Adoption:  
Date of Last Review:  
Date of Next Review:  
Responsible Officer:

March 2023  
Manager Community Support



## Purpose

This service statement defines the purpose and future direction of the Maternal Child and Health (MCH) service provided at Wyndham City. It provides the decision-making framework and principles for current and future service planning, and is an overarching, public summary of detailed service planning processes, data, evidence and policy inputs. This statement affirms Council's commitment to deliver maternal and child health services within an integrated system of support.

Wyndham City is continuously improving service planning and alignment to ensure public value in all service areas, and accountability and efficiency at the service level. Service planning and statements support the delivery of the Wyndham City Plan 2017-21, and the Wyndham 2040: Community Vision. The MCH service planning fits within a lifecourse approach being developed across services to meet the holistic needs of community members throughout their lives. This approach will deliver on the Community Vision through supporting integrated and joined up services, that wrap-around community members as they seek different services at different stages of life in the community. The MCH service is a crucial start to this cycle of lifecourse services.

This service statement will inform the design of service performance measures based on the principles and service direction articulated here, and in the context of lifecourse planning. Service levels and measures will be monitored in Wyndham City's Service Catalogue. This service statement also informs the service definition and budget in the Annual Plan and Budget, which is transparently reported on in the Annual Report, and through the Local Government Reporting Framework.

## Maternal and Child Health Nursing in Wyndham

Wyndham City's MCH Service is leading the way in Victoria in many respects. Recent achievements include innovative partnerships with general practice and child care, involving families as partners in practice, pioneering good practice service models for Aboriginal and refugee cohorts, and delivering a quality service in the context of rapid population growth.

Increasing complexity, increasing demand and increasing diversity are having a great impact on MCH nursing in Wyndham. This is related to population growth – a level of prevalence of health, social and emotional issues can be anticipated alongside the growing volume of demand. Increasingly, the workforce is dealing with the impacts of trauma on child development and family wellbeing. The low provision of tertiary and acute support services pushes risk down to the universal service.

Culturally appropriate care is an important factor in considering how best to enable the health and development of children. Wyndham has the highest rate and number of overseas arrivals across Victorian growth areas. Based on our successes with bicultural support resources, and the myriad journeys our families undertake to settle in Wyndham, it is important that our services build on the cultural strengths of our families. This is particularly important for parents from communities that do not have a well-established cultural community in the local area, or whose citizenship status prevents them from accessing universal services.

Evidence shows that a child's first 1,000 days are a critical period in a child's physical, social and psychological development. Strategies aimed at support for children in their early years and families have enduring outcomes over the long-term.



## Context

The Victorian Maternal and Child Health (MCH) Service is a universal service available for all families with children from birth to school age through a schedule of consultations at key ages and stages, and other activities including parent groups. Additional support is also available through the Enhanced MCH Service, which responds to children and families who need extra support. Both the Universal and Enhanced services are supported by the 24-hour MCH Line.

A memorandum of understanding (MOU) between the Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV) and the Department of Education and Training (DET) guides the partnership between State and Local government for the planning, funding and provision of maternal and child health services. This MOU commits both Council and the State Government to co-funding the service on a 50:50 model.

Our funding and service agreements provide the base starting point for service delivery, planning and performance measurement. This is calculated based on the level of participation in the service at key age and stage consultations. Over time, Council's proportion has increased beyond 50 per cent, despite a range of system efficiencies being implemented. In the context of the Victorian Government's policy on rate-capping, this puts a strain on the resources required to adequately meet the current and future service needs of the Wyndham community.

Aligned with our aim to deliver a service that our community values, performance will also be measured through:

- Development of data sources and collection methods that tell us about parent confidence and other measures that parents value outlined in the *Value Proposition* section below. This includes an ongoing process for collecting and analysing community feedback.
- Monitoring the preparedness of families entering our community care system, including contributing factors, and what might have helped parents to better prepare.
- Monitoring preparedness of children to successfully enter the education system.

Council is implementing a model of integrated service delivery. All future service delivery models and facilities that Council develops will align with the following principles.

