

# NSW Health organisations



## NSW Ministry of Health

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### Secretary: Elizabeth Koff

(Biography on page 9)

### Key achievements

- In continuing to respond to the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic, the State Health Emergency Operations Centre (SHEOC) led the NSW Health operational response to the COVID-19 pandemic including planning with local health districts and specialty health networks to increase intensive care unit (ICU) capacity to meet the predicted COVID-19 surge, sourcing and distributing medical equipment such as ventilators, supporting the operation of COVID-19 testing clinics, the NSW Hotel Quarantine and Airport program in collaboration with other NSW Government agencies and establishing a large network of over 100 vaccination clinics, including mobile outreach locations, across the state, and the state's first mass vaccination centre at Sydney Olympic Park. Meanwhile, the Public Health Emergency Operations Centre (PHEOC) led the public health aspects of the response to COVID-19. PHEOC worked in conjunction with Public Health Units in local health districts and NSW Health Pathology, primarily being involved in contract tracing, providing expert advice, issuing public health orders and epidemiology research.
- Collaborated with Sydney Water to implement our award-winning sewage surveillance program at more than 60 sewage treatment plants across NSW to support our COVID-19 response, providing an additional level of surveillance at a population level with the world-first research program having achieved global significance.
- Rolled out the COVID-19 vaccination program across NSW, establishing a mass vaccination centre at Sydney Olympic Park and planning for the second mass hub in Newcastle. As at 29 June 2021, our health workers had administered 851,400 doses of the AstraZeneca and Pfizer vaccines.
- Invested more than \$28 million in initiatives to generate research evidence to support the response to the COVID-19 pandemic, which included launching the competitive and merit-based COVID-19 Research Grants Program with \$8 million awarded to 17 research projects.
- Invested more than \$4.5 million over three years to support experts in studying the clinical and immunological responses to the COVID-19 vaccines in NSW recipients to inform the state's vaccine policy into the future.
- Responded to over 18,000 calls a month to the Mental Health Line as an additional \$16.4 million was invested to enhance the service as part of the state's COVID-19 response.
- Worked collaboratively as part of the statewide emergency response to the extreme rainfall and flooding in March 2021, ensuring isolated communities or those at risk of flooding were safe and able to access health services. Part of this work included the deployment of a specialist Medical Assistance Team to North Richmond for five days to provide emergency care and deliver healthcare services to support evacuation centres on the Mid North Coast, Upper Hunter and Castle Hill. The coordinated response also spanned the clean-up and recovery.
- Launched the NSW HIV Strategy 2021-2025 to continue to build on the success of its predecessor, which saw a substantial improvement in HIV prevention, testing and treatment in NSW. In continuing the momentum, the 2021-25 strategy aims to achieve the virtual elimination of HIV transmission in NSW by addressing the barriers to testing and treatment created by stigma and discrimination; adapt, pilot and implement new technologies; and focus additional efforts on priority populations who have not experienced the same level of recent success.
- Launched the First 2000 Days Implementation Strategy 2020-2025 to support local health districts, specialty networks and other policy, program and service delivery areas within the health system to implement the First 2000 Days Framework at a local level. Successful implementation of the strategy will improve health and development outcomes for all children, giving them the start that they need to thrive now and in the future.
- To support care and service delivery, more than \$2.1 billion was invested into infrastructure planning and construction, with 23 projects completed across metropolitan and regional NSW.
- Exceeded the Premier's Priority of doubling Aboriginal people in senior leadership roles, increasing from five to 11, and established a stretch target of 16 Aboriginal people in senior leadership roles by 2025.
- Welcomed 1041 Junior Medical Officers to the NSW Health system in January, a record number of new starters, having increased 35 per cent from 2011, and the most of any state or territory in Australia.
- Increased recruitment of graduate nurses and midwives with more than 2700 new graduates employed in 2020-21, of which 25 per cent were located in rural and regional areas.
- Offered dental care to 121,701 primary school students as part of the Primary School Mobile Dental Program. Of these students, 18,487 received dental treatment, 78 per cent of whom had not previously accessed public dental services.

# Statutory health corporations

## Agency for Clinical Innovation

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Business hours: 8:30am-5pm, Monday to Friday

### Chief Executive: Dr Jean-Frédéric Levesque



Dr Jean-Frédéric Levesque joined the Agency as Chief Executive in June 2017. He brings experience in clinical practice in refugee health and tropical medicine, in clinical governance and in academic research.

Jean-Frédéric is a member of the Strategic Analytic Advisory Committee of the Canadian Institute of Health Information and a Fellow of the Royal College of Physicians of Canada in Preventive Medicine and Public Health. He holds a Doctorate in Public Health, a Master's in Community Health and a medical degree from the Université de Montréal, Canada. He is an adjunct professor at the Centre for Primary Health Care and Equity of the University of New South Wales.

### Year in review

This past year has been the first full year that we have worked in a pandemic environment. For us, it is important to reflect on the challenges and successes of progressing innovation in a disrupted environment, where the system has been rightly focused on responding to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Even in an environment where the biggest priority has been one of such significance, there are various projects that have needed to continue to benefit patients and clinicians, and offer efficiencies across the wider health system. These projects have represented evidence-based approaches, adding value to how care is delivered and needing multiple stakeholders to collaborate to ensure a successful outcome.

Developing and delivering such projects – often in a virtual environment – presented greater challenges to how these initiatives were traditionally implemented, and it is a great credit to our staff that they have connected with clinicians and delivered successful initiatives together across NSW this year.

Many of the statewide programs the Agency has worked on have not been impacted in terms of their rollout, despite the pandemic. For us, working in a system that can manage change in uncertain times – a system that keeps moving and improving – is something for us all to celebrate.

Our staff have worked with many rural and regional sites to extend the NSW Telestroke Service, benefiting stroke patients who would not otherwise have had access to life-saving treatment. In a similar vein, the Patient Reported Measures Program has continued in momentum. The launch of the IT platform that supports the program represented the culmination of an extensive collaboration between clinicians, patients and managers from around the state. Virtual care continues to be a key priority and our work partnering with eHealth NSW in accelerating its use in clinical settings was supported in local health districts throughout NSW.

I would like to thank our staff who work with clinicians, and those who support the development of clinical initiatives throughout the pipeline of innovation, which enables these innovations to come to fruition. It is a testament to our collective ability to respond quickly to changes and different environments which allows our work to have a great reach across the health system.

### Key achievements

- Led the statewide implementation of Telestroke services including the development of resources and training modules for My Health Learning and Virtual Reality. The launch was achieved at 11 sites, enabling care to be delivered to over 800 stroke patients across regional and rural NSW with over 150 recommendations for reperfusion.
- Launched the Health Outcomes and Patient Experience purpose-built IT platform, enabling patients and their carers to provide direct, timely feedback about outcomes and experiences. Approximately 3554 patients and 249 clinicians are active in the Health Outcomes and Patient Experience platform and 14,657 patient surveys have been completed.
- Co-designed and piloted the Leading Better Value Care eMR solutions for the musculoskeletal cohorts, Osteoarthritis Chronic Care Program and Osteoporotic Refracture Prevention in two local health districts.

- Developed the 3Ci Model of Care, a principles-based model of care delivering value based healthcare for chronic heart failure and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, to support guideline-concordant care across the entire healthcare journey and reduce readmissions to hospital.
- Delivered key activities under the Surgery Action Plan, including a position paper on avoidance of non-beneficial surgery, recommendations for implementation of prehabilitation and low value surgery, key principles for colorectal enhanced recovery after surgery and examined specialties with the greatest potential for enhanced recovery after surgery.
- Launched the Working with Consumers and Co-design toolkit. The toolkit is a practical resource for health services to adopt a co-design approach, enabling consumers to become equal partners in the improvement process.
- Delivered the Vocational Intervention Program's implementation report and economic analysis, which documented 53 vocational partnerships in NSW between 20 vocational providers and 12 brain injury units. A total of 173 people engaged with the program, with 66 people achieving employment.
- Led the statewide implementation of myVirtualCare and developed over 60 resources to support all users including patients, their families and carers, external users, interpreters, NSW Health providers and administration officers. As a result, over 3100 clinicians have used myVirtualCare for approximately 30,000 patient consultations.
- Incorporated the 8 Ways of Aboriginal Learning principles into the Redesign curriculum to help address issues faced by Aboriginal communities in accessing culturally safe and integrated healthcare.
- Delivered the COVID-19 Critical Intelligence Unit, which has produced 400 integrated dashboards of data, 250 daily digests of the academic literature, 100 topic-specific evidence checks, 50 weekly reports on risk levels and international data and four online living evidence tables.
- Strengthened the statewide COVID-19 response by leading 12 COVID-19 Communities of Practice and developing the Pandemic Kindness Movement website to support all health workers during the pandemic. The website has had over 100,000 views since its launch.

## Bureau of Health Information

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Business hours: 8:30am-5pm, Monday to Friday

### Chief Executive: Dr Diane Watson



Dr Diane Watson has led the establishment of three reporting agencies in Australia that use big data to drive decisions on healthcare provision nationally and locally. For more than 25 years, Diane has held senior management positions measuring,

monitoring and reporting on the performance of healthcare systems to drive improvements in health, patient care and productivity. Diane was the inaugural Chief Executive Officer of the Victorian Agency for Health Information and the inaugural Chief Executive of the National Health Performance Authority.

### Year in review

In 2020-21, the Bureau of Health Information continued to provide timely, accurate and comparable healthcare performance information to the people of NSW.

We published 13 reports and associated information products and worked closely with stakeholders to ensure our reporting is used to inform healthcare improvement efforts.

In March 2021, the Bureau's latest *Healthcare in Focus* report provided insights into the impact of COVID-19 on the public healthcare system during 2020. It examined activity and performance throughout the year, looking at measures including timeliness of care, patients' experiences, and COVID-19 cases and testing numbers.

The report expanded on the COVID-19 supplements published with the September and December 2020 issues of *Healthcare Quarterly*, our quarterly report on the performance of public hospital and ambulance services. In June 2021, *Healthcare Quarterly* also included analyses on quarantine services provided in response to the pandemic.

The June issue of *Healthcare Quarterly* coincided with the launch of the new Bureau of Health Information Data Portal, part of a transition to a digital-first way of reporting healthcare performance results in NSW, making them more accessible and user friendly.

Work continued to reform the NSW Patient Survey Program to help ensure patients' voices drive improvements in experiences and outcomes of care. We heard from almost 59,000 people about their experiences across a variety of care settings and published patient survey results for emergency departments, admitted patients, rural admitted patients and maternity care.

In July 2020, *Healthcare in Focus* examined the experiences of more than 200,000 people who visited emergency departments or were admitted to public hospitals over a five-year period. Trends in patients' experiences were analysed to identify areas with significant improvement or decline.

At the end of 2020, the Bureau developed the first statewide survey to collect information about patients' experiences and outcomes of virtual care outpatient appointments with NSW public hospitals. This formed the first part of a program of work that will help improve healthcare experiences and outcomes for patients across NSW.

Key developments for patient surveys included the introduction of shorter, more focused questionnaires and the application of advanced methods for standardising hospital results to ensure they take into account key differences in patient populations.

This past year, we also seconded almost a quarter of our staff to the Ministry to support the COVID-19 effort, particularly in the areas of communication, operations management, data analytics and information.

We thank our staff for their continued commitment to healthcare performance reporting.

### Key achievements

- Published *Healthcare in Focus – People's experiences of hospital care: Insights from five years of patient feedback*, providing trend data to highlight achievements and opportunities for improvement.
- Implemented shorter, more flexible surveys to reduce the burden on patients and focus on priority aspects of care, while maintaining robust and representative results.
- Gave voice to almost 59,000 patients about their experiences with public hospitals and used sophisticated analytic methods to deliver insights into health system performance.
- Provided patient experience and engagement key performance indicators for local health districts in line with their 2020-21 Service Agreements with NSW Health.
- Published results from a census sample of adult Aboriginal patients admitted to or who gave birth in NSW public hospitals in 2019.
- Published four *Healthcare Quarterly* reports featuring detailed information for the public about activity and performance in NSW public hospital and ambulance services, including COVID-19 supplements.
- Achieved improvements in stakeholder perceptions of the Bureau as a trusted provider of information (88 per cent), fulfilling its purpose (88 per cent) and engaging with stakeholders (82 per cent).

## Cancer Institute NSW

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Business hours: 9am-5pm, Monday to Friday

### Chief Executive: Professor David Currow FAHMS



Professor David Currow FAHMS is the Chief Cancer Officer of NSW and Chief Executive Officer of the Cancer Institute NSW. Prior to his appointment in March 2010, David was the foundation Chief Executive Officer of Cancer Australia.

David is a Fellow of the Australian Academy of Health and Medical Sciences, the previous president of the Clinical Oncological Society of Australia and past president of Palliative Care Australia.

He has also:

- served on the American Society of Clinical Oncology working party on palliative care education
- chaired the working party for the Union of International Cancer Control on Palliative Care for the United Nations summit on non-communicable diseases
- been a faculty member of the Australia and Asia Pacific Clinical Oncology Research Development workshops.

### Year in review

Despite excellent survival rates, cancer continues to be a significant public health issue and cause of premature death, impacting thousands of people in NSW.

The Cancer Institute NSW provides the strategic direction for cancer control across the state, which is driven by the goals of the fourth NSW Cancer Plan to:

- reduce the incidence of cancer
- increase the survival rate of people with cancer
- improve the quality of life of people with cancer.

We work in close collaboration with the health system, non-government organisations, community members and researchers to develop and implement patient-centred initiatives across the spectrum of cancer control. We continue to focus on improving outcomes for groups that are disproportionately affected by cancer, including Aboriginal people, multicultural communities, and people from rural, remote and lower socioeconomic backgrounds.

The Institute manages strategic investment on behalf of the NSW Government to build research capacity, attract world-class researchers, foster innovation and support the translation of discoveries into clinical practice.

This year, we invested \$21 million in cancer research and modified our funding model to increase investment in our successful Translational Program Grants scheme.

We delivered the tenth round of the Reporting for Better Cancer Outcomes program providing local and statewide cancer information to local health districts, specialty networks, primary health networks and participating private hospitals. Reporting for Better Cancer Outcomes provides a comprehensive view of cancer control in NSW, informing health system performance and identifying areas for improvement.

One in three cancers are caused by lifestyle behaviours. The Institute promotes healthy lifestyle behaviours through our public campaigns, website and social media information, and smoking cessation support initiatives, such as the NSW Quitline and the [icanquit.com.au](http://icanquit.com.au) website.

We continued to support cancer services to gain sustainable efficiencies in the delivery of care during COVID-19, optimising clinical resources without compromising outcomes. We encouraged people to safely access health services, see their doctor about symptoms, and participate in the national cancer screening programs. BreastScreen NSW was able to resume safe, high-quality screening following a short suspension of service during the pandemic.

Finally, as custodian of the NSW Cancer Plan, we worked in collaboration with stakeholders in cancer control to draft the fifth plan, which will take effect in 2022, sitting under the Future Health Strategy.

Thank you to our staff and colleagues in cancer control for their commitment to reducing the burden of cancer in NSW.

### Key achievements

- Launched *Sun and UV at School*, a suite of evidence-based teaching resources aligned to NSW Science and Personal Development, Health and Physical Education curriculum for Kindergarten to year 10. The resources, which were developed with the Department of Education, are linked to the Australian curriculum and SunSmart program. *Sun and UV at School* includes complete units of work, individual lessons, animations, infographics, links to data repositories and grab-and-go activities.
- Promoted early detection of breast, bowel and cervical cancers through the delivery of comprehensive screening programs with focused programs for Aboriginal people and culturally and linguistically diverse groups, and supported the delivery of safe screening by BreastScreen NSW during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Improved the knowledge, skills and confidence of staff working in cancer services to deliver smoking cessation interventions through the promotion of the *Smoking Cessation Framework in Cancer Services*, facilitated technical change for data collection and secure referrals to NSW Quitline, and established standardised data fields and functionality for smoking cessation in electronic medical record systems, resulting in more patients of cancer services receiving support to quit smoking at the time of diagnosis.
- Continued to focus on the provision of value-based, patient-centred cancer care through the implementation of two Leading Better Value Care initiatives:
  - Direct access colonoscopy – continued to support local health districts to implement the *Direct Access Colonoscopy Model of Care*, which outlines the mandatory and recommended inclusions for localised implementation of services, and undertook a baseline patient reported experience measure survey
  - Breast cancer hypofractionated radiotherapy – the proportion of women with early-stage breast cancer who received hypofractionated radiotherapy increased from 75 per cent in 2017 to 90 per cent in 2020 in NSW public facilities, and from 52 per cent in 2017 to 83 per cent in 2020 in NSW private facilities.
- Expanded and optimised digital channels for people affected by or at risk of cancer, supporting users to access accurate information and support when they need it and promoting cancer services that meet quality measures to drive better outcomes. In 2020-21, there were 261,778 users of Canrefer, an online directory listing specialists who are active members of a multidisciplinary cancer care team. Canrefer also released a new feature to assist users to find cancer clinical trials in their area that are currently or soon to be recruiting participants. Information on [patients.cancer.nsw.gov.au](http://patients.cancer.nsw.gov.au) has been expanded to include information about 33 cancer types, with content available in eight community languages.
- Continued to expand [eviQ.org.au](http://eviQ.org.au), which now has 640,847 total users, representing a 23 per cent increase from the previous year. *eviQ Education*, which has about 108,063 total users, supports the rapid uptake of emerging evidence into clinical practice and responds to the evolving learning needs of oncology professionals at the point of care. This year, *eviQ Education* released 14 learning resources and an additional 13 learning resources for oncology professionals.
- Invested more than \$12.4 million in mass media public education campaigns to reduce smoking rates and participation in cancer screening programs. This included the development and launch of a new advertising campaign to increase participation in the National Bowel Cancer Screening Program.

- Published the sixth publicly available *Cancer Control in NSW: Statewide* report, as part of the Reporting for Better Cancer Outcomes program. This report included more than 70 key performance indicators across cancer control. We also collaborated with the Aboriginal Health and Medical Research Council of NSW to develop the inaugural *Reporting for Better Cancer Outcomes: Aboriginal people in NSW* report, which highlights the impact of cancers on Aboriginal communities and opportunities for improvement.
- Continued to support person-centred cancer care by collecting patients' perspectives through patient-reported measures surveys and providing personalised information to inform shared decision making in seven local health districts.
- Strengthened cancer research capacity by investing \$21 million in cancer research, including grants and clinical trials, and increasing support for translational research programs, which aim to ensure scientific discoveries have a real impact at the point of care.

## Clinical Excellence Commission

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Business hours: 8:30am-5pm, Monday to Friday

### Chief Executive: Carrie Marr



Carrie Marr began her professional health career as a nurse in Scotland. She has held a number of executive roles within the National Health Service, Scotland, including Director, Tayside Centre for Organisational Effectiveness and Associate Director, Change and Innovation. Prior to taking up her role at the Clinical Excellence Commission in 2015, Carrie worked at Western Sydney Local Health District.

Carrie is a graduate of the advanced training program in Quality Improvement at Intermountain Health Care, Utah, USA and holds a Bachelor of Science (Nursing), a Diploma in Education (Nurse Teaching) and a Master of Science (Organisation Consulting).

### Year in review

In a year marked by one of the world's greatest health emergencies, I am proud of the Clinical Excellence Commission's response to the COVID-19 pandemic, while maintaining focus on its primary objective to promote and support improved clinical care, safety and quality across the NSW public health system.

