

# FESTIVAL OF CONTAGIOUS IDEAS 2016



NEW SOUTH WALES  
**HEALTH INNOVATION**  
Symposium 2016

## Local Solutions

### LifsmilesGOLD: Better access to oral health care Southern NSW Local Health District

The goal of this program was to reduce waiting times for adult patients waiting from 65 per cent of recommended waiting time to 15 per cent and reduce the average cost of a course of care from \$1080 to \$560 by December 2015.

The method of achieving this was using redesign methodology, which ensured staff, patients and members of the community were involved in the change. Clinical champions led implementation of separate care pathways for 'urgent' and 'general care' patients. Patients, community members and clinic staff from Southern NSW (Queanbeyan) and Murrumbidgee Local Health Districts (Wagga) dental clinics collaborated on diagnostics, solution design, implementation and evaluation phases.

Results were very encouraging. These included an overall reduction in waiting lists and waiting times, better access for the highest five of eight triage categories, and reduction in average cost of a course of care. Clinicians'



mindsets have moved towards a population health perspective.

This program has meant that a consistent model of care is now operational, ensuring more equitable oral health service delivery and closer alliance to NSW health policy.

The changes are sustainable locally because staff at all levels were involved in development of the program. Staff have become champions of the program and also agents of change (ACI 2013), implementing the model with consistency.

