
Operations and performance

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Our service offering

NSW Health delivers a broad range of healthcare services and programs that support the health and wellbeing of the people of NSW. These services are patient-centred, culturally safe, and digitally enabled.

Our service offering spans pre-hospital, acute, and sub-acute care environments, where patients receive specialised treatment, often for serious or urgent health conditions. These services include ambulance services, emergency departments, operating theatres, intensive care, maternity, mental health, cardiac, cancer, paediatric and neonatal, transplant services, rehabilitation, palliative care, geriatric services, pathology and diagnostics, and outpatient clinics.

These services are delivered safely across a range of settings – from traditional hospital-based locations to Hospital in the Home and virtual healthcare models that support the provision of care in the community through telehealth consultations, remote patient monitoring, digital health platforms, care in the community, and in forensic or custodial settings.

NSW Health also offers a range of community services such as chronic disease management, community nursing for wound care, medication management, post-hospital discharge support, mental health crisis teams, outreach and counselling, Aboriginal health services delivered in partnership with community-controlled organisations, and health promotion, education and prevention programs.

NSW Health also provides healthcare enabling services through our pillar organisations and statewide shared services.

Detailed information about the specific services provided by NSW Health can be found on local health entity websites. The roles and functions of NSW Health entities can be found in Section 1: Overview of this report.

Use of technology

Technology provides exciting opportunities in healthcare. From disease prevention to diagnosis and treatment, it plays an important role in providing outstanding healthcare. This aligns with NSW Health's vision for a sustainable health system that delivers outcomes that matter to patients and the community.

While new technologies have the potential to offer significant benefits to patients, clinicians, and the health system, they must be carefully evaluated before implementation. This approach is outlined in the *New Health Technologies and Specialised Services Guidelines*, which detail the approach to the identification, assessment, planning, and implementation of new health technologies in NSW. This is overseen by the New Technologies and Specialised Services Committee, which assesses technology against six factors: clinical need, equity of access, materiality, level of evidence, economic feasibility, and policy congruence.

Technology has also enabled the expansion of virtual care, sometimes referred to as telehealth services. Designed to be easily accessible and adaptable, virtual care offers the same safety and quality standard as face-to-face consultations. Benefits include improved convenience, ease of access – particularly for people in remote or regional areas, and enhanced professional collaboration among multidisciplinary clinicians.

Accelerating investment in systems, infrastructure, security, and intelligence remains a key organisational objective. This enables NSW Health to leverage emerging artificial intelligence (AI) and automation technologies. The NSW Health AI Taskforce helps inform and guide the use of AI in the public health system.

Several AI initiatives are already underway at NSW Health. Examples include improving wound care, simplifying complex data analysis, saving time through automation of repetitive processes, and reviewing large volumes of cardiology literature to aid in clinical decision-making. As we continue to harness the potential of AI, NSW Health also remains committed to managing associated risks while maximising the benefits for patients and the system.

NSW Health is also investing in the Single Digital Patient Record (SDPR), which is the largest technology transformation in an Australian health system to date. Led by the Single Digital Patient Implementation Authority, the ongoing implementation of the SDPR will help connect care across NSW Health, making healthcare simpler and more coordinated for patients, carers, and staff.

More information about our use of technology can be found in the performance summary within this section of the report.

NSW Health's approach to innovation and continuous improvement

NSW Health recognises that ongoing innovation, digital enablement, and continuous improvement are integral to delivering world-class healthcare, and underpin financial and environmentally sustainable service delivery.

Our commitment to innovation is outlined in the *Future Health* strategy, specifically Strategic Outcome 5: Research and innovation, and digital advances inform service delivery. The diversity of our activities span clinical innovation, research, education, digital transformation, and staff-led initiatives. Above all, our approach is grounded in our shared CORE values of Collaboration, Openness, Respect and Empowerment. This enables genuine, ongoing partnerships with all stakeholders, including staff, patients, and their families and carers, subject matter experts, industry partners, and the wider communities we serve.

Leading this work is the NSW Ministry of Health Clinical Innovation and Research Division, which brings together the Agency for Clinical Innovation (ACI) and the Office for Health and Medical Research. Acting as a central point for coordination and strategy setting, the Division drives focus on statewide research and innovation priorities.

In May 2025, NSW Health launched the *NSW Health Research and Innovation Strategy 2025-2030*. Led by the Clinical Innovation and Research Division, this vital Strategy provides clear direction for health research and innovation across NSW. The five-year Strategy aligns closely with the NSW Innovation Blueprint, and will enable greater collaboration between the NSW Government, health, academic, and industry sectors. It provides an essential roadmap to help NSW Health achieve a brighter future, with positive economic, social, and environmental impacts.

During the reporting period, other innovation and continuous improvement highlights across NSW Health included the expansion of the Sustainable Futures Innovation Fund. It supports staff-led innovation projects aimed at improving patient care, and reducing our environmental footprint; and an expansion of virtual and digitally enabled care.

Performance summary

NSW Health aims to help people stay healthy and to provide access to timely, high-quality, patient centred healthcare. Guiding how we achieve our goals is the *Future Health* strategy. Performance in relation to the strategy is presented below, highlighting the key achievements for each strategic objective in 2024-25.

Additional performance information can be found in the *NSW Budget 2025-26 Budget Paper No.02 – Performance and Wellbeing Statement* on the NSW Budget website. The Paper presents key information on the performance of government services and the wellbeing of people of NSW. The Paper measures reports on key health indicators that contribute to the government's NSW Outcomes of supporting Healthy wellbeing:

- People receive timely, quality care in hospitals and the community
- People are supported to make the best decisions for their health
- People are enabled to lead active lifestyles.

Strategic outcome 1

Patients and carers have positive experiences and outcomes that matter

People have more control over their own health, enabling them to make decisions about their care that will achieve the outcomes that matter most to them.

1.1 Partner with patients and communities to make decisions about their own care

Expanding the Collaborative Care program

Following the successful implementation of five pilot Collaborative Care projects across regional NSW in 2023, an additional five sites were chosen to expand the program.

Collaborative Care is a community centred approach to place-based planning which engages key community and local health stakeholders to develop tailored solutions to the unique healthcare challenges of a regional community. It focuses on providing access to primary care services, recruitment and retention of health practitioners and the sustainability of services.

Projects in the Far South Coast, Leeton, Liverpool Plains, Murwillumbah and Wee Waa have commenced. Each region has a local working group which will develop a targeted approach and specific priorities in partnership with the community. The program is run in partnership with the Rural Doctors Network.

Strengthening the collection, management and use of patient-reported information

Patient-reported information increasingly contributes to actionable insights that can improve patients' experiences and outcomes.

In 2024-25, the Rapid Patient Experience Survey Pilot was implemented in four regional local health districts. The pilot aims to build and trial a concept that can be used to capture meaningful and actionable local patient experience data to inform rapid-cycle quality and safety improvements.

To support NSW Health staff collecting, using and disclosing patient-reported information through surveys, the *Introductory guide to collecting self-reported information through surveys and self-reported information* fact sheets were published in December 2024.

Embedding Alcohol and Other Drugs outcome and experience measures

The Centre for Alcohol and Other Drugs continued to embed the collection and application of consumer outcome and experience measures. In 2024-25, training was delivered to 377 alcohol and other drug workers on the clinical use of outcomes tools, and a coordinated experience measurement approach was trialled with 19 organisations and 981 people in treatment.

Implementing the Blueprint to improve maternity care in NSW

The NSW Health Maternity Expert Advisory Group and the NSW Health Maternity Consumer Reference Group provided advice and made recommendations on the following implementation priorities to improve the experience and wellbeing of pregnant women and their families:

- Increasing access to maternity continuity of care models, including midwifery continuity of care
- Embedding trauma-informed care into all aspects of maternity care
- Improving the way information is provided to women
- Improving the consent process in maternity care
- Supporting women who experience pregnancy complications.

These initiatives align to *Connecting, listening and responding: A Blueprint for Action – Maternity Care in NSW* (the Blueprint) and the Inquiry into Birth Trauma. All commitments are on track to be delivered in 2025. The 2025-26 NSW Budget invests \$44.8 million in maternity care to build on the initial 5 accelerated initiatives and supports the further implementation of the Blueprint and the Birth Trauma Inquiry recommendations.

Strengthening local health committees

The NSW Ministry of Health Regional Health Division continued to support local health districts to strengthen local health committees and engagement networks through the implementation of the Five Guiding Principles from the Strengthening local health committees in regional NSW Report. In 2024-25, the Strengthening Local Health Committees Resource Hub was launched, and two Masterclasses were held, completing a four-part series. These activities provided targeted education and support, helping local health districts adapt the principles to local contexts, enhance community engagement, and ensure local voices remain central to health planning and decision-making.

LGBTIQ+ inclusive practice learning modules

NSW Ambulance in partnership with ACON developed online learning modules in LGBTIQ+ inclusive practice funded through the NSW LGBTIQ+ Health Funding Pool. The modules have a focus on mental health and suicide risk assessment.

More than 4,000 clinicians have completed all three modules since its release in late 2024. Post-course evaluation indicates strong results. Most participants felt their understanding and confidence in assessing the mental health needs of LGBTIQ+ communities increased following completion of the modules. Participants also indicated they feel confident to apply the learnings in their role.

Multicultural and refugee health

NSW Health has continued to ensure the health system is accessible and responsive to the needs of culturally and linguistically diverse people. In addition to ongoing initiatives including annually celebrated Refugee Week and Multicultural Health Weeks, in 2024-25, the Health and Social Policy Branch released the final report of the review of NSW Health Care Interpreter Services. The report found that while the services have an overall high-quality standard of delivery, there are opportunities for improvement. This includes updating the booking system efficiency, increasing availability of interpreting services and developing and supporting the workforce. The NSW Ministry of Health will work on implementing recommendations from the report to meet the growing demand for interpreting services.

NSW Ambulance Patient Charter

NSW Ambulance developed and adopted a Patient Charter in alignment with the Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Healthcare Standard 2: Partnering with Consumers.

A patient charter outlines the rights and responsibilities of patients within healthcare settings. The Charter is designed for the unique out-of-hospital setting within which NSW Ambulance delivers care and recognises NSW Ambulance's commitment to upholding the rights of consumers. It also reflects a shared understanding of consumer rights between consumers, their loved ones, and clinicians.

Diverse participation at the NSW Drug Summit

NSW Health and other government agencies supported the delivery of the Drug Summit, held in 2024 with the aim of bringing people together to seek ideas to improve the health and wellbeing of communities impacted by drugs.

The Co-Chairs delivered the Drug Summit report to the NSW Government on 3 April 2025 with 56 recommendations for Government consideration.

Embedding voluntary assisted dying

Implemented on 28 November 2023, voluntary assisted dying continues to be accessible throughout NSW for eligible patients. The NSW Voluntary Assisted Dying Support Service, hosted by Northern Sydney Local Health District, is made up of three operational arms – the care navigator service, pharmacy service, and access service. Information on voluntary assisted dying activity in 2024-25 is reported in the NSW Voluntary Assisted Dying Board report, available on the NSW Health website.

1.2 Bring kindness and compassion into the delivery of personalised and culturally safe care

Community pharmacists help reduce stigma

In partnership with the Pharmaceutical Society of Australia, NSW Health launched the 'Enhancing care for people who use Alcohol and Other Drug use in Pharmacy' training module for community pharmacists. It highlights that by breaking down stigma and engaging with vulnerable people in a person-centred way, community pharmacists play a critical role in facilitating access to harm reduction and alcohol and other drug treatment programs such as Take Home Naloxone, Opioid Dependence Treatment and Needle and Syringe Programs.

Increasing accountability for improving Aboriginal peoples' experiences of care

The Bureau of Health Information (BHI) developed a new Aboriginal patient experience index measure for local health districts and delivered the first data set for the new key performance indicator target set by the NSW Ministry of Health. The measure helps monitor district performance and inform healthcare improvements for Aboriginal patients.

To gather more insights into Aboriginal peoples' experiences, BHI boosted the number of Aboriginal patients in the Adult Admitted Patient Survey. Aboriginal patient experience results were published in key adult admitted and emergency department survey reports.

Patient-reported measures enabling personalised cancer care

Cancer Institute NSW elevated the patient voice to personalise cancer care through its statewide patient-reported measures program. In 2024-25, patients provided insight into their outcomes and experiences, supporting timely discussions and the provision of tailored care at nearly 10,000 consultations across 13 local health districts. In total, patient voices have been captured through the program more than 31,000 times statewide. To ensure all patients receive equitable and culturally responsive care and support, there are 10 in-language surveys and 2 tailored, evidence-based tools available for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

Introducing the 1000 Hearts Program

In August 2024, the 1000 Hearts Program sponsored by the NSW Ministry of Health was introduced in the Illawarra Shoalhaven and Central Coast local health districts. The pilot program was developed to support kindness, compassion, and human connection in healthcare. Hand-stitched pocket hearts are gifted, and staff, patients, carers, and families are invited to share moments of care, hope, and healing. Rooted in the simple yet powerful act of giving, the program supports culturally safe, personalised experiences that honour the individual person. The 1000 Hearts Program is a symbol of empathy in action and is a reminder that every act of kindness transforms healthcare experiences.

Creating supportive environments to provide care

The Centre for Alcohol and Other Drugs branch focused on ensuring safe, high-quality services are delivered across the state. In 2024-25, the Alcohol and Other Drugs Care Charter was launched, guiding staff to deliver care that is safe, accessible, equitable, and nonjudgemental to improve the experiences and outcomes of people who use substances.

Virtual support for regional and rural NSW

Virtual Care in Alcohol and Other Drugs (AOD): Treatment Practice Guide was released, supporting clinicians and treatment services to safely expand access to AOD treatment virtually, including in rural and regional areas of NSW.

Embedding Clinical Care Standards in practice

The Centre for Alcohol and Other Drugs delivered 33 workshops across 16 regions to embed the Alcohol and Other Drug Clinical Care Standards as the foundation of safe, high quality, effective and collaborative treatment and support. The workshops reached 873 alcohol and other drug workers across 64 services (16 local health districts, 38 non-government organisations, 10 Aboriginal-community controlled organisations).

1.3 Drive greater health literacy and access to information

Health information reaches the NSW public through digital channels

The people of NSW continued to rely on NSW Health owned communications channels as a trusted health information source. In 2024-25, reliable, engaging, and useful health information was shared, often tailored to the needs of various groups and communities. The NSW Health website had more than 27 million page views from 9.1 million users.

NSW Health's social media content was seen more than 150 million times (impressions) and there were more than 182,000 clicks through to the NSW Health website from NSW Health's social media accounts. The average engagement rate (percentage of people who see and interact with content on social channels) increased.

As well as promoting health information, NSW Health has continued to promote information and content in support of concurrent priorities such as career opportunities and workforce recruitment.

Healthcare Anywhere campaign

In 2024, NSW Health launched a multi-channel awareness campaign encouraging people to call healthdirect as the first step in seeking non-emergency healthcare in NSW. The Healthcare Anywhere campaign was based on consumer behavioural insights, combined with health system data, and was launched in July 2024 to help manage seasonal spikes in demand at NSW emergency departments.

The campaign ran across radio, social media, search, outdoor and cross government channels, including several new platforms such as digital screens in pharmacies and petrol stations. During the first burst of the campaign (14 July to 30 September 2024), calls to healthdirect increased by 27 per cent, compared to the same period in 2023. This is an indication that the campaign was successful in meeting its objective – to reset default behaviours when accessing care by promoting an alternative to emergency departments when a person is unwell or injured.

Shaping the future of accessible communications

NSW Health strives to ensure that staff communicate to the public in ways that are inclusive, accessible, and easy to understand. This helps improve health literacy and ensures more people can access the information they need.

As part of this commitment, NSW Health released the *Accessible Communications Policy*, along with an Easy Read version. The Accessibility Matters online resource hub was launched, and a Community of Practice was established to support collaboration.

Since November 2024, more than 1,000 staff attended virtual information sessions. These sessions covered plain English, Easy Read formats, captions, transcripts, Auslan, and cultural and language considerations to support clearer and more inclusive health messaging.

Launching the Statewide Health Literacy Hub

Launched in October 2024, the Statewide Health Literacy Hub is a system-wide initiative to improve health communication, safety, and equity.

The Hub builds and advances health literacy leadership and capability at both local and system levels. It offers best practice resources, targeted programs, and co-designed solutions that strengthen staff capability, translate research into action, and foster partnerships across services, communities, and sectors. In 2024-25, the team:

- launched the Foundational Health Literacy Training module, with more than 600 registrations in the first 4 months
- delivered the Health Literacy Seminar Series with more than 800 registrations per session
- fostered collaboration by establishing multiple Shared Knowledge Networks with more than 2,000 members
- supported more than 10 active health literacy research collaborations
- awarded three research grants to projects focused on vaping in Aboriginal youth, improving cardiac recovery comprehension, and engaging culturally and linguistically diverse communities through bilingual educators.

Improving cancer health literacy

The Cancer Institute NSW supports people diagnosed with cancer to access high-quality, evidence-based, and easy to understand cancer information to make informed decisions about their care. In 2024-25:

- more than 131,300 users accessed online patient information in 151,400 sessions
- more than 189,200 users accessed translated print, web, and audio-visual patient information in 46 community languages
- 17 new in-language resources on cancer prevention, screening, and support were developed in 28 languages, involving 124 consumers
- anti-vaping, anti-tobacco, breast, bowel and cervical screening, and skin cancer prevention campaign messages were translated in up to six languages, with six campaigns tailored to reach Aboriginal people across NSW
- approximately 60 per cent of the patients who completed a patient-reported measures survey elected to receive information tailored to their concerns immediately after completion.

Breaking down barriers to enable research within diverse communities

The Cancer Institute NSW, in partnership with Western Sydney University and in consultation with all local health districts, worked towards improving inclusivity of culturally and linguistically diverse communities in research. The initiative identified barriers and enablers for engaging culturally and linguistically diverse people, showcased best practices, built staff capability through the delivery of five training programs for clinical trials units' staff and healthcare interpreters across NSW, and included a comprehensive evaluation.

Ongoing support for people from refugee backgrounds

In 2024-25, the NSW Multicultural Health Communication Service translated resources from the *There is no place for Domestic and Family Violence in Australia* campaign in up to 32 languages as part of the Translated Health Resources for Refugee Communities Project.

