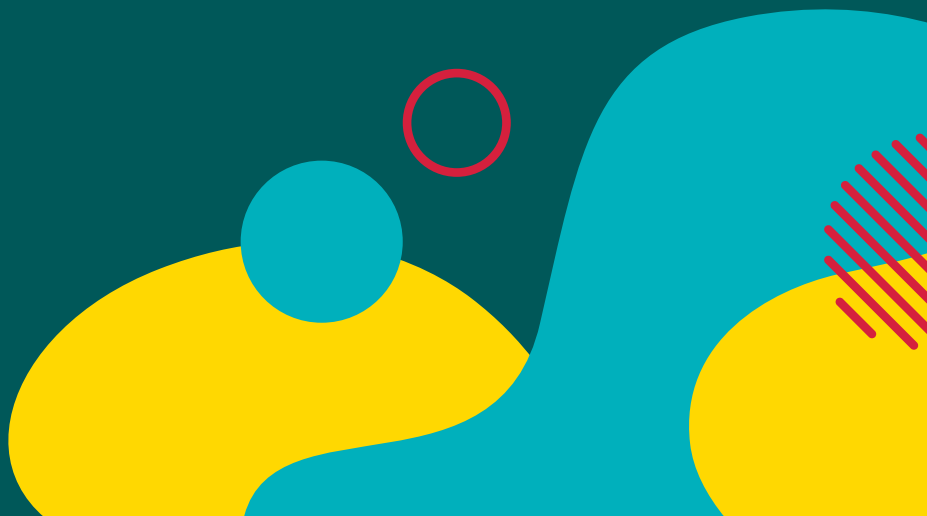

2024 Excellence in Allied Health Awards

Program



About the Awards

The NSW Health Excellence in Allied Health Awards acknowledges and celebrates the vital role Allied Health Professionals play in providing patient-centered care.


The Awards provide an opportunity to commend the nominees, finalists and winners for their daily contributions to patients, families, and communities.



Acknowledgement of country

The NSW Ministry of Health acknowledges Aboriginal people as the Traditional Custodians of the lands and waters of NSW and pays respect to Elders past, present and future.

NSW Health acknowledges the Traditional Owners of the land and waters upon which tonight's awards are held.



Acknowledgements



“It is wonderful to have the opportunity to celebrate and acknowledge the vital role our Allied Health Professionals have in caring for patients in our hospitals and communities, and delivering outcomes which really matter to them.”

Andrew Davison
NSW Health Chief Allied Health Officer



“Allied Health stands as a cornerstone in addressing the healthcare needs of the community, consistently demonstrating their resourcefulness. With the Awards now an annual event, we eagerly anticipate shining a spotlight on the immense talent within the Allied Health Professions, celebrating their outstanding contributions to the well-being of individuals across NSW.”

Richard Griffiths
Executive Director
Workforce Planning and
Talent Development Branch
Ministry of Health



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Program

6pm

Registration

6:30pm

Presentation Ceremony

Welcome to the 2024 Excellence in Allied Health Awards by
Master of Ceremonies (MC), Angela Bishop OAM

Welcome to Country

Speeches

1. The Hon. Ryan Park, Minister for Health and Regional Health
 2. Susan Pearce AM, Secretary, NSW Health
 3. The Hon. Rose Jackson, Minister for Mental Health
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Awards

Allied Health Educator of the Year

Allied Health Researcher of the Year

Allied Health Assistant/Technician/Support Person of the Year

Short Video Presentation

Healthy Deadly Feet - introduced by Richard Griffiths,
Executive Director, Workforce Planning and Talent
Development Branch, NSW Health

Awards

Aboriginal Allied Health Professional of the Year

Early Career Allied Health Professional of the Year

Allied Health Leader of the Year

Allied Health Professional of the Year

Closing Remarks

Andrew Davison, Chief Allied Health Officer, NSW Health

8pm – 9:30pm Networking and canapes

Master of Ceremonies

Angela Bishop OAM



Angela is one of Australia's most respected and experienced Entertainment Reporters. Since being appointed to the role at Network Ten in 1994, she has interviewed the biggest names in show business, including Oprah Winfrey, The Rolling Stones, U2, Nicole Kidman, Hugh Jackman, Jack Nicholson, Dame Julie Andrews, Liza Minelli, Brad Pitt, Angelina Jolie, Sean Connery, Daniel Craig, Ryan Gosling, Robert De Niro, Robert Redford & Barbra Streisand and many more. As co-host of Network Ten's national morning show Studio 10, Angela demonstrates her versatility as a commentator, interviewer and occasional cook during a daily session of three and a half hours of live TV. She also has extensive experience in radio, having worked at talkback stations 2GB and 2UE, as well as MIX FM and WSFM. Angela is in demand as a speaker and MC. She has hosted movie premieres for, among others, Nicole Kidman, Jennifer Aniston, Jane Fonda and Tom Cruise. She has hosted on stage interviews sessions with Sharon Osbourne and Kelsey Grammer for Commercial Radio Australia's annual conference, as well as Q&A panel discussions at same.

Angela's renowned work ethic, integrity and professionalism sees her regularly invited to interview the stars and creators of music, film and television all over the world. Angela can be seen covering the major red carpet events around the world including the Academy Awards, Golden Globes and Emmy Awards. She is also called upon by movie companies to host Australian premieres and media conferences.

As co-host of Network Ten's national morning show Studio 10, Angela demonstrates her versatility as a commentator, interviewer and occasional cook during a daily session of three and a half hours of live TV. She also has extensive experience in radio, having worked at talkback stations 2GB and 2UE, as well as MIX FM and WSFM.