As the lead agency for Infection Prevention and Control, the Commission played a critical role throughout 2020-21 in keeping frontline staff, patients and visitors safe through the COVID-19 pandemic and supporting the system with strategic guidance, advice, resources and education.

The Commission was also successful in supporting Infection Control Practitioners, who played a critical role in providing expertise across the NSW health system to reduce the risk of the COVID-19 virus spreading.

In response to the pandemic, we developed a wide range of COVID-19 resources to provide targeted advice and expertise to NSW Health and external agencies, including aged care facilities, private hospitals and essential services such as Police and Transport NSW.

We delivered the *COVID-19 Infection Prevention and Control Manual (2021)*, a consolidated guide for acute and non-acute healthcare settings. We implemented robust governance processes for product review and procurement in partnership with HealthShare NSW. This successful program of work ensured NSW Health was proactive in the post-market review of facemasks and removals from the Therapeutic Goods Administration register. We developed and launched an online NSW Health-wide interactive table of medicines with disruptions to supply, which enables health professionals to manage real-time medicine shortages.

Vital to stopping transmission of COVID-19 is the NSW Hotel Quarantine and Airport Program Quality Assurance Program, which was managed by the State Health Emergency Operations Centre throughout 2020-21 with support from the Commission, Sydney Local Health District and Healthcare Australia. Our role provided a mechanism to identify trends, exemplary practices, areas of concern and opportunities for education and improvement across all aspects of quarantine infection prevention and control in NSW.

The Commission's Patient Safety team led the successful statewide implementation of the revised NSW Health Incident Management Policy Directive and, in collaboration with eHealth NSW, the rollout of the ims+ incident management system.

In addition to supporting the COVID-19 response, in 2020 our NSW Mental Health Patient Safety Program team partnered with mental health services to lead safety and improvement work aligned to the needs of staff and consumers.

We continued to develop the Quality Improvement Data System's capacity to translate raw data into insights, adding a morbidity and mortality meeting module to provide a secure platform for clinical teams.

The Commission also developed its education and training offering, namely the updated Safety & Quality Essentials Pathway, to enable participating staff to build the skills and knowledge needed for effective leaders of safety and quality improvement in daily practice.

I would like to thank our staff for their resilience and resolve in delivering these remarkable outcomes during a challenging year when each went above and beyond to respond to public need and strive for safety of care for every patient, every time.

### Key achievements

- Supported 1.5 million webpage views and over 250,000 downloads of COVID-19 resources in 2020-21.
- Collaborated with HealthShare NSW to conduct 196 personal protective equipment (PPE) reviews, totalling 430 PPE product assessments, and delivered weekly PPE audits via the Quality Audit Reporting System for local health districts and specialty health networks.
- Responded to 968 notifications regarding issues with medical devices, medicines and biological agents with our Critical Response Unit conducting risk assessments. Of these, 18 required system-wide critical responses related to product issues and shortages to ensure the safe delivery of care and continued service delivery. We issued 25 urgent safety alert broadcasts, including 12 related to clinical issues and 13 related to medicines and vaccines. These were in addition to 19 medication safety updates and 10 medication safety communications as part of our primary function to minimise potential harm.
- Developed and led implementation of a statewide Respiratory Protection Program with participation by more than 38,000 health workers; and coordinated a whole-of-health approach to developing standardised resources for fit checking, fit testing, reporting and training.
- Developed new Morbidity and Mortality meeting guidelines in conjunction with clinicians and established these on the Quality Improvement Data System platform for clinical teams to access near real-time data and generate insights for meetings. The new Morbidity and Mortality guidelines identify six core principles that reflect contemporary safety and quality principles, which are guided by Human Factors science to support robust processes that improve learning and system improvement.
- Developed, tested and released a Safety Culture Measurement Toolkit to serve as a self-contained set of instructions and templates to enable health services to administer a safety culture survey effectively and adapt for local conditions.
- Developed the Safety Fundamentals for Person Centred Communication tools to support staff in building relationships and partnering with patients, their families and carers in decision making. They include Teach Back, What Matters to You? and the Patient Delivered Handover.
- Implemented the revised NSW Health Incident Management Policy following the commencement of legislative changes for serious incident management in December 2020. Collaborated with eHealth NSW to align the use of the incident management system platform through refocusing process aims to improve reliability, quality, timeliness, strength of incident management, responses to review recommendations and system learning. Supported local health districts and specialty health networks to implement the use of the Preliminary Risk Assessment and serious adverse event review methodologies by hosting 36 masterclass sessions for 1507 participants prior to commencement of legislation; developing 80 resources including templates, toolkits, workbooks, fact sheets and explainer videos; and hosting two Patient Safety Manager Forums following implementation attended by 195 staff.
- Partnered on 15 research projects to support innovation and translation in a range of quality and safety priorities, including stillbirth prevention, falls prevention, antimicrobial stewardship and virtual clinical pharmacy services.

## Health Education and Training Institute

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Business hours: 8:30am-5pm, Monday to Friday

### Chief Executive Adjunct Professor Annette Solman



Annette commenced as Chief Executive of the Health Education and Training Institute in June 2015 with a focus on working with and strengthening relationships within health and academic partners to create an innovative environment in which excellence in education and training can be delivered to support the diverse NSW Health workforce.

Annette holds a Master of Nursing (Research), Bachelor of Health Science, Diploma in Health Science Nursing and is Adjunct Professor at the University of Sydney and the University of Technology Sydney, as well as Honorary Professional Fellow at the University of Wollongong, and is a member of the *International Practice Development Journal* Editorial Board.



## Year in review

Supporting the COVID-19 health response, lifelong learning and providing quality and accessible education were three areas of focus for the Health Education and Training Institute (HETI) over the past year. These focus areas were brought to life through the delivery of timely, high-quality and evidence-based education and training to the NSW Health workforce and to the Institute's higher education students.

As part of the COVID-19 health response, the Institute collaborated to provide training to close contact tracers, with the program recognised as a finalist in the Recovery and Resilience category in the 2020 Premier's Awards. We delivered a mid-year medical graduate recruitment process for unfilled intern positions to support the medical workforce surge strategy and designed and delivered a bespoke Care Assistant Program as a COVID-19 strategy in the event of catastrophic staffing shortages.

The Senior Executive Development Program adapted to virtual delivery, maximising the virtual environment to present dynamic and engaging group presentations to senior staff, which included the Secretary NSW Health. We delivered the NSW Health Leadership Program in partnership with local health districts and contextualised to their strategic and operational challenges. The Institute was also a key partner with the NSW Ministry of Health's Health System Strategy and Planning Branch on the NSW Health Future Health Strategy Consultations. Through the Allied Health Workplace Learning Grant Program, we supported allied health professionals to upskill in clinical knowledge and capability to support patient care.

HETI Higher Education doubled its student numbers in the last year. It redesigned the Graduate Certificate Applied Mental Health Studies into shorter modules to support more accessible learning for award study, which can be stacked towards a later award or for professional development, all for improved mental health outcomes.

This snapshot of achievements highlights a successful year for the Institute in promoting and supporting a connected and responsive learning community across NSW Health. Thank you to all our staff for their dedication and commitment to learning, training and development.

## Key achievements

- Developed and implemented a process to enable prevocational medical accreditation surveys to occur virtually. This enabled HETI to continue monitoring and accrediting facilities to ensure high-quality education and training and junior doctor wellbeing.
- Welcomed 12 medical graduates in intern positions in July 2020 and planned for the recruitment of a subsequent mid-year intake to commence in July 2021.
- Assisted in identifying and coordinating 63 facilitators to deliver 98 workshops across the state on the NSW Health Future Health Strategy Consultations, including delivery of the Facilitation Development program to 22 NSW Ministry of Health staff.
- Delivered the virtual Senior Executive Development Program to 22 participants to September 2020.
- Delivered the NSW Health Leadership Program to a total of 263 participants.
- Supported 100 participants to complete the bespoke Care Assistance Program, with the one-week program delivered via online workshops supported by My Health Learning modules.
- Trained over 600 close contact tracers, in collaboration with the NSW Ministry of Health, by rapidly developing and delivering a rolling program of innovative, interactive and just-in-time online training as part of the critical COVID-19 pandemic response.
- Increased recruitment and engagement of junior doctors training in rural NSW for the Rural Generalist Medical Training Program with 52 Foundation Year trainees enrolled and 29 trainees undertaking the 12-month advanced skills training. A further eight general practitioners undertook 12 months of advanced skills training.

# Specialty health networks

## Justice Health and Forensic Mental Health Network

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### Chief Executive: Gary Forrest



Gary has worked in nursing for more than 35 years. He completed his general nursing training at Rockhampton Base Hospital in Queensland, a Bachelor of Science (Nursing) at Flinders University and a Master's of Applied Management (Health) with distinction at the University of Newcastle.

Gary joined the Network in 2002, working in nursing, population health and prison hospital management, before becoming the Chief Executive in 2016.

### Year in review

Justice Health and Forensic Mental Health Network (the Network) delivers healthcare to adults and young people in contact with the forensic mental health and criminal justice systems, across community, inpatient and custodial settings.

The Network's vision is to return healthier people back to their communities.

The 2020-21 year demonstrated the commitment and professionalism of our staff who, despite the challenging circumstances, delivered comprehensive and timely care to the most vulnerable people, with extremely complex healthcare needs, in the community.

In collaboration with Corrective Services and Youth Justice NSW, the Network developed a COVID-19 response model for screening, isolation, quarantine, contact tracing and auditing for the correctional and detention systems. Our efforts were rewarded – with zero cases of COVID-19 community transmission among people in custody in NSW correctional and detention centres. The Network has continued testing people in custody for COVID-19, having also rolled out the COVID-19 vaccination program to staff, people in custody and Custodial staff across the Network.

We rapidly expanded our telehealth program, and introduced a bespoke program for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in custody. In 2020-21, five per cent of all consultations were virtual. Funding of almost \$220,000 helped us to set up an Aboriginal Telehealth Team to provide culturally sensitive mental health support and other health services.

In October 2020, the Network began a Community Transitions Trial to support highly vulnerable individuals with serious and enduring mental illness leaving custody. Funded through the COVID-19 Vulnerable Populations Initiative, the multi-agency collaboration supported 140,000 people returning to their communities. Participants had four times the rate of engagement with treatment compared with people in custody without this support (based on published studies), and also had high rates of housing and other health and wellbeing measures. It was so successful, recurrent funding has been granted.

Our long-term goal to reduce rates of seclusions and restraints was achieved. In November 2020, the use of long-term seclusion ceased, forever changing the course of patients' care and experience at the Forensic Hospital in Malabar. Since this time, the hospital has been able to bring its seclusion rates below the state's average and achieved – a previously inconceivable milestone of – zero seclusion episodes for the month of April 2021.

Thank you to our staff who went above and beyond this year to deliver healthcare and reassurance to our patients and people in custody under extremely difficult circumstances. The professionalism, resilience and ability to overcome the challenges was inspiring, as was the care they demonstrated for the people whose lives we change and care for every day.

### Key achievements

- Diverted 80 per cent of adults identified as mentally ill into community-based treatment. Ninety-two per cent of young people were recommended for mental health diversion into community-based treatment.
- Received \$14.66 million in funding to build a mental health intensive care facility (Freshwater Unit) at the Forensic Hospital from the \$700 million Statewide Mental Health Infrastructure Fund.
- Implemented the use of depot buprenorphine as the preferred treatment for opioid addiction in NSW public gaols. By the end June 2021, 67 per cent of the Network's Opioid Agonistic Treatment patients (1087 of 1614 patients) were receiving depot buprenorphine, up from 45 per cent the previous year.

- Increased virtual care consultations by 27 per cent (compared with 2019-20). Successfully trialled Virtual Cardiology clinics with Prince of Wales Hospital, with a 59 per cent increase in clinical session use, a 56 per cent decrease in patient transfers, and a patient satisfaction score of 93 per cent.
- Clinically significant improvements in inpatient mental health outcomes, as Long Bay Hospital mental health inpatients increased from 55 per cent of patients to 82 per cent. For Aboriginal patients, clinically significant improvements in mental health outcomes were found in 67 per cent of patients, up from 47 per cent in 2019-20\*.
- Introduced a new electronic tool, with an algorithm designed to support clinic decision making, which has improved the detection of mental illness on reception screening by 35.5 per cent.
- Provided National Disability Insurance Scheme support for 98 per cent of patients leaving custody with a dual diagnosis of an intellectual disability and a severe and persistent mental illness, resulting in a decrease in recidivism with 73 per cent remaining out of custody.
- Completed a nine-month Community Transitions Trial from October 2020 to support the community transition of highly vulnerable individuals with serious and enduring mental illness leaving custody.
- Screened all patients for Hepatitis C (HCV) via the Point of Care Testing pilot program at the Metropolitan Remand and Reception Centre at Silverwater from January to July 2021. Positive patients were scripted for treatment before entering the general prison population.
- Supported 2046 adult patients in the Aboriginal Chronic Care Program, well above the target of 1325.

\*Projection – final figures unavailable at time of reporting.

## The Sydney Children's Hospitals Network

Hawkesbury Road, Westmead NSW 2145

Telephone: 9845 0000

Website: [www.schn.health.nsw.gov.au](http://www.schn.health.nsw.gov.au)

Business hours: 8am-5pm, Monday to Friday

### Chief Executive: Cathryn Cox PSM



Cathryn Cox PSM was appointed Chief Executive of Sydney Children's Hospitals Network in August 2020.

Cathryn has many years' experience as an executive within the NSW Ministry of Health with responsibility for a range of health policy, planning, infrastructure and strategic reform programs. Her early role as a physiotherapist at Royal Prince Alfred Hospital paved the way for a long-term career in health which included leading Health Infrastructure as its interim Chief Executive.

In 2020, Cathryn led the COVID-19 System Planning stream of the Ministry's coordinated COVID-19 response. This included the establishment of the COVID-19 Clinical Council and Communities of Practice and oversight of the infrastructure planning, in partnership with Health Infrastructure.

Cathryn is passionate about her role at Sydney Children's Hospitals Network, and most importantly its people who are providing world-class patient-centred care for children and young people, and their families.

### Year in review

Sydney Children's Hospitals Network, incorporating Sydney Children's Hospital, Randwick, The Children's Hospital at Westmead, the Newborn and paediatric Emergency Transport Service, Bear Cottage and the Children's Court Clinic, is the largest provider of paediatric health services in Australia.

In 2020-21, our two hospitals saw occupancy averaging 84.7 per cent and cared for 172,898 children. Care included 1,153,001 occasions of service (being examination, consultation, treatment or other service provided in a non-admitted setting), and 97,786 emergency department presentations.

As part of our COVID-19 response, we adapted our models of care to safely deliver services to patients and families. COVID-19 testing clinics were established at Randwick and Westmead and, in March this year, vaccination hubs were activated at both sites as part of the NSW COVID-19 vaccination program. In 2020-21, our COVID Positive Outpatients Response Team cared for 97 children who tested positive to COVID-19 in the community.

The past year saw 75,993 telehealth consultations (telephone and audio visual), with 30,001 children cared for virtually, an increase of 25 per cent on the previous year.

This year, the Network established virtualKIDS, Australia's first paediatric-specific virtual care service. The 24/7 nursing-led service supports patients receiving care closer to home in collaboration with local care teams, through functions such as remote monitoring, a patient and family hotline, collaborative virtual ward rounds and coordination of specialty advice facilitation.

In March 2021, Westmead's state-of-the-art Central Acute Services Building was officially opened by the Premier of NSW, Gladys Berejiklian. The Central Acute Services Building forms the centrepiece of the \$1 billion-plus Westmead Redevelopment and is a collaboration between Westmead Hospital, The Children's Hospital at Westmead and the University of Sydney. It includes two new emergency departments – one for adults and one for children, 25 digital operating theatres and more than 300 patient rooms.

In 2020-21, our research division, Kids Research, launched the Sydney Children's Hospitals Network Kids Advanced Therapeutics Program. The program aims to provide access to novel and transformative treatments for paediatric patients with a specific focus on rare diseases and cancer. The success of the program demonstrates the Network's capabilities as a national leader in the genome and advanced therapeutics field.

We thank our dedicated staff and volunteers for their agility in adapting to the challenges of the last year and their tireless work in caring for sick and injured children.

### Key achievements

- Launched the Sydney Children's Hospitals Network Interim Aboriginal Employment Strategy, engaging managers and their teams to target suitable roles, with 20 Aboriginal people, including two nursing cadets, joining Sydney Children's Hospitals Network in 2020-21 and three Aboriginal Population Health Trainees sponsored.
- Supported the psychological wellbeing of staff throughout the pandemic with a range of activities including team reset sessions, managers sessions, on-site Employee Assistance Program services and a team-based work pilot.
- Established the Sydney Children's Hospitals Network Patient eXperience Council to improve the experiences of patients and families accessing our services. Introduced Patient Experience Officers at both children's hospital emergency departments, supporting the wellbeing of patients and families while they wait to be seen.
- Recognised for leadership and innovation in research and patient care, including NSW Health Awards for improving health outcomes for Aboriginal people and advancing precision medicine, and other state and national awards for outstanding individual and team contributions to paediatric health.
- Implemented the first statewide pilot newborn screening program for spinal muscular atrophy followed by treatment to patients with spinal muscular atrophy using transformative gene therapy.
- Established the Sydney Children's Hospitals Network Population Child Health Research Group, bringing together experts from many disciplines, communities and governing bodies to apply research on three priority areas: Integrated Care, First 2000 Days and Priority Populations. This will allow equitable access to complex care for children and young people regardless of where they live including rural and regional areas or their socioeconomic status.
- Led research into COVID-19, including studies investigating the general immune response against COVID-19 infection, SARS-CoV-2 transmission in schools and early childcare services and work on developing a test to detect antibodies in children and adults and their level of protection against SARS-CoV-2. In addition, the National Centre for Immunisation Research and Surveillance led SARS-CoV-2 serosurveillance networks to investigate immunity and undetected virus transmission in NSW and nationally, and pivoted the AusVaxSafety collaborative network to monitor COVID-19 vaccine safety.
- Developed a physical assessment program for paediatric nurses which has informed a set of core physical assessment skills, relevant to use with babies, children and adolescents, leading to better patient outcomes and enhanced professional skills for nurses.

## St Vincent's Health Network

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Telephone: 8382 1111

Email: svhn.ceo@svha.org.au

Website: svhs.org.au

Business hours: 9am-5pm, Monday to Friday

### Chief Executive:

#### A/Professor Anthony M. Schembri AM



Anthony M. Schembri AM joined St Vincent's Health Network Sydney as Chief Executive Officer in 2014. He is a Board Director of the Central and Eastern Sydney Primary Health Network, the Garvan Institute for Medical Research, the Victor Chang Cardiac Research Institute, the St Vincent's Curran Foundation, the National Centre for Clinical Research of Emerging Drugs of Concern, Co-Chair of the Nursing Research Institute of the Australian Catholic University/St Vincent's and Councillor for Sydney Partnership for Health Education Research Enterprise.

Anthony holds academic appointments with the University of New South Wales, University of Notre Dame Australia and the Australian Catholic University.

### Year in review

Responding to the COVID-19 pandemic has continued to play a major role for St Vincent's over the past year, but this has not precluded us from thriving across our broader endeavours and many successes during this time, which we are proud to acknowledge.

In late 2020, we embarked upon an expanded model of service delivery – stvincent’s@home, aimed at progressing our health service into the next phase of healthcare provision beyond our traditional hospital walls. It incorporates six key projects, including expansion of telehealth and Hospital in the Home, as well as Virtual Outpatients and Virtual Hospital projects.