Codesigned with the South Eastern Sydney Local Health District Domestic Violence Service, community organisations, and people with lived experience, the resources aim to assist people from refugee backgrounds to identify domestic family violence in their social contexts and link to care.

The multilingual resources were provided to NSW Health staff and community workers to share with the culturally and linguistically diverse networks and communities that they serve.

1.4 Partner with consumers in co-design and implementation of models of care

Establishing the NSW Health Consumer, Carer, and Community Advisory Council

The NSW Health Consumer, Carer, and Community Advisory Council was established, bringing together consumers, carers, community members, to provide independent advice and share diverse perspectives on strategic opportunities to strengthen how care is experienced and delivered. The Council is contributing to key NSW Health initiatives, such as the Single Digital Patient Record Implementation Authority's work on using Patient Reported Measures in MyChart.

The Council's input ensures patients, carers, and community members' expectations and preferences are being considered and they are enabled to take an active role in their care.

Establishing the Violence, Abuse and Neglect Lived Experience Register

The Agency for Clinical Innovation, with funding from the NSW Ministry of Health, established the Violence, Abuse and Neglect Lived Experience Partnership Project, and a dedicated Violence, Abuse and Neglect Survivor Partner position which was recruited to.

The Project and new partner position will implement a registry of consumers, including families and carers with lived experience of domestic and family violence, sexual assault, and child abuse and neglect, to advise on the development and implementation of NSW Health policies, programs and service design.

Implementing the statewide menu system

In partnership with the Agency for Clinical Innovation and local health districts, HealthShare NSW commenced implementing a statewide menu system across NSW Health facilities in September 2024. By April 2025, breakfast, lunch and dinner menus were implemented at 13 local health districts along with Orange Hospital, replacing 140 individual menus.

Menu development incorporated feedback from patient and consumer taste testing sessions as well as insights from patient selection data. The new menu system supports consistent patient experience across HealthShare NSW-managed facilities; easier processes for updating menu items; better quality and standardised meal offerings; greater functionality with the new Food and Nutrition IT System; and system affordability.

Safe care is delivered across all settings

Safe, high quality reliable care is delivered by us and our partners in a sustainable and personalised way, within our hospitals, in communities, at home and virtually.

2.1 Deliver safe, high quality reliable care for patients in hospital and other settings

Improving wait times in emergency departments

The Emergency Department (ED) Taskforce was established to improve ED wait times, access to care, and to explore innovative solutions to divert pressure from our hospitals.

During the 2024-25 financial year, the Taskforce:

- reviewed, endorsed, and continues to monitor the Emergency Care Assessment and Treatment (ECAT) program
- reviewed, endorsed, and continues to monitor the seven new performance measures of the Hospital Access Targets that went live on 1 July 2024
- reviewed, endorsed, and continues to monitor alternative referral pathways for NSW Ambulance
- provided implementation support and monitoring of the strategies associated with the \$480.7 million over 4 years ED relief package
- endorsed progression of Aboriginal Health strategies to improve outcomes for Aboriginal patients in the ED.

The Taskforce provides regular updates on the NSW Health website.

Introducing Hospital Access Targets

On 1 July 2024, NSW Health introduced updated Hospital Access Targets and Mental Health Key Performance Indicators to support more transparent, equitable, and clinically relevant performance measurement. Public reporting of key metrics commenced on 11 June 2025 via the BHI.

The revised targets apply to both general hospital and mental health services and reflect statewide efforts to improve access and accountability. NSW Health continues to work closely with the Australasian College for Emergency Medicine (ACEM) to ensure the indicators remain aligned with clinical best practice and evolving operational needs.

Expanding the Emergency Department Short Stay Unit

As part of the NSW Government's Emergency Department Relief Package, the expansion of Emergency Department Short Stay Units aims to improve patient flow and care outcomes by providing short-term treatment for patients who do not require full hospital admission. These units help reduce emergency department congestion, support timely care, and create capacity for more urgent cases.

The initiative is led by the NSW Ministry of Health in partnership with local health districts, specialty health networks, and other NSW Health entities to ensure consistent delivery and alignment with broader health system priorities.

Implementing the virtual Urgent Care Service for adults

A statewide urgent care service for people aged 16 and over with unplanned non-life-threatening conditions was launched in December 2024. It provides virtual assessment, treatment, and referral, helping patients access care from home and reducing pressure on emergency departments.

The service runs daily from 8:00am to 10:00pm, including public holidays, through two hubs. The Metro Hub runs from Sydney Local Health District and covers six metropolitan local health districts, two regional local health districts, and St Vincents Hospitals network. The Rural Hub runs from Western NSW Local Health District and covers seven regional local health districts.

As a key alternative care pathway accessed through the NSW Single Front Door/healthdirect, the service has received more than 4,500 referrals.

Providing specialist dementia behavioural advice

NSW Health has piloted the innovative statewide Extreme Behavioural and Psychological Symptoms of Dementia (BPSD) Consultation/Liaison Service, with the service now funded for a further three years. This service provides specialist clinical review, advice, and support to NSW Health hospital staff caring for a person experiencing extreme behaviours associated with dementia.

Evaluation shows the service has achieved positive outcomes for both older people experiencing extreme BPSD and the NSW Health staff caring for them. Service outcomes include reductions in average number of behaviour-related incidents, use of psychotropic medication, and use of individual patient specialising for people with extreme BPSD. Hospital staff highly valued the service and 100 per cent of referrers found the service useful and would refer again.

Implementing the Lumos program

Lumos delivers insights on patient journeys across care settings that drive system improvements. Data from general practice records of nearly 7 million patients from 850 participating practices are linked with comprehensive hospital records.

Lumos is embedded in collaborative projects across NSW Health, primary health networks and partners, and extensive analytics inform needs assessments and service commissioning. Work to embed Indigenous Data Sovereignty principles in Lumos has progressed, with an Aboriginal Lumos pilot project planned for Northern NSW Local Health District.

Nearly 1,500 reports were delivered to Lumos general practitioners in 2024-25, providing valuable insights on their patients' use of the broader health system, informing quality improvement.

New prioritisation policy streamlining oral health service delivery

After implementation of a new policy directive to streamline waiting list management and improve patient experience, 96.4 per cent of patients are being seen within the maximum recommended wait time. This is up two per cent after an expected drop following the implementation of the policy. The new policy has been well received by patients and staff. The Far West Local Health District has made considerable progress from 59 per cent at 30 June 2024 to 84.4 per cent at 30 June 2025.

During the 2024-25, NSW public dental clinics provided 837,902 appointments to 341,962 patients.

Integrated Domestic and Family Violence Crisis Response Pilot Project

The Integrated Domestic and Family Violence (DFV) Crisis Response Pilot Project, funded through the Family, Domestic and Sexual Violence National Partnership Agreement, was implemented to develop, trial, and evaluate a 24/7 integrated psychosocial, medical, and forensic DFV crisis response. Phase two included trialling a specialist DFV consultation service through NSW Health's Child Wellbeing Unit.

Pilot sites at Hunter New England, Illawarra Shoalhaven, Northern NSW, and Northern Sydney local health districts successfully developed and implemented local models of care that expand access to psychosocial, medical and forensic services for victim-survivors of DFV. Additional funding was secured to extend the pilot for two years and results will inform development of a statewide model of care and implementation plan.

NSW Health medical and forensic examiners supervision guidelines

Violence, abuse and neglect medical and forensic examiners provide medical care and forensic examinations for adults and children affected by sexual assault, domestic and family violence, and child abuse.

Clinical supervision provides professional support for clinician's ability to reflect their wellbeing and development in challenging environments. A fact sheet was created to support supervising clinicians and promote quality care. This has been strengthened by additional supervision training for doctors and nurses responding to cases of violence, abuse, and neglect. Four sessions with approximately 40 medical and forensic specialist staff attendees aimed at boosting supervision skills and knowledge to provide local leadership to the violence, abuse, and neglect medical and forensic workforce.

Implementing Paediatric Service Capability

Implementation of the *Paediatric Service Capability (Paediatric Medicine and Surgery for Children) Guideline* commenced across NSW. The Guideline describes the service capability standard for paediatric services.

The Guideline requires a comprehensive assessment of facilities that provide services to children and young people. All local health districts and networks report on paediatric service capability annually.

These assessments will assist local health districts and specialty health networks to plan, design, and deliver safe, high quality health services for children and young people across the state, and inform central planning relevant to health services for children, young people, and their families across NSW.

Improving access to specialist maternity care

The Pregnancy Connect initiative focuses on improving timely access to specialist maternity care and the safe transfer of women who need higher-level care, particularly in regional and rural NSW.

Pregnancy Connect has an ongoing yearly investment of \$6.19 million to fund a total of 13 full time equivalent (FTE) midwives and 8 FTE obstetricians. The funding supports fractional appointments to ensure equitable distribution of positions across every local health district.

NSW Health continues to implement the initiative with a focus on strengthening the tiered perinatal networks and connecting women to pregnancy care early and regularly.

Breaking down barriers to cervical screening

The Cancer Institute NSW promoted self-collected cervical screening to break down barriers and boost participation rates. NSW data shows that 40 per cent of all screening tests are now self-collected.

The Institute awarded 11 cervical screening community engagement grants to improve awareness and reach of cervical screening in Aboriginal, culturally and linguistically diverse and LGBTQ+ communities, and people with disability.

The Institute also developed resources to educate patients and workforce about cervical screening during pregnancy. These resources were translated into 20 languages.

A cervical screening flipchart for Aboriginal health workers was developed in partnership with Aboriginal stakeholders.

Improving equitable access to colonoscopy

The Cancer Institute NSW supported the statewide implementation of Direct Access Colonoscopy services – a model of care fast tracking people with a positive bowel screening test to public colonoscopy services. The services reduce barriers commonly faced by patients, such as extended wait times for clinic appointments and out-of-pocket costs for private specialist room appointments.

The Institute supported 11 grants to expand direct access colonoscopy coverage in NSW, make recommendations, and implement initiatives to improve access to colonoscopy for priority populations.

In recognition of the vital role of primary care, the Institute – in partnership with the Daffodil Centre – launched Refer4Scope, an online decision tool supporting general practitioners with guideline-appropriate colonoscopy assessment and referrals.

Education for oncology professionals

eviQ Education, part of the Cancer Institute NSW's eviQ program, provides healthcare professionals with online learning resources, supporting them to keep their professional skills up to date so that they can deliver safe, evidence-based cancer care. The website was viewed over 1.3 million times in 2024-2025.

To keep up with emerging evidence, the program enhanced eLearning on radiation oncology nursing; adult neutropenia, febrile and sepsis; and oral anticancer drugs in community pharmacy. Nine rapid learning modules were also published, covering oncological emergencies, smoking and vaping cessation, and patient education.

eviQ also established social media channels to deliver bite-sized clinical 'microlearning' opportunities to followers.

Cancer treatment protocols

eviQ, a program of the Cancer Institute NSW, provides free evidence-based, consensus-driven cancer treatment protocols to ensure everyone with cancer receives safe, quality care. In 2024-25, the program:

- had more than 12 million website views
- produced 41 new cancer treatment protocols and clinical resources
- reviewed 263 existing protocols, clinical resources and patient information resources.

In response to the rapidly changing clinical landscape, eviQ also published resources to support health professionals in the safe and effective delivery of an emerging type of immunotherapy: bispecific antibody therapy. These therapies can present unique challenges and eviQ's work aims to support the safe care for patients receiving them.

A whole of health response to winter demand

To manage seasonal pressures in 2024-25, the Whole of Health Program led a coordinated winter planning response across NSW Health. Local health districts and specialty health networks submitted 257 initiatives, nearly half of which focused on improving patient flow and accelerating aged care discharges to reduce the average length of stay for older persons and increase inpatient capacity.

The NSW Ministry of Health supported this work with capability-building activities, including an International Winter Forum attended by more than 160 clinical and operational staff, delivered in partnership with the Agency for Clinical Innovation. An evaluation of the program will be undertaken, with findings and examples of successful initiatives to be shared across the system to inform future planning.

Safety and Quality Indicators in specialty health networks and pillar agencies

The NSW Ministry of Health Patient Safety First Unit worked with specialty health networks and pillar agencies to develop fit-for-purpose safety and quality indicators:

- The Clinical Excellence Commission (CEC) developed performance deliverables for inclusion in their 2025-26 Service Level Agreement: Recognise, Engage, Act, Call, Help (REACH) annual forum; Hospital Acquired Complication forums and Australian Sentinel Events reporting.
- NSW Ambulance developed a suite of safety and quality key performance indicators which were included in their Service Agreement for 2025-26.
- Justice Health and Forensic Mental Health Network developed key performance indicators that are sensitive to the custodial setting, focussing on clinical care, including chronic disease screening which were included in their Service Agreement for 2025-26.

Actionable insights into patient safety and safety culture

The Bureau of Health Information (BHI) released a report providing actionable insights into patients' experiences of healthcare for measures related to patient safety and safety culture within health service organisations. Findings in *The Insights Series – Patients' experiences of safe care and readmission to hospital over time* are based on in-depth analyses of thousands of patients' feedback in the Adult Admitted Patient Survey from 2018 to 2023.

The report highlighted the clear link between patient feedback and safety and health outcomes. Given the positive association between admitted patients' experiences and risk of readmission, the report also delivered new insights into readmissions following hospitalisation for eight clinical conditions across NSW public hospitals between 2016 and 2022.

Understanding and addressing clinical safety issues

The Clinical Excellence Commission Safety Intelligence team partners with internal and external stakeholders to better understand clinical safety issues, to support safe and reliable care. The team supports the process of learning from serious incidents to anticipate risks, the actions taken to mitigate harm, and the use of data to identify changes and provide assurance. The Team's analytical method adopts a patient-centric approach and considers the patient journey, prompting curiosity and direction for action at a state and local level. A recent pilot of a Rapid Patient Experience Survey allowed facilities access to another important measure of quality of care, and has delivered promising preliminary results demonstrating the benefits of enabling facilities to rapidly access and act on patient feedback to improve care outcomes.

Knowledge sharing and capability development to improve patient flow

The Whole of Health Program supports local health districts and specialty health networks to improve patient flow and timely access to care across the NSW Health System. The Program focuses on knowledge sharing and capability development, enabling effective local initiatives to be scaled and adapted across the state.

The program provides annual budget supplementation to local health districts and specialty health networks to support dedicated program leads. These roles are responsible for implementing and sustaining local patient flow improvements while building long-term capability within their services. By strengthening leadership and promoting shared learning, the Program enhances system-wide responsiveness and supports better outcomes for patients.

Discharge Patient Flow Concierge initiative

The Discharge Patient Flow Concierge initiative has received \$49.9 million in recurrent funding and \$4 million in capital funding over four years to improve discharge planning and coordination. It supports patients, families, and hospital staff by streamlining discharge processes and reducing delays. The funding enables dedicated concierge roles within hospitals to support discharge planning, alongside the development of digital algorithms and other functions with the Patient Flow Portal, a statewide tool for managing patient flow and care coordination, to identify complex inpatients who may benefit from earlier intervention.

NSW Hospital Guardianship Program

The Whole of Health Program supports the NSW Hospital Guardianship Program, a joint initiative with the Department of Communities and Justice aimed at reducing unnecessary hospital stays for patients awaiting guardianship hearings. In June 2025, NSW Health updated the Guardianship Guideline to reflect current policy and legislative changes.

The revised guideline standardises the process for adult inpatients who require guardianship applications to the NSW Civil and Administrative Tribunal. It provides clear direction for NSW Health professionals involved in these applications, promoting consistent, timely, and legally compliant practices across all health facilities.

Reducing hospital acquired complications

The Sydney Children's Hospitals Network Hospital Acquired Complications Recovery Program has delivered significant improvements in patient safety, driving down hospital acquired complications (HAC) rates across all categories. A key achievement being a 10 per cent reduction in hospital-acquired delirium. Using a practical, data-driven approach, the Network redesigned how HACs are identified, reviewed, and managed. This was achieved by introducing a robust validation process, engaging clinicians in case reviews, and implementing changes in practice aligned to latest evidence, as well as regular rounding, support and just-in-time education.

A year of firsts

The Sydney Children's Hospitals Network continued to lead in paediatric breakthroughs by being the first health entity in Australia to introduce several groundbreaking initiatives. A patient at The Children's Hospital at Westmead became the first child in Australia to receive a diaphragm pacer, eliminating the need for round-the-clock ventilation and enabling independent breathing. The first health entity in Australia to introduce the use of a Tübingen Palatal Plate to treat children with severe forms of Pierre Robin syndrome. The Network also established the Ventricular Assist Device service, marking a significant milestone in paediatric cardiac care in NSW and allowing for a comprehensive NSW paediatric heart failure service.

Creating supportive environments to provide care

The Centre for Alcohol and Other Drugs branch focused on ensuring safe, high-quality services are delivered across the state.

In 2024-25, the Alcohol and Other Drugs Care Charter was launched, guiding staff to deliver care that is safe, accessible, equitable, and non-judgemental to improve the experiences and outcomes of people who use or have used alcohol and other drugs.

The *Virtual Care in Alcohol and Other Drugs: Treatment Practice Guide* was released, supporting clinicians and treatment services to safely expand access to treatment through virtual care, particularly in rural and regional areas of NSW.

The team also delivered 33 workshops across 16 regions to embed the Alcohol and Other Drug Clinical Care Standards as the foundation of safe, high quality, effective, and collaborative treatment and support. A total of 873 alcohol and other drug workers across 67 services (16 local health districts, 38 non-government organisations, 10 Aboriginal-community controlled organisations) attended a workshop.

Statutory Review of the Abortion Law Reform Act 2019

The *Abortion Law Reform Act 2019 (the Act)* ensures abortion is treated as a health issue. In accordance with section 17 of the Act, the NSW Ministry of Health conducted a review into the operation of the Act on behalf of the Minister for Health and tabled it in Parliament.

The review found the Act is operating well regarding improvements to legislative access and treating terminations of pregnancy as a health issue.

NSW Health is implementing the review's recommendations to address barriers to care. NSW Health has engaged with stakeholders and allocated two grants to support improved access to abortion care.

Updated Burns Injury Model of Care

The updated Burns Injury Model of Care was released in October 2024 and ensures equitable access to best-practice treatment for all people in NSW. This revised model integrates several health lenses to guide clinicians in delivering comprehensive, person-centred and culturally appropriate care. The updated Burns Injury Model of Care was presented to the NSW Burns State-wide Planning Directors and Managers Network in February 2025 and received excellent feedback.

