

Capital Health Network Limited

Election of Directors 2025

Candidate Statement

Candidate name (please print):	Cherie Townsend		
Tick the Director Position being nominated for:	E2 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	E3 <input type="checkbox"/>	E4 <input type="checkbox"/>

Statement in support of nomination

As a community member, registered nurse, senior health care executive and a person who lives with a life limiting illness, I believe that I have a significant understanding of the community and the access and equity challenges that are faced. All strengths that would support significant contribution to the CHN Board.

I have three decades of experience in the health care sector, which across clinical practice, hospital leadership, and national regulatory systems. I hold a Master of Business Administration and Master of Nursing, alongside my professional nursing qualifications and registration with the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (AHPRA). My career includes senior leadership roles with Calvary Health Care, NSW Health, and the Australian Federal Police, as well as extensive clinical roles. These roles have strengthened my capability and knowledge in governance, risk oversight, health system reform, and workforce strategy.

I have a strong track record of leading major service redesigns, advancing quality and safety, and embedding workforce sustainability. I am recognised for acting with integrity, collaboration, and a focus on outcomes, ensuring that decisions are ethical, transparent, and community-focused.

I have undertaken governance development aligned with the Australian Institute of Company Directors (AICD) frameworks, and bring the skills to contribute effectively to the fiduciary and strategic responsibilities of the Board.

I am deeply committed to advancing diversity, equity, and inclusion in healthcare, including supporting First Nations health outcomes and ensuring that diverse voices are represented at the governance table.

If elected, I will bring strong governance, integrity, and leadership.

NOTE: 250 word maximum

Capital Health Network Limited

Election of Directors 2025

Statement addressing the position requirements for Director position E2

Candidate name (please print):	Cherie Townsend
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Statement addressing the position requirements

To Whom It May Concern:

RE: Statement addressing position requirements – Capital Health Network Director Election

I am nominating for the Director position E2 on the Capital Health Network (CHN) Board. As a registered nurse with more than 30 years of senior executive and clinical leadership experience, I bring a unique combination of frontline health expertise, governance capability, and strategic leadership developed across public, private, and regulatory health systems.

Strategic Thinking

My career has centred on driving organisational performance and health system improvement. In senior executive roles with Calvary Health Care and NSW Health, I have led large hospital and community service portfolios, workforce reform, and major transformation projects, ensuring alignment with organisational strategy while delivering improved outcomes for patients and staff. My tenure with the Australian Federal Police, I strengthened the national governance framework for supporting health of front line workers, compliance, and workforce protection. These experiences have honed my ability to think strategically, balance competing priorities, and guide organisations through complexity.

Leadership, Integrity, and Ethics

I am recognised for leading with integrity, transparency, and a strong ethical compass. Whether managing clinical services, overseeing regulatory compliance, or leading large multidisciplinary teams, I have prioritised accountability and trust. My leadership style is collaborative and outcomes-driven, grounded in respect for diverse perspectives and a commitment to equitable, sustainable solutions. An example of this is leading a large team as the health functional area coordinator and mental health coordinator during 2019. bushfires.

Governance Experience

I hold a Master of Business Administration, a Master of Nursing, and have successful as a graduate with the Australian Institute of Company Directors (AICD). I have extensive experience providing governance oversight of risk, quality, and safety in healthcare settings, as well as contributing to

strategic board and committee reporting. This equips me with the skills to support the fiduciary and governance responsibilities of CHN's Board.

Commitment to Diversity and First Nations Health

I strongly support CHN's commitment to diversity and the active inclusion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives. Throughout my leadership career, I have worked to strengthen partnerships with First Nations communities and to embed culturally safe practices into service delivery. I believe that diverse voices at the board table are essential to shaping equitable and community-centred health strategies. An example of this is partnering to deliver health care in the private setting for people with limited access.

Why I Am Standing

I am passionate about strengthening primary health care and ensuring that health system reforms deliver meaningful benefits for communities. I believe my experience—spanning clinical practice, executive leadership, governance, and national regulatory frameworks—positions me to make a significant contribution to CHN's governance and strategic direction.

If elected, I will bring my skills, integrity, and commitment to ensuring that CHN continues to deliver innovative, inclusive, and sustainable solutions that improve the health of people across the ACT region.

Thank you for considering my application. I would welcome the opportunity to discuss how my background aligns with your vision and priorities.

Warm regards,

Cherie Townsend

NOTE: 500 word maximum

CIRRICULUM VITAE

Name	Cherie Townsend (Puckett)
Address	G19/18 Parbery Street, Kingston ACT 2604
Telephone	0414 743 156
Email	Cherie.townsend1968@gmail.com
Citizenship	Australian

PROFESSIONAL PROFILE

I am a forward-thinking and action-driven senior executive professional with a Master of Business Administration (MBA) and a Master of Nursing. With extensive experience in cross-functional leadership. I possess a strong capability in both operational and strategic planning. My expertise encompasses stakeholder engagement and collaborative practices that drive impactful outcomes.

