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EXECUTIVE SEARCH & ADVISORY

Candidate Briefing Pack

north richmond community health

Board Directors

Two Board appointments: Clinical Governance, and Government Relations and Stakeholder Engagement

October 2026

ABOUT NORTH RICHMOND COMMUNITY HEALTH

North Richmond Community Health (NRCH, Wulempuri-Kertheba) is a not-for-profit community health service and registered charity based on the North Richmond Housing Estate, on Wurundjeri land. It was born from a simple idea: that everyone deserves access to quality healthcare. NRCH opened its doors in 1974, soon after the Whitlam Government's Community Health Program set out to shift the emphasis of care from treatment to prevention, and it has served the Richmond community continuously ever since.

More than fifty years on, NRCH is a trusted provider, advocate and service leader for people experiencing significant health and social inequity. Its model of care is grounded in the social determinants of health: the understanding that housing, income, education, trauma, culture and access to services shape health outcomes as much as clinical care does. NRCH removes barriers of stigma, discrimination and accessibility so that people feel safe, seen and not judged, and its reach now extends well beyond the estate to clients referred from across Melbourne.

Vision. enhance lives and strengthen community.

Purpose. to pursue care solutions with a strong focus on addressing health inequity.

Values. Making a Difference, Being Courageous, Working Together and Embracing Diversity.

NRCH by the numbers

- More than fifty years of continuous service to the Richmond community, since 1974.
- Located on the North Richmond Housing Estate, home to more than 3,000 people and the largest public housing estate in Australia, with many languages, cultures and faiths represented and many residents from refugee backgrounds.
- A broad, integrated service offer: general practice and primary care, oral health, allied health, nursing, pharmacotherapy and alcohol and other drugs (AOD) programs, refugee and asylum seeker health, child, youth and family services, health promotion, and community development.
- Operator of Victoria's first Medically Supervised Injecting Room (MSIR) since 2018. Independent reviews have shown reduced ambulance call-outs, public injecting and discarded needles, and thousands of people connected to wider health and social support. Since July 2024 the service has been delivered through North Richmond Health Partners, a consortium with St Vincent's Hospital Melbourne, Access Health and Community and Your Community Health.
- Home to the Centre for Culture, Ethnicity and Health, a state-wide program that helps health and human services work more effectively with culturally and linguistically diverse communities, alongside award-winning oral health and outreach services.
- Accredited under AGPAL standards, with a commitment to trauma-informed, culturally safe, client-centred practice.

NRCH's role is genuinely unique: a place where clients with the most complex health and social needs come back because they feel safe, and where staff reflect the backgrounds and communities they serve.

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STRATEGIC CONTEXT

The Strategic Plan 2024–2027

NRCH's current plan was developed in its fiftieth year through consultation with more than 260 people, including staff, clients, community members, and state and local government leaders and policy makers. It sets four strategic priorities:

- **Affordable and sustainable healthcare that fosters connection:** securing funding for the Community Hub as a wide front door to health and social services, implementing the Community Paramedic (CP@Clinic) model and the Family and Child Hub, piloting group medical care, and shifting care pathways from acute settings into the community.
- **A safe and innovative place for harm reduction and addiction services:** implementing the enhanced MSIR consortium model, contributing to new evidence-based harm reduction and addiction medicine in Victoria, partnering on community safety, and advocating for drug law reform that improves health and social outcomes.
- **Respecting and upholding the rights of residents of the North Richmond Housing Estate:** building community engagement and governance frameworks, and influencing the direction of estate revitalisation, amenity and safety.
- **A thriving organisation and workforce:** building capability to work within a social determinants model, attracting Lived Experience and First Nations staff, strengthening a culture of collaboration and accountability, and improving financial acumen so that surpluses can be reinvested in community need.

Four enablers underpin the plan: financial sustainability, research and evaluation, strong advocacy for health system reform with partners, and technology-enabled solutions. NRCH's ways of working (a social determinants model of care, relationships, evidence and innovation, and place-based solutions) shape how decisions are made at every level.

The next chapter

NRCH is entering a period of consolidation and growth, with a focus on strengthening operational performance, improving system integration and identifying sustainable pathways for future service delivery. The current plan concludes in 2027, and the Board will lead development of the 2027–2030 Strategic Plan with the executive. The incoming directors will join in time to help shape it.

Why these two appointments, and why now

NRCH operates in one of the most complex clinical, regulatory and policy environments in Australian community health. Its services span primary care, pharmacotherapy, a supervised injecting service, outreach and new models such as community paramedicine, which makes rigorous clinical governance a core Board responsibility. At the same time, much of what NRCH seeks to achieve, from estate revitalisation to drug law reform to sustainable funding, depends on influence with government, funders and partners. A strategic review of the Board's composition identified these two capabilities as the priorities for renewal, following the end of term for one director and the interstate move of another.