Trialling body worn cameras for security staff

A 12-month trial of body worn cameras commenced in December 2024. Security staff at 15 hospitals across NSW Health will wear the cameras. There are up to 300 cameras in operation. The trial will determine how effective the presence of body worn cameras are in helping to deter and de-escalate the frequency and severity of incidents involving aggression and violence in hospitals, and provide valuable insights into how to improve safety for staff, patients, and visitors.

2.2 Deliver more services in the home, community and virtual settings

Easing pressure on emergency departments through Urgent Care Services

NSW Health has launched 25 Urgent Care Services across the state over the two years to 30 June 2025. During the 2023–24 and 2024–25 financial years, 11 of these services were introduced in regional and remote areas of NSW.

NSW Health has partnered with local health districts and Primary Health Networks to provide alternative pathways to care outside the hospital in an effort to ease pressure on emergency departments and ensure the people of NSW receive timely and appropriate healthcare.

Patients with urgent but not-life-threatening conditions can call healthdirect to be triaged by a registered nurse who assesses their condition and refers the caller to the most appropriate service depending on their clinical needs. This may include virtual consultations with NSW Health's statewide virtual urgent care services for adults and for children.

Developing the virtual care suitability toolkit

The virtual care suitability toolkit was developed to help healthcare providers and consumers to decide if virtual care is suitable for them. It promotes shared decision making with a focus on, person-centred care, choice, and flexibility in how care can be provided. The toolkit aims to encourage and guide discussions about the most appropriate care options.

The consumer guide outlines what virtual care is, its benefits, and includes a suitability checklist to help consumers decide if virtual care is right for them. It also provides specific information for consumer groups such as Aboriginal people, those who speak languages other than English, and people with disabilities.

The toolkit contains resources to support clinicians to decide whether it is clinically appropriate to use virtual care. An accompanying checklist is designed to stimulate thinking and empower clinicians to discuss the suitability of virtual care with the consumer.

Enabling virtual care through healthdirect Video Call

In December 2024, NSW Health launched the healthdirect Video Call platform to support virtual emergency care through statewide virtual urgent care services for adults and children. Purpose-built for healthcare, the platform improves video quality, clinician usability, and integration with digital tools, enabling faster and more effective virtual care across NSW.

Implementation to all local health districts and specialty health networks will continue into the 2025-26 financial year.

Providing health information and advice

The NSW Health Single Front Door initiative, delivered in partnership with healthdirect, enables people with urgent, unplanned health needs to access advice and navigate to clinically appropriate care locally or virtually, reducing avoidable emergency department presentations and enhancing experience and equity of access to care.

In 2024-25, healthdirect provided health information and advice to more than 525,000 NSW callers. The 24/7 helpline delivered more than 404,000 nurse triages, connecting people with self-care advice or clinically appropriate services, such as referral to a GP or Urgent Care Service provided through either face-to-face or virtual appointments. Fewer than 25 per cent of callers were referred to emergency departments or Triple Zero, reflecting the impact of accessible, alternative care pathways.

Developing referral pathways from NSW Ambulance to virtual services

In June 2025, NSW Ambulance implemented a new referral pathway from the Virtual Clinical Call Centre (VCCC) and Extended Care Paramedics (ECP) into the urgent care service for adults.

It allows VCCC and ECP clinicians to arrange video consultations, issue prescriptions, and refer patients for imaging and pathology during 8:00am to 10:00pm operating hours.

While a referral pathway for children to the Virtual Urgent Care Service for Children already existed, this initiative has now incorporated and established a complete pathway for both adults and children in NSW and aims to avoid transportation of patients to emergency departments where this is clinically appropriate for the patient.

Delivering valuable insight into patients' experiences of virtual care

The Bureau of Health Information (BHI) provided insights into patients' experiences of virtual care in NSW based on what was learned from five years of feedback in the statewide Virtual Care Survey. Analysis in *The Insights Series – Patients' experiences of virtual care with NSW public hospital outpatient clinics* examined feedback from more than 12,000 patients, including those who also received virtual care with general practitioners. Among its findings, the report shows that patients were much more likely to have high overall satisfaction with virtual care when they said health professionals worked well together and gave understandable explanations; and their care was well organised.

Establishing Virtual Psychiatry Hubs

As part of a statewide response to anticipated workforce disruptions, NSW Health launched two Virtual Psychiatry Hubs in February 2025 in Hunter New England and Western NSW local health districts. The hubs provide after-hours and surge psychiatric support, particularly to emergency departments, ensuring continuity of senior clinical expertise. While utilisation is optional and adaptable to local service priorities and capacity, the model has supported over 1,500 referrals with an average 30-minute turnaround and a 70 per cent discharge rate.

NSW Health Out of Hospital Care Program

The Out of Hospital Care Program is a key patient flow strategy that supports timely discharge from public hospitals and helps prevent avoidable admissions. The program provides targeted case management and home support packages, including: ComPacks (for patients over 18 requiring discharge support), Safe and Supported at Home (SASH) for people under 65 not eligible for the NDIS, and End of Life (EoL) packages for those with a life-limiting illness and a prognosis of three months or less. These services ensure eligible patients can safely receive care at home. This included: 12,903 ComPacks, 5,347 Safe and Supported at Home (SASH) packages, and 6,104 End of Life packages.

Strengthening Hospital in the Home services

NSW Health is implementing a system-wide reform to strengthen Hospital in the Home (HITH) services and expand virtual care delivery. This reform aims to improve patient outcomes, increase access and equity, decrease hospital length of stay or avoid hospitalisation altogether, and free up inpatient capacity across the health system.

In February 2025, the new *Hospital in the Home Policy Directive* was released, setting out updated core service elements for all HITH models and widening eligibility for HITH care by leveraging virtual care technology. HITH reform is being funded through State and Commonwealth initiatives to support implementation, with progress actively monitored. Additional statewide initiatives are underway to further embed virtual care in everyday service delivery.

The NSW Health Deployment Program

The NSW Health Deployment program provides nurses, midwives, and allied health staff opportunities to travel and work at hospitals and health services that have a short-term need for their skills and experience. Deployments are between 2 and 13 weeks. The unit has succeeded with its initial task to assist with the COVID-19 workforce recovery and now supports a pipeline of deployable health professionals.

By deploying the equivalent of 1,481 fulltime equivalent staff in priority roles such as nursing, midwifery, occupational therapy, speech pathology and physiotherapy, the program realised significant efficiencies and better outcomes for rural, regional, and priority populations. The program is set to expand significantly in the next two years.

Referral pathways

Referral pathways help patients calling Triple Zero (000) access the most appropriate care when their condition doesn't require an emergency department. In 2024-25, NSW Ambulance developed 20 referral pathways to refer patients to established local health district services, speciality health networks, Urgent Care Services, virtual services, and other specialised care providers. Each pathway is a formally endorsed collaboration between a non-emergency department service and NSW Ambulance. It represents a partnership in patient centred care.

A key highlight includes the consolidation of multiple pathways into a single point of access for North Sydney and South Western Sydney local health districts, supporting excellence in care for local communities.

2.3 Connect with partners to deliver integrated care services

NSW Problematic and Harmful Sexual Behaviours Interagency Standards and Training Committee

NSW Health led the establishment of the cross-agency NSW Problematic and Harmful Sexual Behaviours (PHSB) Interagency Standards and Training Committee. The Committee focuses on building capability and capacity across government and non-government workforces to prevent and respond to children and young people who have displayed PHSB.

In 2024-25, the NSW Health Education Centre Against Violence, in collaboration with the Committee, produced the *Together We Can Report: Strategic insights to guide shared workforce learning and capacity building for preventing and responding to PHSB*. The Report provides a series of recommendations to support a system-wide approach to interagency learning and workforce development strategies, for the Committee's consideration for prioritisation and implementation.

Improving access to cancer clinical trials for the LGBTQ+ community

The Cancer Institute NSW partnered with community organisation ACON to explore barriers and identify solutions to increase cancer clinical trial participation for the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer (LGBTQ+) community. The foundational research paper, published in February 2025, identified barriers to collecting, self-reporting, utilising, and publishing LGBTQ+ data, and the attitudes of clinical research staff towards the collection of data. The research also found that education and support for the workforce, as well as changes to data collection practices, will be effective strategies to increase inclusion in cancer clinical trials.

Statewide Specialist Trans and Gender Diverse Health Service

The Statewide Specialist Trans and Gender Diverse Health Service is now fully operational, providing medical, nursing, and allied health specialist care to trans and gender diverse young people across NSW. In 2024-25, the Sax Institute Evidence Check Update on *Effective interventions for children and young people with gender dysphoria* was published. Work continued with the Clinical Advisory Panel, Statewide Steering Group, and Consumer Advisory Panel to support holistic, evidence-based practice.

Innovative mental health response model

NSW Ambulance partnered with Western Sydney Local Health District to design and implement a model of care involving a mental health clinician co-responding to Triple Zero (000) calls with a NSW Ambulance paramedic.

This program provides out-of-hospital support for people experiencing mental distress, improving access to appropriate community care services. The program also aims to ease pressure on the system-wide demands in mental health care and highlights NSW Ambulance's commitment to responsive, person-centred care.

Statewide initiative for diabetes management

The implementation of an integrated and coordinated approach to diabetes management across NSW Health and primary health networks in NSW in 2024-25 included:

- developing practical resources to support local implementation of case conferencing clinics between specialists and GPs to support their patients, for timely and appropriate access to diabetes care while building capacity and capability in primary care
- showcasing diabetes service models on the ACI Innovation Exchange
- bringing together a clinical advisory group to support the development of statewide referral criteria for diabetes and endocrinology
- establishing a community of practice to improve approaches to diabetes management.

Building connection with community pharmacists

NSW Health partnered with the Pharmaceutical Society of Australia to deliver 10 full-day, face-to-face Aboriginal cultural safety workshops across NSW for community pharmacists participating in the Needle Syringe Program and Opioid Treatment Program.

These workshops were designed and delivered by Aboriginal subject matter experts with a focus on providing culturally safe care for Aboriginal patients and building connection with Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisations.

NewGen Matrix Project

NewGen Matrix aims to provide paramedics with the information they need to transport patients to the right location, for the right care. NewGen Matrix will ensure appropriate patient distribution across NSW, promoting a system-wide approach to patient flow that reduces pressure on the health system. To date, the project has:

- engaged more than 1,000 stakeholders, including patients, paramedics, hospital staff and ministry executives, to design core features and functionality of the NewGen Matrix
- developed a pre-hospital Patient Acuity Tool that is an evidence-informed instrument to guide and standardise the identification of patient acuity levels and ongoing care needs when determining transport destination
- defined a comprehensive benefits realisation strategy to ensure the NewGen Matrix drives seamless integration and lasting benefits across the NSW Health System
- developed a detailed quality assurance and governance strategy to refine the final NewGen Matrix product.

2.4 Strengthen equitable outcomes and access for rural, regional and priority populations

Primary School Mobile Dental Program

The Primary School Mobile Dental Program is now delivered by 11 local health districts, expanding from 5 in 2019. This includes eight rural, regional, and remote districts, which supports providing dental care to children disadvantaged by geographic distance from a fixed clinic.

In 2024-25, the program was offered to 75,083 students across 290 schools, of which 93 per cent were schools with a high rate of disadvantage. Of the 28,560 patients treated, 3,675 were Aboriginal and 2,512 spoke a language other than English.

The known dental decay disparity that exists for more disadvantaged schools has been narrowed since the program commenced in 2019.

Improving access to oral health care for refugee and asylum seekers

The Refugee and Asylum Seekers program is delivered by the Centre for Oral Health Strategy in collaboration with oral health services, Multicultural Health Communication Service, and NSW refugee health services in six local health districts.

This program enables local health districts to provide appropriate support to refugee and asylum seeker patients, considering local context, needs and capacity, resulting in better patient experience.

Family Start Package – essential services for children

To increase support to children with developmental vulnerabilities, recruitment of 32 additional paediatric allied health staff and development of local models of care commenced from September 2024 in all local health districts and the Sydney Children's Hospital Network. Recruited professions include speech pathology, occupational therapy, physiotherapy, and social work to become part of multidisciplinary teams.

Streamlining care for children with behavioural issues and/or ADHD in regional NSW

The pilots in Hunter New England Local Health District and Western NSW Local Health District aimed at enhancing models of care for children with behavioural issues and/or ADHD ended on 30 June 2025.

The models of care have enabled co-management with general practitioners, supporting high-quality person-centred care through efficient referrals, a family-centred approach, and improved access in rural and regional areas.

Independent evaluation of these pilots will be published by the end of 2025.

Improving access to cervical cancer screening for priority populations

The Cancer Institute NSW works in partnership with local health districts across the state to support women's health nurses, who drive access to free, life-saving cervical screening tests. Women's health nurses bridge the gap for priority populations that are under-screened and never screened through an approach that builds trust, is safe, and culturally sensitive.

In 2024-25, Women's health nurses performed more than 6,500 cervical screening tests, 4,200 of which were with women and people with a cervix from a priority population.

Improving cancer screening awareness in refugee communities

The Cancer Institute NSW's Refugee Cancer Screening Project is focused on engaging and educating under-screened refugee communities from Sub-Saharan Africa and the Middle East. Following consultation with community leaders, the Institute led an African Health and Wellbeing Day, in collaboration with NSW Service for the Treatment and Rehabilitation of Torture and Trauma Survivors and Western Sydney Local Health District.

The event emphasised cultural authenticity, fostering a supportive environment that encouraged engagement and trust in health services. More than 250 community members, including newly arrived refugees, received cancer education through talks by African health professionals and information stalls, as well as opportunities to book a breast screen and/or order bowel screening kits.

Cancer education in multicultural communities

The Cancer Institute NSW supported and delivered a range of culturally appropriate, in-language activities to educate multicultural communities on cancer prevention and early detection.

In the 2024-25 financial year:

- six new Multicultural Community Education grants awarded
- 15 programs funded by Multicultural Community Education grants reached completion. These programs delivered 204 community education sessions, reaching more than 3,600 people from more than 30 cultural groups.
- over 70 multicultural health workers attended training to build capacity to run cancer education sessions
- 23 community events and workshops were attended, hosted or supported by the Institute, enabling engagement with over 2,000 community members
- 20 partners were collaborated with to co-create resources
- 80 general practitioners attended 2 webinars on the provision of culturally responsive care.

Court diversion service expanded to regional communities to support defendants with mental illness

Justice Health and Forensic Mental Health Network continued to expand its court diversion service to regional communities across the state as part of a \$13.4 million investment by the NSW Government.

The Statewide Community and Court Liaison Service commenced at Orange, Bathurst, Blayney, and Oberon local courts, diverting eligible defendants living with mental illness away from the criminal justice system and connecting them with local mental health care and support services.

The service provides comprehensive assessments by mental health clinicians who make recommendations to the magistrate on appropriate treatment and rehabilitation services available in the community.

Community Emergency Response Team

The NSW Ambulance Community Emergency Response Teams (CERT) initiative extends essential health services to smaller communities. CERTs are comprised of NSW Ambulance clinical volunteers who are trained to initiate clinical care prior to the arrival of paramedics. New CERTs in the regional locations of Harrington and The Rock began induction training in June 2025.

Improving care for border regions through collaboration

In collaboration with the ACT, Queensland and Victoria, NSW Health has continued to seek improvements in the access to and delivery of quality and safe care for NSW border communities.

NSW Health collaborated with our bordering jurisdictions in various forums throughout 2024-25, including statewide health governance and border region operational committees to identify and address matters affecting NSW border residents.

NSW Health partners with the NSW Cross Border Commissioner to support the development and implementation of whole-of-government Memoranda of Understanding and will host a tri-state forum in Wentworth NSW in October 2025, bringing together South Australian, Victorian, and NSW stakeholders to discuss shared strategic priorities.

Building a shared understanding of healthcare delivery in NSW

The Shared Understanding Project aims to ensure that NSW Health and partner organisations are working effectively with communities in the planning and delivery of health services and models of care. This is essential to create a shared understanding and ensure future health services are informed, understood, trusted, and embraced.

Between July and December 2024, the NSW Ministry of Health engaged with more than 300 community members, consumers and carers, staff and partners, to understand current engagement processes around health service planning, design, and delivery.

The Consultation Insights Report has since been published, which will inform the development of recommendations and a workplan to address findings.

Regional Health Strategic Plan Progress Snapshot 2023-24

The *NSW Regional Health Strategic Plan Progress Snapshot 2023-24* provided an update on work undertaken to improve health outcomes and access to healthcare for people living in regional, rural and remote NSW.

The progress report highlighted a range of achievements in the second year of the *NSW Regional Health Strategic Plan*, including: a stronger regional health workforce with more people working in regional local health districts, more patients accessing the Isolated Patients Travel and Accommodation Assistance Scheme, and the establishment of three clinical trial support units in regional areas – improving access to the latest tests and treatments closer to home.

NSW Health Cross Border Community of Practice

The Cross Border Community of Practice (CoP) was established in 2024 to support key deliverables in the *NSW Regional Health Strategic Plan 2022-2032*.

The CoP aims to provide a statewide network for strategic support and collaboration regarding the provision of cross border care. In 2024-25, there were four meetings held, each focusing on a different cross border topic, including enabling seamless cross border care, record and data sharing, pathways to specialist services, and patient flow.

Response to the Rural Health Inquiry

NSW Health has been monitoring the progress of the implementation of all 44 recommendations of the Parliamentary Inquiry into Health Outcomes and Access to Health and Hospital Services in Rural, Regional and Remote New South Wales (Rural Health Inquiry). This includes completed actions and those that are in progress.

In September 2024, NSW Health published on its website a *Rural Health Inquiry Progress Report 2024* about the status of the implementation as at 30 June 2024. The Report also included also shares stories directly relating to Rural Health Inquiry recommendations – from the perspective of patients, staff, and the community.

As at 30 June 2025, 28 of the 44 recommendations were completed. There is ongoing work to implement the remaining 16 recommendations.

2.5 Align infrastructure and service planning around the future care needs

Establishing key health worker accommodation

NSW Health established the Key Health Worker Accommodation Program following its announcement as part of the 2024-25 NSW Budget. The funding is intended to support the attraction, retention, and integration of more than 500 health workers and their families in regional NSW by providing short and long term accommodation that is close to the health facilities where they work.