Services and facilities will:

- Support the integrated delivery of early childhood and related family services
- Improve access to high quality early childhood services for the local community, particularly for disadvantaged and vulnerable families
- Support the establishment of connections with local schools
- Facilitate access for children of all abilities
- Enable a positive learning and caring culture in the local area
- Transform the physical and social environments that impact on child development
- Enable uninterrupted support for children's healthy growth, from prenatal to young people accessing education, training and employment
- Support families to raise their children as well as provide educational and employment opportunities
- Build community across residents, institutions and other stakeholders

## Scope

This statement applies to the following services:

- Universal Maternal and Child Health
- Enhanced Maternal and Child Health
- Immunisations
- Any services delivered by Council that are funded in line with the MOU between DET and MAV for the provision of maternal and child health services.



## Vision

Wyndham families have access to Maternal and Child Health services that support the capacity of the family through a range of targeted and integrated programs that respond to local community needs.

The planning, development, design and delivery of Maternal Child Health and Wellness services in Wyndham aligns with contemporary national and international models of best practice.

## Value Proposition

Families have access to locally responsive Maternal and Child Health services provided by Council staff within integrated settings that align with Victorian MCH Practice Guidelines.

Understanding what families need, want and aspire to is a primary goal of effective service delivery. We understand that Wyndham parents value:

- Knowing their baby is healthy and developing well
- Being assured they're doing the right thing as a parent/carer
- Talking to someone and getting some support
- Learning more about parenting
- Connecting with new parents
- Understanding why they're feeling down after giving birth
- Knowing there's somewhere to go to ensure they and their children are safe.
- Continuity of care with the same nurse (where preferred).

## Council's Role

### Leader

Lead the development of innovative service delivery models through increased service levels by expanding and diversifying funding sources, piloting specialised roles and innovations. Developing relationships with research institutions, and academic institutions that provide the pipeline for health and human services workforces.

### Service provider

Council provides Immunisation and Maternal Child Health and Wellness services that respond to the diverse needs of children, families and communities that are delivered within the context of service integration, Victorian MCH Guidelines and best value, including; efficiency, cost effectiveness, transparency and accountability.

### Partner

Work in partnership with a range of stakeholders including families, health providers, human service agencies, State Government and schools to build a strong child and family health care system that values and supports children and their families in Wyndham.

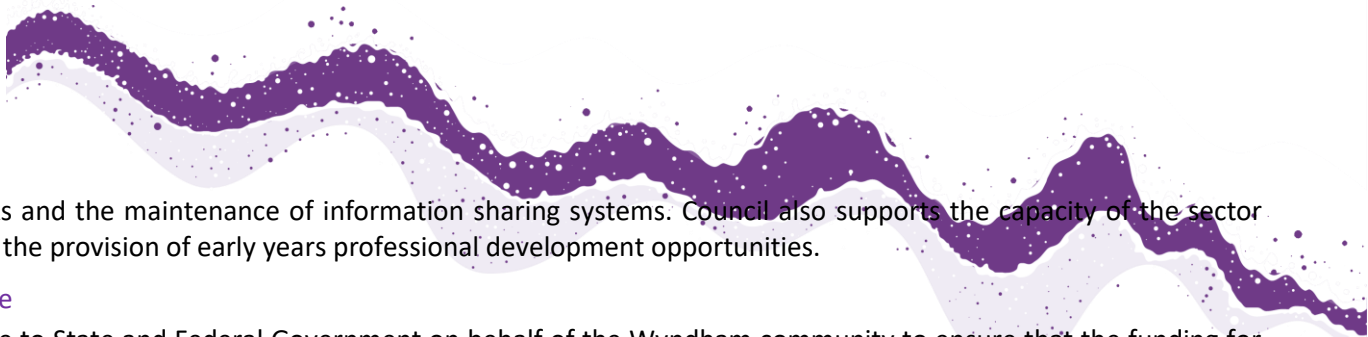
### Planner

Plan, design and build infrastructure to support the delivery of Maternal and Child Health and Wellness services provided by both Council and other organisations for the benefit of local families and children.

Work in partnership with a range of community support services, early years providers, health providers, governments, agencies, education providers and families to plan and facilitate effective and coordinated services for children and their families in the municipality, this includes; service system planning and development as well as a whole of community approach to meeting the needs of local families and children.

### Facilitator/Broker

Play a key role in information dissemination and in connecting local service providers through the facilitation of



networks and the maintenance of information sharing systems. Council also supports the capacity of the sector through the provision of early years professional development opportunities.

#### Advocate

Advocate to State and Federal Government on behalf of the Wyndham community to ensure that the funding for and commitment to the provision of child and family health and wellbeing services meets the community's needs.

#### Stewardship

Improve the capacity and capability of an integrated service system in Wyndham through local government stewardship.