Angela also regularly performs MC duties at corporate and charity events. Angela is also a committed and active member of the Sydney Breast Cancer Foundation and Pink Ribbon committee, incorporating the very successful fundraiser, signature teddy bears.

Presenters

Award	Presented by
Allied Health Educator of the Year	The Hon. Rose Jackson Minister for Mental Health
Allied Health Researcher of the Year	Deb Willcox AM Deputy Secretary, Health System Strategy and Patient Experience
Allied Health Assistant / Technician / Support Person of the Year	Richard Griffiths Executive Director, Workforce Planning and Talent Development Branch
Aboriginal Allied Health Professional of the Year	Nicole Turner Chairperson, Indigenous Allied Health Australia (IAHA)
Early Career Allied Health Professional of the Year	Phil Minns Deputy Secretary, People, Culture and Governance
Allied Health Leader of the Year	Susan Pearce AM Secretary, NSW Health
Allied Health Professional of the Year	The Hon. Ryan Park Minister for Health, Minister for Regional Health



Allied Health Educator of the Year

The Allied Health Educator of the Year has made exemplary contributions to the education of others to improve Allied Health services.

This could include teaching of Allied Health professional peers, students, other health disciplines, patients, or the general public. They are proud to be an Allied Health Professional working in NSW Health.

Their activities have been impactful to improve the practice standards of Allied Health professionals, the knowledge of specific health conditions or the understanding of Allied Health services.

Avindu Vithanage

Physiotherapy Northern Sydney Local Health District

Avindu Vithanage, a dynamic professional in the field of physiotherapy, blends expertise with passion to elevate patient care in orthopaedic care.



He has dedicated nine impactful years to NSW Health and is currently the Senior Orthopaedic/Fracture Clinic Physiotherapist at Hornsby Ku-ring-gai Hospital. Beyond clinical expertise, Avindu is a passionate educator, contributing significantly to the development of educational programs for patients and fellow healthcare professionals including co-founding the NSLHD and CCLHD Orthopaedic Physiotherapy Network Group. Avindu's unique blend of clinical excellence, teaching, and dedication to advancing orthopaedic care underscores his profound impact on both patients and the broader physiotherapy community.

Radiation Oncology. She is also an editor in chief of Journal of Medical Radiation Sciences. Cherry co-produced webinars and other forums for radiation therapists, radiographers and members of the multi-disciplinary team. Cherry is passionate about building successful collaborations, designing programs, and inspiring students and her peers.

Cherry's contribution to the profession was recognised by the Australian Society of Medical Imaging and Radiation Therapy with the Service Award (2016), Varian Award (2016) and the Nicholas Outterside Medallion (2023).

Jacqui Hogbin

Social Work Southern NSW Local Health District

Jacqui commenced with SNSWLHD as the psychosocial Allied Health Educator in November 2021.

With over 25 years of social work experience, Jacqui has a philosophy that education events are part of a broader cultural shift in the way people work. This means that outcomes and ongoing practice change are embedded in the programs she delivers. Some of the programs Jacqui has developed, implemented, and led include embedding the Trauma Informed Care Framework via a flexible training model, clinical supervision training and training for volunteers and Allied Health Assistants (AHAs) drawing on the accidental counsellor syllabus. Jacqui also supports Domestic Violence Routine Screen trainers. Jacqui is dedicated to improving clinical supervision in the workplace and collaborated with the Health Education Training Institute (HETI) to develop and implement the clinical supervision



Cherry Agustin

Radiation Therapy Western Sydney Local Health District

Cherry is a radiation therapy (RT) educator at WSLHD and a conjoint lecturer at the University of Newcastle since 2004. She co-founded the NSW RT Educators Group and together produced evidence that contributed to the RT educator positions becoming permanent in NSW public hospitals. Cherry is a proud member of editorial review boards for 21 years. She is the first RT associate editor in the Journal of Medical Imaging and



workshops C (clinical supervision in group settings) and D (supervisee workshop for allied health). She is flexible, enthusiastic and passionate about clinical education and is held in high regard by her colleagues and managers.

Nicole Stevens

Speech Pathology Central Coast Local Health District

Nicole has been the Speech Pathology Practice Educator for CCLHD since 2004 and has provided education to several hundred undergraduate students on their clinical placements during this time. She strives to create a warm, welcoming, and empowering teaching environment, whilst at the same time providing high quality patient care and sharing her extensive clinical knowledge and skills with her colleagues and work teams. Nicole also coordinates all speech pathology student placements throughout CCLHD. Nicole is committed to staff education and development and often acts as a mentor for those wishing to enhance their skills in designing and delivering education and training resources, or in the field of practice education. Recently, Nicole has driven initiatives to support the wellbeing of staff and students. These include co-piloting workshops focusing on recognising and managing anxiety in supervisees, and facilitating clinical supervision via a range of models, including multidisciplinary group supervision for new graduates.



Rachelle Robinson

Speech Pathology South Eastern Sydney Local Health District

Rachelle Robinson has worked as a speech pathologist for the last 25 years in Sydney, regional NSW and the UK. For the last 20 years, Rachelle has specialised in ENT/head and neck oncology at Prince of Wales Hospital in Sydney. Her passion lies with teaching. She has been a guest university lecturer in her specialty to speech pathology students at three universities in Sydney since 2006. Rachelle is regularly involved in running workshops and acting as a mentor and consultant for NSW/Australian speech pathologists. She is the recipient of the NSW Cancer Institute grant in 2008 for an overseas sabbatical at cancer centres and helped develop head and neck research in Prince of Wales Hospital speech pathology. Rachelle has presented at conferences and has published research in international journals. She is the recipient of the Randwick Campus Tow Research prize and the Deidre Russell Award for service to the University of Sydney.