The Government will secure approximately 120 dwellings, which may include the building of new accommodation, refurbishment of existing accommodation, and purchase of suitable properties.

A total of 51 modern, fully-furnished preconstructed units were delivered across Far West, Murrumbidgee, and Southern NSW local health districts. Twenty-seven properties have been purchased, with final touches underway to welcome healthcare workers.

The \$45.3 million investment encompassed Broken Hill, Balranald, Leeton, Narrandera, Finley, West Wyalong, and Cooma, and the units are now operational.

NSW Health will work with local health districts, NSW Ambulance, Homes NSW, and the NSW Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development to understand Key Health Worker Accommodation requirements.

Capital Investment Planning process

In February 2024, the NSW Ministry of Health invited all NSW Health entities to submit Capital Investment Proposals (CIPs) as part of the annual Capital Investment Planning process. This process informs the annual development and submission of the NSW Health 10 Year Capital Investment Strategic Plan. There were 78 proposals received from 20 health entities. Written feedback on the proposals was provided to each health entity in December 2024.

Health entities will use 2025 as a 'planning' year and CIP submissions are not required in 2025. The Ministry will undertake a review of NSW Health's major capital investment planning process with a view to identify opportunities to enhance submissions in future years.

Strategic outcome 3

People are healthy and well

Investment is made in keeping people healthy to prevent ill health and tackle health inequality in our communities

3.1 Prevent, prepare for, respond to and recover from pandemic and other threats to population health

Keeping people safe in a state emergency

NSW Health prepares, prevents, responds to, and supports recovery from state emergencies and major incidents, ensuring our patients, communities, and workforce are always cared for.

The State Preparedness and Response Unit improved access to emergency management education and training for regional health staff and continued to build emergency management capability across the NSW Health System.

There were two events where the State Health Emergency Operations Centre (SHEOC) was activated. SHEOC works in collaboration with health entities to respond to emergencies. This includes local health districts, NSW Ambulance, HealthShare NSW, Health Infrastructure, the Justice Health and Forensic Mental Health Network, NSW Health Pathology, along with other agencies such as Primary Health Networks, Aboriginal Medical Service teams, and community health partners.

In March 2025, Ex-Tropical Cyclone Alfred impacted the Northern Rivers and Mid North Coast communities. The NSW Health Services Functional Area Supporting Plan (NSW HEALTHPLAN) transitioned to activation phase on 5 March 2025. The SHEOC was stood up by the State Health Services Functional Area Coordinator to operate daily.

NSW Health staff supported local and state level emergency operations centres, evacuation centres, and recovery centres. NSW Health partnered with Healthy North Coast Primary Health Network and St John Ambulance NSW. Clinicians were deployed from metropolitan local health districts to support affected regions. The SHEOC was stood down from 5:00pm on Tuesday 11 March 2025.

In May 2025, a slow-moving weather system caused flooding and significantly impacted the Hunter New England, Mid North Coast, and Central Coast local health districts.

The NSW HEALTHPLAN transitioned to activation phase and the SHEOC was stood up on 22 May 2025 to operate daily. Dedicated healthcare workers in the affected areas led these efforts, supported by the NSW Health System. All health services remained open and operational in the impacted areas.

Community recovery is ongoing. Health service support, including public health resources and mental health staff continue to assist affected communities process the consequences of the severe weather event and ex-Tropical Cyclone Alfred. The SHEOC was stood down on 25 May 2025.

NSW Health is the agency responsible for the Health Services Functional Area under the State Emergency Management Plan (EMPLAN) and works closely with partner agencies and emergency service organisations to prepare, prevent, respond to, and recover from emergencies and major incidents. NSW Health continues to be well-prepared to respond to and reduce the impact on people's health from many types of emergencies.

Preparing for public health emergencies

During 2024-25, Australia remained the only continent free from avian influenza H5 virus. Health Protection NSW collaborated with other agencies to prepare for avian influenza incursion in wildlife with consideration for human health risks. One state-based desktop exercise and three national-level exercises were held, testing NSW Health's capabilities and preparedness functions. These preparedness activities assisted with a response to avian influenza H7 virus detected on poultry farms on the outskirts of Sydney in mid-2024.

Several policies and guidelines were developed or updated to enhance broad system preparedness. These included public health guidelines for preparedness and response with Aboriginal communities, mass evacuation centres, and debriefs.

Coordinating mpox outbreak response

From June 2024 to January 2025, NSW experienced an outbreak of mpox clade IIb, primarily affecting gay, bisexual, and other men who have sex with men. Health Protection NSW worked with the Centre for Population Health, public health units and sexual health services, NSW Health Pathology, ACON, healthcare providers, and the community to successfully suppress the outbreak. This included:

- increasing access to and promotion of vaccination
- ensuring clinical awareness of mpox signs and symptoms
- increasing laboratory capabilities
- prompt case and contact management
- increasing awareness of mpox among affected communities
- updating guidelines and resources for clinicians and the public.

Effective use of pathology services

NSW Health Pathology's Public Health Pathology Service coordinates pathology testing and supports responses to public health outbreaks across NSW. The service provides evidence-based information and specialised pathology testing to inform NSW Health policies.

The service coordinated the NSW laboratory investigation of contaminated commercial antiseptic wipes used across Australia. Whole genome sequencing by NSW Health Pathology of NSW patient samples confirmed the causative products and enabled critical actions by the Therapeutic Goods Administration nationally.

It coordinated the testing of patient and environmental samples in four Sydney legionnaires disease outbreak investigations and supported Health Protection NSW's investigation to identify potential sources of the outbreaks. NSW Health Pathology also coordinated NSW testing of the new mpox virus, performing 5,566 tests with 746 mpox positive results, including the detection of Australia's first case of mpox virus clade Ib.

NSW Drug Checking trial at music festivals

The Centre for Alcohol and Other Drugs has begun a 12-month drug checking trial at music festivals. To June 2025, three festivals have hosted the service. This is the first public facing drug checking service in NSW. The government supported a trial following advice from the NSW Drug Summit Co-Chairs. The trial is supported by NSW Police Force and Liquor & Gaming NSW. It is operated as a partnership with NSW Health Pathology, NSW Users and AIDS Association, and the music festival industry.

Testing is conducted on site by the Forensic and Analytical Science Service. The results are then shared with service users along with harm reduction information by peer workers from NSW Users and AIDS Association. During the first 3 events, the service tested 247 drug samples and has been accessed by more than 350 people. The trial will continue into 2026.

3.2 Get the best start in life from conception through to age five

Launching the respiratory syncytial virus prevention program

The NSW respiratory syncytial virus (RSV) prevention program was launched in February 2025. RSV is a common cause of respiratory infection requiring hospitalisation mostly affecting young children.

The program aims to protect infants against RSV and reduce RSV-associated hospitalisations in the first five months of life. It offers RSV vaccination during pregnancy and an infant RSV immunisation product to babies who were not protected by maternal vaccination and those with medical risk factors for severe RSV disease. From 3 February 2025 to 30 June 2025 inclusive, 26,930 women aged 14 to 45 years received the RSV vaccine. From 1 March 2025 to 30 June 2025 inclusive, 5,407 babies born on or after 1 January 2025 received the RSV immunisation product.

Publishing the Induction of Labour Clinical Practice Guide

NSW Health is committed to ensuring women receive safe and respectful maternity care, including providing safe, evidence-based clinical practice for the induction of labour.

The *Induction of Labour: Methods and Approaches Clinical Practice Guide* was published in May 2025 and provides advice on methods and approaches to the induction of labour. It supports maternity services to provide safe and evidence-based clinical practice; to consider if a woman may need to be transferred to a higher level of care for induction of labour; and assists clinicians and women with informed decision-making. The clinical practice guide is included as part of the NSW Health policy directive: *Induction of Labour*.

Strengthening early identification and response to domestic violence

A range of initiatives are underway to enhance NSW Health's long-standing Domestic Violence Routine Screening (DVRS) Program.

In 2024-25, DVRS forms were updated to align with new policy and practice guidance. A review of DVRS practice was conducted within the four settings where DVRS is mandated (child and family health, maternity, drug and alcohol, and mental health services).

This review, funded through the Family, Domestic and Sexual Violence National Partnership Agreement, included the development of practice resources co-produced with victim-survivors of domestic and family violence to support the delivery of safe, effective, and trauma-informed routine screening.

The practice resources will be launched in September 2025.

Supporting parents to quit smoking

The Centre for Alcohol and Other Drugs expanded free access to Nicotine Replacement Therapy to people who use Substance Use in Pregnancy and Parenting Services, along with providing new clinical guidance to inform practice.

3.3 Make progress towards zero suicides recognising the devastating impact on society

Using data for suicide prevention and response

The NSW Ministry of Health System Information and Analytics branch uses data to monitor how patients use health services over time and identify comparison groups. The NSW Suicide Monitoring System (SuMS) provides regular reports and briefings to the NSW Ministry of Health, local health districts, and partner organisations.

This data helps to assess the impact of the Toward Zero Suicides Initiative on suicide prevention efforts, and guides further evaluation to design best practice care. Teams across NSW working within the initiative never lose sight of the fact that each piece of data represents a person with a story.

An integrated suicide and self-harm dashboard was launched in February 2025 for NSW Ministry of Health and local health districts. The dashboard brings together data on suspected suicide deaths, self-harm related emergency department presentations, and access points for suicide prevention and response. It supports progress towards zero suicides by providing service leaders and policy makers with a tool to understand trends and risk groups, and to plan prevention and response activities.

Providing information about how to access suicide prevention supports

NSW Health launched the new suicide prevention and response website to help people in distress and those supporting someone in distress to easily find and access the right information and supports. It includes evidence-based resources for communities and professionals and recent evaluation reports. The website supports a coordinated government effort to reduce suicide in NSW, increase suicide prevention capabilities, and meet the needs of people impacted by suicide.

This launch follows the introduction of the NSW Suicide Prevention Bill 2025 to Parliament, an election commitment aimed to establish a whole-of-government approach to suicide prevention that addresses drivers of distress and strengthens cross-agency action and accountability.

Together these initiatives demonstrate a coordinated effort to reduce suicides across the state.

Delivering and enabling suicide aftercare services

Aftercare services are free caring support services for people who recently attempted suicide or going through a suicidal crisis. The services are being delivered in 26 geographical regions across 19 sites in NSW. Expanded referral pathway trials are being implemented to improve access for priority populations, including Aboriginal communities, people with psychosocial disabilities, and older people. In May 2025, the Agency for Clinical Innovation hosted the Aftercare Forum, launching the NSW Aftercare Service Delivery Model. In June 2025, the NSW Aboriginal Suicide Prevention Forum was held in partnership with the Aboriginal Health and Medical Research Council.

Peer workforce plays a critical role in these services. A dedicated peer workforce framework has been developed through extensive engagement with stakeholders and will be published in 2025.

Providing suicide prevention training

Building on training development funded by the NSW Ministry of Health Mental Health Branch, the Health Education and Training Institute provided access to suicide prevention training to more than 9,000 NSW Health staff, supporting NSW's commitment to reducing deaths through suicide. Training was made available through a suite of eModules and workshops adapted for the differing needs of NSW Health's diverse workforce.

3.4 Support healthy ageing ensuring people can live more years in full health and independently at home

Reducing hospital length of stay for older patients

The Integrated Geriatric Emergency Medicine (iGEM) is an initiative based out of Blacktown Hospital, aimed at supporting safe and timely care for older patients. The initiative creates environments that support the unique needs of elderly patients, so they can sooner return to the comfort of their aged care facility under a shared care model.

Between 1 July 2024 to 30 June 2025, more than 1,100 patients accessed care through iGem, with 96.5 per cent of patients returning to their residential aged care facility within 24 hours. The iGEM model was made permanent after the success of the pilot program with view for expansion into other hospitals.

Providing high-quality care to older people in their own home

NSW and the Commonwealth signed a bilateral agreement under Strengthening Medicare to support older people access high-quality care in the community. The funding allows NSW Health to expand its aged care outreach services and strengthen pathways into Hospital in the Home for older people, enabling older people to access high-quality clinical care in their own home, whether that's residential aged care or the broader community.

The agreement aims to:

- reduce avoidable hospital presentations and unnecessarily long hospital stays
- support timely discharge back to the community
- improve transitions to appropriate care.

3.5 Close the gap by prioritising care and programs for Aboriginal people

Launching the NSW Aboriginal Health Plan 2024-2034

NSW Health launched the *NSW Aboriginal Health Plan 2024-2034* with the Minister for Health and the Aboriginal Health and Medical Research Council (AH&MRC) of NSW in August 2024.

The Plan marks a significant step towards reforming health systems to provide culturally safe, holistic, and high-quality care for all Aboriginal people in NSW by sharing power in system reform.

It provides a roadmap for the future and an ongoing commitment to growth, transformation, and continued partnership with the AH&MRC. It is a landmark document relevant to the Aboriginal people of NSW while also embedding the Closing the Gap priority reforms as enablers of change.

The Plan is a result of extensive consultation and partnership.

Launching the NSW Aboriginal Health Governance, Shared Decision Making and Accountability Framework

In September 2024, the *NSW Aboriginal Health Governance, Shared Decision Making and Accountability Framework* was launched. The Framework focuses on transforming NSW Health systems, structures, and processes to enable shared decision making with Aboriginal people.

It has four principles to guide and embed these concepts in NSW Health:

- Aboriginal people are embedded into decision-making processes and governance structures that impact Aboriginal people in NSW Health
- Aboriginal NSW Health staff are recognised in the NSW Health System and are supported and empowered to participate in shared decision making, governance, and structures

- NSW Health and the Aboriginal Community Controlled sector have strong partnership mechanisms
- the NSW Health System is held accountable for Aboriginal health outcomes.

The Framework outlines the gold standard for each principle and all NSW Health organisations are working to implement the gold standard.

Launching the Stolen Generations Survivors Action Plan

Co-designed with Survivors, their descendants, and Stolen Generations Organisations (SGOs), the *Stolen Generations Survivors Action Plan 2025-30: Towards Health and Healing* will guide and propel NSW Health's response to the urgent health, aged care, healing, and wellbeing needs of Survivors and their descendants.

The Plan is an extension of the apology that the NSW Health Secretary delivered in 2022, recognising NSW Health's role in the Stolen Generations.

Integral to the development of the Plan is a Survivor-led approach, ensuring that lived experiences shape its actions and priorities, reflecting NSW Health's commitment to centring Survivor voices in development, governance, and implementation.

Aboriginal Mental Health and Wellbeing Model of Care initiative

In its third year, the Aboriginal Mental Health and Wellbeing Model of Care initiative continues to support nine Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisations (ACCHOs) and two local health districts across NSW.

The work with participating ACCHOs and local health districts focused on shared employment models, workforce development, clinical service delivery, and care navigation. This phase prioritised implementation and preparation for final year evaluation in 2025-26, with a preference for an Aboriginal-led evaluator. The program supports culturally-safe care across rural, remote, and metropolitan communities.

Delivering an Aboriginal-led throughcare program

This place-based throughcare program offers incarcerated Aboriginal women support before, during, and after incarceration, facilitating effective reintegration and reducing recidivism.

Following the success of Waminda's Justice Our Way Program at Silverwater and Dillwynia Correctional Centres, funding was given to Durri Aboriginal Corporation Medical Service and Wellington Aboriginal Corporation Health Service. Funding will deliver Aboriginal-led throughcare to Aboriginal women on remand and incarcerated at Mid North Coast Correctional Centre and Wellington Correctional Centre (WCC), and to pilot a men's program at WCC. This program is being delivered collaboratively with the NSW Ministry of Health, Justice Health and Forensic Mental Health Network, and Corrections NSW. In 2024-25, the Waminda Program supported around 1,200 women through both in-reach and warm referrals to other services in the community.

Improving cancer outcomes for Aboriginal people

Cancer Institute NSW contributed towards closing the gap for Aboriginal people in 2024-25 by:

- capturing the lived experiences of Aboriginal people to help shape the *NSW Aboriginal Cancer Strategy*
- supporting the Aboriginal health workforce in educating and empowering clients to reduce their cancer risk through the Helping Mob Live Healthy and Prevent Cancer Toolkit
- engaging with community and promoting cancer screening prevention resources at Yabun, an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural festival
- awarding two dedicated Aboriginal Cancer Research Grants to support Aboriginal-led research aimed at increasing access to cancer services and facilitating a health system that is responsive to the needs of Aboriginal people.

A yarning circle for the Aboriginal Allied Health Network

The Aboriginal Allied Health Network is a NSW Health statewide initiative established in 2019 that supports the cultural safety, cultural connections, and professional development of NSW Health Aboriginal allied health professionals. The program invests in the growth and support of the Aboriginal health workforce and works toward retention and progression of Aboriginal staff.

In 2024-25, the Online Yarning Circle was established to increase cultural connection between scheduled bi-annual face-to-face Aboriginal Allied Health Network forums. The aim is to promote cultural safety, build connection, share knowledge, and provide support from cultural leaders and senior members of the network. It brings together Aboriginal staff from across the 23 allied health professions with allied health assistants and graduates of the Djirruwang Program. Engagement with the network's new Online Yarning Circle has supported its membership growth from 84 network members in 2023 to 141 in 2025.

Yarning about alcohol use in pregnancy

The Centre for Alcohol and Other Drugs focused on empowering clinicians to talk to patients about alcohol use during pregnancy. A toolkit was developed for health workers to support having culturally sensitive and non-stigmatising conversations. Workshops were delivered to four Aboriginal medical services, and nearly 175 staff viewed a targeted webinar on alcohol use in pregnancy.

Embedding cultural healing practices in to models of care

The Sydney Children's Hospitals Network continued to improve care for Aboriginal communities and build a culturally intelligent workforce by restructuring the Aboriginal Health Directorate. The Network's Aboriginal Health team embedded cultural strength mapping and incorporated cultural healing practices into clinical care plans. The Network's commitment to prioritising Aboriginal healthcare was also demonstrated in updating its apology statement; partnering with Aboriginal artists to bring traditional ways of knowing into the design of infrastructure redevelopments; and building and strengthening partnerships across the state with primary health networks, local health districts, and community care providers like the KARI and Gujaga Foundation.

Strengthening cultural understanding with Aboriginal health practitioners

Paramedics in South West Sydney collaborated with the Tharawal Aboriginal Medical Service (AMS) to deliver two days of observation shifts for Aboriginal health practitioners.

