



Constitution Amendment Communiqué

The decision to establish a single charitable company, HeartKids Limited, to be led by an independent and skills based Board, was a significant milestone in our organisations' thirty-five year history. The decision was overwhelmingly supported by 98% of HeartKids state and territory members, who agreed that a single national organisation was needed to ensure the sustainability of HeartKids and provide the infrastructure and capability to support a growing population of infants, children, young people and adults across Australia living with or impacted by congenital / childhood heart disease.

HeartKids Limited commenced on 31st October 2016 as a national organisation bringing together our staff and volunteers, programs and operations of the six previously state and territory-based organisations under one charity, one brand and one Board.

Since the HeartKids Limited Board was appointed in late 2016, it has been working with our new CEO on shaping the strategic directions of HeartKids and overseeing the implementation of a complex transition plan unifying the six organisations into a single company.

The Board, in consultation with its consumer, health and research advisory committees, has identified core program, advocacy and research priorities and has mapped a clear and positive way forward in the 2017 to 2020 Corporate Plan.

The Transition Plan has resulted in revenue growth particularly from corporate partners and grants; less is now spent on administration and more on programs and research; and more funding is directed towards new resources and training for staff, resulting in increased numbers of people being assisted by our services and an increased level of investment in CHD research. While we have made good progress in transitioning to the new model, much still needs to be done.

The Board would like to acknowledge and thank HeartKids staff and volunteers for their hard work and support over the last ten months.

In August 2017 the Board met and discussed the importance of bedding down the newly adopted Corporate Strategy and the benefits of continued stability over the next twelve months. To this end the Board approved amendments to the HeartKids Constitution to appoint the interim Board for a further twelve months until September 2018 and, in the event of a Director retirement or resignation, to appoint any casual vacancies if they arise during that period.

The decision to amend the Constitution was thoughtfully considered and took into account the need to embed our strategy, the pace of reform, the current skills of Directors and the need to provide consistency of support to the CEO and his team across our four strategic pillars of support, information, advocacy and research.

In addition, Board was conscious that there are several large scale projects presently underway which need continuity of strategic leadership and direction from the Board. These include the implementation of the National CHD Survey and Registry, a National CHD Roundtable at Parliament House Canberra, a new CHD Research Strategy, Phase One of the Information Technology Project and Phase Two of the Program Strategy which includes three new models of care in bereavement, family support and teen transition.

Looking forward, in June 2018 the Board's Nominations and Remuneration Committee will determine the preferred skills needed to add value to the Board and call for nominations from Associate Members from each Region. The committee will assess the nominees, select a short list of preferred nominees as candidates for election to the Board and arrange for an election to be held.

In the interim the Board will review the composition of its Advisory Committees to maximise opportunities for Associate Members and Affiliate Members to continue to be involved in and contribute to the work of HeartKids. The CEO and his State Managers will also hold quarterly advisory meetings with local members.

The Board is committed to best practice corporate governance including ensuring that the composition of the Board reflects a diversity of skills, backgrounds and perspectives relevant to current and emerging needs of HeartKids and the scope of the Board's responsibilities. The decision to appoint the current Board for a further twelve months allows for stability, good governance and the corporate strategy to be more fully embedded.

Jan McClelland AM
Chairperson
HeartKids Limited