Allied Health Researcher of the Year

The Allied Health Researcher of the Year has made exemplary contributions to research to enhance Allied Health practice and services.

Their activities have been impactful and can be translated into practice, and they are proud to be an Allied Health Professional working in NSW Health.

They contribute to building capacity to conduct and translate research in Allied Health services, for example by supervising research students, leading research teams, or mentoring novice researchers.

Dr Carmel Smart

Nutrition & Dietetics Hunter New England Local Health District

Dr Carmel Smart is a clinical researcher and practitioner who is internationally recognised as a leading authority in nutrition and type 1 diabetes. Carmel has developed international partnerships and research collaborations aimed at improving the nutritional care of all children living with diabetes. Dr Smart has directly translated her research outcomes into clinical practice, leading to internationally renowned paediatric diabetes outcomes and informing diabetes nutritional management globally. She has built a multidisciplinary team of clinician researchers at Hunter Medical Research Institute, Newcastle where she supervises undergraduate and post graduate students. Carmel is invited regularly as a plenary speaker at international meetings and has led International Paediatric Diabetes Clinical Nutrition Guidelines. She serves in leadership roles at state, national and international levels, often as the inaugural allied health member. Carmel has written chapters for numerous books on diabetes including the American Diabetes Association Guidelines and publishes in leading diabetes journals.



pathologist at St George Hospital. Julia has 30 years' experience co-leading the St George Swallow Clinic, an internationally recognised unit, in the research and management of complex dysphagia. Julia is recognised as a clinical and research expert in adult dysphagia, nationally and internationally, following head and neck cancer and in complex ENT/respiratory disease. Julia is a leader in the management of patients following laryngectomy surgery and has trained thousands of speech pathologists and ENTs across the world. With her team, she has attracted significant competitive research funding, ensuring rapid translation of research outcomes into improved patient outcomes. Julia has a strong interest in advocating for patient safety and recently spearheaded the development of an eMR based platform, with Anaesthetics, to keep patients with complex airway dysfunction safe in hospital, which will be implemented across NSW in 2024.

Dr Natalie Fairbairn

Occupational Therapy Sydney Children's Hospitals Network

Dr Natalie Fairbairn has had a career in clinical research for over 20 years, and currently holds joint roles as a senior occupational therapist and research officer in the Grace Centre for Newborn Intensive Care Unit (NICU). She is also an Honorary Senior Lecturer at the University of Sydney. Natalie has extensively researched the long-term outcomes for infants post major surgery (cardiac and non-cardiac). This has translated to increased neurodevelopmental surveillance as part of the Grace Developmental Clinic. Natalie



Conjoint Associate Professor Julia Maclean

Speech Pathology South Eastern Sydney Local Health District

Conjoint Associate Professor Julia Maclean is a Clinical Specialist and leading academic speech



has published extensively in peer reviewed journals and contributed to national and international research activities. Natalie is passionate about translating research into clinical practice. She is currently working with key leaders to develop Australian-based guidelines for the long-term neurodevelopmental follow up of children post cardiac surgery. Her work is assisting to transform clinical practice and improve outcomes for babies and their families in the NICU and beyond.

Clinical Associate Professor Sharon Carey

Nutrition & Dietetics Sydney Local Health District



Clinical Associate Professor Sharon Carey is renowned for clinical nutrition research within complex gastrointestinal disorders. She has also developed a research skills and mentoring program for allied health clinicians within SLHD. Sharon has national and international recognition leading nutrition research within major gastrointestinal disorders. She has over 70 publications and is an invited speaker internationally. She is the president of the Australasian Society for Parenteral and Enteral Nutrition, leading the development of a national registry for home parenteral nutrition. She is the Agency for Clinical Innovation (ACI) co-chair for the Home Enteral Nutrition network. Within her role, Sharon provides leadership to support and encourage clinicians to undertake research, including allied health, nursing and junior medical clinicians. She has supervised over 50 masters research projects and four PhD students, supervising the first nutrition PhDs internationally within the areas of pelvic

exenteration and peritonectomy. Her research collaborations span across Australia and beyond.

Dr Traci-Anne Goyen

Occupational Therapy Western Sydney Local Health District



Dr Traci-Anne Goyen is a dedicated clinical specialist occupational therapist with over 30 years' experience in the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit at Westmead Hospital. She provides an exceptional, highly specialised clinical service and clinical research program devoted to improving outcomes for babies born prematurely. She is recognised nationally and internationally for her research aimed at preventing neonatal brain injury, exploring factors associated with poor outcome and early detection of brain injury. Dr Goyen is a visionary leader, fostering research in allied health clinicians, and medical and nursing researchers in the NICU. Her research findings have translated into clinical practice and she is a consultant on the national clinical guideline for preterm follow-up. Dr Goyen is currently a chief investigator for two international clinical trials and is building a team of national and international investigators to extend her pilot randomised controlled trial into a large multi-centre trial aimed at reducing neonatal brain injury.



Allied Health Assistant / Technician / Support Person of the Year

The Allied Health Assistant/Technician/Support Person of the Year consistently provides exceptional and high-quality support for Allied Health Professions and Allied Health Services.

They actively support a positive culture in line with NSW Health's CORE values and are proud to be an Allied Health Assistant / Technician / Support Person working in NSW Health.