### Service Commitment

Council is committed to ensuring that Wyndham children and their families will have the opportunity to optimise their health, development and wellbeing through access to timely and responsive Maternal and Child Health services.

From analysis of the Local Government Act's Objectives of a Council, and with consideration to Public Value Principles, we commit to delivering services that are:

- **Outcome focused** - Our services and people aligned all efforts towards delivering community outcomes and improving public value.
- **Agile** - The City's rapid growth means we need to quickly respond to change ensuring continuous improvement, relevancy and value-add.
- **Efficient** - With limited resources we need to be effective and efficient to ensure maximum public value no matter the constraints.
- **Accessible** - Our strategies and services need to be easy to access, equitable, affordable, clearly communicated and simply understood.
- **Integrated** – It is essential that we align effort across a service system to maximise community benefits
- **Transparent** – We have a responsibility to keep our community informed of how we use public funds.


Maternal Child Health and Wellness Services will usually be delivered from community facilities which support integrated service provision across a suite of community support services. Sometimes services will be offered in other settings which promote increased access for particular cohorts of families and children.

The redevelopment of existing community facilities and the development of new facilities will encompass the establishment of an Early Years' Service Model that includes a suite of integrated early childhood education and care services to meet community need including maternal and child health.

When existing sites are redeveloped opportunities for partnerships to ensure that services are able to meet community need will be considered. The following framework will be used to guide Council's decision making process to determine when services will be delivered by Council.

#### Decision Making Framework

Service principle	Acquittal
<b>Outcome Focused</b>	Council will ensure access to quality Maternal and Child Health services for the local community. The planning, development, design and delivery of Maternal and Child Health services in Wyndham will align with contemporary national and international models of best practice.



We will support local employment. Many of our staff are from the local community. We support the further education and training of our staff for their own improvement as well as to create greater benefit for our community.

**Agile**

We will ensure we base our services on the best information available in a timely manner. As an example of our responsiveness, provision of temporary sites may be established to meet an unplanned community need.

We will ensure community voice is heard and responded to in our service design process, and reflected in our continuous improvement approach.

**Efficient**

The model and resourcing will provide value for money, with services and infrastructure delivered at a level of subsidy that is acceptable to Council.

Council will seek to create efficiencies through partnering with other specialist and generalist providers.

An integrated model can reduce duplication across allied services.

**Accessible**

The diversity of our communities is a source of pride, not an access barrier. Families will not be disadvantaged to access Council services as a result of personal characteristics. In our role as leader, planner and our facilitating and leadership role as service provider, we will be cognisant of the cultural and personal needs of our community members, and support the health and human services sector to ensure accessibility.

Affordability will not be a barrier to accessing quality services. Assessments of service gaps will inform Council's decision to enter into service sectors to ensure a healthy market.

Our services will be delivered through a model and level of subsidy that is acceptable to community members.

From an equity perspective, Council recognises that greater effort may be required for some children to achieve equality of opportunity.

**Integrated**

In our service system planning and development role, we will facilitate a whole-of-community approach to meeting the needs of children and their families. Services work as one to provide more comprehensive and cohesive delivery to community.

We will seek to understand the service system as a whole and to align effort from all contributors to the system.

**Transparent**

We have a responsibility to keep our community informed of how we make decisions and use public funds.

Council may make an operational decision to deliver allied health services in line with the Victorian Enhanced MCH Reform Program Guidelines if there are no available partners and services. These services will be delivered in line with the above decision making framework. A sector development plan will be implemented to ensure a transition from Council to appropriate health and human services agencies occurs.





## Associated Policies & Documents

- Local Government Act 1989
- Family Friendly City Charter, 2018
- Wyndham 2040 Community Plan
- Wyndham City Plan 2017-2021
- Wyndham Best Start Action Plan
- Wyndham Service and Asset Strategy (in development)
- Wyndham Service Planning Framework
- Wyndham Lifecourse Framework (in development)
- Wyndham Public Value Framework: Services and Strategies (in development)
- Victorian Maternal and Child Health Practice Guidelines, 2018.
- Maternal and Child Health Service Program Standards (Department of Education and Early Childhood Development, 2009)
- Enhanced Maternal and Child Health Program Guidelines (DET, 2018)
- Memorandum of Understanding between Department of Education and Training and Municipal Association of Victoria in relation to the Maternal and Child Health Service 2017-2020
- Children, Youth and Families Act 2005

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