The Network established the St Vincent’s Community Access and Assessment Team, created specifically to complement the care that the Mental Health and Homeless Health Case Managers provide, focusing on supporting those with particularly complex health and social needs.

A first for NSW, the St Vincent’s Community Access and Assessment Team provides specialist assessments for vulnerable people with the aim of hospital avoidance, diagnostic clarification, and to support appropriate referral pathways to services such as the National Disability Insurance Scheme, the Aged Care Assessment Team and NSW Civil and Administrative Tribunal Guardianship Division.

We also commenced our Police Ambulance and Clinical Early Response (PACER) service, a team of mental health clinicians that partner with local police and NSW Ambulance to provide expert and specialist support for people in crisis and experiencing mental health distress. The team work in collaboration with Kings Cross and Surry Hills Police to meet people’s complex social and health needs in the community at the scene of the crisis, or in their home, to provide immediate expert assessment and treatment.

We established a vaccination clinic, adopted by St Vincent’s, City of Sydney, St Vincent de Paul and other frontline non-government organisations to provide equitable access to COVID-19 vaccinations for people experiencing homelessness.

Additionally, following the success of a pilot program, NSW Ministry of Health allocated permanent, ongoing funding for the St Vincent’s Alcohol and Drug Telehealth Service. The program provides Addiction Medicine Specialist clinics to facilitate access to specialist care for people living in remote and rural areas in the Murrumbidgee region, living with substance use dependence.

In late 2020, The Trustees of St Vincent’s Hospital purchased the site of the Green Park Hotel to use for hospital-related patient and community care and as part of this acquisition, St Vincent’s have increased mental health support.

## Key achievements

- As at 30 June 2021, provided COVID-19 vaccinations to over 1000 people experiencing homelessness.
- Expanded St Vincent’s Alcohol and Drug Telehealth Service, with the service now supporting Southern NSW Local Health District, Far West Local Health District and Western NSW Local Health District on an ongoing basis.
- Launched the Safe Haven model in support of the NSW Government Towards Zero Suicides initiative.
- Achieved accreditation under the National Clinical Trials Governance Framework, for the Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care. St Vincent’s was awarded the top level for all 14 of the criteria in Standard 2, and achieved top level in 31 out of 33 criteria in Standard 1.
- Launched a Remote Patient Monitoring platform to manage COVID-19-positive patients. The platform provides a tailored patient portal via a mobile phone app, which allows the patient to undertake daily self-assessments of their health status.
- Commenced a clinical trial using psilocybin, a known psychedelic drug. The aim is to determine if using psilocybin will benefit treatment for clients attempting to stop or reduce their use of methamphetamine.
- Performed Australia’s first remote transcatheter aortic valve implantation, a minimally invasive procedure that helps to repair a damaged aortic valve, using Augmented Reality.

# Health Administration Corporation

## NSW Ambulance

Balmain Road, Rozelle NSW 2039

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Email: ambulance-communications@health.nsw.gov.au

Website: www.ambulance.nsw.gov.au

Business hours: 9am-5pm, Monday to Friday

### Chief Executive: Dr Dominic Morgan ASM



Dr Dominic Morgan ASM is a registered health professional with more than 30 years' experience across a broad range of executive, operational and clinical roles. After commencing his career with NSW Ambulance, Dominic, a qualified Intensive

Care Paramedic, was appointed Chief Executive Officer of Ambulance Tasmania in 2009, returning to NSW Ambulance in 2016 as Chief Executive.

Dominic was appointed Chair of the Council of Ambulance Authorities for a two-year period in 2019 and holds a Bachelor of Health Science, a Diploma in Adult Education and a Master of Business Administration. He completed his PhD in 2018 and holds an adjunct associate professorship through the University of Technology Sydney.

### Year in review

In a year defined by the global COVID-19 pandemic, NSW Ambulance rolled out numerous strategies to improve our service to the community, provided enhanced education to staff to improve their clinical practice and safety, and delivered several new initiatives to guide the organisation into the future.

As part of our response to COVID-19, staff safety and protection programs were implemented which included an effective vaccination rollout. Intensive Care Paramedics also took part in an update course to improve patient care and paramedic safety when treating patients with suspected or confirmed COVID-19.

Education and training was also extended to other key stakeholders. Notably, the NSW Ambulance Public Access Defibrillation program saw participation from other emergency service organisations to help improve out-of-hospital cardiac arrest survival rates in NSW by decreasing the time to CPR and defibrillation, and the 'Save Triple Zero for Saving Lives' public education campaign.

The health and wellbeing of staff has also been a key focus in 2020-21. Our dedicated Staff Health team implemented a number of innovative programs to improve wellbeing and physical fitness, and support all staff in the performance of their roles and services to the community.

This past year, the transformation of NSW Ambulance infrastructure in rural and regional NSW has continued, with two purpose-built stations commissioned at Sawtell and Cootamundra and supplementary funding received for a new service to Iluka as part of Rural Ambulance Infrastructure Reconfiguration Stage 1. An additional \$100 million budget was also allocated to deliver upgraded, rebuilt or entirely new services in regional NSW as part of Rural Ambulance Infrastructure Reconfiguration Stage 2.

Funding sourced in 2021 to increase our fleet of new state-of-the-art Paramedic Intensive Care Unit ambulances is another boost for stations in regional and rural NSW, with a majority of the new vehicles allocated to these areas.

A major achievement for us was the launch of our Vision and Strategic Plan for 2021-2026. The plan builds on what we do best and modifies our services and structures so that we can provide even better value care for the community through a modern, innovative and integrated service, linked to the whole of the NSW Health system.

Finally, and most importantly, NSW Ambulance staff responded throughout the year with professionalism and dedication to keeping patients, colleagues and our communities safe. We acknowledge and thank them for their adaptability and commitment.

### Key achievements

- Secured funding to replace 69 existing ambulances with Intensive Care Unit ambulances. The high specifications of the ICU ambulances improve paramedic safety and patient care.
- Implemented Respirator Fit Testing for clinicians across NSW.
- Expanded the statewide Workforce Enhancement Program into its third year with 180 new staff recruited. To help meet demand, the training of 100 paramedics was brought forward as part of the NSW Government's commitment to increase recruitment of new paramedic and call centre staff. Meanwhile, the Rural Structural Reform enabled the reduction of on-call rosters at 12 locations across regional NSW to improve emergency care to the community, as well as paramedic safety and wellbeing by reducing fatigue.

- Educated more than 650 Intensive Care Paramedics across NSW through the Intensive Care Paramedic COVID-19 Update Program. Along with being introduced to new equipment, Intensive Care Paramedics were educated on human factors, leadership growth, mentoring and crew resource management.
- Opened Randwick Superstation and Mona Vale Station under the Sydney Ambulance Metropolitan Infrastructure Strategy program.
- Launched a media campaign in early May 2021, appealing for the public to 'Save Triple Zero (000) for Saving Lives'. At a time when NSW Ambulance has never been busier, the campaign aimed to educate the public to only call Triple Zero in emergency situations. It was featured in all major television, radio, print and online media outlets across NSW.
- Rolled out the statewide Medic Fit program and established a Domestic Violence Referral Offer Network to support staff health and wellbeing.

## Health Infrastructure

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Website: [www.hinfra.health.nsw.gov.au](http://www.hinfra.health.nsw.gov.au)

Business hours: 9am-5pm, Monday to Friday

### Chief Executive: Rebecca Wark



Rebecca Wark is an experienced leader of major infrastructure projects and has been with Health Infrastructure in various roles since 2008, overseeing the development of some of the state's largest hospitals and public health services. Today, she is proudly leading the delivery of the largest health capital works portfolio in Australia.

Prior to Health Infrastructure, Rebecca worked on major projects across the public and private sectors including in health, education, justice and environmental management. Her first public sector role was planning and delivering venues for the Sydney 2000 Olympics. She has completed studies in landscape architecture and project management and acts as a mentor to young professionals in business and construction. She has also recently been appointed as a non-executive Director of Royal Far West.

## Year in review

Health Infrastructure (HI) manages the largest health capital works portfolio in Australia, a record \$10.8 billion over the four years to 2024-25, delivering critical new and upgraded facilities and services across metropolitan and regional NSW.

In 2020-21, we set new directions for the next five years through a new Corporate Strategy 2021-2025 to achieve our vision of delivering future-focused, innovative and sustainable infrastructure and support solutions that enable value based healthcare delivery in NSW.

The core focus of planning and delivering the largest health capital works program remains, with greater focus on all aspects of sustainability, asset and facility advisory and precincts and commercial partnerships, in line with priorities in the Health Infrastructure Strategy. To support this new strategy, we realigned expertise and services to expand our existing commercial services, support our new precincts work program and strengthen focus on advisory support and asset programs.

We worked extensively across government and industry to support the state's economic recovery through the planning and delivery of our largest-ever capital pipeline. This included completion of 23 projects across metropolitan and regional NSW, and progression of world-leading health and education precincts at Westmead, Liverpool and Randwick which are linking health professionals with students, researchers and academics in a pioneering approach to future-proofing public health.

Significant progress was made towards better use of existing health assets, as outlined in the Health Infrastructure Strategy. We partnered with health entities to deliver the first annual documentation for both NSW Health and health entities – including Maturity Assessments, Strategic Asset Management Plans and Asset Management Plans, along with NSW Health's Asset Management Framework, Implementation Plan and Attestation Statement.

A dedicated implementation project was established for the Facility Planning Process to ensure Health Infrastructure's capital projects are delivered strategically and consistently, with better connection to functional support, and improved policies and procedures to support the new requirements. Five interconnected stages are aligned with the project lifecycle, ensuring our capital assets are fit for purpose, future focused, and enable high-quality and safe care.

We worked with other delivery agencies across NSW Government and industry partners to support school leavers through a two-year paid Infrastructure Traineeship program, providing infrastructure sector experience. The program aligns with our commitment to supporting the future of the construction industry through creating career pathways for the next generation.

Thank you to our people who continue to show commitment and flexibility as we deliver our largest-ever pipeline during the COVID-19 pandemic. On behalf of the Leadership Team, I thank each of you for the hard work, collaboration and dedication that has allowed us to continue to deliver for NSW communities.

### Key achievements

- Achieved Health Infrastructure's biggest year yet, with more than \$2.1 billion spent on the planning and delivery of health facilities, including completion and handover of 23 projects to local health districts.
- Completed 15 business cases for projects with a combined total value of \$3.1 billion.
- Awarded \$1.12 billion construction contracts across 25 projects.
- Prepared the NSW Health Asset Management Framework to support health entities as they work towards compliance with the Asset Management Policy for the NSW Public Sector.
- Delivered nine projects to support improvements and access to health services in rural and regional NSW as part of the \$297 million Stage 5 Multipurpose Service Program and \$100 million HealthOne Strategy.
- Delivered the largest transformation of NSW Ambulance infrastructure through the \$132 million Rural Ambulance Infrastructure Reconfiguration Program and \$184 million Sydney Ambulance Metropolitan Infrastructure Strategy.
- Supported 20 school leavers with paid traineeships under the NSW Government Infrastructure Traineeship Program, creating infrastructure career pathways for the next generation.

## HealthShare NSW

1 Reserve Road, St Leonards NSW 2065

Telephone: 8644 2000

Email: HSNSW-CEOffice@health.nsw.gov.au

Website: www.healthshare.nsw.gov.au

Business hours: 8:30am-5pm, Monday to Friday

### Chief Executive: Carmen Rechbauer



Carmen Rechbauer has worked with HealthShare NSW since its inception in 2005 and was appointed to the Chief Executive role in 2018. In her previous role of Executive Director, Clinical Support Services, Carmen was responsible for the delivery of hospital support services, including food, linen, cleaning, portering and security. She also led the design and implementation of the My Food Choice program, which has transformed patient meal services and resulted in improved experiences for patients, staff and clinicians.

Prior to joining HealthShare NSW, Carmen worked with South Eastern Sydney Area Health Service, where she gained frontline service delivery experience across seven hospitals. Since being appointed to the role of HealthShare NSW Chief Executive, Carmen has focused on the organisation's culture, greater system collaboration, embedding sustainable practices, and enhancing patient experience through innovative support service delivery.

### Year in review

The HealthShare NSW (HealthShare) team of more than 7000 staff continued to play an integral role in NSW Health over the last year. As NSW Health's shared service provider, the organisation partnered with its customers and community to support the ongoing effectiveness of the NSW Government's response to COVID-19.

This year, HealthShare implemented a new four-year strategic plan with a specific focus on partnering for patients. This focus, in line with the Secretary's Priorities, has already begun to elevate HealthShare's connection to patients, their families and carers, both directly and indirectly, through its services. In addition to partnering for patients, HealthShare's Strategic Plan for 2020-2024 is underpinned by its three pillars of sustainability, collaboration and its people.

HealthShare's Patient Transport Service is responsible for the transport of non-emergency patients and has played a pivotal role in the COVID-19 response. Over the last year, the Patient Transport Service established the Airport and Hotel Quarantine Operations Patient Transport Service team to provide highly specialised and safe airport and hotel quarantine transport.



This elite team is responsible for transporting COVID-19-positive and suspected positive patients from the airport to fit-for-purpose quarantine hotels. The service has transported thousands of travellers between the airport, hotel quarantine and hospitals for treatment.

HealthShare's Clinical Support Services is responsible for providing food, linen and cleaning services to hospitals across NSW. Over the last year, the service has had a pivotal role in the state's COVID-19 response by partnering with industry to provide more than 700,000 meals to returning passengers quarantining in Special Health Accommodation.

Even with COVID-19-related global supply chain shortages over the last year, HealthShare's Procurement and Supply Chain Operations teams have done a remarkable job maintaining the supply of personal protective equipment (PPE) to 100 per cent of all NSW Health staff and patients. The team has also provided the required PPE to other NSW Government agencies to ensure the continued provision of essential government services. This team has also managed ordering, storage and distribution of the medical consumables required as part of the vaccination rollout, from forecasting and sourcing the consumables required, to supporting the operationalisation of the NSW Government's mass vaccination centres, to onboarding frontline staff with their uniforms.

We thank our exceptional HealthShare NSW teams for their extraordinary work over the last year and for continuing to support and partner with our customers, patients and community.

### Key achievements

- Developed a model to improve efficiencies of cleaning task allocation and began its rollout across hospitals.
- Collaborated with other Health organisations to design new sustainable gown prototypes to improve patient experience and reduce clinician gown modification.
- Provided a more effective and efficient patient transport service through improved utilisation of vehicles, booking systems and labour resources.
- Enhanced the health and wellbeing of our staff through the provision of a range of wellbeing surveys and support programs and services, including an internally managed wellbeing hotline.
- Piloted the DeliverEASE initiative to drive value in procurement through improved visibility of medical consumable stock and reduce the risk of nil stock situations.
- Delivered \$31.4 million worth of savings to the system via the Accelerated Savings Program.

- Managed the NSW Personal Protective Equipment stockpile (116,000 pallets) on behalf of whole of government (including consolidating 22 warehouses to nine warehouses).
- Commenced the implementation of Project CHEF to provide a more patient-centred order-to-appetite model of food services for public hospitals.
- Met or exceeded all diversity targets including employees of Aboriginal background at 3.5 per cent; employees with a disability at 7.2 per cent; employees whose first language spoken as a child was not English at 29.5 per cent; women at 65.2 per cent; and women in senior leadership roles (tiers 1, 2 or 3) at 51.7 per cent.

## NSW Health Pathology

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Business hours: 9am-5pm, Monday to Friday

### Chief Executive: Tracey McCosker PSM



Tracey McCosker PSM has worked in public health for more than 20 years. She held several Hunter New England Local Health District executive positions before leading a range of statewide projects for NSW Health. She is committed to leading a caring, connecting and pioneering organisation that consistently models its values of respect, innovation, teamwork and excellence.

Tracey holds a Bachelor of Commerce and a Master of Business Administration, and is a member of the Australian Institute of Company Directors. She is drawn to organisations that make a positive difference in people's lives and serves on the Board of Life Without Barriers. She was recently awarded an Australian Public Service Medal for outstanding public service to community health in NSW.

### Year in review

NSW Health Pathology was again indispensable to the NSW public health response to COVID-19 – caring, connecting and pioneering for all of us in these extraordinary times.

We kept pace with the shifting challenge of COVID-19 while maintaining exceptional business-as-usual performance.

Our staff and their communities were again hit by natural disasters, which threatened lives and service disruption. But they kept going, showing the incredible resilience and innovation this organisation is known for.

In January 2021, our Director of Public Health Pathology, Professor Dominic Dwyer, was one of 17 international experts chosen by the World Health Organization for funded travel to Wuhan, China, to investigate the source of SARS-CoV-2 – the virus that causes COVID-19 disease.

Meanwhile, we processed more than 3.6 million COVID-19 tests, including more than 500,000 saliva screening tests for hotel quarantine workers.

Whole genome sequencing assisted public health responses, and work continued on tests to diagnose new variants of concern and differentiate between vaccine-induced and natural infection antibodies.

Over 2.4 million people registered for our COVID-19 SMS Results Service, which was joint winner of the 2020 NSW Premier's Putting the Customer at the Centre Award and acknowledged by *Harvard Business Review*.

We continued to push ahead with initiatives vital to the future of our services – our Specimen Tracking Project, Statewide Test Catalogue and the transition to a single, statewide laboratory information system.

Our Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan was launched with great pride, demonstrating our commitment to building respectful relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and achieving meaningful gains in closing the health and justice gaps for these communities.

Our scientists working in partnership with the Fertility and Research Centre at The Royal Hospital for Women in Randwick and the University of New South Wales celebrated the birth of the service's first IVF baby, Ryan.

We received 116 nominations for our second-ever NSW Health Pathology Awards, which filled me with admiration. The courage in adversity, strength and determination of our 5000-plus workforce never ceases to amaze me and I thank them all for their tireless efforts in what has been another challenging, yet extraordinary year.

### Key achievements

- Eased anxiety and time in isolation for patients and saved 423,000 hours in calls or 42,000 shifts for health workers through significant uptake of our COVID-19 SMS Results Service.
- Launched our Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan guided and endorsed by Reconciliation Australia. The two-year plan details practical actions we will undertake to contribute to reconciliation within NSW Health Pathology and the communities we serve.
- Progressed Fusion, NSW Health Pathology's investment in a new statewide laboratory information management system and key enabling projects that will reduce costs, waste and clinical uncertainty, while enhancing quality of care for communities.
- Progressed a new statewide Forensic Medicine Information System to the build phase, which will improve timeframes in the coronial system and help our Forensic Medicine staff to better support bereaved families.
- Piloted a new purpose-built statewide specimen tracking system across 12 labs, with more to follow. The system will standardise the way we receive, track and dispatch specimens so they arrive safely every time. This will improve patient safety, avoid potential delays and duplication, and reduce the chance of misplaced samples.
- Completed a new system to house a catalogue of testing services, with rollout underway. A 'single source of truth', it provides current, accurate information about collection, handling and testing across all sites and links to resources for staff, patient and clinician.
- Provided expert scientific analysis to support the NSW Government's Drug Surveillance Strategy to directly inform community alerts about harmful substances and to support the treatment of critically ill patients presenting to emergency departments.
- Piloted a new billing system to be rolled out in all operational areas replacing four systems with one statewide solution. The Statewide Billing Project will streamline and simplify processes and reduce double-handling, enable improved reporting capability and improve compliance and reporting for Medicare requirements.
- Rolled out modern, professional, standardised signage to help patients and customers find their way around 140 NSW Health Pathology facilities including laboratories and collection centres. The durable internal and external signage reinforces our identity as a statewide service, builds brand awareness with staff and the community and complies with industry standards.