This individual demonstrates a commitment to elevating the human experience by being the backbone of the Allied Health Service for their organisation. They show professionalism and are a proven team player.

Caity Webb

Allied Health Assistant Sydney Children's Hospitals Network

Caity is a dedicated professional with a passion for transforming lives of children and young people.

Caity is a valued paediatric allied health assistant, working in the disciplines of physiotherapy, occupational therapy and allied health education.

Caity has a strong commitment to providing exceptional patient care. She has proven her ability to connect with her patients and families, providing them with the guidance required to achieve their goals through various therapies. Caity has shown excellence whilst working across various disciplines, with a specific interest in amputee rehabilitation and developmental care in infancy. She has proven her ability to work collaboratively in a multidisciplinary team and be a great patient advocate. She takes pride in her work and always strives to inspire and motivate the children and young people she works with. Driven by a desire to create meaningful change, Caity is looking forward to advancing her career by furthering her studies in the medical field.



in the delivery of direct client related tasks such as malnutrition risk screening, calculation of nutritional intake, and monitoring nutritional progress under the supervision of a dietitian. Alongside a supervising speech pathologist, she implements communication and dysphagia therapy programs and compiles a range of multilingual resources including augmentative and alternative communication, cue cards, and life story books.

Earlier this year, it was identified through the NSW Health Speech Pathology Advisory Network that there was a lack of collegiality for these isolated key workers. As a result, Huda launched the Allied Health Assistants in Speech Pathology Network as a means of connecting and collaborating with fellow colleagues in the same field. Currently, there are 11 members across NSW and ACT.

Jemma Corsiatto

Allied Health Assistant Western Sydney Local Health District

Jemma is a dedicated, valuable, and dependable allied health assistant whose passion for high quality care has had a profound impact on countless patients' rehabilitation journeys. Her drive to continually improve herself and the service has seen her go above and beyond to elevate the human experience of patients. Jemma has extensive AHA skills across physiotherapy, occupational therapy and speech pathology, and implements innovative ideas to enhance service delivery. Most notably, Jemma established a weekly recreational wellness group after identifying that much of the patients' time on the rehabilitation ward, outside of direct therapy time, was spent



Huda Hamdan

Allied Health Assistant South Eastern Sydney Local Health District

Huda's role is shared between the speech pathology and nutrition & dietetics departments working with patients in the rehabilitation unit and under the care of the Acute Rehabilitation Therapy Team. Huda assists



inactive without social interaction or stimulation. Jemma's innovative group resulted in enhanced patient engagement, boosted morale, and improved quality of life for long-stay patients. She empowered patients and instilled a sense of self-worth by providing them with a safe supported environment. It is Jemma's goal to have a wellness group implemented across multiple wards.

Jodie Keller

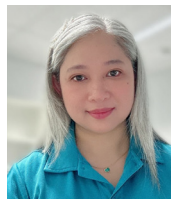
Allied Health Assistant Southern NSW Local Health District



Jodie has been an integral member of the occupational therapy team at Goulburn Hospital for four years. Her high level of initiative and competence allows the occupational therapists to delegate an immense range of tasks, improving the department's efficiency. With exceptional customer service skills and a broad allied health base, it is easy to delegate tasks to Jodie, knowing with confidence she will complete every task to a high degree of quality. Jodie is always looking for ways to improve processes to achieve team and patient safety outcomes. Following an equipment loan pool flood, Jodie identified a safety risk in the form of mould on equipment which resulted in much of it being condemned. She then led an AHA team project to catalogue loan equipment across multiple hospitals including pictures, safe weight limits and size specifications with the flow on effect to patients being access to well-maintained equipment as needed.

Meryl Abao

Allied Health Assistant Northern Sydney Local Health District



Meryl is a seasoned allied health assistant and crucial asset at Royal North Shore Hospital. Meryl's commitment to delivering exceptional outcomes for consumers is evident in her extensive experience providing quality clinical interventions to patients in acute care. Meryl adeptly manages a full clinical load, reviewing acutely unwell patients, those on rehabilitation pathways, and those requiring maintenance care to prevent secondary hospital complications. Her competencies span musculoskeletal, neurological, and respiratory impairments, and she collaborates with patients to set daily treatment goals, encouraging nursing staff to participate throughout the day. Meryl's extensive training includes a Bachelor of Science in Physical Therapy (overseas), Cert 3 in Individual Support – Aging, Cert 4 in Allied Health Assistance (Physiotherapy) and Courses on Working with People with Mental Health issues, Understanding Traumatic Brain injury, Understanding and Preventing Dementia, which underscores her dedication to providing optimal, safe, and patient-focused assistance.



Aboriginal Allied Health Professional of the Year

The Aboriginal Allied Health Professional of the Year demonstrates exceptional commitment, professionalism, and compassionate care to all patients.

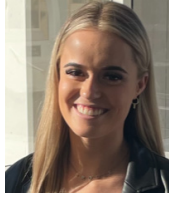
They are committed to improving and advocating for the culturally appropriate health care of Aboriginal peoples and communities, and are proud to be an Allied Health Professional working in NSW Health.

The Aboriginal Allied Health Professional of the Year demonstrates their leadership through passionate advocacy for their profession by contributing to the growth and development of the Aboriginal Allied Health workforce in NSW Health.

