CENTRE FOR EPIDEMIOLOGY AND EVIDENCE

Services and Programs
FACTS ABOUT THE CENTRE

- There are over 54,000 users of HealthStats NSW.
- 1 billion anonymised records were released to researchers in 2018.
- We process over 100 million records each day to look for public health concerns in near real time.
- We provide access to 300 users to 9 terabytes of health data on a secure, analytics ready platform.
- Linked data are securely held in Registers and updated regularly.
- The Centre supported over 60 evaluations between 2015 and 2018.
- Our research and evaluation practice guides have been downloaded over 2,500 times.
- Over 550 staff participated in our evaluation training between 2015 and 2018.
- We have trained over 180 public health officers and over 100 biostatisticians, and supported around 30 Aboriginal population health trainees.
The strategic framework of the Centre for Epidemiology and Evidence communicates our vision for improved population health outcomes, our roles and functions, and the enablers that support our work.

**OUR VISION**

A sustainable health system that delivers outcomes that matter to patients and the community, is personalised, invests in wellness and is digitally enabled

**OUR PURPOSE**

Collect, link, analyse and translate complex data and evidence into actionable insights

**OUR FUNCTIONS**

- Make data accessible
- Link and share data
- Transform data into information
- Enable rapid response
- Build capability
- Generate and translate evidence

**OUR ENABLERS**

- Strong and enduring partnerships
- Applying an evidence-driven approach
- Harnessing innovation
- Collaborative and reflective culture
WHO WE ARE

The Centre is a trans-disciplinary Branch within the Population and Public Health Division of the NSW Ministry of Health focused on the collection, linkage, analysis and translation of complex data, and research and evaluation evidence to directly impact the health of the population in NSW.

Our work supports the NSW Health Strategic Priorities. Further information is available at www.health.nsw.gov.au.

The Centre comprises four Units:

- Centre for Health Record Linkage (CHeReL)
- Evidence and Evaluation
- Epidemiology and Biostatistics
- Population Health Intelligence Systems

SERVICE MODELS

We apply formal models to the delivery of our services to ensure our collaboration with a broad range of partners are transparent and effective. Our service domains include evaluation and analytics, data linkage, information management and systems, and capability building. Support across these domains ranges from strategic advice and structured input through to project management and project delivery.

CENTRE PRIORITISATION CRITERIA

- Relevance to current NSW Government priorities, in particular the Premier’s Priorities and the NSW Health Strategic Priorities
- Strategic importance of the work for the Population and Public Health Division and the Ministry
- Taking a long-term system-wide view, the opportunity to build capacity and infrastructure that will support future projects
- Project timeframes and available resources within the Centre and partners
Delivers five levels of services from high-level strategic advice through to structured input and full project management.

Advises researchers and policy makers on analytical methods and ethical approvals, and streamlines access to data custodians.

Applies flexible project delivery methods that readily scale from simple to complex projects.

Delivers comprehensive capability building opportunities through formal training programs, multi-modal learning and communities of practice.

CENTRE SERVICE MODELS

Evaluation and analytics services

Client services for record linkage

Information manager and systems services

Capability building
HEALTHSTATS NSW

HealthStats NSW is an open data website bringing together data from many sources to produce statistical information about the health of the NSW population. Users can view and download data and select indicators to produce tailored reports that provide insights into a wide range of health determinants and outcomes.

www.healthstats.nsw.gov.au

EVIDENCE TRANSLATION

The Centre facilitates the use of evidence in policy and practice through co-production of research, targeted evidence dissemination, increasing practitioners’ skills in finding and using evidence, and supporting the scaling up of effective programs. Core funding is provided to the Sax Institute which aims to promote the use of research evidence in health policy. Evidence translation is also a key requirement for Prevention Research Support Program recipients.


POPULATION HEALTH DISEASE REGISTERS

The NSW Public Health Act 2010 enables the Secretary to establish public health or disease registers for a range of purposes including planning and evaluation of health programs, and measuring and monitoring health outcomes and risk factors. The Centre establishes and supports a range of ad hoc and ongoing registers.

ABORIGINAL POPULATION HEALTH TRAINING INITIATIVE

This postgraduate training program provides workplace-based training for Aboriginal people who have an undergraduate health-related qualification. Trainees gain public health experience through supervised workplace learning and part-time study towards a Master of Public Health degree. The program is delivered through partnerships between the Ministry and NSW health services.