This initiative fostered mutual understanding between services, deepening an understanding of the patient journey from the initial Triple Zero (000) call, to care in the AMS. The initiative also enriched the ability of paramedics to provide culturally safe care to Aboriginal peoples, reinforcing NSW Ambulance's commitment to making its services more accessible and responsive to the needs of Aboriginal patients and communities.

Isolated Patients Travel and Accommodation Assistance Scheme (IPTAAS)

A two-year pilot was established to reduce barriers for Aboriginal people using IPTAAS through Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisations (ACCHOs).

The IPTAAS and ACCHO Direct Funding Initiative will provide IPTAAS funding directly to ACCHOs to manage on behalf of their patients.

The initiative takes a flexible, co-design approach and is in the initial stages of development in partnership with a number of pilot sites and the Aboriginal Health and Medical Research Council.

Aboriginal-community controlled organisations leading care

Aboriginal people were named as a priority population for the newly commissioned public and non-government services under the NSW Government's Response to the Special Commission of Inquiry into the Drug 'ice'.

As part of the response, the Centre for Alcohol and Other Drugs commissioned new alcohol and other drug support hubs, six of which are either led by Aboriginal-community controlled organisations or delivered in partnership with a non-government organisation. A new day rehabilitation service for parents with young children is being delivered by and for Aboriginal communities on the Central Coast.

Two of the five post custodial support services for people who are at risk of harm from alcohol or other drug use are delivered by Aboriginal-led services. All of these are in regional and remote areas.

3.6 Support mental health and wellbeing for our whole community

Launching Nurturing Connections

A new program supporting healthy child-caregiver connections to help families thrive launched in September 2024.

The Nurturing Connections Program is the first public mental health program to address the needs of caregivers with significant mental health concerns and psychosocial risk, and their young children (aged zero to four years).

The therapeutic program aims to prevent mental health problems in very young children by focusing on the parent-child attachment relationship; delivering observation-based and cost-effective interventions which are embedded in existing systems; and nurturing and guiding the children's development at a critical age.

Since the program's launch, 202 consumers had received support as of May 2025.

New Mental Health Intensive Care Unit in Sydney's east

Justice Health and Forensic Mental Health Network opened the state's first Mental Health Intensive Care Unit, delivering specialist mental health treatment and rehabilitation services to acutely unwell and high-risk patients who have been involved with the criminal justice system.

The new Freshwater Unit, located within the high secure grounds of the Forensic Hospital at Malabar, is being delivered as part of the NSW Government's \$700 million State-wide Mental Health Infrastructure Program.

3.7 Partner to address the social determinants of ill health in our communities

Providing effective, tailored preventive health coaching for all

Health coaching provides knowledge, skills, and confidence to support people to self-manage their health. Get Healthy and Go4Fun are NSW Health's effective and free telephone or online coaching services. Participants can access culturally safe supports to help them achieve their healthy eating and active living goals.

In 2024-25:

- 16,000 adults were referred to Get Healthy, of which 70 per cent were pregnant women
- 1,700 primary school-aged children and their families enrolled in Go4Fun
- Get Healthy launched specialised healthy ageing support, including a focus on fall prevention, and is providing additional tailored advice for people living with diabetes.

Facilitating community-led healthcare

The Knockout Health Challenge is a 10-week, community-led, holistic health program for Aboriginal people. Co-designed with community, it delivers a culturally safe, sustainable way to improve physical, emotional, and social wellbeing. As part of the health challenge, group activities are held to meet local needs, such as cooking classes, walking groups, and education sessions.

Participants report stronger connections to community and culture, an increase in their physical activity, improved understanding of healthy eating, and reduced sugar and alcohol intake. In 2024, 36 teams and more than 900 participants aged between 0 and 91 participated. The 2025 activities will start in July 2025.

Implementing hepatitis C testing in drug and alcohol services

Drug and alcohol services are priority settings for hepatitis C testing and treatment, as they are commonly accessed by people who inject drugs, who are at greatest risk of infection. The *NSW Hepatitis C Testing and Care in Alcohol and Other Drug Services Guidance* document was released in February 2024 and implemented throughout 2024-25.

The Centre for Alcohol and Other Drugs and the Centre for Population Health are leading the implementation and collecting information to find ways to scale up hepatitis C testing in alcohol and other drug service settings. This work focuses on promoting opportunities identified through sector consultation, including strengthening workforce capacity through education and partnerships, establishing Dried Blood Spot testing as a minimum standard, and sharing best practice examples to promote system-wide improvement.

Promoting respectful relationships among young people

NSW Health has partnered with Full Stop Australia to develop the Anchored in Respect: Sex and Ethics for Young People Program, to promote respectful relationships among young people aged 13 to 17 years.

Almost 100 participants from NSW Health, Department of Education, Department of Communities and Justice, and non-government sector workforces completed the training program, learning the skills to deliver the program to young people.

Strengthening tobacco control in NSW

NSW Health continues to deliver a range of tobacco control initiatives across the state to prevent the uptake of smoking and vaping, and support cessation. This includes:

- updating the *Smoke-free Health Care Policy Directive* and *Managing Nicotine Dependence Guide* for NSW Health staff to support smoke-free environments across NSW Health facilities and embed cessation
- developing additional resources for young people, parents, and carers, providing information on nicotine addiction, quit vaping tips, and how vaping impacts stress and anxiety
- promoting smoke-free environment awareness via the No Smoking means No Vaping campaign. Resources continue to be disseminated through organic social media and stakeholder engagement, including Aboriginal specific collateral and posters translated in 10 community languages.

Enforcing tobacco retailing laws

NSW Health has continued to take a strong approach to enforce compliance with the *Public Health (Tobacco) Act 2008* and *Poisons and Therapeutic Goods Act 1966*.

In 2024-25, NSW Health inspectors conducted more than 1,750 retail inspections and seized:

- around 200,000 vapes, e-liquids, and pouches, worth an estimated street value of more than \$6.3 million
- more than 14 million cigarettes and around 2,800 kilograms of other illegal tobacco products, worth an estimated street value of more than \$15.5 million.

Tobacco and vaping reforms

The *Public Health (Tobacco) Amendment Bill 2024* amended NSW legislation to introduce specific supply and possession offences for vaping goods modelled on the Commonwealth Government's national vaping reforms. The Bill also removed provisions relating to e-cigarette retailing from the *Public Health (Tobacco) Act 2008*.

The *Public Health (Tobacco) Amendment Bill (No 2) 2024* introduced a licensing scheme for tobacco and non-tobacco smoking products (to commence from 1 July 2025) and increased penalties for a range of tobacco retailing offences.

The NSW Ministry of Health has engaged closely with the Australian Government and other states and territories to support the national tobacco and vaping reforms.

3.8 Invest in wellness, prevention and early detection

Releasing the Doxy-PEP shared decision-making tool

Oral antibiotics are an important measure to protect against syphilis and chlamydia.

In September 2024, the Centre for Population Health released the doxycycline post-exposure prophylaxis (Doxy-PEP) shared decision-making tool, informed by evidence outlined in the Australasian Society for HIV, Viral Hepatitis and Sexual Health Medicine Consensus Statement on Doxy-PEP.

Designed for use by patients while in discussion with their general practitioner, this tool facilitates informed decisions about taking Doxy-PEP within 72 hours of oral, anal, or vaginal sex to lower the risk of syphilis and chlamydia.

The tool provides guidance on which groups benefit most, identifies risks including antimicrobial resistance, safety considerations, and other sexually transmitted infection (STI) prevention strategies. Emerging evidence highlights the significant individual and population-level impact of Doxy-PEP in reducing the incidence of selected STIs.

Innovating ways to access HIV testing

MyTest provides an innovative way to access non-traditional methods of HIV testing for people who have never tested or infrequently test and are not engaged in primary care. Designed to address increasing rates of HIV in Greater Western Sydney, MyTest utilises vending machines in 10 community-accepted locations to provide HIV finger-prick self-testing kits and increase access to HIV testing services.

Implementation of MyTest has resulted in 2,820 individuals registering to access HIV self-testing with more than 2,640 HIV self-test kits dispensed. Among them, 44 per cent of users had never tested for HIV previously and 58 per cent of users are born overseas. Importantly, 62 per cent of users are accessing self-test kits from high-risk venues, including sex-on-premise venues.

Implementing STI Testing Locator

The Play Safe STI Testing Locator is a user-friendly, interactive tool on the Play Safe and International Student Health Hub website that helps users find convenient and relevant STI testing services. By answering five simple questions covering bulk billing preferences, accessibility needs, Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander status, age, and postcode, users are matched with testing services that suit their needs.

This is the first tool of its kind to integrate general practitioners, sexual health clinics, and Aboriginal Medical Services into one service finder. The locator supports increased STI testing by raising awareness of the wide range of services available. More than 25,000 people have used the service since it launched in November 2024.

Launching the NSW Active Transport Health Model

The Centre for Population Health launched an evidence-based tool that quantifies the physical and mental health benefits of physical activity, including reduced anxiety and depression, as well as chronic diseases such as type 2 diabetes.

Contributing new evidence and using current NSW and Australian population data, the tool allows NSW Government agencies to embed health considerations in infrastructure planning. The model promotes healthier, more active communities, while contributing to broader government goals like sustainability, climate resilience, and improved urban liveability.

Investing in regional treatment and support, and diversion services

The Centre for Alcohol and Other Drugs expanded access to treatment services in regional and rural areas.

A new residential rehabilitation services for young people (aged 12 to 17 years) was established in Newcastle. Also established were 12 new day rehabilitation or counselling services in regional and rural areas, 9 of these services are targeted specifically to young people. There were also 12 new integrated alcohol and other drugs support hubs, of which 9 are in regional and rural areas.

In collaboration with the Department of Communities and Justice, the MERIT program expanded to include more regional and rural sites. There is now a total of 82 participating local courts in NSW with more people accessing alcohol and other drug treatment.

In collaboration with the Department of Communities and Justice, the Early Drug Diversion Initiative commenced on 1 March 2024. In 2024-25, 129 alcohol and drug health interventions were provided for adults who would otherwise been required to attend court without a specialist intervention.

Offering healthier food and drink in NSW health facilities

The annual statewide audit of the *Healthy Food and Drink in NSW Health Facilities for Staff and Visitors Framework* has demonstrated the leadership provided by NSW Health in offering more healthier options in health facilities for staff and visitors across the state. The framework forms part of NSW Health's commitment to wellbeing and the prevention of chronic disease. NSW was the first state to remove sugar-sweetened drinks from cafes, kiosks, and vending machines across the health system, and this year's results show success is continuing to build with more than 896 outlets supported to succeed and audited by staff across local health districts and specialty health networks.

Expanding respiratory illness campaign

NSW Health launched an evidence-based winter campaign to support the uptake of influenza vaccinations across the community. The campaign, implemented from April to May 2025, was developed using behavioural insights to address both the diverse attitudes and demographics of priority audiences. It targeted those cautious about vaccination ahead of winter, people aged 65 and older, and the general population, including those most at-risk of severe illness from influenza. The campaign, along with extensive consumer and healthcare professionals stakeholder engagement, provided clear, evidence-based information to support informed community decision-making for the people of NSW.

Addressing preventable cancer risk factors

In 2024-25, the Cancer Institute NSW delivered 15 public education campaigns to support people to reduce their cancer risk and participate in screening programs to detect cancers early. This included:

- three anti-tobacco campaigns predicted to have resulted in more than 23,700 additional people making a quit attempt
- an anti-vaping campaign motivated an estimated 24,000 young people to attempt to quit vaping
- a skin cancer prevention campaign that motivated 85 per cent of young people who saw it to improve their skin protection behaviours
- a BreastScreen NSW campaign projected to drive almost 10,000 additional screens.

Enhancing smoking and vaping cessation support

The Cancer Institute NSW recognises that quitting smoking or vaping isn't always easy, and in response, enhanced its support to help people reduce their cancer risk and live a longer, healthier life.

NSW Quitline supported more than 25,586 calls and the iCanQuit website was visited by around 175,000 people. Pave, a new application designed with and for young people to support them to quit vaping, was launched in February 2025 and has been downloaded by more than 5,000 users.

Smoking and vaping cessation advice is accessible for everyone in the community with Aboriginal and bilingual NSW Quitline counsellors. Access to interpreters is also available through the national Translating and Interpreter Service.

Strategic outcome 4

Our staff are engaged and well supported

Staff are supported to deliver safe, reliable person-centred care driving the best outcomes and experiences

4.1 Build positive work environments that bring out the best in everyone

Launching the NSW Health LGBTIQ+ Capability Framework

The Health Education and Training Institute launched the *NSW Health LGBTIQ+ Workforce Capability Framework (2025–2029)*. The Framework is an enabler of the *NSW Health LGBTIQ+ Health Strategy 2022–2027* that builds workforce knowledge, confidence, and behaviours required to meet the needs of LGBTIQ+ people in NSW. The Framework is being embedded into workforce development strategies and education programs across NSW Health.

Shaping staff culture and experience

The NSW Ministry of Health published the *Culture and Staff Experience Framework* in September 2024. The NSW Health CORE values of Collaboration, Openness, Respect and Empowerment were refreshed with contemporary definitions to reflect what's important to the people of NSW Health. The Framework also introduced nine culture levers which identify key areas where individual action can affect positive workplace culture.

The Framework is designed to complement the existing work of health entities by providing a common, whole-of-health approach to understanding workplace culture and what health staff can expect of each other. The Framework is facilitated by the new Culture and Staff Experience Hub, where staff can access resources to uplift and actively shape workplace culture in line with the CORE values.

NSW Health participated in the 2025 Sydney Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras parade in March, demonstrating commitment to supporting diversity and inclusion for staff and the broader community.

Implementing NSW Ministry of Health Reconciliation Action Plan

The Regional Health Division is leading the implementation of the NSW Ministry of Health's first Reflect Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP), which was launched in November 2024.

The Reflect RAP enables us to sustainably and strategically take meaningful actions to advance reconciliation and build upon important work and partnerships already in place, and marks an important step in the journey to reconciliation and the celebration of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture and knowledge.

Safe staffing levels at NSW Health emergency departments

NSW Health continued to implement the NSW Government Safe Staffing Levels commitment to better support the experience of patients and staff. The initiative, overseen by the Safe Staffing Levels Taskforce, introduces minimum staffing levels and ratios on every shift across NSW emergency departments.

By the end of the 2024–25 financial year, 30 emergency departments across Sydney and regional NSW commenced safe staffing levels. The initiative continues to be rolled out in a phased approach across the state.

Celebrating kindness at NSW Health

The Strategic Communications and Engagement branch delivers internal communications to drive staff engagement across the NSW Health System.

Aligning with existing NSW Health retention, culture, and wellbeing initiatives, the Small Acts of Kindness campaign was re-launched in May 2025 to celebrate the powerful and lasting impact of kindness on staff, patients, families, and carers.

The campaign uses videos featuring real-life stories of kindness from diverse NSW Health staff to reinforce that kindness is not only a core organisational value, but also essential to delivering outstanding healthcare.

In the six weeks following its relaunch, the NSW Health Small Acts of Kindness social posts were viewed more than 1.6 million times.

4.2 Strengthen diversity in our workforce and decision-making

Diversifying health staff in infrastructure

Health Infrastructure continued to address skill shortages and increase diversity in the construction sector in line with the Infrastructure Skills Legacy Program. Female project officers were placed in eight projects across NSW, increasing women's involvement in trade. At Griffith Base Hospital, 18.1 per cent of trade roles were filled by women, surpassing the initial 2 per cent target.

In 2024-25, policy targets were exceeded with almost \$500 million in procurement costs supporting Aboriginal employment, businesses, training, and engagement under the Aboriginal Participation in Construction Policy. In 2024-25, several contracts significantly exceeded targets – Sydney Children's Hospital, Randwick achieved 10 per cent (\$34.9 million) and The Children's Hospital at Westmead achieved 9.3 per cent (\$29.9 million) against a 1.5 per cent target.

Strengthening our Aboriginal workforce

NSW Health is committed to increasing the Aboriginal nursing, midwifery, and allied health workforce by improving career development opportunities for Aboriginal people.

In 2024-25, NSW Health supported 122 Aboriginal nursing and midwifery cadets. In addition, 40 undergraduate scholarships and 29 postgraduate scholarships were awarded to support nursing and midwifery studies for Aboriginal people.

The NSW Health Aboriginal Allied Health Cadetship Program was delivered again in 2024-25 to increase the number of Aboriginal people working in allied health across NSW. This year, 28 allied health students participated, with 12 students graduating from the program at the end of 2024. A total of 10 cadetship graduates commenced employment with NSW Health.

A new framework providing structured guidance, support, and culturally safe career planning for the NSW Health Aboriginal allied health workforce was launched.

The *NSW Health Aboriginal Allied Health Cultural Mentoring Framework* was developed for the Aboriginal allied health workforce, including trainees, cadets, assistants, graduates, technicians, and professionals, covering 23 distinct allied health professions. The Framework aims to strengthen the Aboriginal allied health workforce, which is crucial to delivering culturally-safe care.

Integrating Aboriginal health practitioners in multidisciplinary care

NSW Health is integrating Aboriginal Health Practitioners into multidisciplinary teams and aims to grow this professional group as a priority to improve health outcomes for Aboriginal people of NSW.

The first pilot ran in 2024-25 enabled Aboriginal Health Practitioners to administer influenza vaccines. There were 15 practitioners engaged through the project and 4 have commenced as part of the multidisciplinary teams working with influenza immunisation in their NSW Health entity.

Finalising NSW Health Gender Equality Action Plan 2025-2028

In June 2025, NSW Health finalised its first three-year Gender Equality Action Plan. The Plan commits NSW Health to 17 actions across 4 priorities, covering workforce, capability, communication, and data, focusing on change at a system level. The Plan is for all genders, including women, men, non-binary people, and those that use other terms. It covers both the NSW Health workforce and the people we care for. The Plan was officially launched in July 2025.

4.3 Empower staff to work to their full potential around the future care needs

Tapping into the allied health workforce

The Allied Health team within the Workforce Planning and Talent Development branch explored the role of allied health professions in preventing hospital acquired functional decline (HAFD). The *Preventing Hospital Acquired Functional Decline – The Untapped Value of Allied Health Report* was delivered and published to the NSW Health website. The report found that the prevalence and impact of HAFD can be significantly reduced by integrating the appropriate allied health professions earlier in the inpatient journey, and made recommendations to support the current and emerging allied health and multidisciplinary models of care that can prevent and respond to HAFD.