Brodie Walters

Social Work Sydney Children's Hospitals Network

Brodie was the Aboriginal Paediatric Social Worker at SCHN and has recently moved to the Women's and Children's space for CCLHD. Brodie is a proud Kamilaroi woman and strives to support Aboriginal children and their families through her role as a social worker. While at SCHN, Brodie supported Aboriginal children and their families through hospital admissions, outpatient appointments and connecting families to community supports. Brodie also supported the strengthening of the social work department by creating additional resources for the social work team. Brodie also created a resource for the social work department around Sorry Business when working with Aboriginal families before, during and after end of life within the hospital environment. Brodie continues to strive to ensure that all Aboriginal families and children have a culturally safe experience throughout their hospital journey.



champions the cause of providing person-centred holistic healthcare. Understanding the importance of cultural safety, Christie ensures that her work reflects a deep respect for her Aboriginal culture. Christie has played a pivotal role in the development of the Deadly Allied Health Academy, a framework that focuses on improving the health and socio-economic outcomes for Aboriginal high school students and adults.

The academy supports the career progression of Aboriginal people into allied health careers. This program focuses on a culturally safe and holistic approach to nurturing future leaders within NSW Health.

Madeleine Bridge

Social Work Nepean Blue Mountains Local Health District

Madeleine Bridge is a proud Wiradjuri woman who is currently working as a social worker within the Social Work Acute Care Team at Nepean Hospital. Madeleine strives to provide cultural safety within all of her interactions and enjoys working with Aboriginal patients and their families. Madeleine is committed to providing a high quality of social work service to all patients and families and works from a person centred and trauma informed approach. She closely adheres to and values the Australian Association of Social Workers Code of Ethics and values human rights and dignity. Madeleine is committed to developing Aboriginal social workers within the LHD and provides cultural support and mentorship to the Social Work Aboriginal Cadets, as well as providing student placements for Aboriginal social



Christie Longinidis

Occupational Therapy South Eastern Sydney Local Health District

Christie is a proud Wiradjuri woman who is fiercely committed to achieving exceptional health outcomes for patients and their families. She has been an occupational therapist for 20 years and has held leadership roles in SESLHD for 17 years. As an advocate for our most vulnerable patients, Christie



work students. In this way, she is assisting with the development of the future workforce of Aboriginal social workers.

Mikie Hughes

Pharmacy Central Coast Local Health District

As a proud Gamilaraay/ Wiradjuri woman, Mikie has dedicated her career to advancing healthcare and advocating for the wellbeing of her patients. With eight years of invaluable experience within CCLHD, she has emerged as a dynamic and compassionate leader in the field of pharmacy. Drawing on her extensive experience, Mikie has demonstrated exceptional skills in people management, fostering collaborative and supportive environments within her teams. Additionally, she has been a driving force in the implementation of Aboriginal patient liaison programs, ensuring culturally sensitive and inclusive healthcare practices. In every aspect of her career, Mikie continues to embody the spirit of service, utilising her skills to build bridges, foster understanding, and ensure that healthcare remains a right for every individual, regardless of background or circumstance.



Simone Owen

Speech Pathology Hunter New England Local Health District

Simone Owen is a proud Gomeri woman from Tamworth who is currently working on Gamilaraay/ Gomeri and Awabakal country. Simone is a speech pathologist working at the major rehabilitation hospital for the district providing speech pathology management and care for both inpatients and people living in the community with communication and swallowing impairments. She is the Clinical Trial Coordinator for the Yarning Up After Stroke Project which is a community-led project aimed at strengthening the cardiovascular health and recovery of First Nations stroke survivors living on Gamilaraay/ Gomeri countries within HNELHD. Simone is committed to ensuring all peoples living with stroke have access to culturally secure evidenced based care at all stages of their recovery journey. Simone provides training on culturally responsive care and clinical yarning to allied health and medical staff within HNELHD to ensure all first nations people accessing her health service receive culturally responsive care.





Early Career Allied Health Professional of the Year

The Early Career Allied Health Professional of the Year has shown exceptional potential during their first two years of practice.

They are committed to supporting a positive culture in line with the NSW Health CORE values and are proud to be an Allied Health Professional working in NSW Health.

This early career Allied Health Professional demonstrates passion and commitment to the provision of quality, safe and compassionate care to patients and their family/caregivers. They are committed to seeking continuous learning opportunities and are driven to demonstrate emerging clinical excellence for their discipline.

Allaha Siddiqi

Social Work Western Sydney Local Health District

Allaha is a social worker at Auburn Hospital who demonstrates passion and commitment to the provision of quality, safe and compassionate care to patients in the Women's Health space. She has worked on quality improvement projects such as developing bereavement packs for women who experience pregnancy loss, streamlining the process of destitute funerals, and was the successful recipient of the Volunteer Wishlist grant. This grant supported resources to keep children occupied while Allaha completed important assessments such as domestic violence and child protection. Allaha has received acknowledgement from the Chair of the WSLHD Healthcare and Quality Committee after presenting a patient story where self-determination and patient-centred care was upheld. Patients have provided feedback expressing their gratitude for Allaha, describing her as 'truly inspiring'. Her emerging leadership skills can be seen through her ability to lift team morale within the social work department. She is full of life and brings joy to the department.



Within her first year, Allysha completed a quality improve project evaluating the Orthopaedic Nutrition Protocol resulting in a 20% increase in malnutrition risk screening by dietitian assistants and a 15% increase in referral accuracy to a dietitian for at risk patients. Allysha is a passionate and enthusiastic dietitian. She is a team player, always first to offer her help. Allysha is highly motivated and eager to learn, regularly undertaking development opportunities to support the provision of exceptional patient care such as her role as wellbeing champion, bringing increased attention to the importance of mental health within the department. These attributes, combined with her strong leadership and excellent innovation, have supported Allysha to attain senior dietetic positions in the complex and dynamic clinical areas of Kidney Supportive Care and the Peritonectomy Service.