## eHealth NSW

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Website: www.ehealth.nsw.gov.au  
Business hours: 8:30am-5pm, Monday to Friday

### Chief Executive: Dr Zoran Bolevich



Dr Zoran Bolevich is Chief Executive of eHealth NSW and Chief Information Officer of NSW Health. He has a background in medicine and business administration and has worked in senior health system management, health IT and data analytics leadership roles in Australia and New Zealand.

Leading a team of more than 1600 staff, Zoran is focused on implementing the eHealth Strategy for NSW Health, streamlining governance of eHealth NSW's key programs and activities, and developing a highly effective, customer-focused health IT organisation. He is passionate about improving the health system through meaningful and effective use of digital technologies, data analytics, research and innovation in partnership with patients, clinicians, health organisations, government and industry partners.

### Year in review

The pandemic has increased reliance on technology and accelerated digitisation across the globe in all sectors, including healthcare. Responding to the past year's challenges has reinforced the importance of NSW Health's approach to building consistent ICT foundations. Our enterprise-wide platforms have enabled us to scale at pace and to innovate – responding with agility and efficiency.

COVID-19 continued to drive the digitisation of healthcare and demands upon network infrastructure. Critical communications infrastructure supported by eHealth NSW, such as our Health Wide Area Network and data centres, were vital in supporting increased network traffic.

Working closely with the State Health Emergency Operations Centre and Public Health Emergency Operations Centre, we developed digital solutions to support the health system's COVID-19 response. A system to fast-track vaccinations of frontline workers was rapidly developed and subsequently made accessible to the public. In parallel, a system was designed and implemented to enable the entire vaccination management process.

Enabling patients to connect with health professionals virtually was critical in rural and metropolitan locations. It was also pivotal in connecting patients with family and friends. A Virtual Care Accelerator was established to drive development and uptake of virtual care and telehealth, first in response to COVID-19 and then as part of a longer-term strategy for NSW Health.

Using digital solutions to enhance patient experiences and outcomes has become an increasing area of focus. The Health Outcomes and Patient Experience platform, delivered in partnership with the Agency for Clinical Innovation, is testament to this. So too is our work on the National Children's Digital Health Collaborative – where we have harmonised and digitised the baby book.

In delivering new digital systems, keeping safety and security front of mind is crucial. The new incident management system has now been implemented across the state and supports increased patient safety. Our Information Security team continue to proactively monitor our systems in an ever-evolving cyber threat landscape. They have also developed education and training for NSW Health staff.

Our strong partnerships across both the healthcare and technology sectors have been instrumental in all that we have achieved this year, as have the dedication and work of our staff. eHealth NSW has strived to deliver technology to support the health system and its workforce in delivering outcomes and experiences that matter to patients.

Our ongoing collaboration across NSW Health, with government agencies and industry made it possible for eHealth NSW to not only support the digital response to COVID-19, but to also continue to digitally enable and transform healthcare delivery and support provision of services by local health districts and specialty health networks.

### Key achievements

- Supported NSW Health's digital health response to the pandemic, underpinned by strong collaboration across government agencies and with industry. eHealth NSW developed and implemented a digital system to fast-track the vaccination of frontline workers in 21 business days. Subsequently the system was made available for bookings by the public. By mid-2021, it was being used by 64 clinics across 14 local health districts and specialty networks and had captured more than 675,000 vaccination registrations. In parallel, the NSW Health Vaccination Administration Management system was developed and deployed in 10 business days providing a single, scalable solution to manage the entire vaccination administration process for staff and the public. By mid-2021, it had been used to book 21,863 appointments and vaccinate 3646 people.

- Implemented the Electronic Record for Intensive Care, which is now in operation at 21 hospitals, benefiting 28,000 patients. The electronic medication management program is close to completion, having now implemented at 199 of 200 hospitals.
- Deployed the NSW Telestroke Service to 11 health facilities giving rural and regional patients access to high-quality specialist clinical care across NSW. More than 800 patients have benefited from rapid stroke assessment, treatment and management via the service.
- Implemented the new Radiology Information System and Picture Archiving Communication System in eight hospitals across Nepean Blue Mountains, Northern Sydney and Central Coast local health districts, processing over 500,000 imaging examinations.
- Completed three pilots of the Health Grade Enterprise Network at Westmead Health Precinct, Coffs Harbour Hospital and 1 Reserve Road, St Leonards. The Health Grade Enterprise Network will replace legacy infrastructure to provide a more consistent and secure ICT network platform across the public health system.
- Increased uptake of the myVirtualCare platform statewide with 3148 clinicians conducting more than 30,000 consultations. Pilots of myVirtualCare for rural endocrinology services were also launched at Walgett Aboriginal Medical Service and Broken Hill District Hospital.
- Completed the rollout of the new incident management system to all local health districts, specialty networks, health organisations, pillar organisations and private correctional facilities in partnership with the Clinical Excellence Commission.
- Launched the Real Time Prescription Monitoring Management Portal in June 2021, providing the NSW Health regulatory team access to prescribing and dispensing events for monitored medicines.
- Harmonised and digitised the baby book as part of the National Children's Digital Health Collaborative as 141 mothers and 202 newborns and children were involved in the trials to test and evaluate the clinical and consumer utility of the Child Digital Health Record.
- Drove continued adoption of ServiceNow/SARA across NSW Health as our workflow and services management platform. It was used by staff to raise 456,000 IT incidents, 1,141,000 human resources cases, 106,000 finance cases and 28,000 IT changes. The platform also hosted an additional 4550 knowledge articles. The SARA Virtual Assistant launched in August 2020, providing a new channel for staff to find information 24/7, on any device, without having to make a call. The statewide service desk answered 508,622 calls.
- Analysed over 370,000 security events of which 14,300 were validated, investigated and responded to. A new online reporting mechanism to make it easier for staff to report phishing and spam and flag potential cyber security risks safely was implemented as well as a new mandatory Cyber Fundamentals module and other cyber security modules and workshops for all NSW Health staff.

# Local health districts



NSW Health's 15 local health districts cover metropolitan, regional and rural areas across NSW, varying in both geographical size and population. Districts provide hospital, community and population-based healthcare services that meet the needs of their local community.

Providing a comprehensive range of medical specialties, the districts deliver in-hospital care, outpatient services, mental health services, child and family health services, oral health services, Aboriginal health services, and drug and alcohol rehabilitation.

This year, districts faced significant challenges from the extreme rainfall, floods and mice plague which directly impacted many, and the COVID-19 pandemic. Our incredible staff rose to these challenges admirably while continuing to provide high-quality safe care to their patients and communities. Read on to discover the achievements of districts this year and visit their websites to find out more about the services they provide.

## Metropolitan NSW local health districts

- Central Coast
- Illawarra Shoalhaven
- Nepean Blue Mountains
- Northern Sydney
- South Eastern Sydney
- South Western Sydney
- Sydney
- Western Sydney

## Rural and regional NSW local health districts

- Far West
- Hunter New England
- Mid North Coast
- Murrumbidgee
- Northern NSW
- Southern NSW
- Western NSW

## Central Coast Local Health District

Holden Street, Gosford NSW 2250

Telephone: 4320 2111

Email: CCLHD-Feedback@health.nsw.gov.au

Website: www.cclhd.health.nsw.gov.au

Business hours: 8:30am-5pm, Monday to Friday

### Chief Executive: Dr Andrew Montague (to April 2021)



Dr Andrew Montague has extensive clinical and senior management experience within the health sector, both in Queensland and NSW. He studied both medicine and health administration at the University of New South Wales and

is a fellow of both the Royal Australian College of General Practitioners and the Royal Australasian College of Medical Administrators. Andrew's previous role was Executive Director Operations for Northern Sydney Local Health District from 2012 to 2016, where he also acted as the Chief Executive. He worked as a clinician for 10 years, both in hospitals and as a general practitioner, and since 2005 has held medical director roles at both hospitals and health services. Andrew resigned from the position in April 2021.

### Brad Astill, Acting Chief Executive (from April 2021)

Brad Astill acted as Chief Executive of the District following Andrew's departure. Brad is an experienced health leader in both management and operations. He has previously acted in a number of senior executive roles in local health districts in NSW, including as the interim Chief Executive, Far West Local Health District.

## Year in review

Maintaining a proactive and sustained response to the evolving COVID-19 pandemic remained a key focus of the District. We opened two primary testing clinics, as well as an additional pop-up clinic (as required), to facilitate local testing to identify and stem community transmission. In addition to serving our local community, our Public Health Unit also assisted other Australian outbreak responses, surging large contact tracing teams and rapidly onboarding and training staff from other teams to support the effort.

We provided advice and education to vulnerable populations – as well as to the broader community and our staff – on how to stay safe during the pandemic, and in March and April 2021, we opened two COVID-19 vaccination clinics to staff and eligible groups in the community.

While managing our COVID-19 response, we also advanced projects to enhance healthcare on the Central Coast. The \$200 million redevelopment of Wyong Hospital came a step closer following completion of construction and the \$72.5 million Central Coast Clinical School and Research Institute, a partnership with the University of Newcastle, prepared to open its doors. We also opened a dedicated 10-bed Palliative Care inpatient unit at Gosford Hospital. For the first time on the Central Coast, palliative and end of life care can now be offered in a hospital setting, not just at home.

We continued our focus on innovative ways of delivering patient care with the development of our virtual care platform. This allows clinicians to connect with patients and their families through virtual consultations, reducing the number of people attending our facilities while maintaining high-quality care.

## Central Coast Local Health District | Demographic summary

### Size

- 1853 km<sup>2</sup>

### Population size

- 350,000 residents (2019)
- Projected to increase to 397,370 by 2031

### Age

- 14 per cent aged 70+ (2016)
- 70+ age group projected to increase to 19 per cent by 2031

### Culture

- 4.6 per cent from an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander background (2016)
- 50,000 born overseas (2016)
- 5.8 per cent speak a language other than English at home (2016)
- Darkinyung (Darkinjung) people are the traditional custodians of the land

### Health issues

- Ageing-related
- Chronic health conditions
- Growing service requirements due to higher population growth, lower socioeconomic status and higher levels of risky behaviours such as smoking, alcohol consumption, poor diet and obesity
- Higher rates of death from all causes, in particular cancers and respiratory disease, compared with NSW rates

A Virtual Care Hub was also established, which incorporates remote monitoring capabilities that enable patients to actively participate in their recovery and healthcare. With our first remote monitoring patient welcomed in June 2021, the Hub initially supports patients of the Acute Post-Acute Care and Hospital in the Home services.

We supported over 350 local Aboriginal families – the second highest number of program participants in the state – through the Building Strong Foundations program, which helps families provide a nurturing environment for their child so they develop optimal physical, social, emotional and cultural wellbeing. We also developed a cultural care plan for local pregnant women and families as part of the Birthing Off Country project.

We thank our exceptional staff for their remarkable innovation and resilience in the face of such a challenging year and applaud their steadfast commitment to providing the highest standard of care to our community.

### Key achievements

- Continued work on the \$200 million Wyong Hospital Redevelopment, with construction of the new six-storey building completed. Works moved to focus on the fit-out of the building, which will include a new and expanded emergency department and intensive care unit. Refurbishment of some areas of the existing hospital began, including the expansion of operating theatres.
- Completed construction of the Central Coast Clinical School and Research Institute, a partnership between the District and the University of Newcastle. The six-storey building provides state-of-the-art facilities for local students who wish to study medicine and nursing, and gives researchers access to dedicated and collaborative spaces to carry out world-class pioneering research in integrated healthcare and population health.
- Received accreditation for three years against the National Safety and Quality Health Service Standards by the Australian Council on Healthcare Standards in May 2021.
- Successfully trialled six new Patient Experience Officers at Gosford and Wyong Hospital emergency department waiting rooms to assist patients, carers and relatives to access services and de-escalate concerns.
- Collaborated with local police to continue the Police Ambulance and Clinical Early Response (PACER) program. The initiative focuses on rehabilitation not incarceration, with specialist mental health clinicians embedded into the teams at two police districts to help de-escalate crisis situations and provide more timely interventions, and to connect people experiencing mental health issues with the right support.

- Launched an innovative nurse-led Subcutaneous Immunoglobulin program, where some patients with chronic autoimmune conditions who require regular and time-consuming in-hospital infusions are provided with infusion pumps at no cost and trained by specialised nurses on how to safely self-administer their treatment at home, decreasing hospital visits and increasing independence and convenience.
- Developed a NSW-first Rapid Response Dashboard, a fully automated dashboard that captures and publishes every Rapid Response event for the District. The graphical data is de-identified, allowing all staff to access and better understand and analyse all circumstances related to patient deterioration.
- Achieved double the target for health professional referrals to the Get Healthy Service, with more than 750 referrals made.

## Far West Local Health District

2-4 Sulphide Street, Broken Hill NSW 2880

Telephone: (08) 8080 1333

Email: FWLHD-Feedback@health.nsw.gov.au

Website: www.fwlhd.health.nsw.gov.au

Business hours: 8:30am-5pm, Monday to Friday

### Chief Executive: Umit Agis



Umit Agis was appointed to the Chief Executive role in January 2020. Umit's career in health service delivery spans more than 25 years, with the last 15 in senior management including executive roles at Country Health SA, and at Tasmanian Mental Health Services, Forensic Mental Health Services, Prison Health, Forensic Mental Health Services and the Drug and Alcohol Services.

Umit's qualifications include a Bachelor of Social Work, Graduate Diploma in Health Sciences and a Master of Management. He is a graduate and member of the Australian Institute of Company Directors and is halfway through completing a Doctor of Business Administration. He also holds an academic chair with the International Institute of Organisational Psychological Medicine.

### Year in review

The District continued its focus on maintaining quality patient care, while successfully managing our COVID-19 response to safeguard our patients, staff and communities. We embarked on the delivery of COVID-19 vaccination clinics across the District and continue those clinics, working in partnership with key health providers in the District.

## Far West Local Health District | Demographic summary

### Size

- 194,949 sq km

### Population size

- 30,220\* residents
- Projected to decrease to 28,700 by 2031

### Age

- 16.2 per cent\* aged 70+
- 70+ age group projected to increase to 21.1 per cent by 2031

### Culture

- 14.9 per cent from Aboriginal background (2016)
- 5.4 per cent born overseas (does not include Unincorporated Far West) (2016)
- 3.3 per cent speak a language other than English at home (does not include Unincorporated Far West) (2016)
- Barkandji, Wilyakali, Ngiyampaa and Muthi Muthi peoples are the traditional custodians of the land

### Health issues

- Aboriginal health
- Men's health
- Cancer
- Diabetes
- Smoking in pregnancy

Source: \*ERP, 2021.

We continued developing alternative models of care using telehealth during the pandemic, and technological solutions have become important components in the District's strategic approach to service delivery. Our use of telehealth increased from an average of 1282 sessions per month in 2019-20 to an average of 1639 sessions per month in 2020-21. This also translated to an increase in Pexip accounts from 33 to 103.

We achieved our first-ever organisation-wide full accreditation with the Australian Council on Healthcare Standards, with all eight National Standards met. Our staff were exemplary in their approach to presenting the quality work they undertake.

Significant infrastructure milestones:

- We officially opened the Tibooburra HealthOne refurbishment.
- Buronga HealthOne facility on land leased from the Barkandji traditional owners progressed to awarding construction tender to Barpa, an Australian Indigenous company. Site works were earmarked to begin in July 2021.
- The District welcomed \$30 million in funding from NSW Government for a new Wentworth Hospital, with planning to start in 2021-22. Clinical Service Planning is well underway to provide a service that matches community needs and an increasing service demand.
- We refurbished the radiology area at Broken Hill Health Service to improve BreastScreen services.
- We refurbished a wing of Medical Ward to provide a more home-like environment for palliative care patients and families.

In addition, the District is finalising its Aboriginal Workforce Plan, Aboriginal Health Framework and five-year Strategic Plan, and we increased our Aboriginal Nursing and Midwifery workforce, introducing three cadets.

We launched a new video ('Welcome to the Far West') to promote the District and help boost recruitment and retention of staff. This has improved our recruitment drive in the last 12 months.

A record 33 new nursing graduates joined the District in 2021.

We have implemented a new organisational governance model along with a revised executive structure to support the District's strategic goals and to realise its vision of being an accountable best remote and rural health service.

We are pleased that the District has retained its zero performance rating (no performance issues) for the 2020-21 financial year.

The Board and executive express our sincere thanks and appreciation to all staff for their continued hard work and dedication in 2020-21, which has occurred against a backdrop of a challenging and often rapidly changing environment.

### Key achievements

- Refurbished a wing of Medical Ward, Broken Hill Hospital, using \$395,000 of NSW Ministry of Health funding to provide a more home-like environment for palliative care patients and families.
- Welcomed three Aboriginal cadets under the NSW Health Aboriginal Nursing and Midwifery Cadetship program. The program provides financial support through paid clinical placements and a fortnightly study allowance to enable cadets to complete the undergraduate studies for first registration as a registered nurse or registered midwife.



- The Far West Local Health District Mental Health Drug and Alcohol Service became a finalist in the 2020 NSW Health Awards for 'Excellence in the Provision of Mental Health Services' with The Connections Program, an after-hours peer-led and peer-delivered program aimed at reducing social isolation and loneliness of people in our community. The program is operated in partnership with Mission Australia. Preliminary data showed a direct link to a downwards trend of people attending the emergency department compared with six months after the program was implemented.
- Officially launched Safe Haven Café as part of the Towards Zero Suicides initiative, in partnership with Mission Australia. It is a peer-led after-hours service where people who are experiencing mental health concerns, distress or suicidal thoughts can, where appropriate, go for support instead of attending an emergency department. The District has provided a purpose-built facility on hospital grounds.
- Leased land from the traditional owners for the Buronga HealthOne \$10 million facility build. The signing of the Agreement for Lease between the NSW Government, the District and traditional owners for use of land to build the facility is the first agreement of its kind nationally within the health sector.
- Appointed the inaugural Far West Local Health District Director of Research, which is a conjoint appointment role with the University Department of Rural Health (University of Sydney). The expanded Local Health District Research Program will seek to encourage research capability, enable rural health research, and establish and promote a culture of research in the Far West.
- Maintained high childhood vaccination rates, with 100 per cent of children (Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal) being vaccinated by the age of six.

- Trained 88 per cent of the District's early childhood services in the Munch & Move program and met 70 per cent of program practices. Trained 78 per cent of District primary schools in the Live Life Well @ School program and met 70 per cent of program practices. Referrals by health professionals to the Get Healthy Service were exceeded by 136 per cent.

## Hunter New England Local Health District

Lookout Road, New Lambton Heights NSW 2305

Telephone: 4985 5522

Email: HNELHD-SRC@health.nsw.gov.au

Website: www.hnehealth.nsw.gov.au

Business hours: 8:30am-5pm, Monday to Friday

### Chief Executive: Michael DiRienzo



Michael DiRienzo holds tertiary qualifications in commerce and economics. He held senior positions in a range of manufacturing organisations prior to entering the health field. Michael has extensive experience in senior management roles within health support services and was senior operational leader of the District's major referral hospitals prior to becoming Chief Executive in January 2011.

### Year in review

This year, our District continued to deliver excellence in healthcare amid the demands and challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Earlier in the pandemic, our focus was on preparing for the unknown, building clinical surge capacity and ensuring adequate personal protective equipment. During more recent times, we have moved our attention to vaccine delivery while continuing our vast screening efforts.