THE BOARD AND NRCH'S CULTURE

How the Board works

NRCH's Board governs collectively and is accountable to NRCH's members. It sets strategic direction, oversees performance, risk, clinical quality and financial sustainability, and appoints, supports and evaluates the Chief Executive Officer, to whom it delegates operational management. The Board is supported by the Company Secretary and the Strategy and Governance Lead, and works closely with the Executive Team: the Chief Executive Officer, Medical Director, Executive Director Community Health Services, Chief People Officer and Chief Corporate Officer.

Much of the Board's detailed work happens through three standing committees, and each director joins at least one:

- **Finance, Audit and Risk Committee:** financial performance and sustainability, audit, and the enterprise risk framework.
- **Clinical Governance Committee:** clinical quality, patient safety, clinical risk, incident management and accreditation.
- **Governance, Remuneration and Nominations Committee:** governance practice, Board composition and succession, and remuneration.

Culture

NRCH describes itself as an organisation that is thoughtful, ambitious and open to doing things differently where better outcomes can be achieved. Its values encourage people to trust their expertise, embrace pragmatic solutions and not be afraid of calculated risk, and its leadership culture is deliberately non-hierarchical and respectful of every contribution. The Executive Team operates as a 'first team', and the Board expects the same of itself: robust, constructive discussion, followed by collective decisions that are owned by all.

What the Board is looking for

- Clinical governance depth from primary health: a senior clinician, ideally a general practitioner or other primary health leader, who has designed or strengthened clinical governance frameworks and can oversee clinical risk without stepping into operations.
- Government relations and policy influence: a director who understands Victorian health and community services policy and funding, knows how government decisions are made, and can help NRCH advocate credibly for its community.
- A genuine commitment to health equity, cultural safety and meaningful consumer participation, and respect for the knowledge and lived experience of the North Richmond community.
- Independent judgement and constructive challenge, combined with a collegial approach and a clear grasp of the line between governance and management.
- The appetite and capacity to contribute to the 2027–2030 Strategic Plan from the start.

The two appointments will be considered together, so that each preferred candidate complements both the existing Board and the other incoming director.

THE OPPORTUNITY

Roles. Board Director, North Richmond Community Health (two positions). Directors are non-executive directors and statutory office holders, and Responsible Persons of a registered charity.

Board. a skills-based Board accountable to NRCH's members, supported by three standing committees.

Remuneration. directors receive an annual fee. Details are available in a confidential conversation with Searchlight Group.

Commitment. eight Board meetings a year, held face to face, plus at least one committee and an annual strategic planning day: see The Role of an NRCH Director.

Location. Board meetings are held at NRCH, 23 Lennox Street, Richmond.

Term. three years.

Commencement. appointment at NRCH's 2026 Annual General Meeting or early in the new year.

Board Director: Clinical Governance

This director will bring specialist expertise to the Board's oversight of clinical quality, patient safety, clinical risk and models of care, helping to ensure NRCH's services are safe, effective and equitable. The Board is particularly interested in primary health experience, for example as a general practitioner or primary care clinical leader, and in candidates who have set up or matured clinical governance frameworks in a multidisciplinary setting.

Board Director: Government Relations and Stakeholder Engagement

This director will bring specialist expertise to the Board's oversight of NRCH's relationships with government, funders and partners, its advocacy and policy positions, and the reputational risks that come with them. The Board is looking for senior experience with government, public policy, advocacy or strategic stakeholder relationships, and a strong understanding of Victorian health and community services policy and funding.

What the incoming directors will do

- **Shape the next strategic plan:** contribute from day one to the 2027–2030 Strategic Plan.
- **Strengthen clinical governance:** help the Board oversee a complex clinical portfolio, from primary care and pharmacotherapy to the MSIR and new community models, with rigour and confidence.
- **Lift NRCH's influence:** support the Board to engage government, funders and partners on estate revitalisation, harm reduction reform and sustainable funding.
- **Steward sustainability:** share in the Board's oversight of financial performance, risk and growth during a period of consolidation.
- **Hold the culture:** model a collegial, equity-focused Board culture that supports the executive while holding it to account.

THE ROLE OF AN NRCH DIRECTOR

Alongside their specialist contribution, both directors share the full responsibilities of every Board member and act in the best interests of NRCH as a whole. In practice, each director:

- Safeguards NRCH's charitable purpose and helps set and monitor its strategic direction, priorities and performance.
- Acts with care and diligence, honestly and in good faith, using independent judgement, and complies with the Corporations Act 2001 (Cth), the ACNC Act and Governance Standards, and the NRCH Constitution.
- Reviews and approves budgets, financial statements and significant decisions, monitors financial sustainability and takes reasonable steps to prevent insolvent trading.
- Oversees enterprise risk, clinical governance, work health and safety, safeguarding, regulatory compliance, service quality and culture.
- Appoints, supports and evaluates the CEO, and respects the distinction between governance and operational management.
- Prepares thoroughly, contributes constructively, declares and manages conflicts of interest, protects confidential information, and supports Board decisions once made.
- Completes induction and ongoing governance education, and takes part in Board evaluation, succession planning and committee work.