Georgia Knowles

Occupational Therapy Western NSW Local Health District

Georgia is a passionate occupational therapist with a profound commitment to delivering exemplary clinical care in rural and regional communities. She has embraced the WNSWLHD Allied Health Rural Graduate Program in its pilot year, actively seeking opportunities to extend her learning and experiences in a range of clinical areas across various sites. Georgia's commitment extends beyond individual care; demonstrating an interest in comprehending the broader health system and understanding how services can best meet the needs of the communities they serve. Her emerging leadership



Allysha Stibbard

Nutrition & Dietetics South Eastern Sydney Local Health District

Allysha joined St George Hospital's nutrition and dietetic department as a new graduate in 2021.



capabilities are evident in her interactions with colleagues, whether assisting other staff members, sharing knowledge, actively participating in quality improvement or advocating for patients in multidisciplinary team meetings. Georgia is motivated by working for public health as a means of providing equitable services to rural communities. She is driven to contribute to the provision of world-class rural health care and improving the health and wellbeing of communities in WNSWLHD.

Isabella Shearman

Social Work Hunter New England Local Health District

Isabella Shearman is a proud Gomerioi and Wiradjuri Women from Tamworth. Isabella graduated with a Bachelor of Social Work (Hons) from the University of New England in 2023. Isabella began working as the Aboriginal Sexual Assault Counsellor for HNELHD at the beginning of 2023. Isabella aims to ensure her practice is trauma-informed and patient-centred. Isabella aims to walk alongside patients accessing sexual assault service so that they can experience liberation, empowerment and healing.



Mia Whitehall

Speech Pathology Northern Sydney Local Health District

Mia Whitehall is a speech pathologist at Royal North Shore Hospital and an integral member within the multidisciplinary team. As a new graduate, Mia consolidated valuable and versatile skills in acute care and rehabilitation. Within her current role, Mia is devoted to supporting patients with head and neck cancer within the Northern Sydney Cancer Centre. She has sought additional competency training in flexible nasendoscopy, tracheostomy, and laryngectomy procedures to ensure comprehensive care for her patients. Mia has lead quality improvement initiatives where she developed valuable resources, led professional development workshops, and presented core outcomes at the Ryde and RNSH Allied Health Symposium in 2023. As chair of the Speech Pathology Health Promotion Network, Mia passionately advocates for her profession throughout the NSLHD. As a growing clinician, Mia is recognised for her patient-centred, professional, and holistic approach and consistently embodies compassion in every aspect of her work.





Allied Health Leader of the Year

The Allied Health Leader of the Year has continuously exhibited excellence in leadership, focusing on the values of teamwork, innovation, service, quality, compassion, and integrity.

They show exceptional skills to support, mentor, and coach staff.

The Allied Health Leader of the Year is a visionary. They drive quality improvement in patient care, service delivery and a commitment to value-based health care. They are leaders of a positive culture across professional groups in line with NSW Health's CORE values. They are proud to be an Allied Health Professional working in NSW Health.

Caroline Zeitoun

Pharmacy South Eastern Sydney Local Health District

Caroline Zeitoun is the Director of Pharmacy for Sutherland Hospital. Caroline continually exhibits excellence in leadership, focusing on values of teamwork, compassion and integrity. Over the last 12 months, Caroline has led the Sutherland pharmacy team through a significant model of care change to implement patient centred pharmacy services. Caroline's ability to support, mentor and coach staff through this change whilst leading with empathy demonstrated her exceptional leadership skills. Caroline was able to articulate a vision for the service to drive quality improvement in patient care and service delivery, with a commitment to value based health care. She has promoted a collaborative and positive culture across professional groups at the Sutherland Hospital to optimise the service and improve patient care. Caroline was able to achieve this in an environment with long held beliefs that this model was impossible to achieve within existing resources and staffing.



with transparency and vulnerability. Clare is a visionary and has been innovative in leading collaboration between the Sydney Children's Hospitals Network with HealthShare NSW to reform paediatric food service via the KidsCHEF project. She has completed an ACI Clinical Redesign project to improve carer access to food while caring for their child during a hospital stay.

Clare is now providing consultation to food service planning for paediatrics in other states across the country. Clare has also initiated and guided the establishment of the NSW Health Paediatric Dietitians Network to develop and empower paediatric dietitians to ensure patients are able to access the right care at the right time close to home.

Deanne Harris

Nutrition & Dietetics Hunter New England Local Health District

Deanne Harris is an Advanced Accredited Practising Dietitian. She has over 30 years as a rural practitioner. In her role as Profession Lead, she oversees dietetics governance across a large and diverse region. Deanne is passionate about creating a skilled dietetic workforce, advocating for the importance of professional supervision. She provides supervision to dietitians in management and eating disorder roles across NSW aiming to promote a culture of excellence. She is an active accreditation review team member for Australian dietetic education programs. Deanne utilises her passion for dietetics in eating disorders to advocate for clients and families no matter their location. Advocating for dietetics via roles on Australian and New Zealand Academy of



Clare Klimes

Nutrition & Dietetics Sydney Children's Hospitals Network

Clare has held the role of Head of Department Nutrition & Dietetics and then Allied Health Manager in 2023 and has now commenced as Director of Allied Health at The Children's Hospital at Westmead. She has built a team of allied health leads that interact



Eating Disorders (ANZAED) credentialing council, ANZAED Rural Interest Group Co-Chair and DA Eating Disorders Interest Group Vice Convenor, Deanne remains excited about her dietetics career as she was when she began work for NSW Health 32 years ago.

