



Bonalbo MPS open

It was standing room only for the official opening of the Bonalbo Multi-Purpose Service.

Community members joined health representatives and facility residents as NSW Member for Lismore, Thomas George and Federal Member for Page, Kevin Hogan opened the facility on 11 December.

Long time Bonalbo resident and active community advocate, Joan Hart, cut the ribbon to open the state of the art health and aged care facility.

"This is a very exciting day for the community of Bonalbo and the surrounding region, and especially for those who will now be living and working in this beautiful facility," Mr George said.

The new Bonalbo MPS was constructed in two stages and replaces the former Bonalbo Hospital and Bonalbo Community Centre.

Stage 1 comprised a 15-bed Residential Aged Care facility, a 24-hour emergency department, acute inpatient beds, and outpatient and GP consultations rooms, while Stage 2 comprised the laundry and kitchen facilities, acute inpatient beds, as well as a meeting room, mortuary,



▲ From left, Bonalbo MPS Nurse Manager Cheryl Ducat, Member for Lismore Thomas George, Uncle Harry Walker, Bonalbo Save Our Service member Joan Tart and Federal Member for Page Kevin Hogan.

Ambulance bay, and staff amenities.

Residents of the former Caroonia Uniting Care facility moved into the Bonalbo MPS in early December.

The new MPS was made possible under the NSW Health State-wide \$300 million

MPS Program of works to upgrade existing, or build new MPS facilities in a number of rural and remote communities.

"This is great news for our community. It is crucial that the right health care services are available for members of our community as they age,"

Mr Hogan said.

The NSW Government provides funding for the delivery of health services and the necessary capital infrastructure, while the Australian Government provides funding for an agreed number of aged care places.



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Building healthy communities together



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Lismore Base Hospital tradesmen Willie, Tim and Micheal in the spotlight

The Northern NSW Local Health District Board and Executive are committed to fostering a safe and inclusive work environment. Improving workplace culture is a key priority for 2017-18, with an emphasis on enhancing staff wellbeing and increasing communication throughout the organisation.

Executive Update



2018 has been an amazing year for Northern NSW Local Health District.

Among our achievements in patient care and service delivery, we have seen new and exciting developments including sections of Lismore Base, The Tweed and Ballina District Hospital, the redevelopment of Urbenville MPS Emergency Department and the new Bonalbo MPS.

These purpose-designed facilities allow our staff and clinicians to provide

contemporary models of care that support best practice healthcare delivery for our communities.

I want to acknowledge the patience and tolerance of the staff at these sites who have been working in what were essentially building sites for an extended period of time. At some sites our staff continue to work among construction noise and interruptions, at times under very difficult circumstances.



In this edition you will read about long service recognition for a group of staff who have been providing outstanding services to their communities for over 45 years.

Their service represents a huge wealth of knowledge that benefits our patients and our organisation.

What an amazing achievement from each and every one of these special people, and to be able to enjoy the award ceremony with them at our recent Annual General Meeting was absolutely delightful.



As our minds turn to what gifts to buy or what delicacies to serve at Christmas, I encourage you to take a few moments to think about those in our community who may be less fortunate.

It is often said that the greatest gift is the gift of giving, and through Workplace Giving, we all have the opportunity to support any charity we choose. There are many local charities deserving of support, and I've listed just a few examples here:

- Westpac Helicopter Rescue
- Jodie's Inspiration
- Our Kids



Finally, I thank you all for your hard work, dedication to quality and support for each other over the last 12 months.

A special thank you to those staff who will remain on deck across the holidays, providing care and services to residents and tourists in our region. I wish you all a very Merry Christmas and a safe and healthy 2019.

Wayne Jones
Chief Executive

From the Board Chair



As Board Chair, I regularly receive compliments (and the odd criticism) about our health service from members of the community. We always value feedback – it is important to our organisation as we use it to understand what we are doing well and where we need to improve.

I am pleased to report that Northern NSW Local Health District has been performing exceptionally well, based on a range of patient satisfaction measures which are assessed independently.

Patient survey information released recently by the NSW Bureau of Health

Information (BHI) shows that our health district was the equal top NSW LHD for overall patient experience and the State's second ranked LHD for overall patient engagement.