4.4 Equip our people with the skills and capabilities to be an agile, responsive workforce

Building a future-ready workforce

Health Education and Training Institute continued to deliver education and training to staff to advance skills and capabilities, and continuous learning and development opportunities to sustain a world-class workforce. In 2024-25, a range of initiatives were delivered including:

- Emergency Nursing Education Pathway to support nurses from novice to expert practice
- End-of-Life and Palliative Care Education and Training Strategy to uplift end-of-life and palliative care capability among non-specialist clinicians – more than 200 Certificate in Palliative Care scholarships were awarded
- Evaluation and Research Webinar Series and Health Education in Practice Journal, strengthening research literacy and evaluation capability – 14 peer-reviewed papers published
- Learning Navigator for Public Health Professionals supporting a confident, capable, and future-ready workforce to meet emerging public health priorities
- Applied Mental Health Studies Higher Education Courses to help develop mental health expertise – 330 individuals enrolled in courses.

Tertiary Health Study Subsidy Program

The Tertiary Health Study Subsidy Program is a key workforce initiative that attracts staff and retains talent in the NSW public health system by building a student workforce pipeline. Financial subsidies are offered to students commencing tertiary health studies or commencing new graduate employment with NSW Health in identified workforce areas of need, with a commitment to work in the public health system for at least five years.

In the 2024 calendar year, the first year of the program:

- 1,976 students commencing their first year of study were awarded and paid a subsidy
- 2,000 students who graduated and commenced employment with NSW Health were awarded and paid a subsidy through NSW Health payroll.

In 2025, as of 30 June 2025:

- 1,748 students commencing their first year of study have been awarded and paid a subsidy
- 1,382 students who graduated and commenced employment with NSW Health have been awarded and paid a subsidy through NSW payroll
- The program continued to support the 1,976 students awarded a commencing study subsidy in 2024.

Supporting psychiatry trainee development

Health Education and Training Institute continued to support the development of psychiatry trainees through the delivery of two Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Psychiatrists accredited education courses: the Postgraduate Course in Psychiatry, and Advanced Training in Child and Adolescent Psychiatry. The Postgraduate Course in Psychiatry achieved a record number of 301 doctors enrolling. Health Education and Training Institute was also recredited to deliver a further five years of formal education courses and continues to deliver the Psychiatry for Junior Medical Officers, and Introduction to Leadership in Psychiatry courses.^{4.5} Attract and retain skilled people who put patients first

Expanding and strengthening the nursing and midwifery workforce

NSW Health continues to employ graduate nurses and midwives to ensure a sustainable workforce into the future. In the 2024 calendar year, 3,395 graduate nurses and midwives were employed across NSW Health, with 42 per cent of the cohort commencing in rural and regional locations.

Postgraduate scholarships supported the professional development of nurses and midwives. In 2024-25:

- more than 970 nurses and midwives took up individual scholarships offered by NSW Health
- more than 570 nurses and midwives took up an education scholarship offered by NSW Health
- more than 490 clinical placement grants of up to \$1,000 were awarded to nursing and midwifery students to support diverse clinical experiences across rural and metropolitan areas.

The NSW Health MidStart program supports registered nurses to train to be midwives. In 2024-25, there were 221 MidStart training positions recruited across NSW Health. In addition, 15 rural postgraduate midwifery student scholarships were provided to small rural maternity units.

Further supporting the nursing workforce pipeline, the *NSW Health Pathways into Nursing* was completed and published. The document is a comprehensive overview of the available entry pathways into nursing practice and employment in NSW Health.

The resource provides health leaders, managers, and educators with advice on career entry points and pathways for entry-level nursing roles, how to connect with the future workforce pipeline, and support existing employees who are undertaking additional study on a nursing pathway.

Since its publication in July 2024, there has been broad support from the system and work is underway to develop a complementary document for *NSW Health Pathways into Midwifery*.

Rural Health Workforce Incentive Scheme

The Rural Health Workforce Incentive Scheme enables participating NSW health organisations to offer incentives and benefits above award entitlements to attract, recruit, and retain health workers in hard-to-fill and critical positions in regional, rural and remote locations.

As of 30 June 2025, the scheme has delivered incentives worth \$79.4 million, supporting the recruitment of 3,781 positions across 2,571 full time equivalent staff, and retention of 11,100 workers across 8,346 full time equivalent staff.

The retention of staff in rural and remote areas was further supported by the Rural and Regional Health Career Scholarship Program. The Program offers scholarships to nursing, midwifery, medical and allied health clinicians to support early career support and career development. In 2024-25, \$483,000 has been awarded to scholarship recipients.

Implementing International Medical Graduates Clinical Readiness Program

Implementing International Medical Graduates Clinical Readiness Program (ICRP) is a 12-week structured program designed to introduce international medical graduates into the NSW Health System and to help them gain experience working in a clinical setting. Activities include participating in ward rounds, practice history taking and clinical examination, and perform simple procedures under supervision, improving their readiness and skills for entering the workforce.

ICRP was first implemented as a pilot program in 2023 and then successfully rolled out in 2024 and 2025. Funding for 2026 has been secured and applications will open in November 2025. There have been a total of 141 International Medical Graduates that have completed ICRP, with approximately 70 per cent receiving employment offers or entering employment as a medical officer.

Rural Generalist Single Employer Pathway

The Rural Generalist Single Employer Pathway is a four-year pilot program being delivered across eight local health districts in regional NSW.

The pathway offers rural generalist trainees secure employment through a length of training contract of up to four years. This enables trainees to work and train seamlessly across NSW Health facilities and private primary care practices, while retaining and continuing to accrue leave entitlements and are paid the same as their hospital trained counterparts.

The Pathway has supported a total of 50 rural generalist trainees in its first 2 years, with 29 trainees recruited for the current clinical year which began in February 2025.

Funding regional alcohol and other drug training for staff

The Centre for Alcohol and Other Drugs funded the Aboriginal Health and Medical Research Council to deliver an alcohol and other drugs skillset training in two regional communities in NSW. This resulted in 19 learners from Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations achieving competencies in drug and alcohol service provision.

Celebrating and recognising our staff

Recognised the dedication of the NSW Health workforce in enriching health in millions of ways every day. Across the NSW public health system, award programs and initiatives recognise, uplift, and inspire staff and volunteers. This includes participating in NSW Government awards, like the NSW Premier's Awards, and running system-wide award programs such as the NSW Health Awards, Excellence in Allied Health Awards, and Excellence in Nursing and Midwifery Awards. In 2024-25, NSW Health had:

- 9 winners and 18 finalists in the Excellence in Nursing and Midwifery Awards
- 14 winners and 29 finalists in the NSW Health Awards
- 7 winners and 28 finalists in the Excellence in Allied Health Awards
- 2 winners, 2 honourable mentions, and 14 finalists in the Premier's Awards

4.6 Unlock the ingenuity of our staff to build work practices for the future

NSW Health System Advisory Council

The NSW Health System Advisory Council continues to provide expertise and advice to help inform and shape the delivery of frontline healthcare under the authority of the NSW Health Secretary.

The Council comprises of a multidisciplinary group of clinicians that reflects the breadth and diversity of healthcare professionals across NSW Health, as well as NSW Ministry of Health Executive and NSW Health system executive manager representation.

The Council provides independent and impartial strategic clinical advice on key priorities and functions of the NSW Health System, as well as guides the planning and implementation of measures to drive positive change. In 2024-25, the Council advised on various system priorities, including the *NSW Health Data and Analytics Strategy*, Unwarranted Clinical Variation, Strengthening Acute and Mental Health Interfaces and the Special Commission of Inquiry into Healthcare Funding.

Strengthening leadership and management capabilities

In 2024-25, the Health Education and Training Institute launched a range of programs and resources to strengthen the capabilities of current and future people leaders and managers across NSW Health.

Examples include:

- launching the new Leadership and Management Resource Hub and Leadership and Management Capability Development program
- 21 new masterclasses were run, and four online modules were introduced
- a suite of manager development programs were delivered.

Combined, these resources meet different needs of the people leaders and managers to enhance their capability to build a confident, capable, and future-ready workforce.

Introducing the iLEAD Program

Directors of nursing and midwifery have a pivotal role in the delivery of safe, high-quality, and compassionate care, and in elevating the nursing and midwifery profession.

The new iLEAD Program was developed to enhance the knowledge, skills, and capabilities of directors of nursing and midwifery within NSW Health, so they can in turn nurture and uplift the nursing and midwifery workforce.

In May 2025, 25 directors of nursing across NSW Health commenced the iLEAD Program.

Strategic outcome 5

Research and innovation, and digital advances inform service delivery

Clinical service delivery continues to transform through health and medical research, digital technologies, and data analytics

5.1 Advance and translate research and innovation with institutions, industry partners and patients

NSW Health Research and Innovation Strategy

In May 2025, the NSW Government launched the *NSW Health Research and Innovation Strategy 2025–2030*. Led by the NSW Ministry of Health’s Clinical Innovation and Research Division, the Strategy defines the vision and sets the strategic direction for advancing research and innovation to improve health outcomes across the state. The Strategy strengthens collaboration across government, health, academic, and industry sectors, and aligns with broader NSW Health and Government priorities. Developed with input from more than 400 stakeholders, it provides a roadmap for delivering economic, social, and environmental impact. Action planning is now underway to support implementation across the NSW Health System.

Medical Research Support Program

NSW Health continued to foster world-class health and medical research through the NSW Government’s Medical Research Support Program (MRSP). The MRSP helps to ensure the financial sustainability of the NSW health and medical research landscape by funding the indirect costs of research at medical research institutes, such as equipment and support staff. The outcomes of the program’s fourth round of applications were announced in December 2024 with 13 independent medical research institutes awarded funding. NSW Health’s funding of these research programs attracts top talent, and strengthens and supports productive and innovative medical research in the state.

Supporting research that transforms patient care

The Translational Research Grants Scheme supports high-impact research by NSW Health to translate evidence into policy and practice that leads to improved patient outcomes, health service delivery, and population health and wellbeing.

In 2024-25, \$5 million was awarded to 10 research projects focused on new models of care across NSW. These include telehealth support for drug and alcohol withdrawal, improved access to emergency care and enhanced diabetes care in rural NSW, better care for children with speech development issues, hospital-level care at home, and a self-management program for people with seizures.

Building cancer research capacity

The Cancer Institute NSW continues to make NSW a leading hub for cancer research and improve outcomes for people with cancer by building research capacity and ensuring research is connected into the health system.

In 2024-25, the Institute invested:

- \$6 million in cancer research Fellowships to develop the next generation of research leaders
- \$5 million in translational research program grants, supporting seven major translational research projects aiming to rapidly translate research findings into new treatments
- \$1.8 million in grants for research equipment to ensure cancer researchers in NSW have access to the latest technology.

Establishing a strong medical device community in NSW

The Medical Devices Fund is a competitive technology and commercialisation program funded by NSW Health and administered by the Office for Health and Medical Research.

In 2024-25, \$7.5 million was awarded to 3 local medical technology companies to develop ground-breaking medical devices including a lifetime-lasting heart valve replacement, bionic eyeglasses, and a 3D printer for on-the-spot skin regeneration.

The program facilitates the development of innovative medical devices and related technologies, and the opportunity that these devices will be brought into the health system.

The Rural Research Capacity Building Program

The Rural Research Capacity Building Program supports NSW Health rural staff to develop research experience whilst undertaking close-to-practice research that is endorsed by their health agency. Recent cohorts have produced 65 research projects, and 23 researchers published in peer-reviewed journals for the first time with many going on to multiple publications. In 2024-25, 9 candidates completed their research papers, and 12 peer-reviewed papers were published by program graduates and candidates. The Program has celebrated 25 years of educating and upskilling the rural workforce in health research, evaluation, and implementation.

Roadmap supporting the vaccine-translational pipeline

In July 2024, VaxNSW Connect was established as a statewide network facilitated by the Office for Health and Medical Research to accelerate the development and use of innovative and effective vaccines. The network increases statewide collaboration across the sector, enabling the development, scale, and rapid deployment of safe and effective vaccines across NSW.

Supporting translation of research into care through clinical trials

NSW Health is progressing a range of initiatives to support the translation of research and promote equity in access to clinical trials to improve health outcome and system efficiency.

The Rural, Regional and Remote Clinical Trial Enabling Program, led by the Office for Health and Medical Research, aims to improve access to clinical trials for populations in rural, regional, and remote areas. In 2024-25, the Program delivered and supported several activities to advance the capability of the rural, regional and remote clinical trial workforce including, infrastructure projects to strengthen the long-term sustainability of clinical trial support units across NSW, a community of practice to provide access to a dedicated support network, and the launch of the Good Clinical Practice education and training program using a train-the-trainer model.

In October 2024, 10 staff completed the training and have since delivered Good Clinical Practice education to 43 individuals. Good Clinical Practice is an internationally recognised standard for designing, conducting, recording, and reporting clinical trials involving human participants.

St Vincent's Health Network Sydney established a secondary clinical trial site at Griffith Base Hospital to increase access to clinical trials in regional NSW for patients with multiple myeloma. The site allows the delivery of novel treatment options for regional patients closer to home. The multidisciplinary collaboration between Griffith Base Hospital and the network has enabled the successful activation of the clinical trial site and enrolment of the first participant.

The Cancer Institute NSW supports the rapid transfer of research into clinical practice by advancing clinical trial capacity. Last year, 2,571 people in NSW were enrolled across 795 cancer clinical trials.

In 2024-25 the Institute provided \$5 million to clinical trials units across NSW to strengthen the Cancer Clinical Trial Units' trial capacity, support workforce development and promote innovation to boost trial participation and recruitment.

As part of this funding, 4 new Clinical Trials Fellowships were awarded and 224 members of the clinical trial workforce were supported to attend training and education events, with 20 per cent of these from regional and rural areas.

The allergy research program at St Vincent's Health Network Sydney is testing a pioneering treatment for adults with peanut allergy through a first-in-human, phase 1 clinical trial. The trial's novel treatment offers the potential of a proactive approach to rapidly preventing peanut allergies, potentially without food avoidance. A defining event in 2024-25 included the recruitment of the very first participant worldwide. St Vincent's Health Network continues to strive to improve outcomes for individuals with food allergies, reducing their risk of anaphylaxis and improving quality of life.

Viral Vector Manufacturing Facility

The NSW Government is building a viral vector manufacturing facility in Western Sydney, the first of its kind in Australia. The facility, located in the Westmead Health and Innovation District, will have the production capacity to meet the growing demand for viral vectors for use in gene therapy research and clinical trials in Australia and internationally. In July 2024, the CEO was appointed, as was the Chair of the Board, and three additional Non-Executive Directors. Construction of the facility progressed during 2024-25, with completion expected in the next financial year.

Managing intellectual property and commercialisation

The Office for Health and Medical Research supports NSW Health entities to manage intellectual property and commercialisation. In line with the updated NSW Health Intellectual Property Policy Directive, a central support service was established to provide advice and guidance including, a SharePoint hub with resources to help staff understand and apply the policy, a new community of practice, and a supplier panel offering specialised intellectual property and commercialisation services. NSW Health recognises the importance of ensuring intellectual property is used in a way that supports the public health system.

Promoting NSW Health as a leader in health and medical research

In June, the 2025 NSW Health and Medical Research Prospectus was launched at BIO International, the world's largest annual life sciences convention. Designed for an international audience, the Prospectus showcases the state's strengths in health and medical research and highlights opportunities for investment and collaboration.

Using this global platform, NSW Health demonstrated its commitment to advancing discovery, accelerating translation, and fostering collaboration across the state's dynamic health and medical research ecosystem.

5.2 Ensure health data and information is high-quality, integrated, accessible and utilised

Developing the first whole-of-NSW Health Data and Analytics Strategy

The Enterprise Data Governance Enablement Team is leading the development of the first enterprise-wide *NSW Health Data and Analytics Strategy*. This Strategy aims to define a unified vision and direction for how data and analytics are used, managed and shared across NSW Health, ultimately to improve the health and wellbeing of people across NSW. Work is ongoing to develop the strategy and roadmap in collaboration with individuals and teams across NSW Health, and with input from consumers, carers, and communities.

Statistics and insights on the health of the NSW population

The Centre for Epidemiology and Evidence supports HealthStats NSW, a public open data platform providing statistics and insights on the health of the people of NSW. Users can explore a range of health topics, including for population sub-groups and locations, to inform and enhance local health monitoring, planning, and policy activities. In 2024-25, HealthStats NSW attracted approximately 5,100 users from across Australia per month, an increase from 2023-24 (about 2,200 users per month).

HealthStats NSW also hosts the NSW Population Health Survey results. The results are used to monitor key health risk factors and health behaviours in the community. In 2024, 13,649 people participated in the survey.

Improving access to healthcare performance data

BHI continued to make important data readily available and accessible to inform healthcare services and practices. In 2024-25, BHI released its annual survey results up to five months sooner than previous years. The more timely data enhances its value for stakeholders.

BHI also improved accessibility to healthcare performance data with the new BHI Internal Reports Hub. The Hub provides a single, secure location for NSW Health staff to easily access the information.

In 2024-25, BHI delivered a program of awareness and capability-building across NSW Health to support effective and meaningful use of patient experience data. The team also enabled new and actionable insights into patients' experiences with NSW public hospitals by enabling secure data access for researchers to perform custom analyses. Three research articles were published using this data, establishing direct links between patients' experiences and self-reported outcomes, including delayed discharge and readmission to hospital.

Statewide rollout of Incoming Patient Allocations module

The System Performance Support Branch's Operational Data Store Team completed the statewide rollout of the Incoming Patient Allocations Module within the Patient Flow Portal.

This module supports hospitals to manage incoming patients from emergency departments, inter-facility transfers, planned admissions, and outpatient clinics. By integrating real-time data from multiple systems, it provides full visibility of incoming patients and available capacity across NSW Health facilities.

The module replaces manual processes such as paper forms, faxes, and phone calls, streamlining hospital operations and improving coordination. It includes a real-time view of bed availability and discharge planning, helping clinicians and managers make timely, informed decisions to optimise patient flow and improve system efficiency.

Improving statewide pathology ordering

NSW Health Pathology's Pathology Stewardship Program helped improve statewide pathology ordering, providing data to local health district clinicians for benchmarking across sites and convening a clinician taskforce to showcase and enhance pathology stewardship.