## Hunter New England Local Health District | Demographic summary

### Size

- 131,785 sq km

### Population size

- 962,390 residents
- Projected to increase to 1,038,920 by 2031

### Age

- 141,810 aged 70+
- 70+ age group predicted to increase to 187,160 by 2031

### Culture

- 7.1 per cent from Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander background
- 20 per cent born overseas
- Five per cent speak a language other than English at home
- Kamilaroi, Gomilaroi, Geawegal, Bahtabah, Thungutti, Awabakal, Aniawan, Biripi, Worimi, Nganyaywana, Wonnarua, Banbai, Ngoorabul, Bundjalung, Yallaroi and Darkinung peoples are the traditional custodians of the land

### Health issues

- Stroke
- Cancer
- Gastro-intestinal disease
- Kidney disease

As the vaccine became available in 2021, we worked to establish six vaccination clinics across our District, including at Tamworth Hospital, and a major vaccination hub at John Hunter Hospital. We have delivered more than 64,000 vaccinations to date and will continue to focus on ensuring our most vulnerable community members are vaccinated.

In June 2021, we announced the establishment of a mass vaccination centre at Belmont. This development took tremendous effort from staff and contractors and will enable the delivery of 20,000 vaccines each week.

While we worked hard to establish vaccination clinics, we also continued with our extensive screening program. We completed 629,687 swabs to 30 June 2021, across 25 clinics. The high screening rates are testament to the work of our staff in communicating core public health messages.

We maintained excellent communication with our staff and our community throughout the pandemic to ensure everyone was as well informed and safe as possible.

Amid the pandemic efforts, flooding impacted the New England and Mid North Coast regions within our District. Our staff rallied during the devastating time; many staff members could not get to work while others picked up additional hours to keep services running. Consult rooms at Manning Hospital were transformed into staff sleeping areas, and some staff who live in Taree generously opened their homes to colleagues who could not make it home.

Some of our service managers and staff even volunteered their time at evacuation centres to help coordinate local responses.

Despite the challenges, staff continued to put our patients first with inspiring resilience and adaptability, particularly during the response to COVID-19.

The Chief Executive and Executive Leadership Team commend the efforts of all staff across the District in providing positive healthcare experiences and outcomes for our communities.

### Key achievements

- Implemented the Sustainable Healthcare: Together Towards Zero 2030 initiative, to be carbon waste neutral by 2030. This will include the installation of solar panels on the rooftop of all our health facilities, including John Hunter Hospital where 12,000 square metres of roof (85 per cent) has been covered in solar panels.
- As part of COVID-19 surgical recovery, achieved a reduction in the number of overdue patients on the surgical waitlist from 1290 in September 2020 to five at the end of 2020-21.

- Completed major infrastructure projects including:
  - the \$60 million Inverell Hospital redevelopment, which delivered a purpose-built hospital and refurbished community health facility
  - the \$10 million investment into the Murrurundi Health Service, which delivered a new health service building
  - the almost \$8 million Port Stephens HealthOne Project, which brought together general practitioner, community health and hospital services into one purpose-built facility on the Tomaree Hospital site.

In addition, planning progressed on the \$780 million John Hunter Health and Innovation Precinct with the unveiling of the project's master plan.

- Implemented an integrated care model for trans and gender diverse adolescents and young adults in Northern NSW, including outreach services in other health districts. The initiative included the community-based Trans and Gender Diverse Centre in Newcastle.
- Delivered the concept design for the new Banksia Mental Health Unit in Tamworth in partnership with staff, carers and consumers. The new unit will provide an additional eight beds supporting services for older persons, as well as the flexibility and provision of short-stay accommodation for young and vulnerable people.
- Launched a pilot study into the management of children with attention deficit hyperactivity disorder in the primary healthcare setting, including the prescribing of stimulant medication by general practitioners. So far, more than 35 GPs are trained to deliver attention deficit hyperactivity disorder care, reducing wait times in outpatient clinics.
- Implemented the Assistants in Medicine initiative, which saw 76 medical students (20 full-time equivalent) placed in our hospitals. The initiative provided opportunities for upskilling and workload management in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Began piloting the Emergency Department Did Not Wait strategy at 10 sites, to reduce Did Not Wait rates through communication within the emergency department waiting room explaining the triage process and the importance of completion of care. The project was initiated by Aboriginal Health in partnership with the emergency department stream in response to higher Did Not Wait rates among Aboriginal patients, but has been broadened to target all patients.
- Grew Aboriginal employment rates to 5.27 per cent through the Good Health, Great Jobs Aboriginal Employment Strategy and our own Aboriginal Employment Strategy 2021-2025, which is currently being rolled out.

## Illawarra Shoalhaven Local Health District

Suite 2, Level 2, 67-71 King Street

Warrawong NSW 2502

Telephone: 4221 6899

Email: ISLHD-CEOffice@health.nsw.gov.au

Website: www.islhd.health.nsw.gov.au

Business hours: 8:30am-5pm, Monday to Friday

### Chief Executive: Margot Mains



Margot Mains began her career as a nurse and held senior leadership roles in health in New Zealand and South Australia, before taking up the position of Chief Executive of the Illawarra Shoalhaven Local Health District in 2014. Margot has

extensive health executive leadership and management experience at hospital and District level. She also holds a Bachelor of Laws.

Margot has a strong focus on research and has led the District through a significant period of change, including leadership reform.

### Year in review

The past year has continued to challenge, as we in health reinforce our efforts to adapt and respond to the fight against COVID-19.

In the Illawarra Shoalhaven Local Health District, our focus has remained on strengthening preparedness. We upskilled staff in critical care; strengthened our protocols around availability and correct usage of personal protective equipment; and maintained a building program to support the ongoing response.

This included the establishment of dedicated COVID-19 wards and intensive care capacity, additional observation units and on-site storage capability, new staff amenities and specialised areas within emergency for the safe care of patients.

All of this occurred as we continued to see increasing demand on our health services. While we saw a reduction in patient presentations to our emergency departments for a brief period during the height of COVID-19, our numbers significantly increased in the second half of the year to record levels. To ensure timely access to care for our patients, we worked in close collaboration with private providers to increase elective surgery, particularly for those unable to receive their operations due to early COVID-19 measures.

The safety and wellbeing of staff was more important than ever before. We implemented a staff wellness program, known as SEED, starting at Milton Ulladulla Hospital. It grew to include other hospitals in the District, enhancing teamwork, building resilience and better supporting staff during challenging periods.

The community should be incredibly proud of the District's workforce. They have rallied in the face of adversity to continue to deliver high-quality and safe health services. Their hard work, drive and dedication was nothing short of inspirational and we thank each and every member of staff for their contribution over the past 12 months.

Our District also celebrated important milestones including the opening of the Bulli Hospital and Aged Care Centre, our innovative new community health facilities known as HealthOne at Ulladulla and Dapto, and a much-needed refurbishment of the Birthing Unit at Wollongong.

## Illawarra Shoalhaven Local Health District | Demographic summary

### Size

- 5687 km<sup>2</sup>

### Population size

- 404,000 residents<sup>#</sup>
- Projected increase to 470,000 by 2031<sup>#</sup>

### Age

- 13 per cent aged 70+<sup>#</sup>
- 70+ age group projected to increase to 87,000 by 2031<sup>#</sup>

### Culture

- 4.2 per cent from Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander background<sup>\*</sup>
- 18 per cent born overseas<sup>^</sup>
- 11 per cent speak a language other than English at home<sup>^</sup>
- Dharawal and Yuin peoples are the traditional custodians of the land, which encompass five language groups: Wadi Wadi, Dharawal, Wandandian, Walbanga and Yuin

### Health issues

- Cancer
- Heart and vascular diseases
- Mental health conditions and substance abuse
- Muscular skeletal diseases
- Respiratory diseases

Sources: <sup>#</sup>NSW Department of Planning, Industry and Environment. <sup>^</sup>ABS Census 2016. <sup>\*</sup>ABS Estimates of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians, June 2016.

Planning continued on the major redevelopment of Shoalhaven Hospital and a preferred site for a new Shellharbour Hospital was identified.

In the past few months, the District contributed to the national COVID-19 vaccination program and, in the first five weeks, our local teams administered 10,000 doses to essential frontline workers.

The next 12 months will no doubt focus on bolstering vaccination efforts, while continuing to provide world-class services to our local community and supporting their health and wellbeing.

### Key achievements

- Strengthened the District's online and digital platforms to better enable patient communications, community information and dedicated COVID-19 advice.
- Launched innovative suicide prevention initiatives including Safe Haven – a peer-led alternative to attending an emergency department for people experiencing suicidal crisis. A Suicide Prevention Outreach Team was launched in Nowra to reduce deaths and suicide attempts by supporting people in their own homes.
- Enhanced the use of virtual care and telehealth technology including transitioning major services to the myVirtualCare platform. Telestroke was also launched in the Shoalhaven Hospital, with the hospital holding the quickest time to treatment in NSW.
- Launched the state's first Health Outcomes and Patient Experience IT platform for Patient Reported Measures. A Quality of Life tool was also implemented to better empower health staff to engage with patients in a more holistic way.
- Enhanced the District's research capacity with the development of a Clinical Trials Unit. More than \$8 million in competitive grants were awarded to District clinicians over the past 12 months and a total of 24 COVID-specific research projects were undertaken.
- Completed an international research project in partnership with two universities looking at nursing and midwifery measures, using performance indicators set by consumers. The results of the Implementing and Measuring Person-centredness and using APP for Knowledge Transfer study will inform a statewide sustainability plan.
- Achieved finalist status in the Personal Injury Education Foundation excellence awards in the category of Collaboration in Injury and Disability Management.
- Deployed a new Senior Assessment process, new FastTrack Model and new Short Stay Area to improve emergency department treatment times. Three new Patient Experience Officers commenced across the District to better support the patient experience.

## Mid North Coast Local Health District

Morton Street

Port Macquarie NSW 2444

Telephone: 1800 726 997

Email: MNCLHD-ConsumerRelations@health.nsw.gov.au

Website: www.mnclhd.health.nsw.gov.au

Business hours: 8:30am-5pm, Monday to Friday

### Chief Executive: Stewart Dowrick



Stewart Dowrick began his career in healthcare administration at the then Children's Hospital at Camperdown in 1989. He moved to the Central Coast Area Health Service in 1993 and the Mid North Coast Area Health Service in 1999.

Since 2000, he has held numerous executive positions with the Mid North Coast and North Coast Area Health Service and was appointed Chief Executive at the beginning of 2011. Stewart has a particular interest in health service partnership and service partners working together. He holds a Doctorate in Health Studies, and tertiary qualifications from the University of New South Wales, the University of Newcastle and the Australian Institute of Company Directors.

### Year in review

In 2020-21, the Mid North Coast Local Health District faced a year like no other.

While managing the ongoing response to the global pandemic and recovering from the catastrophic bushfires that swept across the region, the Mid North Coast was hit by devastating floods in March 2021.

The emergency situation and its aftermath further challenged the resilience of local communities.

Healthcare workers, whose own homes had been inundated, went to work at the many evacuation centres established across the District. They provided around-the-clock clinical and mental health support, putting their own recovery on hold to help others.

The flooding coincided with the commencement of the Mid North Coast Local Health District's COVID-19 vaccination program and the establishment of vaccination hubs at Coffs Harbour Health Campus and Port Macquarie Base Hospital.

Through the hard work and dedication of the team, the program was able to quickly scale up to meet demand, vaccinating frontline and essential workers, and then was expanded to include eligible community members as the vaccination program expanded in line with the Australian Government eligibility criteria.

## Mid North Coast Local Health District | Demographic summary

### Size

- 11,335 sq km

### Population size

- 226,422 residents
- Projected increase to 241,184 by 2031

### Age

- 18.6 per cent aged 70+
- 70+ age group projected to increase to 23 per cent by 2031

### Culture

- 6.9 per cent from Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander background
- 10.7 per cent born overseas
- 2.1 per cent speak a language other than English at home
- Gumbaynggirr, Dunghutti, Birpai and Nganyaywana peoples are the traditional custodians of the land

### Health issues

- High levels of health risk behaviours (obesity, smoking, alcohol consumption, cholesterol, blood pressure)
- Chronic disease
- Ageing-related
- Mental health
- Drug and alcohol misuse
- Family and domestic violence

Although the Mid North Coast had no locally acquired COVID-19 cases in 2020-21, testing clinics continued to operate across the region and have been able to rapidly increase capacity in response to outbreaks in other parts of the state.

The Mid North Coast Local Health District continues to work closely with councils, police, local businesses and partner organisations to ensure ongoing compliance and education about COVID-safe practices in the community.

The impact of COVID-19 was also felt in a very personal way when the smiling faces of volunteers were no longer seen in local hospitals and community health centres. To protect the community's most vulnerable during the pandemic, volunteer activities were suspended for more than a year.

Volunteers began returning to their roles in early 2021, having undertaken COVID-19 safety training and enthusiastically supporting the vaccination program.

### Key achievements

- Continued construction on major capital projects including the \$194 million Coffs Harbour Health Campus Expansion and HealthOne facilities at Bowraville, Nambucca Heads and Camden Haven.
- Launched regional Australia's first hospital-based Tresillian Residential Unit at Macksville District Hospital. This important partnership with Tresillian provides a service to assist local families struggling with the demands of parenting.
- Continued the District's comprehensive response to the COVID-19 pandemic, which included establishing a large-scale drive-through clinic at Port Macquarie to increase capacity in response to outbreaks in other parts of the state.

- Developed and implemented an Aboriginal Cultural Engagement Self-Assessment Tool to ensure the delivery of culturally safe and accessible health services for Aboriginal patients and clients as part of the District's Aboriginal Cultural Safety and Security Framework. Audit sessions were held with all directorates to look at ways to improve inclusivity and Aboriginal cultural safety within current practices.
- Developed and implemented a Midwifery Group Practice service for Coffs Harbour and Macksville hospitals. The District joins other regional NSW local health districts in the provision of best practice maternity care, including post-natal home visits by a midwife.
- Achieved two awards in the 2020 NSW Health Nursing and Midwifery Awards. Trauma Clinical Nurse Consultant, Trish Lemin, was named joint winner of the Nurse of the Year, and Mid North Coast Cancer Institute Nurse Unit Manager, Amelia Bolt, received the Aboriginal Nurse/Midwife of the Year award.
- Implemented the Health Grade Enterprise Network initiative to provide improved Wi-Fi performance for staff, patients and visitors thanks to a major upgrade of wireless network infrastructure. Coffs Harbour Health Campus was the first regional health facility to roll out the initiative.
- Presented the Your Health Link National Photographic Competition as a virtual event, receiving a record 1833 entries from every state and territory in Australia. The photo competition is part of the broader suite of Your Health Link programs designed to connect the community to evidence-based health information.
- Celebrated the achievements of staff and volunteers at the 2020 (virtual) and 2021 (face-to-face) Mid North Coast Local Health District Health Innovation Awards.

## Murrumbidgee Local Health District

Level 1, 193-195 Morgan Street

Wagga Wagga NSW 2650

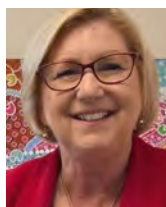
Telephone: 5943 2003

Email: MLHD-FeedBack@health.nsw.gov.au

Website: www.mlhd.health.nsw.gov.au

Business hours: 9am-5pm, Monday to Friday

### Chief Executive: Jill Ludford



Jill Ludford leads a team of more than 3500 staff who deliver healthcare across 47 health facilities in the Riverina Murray region. Having started her career as a registered nurse and midwife, Jill is passionate about improving access to essential healthcare in rural communities and advocates for digital clinical programs, including telehealth and electronic medical record systems.

Under Jill's leadership, the District has sponsored new models of patient care, improved patient experience and introduced staff wellbeing programs. Jill has strong links with the regional community and has fostered partnerships with a wide range of stakeholders, including non-government organisations, Aboriginal services and tertiary institutions.

### Year in review

The Murrumbidgee Local Health District strives to deliver exceptional rural healthcare for our communities while improving access to care across our region.

The health response to COVID-19 continued to be a priority and Murrumbidgee staff rose to the challenge of keeping our communities safe, undertaking pandemic-related work and sustaining services.

Our COVID-19 team responded to the changing environment, providing contact tracing and public health services, establishing testing and vaccination clinics, adapting clinical services to virtual care models, and configuring hospitals and community services to care for COVID-19 patients.

During this time, our commitment to safety and improving consumers' experience did not waiver. Clinical leaders in infection prevention enhanced our respiratory protection program to ensure staff safety. We started collecting patient-reported experience and outcome measures to help us better understand patient individual needs and improve their outcomes.

Our surgical teams fast-tracked elective surgery, which was unavoidably delayed following the National Cabinet decision to suspend non-urgent surgery due to the pandemic. This led to the highest number of elective surgeries ever performed from January to June.

To understand our workforce and the lessons learnt during this time of rapid change, we undertook pulse checks with staff, enabling a consolidation of our learnings and experiences, to plan for future enhancements.

Bushfire recovery supports continued across fire-affected regions, with clinicians actively making connections in communities with people needing psychosocial support. Fire Shed Fridays reached more than 20 local fire-sheds and their volunteers, to connect people and provide psychological support and opportunities for community development.

## Murrumbidgee Local Health District | Demographic summary

### Size

- 125,243 km<sup>2</sup>

### Population size

- 245,196 residents (30 June 2019 ERP)
- Projected to increase to 246,022 by 2031 (2019 NSW Department of Planning, Industry and Environment projections)

### Age

- 14 per cent aged 70+ (30 June 2019 ERP)
- 70+ age group projected to increase to 19 per cent by 2031

### Culture

- 5.8 per cent from Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander background (2016 ABS ERP)
- 8.6 per cent born overseas
- 6.1 per cent speak a language other than English at home

- Wiradjuri, Yorta Yorta, Baraba Baraba, Wemba Wemba Perrepa Perrepa, Nari Nari and Muthi Muthi peoples are the traditional custodians of the land

### Health issues

- Cancer
- Chronic disease
- Heart disease
- Mental health
- Injury – motor vehicles crashes and falls

A close collaboration with local Aboriginal communities developed strong local models for culturally safe care. We partnered with the Brungle community in Tumut and the local Aboriginal community in Deniliquin to listen and establish localised solutions that will improve outcomes for Aboriginal people.

Several significant building projects continue within the District. Work continues on the Griffith Base Hospital Redevelopment site, construction began on the Hay Health Service Redevelopment in November 2020, and the new Tumut Hospital is due for completion in late 2021.

