



**Government
of South Australia**

VETERANS' HEALTH ADVISORY COUNCIL

2018-19 Annual Report

VETERANS' HEALTH ADVISORY COUNCIL

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To:

The Hon Stephen Wade MLC
Minister for Health and Wellbeing

This annual report will be presented to Parliament to meet the statutory reporting requirements of (the *Public Sector Act 2009*, the *Public Finance and Audit Act 1987* and the *Health Care Act 2008*) and the requirements of Premier and Cabinet Circular *PC013 Annual Reporting*.

This report is verified to be accurate for the purposes of annual reporting to the Parliament of South Australia.

Submitted on behalf of the VETERANS' HEALTH ADVISORY COUNCIL by:

Geoff Tattersall
Presiding Member

Date 25 September 2019

Signature



From the Presiding Member

The Veterans' Health Advisory Council (VHAC) is comprised entirely of volunteers appointed by the Minister for Health and Wellbeing all of whom have relevant knowledge and experience in matters relating to veterans' health and wellbeing. It is supported by an Executive Officer who is employed by RSL Care SA for two days per week which is funded through a service agreement with SA Health.

The 2018-19 year has been a particularly busy and productive for VHAC. Our principal role is to advise the Minister for Health and Wellbeing on the health service needs, priorities and issues for veterans and for the spouse, widow or widower of veterans and to advocate on their behalf with the Minister. VHAC engages with ex-service and related organisations to get their views when preparing such advice for the Minister.

During the past year VHAC has provided advice to the Minister on a broad range of issues including;

- The provision of facilities and services for veterans at the reactivated Repat site including the development of a Veteran Wellbeing Hub at the site.
- The establishment of a Post Occupation Review for the Jamie Larcombe Centre which was commissioned by SA Health in April 2019 and is expected to report early in the 2019-20 year.
- The Productivity Commission's Interim Report of its review into compensation and rehabilitation for veterans. Further advice is likely when the final report from the Commission is delivered early in the new year.
- Post Traumatic Stress Disorder terminology.
- The difficulty experienced by some clients awaiting discharge from The Jamie Larcombe Centre having timely access to Aged Care and/or NDIS Assessment.
- A proposal to amend the Rules of VHAC to better reflect the environment in which it works. Amended Rules were signed by the Minister to come into effect from 1 June 2019.

In July 2018 VHAC conducted a workshop to review progress with the implementation of the recommendations of the *Framework for Veterans' Health Care 2016-2020* and to set its priorities for consideration throughout the year. The development by SA Health of a video and continuing education module for staff which emphasised the importance of identifying veterans a point of entry to the health system was a significant achievement in meeting one of the key recommendations of the Framework.

VHAC will soon have to give its attention to providing advice on the development of an updated Framework when the existing Framework expires at the end of 2020.

Prior to the amendment of VHAC's Rules on 1 June 2019 VHAC comprised up to 15 members appointed by the Minister of which 11 were nominated by RSL SA and 4 by the Minister. The amended Rules now prescribe that RSL SA may nominate 1 Member, VHAC may nominate 10 members, after consulting with the veteran community, and the Minister may nominate 4 members.

The following persons were members of VHAC throughout the 2018-19 year.

RSL SA Nominations
Mr Geoff Tattersall (Presiding Member)
Ms Ilona Horan (Deputy Presiding Member)
Mr Nathan Klinge
Dr Chris Butcher
Professor Alexander McFarlane
Dr Paula Dabovich
Mr Craig Rivett
Mr Bill Denny
Ministerial Nominations
Ms Genevieve Rüeger
Ms Dianne Fairhead
Dr Robert Black

I take this opportunity to thank members sincerely for giving of their time so freely and for the contribution they make, both individually and collectively, to help improve the health and wellbeing of veterans and their families.