The program helped reduce inappropriate blood gas tests in some emergency departments by 12 per cent and replaced 25 per cent of screening SARS-CoV-2 PCR testing with rapid antigen testing. Stricter adherence to guidelines reduced demand for blood culture testing by 20 per cent during and beyond a worldwide shortage of blood culture bottles. It also supported safe reduced use of O negative blood at Murrumbidgee Local Health District.

The NSW Health Pathology team met with most local health districts and other partners to understand their needs and created a statewide register of stewardship programs to make learnings available across NSW.

Enabling data linkages

In 2024-25, the Centre for Health Record Linkage (CHeReL) linked and released more than 5.3 billion records from health and human services data collections. Data released by the CHeReL this financial year enabled a wide range of projects aligned with NSW Health and broader NSW Government strategic priorities.

Data linked by the CHeReL also supported the *NSW Immunisation Strategy* and the delivery of the *NSW Immunisation Action Plan*.

Using a virtual registry to support decision making

The Register of Outcomes Value and Experience (ROVE) is a de-identified virtual data asset which links service and system-level patient experience, outcomes, activity, and clinical data. ROVE is a cohort specific dataset that does not represent all of NSW data but rather data for specific cohorts such as patients participating in new models of care or initiatives. It is used to monitor and evaluate the impact of key initiatives and is accessible to analysts across NSW Health.

In 2024-25, the cohort data for virtual care services, the Telestroke dataset from Prince of Wales Hospital, BHI virtual care surveys, and severe and complex menopause services have been added to the data asset. Linking survey data and external datasets like Telestroke to the core patient NSW Health datasets such as emergency department and admitted patient data allows analysts to view a patients journey throughout the health system.

The ROVEAPP gives users access to dashboards that contain aggregated data and charts that have been sourced from ROVE. In 2024-25, the app received technical improvements to improve effectiveness and efficiency and the app now includes dashboards for virtual care and severe and complex menopause services.

Enduring Cancer Data Linkage program

The Enduring Cancer Data Linkage (CanDLe) program enables approved researchers to access linked data sets that can be used for ethically approved research. In 2024-25, three additional NSW data assets were available for researchers: Patient Reported Measures, Outpatient Systemic Therapies Oncology Dataset, and the Non-admitted Patient Data Collection. CanDLe now links 20 NSW and ACT data collections, and has led to 6 peer reviewed publications with a further 6 publications under review. CanDLe researchers have presented their work nationally and internationally at eight conferences.

5.3 Enable targeted evidence-based healthcare through precision medicine

Realising the vision for NSW Health Genomics

The *NSW Health Genomics Strategy* continues to support implementation activities to ensure the people of NSW will benefit from advances in genomic and precision medicine. In 2024-25, activities included:

- piloting a digital consent platform to provide a streamlined genomic consent workflow
- publication of information to support informed consent
- delivering 20 scholarships for NSW Health non-genetics healthcare professionals to complete the *UNSW Integrating Genomics into Health Care Delivery* short course
- development of an integrated genomics infrastructure model for clinical genomics.

The Centre for Genetics Website

The Centre for Genetics Education (CGE) website is widely recognised as a trusted source for genetics and genomics education and training resources. It plays a vital role in supporting NSW Health clinicians to deliver genomic healthcare by providing a range of resources and tools to help clinicians build their knowledge and confidence in applying genomics and embedding genomics into everyday practice. Since June 2024, the CGE homepage has received more than 102,000 visits.

5.4 Accelerate digital investments in systems, infrastructure, security and intelligence

NSW Health Artificial Intelligence Taskforce

Artificial Intelligence (AI) has the potential to transform health service delivery. In February 2024, NSW Health established a Taskforce comprised of senior leaders and subject matter experts to inform and guide the use of AI in NSW Health.

Several AI initiatives are already in place across the state transforming healthcare, including improving wound care, simplifying complex data analysis, automating repetitive processes, and reviewing volumes of cardiology literature to aid in clinical decision-making.

The Taskforce is translating the whole of Government approach into the healthcare context through the development of a strategic and operational framework. The framework, due for release late in 2025, will balance the opportunities presented by AI with consideration and management of potential risks around safety, ethics, privacy, security, and regulation.

How MedSync connects clinicians statewide

MedSync continued to connect clinicians and securely share clinical information. A partnership between eHealth NSW and Microsoft, MedSync exemplifies accelerated digital investment by transforming existing Microsoft 365 infrastructure into a comprehensive, integrated platform to support convenient and efficient collaboration between clinicians all throughout NSW.

MedSync is available to 110,000 clinicians and more than 800,000 clinical images and videos have been updated to the Enterprise Imaging Repository, reducing upload times to less than one minute. The platform also supports and facilitates real-time collaboration with external providers.

Role-based messaging, its latest feature, allows clinicians to connect by role instead of name, eliminating the need for paging and allowing clinicians to connect to rostered specialists immediately. This reduces administration time for clinicians, allowing more time for patient care.

Intensive Care Data Asset

The Intensive Care Data Asset (ICDA) provides streamlined access to intensive care units to advance intensive care research and innovation. The prototype of the ICDA was delivered in 2024-25. It included the development of governance with a safe, secure, and streamlined access framework, live data pipelines automating the transformation of local intensive care unit data into a standardised analysis-ready format, and onboarding of data from electronic records for intensive care systems from four local health districts. It holds data on more than 70,000 patients and 95,000 intensive care unit admissions, with more than 1.4 billion clinical records.

The ICDA is hosted in the NSW Health Enterprise Data Lake and is updated weekly. It enables advanced analytics to support clinical innovation, evidence-based insights, and better patient outcomes across the intensive care landscape in NSW. The ICDA prototype will be extended in 2025-26 as more intensive care units are onboarded.

Strategic outcome 6

The health system is managed sustainably

The health system is managed with an outcomes-focused lens to deliver a financially and environmentally sustainable future.

6.1 Drive value based healthcare that prioritises outcomes and collaboration

Supplier relationship management

NSW Health continued to support increased opportunities for local suppliers for the NSW Government. Accordingly, NSW Health has updated the NSW Health Procurement (Goods and Services) Policy Directive to support access opportunities for local suppliers, aligning with Government priorities and requirements and continue to support increased opportunities for NSW and Australian businesses that supply the NSW Government.

NSW Medicines Formulary

The NSW Medicines Formulary and associated governance supports optimum clinical governance and better value health care. The integrated statewide approach for evaluating and approving the use of medicines has reduced unnecessary clinical variation, improved safety, and enables a systematic approach to the procurement of those medicines. This has resulted in the following achievements:

- Delivery and implementation of an Individual Patient Use module between December 2024 and July 2025
- Improved alignment between the Formulary and pharmaceutical procurement contracts
- Improved price parity and stabilisation of inpatient medicine expenditure across NSW Health services
- A sustained decrease in use of non-Formulary medicines.

Identification and preparation to expand the Formulary is underway to include outpatient medicines, supporting continued safety, equity, and value in the system.

Ministry Strategic Investment Committee

The NSW Ministry of Health's Strategic Investment Committee was established to support the annual State Budget process. The Committee reviews new policy proposals to ensure alignment with NSW Health strategic objectives, government priorities, and compliance with NSW Treasury requirements. This Committee considers value-based care among other factors to ensure that health outcomes and patient experience are central to investment decisions.

Implementing the Violence, Abuse and Neglect Redesign Program

The Violence, Abuse and Neglect (VAN) Redesign Program is an ambitious program of reform to improve public health responses to violence, abuse and neglect. In 2024-25, clinical advisors for VAN Integration and Aboriginal Wellbeing, Trauma and Healing were established in the NSW Ministry of Health to provide clinical and system redesign leadership and establish Centres of Excellence in VAN Integration.

An Aboriginal Programs and Policy Team was established to improve cultural safety of VAN services and programs and provide career pathways for Aboriginal staff. The Education Centre Against Violence

(ECAV) reviewed course offerings to build workforce capability and confidence. ECAV convened the Adult Survivor Community of Practice and working groups to support the VAN Redesign Program.

Applying a whole-of-lifecycle approach to planning and design of new infrastructure

Health Infrastructure released the Lifecycle Cost Analysis Tool. Decisions made during planning, design, and construction directly affect long-term operations and maintenance of infrastructure projects. Piloted on a project in Tamworth in 2023 and now used across 12 capital projects in early design across Health Infrastructure, the tool strengthens data-driven decision making by embedding lifecycle principles early in project development.

In collaboration with HealthShare NSW and eHealth NSW, Health Infrastructure advanced evidence-based lifecycle cost planning tools and refined procurement strategies to deliver sustainable, system-wide benefits. While further work continues, the progress to date is shaping future-focused, innovative healthcare infrastructure across NSW.

Design standardisation

The Health Infrastructure Finishes Catalogue was developed as part of the Design Standardisation Program through extensive engagement with local health district representatives, industry partners, and operational facilities to provide project teams with evidence-based guidance for selecting and integrating consistent, high-quality interior and exterior finishes. By improving consistency in design, it supports sustainability, durability, and better whole-of-asset outcomes across healthcare projects. It forms part of Health Infrastructure's broader program to standardise aspects of health facility design and construction across its capital works portfolio.

Rolling out the Patient Transport Service Reservations Model and real-time dashboard

HealthShare NSW successfully implemented the statewide rollout of the Patient Transport Service Reservations Model, providing confirmation of arrival times. The rollout was further supported by implementation of a real-time dashboard that highlights any delays in real time, enabling timely escalation to improve patient flow and outcomes.

Using a 'reservations' approach to allocating trips, the model offers greater certainty around transport times and reduces the need for rework and reprioritisation of bookings. Since implementation, the model has delivered significant improvements, including:

- timeliness within the new 30-minute key performance indicator increased from 42 per cent to 74 per cent
- 86.3 per cent of bookings were met within 4 hours of the requested time
- major delays decreased from 32 per cent to 1.6 per cent
- excess time on scene reduced by 18.8 per cent
- patient experience improved from 89.6 per cent to 90.7 per cent.

Successful DeliverEASE statewide rollout

DeliverEASE is an award-winning, custom designed framework led by HealthShare NSW that transformed the NSW Health medical consumable supply chain by optimising processes from the point of receipt of goods at the hospital dock to ward storerooms. The framework introduced new tools and processes to improve inventory management and stock availability, delivering financial savings and more time back to clinicians for patient care.

The improved inventory visibility and management controls has resulted in an increased availability of stock and cost savings.

During 2024-25, DeliverEASE was formally wrapped up across the state, having successfully embedded the frameworks, principles, processes and practices across a total of 57 sites and 1,297 clinical areas, resulting in cost savings of approximately \$30.8 million.

A successful example of DeliverEASE was the phased implementation across 48 clinical areas within St Vincent's Hospitals Network. Active frontline engagement ensured the model was tailored and

sustainable. The project led to reduced top-up orders, better inventory alignment, and contributed to \$1.08 million in procurement savings. Staff praised the seamless implementation and strong support throughout the transition.

Transitioning non-clinical support services

HealthShare NSW transitioned additional non-clinical support services from three local health districts in 2024-25. The organisation leveraged its experience from previous food and linen service transitions to optimise its standardised service model. Services from Nepean Blue Mountains, Western Sydney and South Western Sydney local health districts were successfully transitioned, including their cleaning, loading dock, and waste management operations. HealthShare NSW is working with district partners to standardise, digitise, and improve services while transitioning remaining non-clinical support functions.

Reporting for Better Cancer Outcomes

The Cancer Institute NSW connected data with clinical expertise to improve patient outcomes and reduce disparities across the state through the Reporting for Better Cancer Outcomes (RBCO) program. Since 2017, the RBCO program has engaged more than 500 stakeholders to develop 212 system indicators to understand how care is delivered across the state. In 2024-25, 48 stakeholders were consulted across 10 projects and data was harnessed and analysed across 194 system indicators to generate insights. This information is provided back to the services to understand variations in cancer control, address any unwanted variation, improve the patient experience, and reduce inequities for priority populations.

Efficiency Improvement Plans

Efficiency Improvement Plans (EIPs) are required to be submitted as part of the Conditions of Subsidy, which outlines the requirements and guidelines for financial management and compliance for NSW Health entities. The Efficiency Improvement and Support Team coordinate the submissions of EIPs, audit the quality of the plans, and provide advice to districts and networks where required. In the 2024-25 financial year, a total of \$492 million was achieved through various EIPs that targeted costs including employee related expenses, goods and services, revenue, and productivity efficiencies.

Whole of Health Nurse Agency Panel

The Whole of Health Nurse Agency Panel Initiative is a cost-saving initiative relating to the NSW Health contingent labour workforce.

The initiative was implemented in September 2024. It aims to improve governance and ensure that health organisations have access to suitable nursing agencies with a fixed fee arrangement that considers the effects of location on supply and demand. The panel is the first statewide nursing and midwifery agency panel for NSW Health and delivers a consistent approach in engaging agency nurses and midwives.

Under the panel arrangement, health organisations have access to 69 approved nursing agencies, all with standardised commission only fees that is scalable according to the location of the health organisation. NSW Health organisations can only procure agency nurses from 1 of the 69 identified agencies.

The contract outlines a performance management framework for agencies through key performance indicators (KPIs). The KPIs set out the minimum levels of performance and associated service that nursing agencies must comply with.

Since implementation, 70 per cent of the agencies on the panel have supplied nurses to NSW Health under the agreement. The Whole of Health Nursing Agency Panel contract has delivered savings of \$19.33 million since its implementation in September 2024.

Evaluating Leading Better Value Care initiatives

In 2024-25, the NSW Ministry of Health evaluated the Tranche 1 Leading Better Value Care (LBVC) initiatives: renal supportive care, high risk foot service, osteoporosis refracture prevention, hip fracture and the osteoarthritis chronic care program.

All LBVC evaluations demonstrated value for money, positive clinician and patient engagement, and enhanced clinical outcomes. Given the positive impact across all measurable dimensions of value based healthcare, the recommendations were that these models of care become business-as-usual.

Other recommendations were that:

- virtual care modes of service delivery be more broadly incorporated into service delivery models to enhance access to specialist services for patients in regional and rural areas
- any strategy for routine collection of Patient-Reported Outcome Measures be based on a quality-of-life tool that reflects Australian society to facilitate inclusion of patient outcomes in economic evaluation of initiatives
- the Clinician Experience Measure Survey be implemented at scale to inform other large-scale reforms.

6.2 Commit to an environmentally sustainable footprint for future healthcare

Investing in solar panel system

HealthShare NSW launched an innovative project to install solar panel systems across five of its production facilities. The first solar installation was completed at Tamworth Linen Services, following a roof structure replacement. The Tamworth solar panel system includes approximately 462 individual solar panels with a capacity of about 203.3 kilowatts (kW). It is expected to produce 288,000 kilowatt-hours (kWh) per year, which will reduce the site's non-renewable energy consumption by 55 percent. This means more than half of the electricity used at Tamworth will come from the solar system, leading to decreased electricity bills and a lower carbon emissions footprint for HealthShare NSW.

Giving patients a voice on sustainable healthcare

BHI reported new insights into patients' expectations and views of NSW Health's efforts to deliver services in more environmentally sustainable ways. Analyses were based on patients' feedback to a sustainability module introduced into the Adult Admitted Patient Survey to inform and support *NSW Health Net Zero Roadmap 2025-2030*, and were published in *Healthcare in Focus*. The results showed more than 8 in 10 patients were willing to personally take action to support NSW Health's efforts, including by receiving treatment in the community rather than in hospital; taking more environmentally friendly prescription medications; and returning unused medicines for appropriate disposal.

Net Zero Roadmap 2025-2030

The *NSW Health Net Zero Roadmap 2025-2030* was released in May 2025 and outlines how NSW Health will reduce its environmental impact while continuing to deliver safe, high-quality care to the people of NSW. The Roadmap was developed through extensive consultation involving more than 2,200 stakeholders including staff, partners, and community members. It is informed by the NSW Government's *Climate Change (Net Zero Future) Act (2023)* and the Net Zero Government Operations Policy.

The Roadmap is the first of its kind for NSW Health, identifying four guiding principles, six strategic priorities, and 18 emissions sources which account for 80 percent of NSW Health's estimated carbon footprint.

Sustainable Futures Innovation Fund

NSW Health staff have innovative and impactful ideas that can improve the sustainability of our health system. The Sustainable Innovation Fund supports our staff to accelerate their ideas. Established in 2023, a second round for the Sustainable Futures Innovation Fund was provided in 2024-25.

Staff applied for between \$20,000 and \$25,000 (per project) in funding for innovative projects in energy, assets, supply chain emissions, and decarbonising medical and surgical clinical pathways. In 2024-25, 11 projects were funded, and 9 local sustainability initiatives have been chosen for implementation in 2025-26.

Net Zero Hubs

The Net Zero Hubs (2024-2027) program led by the NSW Ministry of Health is an Australian-first program establishing multidisciplinary teams to lead decarbonisation activities across our carbon hotspot areas, including theatres, intensive care units, emergency departments, renal, endoscopy, paediatrics and infection prevention services.

In November 2024, 20 clinical leads were selected to participate in the 3-year program. Hub members are appointed on a fractional basis and are responsible for becoming exemplars and guiding decarbonisation activities in their service or specialty.

Building our climate resilience

The Sydney Children's Hospitals Network made significant strides in our commitment to transitioning to a low-carbon, low-waste, climate-resilient health service. Alongside launching the *Net Zero Pathway 2024-27* in November 2024, the Network secured NSW Ministry of Health funding for a Paediatric Net Zero Hub to lead statewide decarbonisation in paediatrics. This includes reducing emissions from nitrous oxide and metered dose inhalers, and enhancing virtual care to allow care closer to home.

The new Dragonfly car park at The Children's Hospital at Westmead provisions 200 electric vehicle charging stations, supporting fleet and staff transition to electric vehicles powered by renewable energy.

The Network's food waste initiative has diverted 47 tonnes of food waste from landfill, converting it into soil improver or renewable fuel.

Remotely Piloted Aeromedical Clinical System

The Remotely Piloted Aeromedical Capability System (RPACS) represents an innovation led by NSW Ambulance to enhance aeromedical responses. Operated by experienced critical care or special operations paramedics, RPACS leverages drone technology to enhance situational awareness and streamline rescue operations. It identifies patient location, clinical condition, hazards and access routes.