### Key achievements

- Launched the Murrumbidgee Rural Generalist Training Pathway, a locally developed training program for rural generalist doctors to boost the rural doctor workforce. The single employment model allows for seamless transition between hospital and community-based training placements for trainee GPs.
- Implemented the Safe Wards program, an initiative designed to support consumers in the acute mental health setting by enhancing staff's management of conflict. The program engages people with lived experience of mental health drawing on personal experience to educate staff, ultimately improving services and experiences of others.
- Stroke Unit was awarded the prestigious World Stroke Organization's Angels Gold Status in November 2020. Wagga Wagga Base Hospital was recognised for meeting the highest standards in stroke treatment, indicating that more than 50 per cent of stroke patients receive time-critical care within 60 minutes of presenting to hospital. It was the first Australian hospital to achieve gold status.
- Opened Wagga Wagga Health Service Hub, the third and final stage at the centre of the \$431 million Wagga Wagga Base Hospital Redevelopment. Sixty health services were relocated into the new building. This included an expansion to the Wagga Wagga Base Hospital Renal Unit, providing extra dialysis chairs and doubling the home training unit to support education for consumers undertaking home dialysis.
- Launched the new Health and Arts Outreach Program, an innovative program providing aged care residents access to a quality arts engagement experience, piloted in partnership with Art Gallery of NSW and Health Infrastructure. The program has a social and cultural approach, providing a meaningful way for aged care residents to connect with others, particularly during periods of isolation due to the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Piloted a multi-agency Health Expo for the community of Brungle, a holistic health day linking the Brungle Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community with internal and external outreach programs. The event aimed to improve health outcomes and boost community engagement, rebuilding rapport and trust between facilities, services and the community while addressing the ongoing holistic health and support needs of the community and surrounding areas.
- Day-only hip surgery began at Wagga Wagga Base Hospital. The first of its kind in the region, it enabled patients a short stay in hospital for hip replacements. Recovery is aided with a short-acting spinal anaesthetic drug, allowing people to mobilise quickly. They are often up and walking four hours after surgery. Since it began in July 2020, patients have reported positive experiences and outcomes.
- Launched the Murrumbidgee Collaborative Commissioning Initiative in partnership with the Murrumbidgee Primary Health Network, aiming to collaborate with patients, clinicians and communities to improve quality and demonstrate value in the care we deliver for people with chronic obstructive pulmonary disease and congestive heart failure.
- Released our Patient, Carer and Consumer Experience and Participation Framework, with the aim of improving people's experience in our care. Some initiatives included:
  - Patient Experience Officers and feedback kiosks trialled in emergency departments, with extremely positive feedback
  - the launch of the Patient Reported Outcome Measures program, with patients using electronic devices to record what matters to them, and data used to inform health discussions and individual healthcare plans with patients
  - Mental Health, Drug and Alcohol Lived Experiences Platform, which was created to give people with a lived experience opportunities to share experiences, ideas and feedback to help shape and improve services for their community. See <https://mhdaexperiences.com.au>.
- NSW Health Nurse of the Year Award awarded to Keiran Preston from Wagga Wagga Mental Health Unit. Keiran was announced as joint winner of the 2020 award at the NSW Health Excellence in Nursing and Midwifery Awards in November 2020. Passionate about nursing care and non-judgemental in his interactions with consumers, Keiran is most recognised and appreciated for his empathy for others.

## Nepean Blue Mountains Local Health District

Nepean Hospital  
 Derby Street, Penrith NSW 2750  
 Telephone: 4734 2000  
 Email: NBMLHD-mail@health.nsw.gov.au  
 Website: www.nbmlhd.health.nsw.gov.au  
 Business hours: 8:30am-5pm, Monday to Friday

### Chief Executive: Kay Hyman



Kay Hyman has proudly held the role of Chief Executive, Nepean Blue Mountains Local Health District, for more than 10 years. With tertiary qualifications in marketing and economics, Kay brings over 20 years’ health management experience in New Zealand to the role.

### Year in review

Our commitment to keeping our community safe and healthy has not wavered despite a difficult year in our fight against COVID-19.

We welcomed the opening of the Nepean COVID-19 Vaccination Clinic, offering a level of protection in our community to ensure we can remain safe as the pandemic continues.

With extreme weather continuing to affect our region, we supported residents in the Hawkesbury and Nepean area when a one-in-30-year devastating flood restricted access to essential services. Our response ensured areas continued to have access to medical assistance, safe transfer to hospital and medicines.

The District’s strong relationship with the local Aboriginal community was highlighted with the unveiling of a dedicated World War I memorial at Blue Mountains District ANZAC Memorial Hospital. The names of 35 Darug and Gundungurra soldiers take pride of place at the entrance to the hospital and remind our community of the role these soldiers had in our community and Country.

As part of a strong partnership, three senior mental health clinicians worked alongside first responders as part of the Police Ambulance and Clinical Early Response (PACER) teams in the Nepean area. The roles have reduced the number of emergency department presentations, improved mental health outcomes for affected individuals, and reduced stigma across the area.

For complex pregnancies, our participation in the Maternal Transfer Redesign Initiative has meant families have access to obstetric and neonatal expertise across our own and Western NSW Local Health District when experiencing complications during their pregnancy. We also increased our ability to deliver quality healthcare to people with intellectual disability.

We continued to embrace digital technology to provide safe and high-quality care through our telehealth service. Our new online surgery booking system has also enabled better decision making and information flow across the whole elective surgery journey.

A redesign of our care models has delivered dramatic improvements in Nepean Hospital’s Ear, Nose and Throat service, with access improved following a reduction in wait times.

## Nepean Blue Mountains Local Health District | Demographic summary

### Size

- 9179 km2

### Population size

- 384,742 residents
- Projected increase to 468,777 by 2031

### Age

- 10 per cent aged 70+
- 70+ age group projected to increase to 14 per cent by 2031

### Culture

- 4.4 per cent from Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander background
- 24 per cent born overseas
- 11.8 per cent speak a language other than English at home
- Darug, Gundungurra and Wiradjuri peoples are the traditional custodians of the land

### Health issues

- Cancer
- Circulatory disease
- Respiratory disease
- Injury and poisoning
- Mental disorders



We have also recognised the important role creative arts can play in wellbeing and healing. Our renal dialysis and palliative care teams have introduced art and music therapy programs to encourage patients to take charge of their rehabilitation through creative expression, which has been well received by patients and their families.

Our committed and hardworking staff, volunteers, community, consumers and advocates have our heartfelt thanks for making these achievements possible.

### Key achievements

- Supported the public health response to localised flooding incidents in the region, including the provision of pathology, palliative care, pharmaceuticals and essential supplies for residential aged care facilities, safe transfer of patients, and deployment of mental health staff. Public health safety and hygiene information was distributed to the community to caution those in floodwaters and as recovery efforts started.
- Implemented a safe and effective COVID-19 vaccination program for our staff and the community with almost 15,000 vaccinations having been administered since the clinic opened in April.
- Began an initiative to jointly manage mental health emergencies as part of a \$6.1 million investment by NSW Government to establish Police Ambulance and Clinical Early Response (PACER) teams across NSW.
- Employed a Specialist Intellectual Disability Clinician to provide care to people with an intellectual disability across the District. It is one of only nine such roles across NSW.
- Supported better connectivity between patients and clinicians with 214,488 telehealth occasions of service throughout the period.
- Since the introduction of the online surgery booking system, 2915 requests for admission have been entered. The system automatically recommends an operation date as a surgery is added to the waitlist and patients can be automatically referred to outpatient services at the start of their surgery journey.
- Achieved a 60 per cent reduction in waitlist times as a result of the comprehensive redesign of the Nepean Hospital Ear, Nose and Throat clinic, and in 90 per cent of cases, patients were referred, screened and triaged within five days.

## Northern NSW Local Health District

Crawford House

Hunter Street, Lismore NSW 2480

Telephone: 6620 2100

Website: [www.nnswlhd.health.nsw.gov.au](http://www.nnswlhd.health.nsw.gov.au)

Business hours: 8:30am-5pm

### Chief Executive: Wayne Jones



Wayne Jones started in health more than 35 years ago, undertaking his generalist nursing training in Western Sydney. In the following 10 years, he gained multiple postgraduate nursing and management qualifications in areas including intensive care, cardiology and a Bachelor of Health Management. Wayne progressed into a variety of nursing and general management roles, and came to Northern NSW in 2000 as Executive Officer of Lismore Base Hospital. Prior to his appointment as Chief Executive in May 2016, Wayne held a number of roles within the health service, including Manager of Planning, Director of Clinical Streams and Chief of Staff.

### Year in review

Responding to the COVID-19 pandemic was a large focus of our health district throughout 2020-21.

As case numbers grew throughout the middle of 2020, our COVID-19 response team collaborated with staff groups and external organisations to lead our community and our health service through the difficulties presented by the pandemic.

We held weekly meetings with police, NSW Ambulance, local councils, primary health partners, Aboriginal Medical Services, universities and infectious disease specialists to stay connected and respond to new challenges as they arose.

Weekly personal protective equipment governance meetings were held with clinicians and managers to review and discuss personal protective equipment supply issues.

Our COVID-19 Operational Planning and Policy Governance Committee provided oversight, coordination and endorsement of all planning activities (clinical, welfare and workforce) and related documentation to support the District's response to the pandemic. It also worked to oversee the development and approval of COVID-related internal policy, procedure and guidelines and to endorse any workforce changes and strategies.

## Northern NSW Local Health District | Demographic summary

### Size

- 20,732 km<sup>2</sup>

### Population size

- 304,857 residents<sup>1</sup>
- Projected increase to 319,755 by 2031<sup>2</sup>

### Age

- 17 per cent aged 70+<sup>1</sup>
- 70+ age group projected to increase by 63 per cent by 2031<sup>2</sup>

### Culture

- 21 per cent born overseas<sup>3</sup>
- Five per cent from Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander background<sup>4</sup>
- Four per cent speak a language other than English at home<sup>3</sup>
- Bundjalung, Yaegl, Gumbaynggirr and Githabul peoples are the traditional custodians of the land

### Health issues

- Poor health behaviours such as risky alcohol consumption, smoking during pregnancy, physical inactivity, overweight and obesity
- Higher cancer incidence
- High rates of psychological distress, intentional self-harm and suicide
- Higher rates of death for cancers, circulatory diseases, injury and poisoning<sup>5</sup>

Sources: 1. NSW Health, 2019. ABS Estimated Residential Population (ERP) by age group (100+) and sex by: SLA (2007, 2011), LGA (2007), Planning clusters and local health districts. Available from: [Resources \(nswhealth.net\)](https://www.nswhealth.net/resources). 2. NSW Department of Planning, Industry and Environment, 2019. NSW 2019 Population Projections. Available from: [Projections](https://www.planning.nsw.gov.au/projections). 3. Australian Bureau of Statistics. Census of Population and Housing, 2016, TableBuilder. Available from: [TableBuilder \(abs.gov.au\)](https://www.abs.gov.au/tablebuilder). 4. Australian Bureau of Statistics. Estimates of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians, June 2016, Catalogue number 3238.0.55.001. Canberra: ABS, 2018. Provided to NSW Health by the ABS as a special request. Available from: [Population by Aboriginality](https://www.abs.gov.au/population-by-aboriginality). 5. NSW Health. 2021. HealthStats NSW. Available from: [HealthStats NSW LocationBasedAllIndicatorGroup](https://www.healthstats.nsw.gov.au/locationbasedallindicatorgroup).

These challenges included responding to workforce and medical access issues arising from border closures, ensuring our hospitals and health facilities were adhering to strict infection prevention protocols, developing technical solutions to support the patient-focused activities, supporting businesses and industry with public health advice and resources around restrictions and COVID-safe practices, and keeping our community informed.

When COVID-19 vaccines became available in early 2021, we mobilised new vaccination clinics to provide vaccinations to the priority groups in our District, including setting up the first shopping centre-based vaccination clinic in the state, an innovative approach designed to encourage and reinforce the importance of vaccination in an accessible and public place.

Training and expanding our workforce to have the skills needed to keep themselves and our community safe was a key part of our District's pandemic response.

We recruited 62 additional nursing staff to assist with workload and additional requirements brought on by COVID-19. Our mental health directorate led the District's Staff Wellbeing response, conducting sessions, consultation and workshops with staff groups directly impacted by COVID-19.

We developed a supportive skills program for nurses and midwives to strengthen the ability of staff to surge in essential services both during COVID-19 and at other times. Also, 265 staff attended surge training in intensive care, emergency and immunisation specialties using the Qstream platform, which delivered learning/questions via mobile at timed intervals throughout the program duration. The training involved multi-media learning and scenario-based questions, with 98 per cent proficiency improvements across the three areas.

Physiotherapists were also supported with a new training package to prepare them in the event they were required to work in intensive care. This included self-directed learning modules, practical training in intensive care units and simulation training. Forty-six physiotherapists from across the District completed this training.

Workforce units assisted frontline workers to deliver the vaccine rollout by identifying program phases and priority groups for staff vaccinations, and developed new policies and procedures to support staff to work from home in line with the public health orders.

About 200 additional staff were recruited across clinical and non-clinical disciplines, supported by workforce teams to ensure onboarding and orientation requirements could be met in a business-as-usual environment.

The Lismore Base Hospital Stage 3c redevelopments began in February 2021, marking the final stage in the \$312.8 million redevelopment.

The NSW Telestroke Service was implemented at our hospitals in Lismore, Tweed and Grafton, providing regional patients with life-saving access to expert stroke care to improve clinical outcomes.

Throughout this challenging year, our staff have worked incredibly hard to overcome obstacles and adapt to the changes imposed on both their working and personal lives as a result of the pandemic. They have responded with resilience, leadership and compassion, and we thank them for their unending commitment to providing excellent patient-focused care to our community and to each other.

### Key achievements

- Rolled out the IDose Iris Scanner System across four Opioid Treatment Program sites, resulting in a 50 per cent reduction in medication errors and medication spillages.
- Set up the Homeless Health Outreach Team for the Tweed/Byron area, improving linkages and engagement to mental health services for individuals, community, government and non-government agencies to provide access to treatment, care and transition-to-housing services. So far, more than 100 referrals have been received, and a client list of about 50 consumers has been established.
- Implemented changes to reduce patient falls resulting in serious injury from 0.5/1000 bed days to 0.4/1000 bed days, and to reduce hospital-acquired pressure injuries from 0.08/1000 bed days to 0.05/1000 bed days. Initiatives included improved night lighting, post-fall huddles, falls management plan improvements in eMR, falls prevention training, District-wide changes to linen use, and equipment reviews.
- Improved the safety culture by supporting staff and managers to address safety risks of patient and visitor behaviours through strategy, procedure and processes to ensure a consistent approach when managing unacceptable behaviour of patients and visitors in our healthcare settings.
- Conducted a longitudinal, mixed-methods research study to assess development, resource and support needs of Midwifery Unit Managers and Nursing Unit Managers. The research led to the creation of the Leading Edge Assessment Program and leadership development framework to support Midwifery and Nursing Unit Managers to deliver positive patient outcomes, organisational goals, culture and staff engagement in their teams. Managers then created individualised learning plans to meet their needs.
- Maintained high rates of referral to the Get Healthy phone coaching service, with 617 people, including 573 pregnant women, referred to help them achieve a healthier lifestyle (twice the target set by the NSW Ministry of Health). Health promotion staff worked with over 90 per cent of early childhood centres and 80 per cent of schools to deliver healthy eating and physical activity programs to meet the target outcomes set by the Ministry.
- Piloted the Service Registration Assist program, in which medical practice records can be updated centrally through a single, secure system, ensuring other healthcare providers have their correct contact details and practice information. Before the pilot, three per cent of electronic discharge summaries were undeliverable from the District to participating general practitioners and medical practices due to missing information, and 10 per cent had invalid or missing identifiers. During the pilot, 100 per cent of electronic discharge summaries were delivered, and the project is now being rolled out nationally, led by the Australian Digital Health Agency.
- Piloted same-day hip and knee surgery at Grafton Base Hospital, enabling patients to have major surgery and return home the same day where clinically appropriate. Patients receive pre-operative physiotherapy and education, and are up and moving three to four hours after surgery, under the care of allied health and nursing teams. Twelve patients were selected for the pilot, with a 100 per cent same-day successful discharge rate and no complications. Patient satisfaction was rated nine out of 10.
- Funded nation-first research into the feasibility of the Optimul assay in diagnosis of platelet function disorders in a regional setting, with the aim of improving the care of patients with undiagnosed bleeding disorders in regional Australia. Results from research studies conducted in Lismore and Sydney will be submitted for publication in a national peer-reviewed journal.
- Improved regionally based training opportunities for local junior doctors in the Richmond Network through partnerships with the Northern NSW Regional Training Hub, University of Sydney Rural Clinical School, specialist colleges and NSW and federal health departments. Increased opportunities now exist in specialties including emergency medicine (90 per cent of training now available locally, up from 20 per cent in 2014), general practitioner training (100 per cent of training now available locally), and General Practitioner Advanced Training Skills in emergency medicine, obstetrics, paediatrics, critical care and rehabilitation. Locally available anaesthetics and basic physician training are now at 60 per cent. Eighty per cent of doctors who complete their internship at Lismore Base Hospital now stay in the region beyond postgraduate year three, working in hospital or general practitioner settings.

## Northern Sydney Local Health District

Reserve Road, St Leonards NSW 2065

Telephone: 9462 9955

Email: NSLHD-Mail@health.nsw.gov.au

Website: www.nslhd.health.nsw.gov.au

Business hours: 8:30am-5pm, Monday to Friday

### Chief Executive: Deb Willcox



Deb Willcox became Chief Executive in November 2017. Her career has included roles in both government and non-government organisations, and her experience spans clinical, corporate services, government departments, the research environment and senior government advisor roles. Deb has held a number of senior executive and leadership positions within NSW Health including Director of Operations, Sydney Local Health District, General Manager, Royal Prince Alfred Hospital, Director Customer Service and Corporate Governance, HealthShare NSW and Director Executive and Ministerial Services, NSW Ministry of Health.

### Year in review

The COVID-19 pandemic continued to be a focus for our health district and amidst the unprecedented challenges, our staff came together to lead a monumental response to manage the COVID-19 pandemic while still delivering high-quality safe care to our patients.

Our District led a rapid public health response to COVID-19 exposure at Ryde Hospital and also to the Avalon COVID-19 cluster – which saw some of the highest testing rates in the state leading to the containment of the outbreak.

Efforts were also turned to the mass vaccination program by rapidly setting up vaccination clinics at Hornsby, Royal North Shore and Mona Vale hospitals.

We strengthened technologies such as telehealth to transform our services beyond COVID-19 to better serve our patients.

As we expanded our infrastructure, Hornsby Ku-ring-gai Hospital became the first public hospital in Australia to open a robotic pharmacy as part of a \$265 million redevelopment. The centrepiece of the redevelopment, the six-storey clinical services building, opened featuring a helipad, a specially designed dementia and delirium ward and a new rehabilitation department.

Planning is also underway for the \$479 million redevelopment of Ryde Hospital. Our transformation of Mona Vale Hospital has continued with the opening of its palliative care unit and geriatric rehabilitation unit. Construction also started on Australia's first adolescent and young adult hospice at the former Manly Hospital site.

The achievements of our staff were acknowledged at the NSW Health Awards with two nominations receiving top honours.

Our District also embarked on a planetary health project, taking a holistic approach to our healthcare system and how we can care for the health of our planet and our local community.

In what was another challenging year, which reinforced the skill of our health system, it was a pleasure to be a part of it. I would like to thank our hardworking staff, volunteers, patients and community for contributing to these wonderful achievements.

