

Media Release

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Female directors in the pipeline

As part of a wider nationwide push to target gender imbalance at executive and director level, three of St John of God Health Care's senior female executives have been accepted for Director Pipeline Project, an initiative of the Australian Institute of Company Directors (AICD).

St John of God Hospital Subiaco's Director of Nursing and Midwifery, Chris Hanna, and Director of Mission, Suzanne Sherry, and St John of God Health Care's Director of Clinical Services Midland Project, Robyn Sutherland, will form part of a larger group selected from Perth-based companies who will be offered a range of opportunities to raise their respective profiles through networking, speaking, inclusion on panels, writing articles and meeting Perth's senior director community, all with the goal of achieving positions on corporate boards.

The ASX Corporate Governance Council's Guidelines urge companies to set targets to address gender imbalances in executive teams and boards, and international research has demonstrated a positive link between having a significant ratio of women at senior management levels, including on boards, and organisational performance.

St John of God Health Care's Group Chief Executive Officer, Dr Michael Stanford, confirmed that the not for profit private health care group is 100% behind this initiative.

"As an organisation whose workforce is 85% female, St John of God Health Care understands the many issues that can hinder and help a woman's professional development," Dr Stanford said.

"We have implemented a range of measures to help our female employees achieve their career goals, including through progressive employment policies such as flexible work options and our innovative parental leave scheme as well as significant professional and personal development opportunities.

"The step up from senior manager to board level can prove difficult which can be due to a lack of visibility and opportunity, rather than any deficit in ability and that is exactly what the Director Pipeline Project will address."

The AICD has been extremely active in addressing the gender imbalance, with significant success to date in their mentoring and other programs. This new project will build upon that success and is an outstanding example of how individual organisations and communities can work to address gender-based employment issues.

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