My professional demeanour and strong work ethic are complemented by meticulous attention to detail and a commitment to excellence. I have represented organizations at the executive level within Calvary Health Care, NSW Health and the Australian Federal Police, collaborating effectively with community groups, government entities, and various healthcare organisations.

Possessing a transferable skill set. I demonstrate agility and adaptability in the face of change, readily stepping up as needed. I remain calm and considered, effectively managing high-pressure situations to achieve positive results.

EMPLOYMENT

Hindmarsh Retirement

July 2025 – Current

Operations Manager

Responsibilities

- Provide leadership across retirement villages, inclusive of workforce planning.
- Lead financial sustainability and viability
- Develop organisations strategy
- Provide governance over operational legislative requirements
- Provide strong stakeholder engagement that within and external to villages'

Calvary Bruce Private Hospital

January 2023 – May 2025

General Manager

Responsibilities

- Provide executive leadership across both strategic and clinical operations, ensuring alignment with national policy priorities and community mental health needs.
- Oversee whole-of-organisation governance and performance accountability, including stewardship of financial sustainability, operational excellence, and delivery against key performance indicators (KPIs).
- Represent the organisation with credibility and influence at high-level forums, including community partnerships, intergovernmental negotiations, and public sector leadership events.
- Lead the strategic management of major contracts and commissioning arrangements, ensuring outcomes-based accountability and value for investment.
- Exercise financial and workforce leadership by embedding an enterprise approach to resource stewardship—managing expenditure, revenue, and FTE allocation within approved parameters, and delivering mitigation strategies when risks to performance or budget arise.
- Drive performance improvement through application of the organisation's performance framework, ensuring strategic intent is cascaded into operational accountability and regularly monitored through data-driven insights.
- Translate strategic priorities into executable operational and service delivery plans, embedding continuous improvement and innovation.
- Lead business development initiatives that expand service capability, strengthen partnerships, and position the organisation to respond proactively to emerging community and sector needs.
- Provide strategic reporting and assurance through monthly Executive Operations Reports, presenting performance insights, risk mitigations, and priority recommendations to the Board and executive leadership.

Australian Federal Police

February 2022 – January 2023

Chief Nurse

Responsibilities

- Partnered with the Chief Medical Officer to provide strategic and operational advice to the Commissioner on the delivery of health and wellbeing services to AFP personnel deployed nationally and internationally, ensuring alignment with operational readiness and occupational health priorities.

- Provided executive clinical leadership across a multidisciplinary health service environment within a law enforcement context, ensuring the integration of preventative, acute, and rehabilitative care models tailored to the unique demands of policing.
- Oversaw credentialing governance for health professionals, ensuring compliance with national regulatory standards and risk mitigation in high-consequence operational environments.
- Led the design and implementation of a national clinical governance framework, establishing systems, standards, and audit mechanisms to ensure safe, consistent, and high-quality care across all jurisdictions.
- Provided senior clinical mentoring and strategic coaching to health staff, embedding best practice models and supporting capability development in a high-performance, high-pressure environment.
- Exercised oversight and performance governance of contracted health service providers across domestic and international operations, ensuring service integrity, accountability, and contract compliance.
- Contributed expert advisory input into the design and development of a national wellbeing framework for the AFP, integrating psychological resilience, occupational health, and trauma-informed practice into a unified strategic approach to workforce health.

Murrumbidgee Local Health District

January 2020 – February 2022

Role - Director Clinical Operations West, MLHD

Responsibilities

- Provided executive leadership of Clinical Operations across Murrumbidgee Local Health District (MLHD), with responsibility for service quality, workforce performance, and strategic alignment with statewide health priorities.
- Prepared Ministerial correspondence and submissions for parliamentary inquiries, strategic reviews, and special commissions, ensuring accuracy, political acuity, and alignment with government and community expectations.
- Represented MLHD at high-level government, interagency, and community forums, strengthening the organisation's reputation and enhancing public trust through transparent and inclusive engagement.
- Led MLHD's compliance with the National Safety and Quality Health Service Standards, holding executive accountability for clinical governance, risk mitigation, and service-wide performance in patient safety and quality care.
- Oversaw strategic contract management of key partnerships, including radiology reading services and a public-private partnership delivering integrated cancer services, ensuring performance, cost-effectiveness, and continuity of care.
- Exercised enterprise leadership in financial stewardship and workforce resourcing, ensuring FTE deployment, budget expenditure, and revenue targets were strategically managed. Where

deviations occurred, implemented comprehensive mitigation plans grounded in data and performance insights.