Geoff Tattersall

Presiding Member

Veterans' Health Advisory Council

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Overview: about the agency

Our strategic focus

<p>Our Purpose</p>	<p>The Advisory Council is established in relation to Veterans and the spouse, widow or widower of Veterans to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Advise on their health service needs, priorities and issues; 2. Advise on the delivery of health services; 3. Advocate on their behalf with the Minister.
<p>Our functions, objectives and deliverables</p>	<p>The functions of the Advisory Council in regard to Veterans and the spouse, widow or widower of Veterans are to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Act as an advocate to promote their health interests; 2. provide advice to the Minister about any aspect of the provision of health services; 3. provide advice or assistance to the Minister in relation to the development or implementation of systems or mechanisms designed to support the delivery of health services or programs; 4. assist the Minister and the Department in the provision of information to, and to consult broadly with Veterans in relation to health services provided by incorporated health services in the State; 5. consult with other bodies that are interested in the provision of health services to veterans; 6. provide advice to the Minister about any matter referred to it by the Minister or the Chief Executive; 7. give advice to the Minister on the development and management of health services and on the resources made available for these services and in so doing, reflect the views of Veterans; 8. provide advice to the Minister on the non-clinical commitments to veterans and war widows, as recorded in the 1995 'Record of Ongoing Commitments' between the Commonwealth of Australia and the State. These non-clinical commitments are as follows: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. the continuing work of voluntary bodies, including Ex-Service Organisations, is encouraged; b. Ex-Service Organisations and communities are welcome to visit the former Repatriation General Hospital, Daw Park and areas of significance; and

	<p>c. The Chapel and Peace Garden are maintained at the former Repatriation General Hospital, Daw Park;</p> <p>9. Provide advice to the Minister when the agreement between the Department and the Commonwealth Department of Veterans' Affairs is renegotiated.</p>
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Our organisational structure

The Advisory Council comprises no more than 15 Members who are volunteers appointed by the Minister. 10 of these members will be nominated by the Advisory Council. 1 member will be nominated by the RSL and 4 members may be nominated by the Minister

Changes to the agency

During 2018-19 there were no changes to the agency's structure and objectives as a result of internal reviews or machinery of government changes.

The Rules for VHAC that were first enacted in March 2009 were amended following a submission from VHAC and signed by the Minister to come into effect on 1st June 2019.

Our Minister



Hon Stephen Wade MLC is the Minister for Health and Wellbeing in South Australia.

The Minister oversees health, wellbeing, mental health, ageing well, substance abuse and suicide prevention.

Our Executive team

The Advisory Council does not employ staff. Its membership consists of volunteers appointed by the Minister one of whom is appointed as the Presiding Member.

Legislation administered by the agency

The Advisory Council does not administer legislation.

The agency's performance

Agency contribution to whole of Government objectives

Key objective	Agency's contribution
More jobs	Not Applicable.
Lower costs	Not Applicable.
Better Services	VHAC provides advice to the Minister on the provision of health services to veterans and to the spouse, widow or widower of veterans.

Agency specific objectives and performance

Refer to Page 3 Presiding Member's Report

Corporate performance summary

Not Applicable

Employment opportunity programs

Not Applicable

Agency performance management and development systems

Not Applicable

Work health, safety and return to work programs

Not Applicable

Executive employment in the agency

Not Applicable

Financial Performance

Not Applicable.

The Veterans' Advisory Council is a non-incorporated Health Advisory Council. It does not control assets, incur expenditure or receive revenue.

Risk management

Risk and audit at a glance

The Veterans' Advisory Council is a non-incorporated Health Advisory Council. It does not control assets, incur expenditure or receive revenue.

Fraud detected in the agency

Not Applicable

Strategies implemented to control and prevent fraud

Not Applicable

Whistle-blowers disclosure

Number of occasions on which public interest information has been disclosed to a responsible officer of the agency under the *Whistleblowers Protection Act 1993*:

Nil to Report

Data for previous years is available at:

<https://data.sa.gov.au/data/dataset/08a86488-85c9-4cce-a982-1bfd34c45bc3>

Reporting required under any other act or regulation

Act or Regulation	Requirement
Health Care Act 2008 Part 4 Health Advisory Councils, Division 3 Related Matters, Clause 22 Annual Report	A HAC must, within 3 months after the end of each financial year, deliver to the Minister a report on the operations of the HAC during that financial year.

Reporting required under the *Carers' Recognition Act 2005*

Not Applicable

Public Complaints

Number of public complaints reported

Nil to Report

Audited financial statements 2018 19

Not applicable

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