By enabling information to be live-streamed in real-time to mission oversight teams and ground crews, RPACS significantly improves operational efficiency. The pilot revealed that RPACS reduced aircraft flight hours, lowering fuel consumption and emissions. It also minimises aviation risk, enhancing safety for both patients and crews, and improves service delivery during climate driven disasters.

6.3 Adapt performance measurement and funding models to targeted outcomes

Clarity of responsibilities

The NSW Ministry of Health has implemented an enhanced Contract Handover Process for use between HealthShare NSW and local health districts, providing further clarity regarding process and roles and responsibilities for Health entities, driving efficiency and assuring business continuity.

NSW Health Procurement Academy

The NSW Health Procurement Academy has been delivered to all NSW Health entities. The Academy aims to build capability through providing a clear and consistent understanding of the lifecycle of procurement activities, enabling staff to have a clear direction on delivering enhanced procurement outcomes for NSW Health. The Academy will continue to be offered through the Health Education and Training Institute to support ongoing procurement capability development. Opportunities for targeted content continue to be identified to provide customised courses based on stakeholder roles and requirements.

Multi-year service agreements

The NSW Ministry of Health System Purchasing branch, in collaboration with the Financial and Corporate Services Division, developed and implemented multi-year service agreements, supported by an annual funding and performance supplement, for all local health districts, St. Vincent's Health Network, and Sydney Children's Hospitals Networks. This approach aims to more closely link funding to outcomes, and provide health entities with more certainty for long-term investment in local health priorities.

New multi-year agreements incorporate existing annual key performance indicators for hospital access, mental health, experience, finance, safety and quality, and introduce a second stream of indicators with targets across four years. These multi-year targets measure community and population health, workforce and research.

6.4 Align our governance and leaders to support the system and deliver the outcomes of Future Health

Securing long term health reform via the National Health Reform Agreement negotiations

NSW Health continues to engage with the Commonwealth and other states and territories through the Health Ministers' Meetings and Health Chief Executives' Forum to deliver on priorities including system-wide reform, improving health system performance, and alleviating pressures on the health workforce.

Ministers and Health Chief Executives continued discussions on the next Addendum to the National Health Reform Agreement, implementation of recommendations from the independent review of health practitioner regulatory settings, and the National Regulation and Accreditation Scheme (NRAS) Complexity Review.

Key priorities also included mental health, dental reform, and national public health responses, and First Nations healthcare, including in prisons.

A one-year interim health agreement, which extends the current Addendum to the National Health Reform Agreement 2020-2025 by one additional year, from 1 July 2025 to 30 June 2026 and secured an additional \$407 million in funding for NSW Health, was signed in February 2025. Negotiations on a long-term health reform agreement continue to progress through 2025.

Intergovernmental Agreement with Queensland Health

NSW Health successfully negotiated an Intergovernmental Agreement with Queensland Health, enabling NSW to be reimbursed for health services provided to Queensland residents in NSW under the National Health Reform Agreement and vice versa.

The Agreement also establishes new governance structures, which aim to enable NSW and Queensland to work effectively together to manage and improve cross-border challenges such as patient transfers, medicines access, joint service planning, and improved data and information sharing.

The Cross Border Planning Committee includes senior executive, government relations, finance, and local health district and service representation to support cross-border healthcare.

Standardised recommendation for admission forms

A statewide standardised Recommendation for Admission form for adult and paediatric patients was developed by the Surgical Services team following extensive consultation with local health districts, specialty health networks and the State Forms Committee. This is now informing development and implementation of the Single Digital Patient Record. The new forms are based on existing versions used within districts and networks and the requirements of the NSW Health Elective Surgery Access Policy. Key inclusions in the new forms are the indication for surgery and fields to assist clinicians whose patients require changes to their clinical urgency category. These changes ensure equitable access to surgical care for patients and more standardised data collection to aid in service development.

Statewide referral criteria

The Ministry of Health and Agency for Clinical Innovation in collaboration with clinicians and referrers across NSW implemented Statewide Referral Criteria (SRC) for ophthalmology, gastroenterology, orthopaedic, and ear, nose and throat conditions. SRC facilitate safe, timely, and effective referral and prioritisation of patients requiring access to NSW Health specialist outpatient services.

HealthRoster Improvement Project

Led and implemented by the NSW Ministry of Health Efficiency Improvement and Support Team, the HealthRoster Improvement Project aimed to improve user knowledge of the HealthRoster system, rostering governance and controls. In the 2024-25 financial year, more than 3,200 staff across nursing, medical, allied health and corporate from all local health districts and specialty health networks were trained through the Program.

Improving access to care for patients arriving by Ambulance

St Vincent's Hospitals Network implemented a network-wide improvement program that significantly enhanced patient outcomes and experiences.

By breaking down silos through a shared problem-solving model and unified framework and leveraging clinician-designed dashboards for real-time decision making, teams fostered collaboration and responsiveness. The transfer of care 'TOC Ready = Flow Ready' approach aligned teams around delivering safe, efficient care. Executive-led coaching, distributed leadership, and a consistent cadence helped embed a culture of continuous improvement, uniting all teams under common goals.

Asset Management Capability Funding Program

NSW Health implemented the Asset Management Capability Funding Program in 2024-25. The Program is designed to strengthen planning, resources, and delivery of services through funded asset management specific resources within local health districts and speciality health networks. These resources minimise gaps in asset management related expertise and capacity, and is based on annual asset management maturity assessments aligned to NSW Health's strategic priorities to enable better health outcomes to patients and the community.

Economic or other factors affecting achievement of operational objectives

In 2024-25, NSW Health operated in a fiscal environment that continues to normalise following the COVID-19 pandemic.

Inflationary pressures remained, particularly on goods and services. There was also a continued focus on the delivery of savings as part of the NSW Treasury Comprehensive Expenditure Review initiative.

Workforce challenges remained ongoing in relation to staffing in regional and rural areas, along with industrial relations negotiations and disruptions seen in parts of the workforce.

Through these challenges, NSW Health showed its resilience. Local health districts, speciality networks, and NSW Ambulance had an improved performance to budget, continued reduction in annual leave balances, and improved own source revenue generation.

Public Health Act Section 103A

- Condition: Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) infection (Category 5)
- Number of Section 62 public health orders: 0

Infrastructure program

This section lists Health Infrastructure capital works in progress or completed (to 30 June 2025), including the cost of those works to date and the estimated dates of completion.

Note: The cost to date is project expenditure until the end of the 2024-25 financial year. Dates listed are physical completion dates. Health Infrastructure's website contains up-to-date project completion dates. To be confirmed (TBC) completion dates will be advised once a construction contract is awarded.

Project description	Location	Cost to date expenditure to 30 June 2025 (\$)	Construction completion date (actual or estimated or to be confirmed)	Status
Albury Wodonga Regional Hospital	Albury Wodonga Health	21,576,000 β	2028	Planning
Cessnock Hospital Redevelopment	Hunter New England Local Health District	13,880,000	2027	Construction
Glen Innes Hospital Upgrade	Hunter New England Local Health District	10,536,000	2026	Planning
Manning Hospital Redevelopment Stage 2 ^{##}	Hunter New England Local Health District	16,565,000	2027	Enabling works
Moree Hospital Redevelopment	Hunter New England Local Health District	15,214,000	2027	Construction
Muswellbrook Hospital Redevelopment Stage 3	Hunter New England Local	13,741,000	2027	Construction

Project description	Location	Cost to date expenditure to 30 June 2025 (\$)	Construction completion date (actual or estimated or to be confirmed)	Status
	Health District			
Milton-Ulladulla Hospital Upgrades	Illawarra Shoalhaven Local Health District	949,000	2026	Construction
Finley Hospital Upgrade	Murrumbidgee Local Health District	3,628,000	2027	Construction
Temora Hospital Redevelopment	Murrumbidgee Local Health District	5,847,000	2028	Planning
Grafton Base Hospital Redevelopment	Northern NSW Local Health District	15,726,000	2028	Planning
Canterbury Hospital Redevelopment	Sydney Local Health District	5,965,000	2029	Planning
Batemans Bay Community Health	Southern NSW Local Health District	2,923,000	2026	Construction
Bankstown Hospital (New)	South Western Sydney Local Health District	19,857,000	2031	Planning
Fairfield Hospital Redevelopment	South Western Sydney Local Health District	3,844,000	2029	Planning
Bathurst Hospital Redevelopment	Western NSW Local Health District	12,624,000	2027	Planning
Blacktown and Mount Druitt Hospitals – Additional Beds	Western Sydney Local Health District	2,893,000	2027	Planning
Rouse Hill Hospital	Western Sydney Local Health District	76,037,000	2029	Planning
Wyong Hospital Redevelopment Stage 1	Central Coast Local Health District	194,426,000	2026	Construction
Wyong Cancer Day Unit	Central Coast Local Health District	3,652,000	2026	Construction

Project description	Location	Cost to date expenditure to 30 June 2025 (\$)	Construction completion date (actual or estimated or to be confirmed)	Status
Wentworth Health Service Redevelopment	Far West NSW Local Health District	24,681,000	2025	Construction
Broken Hill Hospital Emergency Department	Far West NSW Local Health District	7,805,000	2025	Construction
John Hunter Health and Innovation Precinct (includes car park)	Hunter New England Local Health District	565,295,000	2026	Construction
Gunnedah Hospital Redevelopment	Hunter New England Local Health District	41,567,000	2025	Construction
New Shellharbour Hospital and Integrated Services (includes car park)	Illawarra Shoalhaven Local Health District	222,714,000	2027	Construction
Shoalhaven Hospital Redevelopment	Illawarra Shoalhaven Local Health District	276,258,000	2026	Construction
Griffith Hospital Redevelopment	Murrumbidgee Local Health District	201,164,000	2025	Construction
Nepean Hospital Redevelopment Stages 1 and 2	Nepean Blue Mountains Local Health District	834,725,000	2026	Construction
Ryde Hospital Redevelopment	Northern Sydney Local Health District	122,906,000	2028	Construction
Tweed Hospital and Integrated Ambulatory Services Redevelopment	Northern NSW Local Health District	712,825,000	2023	Completed
Royal Prince Alfred Hospital Redevelopment	Sydney Local Health District	316,398,000	2028/29	Construction
Sydney Children's Hospital, Randwick - Stage 1 Children's Comprehensive	South Eastern Sydney, Sydney Children's Hospital	526,594,000	2025	Completed

Project description	Location	Cost to date expenditure to 30 June 2025 (\$)	Construction completion date (actual or estimated or to be confirmed)	Status
Cancer Centre	Network			
The Children's Hospital at Westmead Redevelopment Stage 2	Western Sydney, Sydney Children's Hospital Network	497,779,000	2025	Construction Main works
Randwick Campus Reconfiguration and Expansion Stage 1	South Eastern Sydney Local Health District	820,952,000	2025 (remaining fit-out)	Construction
St George Hospital - Ambulatory Care, Day Surgery, Sub-Acute Inpatient Building	South Eastern Sydney Local Health District	269,092,000	2027	Construction
Cooma Hospital Redevelopment***	Southern NSW Local Health District	23,227,000	2024	Completed
Eurobodalla Regional Hospital Development	Southern NSW Local Health District	135,022,000	2027	Construction
Goulburn Hospital Redevelopment	Southern NSW Local Health District	158,000,000	2024	Construction
Bowral and District Hospital Redevelopment Stage 2	South Western Sydney Local Health District	43,947,000	2026	Construction
Liverpool Health and Academic Precinct	South Western Sydney Local Health District	471,609,000	2027	Construction
Cowra Hospital Redevelopment	Western NSW Local Health District	78,738,000	2025	Construction
Viral Vector Manufacturing Facility	Western Sydney Local Health District	48,091,000	2025	Construction
Westmead Redevelopment Stages 1A and 1B	Western Sydney Local Health District	828,534,000	2025	Completed

Project description	Location	Cost to date expenditure to 30 June 2025 (\$)	Construction completion date (actual or estimated or to be confirmed)	Status
Port Macquarie Hospital Helipad Relocation and Car Park	Mid North Coast Local Health District	33,061,000	2025	Completed
Concord Hospital Car Park	Sydney Local Health District	31,181,000	2024	Completed
Key Health Worker Accommodation – Far Western Region	Far West NSW Local Health District	14,561,000	2025	Completed
Key Health Worker Accommodation – Murrumbidgee Region	Murrumbidgee Local Health District	11,285,000	2025	Completed
Key Health Worker Accommodation – Southern NSW Region	Southern NSW Local Health District	7,988,000	2025	Completed
Maitland Integrated Community and Community Mental Health Service	Hunter New England Local Health District	1,310,000	2027	Tender
Integrated Mental Health Complex at Westmead	Western Sydney Local Health District	138,680,000	2027	Construction
HealthOne Strategy (Rebuild NSW Fund)	South Western Sydney Local Health District	86,644,000	2025	Construction
Broken Hill – Acute Mental Health Inpatient Unit Upgrade	Far West NSW Local Health District	*	2025	Construction
Tamworth Mental Health Unit (Banksia), Tamworth Hospital	Hunter New England Local Health District	*	2025	Construction
John Hunter Hospital - Nexus Child and Adolescent Mental Health Unit	Hunter New England Local Health District	*	2026	Construction
Nepean Hospital - Child and Adolescent Mental Health	Nepean Blue Mountains Local	*	2025	Construction

Project description	Location	Cost to date expenditure to 30 June 2025 (\$)	Construction completion date (actual or estimated or to be confirmed)	Status
Service	Health District			
Concord Forensic Mental Health Unit	Sydney Local Health District	*	2025	Construction
Blacktown Forensic Mental Health (Bunya Unit Relocation)	Western Sydney Local Health District	*	2025	Completed
Blayney Multipurpose Service	Western NSW Local Health District	**	2026	Construction
Jindabyne Ambulance Station	Southern NSW	†	TBC	Planning
North Sydney Ambulance Station	Northern Sydney	^	TBC	Planning
Berowra Ambulance Station	Northern Sydney	^	TBC	Planning
South Windsor Ambulance Station	Nepean Blue Mountains	^	2027	Planning
Oran Park Ambulance Station	South Western Sydney	^	2027	Planning
Kingscliff Ambulance Station	Northern NSW	†	2024	Completed
NSW Ambulance Relocation – Fit-out	Sydney Olympic Park	41,330,000 β	2024	Completed
NSW Ambulance Virtual Clinical Care Centre	Sydney Olympic Park	10,000,000	2024	Completed
Wyang Palliative Care Unit	Central Coast Local Health District	^^	2026	Construction
Nepean Palliative Care Unit	Nepean Blue Mountains Local Health District	^^	2027	Planning

Project description	Location	Cost to date expenditure to 30 June 2025 (\$)	Construction completion date (actual or estimated or to be confirmed)	Status
Orange Palliative Care Unit	Western NSW Local Health District	^^	2026	Construction
Tamworth Palliative Care Unit	Hunter New England Local Health District	^^	2026	Planning
Westmead Palliative Care Unit	Western Sydney Local Health District	^^	2026	Construction
Ambulance Infrastructure Program	N/A	92,072,000	TBC	Planning
Extended Hours Childcare Centres	N/A	2,000,000	TBC	Planning
Statewide Mental Health Infrastructure Program	N/A	318,952,000	Various	Various

*Delivered as part of the Statewide Mental Health Infrastructure Program. **Delivered as part of the Multipurpose Services (MPS) Strategy. ***Final works are being delivered by the local health district, which includes a refurbishment and expansion of existing medical imaging unit. ^Delivered as part of the NSW Ambulance Infrastructure Program. †Delivered as part of the Rural Ambulance Infrastructure Reconfiguration program. #Delivered as part of the HealthOne Program. ##In the NSW State Budget 2024-25 (June 2024), the Lower Mid North Coast Health Service project merged the Manning Hospital Redevelopment Stage 2 project and the Forster Tuncurry public hospital project. ^^Delivered as part of the World Class End of Life Care Program. ****Delivered as part of the Sydney Ambulance Metropolitan Infrastructure Strategy. β Reported spend only relates to the Health Infrastructure managed component of this project.

Major problems and issues which arose from major capital works in progress

In 2024-25, inflation and cost escalation challenged project budgets across the construction industry including the health capital works program. This was an industry-wide challenge, navigated by collaboration across government and industry. Projects in the procurement phase were impacted and managed by prioritising areas of clinical need in facility designs, and future-proofing the design where possible to ensure further works can be undertaken in the future.

Major works in progress, cost to date, dates of completion, significant cost overruns or delays/amendments

The global increase of building costs faced by the construction industry placed pressure on projects across the state. However, these were appropriately managed to mitigate significant cost overruns, delays, or amendments evident in the reporting period.

In 2024-25, scheduled power outages that were required for construction activities were cancelled as a result of protected industrial action undertaken by the Electrical Trades Union. The majority of projects were able to mitigate the impacts, and the cost is being assessed. This protected industrial action has now ceased.

Land disposal

The properties that were surplus to NSW Health and were sold in 2024-25 incurred gross proceeds of approximately \$3.97 million.

The proceeds in 2024-25 were impacted by the NSW Government continued directive to pause all government disposal of property and the Property and Land Audit. Both the temporary pause on all government disposals was lifted and the *M2024-08 New Government Property Framework* was released in the last quarter of 2024.

All sales were undertaken in accordance with government policy. Documents relating to these sales can be obtained under the *Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009*.

Total Property Sales this in 2024-25

Property	Status of 30 June 2025	Revenue	Purchaser
Camden, 72 Menangle Road, 84 Menangle Road, and 86 Menangle Road (Former Camden Hospital Nurses' Quarters)	Settled	\$3,640,000	Homes NSW for social and affordable housing
Cobar, Woodiwiss Avenue (Unimproved land)	Settled	\$370,000	Cobar Shire Council for Housing
Gross revenue		\$3,970,000	

Events arising after the end of the annual reporting period

No other events have arisen subsequent to the end of the annual reporting period that would have a significant effect on financial operations, other operations, and clientele and the community that would require the annual report to be amended.

Implementation of price determination

The NSW Ministry of Health set the NSW State Price using the latest available cost data. This year, most new initiatives were reflected in the Budget Schedule of the Service Agreement to advance certainty, timing, and management of funding for patient care.

The NSW State Price for 2025-26 was \$6,081 per national weighted activity unit 2025. Local health districts and specialty health networks were funded for their growth activity at this price, with the exception of some specific contractual funding arrangements.

The NSW State Price is not directly comparable year on year due to changes in national weighted activity unit versions and local health district and specialty health network costing results.