## Northern Sydney Local Health District | Demographic summary

### Size

- 900 km<sup>2</sup>

### Population size

- 985,708 residents
- Projected increase to 1,091,346 by 2031

### Age

- 11.8 per cent aged 70+
- 70+ age group projected to increase to 13.7 per cent by 2031

### Culture

- 37 per cent born overseas
- 0.4 per cent from Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander background
- 28 per cent speak a language other than English at home
- Cammeraygal, Guringai and Dharug peoples are the traditional owners of the land

### Health issues

- Conditions relating to ageing (frailty, dementia, stroke, cancer)
- Higher rates of breast and skin cancer
- Unhealthy levels of alcohol consumption

## Key achievements

- Received the Patient Safety First NSW Health Award with Royal North Shore Hospital Intensive Care Unit's project 'Reducing Inappropriate Arterial Blood Gas Testing in a 58-bed Quaternary Intensive Care Unit'.
- Established a strike force in response to COVID-19 and the virus' threat in residential aged care facilities. The team, who were available 24/7 for the potential occurrence of an outbreak, had members from across disciplines including infection prevention and control, infectious diseases, public health, aged care outreach, allied health and general practitioners.
- Set up COVID-19 Care Teams to support staff during the pandemic. The care teams answered staff questions, passed on feedback to managers and offered general assistance as staff faced unprecedented challenges.
- Developed the District's first Diversity and Inclusion framework to support and empower our workforce. The aim was to reflect the diverse community served and create a place where all our staff felt their skills, perspectives and experiences were embraced and celebrated. We also developed a dedicated Diversity, Inclusion and Belonging Strategy, a number of employee networks which are led by our staff, and a Diversity, Inclusion and Belonging Council which meets regularly to discuss our progress on the strategy and targeted initiatives.
- Established the first Planetary Health Committee to ensure our hospitals and services are more environmentally conscious and sustainable. Driven by our staff, the committee began devising ways for workplaces to become more environmentally friendly and lead to better practices.
- Unveiled a consumer-centred website design, following engagement with our consumers and staff to improve engagement with our health services. The redesign has made the District and hospital websites accessible and more user-friendly.
- Began construction on the \$19.5 million Adolescent Young Adults Hospital. Upon completion, it will be Australia's first dedicated service for 15 to 24-year-old patients and will offer respite care, symptom management and end of life care.
- Awarded the Excellence in the Provision of Mental Health Services Award in the NSW Health Awards with Hornsby Ku-ring-gai Hospital Mental Health Intensive Care Unit's project 'Reducing Time in Seclusion in the Mental Health Intensive Care Unit'.

## South Eastern Sydney Local Health District

Corner, The Kingsway and Kareena Road

Caringbah NSW 2229

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Website: [www.seslhd.health.nsw.gov.au](http://www.seslhd.health.nsw.gov.au)

Business hours: 8:30am-5pm, Monday to Friday

### Chief Executive: Tobi Wilson



Tobi Wilson was appointed the Chief Executive of South Eastern Sydney Local Health District in April 2019. Tobi began his career as a physiotherapist, before completing a Master of Health Science Management at the University of South Australia.

Tobi has a wealth of experience in health service management and has held various executive positions. Prior to his appointment as Chief Executive he held the role of General Manager, Prince of Wales Hospital and Sydney/Sydney Eye Hospital. Prior to this he held senior roles in different jurisdictions including Chief Operating Officer roles at the Royal Melbourne Hospital and South Adelaide Local Health Network. In all the roles he has held, Tobi has demonstrated a proven ability to drive clinical change through redesign, including the delivery of capital redevelopments and large-scale transformational change.

Tobi is passionate about innovation in healthcare and has a strong history in external partnerships to leverage the knowledge and experience of other sectors to resolve the challenges that confront healthcare delivery.

### Year in review

It has been an exciting and challenging year for our health district as we steadily navigated our way through the COVID-19 pandemic. I thank our staff who have rapidly transitioned to the use of telehealth technologies and for their flexible and innovative approach to ensure patients continue to receive the best care.

More than 227,000 people attended emergency departments across the District in 2020-21. More than 36,000 surgeries were performed, and there were more than 196,000 admissions and over 8200 babies delivered at the Royal Hospital for Women, St George and Sutherland hospitals.

Our District published the Journey to Excellence Strategy 2018-21 three years ago, placing people at the centre of the delivery of care to our community.

## South Eastern Sydney Local Health District | Demographic summary

### Size

- 468 km<sup>2</sup>

### Population size

- 979,370 residents
- Projected increase to 1,080,291 by 2031

### Age

- 10.9 per cent aged 70+
- 70+ age group projected to increase to 12.9 per cent by 2031

### Culture

- 40 per cent born overseas
- One per cent from Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander background
- 36 per cent speak a language other than English at home
- Dharawal, Gadigal, Wangai, Gweagal and Bidjigal peoples are the traditional owners of the land

### Health issues

- Diabetes
- Hypertension
- Cancer
- Mental health
- Ageing population

We are now embarking on a new strategy to guide the way we deliver healthcare over the coming years which will build on our achievements from the Journey to Excellence and respond to the challenges facing today's clinicians, leaders and patients. It has been developed in partnership with our staff, consumers and community members reinforcing the need to prioritise equitable, compassionate and person-centred care.

Our hospitals faced a significant challenge of managing increased waitlists following the suspension of non-urgent elective surgery by the federal government due to the COVID-19 pandemic. During the year, staff across the District worked tirelessly to provide patients whose surgery had been delayed with timely access to care.

In 2020-21, more than 24,000 patients had their elective surgery, a 27 per cent increase, or more than 5200 additional patients compared with the previous financial year, with more than 3000 patients receiving their surgery through collaborative arrangements with the private health sector.

We launched our Addressing Racism Strategy, Racism Harms: Act on It, with the campaign including a number of resources to support the District's managers and staff to have conversations about racism, and to act on it.

Several new services were also launched in 2020-21 across the District, including a 12-chair Kogarah Community Dental Clinic, SafeHaven in Kogarah to assist people to develop self-management skills to maintain their mental health and the Suicide Prevention Outreach Team at Sutherland Hospital, a service that supports people in the community.

We celebrated some key milestones this year, including: 50 years of pioneering treatment at Prince of Wales Hospital's Hyperbaric Unit, the 10-year anniversary of the Narrangy-Borris Strong Foundations Aboriginal Child and Family Health Service at Menai and the topping out ceremony to mark the Prince of Wales Hospital's new Integrated Acute Services Building reaching the highest point in its construction.

Thanks to our frontline and support staff who continue to provide safe, quality healthcare and essential services to our community during the COVID-19 pandemic and our volunteers and foundations who support us to deliver these services.

### Key achievements

- Opened one of the first COVID-19 vaccination hubs in NSW at St George Hospital, which administered over 30,000 vaccinations from March to June 2021. The NSW Premier, Minister for Health and Chief Health Officer were among the first in NSW to receive the AstraZeneca vaccine at the hub opening.
- Expanded the NSW Telestroke Service, hosted by Prince of Wales Hospital, throughout NSW. The service connected rural and regional patients to rapid stroke assessment, treatment and management allowing patients to access care closer to home.
- Launched a Virtual Health Strategy, setting out a plan for the District to become a leader in the use of virtual health at scale. The response to the COVID-19 pandemic accelerated the innovation of clinicians across the District with virtual models used in services as diverse as Bariatric, Antenatal and Aboriginal Health.

- Implemented SafeHaven, an alternative to the emergency department for people experiencing suicidal crisis. SafeHaven is a drop-in program where people receive rapid access to compassionate and trauma-informed care. This is a part of the Towards Zero Suicides Initiative and contributes to the NSW Premier's Priority goal of reducing the suicide rate in NSW by 20 per cent by 2023.
- Opened the 12-chair Kogarah Dental Clinic, bringing public dental services in the St George region under one roof. The new clinic has expanded the capacity to deliver public dental care, bringing staff together in a modern disciplinary clinic.
- Granted funding to assist a world-first national consortium of clinical, scientific and governance experts, including the NSW Organ and Tissue Donation Service, to develop bioengineered eye tissue to treat corneal blindness.
- Announced by the NSW Government, an \$81.5 million investment in the Sutherland Hospital Operating Theatres Complex Upgrade Project, along with an additional \$7 million for the installation of an MRI Suite.
- Welcomed the birth of The Royal Hospital for Women's first low-cost IVF babies. The hospital is one of three services offering affordable IVF for eligible families in NSW.
- Secured a number of research grants, including: Safer Medicines to Reduce Falls and Injury for Osteoporosis (\$2,337,170) and First 2000 Days Care Connect – a holistic first 2000 days model of care for migrant and refugee populations (\$840,547).
- Announced by the NSW Government, the fast-tracking of the third and final stage of the St George Hospital redevelopment, with the allocation of \$105 million to start work on the \$385 million Integrated Ambulatory Care Precinct.

## South Western Sydney Local Health District

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### Chief Executive: Amanda Larkin



Amanda Larkin has more than 25 years of experience in health service management, a Bachelor of Social Work, an Associate Diploma in Environmental Science and an Honorary Doctorate from the University of New South Wales.

Leading more than 17,000 staff, her extensive experience in health management and commitment to safe, high-quality care for the people of south western Sydney and passion to further develop health and education precincts across the District places the region at the forefront of world-class healthcare.

Amanda serves as a board member of the Ingham Institute of Applied Medical Research, South Western Sydney Primary Health Network and Health Infrastructure and as the Chair of the Sydney Partnership for Health.

### Year in review

Through the evolving COVID-19 pandemic, our staff have provided outstanding care to our community. Their dedication and teamwork has been truly inspirational.

From the COVID-19 cluster in Casula to the opening of the Liverpool Vaccination Clinic, our District has responded with exceptional commitment to keeping our patients, consumers and community safe. We conducted 243,512 COVID-19 tests in drive-through, pop-up and hospital clinics across our region – an incredible effort from our team.

The new year brought new hope in the fight against COVID-19 with the opening of the Liverpool Vaccination Clinic. Our frontline staff were among the first to be immunised before we extended the protection of vaccination to the rest of our workforce, essential workers and the community. We conducted over 72,000 vaccinations in our District and as well as in country areas. I am immensely proud of the dedication of our staff and thank them for their excellent work.

The District's Transforming Your Experience Strategy provided support and reassurance for our staff with risk huddles and leader rounding now embedded into our practice.

## South Western Sydney Local Health District | Demographic summary

### Size

- 6243 km<sup>2</sup>

### Population size

- 1,038,534 residents
- Projected increase to 1,317,503 by 2031

### Age

- 9.6 per cent aged 70+
- 70+ age group projected to increase by 98 per cent from 2016 to 2031

### Culture

- 43 per cent born overseas
- 2.1 per cent from Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander background
- 49 per cent speak a language other than English at home
- Cabrogal clan of the Darug Nation and peoples of the Dharawal and Gundungurra Nations are the traditional owners of the land

### Health issues

- Diabetes
- Respiratory conditions
- Circulatory disease
- Mental health
- Malignant neoplasms (tumours)

Through the introduction of quality-focused programs, the Improvement Science Learning Pathways and Mental Health Pathways in Practice, we continued to empower our staff to improve their skills.

The development of our One Service Multiple Sites strategy has provided a seamless network of services across the District's care. It is delivering a healthcare system of the future, an important priority of the District's Strategic Plan 2018-2021. Two District research projects also received NSW Health COVID-19 grants to explore virtual models of care in childhood development and intensive care, highlighting our commitment to the plan's strategic direction of research leadership.

The District's \$3 billion hospital redevelopment projects achieved significant milestones. We celebrated the completion of stage one of the \$68.7 million Bowral & District Hospital redevelopment and the \$25 million emergency department extension at Bankstown-Lidcombe Hospital. Both projects have brought world-class facilities to their communities. The \$632 million stage two Campbelltown Hospital redevelopment reached its highest point of construction, early works started on the \$740 million Liverpool Health and Academic Precinct and planning is well underway for the new \$1.3 billion Bankstown-Lidcombe Hospital.

It's been an amazing year of progress and achievement for our District and I am incredibly proud of our staff as they provide outstanding care to our community, not only through the challenges of the pandemic, but every day.

### Key achievements

- Opened the stage one redevelopment of Bowral & District Hospital to provide world-class care to the Southern Highlands community, including a new emergency department, purpose-built and paediatric inpatient wards and new maternity and birthing suites.

- Developed the Regional Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Plan to 2025 in partnership with the South Western Sydney Primary Health Network, pledging to work together to provide the best possible care to consumers in south western Sydney.
- Completed the emergency department redevelopment at Bankstown-Lidcombe Hospital, including additional treatment spaces, more paediatric beds, increased short-stay capacity and additional resuscitation beds.
- Expanded the Targeted Home Visiting Model of Care from Bankstown and Bowral Local Government areas to three additional Local Government areas to ensure families living with vulnerabilities receive more personalised and targeted support.
- Integrated the paperless NSW Health Vaccination Application COVAX into the opening of the Liverpool Vaccination Clinic to enable a seamless transfer of patient information directly into the electronic medical records.
- Launched the Improvement Science Learning Pathway to embed continuous improvement in the District's care and implement a structured approach for staff to plan sustainable quality improvements.
- Established a first-of-its-kind Aboriginal Metabolic Pathway in partnership with the Tharawal Aboriginal Medical Service to provide Aboriginal patients with centralised and culturally responsive and safe care.
- Introduced NSW-first FetaLink technology to Bankstown-Lidcombe and Liverpool hospitals to provide digital fetal and maternal monitoring from the bedside, clinical areas and via remote access.
- Received a NSW Health Award (Secretary's Award) for the Aged Care Rapid Assessment and Investigation Unit's work in improving older patient outcomes through targeted, streamlined and multi-disciplinary care.



## Southern NSW Local Health District

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### Chief Executive: Margaret Bennett



Margaret Bennett joined the District on 2 March 2020 after nine years as Chief Executive Officer of Northeast Health, in Wangaratta, Victoria. Her broad clinical background includes senior executive roles in health and hospital services in NSW, Victoria and WA, with a proven track record as an experienced, capable and successful leader.

Margaret's leadership of significant and complex transformation includes successfully uniting six hospitals and 12 community health services across a large geographic area during her six-year tenure as Inaugural General Manager of Coffs Harbour Health Campus and the Coffs-Clarence Network of the (then) North Coast Area Health Service.

### Year in review

Renewal was the main theme for our community and staff at Southern NSW Local Health District this year. The District is recovering from the significant impact of bushfires, drought and floods, while the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic continue.

Several significant organisational changes were implemented over the last year to improve efficiency, collaboration and workplace culture, which included:

- finalisation of a four-year business restructure
- establishment of the Elevate workplace culture and leadership framework
- creation of the Coastal, Monaro and Tablelands networks to align health services into geographical clusters
- development of strategic and operational plans for 2021-2026.

Our District recognises the extraordinary work of the Public Health and COVID-19 planning, screening, testing and vaccination teams this year. Our teams managed complex and changing border arrangements with the Australian Capital Territory and Victorian governments, airlines and shipping. Southern NSW testing clinics performed 82,644 COVID-19 tests in 2020-21 and there were 25 confirmed cases of COVID-19 in the Southern NSW Local Health District.

### Key achievements

- Introduced quantitative fibronectin testing by the Nursing and Midwifery Directorate, across maternity services to improve safety and reduce unnecessary transfers to tertiary facilities. The testing enables clinicians to predict the likelihood of preterm birth occurring within seven days of testing. As a result, there was a 97 per cent reduction of women with threatened preterm labour needing to be transferred.
- Developed a GradStart program at Goulburn Hospital and Mental Health Inpatient Unit, which supports new graduate nurses to become highly skilled in both General and Mental Health Nursing.

## Southern NSW Local Health District | Demographic summary

### Size

- 44,534 km<sup>2</sup>

### Population size

- 211,122 residents (estimated June 2019)
- Projected increase to 211,617 by 2031 (NSW Department of Planning, Industry and Environment)

### Age

- 14.3 per cent aged 70+
- 70+ age group projected to increase to 20.5 per cent by 2031

### Culture

- 12.4 per cent born overseas
- 4.2 per cent from Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander background (estimated 2018)
- 5.9 per cent speak a language other than English at home (ABS Census 2016)
- Gundungurra, Ngarigo, Ngunnawal and Yuin peoples are the traditional owners of the land

### Health issues

- Impact of ageing – demand for ageing service such as falls prevention, chronic disease, dementia, cancer, rehabilitation and palliative care

- High rates of disability in adults, and high rates of developmentally vulnerable children
- High oral health risk factors
- High rates of psychological distress and intentional self-harm
- Aboriginal population hospitalised for potentially preventable reasons – two times more likely than non-Aboriginal people
- Above state rates of premature and avoidable deaths

- Created the Quit4Bub project to research smoking in pregnancy. Population Health examined if smoking cessation during the second half of pregnancy could prevent low birth weight babies. Based on Phase 1 research of the project, it was hypothesised that women who received smoking cessation enhanced brief intervention during pregnancy would quit smoking in the second half of pregnancy compared with those who received usual smoking cessation care.
- Implemented the No Wrong Door initiative to improve the care of mental health patients who presented at Queanbeyan Hospital. The Queanbeyan Hospital Emergency Department and Community Mental Health Drug and Alcohol team's program helped to increase the number of patients diagnosed with mental health-related concerns to be seen by mental health services prior to discharge.
- Supported the healing of the local Bega Valley and Eurobodalla Aboriginal people following the fires and fostered interagency collaboration through the project, See the country recover through the eyes of the Yuin People. The project aimed to explore and understand the impact of the Black Summer fires on Aboriginal people and their lands, and how we can walk together on the journey called recovery.
- Created an online platform to make maternity-specific information easily accessible to consumers and reduce paperwork. Queanbeyan Hospital's Maternity Service's new platform was well received by patients who commented on the improved communication with the service and a significant reduction in administration time.
- Delivered two projects as part of the NSW Government's \$297 million Multipurpose Service program:
  - completed the Braidwood Multipurpose Service project in September 2020, which features health services co-located under one roof; in-patient rooms designed according to latest models of care requirements; a purpose-built facility delivering therapeutic benefits for patients and visitors; 37 single room residential aged care beds with multiple activity rooms, and shared lounge and dining facilities; acute care beds; an emergency department with dedicated ambulance entry and X-ray services
  - delivered the main works stage for the \$8 million Yass Hospital Redevelopment project in September 2020. Construction of the new emergency department was completed in June 2020 and the department commenced operations in July 2020. The redeveloped health facility includes 24-hour access to emergency care, an additional emergency department treatment bay, dedicated ambulance entry point, patient beds increased from 10 to 12, improved community and allied health facilities and ongoing access to X-ray services. The redeveloped health facility also includes a heritage timeline detailing the history of Yass District Hospital.
- Expanded the reach of the Cardiac Rehabilitation Program as Eurobodalla Cardiac Rehabilitation launched a telehealth project and new model of care to include home-based options for cardiac rehabilitation clients as an alternative to traditional gym-based group sessions. It allowed continuity of service during the COVID-19 pandemic and also improved patient outcomes compared with non-pandemic years.
- Recruited a temporary for seclusion and restraint reduction in November 2020. This role was created to implement the Six Core Strategies for Seclusion and Restraint Reduction across the mental health inpatient units and five declared emergency departments. A service-based seclusion and restraint reduction plan was developed and sensory modulation rooms were opened in our two acute mental health inpatient units. A clinical redesign project using redesign methodology (in conjunction with the Agency for Clinical Innovation) has commenced, which will support our emergency departments to identify solutions for change and support the reduction of seclusion and restraint in these spaces.
- Achieved all 14 Hospital Acquired Complications targets for 2020-21 and commenced implementation of the Patient Reported Measures Program with a rollout schedule planned for 2021.

## Sydney Local Health District

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### Chief Executive: Dr Teresa Anderson AM FIPAA, B.App Science (Speech Pathology) PhD



Dr Teresa Anderson is an internationally recognised speech pathologist, with more than 35 years of experience as a clinician and health service executive. She was recognised for her contribution to NSW Health in 2018, and appointed a Member of the Order of Australia (AM).

Teresa is a Vice-President and Fellow of the NSW Institute of Public Administration Australia, a member of seven medical research, health and primary health network boards, and an active member of Sydney Health Partners Governing Council and Executive Management Group, an Advanced Health Research Translation Centre.

She is passionate about developing people, programs and services to support and improve the health and wellbeing of the community.

