

Catholic Health Australia

**CHA Shared Purpose Statement  
Consultation Paper**

May 2011

## Purpose of this discussion paper

This paper aims to outline the background and purpose underlying the development of a shared purpose statement for Catholic health and aged care. It aims to provide a rationale and process plan for effective communication and consultation towards achieving a statement that is endorsed by all CHA members.

## Background

The 2010 inFORMATION consultation identified key issues for enabling the sustainable future of the Catholic health ministry. One of the issues endorsed by the Stewardship Board for action by Catholic Health Australia was the development of a shared statement of purpose or identity. This action was in response to the inFORMATION recommendation that there be a common mission statement across the Australian Catholic sector. The idea of having one shared mission statement was seen as unnecessary and undesirable. However the development of a shared statement expressing the common vision and commitments of the Catholic health and aged care ministry was endorsed as worthwhile. In essence this would become a statement of shared purpose.

## Rationale

One of the perceived challenges for the Catholic health and aged care ministry is the need for formation of personnel in the unique vision and ethos of the ministry. There is also an increasing need to communicate with external stakeholders, in the business and political domains, the 'point of difference' and underlying motivation of all Catholic ministries. Finally there is a need to facilitate communication and awareness both for CHA members as well as external stakeholders that we speak with 'one voice' on key issues. Articulating a shared purpose statement is perceived as an effective contribution towards achieving these goals.

## Role of the proposed statement

The Shared Purpose Statement would be intended for use in a variety of ways including:

- as a point of reference for internal stakeholders of Catholic ministries to facilitate a more explicit recognition of and reflection on shared goals and purpose;
- in employee education and formation programs to facilitate appreciation of the unique identity of Catholic health aged care ministries and the obligations that follow;
- as a means of facilitating for external stakeholders a clearer understanding of what explicitly motivates the Catholic sector and where our point of difference lies.

## Terminology

In approaching the task of articulating a Shared Purpose Statement some key terms require clarification. These terms are used frequently in relation to the distinctive work of Catholic health and aged care. Clarity of meaning will assist in responding effectively to the survey processes.

The term 'vision' refers to the way we articulate our hopes for the future. It is the big picture that inspires our work. For Catholic healthcare services it is the vision summed up in the concept of the 'Reign of God'. (Arbuckle G, *Healthcare Ministry: Refounding the Mission in Tumultuous Times* (1985).

*'Mission'* flows from our vision and refers to the primary task and core activity undertaken by Catholic healthcare services, to respond to the call of the Gospel.

*'Ministry'* refers to this mission *in action* which is both to society as a whole and to individuals in need.

*'Identity'* refers to those characteristics and qualities that contribute to and define self-understanding. It encompasses both concrete and objectively identifiable features, as well as features recognisable in the subjective dimension, including attitudes and behaviours.

Finally for the purposes of this consultation the word *'service'* refers to those organised expressions of the healthcare ministry both collectively and in particular, that provide concrete assistance to those in need.

### **Core elements of the statement**

A shared purpose statement would distil, in accessible language, the core commitments of the Catholic health ministry into a succinct statement that accurately reflects the overriding purpose of all Catholic ministries. It would address the questions 'Why do we exist?' 'Who do we serve?' while capturing the distinctive essence of the unique spirit and culture central to the Catholic vision. Included as an example at the end of this paper is the statement prepared in 2001 by the Catholic Health Association USA.