Katrina Rohr

Speech Pathology Western NSW Local Health District

Katrina is the coordinator for WNSWLHD's innovative and newly established Allied Health Rural Graduate Program (AHRGP). Katrina is a compassionate and dedicated leader. She is passionate about facilitating a positive and supported experience for graduates as they enter the workforce, and to build graduates' rural generalist clinical skills as they contribute to the provision of high quality rural healthcare. Katrina has developed the AHRGP to support allied health clinicians both within and beyond the program. The AHRGP has been expanded to include graduates outside of the program in capacity building workshops and networking opportunities. Katrina is also working with district teams to enable opportunities for mid-career clinicians to upskill and develop their capability to support graduates as preceptors, mentors, and facilitators. Katrina is committed to developing the AHRGP as a sustainable workforce initiative that empowers allied health graduates and contributes to collaboration and excellence within WNSWLHD.



Mid Battye

Occupational Therapy Murrumbidgee Local Health District

Mid is an occupational therapist who has worked in rural health settings for the past 37 years. She is currently the Integrated Care Team Leader at MLHD. Mid's career goal has been to lead the development and implementation of systematic and sustainable interprofessional practice approaches to care for people living with chronic and complex conditions in the community. She presented the MLHD Chronic Care journey at the Third Asia Pacific Integrated Care Conference in Sydney in November 2023, which highlighted the successful progression of the interprofessional practice model of care within the LHD. Mid inspires allied health professionals and assistants to work at the top of their scope, whilst actively identifying and facilitating development opportunities for others. She communicates openly and respectfully. Her leadership style involves extensive collaboration with others to build strong networks and partnerships with extended care teams.





Allied Health Professional of the Year

The Allied Health Professional of the Year makes an outstanding contribution to clinical excellence, leadership, education, and culture.

They advocate for evidence-based practice, focus on value-based health care, and provide safe, quality, and compassionate patient care. They actively support a positive culture in line with the NSW Health CORE values.

This Allied Health Professional shows commitment to supporting, empowering, and upskilling those around them. They passionately advocate for better patient outcomes through allied health services and collaborate across professions and services to achieve this. The individual is recognised by peers for their outstanding professionalism and the continuous demonstration of pride to be an Allied Health Professional within NSW Health.

Dr Bernadette Brady

Physiotherapy South Western Sydney Local Health District

Dr Bernadette Brady is a musculoskeletal and pain physiotherapist who holds a Clinical Specialist Physiotherapy position at Liverpool Hospital, SWSLHD. A dedicated clinician-researcher, Bernadette advanced her career in SWSLHD from a new graduate to her current level 6 specialty role, completing a clinical masters degree and PhD along the way. Bernadette's clinical and research initiatives have advanced equity in pain management and are the first published programs designing pain treatment to be responsive to the needs of culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) communities. In her post-doctoral work, she embeds culturally responsive research in clinical settings and, as part of her conjoint affiliations with The University of Sydney and Western Sydney University, she strives to improve chronic disease outcomes for CALD communities. Bernadette is a mentor to clinicians across the district, a supervisor of students and a partner to consumers with an interest in health equity.



Kerry is an integral member of the multidisciplinary team and is involved in many projects, including a COVID-19 vaccination clinic for patients with additional needs and/or needle phobia. Kerry helps educate, support, and distract patients and families during procedures, such as medical imaging, and has an endless distraction bag. She often has to drop everything and come to assist patients, and the unit is so grateful for her work. Kerry constantly puts the patients and families first and foremost, and advocates for them. Kerry also initiated a support group for CLT sole practitioners in NSW, which now also includes Queensland and Tasmania. Kerry is an invaluable asset to the team and the child's hospital experience.

Kylie Redman

Psychology Hunter New England Local Health District

Kylie is the Senior Clinical Psychologist for Newcastle Mental Health Service and HNE Towards Zero Suicides. Kylie's contribution to providing sage, quality and evidence-based care as well as her commitment to supporting staff exemplifies what it means to be an effective clinician. Kylie has previously worked in rural mental health, inpatient units, and Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS), in clinical and leadership roles. She supervises 13 psychologists/students, and is the supervisor, advocate and mentor for NSW Health's first Aboriginal Clinical Psychology Traineeship. Kylie provides a diverse array of education to HNELHD, on topics including CBT, care planning, obsessive compulsive disorder, exposure



Kerry Crannis

Child Life Therapy Northern Sydney Local Health District

Kerry has over 20 years experience in the child life therapy field beginning her career at Sydney Children's Hospital, Randwick before coming to Royal North Shore Hospital in 2018.



therapies, ARFID and suicide prevention. Kylie was part of the team of four who developed HNELHD's Suicide Prevention Care Pathway from best practice evidence. She also led the establishment of NSW's first suicide prevention outreach team. She is currently leading research trialling a suicide-specific clinical intervention in mental health inpatient units.