### Year in review

Twelve months into the COVID-19 response in NSW, the opening of the NSW Health Vaccination Centre – RPA Hospital in February brought hope and joy for our staff. It was a major milestone in the pandemic and provided further reassurance to those working in our border and quarantine programs, critical care areas and those in our flying squads and testing clinics.

Within months our District had an instrumental role in further amplifying the state's vaccination program. A clinic was set up at Sydney Airport and the state's first mass vaccination centre opened at Sydney Olympic Park.

The NSW Health Vaccination Centre was initially established with capacity to vaccinate 5000 people every day. Establishing it required the collaboration of hundreds of staff from engineering, ICT and communication, to workforce, administration and training, as well as clinicians and staff required for everyday operations including doctors, nurses, pharmacy and other clinical staff, cleaners and security, students, and partners from government and industry.

The model and design has since been utilised in other vaccination centres across the state. By end June 2021, the centre's daily capacity had doubled to 10,000 and almost 400,000 people had been vaccinated at the three Sydney Local Health District sites.

Our hospitals, Special Health Accommodation and RPA Virtual Hospital continued to care for community members who needed additional support, for people with COVID-19 and for returning travellers who needed additional care or who became unwell.

Since its launch as the state's first virtual hospital in February 2020, **rpavirtual** has had a critical role in the state's COVID-19 response. In 2020-21 alone, we delivered virtual care to almost 18,700 patients, including 1780 COVID-19-positive patients and more than 11,000 in Special Health Accommodation.

It was estimated that together the services have helped to avoid more than 700 hospital admissions. **rpavirtual** won the Premier's Award for excellence in digital innovation.

## Sydney Local Health District | Demographic summary

### Size

- 126 sq km

### Population size

- 722,492 residents, with more than a million people entering this local health district to work, study and visit each day
- Projected to increase to 855,351 by 2031

### Age

- 8.8 per cent aged 70+
- 70+ age group projected to increase to 91,498 by 2031

### Culture

- 1.1 per cent from an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander background
- 45 per cent born overseas
- 58 per cent speak a language other than English at home
- Gadigal, Bediagal and Wangal peoples of the Eora Nation are the traditional custodians of the land

### Health issues

- Insecure housing and homelessness
- Chronic conditions – cardiovascular disease, diabetes, obesity
- Mental health
- Infectious and communicable diseases – COVID-19, sexually transmitted infections, blood-borne viruses
- Drug and alcohol

We heightened measures to stop the spread of COVID-19. Our ICT service designed, built and supported the implementation of daily saliva testing for around 3500 quarantine and frontline staff at more than 24 sites. More than 67,000 virtual meetings or telehealth sessions were held. We tested more than a million people for COVID-19 at locations across Sydney, at times testing more than 4750 people in a single day. Our Public Health Unit managed over 4000 contacts and has surged as needed for contact tracing, surveillance and to inform decision making. We continued to support vulnerable people in our community with COVID-19 testing, vaccination, meal, welfare and other outreach services.

There were more than 3.1 million people cared for in our outpatient services in 2020-21, almost 165,000 people attended our emergency departments and there were over 165,000 admissions and discharges at our hospitals. Over 30,000 surgeries were performed in our hospitals and more than 6000 babies were born at Royal Prince Alfred and Canterbury hospitals.

Our Community Health Services delivered care to nearly 39,500 clients at our service locations and more than 11,000 services were delivered in people's homes. We also provided care to almost 40,000 children, tested the vision of 1100 children and offered 3300 talking and listening checks.

The Sydney Health Care Interpreter Service received 69,752 requests and spent almost 43,000 hours interpreting for patients and their loved ones.

We continued to focus on excellence in healthcare for all, launching Australia's first total body PET-CT scanner at Royal Prince Alfred Hospital, offering new opportunities to treat patients with cancer, neurological conditions and heart disease. The \$341 million redevelopment of Concord Hospital reached a significant milestone, with the new clinical services building reaching its highest point.

We opened Fussell House, a new residential facility to support the National Centre for Veterans' Healthcare at Concord Hospital, and spent \$6.5 million on the Canterbury Hospital Emergency Department upgrade. During NAIDOC Week, we officially opened the revamped Sister Alison Bush Lounge at Royal Prince Alfred Hospital, named in honour of one of the state's longest serving and most influential midwives. We also celebrated the announcement by the NSW Government that the \$750 million redevelopment of Royal Prince Alfred Hospital would be fast-tracked as a key investment in health infrastructure in NSW.

The last 18 months have required an indescribable resolve. What staff working in our health service have faced, found solutions for, and managed to overcome during 2020-21 is extraordinary. But, every day during this pandemic, staff have stepped forward to say 'I can help'. I am so proud to work alongside them and so very grateful for the work they do. Our team has been strengthened by new and existing partnerships – including other government agencies (especially the NSW Police), non-government organisations and private businesses. I would also like to thank our community for their support during this time.

### Key achievements

- Responded to COVID-19:
  - Established vaccination centres at Royal Prince Alfred Hospital, Sydney Olympic Park and Sydney Airport, vaccinating almost half a million people between February and June
  - Established daily saliva surveillance screening for all 3500 quarantine and police hotel workers at the start of every shift
  - Provided more than 1 million COVID-19 tests for our community
  - Supported the Quarantine Program with screening and testing at Sydney Airport, providing Special Health Accommodation for NSW to more than 16,200 people since February 2020 and virtual care through **rpavirtual** to more than 18,700 patients, including more than 1700 COVID-19-positive patients and more than 11,000 COVID-19-negative patients in Special Health Accommodation
  - Significantly changed service provision and prepared hospitals to respond to COVID-19
  - Supported residential aged care homes, people with disabilities and vulnerable populations during the COVID-19 response
  - Partnered with community leaders through our communication and diversity hub networks to support community and develop resources and messages in English and language for community
  - Developed consistent signage for vaccination and COVID-19 areas, utilised across NSW.
- Reached an important milestone in Concord Hospital's \$341 million redevelopment, with construction of the eight-storey, 214-bed clinical services building reaching its highest point of construction.

- Announced the \$750 million redevelopment of Royal Prince Alfred will be fast tracked as a key investment in health infrastructure in NSW.
- Announced and commenced building works for the state's first public inpatient unit for new mothers with severe mental illness.
- Completed the \$6.5 million upgrade of the emergency department at Canterbury Hospital featuring a dedicated waiting area with a play space, seven new treatment spaces, a resuscitation area, specialist isolation area and separate amenities for young patients and their families.
- Won the NSW Premier's Award for excellence in digital innovation for **rpavirtual**.
- Launched Australia's first total body PET-CT scanner at Royal Prince Alfred Hospital to revolutionise patient care, providing clearer images, at a lower radiation dose and in about a quarter of the time.
- Launched the new Bulbuwul Mudjin Midwifery Clinic at Concord Hospital, extending the District's midwifery group practice services for women in Sydney's inner west.
- Launched the new Statewide Intellectual Disability Mental Health Outreach Service to provide advice and consultation to healthcare professionals working with adults with intellectual disabilities.
- Released concept designs for Royal Prince Alfred HealthOne Green Square which will deliver a range of healthcare services focused on population health, early intervention, health promotion and prevention.

## Western NSW Local Health District

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Business hours: 8:30am-5pm, Monday to Friday

### Chief Executive: Scott McLachlan



Scott McLachlan leads a team driven by a commitment to improve health outcomes for rural people, and deliver compassionate, high-quality and connected health services.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people make up more than 13 per cent of the Western NSW Local Health District population. Scott is committed to developing services and places that welcome Aboriginal people and the whole community.

Scott's extensive leadership experience, spanning more than two decades in the public and private health sectors, has shaped his commitment to improving standards of patient care, maintaining authentic community engagement, collaborating with clinicians and leading innovation.

### Year in review

It has been another challenging year for our health system. Our communities have been relentlessly tested but continue to demonstrate resilience, courage and strength. As a community, we are feeling the fatigue associated with the pandemic. We enter a stage of recovery from the drought but now face the detrimental impacts of the mouse plague.

## Western NSW Local Health District | Demographic summary

### Size

- 247,000 km<sup>2</sup>

### Population size

- 279,422 residents
- Projected increase to 286,410 by 2031

### Age

- 41,220 aged 70+
- 70+ age group projected to increase to 52,880 by 2031

### Culture

- Eight per cent born overseas
- 13 per cent from Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander background
- Four per cent speak a language other than English at home
- Barindji, Barrinbinja, Barundji, Gunu, Kamilaroi, Muruwari, Wailwan, Wiradjuri and Wongaibon peoples are the traditional owners of the land

### Health issues

- Cardiovascular disease
- Diabetes
- Cancer
- Alcohol-related deaths
- Suicide and self-harm
- Smoking

Despite the ongoing challenges, we continue to adapt to working and living in a pandemic. Our healthcare team has reached a point of substantial maturity with managing the challenges of COVID-19. We have established culturally appropriate communication strategies, workforce contingency measures including surge planning and emergency response teams to ensure continuity of care. We have tested more than 130,000 people and continue to work with the community and service providers to support and expand on the vaccine rollout in rural and remote communities.

As part of our commitment to provide sustainable healthcare closer to home, we continue to build on innovative technology solutions for remote and virtual care. We have implemented the statewide Telestroke Service, the District-wide pharmacy service incorporating virtual pharmacy, established a virtual Mental Health Drug and Alcohol team and piloted a virtual mental health emergency service.

We have managed the pressures of the pandemic while simultaneously managing the significant increase in the demand for services. Surgeries performed in the District have grown by more than 10 per cent in 2020-21 compared with the previous year, emergency attendances were up by almost 24 per cent and we have had a nine per cent increase in babies being born in our facilities.

The health and wellbeing of Aboriginal people remains a priority. We continue to implement and deliver a range of workforce strategies. We have introduced Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander targeting for all recruitment, and have established an Aboriginal Workforce Training Coordinator to oversee and implement training and development initiatives.

We continue to work in partnerships with other service providers and Aboriginal communities to improve the health of Aboriginal people.

We have an incredible healthcare team. We are proud of the flexibility and resilience of the team. They have shown commitment to providing high-quality patient care during unprecedented times and we would like to thank the team for their ongoing efforts.

## Key achievements

- Improved services across the District, including the opening of the new Lightning Ridge Multipurpose Service and Mudgee Hospital and commenced construction on the new car parking at Dubbo Hospital.
- Implemented Towards Zero Suicides initiatives which included launching Safe Havens, establishing prevention outreach teams, implementing Safeside staff training and partnering with Bila Muuji Aboriginal Corporation Health Service to create rural counsellor positions in Dubbo and Orange.
- Secured a multi-year contract for the provision of medical services to the District health services, and General Practice, in six communities where continuous medical coverage has been difficult to sustain.
- Implemented a Cardiovascular Information System to integrate cardiac catheter lab, echocardiogram and other cardiology services at all sites.
- Launched the Specialist Palliative Care Service Unit. The Specialist team work in partnership with local health services to support patients and their carers to receive care closer to home.
- Developed family and carer spaces within Mental Health Drug and Alcohol services across the District in partnership with non-government organisations, in both community and inpatient settings. Worked with consumers, carers and Aboriginal communities to ensure the spaces are culturally safe for all users.
- Developed numerous training pathways. These include the development of a Western NSW Local Health District physiotherapy clinical school, training pathways for students across all levels of psychology, and the Aboriginal Administration Trainee program.
- Delivered improved services with the installation of CT scan services at Mudgee and Dubbo Health Services. Implemented a new MRI service at Dubbo Hospital and upgraded the MRI and interventional radiology suite at Orange Health Service.
- Implemented further adoption of the Symptoms of Strangulation card for non-fatal strangulation. This was developed by PARVAN (Prevention and Response to Violence, Abuse and Neglect) in Western NSW Local Health District. Over 50,000 copies have since been ordered across NSW, Victoria and the Australian Capital Territory. It has been translated into 21 community languages. It is accessible via Health Pathways intranet site and the Agency for Clinical Innovation website.

## Western Sydney Local Health District

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### Chief Executive: Graeme Loy



During the past 17 years, Graeme Loy has held several executive roles, including Chief Executive for Northern Sydney Local Health District. He was appointed to the role of Chief Executive of Western Sydney Local Health District in 2019.

His knowledge of both clinical and corporate services includes a strong focus on system performance through healthy relationships.

Graeme has accumulated significant experience in all aspects of leadership in both the public and private sectors, delivering highly complex clinical services and positive patient experiences through high-performing teams. His breadth of knowledge spans facility, district and statewide environments and enables him to ensure optimal provision of safe, high-quality and timely clinical and community health services.

### Year in review

The resilience and versatility of Western Sydney Local Health District came to the fore in 2020-21 as we grew and improved services, increased our commitment to research, looked after our staff and planned for the future of healthcare – all while continuing to tackle COVID-19 through testing, treating and now vaccination.

We opened the Central Acute Services Building as the \$1.1 billion Westmead Redevelopment continued. We also opened a new leisure and recreation hub for mental health consumers at Cumberland Hospital, and unveiled the refurbished Merrylands HealthOne community health centre. Work also commenced on significant upgrades to our mental health facilities at Blacktown Hospital.

We have conducted more than 800,000 COVID-19 tests, delivered more than 120,000 doses of the vaccine, and supported people in hotel quarantine with more than 100,000 interpreter sessions. We opened more than 40 COVID-19 testing clinics across western Sydney, and worked with community organisations to vaccinate more than 1000 vulnerable people at dedicated outreach events.

Westmead and Blacktown emergency departments launched a new model of care Rapid Assessment, Intervention, and Discharge-Emergency Department with allied health, significantly improving the patient

experience score from 53 per cent to 79 per cent at Blacktown and from 58 per cent to 92 per cent at Westmead. A new antenatal care model at Auburn Hospital saw the proportion of pregnant women engaged in early care rise from four per cent to 35 per cent.

We were thrilled to launch a new Dragonfly Midwifery Clinic for Aboriginal mothers. The proportion of our staff who identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander has nearly doubled over the past two years, and we began regular yarning circles with Aboriginal elders and the community to discuss how we can improve services.

The launch of a Collaborative Commissioning with the Western Sydney Primary Health Network is driving innovation in the way we manage heart health, urgent health concerns and COVID-19. Our mental health service is working with Blacktown Police to respond to mental health emergencies, responding to more than 400 call-outs and diverting two-thirds of consumers away from the emergency department.

Our commitment to research is stronger than ever with the appointment of our first District Director of Research, and successful grants covering every area of health from heart regeneration and liver cancer to parental health literacy and COVID-19 stress.

This is just the tip of the iceberg, and of course none of it would be possible without the incredible work of the people who make it happen. I could not be more proud of our staff and want to thank them for everything they do each day for the people of Western Sydney Local Health District.

### Key achievements

- Applied successfully for a National Health and Medical Research Council Partnership grant for a cluster-randomised controlled trial of the Parenting Plus intervention program. Child and Family Health, in collaboration with partners, designed the program for new parents to receive more education and guidance through the healthcare system. At the same time, Child and Family Health implemented the Circle of Security Parenting. The highly regarded evidence-based parenting program incorporates videos, teaching, discussion and reflection to help develop the capacity of the parents of western Sydney.
- Targeted priority populations with Youth Health, as *The COVID STREETFIGHTER* program communicated with stakeholders and rapidly scaled up messaging on Facebook. This resulted in many young vulnerable people receiving COVID-19 tests and information, access to telehealth for counselling appointments and mental health care packs for young people in isolation during the first wave of the pandemic.

- Provided a coordinated approach to COVID-19 communication through Multicultural Health Services, working in collaboration with internal and external stakeholders to ensure culturally and linguistically diverse communities in western Sydney received timely, credible, linguistically and culturally appropriate information. Two-way communication processes were established with culturally and linguistically diverse communities early in the pandemic to help identify fears, concerns, challenges and communication needs. Multilingual resources were developed to meet communication needs of a very diverse Western Sydney Local Health District population.
- Started our new Aboriginal Supportive and Palliative care worker, of which we have seen improved culturally appropriate services delivery and support for those and their families who are experiencing end of life.
- Implemented an innovative allied health model of care, the Rapid Assessment Intervention and Discharge in the Emergency Department team at Westmead and Blacktown hospitals. The team works extended hours across seven days including occupational therapy, physiotherapy and social work with the model of care enabling proactive screening of all patients who present to the emergency department.
- Delivered construction of the 14-storey Central Acute Services Building in accordance with the schedule program and handed over to Western Sydney Local Health District on 17 July 2020. The \$1.1 billion Westmead Redevelopment is the biggest health infrastructure project in the state – including the Westmead Hospital redevelopments and stage one of The Children’s Hospital at Westmead. Stage 3 refurbishment works, to create a new specialist cardiology outpatient and administrative hub along with new high-acuity neurosciences inpatient beds, were completed on 21 May 2021.
- Achieved more than five percentage points improvement in patient experience through Auburn Hospital Emergency Department during the COVID-19 pandemic as reported by Bureau of Health Information as a result of strategies focused on transforming the patient’s experience.
- Launched a pilot leadership program in February 2021, recognising the importance of fostering the next generation of leaders among nurses and midwives in western Sydney. The participants of the Nursing and Midwifery Directorate’s leadership program were selected across facilities and services, and have been provided the opportunity to develop and grow on their leadership journey through the engagement with subject matter experts at specialised workshops focusing on patient safety, workforce, conflict and financial management.
- Delivered further progress on cultural transformation focusing on three key areas: leadership, behaviours and communication – including the development and launch of our Culture Vision of ‘Our Place, Our People’
- Established a Health Academy for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students to create pathways into employment in partnership with Indigenous Allied Health Australia Ltd, NSW Department of Education, NSW TAFE, South Eastern Sydney Local Health District and Nepean Blue Mountains Local Health District. Western Sydney Local Health District will be offering clinical placements for trainees with a view of transitioning to permanent employment.

## Western Sydney Local Health District | Demographic summary

### Size

- 780 km<sup>2</sup><sup>5</sup>

### Population size

- 1,144,280 residents<sup>1</sup>
- Projected increase to 1,467,610 by 2031<sup>1</sup>

### Age

- 7.9 per cent aged 70+<sup>1</sup>
- 70+ age group projected to increase by 141,144 by 2031<sup>1</sup>

### Culture

- 46.8 per cent born overseas<sup>2</sup>
- 1.5 per cent from Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander background<sup>2</sup>

- 50.3 per cent speak a language other than English at home<sup>2</sup>
- Darug people are the traditional owners of the land<sup>4</sup>

### Health issues<sup>3</sup>

Coronary heart disease, heart failure, asthma, diabetes and mental illness

Sources: 1. NSW Ministry of Health CaSPA, NSW Department of Planning, Industry and Environment 2019 Common Planning Assumptions (CPA) population projections by Statistical Local Areas (2007, 2011), Local Government Areas (2007) and Local Health Districts defined by mapping ABS SA1 (ASGS2016) to these boundaries. 2. Based on 2016 Census. <https://www.wslhd.health.nsw.gov.au/SocialHealthAtlas/>. 3. Based on hospitalisation separation rates (2014-15 to 2018-19 combined). Epidemiology and Health Analytics. Epidemiological Profile – Western Sydney Local Health District Residents 2020. Sydney: Western Sydney Local Health District, 2020. <https://www.wslhd.health.nsw.gov.au/SocialHealthAtlas/>. 4. <https://www.wslhd.health.nsw.gov.au/Population-Health-Services/Services-and-Programs/Aboriginal-Health>. 5. <https://www.wslhd.health.nsw.gov.au/About-Us>.