Time commitment

- Eight Board meetings a year, held face to face at NRCH in Richmond. The meeting schedule for 2027 will be confirmed with the incoming directors.
- Membership of at least one committee: Finance, Audit and Risk; Clinical Governance; or Governance, Remuneration and Nominations. Committees meet four to six times a year, online, during business hours.
- An annual strategic planning day, with particular emphasis in 2027 on the new Strategic Plan.
- The Annual General Meeting, and preparation time for papers ahead of each meeting.

Eligibility and screening

Directors must be eligible to act as a company director and as a Responsible Person of a registered charity (not disqualified by ASIC or the ACNC), must hold a Director Identification Number before appointment, and must satisfy the appointment requirements of the NRCH Constitution. Appointment is subject to a National Police Check (renewed every three years, with an international check for anyone who has lived overseas in the past ten years), a Working with Children Check where relevant, NDIS worker screening where required of key personnel, and the declarations NRCH needs to assess suitability as a responsible person under aged care legislation. Directors also commit to the NRCH Constitution, Board Charter, Code of Conduct and Board policies.

WHAT YOU WILL BRING

No candidate is expected to hold every attribute below. The Board is looking for real depth in the specialist area of one role, a solid governance foundation, and a positive contribution to its culture.

For both roles

- Integrity, sound judgement and the ability to act independently while contributing to collective decisions.
- The ability to understand strategic, financial, risk, quality and performance information and to identify matters that need further scrutiny.
- Constructive challenge, good listening and clear, respectful communication.
- Commitment to confidentiality, accountability, and the time to prepare for and attend meetings.
- A commitment to health equity, culturally safe care and the voices of people who face health inequity.

Clinical Governance role

- Senior experience in clinical governance, healthcare leadership or oversight of complex health services, ideally from primary health (for example, as a general practitioner).
- Experience setting up or strengthening clinical governance frameworks.
- Understanding of clinical quality, patient safety, safeguarding, incident management, accreditation and professional standards.
- The ability to assess clinical risks and outcomes and ask informed questions of management without taking on an operational role.
- Experience with multidisciplinary, integrated or community-based models of care for people facing barriers to healthcare.

Government Relations and Stakeholder Engagement role

- Senior experience working with government, public policy, advocacy or strategic stakeholder relationships.
- Understanding of Victorian health and community services policy, funding arrangements and government decision making.
- The ability to identify policy changes and funding opportunities that may affect NRCH and its communities.
- Experience building constructive relationships across government, community organisations, funders and partners.
- Sound judgement in advocacy and external engagement, including managing reputational risk and competing interests.

Desirable

- A relevant tertiary qualification: a clinical or health discipline for the Clinical Governance role; policy, law, health, social science, economics or communications for the Government Relations role.
- The AICD Company Directors Course or equivalent director education.
- Previous board or board committee experience. First-time directors with strong expertise are welcome to apply.

THE RECRUITMENT PROCESS

Searchlight Group manages every stage of these appointments on behalf of NRCH. The process is rigorous, confidential and respectful of your time, and we provide feedback at each stage. Final appointment decisions rest with NRCH.

Stage	What happens	Indicative timing
1 · Apply or enquire	A CV and brief cover letter to Searchlight Group, indicating which role you are applying for, or a confidential conversation first.	Open now, ongoing
2 · Initial conversation	A discussion with Michael Holdway about the roles, NRCH and your background.	As applications are received
3 · Structured interview	A structured governance interview with Searchlight Group, plus conflicts of interest screening.	Ongoing, following the initial conversation
4 · Shortlist	Written assessment reports and a shortlist presented to NRCH.	Rolling, as strong candidates emerge
5 · Panel interview	Interviews with NRCH's selection panel.	By arrangement with NRCH
6 · Due diligence	Referencing, eligibility checks and screening (National Police Check, Director ID, ASIC and ACNC checks, and other checks as required).	Following the panel interview
7 · Appointment	Board appointment and induction.	At the 2026 AGM or early 2027

Timing is indicative. There is no closing date: applications are reviewed as they are received, so early contact is encouraged.

HOW TO APPLY

Please apply through the Searchlight Group website, https://searchlightgroup.com.au/careers/, uploading a CV and brief cover letter in Word format:

- A comprehensive CV.
- A brief cover letter (maximum one page) that names the role you are applying for and outlines what you would bring to NRCH's Board, with reference to the selection criteria and NRCH's strategic direction. You do not need to address every criterion.

There is no closing date: applications are considered on an ongoing basis as they are received. If you would prefer to test your interest before applying, Michael Holdway would welcome a confidential conversation.

About Searchlight Group

Searchlight Group is a Melbourne-based executive search firm specialising in the health, public and for-purpose sectors. Board and non-executive director search is core to our practice. Michael Holdway leads this engagement personally, and every conversation is confidential.

Contact

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This pack is provided in confidence for candidates considering the Board Director roles at North Richmond Community Health. It remains the property of Searchlight Group.