Dr Lynne Mason

Psychology Nepean Blue Mountains Local Health District

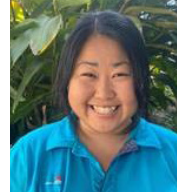
Dr Lynne Mason is a Senior Clinical Psychologist and Team Leader on the Child and Adolescent Unit in the NBMLHD. Lynne has an interest in neurodevelopmental disorders, specifically in the areas of developmental and intellectual disability, neurodiversity, feeding disorders and attachment related disorders. She works towards ensuring equity of access for children with neurodevelopmental disorders and their families, for evidenced based assessment and diagnosis services, and advocacy and support to ensure full participation in their community. Lynne places high value in maintaining the highest standards of clinical excellence in the assessment and diagnosis of neurodevelopmental disorders, in her clinical work, but also through providing evidence-based training, within NSW Health, external organisations and NGOs. She has presented at national and international conferences on neurodevelopmental disorders, feeding and attachment; provided supervision to students and NSW Health clinicians; as well as contributing in quality awards and research activities within NBMLHD.



Sumie Namba

Radiation Therapy Mid North Coast Local Health District

Sumie has worked extensively as a radiation therapist both inter-state and internationally and has been a part of the team at the Mid North Coast Cancer Institute (MNCCI) for the last decade, regularly fulfilling leadership roles. In 2022-23 she gained the role of Surface Guided Radiotherapy Project Officer and led MNCCI to become one of the first public departments in NSW, and the first in regional NSW, to implement tattoo-less radiotherapy using surface guidance. Due to this district wide implementation, as of 2023 the vast majority of breast and lung cancer patients requiring radiotherapy in MNCLHD no longer have their bodies tattooed as a part of their treatment journey. She has held meetings with external departments to advise on tattoo-less techniques, presented at conferences, and will be presenting her and her team's surface guided radiotherapy study findings at an international radiation oncology conference in Europe this year.



Thank you

We wish to acknowledge and commend all other nominees across the seven Award categories.

Allied Health Researcher of the Year

Dr Barbara Lucas
Northern Sydney Local Health District

Faye Southcombe
South Western Sydney Local Health District

Dr Heidi Lavis
Mid North Coast Local Health District

Dr Jennifer Gibney
Nepean Blue Mountains Local Health District

Jessica Kennedy
Western NSW Local Health District

Dr Lauren Christie
St Vincent's Health Network

Pete Destry
Illawarra Shoalhaven Local Health District

Prue Neely
Central Coast Local Health District

Allied Health Educator of the Year

Donna Napier
Northern NSW Local Health District

Emma Woods
Illawarra Shoalhaven Local Health District

Gregory O'Connor
Hunter New England Local Health District

Dr Jane Wheatley
St Vincent's Health Network

Julianne Chong
Sydney Local Health District

Kate Perry
Western NSW Local Health District

Laura King
South Western Sydney Local Health District

Lauren Mewburn
Murrumbidgee Local Health District

Natalie Coburn
Nepean Blue Mountains Local Health District

Dr Soheil Afshar
Sydney Children's Hospitals Network

Allied Health Assistant / Technician / Support Person of the Year

Andrew Underwood
Nepean Blue Mountains Local Health
District

Brianna Chown
Murrumbidgee Local Health District

George Andronis
Sydney Local Health District

June Coyte
Western NSW Local Health District

Karan Hine
South Western Sydney Local Health
District

Leanne Matthews
St Vincent's Health Network

Maila De Guzman
Justice Health and Forensic Mental
Health Network

Sandra McCall
Northern NSW Local Health District

Sharon Cooke
Hunter New England Local Health
District

Sharon McKeough
Central Coast Local Health District

Simona Connor
Illawarra Shoalhaven Local Health
District

Aboriginal Allied Health Professional of the Year

Gemma Carter
Western Sydney Local Health District

Talara Austin
South Western Sydney Local Health
District

Vanessa Kendall
Western NSW Local Health District

Yolanda Batterson
Mid North Coast Local Health District



Early Career Allied Health Professional of the Year

Amelia Logan

Illawarra Shoalhaven Local Health District

Britney Duck

Mid North Coast Local Health District

Ellie Dickin

Murrumbidgee Local Health District

Emily Fahey

Northern NSW Local Health District

Freda Boateng

Justice Health and Forensic Mental Health Network

Lachlan Stevens

Sydney Children's Hospital Network

Lily Tomlin

South Western Sydney Local Health District

Matilda Folwell

Far West Local Health District

Rowan Madkour

Southern NSW Local Health District

Ryan Saunders

Central Coast Local Health District

Tessa Holmes

St Vincent's Health Network

Zoe Bowers

Sydney Local Health District

Allied Health Leader of the Year

Amanda Iverach

Sydney Local Health District

Anna Fulford

Illawarra Shoalhaven Local Health District

Ben Walkling

Mid North Coast Local Health District

Caroline Cusack

Western Sydney Local Health District

Ellen Callery

St Vincent's Health Network

Emma McDonald

Northern NSW Local Health District

Emma Vaughan

Central Coast Local Health District

Janice Dalton

Southern NSW Local Health District

Meredith Munnoch

South Western Sydney Local Health District

Oleen George-Posa

Justice Health and Forensic Mental Health Network

Sarah Drake

Northern Sydney Local Health District

Tracy Herlihy

Far West Local Health District

Allied Health Professional of the Year

Alyssa Walter

Western NSW Local Health District

Caitlin Reid

Illawarra Shoalhaven Local Health
District

Christopher Legg

South Eastern Sydney Local Health
District

Emma Thomson

Central Coast Local Health District

Hellen Francis

St Vincent's Health Network

Judy King

Sydney Children's Hospitals Network

Kim Hobbs

Western Sydney Local Health District

Leah Everingham

Northern NSW Local Health District

Maddison Fellowes

Murrumbidgee Local Health District

Matthew Modini

Sydney Local Health District

Roseanne Scott

Southern NSW Local Health District

Shanyn Carpenter

Justice Health and Forensic Mental
Health Network