CENTRE FOR HEALTH RECORD LINKAGE (CHeReL)

The Centre for Health Record Linkage (the CHeReL) is dedicated to helping researchers, planners and policy makers’ access linked data about people in NSW and the ACT. It provides comprehensive advisory services and hosts a secure, high-performing data linkage system that enables high-quality research and generates timely linked data to support service evaluation and inform policy decisions.

www.cherel.org.au

EVALUATION AND RESEARCH

The Centre supports the evaluation of flagship initiatives across the Ministry and Pillars. Support is also provided for policy-relevant research projects, especially in the area of Aboriginal health. The Centre provides training and guidance to build the research and evaluation capability of the NSW Health workforce and funds research groups that conduct policy and program relevant research.


The Population Health Information Management System (PHIMS) enables tracking of the quality and reach of the following programs:

- Healthy Children’s Initiative (HCI), which aims to reduce overweight and obesity rates of children.
- Nutrition; supports healthy food strategies in Health facilities and school canteens.
- Tobacco control; monitors the implementation and enforcement of tobacco legislation and regulations.
Secure Analytics for Population Health Intelligence and Research (SAPHaRI) is an analytics platform designed for statistical analysis of population-health data. Teams within NSW Health are enabled to use sensitive data, while minimising privacy risks, to support delivery of insights that drive innovation in health care, policy and planning.

nswhealth.sharepoint.com/sites/NSWH-SAPHaRI

This postgraduate training program provides workplace-based training for people who have completed postgraduate studies in public health. Trainees develop public health competencies and professional networks while addressing strategic and operational priorities of the health system and working to improve the health of the people of NSW.


The NSW Population Health Survey Program collects data on NSW residents regarding their health and health-related risk factors. The Program consists of the NSW Population Health Survey, which targets over 15,000 respondents every year, and the NSW School Students Health Behaviours Survey, which targets high school students from over 100 schools every three years.


This postgraduate training program provides workplace-based training for people who have completed undergraduate study in statistics and are committed to a career in biostatistics. Trainees gain experience through supervised workplace learning and part-time study towards a Master of Biostatistics at the University of Sydney.


The Notifiable Conditions Information Management System (NCIMS) provides state-wide data capture, management and reporting of Scheduled Medical Conditions, including reporting from child care centres, schools, aged care facilities, hospitals and testing laboratories, to the public health network. Information is used in disease incident management, contact exposure, prevention and management of disease spread, outbreak management.


Rapid surveillance provides timely ambulance, emergency department, mortality and drug and alcohol intelligence to inform policy, program development and research. The Public Health Rapid Emergency and Disease Syndromic Surveillance (PHREDSS) system operates 7 days a week to deliver capability to rapidly respond to emerging public health issues and provide timely advice and support to public health incidents as they emerge.

The Centre’s principles form the basis for our way of working—how we perform our roles and achieve our strategic functions.

- **We are collaborative by design and value partnerships.**
- **Data are open by default and protected where required.**
- **We use a high level of rigour to ensure our data, information and interpretation are credible.**
- **We take a long-term, system-wide approach to health issues.**
- **Our work takes a population focus and promotes equity and the health and wellbeing of Aboriginal people.**
- **Our work enables others to make evidence-informed decisions about policy, health services and programs, and future investment based on an understanding of ‘what works’.”**
THE CENTRE’S CULTURE

The Centre’s culture is underpinned by the CORE values of NSW Health:

- Collaboration
- Openness
- Respect
- Empowerment.

Within the Centre, our behaviours express and add to the CORE values.

CENTRE CULTURE STATEMENT

We implement an evidence-driven approach.

We aim for continuous improvement including celebrating success and reflecting on our experiences.

We take a long-term strategic and system-wide approach.

We invest in partnerships, and we collaborate with our customers to achieve their goals.

We are a learning team and value the development of skills and practices.

We respect and support diversity and value shared goals.

We empower staff to contribute their best work and actively challenge current ways of working.

We maintain an equity focus in everything we do.

We are a trans-disciplinary team including:

- Information technologists
- Epidemiologists
- Biostatisticians
- Data managers
- Clinicians
- Educators
- People managers
- Project managers
- Researchers
- Evaluators, and
- Engineers.

Some of our staff have affiliations with universities.
PARTNERS AND STAKEHOLDERS

The Centre works with a large and broad range of partners and stakeholders. Our partners and stakeholders work with us to identify areas of emerging interest and assist us in determining how to prioritise our work. We have a strong reputation for responsiveness to the needs of our partners and stakeholders.

The Centre maintains strategic partnerships including, but not limited to, those shown below.