- Embedded organisational strategy into operational delivery through structured business planning, aligning MLHD's local priorities with NSW Health's strategic goals, while managing complex change and transition processes.
- Championed the delivery of high-value care through system-wide strategies to reduce hospital-acquired complications, increase clinical engagement in service improvement, and embed innovation across service lines.
- Provided strategic and operational advice to the Chief Executive and Board, supporting evidence-based decision-making, policy execution, and leadership accountability.
- Led the development and implementation of functional and operational business plans across MLHD, ensuring outcomes were achieved in alignment with statewide health reform and service sustainability mandates.
- Proactively led collaborative approaches with internal and external stakeholders across the care continuum to address complex health system challenges and drive improved population health outcomes.
- Held delegated responsibility as MLHD Health Service Functional Area Controller (HSFAC), leading the district's response to public health emergencies and natural disasters, ensuring coordinated, compliant, and effective disaster preparedness and response strategies.
- Reported monthly to the Board Performance and Activity Committee on operational performance against KPIs, aligned to the MLHD Service Level Agreement with the NSW Ministry of Health, delivering transparent analysis and evidence-informed recommendations.

Southern NSW Local Health District

2012 – 2020

Roles

- August 2017 – March 2020 - District Director Mental Health Drug, Alcohol, Cancer, Palliative Care, Renal and Breast Screening, Southern NSW Local Health District. Mental Health HSFAC, Deputy Operational HSFAC.
- June 2018 – August 2011 – Various Senior roles

Responsibilities

- Held executive operational responsibility for a diverse portfolio comprising Mental Health, Drug and Alcohol, Cancer Services, Renal, Palliative Care, Breast Screening, and Service Planning, with accountability for a \$90 million operating budget and a workforce of over 300 FTE.
- Provided high-quality Ministerial responses and briefing papers, including submissions to special inquiries, ensuring accuracy, timeliness, and alignment with broader health and government strategy.
- Successfully led the statewide strategy and secured funding for the development of the NSW Peer Workforce Framework, shaping national best practice in lived experience workforce development.

- Championed the implementation of the peer workforce model in rural NSW, positioning the region as a leader with the highest number of peer workers employed in NSW Mental Health Services.
- Secured translational research funding through targeted advocacy and proposal development, aligning research objectives with clinical reform and system improvement priorities.
- Led the development of district-wide Clinical Service Plans, ensuring alignment with population health needs, policy direction, and contemporary models of care that are evidence-based and integrated.
- Provided strategic clinical and operational leadership to ensure service delivery was efficient, data-informed, and clearly aligned with organisational strategy and system reform goals.
- Cultivated and sustained partnerships beyond the health sector, including Department of Communities and Justice, Primary Health Networks, and key community-based partners, enabling integrated, wraparound service models.
- Modelled and upheld the organisation's CORE values, embedding these in leadership practices and reinforcing respectful, inclusive, and values-aligned cultures across teams and services.
- Provided peer support to fellow executives across the region, offering cross-functional leadership to enhance system performance and support high-impact, team-based governance.
- Undertook CE-delegated responsibilities aligned to strategic initiatives, providing high-level oversight of complex deliverables across safety, workforce, and service access domains.
- Regularly reported to the Board, executive committees, and NSW Ministry of Health on service performance against Service Level Agreement KPIs, identifying risks, outlining mitigation strategies, and leveraging improvement opportunities.
- Led workforce performance and development frameworks across the portfolio, providing targeted feedback, supporting leadership capability uplift, and embedding a strengths-based, growth-oriented learning culture.
- Provided governance oversight of performance domains including financial accountability, workforce management, and quality and safety compliance — ensuring full transparency through board reporting and audit processes.

August 2011-, Operational Clinical Manager, Uniting Care Ageing South Eastern Region NSW

2008 – 2011 -Little Company of Mary Health Care - Director Care Calvary Retirement Village

2003 –2009 - Greater Southern Area Health Service - Various Senior Nursing Roles

2003 – 1989 - Various roles within Health

QUALIFICATIONS

• Masters Business Administration	2024
• Graduate Australian Institute of Company (GAICD)	2018
• Emergency Management	2016
• Emergency Management Overview	
• Welfare Services Functional Area Overview	
• Recovery Overview	
• Community Engagement Overview	

- Introduction to Emergency Management
 - Emergency Operations Centre Concepts
 - Exercise Management
 - Manage an Emergency Operation
 - Managing an Evacuation
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- Diploma of Business Management 2012
 - Partnering Aboriginal Communities and Cultural Awareness in Aboriginal Communities 2011, TAFE NSW
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- Masters Nursing Adelaide 2010, Flinders University
 - Masters of Nurse, Nurse Practitioner 2008 Flinders University
 - Graduate Certificate Advanced Nursing Practice Newcastle 2006, University of
 - Graduate Certificate Palliative Care Nursing 2001 Australian College of
 - Bachelor of Applied Science Canberra 1992, University of
 - Diploma of Applied Science 1989, UOW

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

- Open Disclosure – Quality and Safety Commission 2023
 - Root Cause Analysis Team Leader Training 2023
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- Executive Leadership Program Clinical Excellence Commission 2015
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- Financial Management Health Education and Training Institute 2015
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- Root Cause Analysis, Clinical Excellence Commission 2015
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- Accelerated Implementation Methodology (AIM) 2014