### **Process for developing the statement**

A broad and inclusive approach consultation process will be conducted through 2011. It will include the following stages:

1. Success of the project will depend on engagement with personnel across the Catholic sector as a whole. Through an initial period of promotion the consultation will seek to engage the interest and involvement of the broadest possible range of stakeholders within Catholic health and aged care. Feedback will be encouraged from people contributing at all levels of the ministry.
2. A summary of the core commitments expressing the identity and purpose of the Catholic health and aged care ministry integral to a shared statement will be identified. This will be via an online consultation process.
3. A draft statement reflecting the core commitments will be developed and widely circulated to CHA members and key stakeholders.
4. Testing of the draft statement will be conducted via online and face-to-face focus groups. Participants will be invited to provide feedback on the relevance and completeness of the statement as well its style and substance.
5. A second statement will be prepared utilising the feedback.
6. Feedback on this draft statement will be sought via Survey Monkey.
7. The final statement will be prepared for ratification by the Stewardship Board.
8. Resources will be developed for distribution to the sector.

## Consultation process

Throughout the project a range of mechanisms will be utilised for promotion and consultation:

- CHA Weekly Newsletter
- Formal communication with CHA delegates and members
- Health Matters
- Mission Leaders Forum, June 14
- CHA Bioethics Forum
- Bishops Commission for Health
- Catholic Religious Australia

## Consultation Questionnaire

The following questionnaire will be the basis of the first round of consultation via the CHA website.

### Shared Purpose Statement Project Consultation Questionnaire

This questionnaire should be completed with reference to the CHA Shared Purpose Statement Consultation Paper, May 2011.

This questionnaire represents the first round of consultation towards preparation of a shared purpose statement. The first round will be conducted for approximately four weeks. Responses will be evaluated and summarized and a draft statement will be prepared for second round consultation in August.

1. Given the statement is intended for use in employee education and formation programs and as a point of reference for both internal and external stakeholders, what do *you* believe would be the best uses for a shared purpose statement?
2. What in your opinion would be the test of a good statement?
3. Do you have any suggestions for the preferred format and tone of the statement?
4. What are the most important messages the statement should convey?
5. Are there any things the statement should avoid?

	<b>Shared Purpose Statement: Project Implementation Timeline</b>
<b>April 2011</b>	<b>Consultation paper</b> prepared clarifying terminology, project purpose, core elements of statement, intended use and the sample CHA-USA statement.
<b>May 2011</b>	<b>Education Committee</b> consideration of the Consultation paper, project timelines and process.
<b>May 2011</b>	<b>Promote</b> the project to key stakeholders using the prepared discussion paper.
<b>June 2011</b>	<b>Identify the core commitments</b> perceived as integral to a shared statement via an online consultation process.
<b>July 2011</b>	<b>Prepare a draft statement</b> reflecting the core commitments articulated by the sector.
<b>August 2011</b>	<b>Test the draft statement</b> via online and face-to-face focus groups.
<b>September 2011</b>	<b>Develop second draft statement</b> for further consultation
<b>October 2011</b>	<b>Test</b> the resulting statement via Survey Monkey
<b>November 2011</b>	<b>Consult</b> with the Bishops Commission for Health, Catholic Religious Australia
<b>December 2011</b>	<b>Final version</b> to Stewardship Board
<b>January 2012</b>	<b>Preparation and distribution of materials</b> supporting the use of the statement
<b>February 2012</b>	<b>Launch</b>

## SAMPLE STATEMENT

### A Shared Statement of Identity for the Catholic Health Ministry (USA)



We are the people of Catholic health care, a ministry of the church continuing Jesus' mission of love and healing today. As provider, employer, advocate, citizen — bringing together people of diverse faiths and backgrounds — our ministry is an enduring sign of health care rooted in our belief that every person is a treasure, every life a sacred gift, every human being a unity of body, mind, and spirit.

We work to bring alive the Gospel vision of justice and peace. We answer God's call to foster healing, act with compassion, and promote wellness for all persons and communities, with special attention to our neighbors who are poor, underserved, and most vulnerable. By our service, we strive to transform hurt into hope.

As the church's ministry of health care, we commit to:

- Promote and Defend Human Dignity
- Attend to the Whole Person
- Care for Poor and Vulnerable Persons
- Promote the Common Good
- Act on Behalf of Justice
- Steward Resources
- Act in Communion with the Church