I was very pleased to hear that one of our services, the North Coast Cancer Institute – Lismore Cancer Care and Haematology Unit, has just been rated by patients as one of the State's best-performing outpatient cancer clinics.

This is based on a BHI survey of 11,300 patients who attended one of NSW's 50 outpatient centres. Patients were asked more than 70 questions on a range of topics including safety and hygiene, communication and clinical care.

Lismore was ranked third in the State and shows that we have an exceptional integrated cancer care system that is operated by a fabulous, committed and caring team. Well done!



This month, Chief Executive Wayne Jones and I hosted our annual community stakeholder meeting at Lismore, attended by staff, Board and community members.

We shared the LHD's 2017/18 performance and achievements and outlined some of the challenges we will face in 2019 and beyond.

It was certainly a busy year and one which saw the opening of a number of new and redeveloped facilities as we continue to ensure our services meet the needs of our large, growing and ageing population.

We also acknowledged the service of some of our staff who have worked in the health service for more than 45 years. An amazing achievement!

We farewelled two of our Board members, Dr Joe Ogg and David Frazer.

Joe and David have made significant contributions and I thank them for their service and wish them well. New Board members are expected to be announced by the Minister for Health shortly.

I would like to wish you all a very safe and happy Christmas and extend my grateful thanks for your continued hard work and commitment to patient care.

Brian Pezzutti
Board Chair

Empowering a healthy community

Equipping people to help themselves and others was the focus of the fifth annual Health Care Community Engagement Conference held at Ballina recently.

The annual conference is an initiative of the Community Engagement Advisory Committee (CEAC), the peak community advisory group for Northern NSW Local Health District (NNSWLHD) and North Coast Primary Health Network (NCPHN).

"The conference was a great success and attracted the largest attendance ever," CEAC Chair Anne O'Donoghue said.

"We wanted the conference to empower and inform people and provide the opportunity to learn from the experiences of others.

"We received some fantastic feedback and everyone is already looking forward to next year's conference."

Keynote speaker, internationally-respected researcher and author Dr Ray Moynihan, delivered an engaging and thought-provoking presentation.

A senior research fellow at Bond University's Centre for Research in Evidence-Based Practice, Dr Moynihan is well-known for his research into the issue of over-diagnosis.

"In sharing my research, I'm interested in helping people understand the issue of over-diagnosis: how it might be avoided and how having a bigger say in your own health care could lead to better outcomes," Dr Moynihan said.



▲ From left, NNSWLHD Board Member, Mark Humphries; NCPHN Manager, System and Service Integration, Sharyn White; CEAC Chair Anne O'Donoghue; NNSWLHD Chief Executive, Wayne Jones, and NNSWLHD Board Chair Brian Pezzutti.

More than 120 health consumers, community representatives, health workers, clinicians and academics attended the event which featured a wide range of health care topics from pain management, to My Health Record, dementia and domestic violence.

The theme of the 2018 conference was 'Improving Health – Everybody's Business, Everyone's Responsibility' and included information stalls offering health checks, information on healthy lifestyles, My Health Record and the National Disability Insurance Scheme.

Some feedback from the event:

"What a wonderful opportunity for the community to meet, learn and become responsive."

"Fantastic. This was my first one. Never thought anything like this existed."

"A great day and I learned so much. Organisation was spot on. It was a long day but was broken up so well that all of it was informative and enjoyable."

"Awesome conference overall and I certainly look forward to the next one."

Reuse, recycle a winner for Nimbin

In the 2018 People Matter Survey, a whopping 100 percent of staff from Nimbin Multi-Purpose Service (MPS) shared their views.

For their efforts, Nimbin MPS received \$500 and staff members decided to use the money to purchase reusable coffee/tea cups and water bottles.

Wanting to support Nimbin businesses, they arranged to purchase products from local shop, the Green Bank, with each staff member choosing their own cup or bottle.

A big thanks to Nimbin Assistant in Nursing and member of the NNSWLHD Culture and Staff Engagement Committee, Susan Lacy, who was instrumental in encouraging her colleagues to complete the survey.



▲ Nimbin MPS staff, from left, Krista Matthews, Wendy Longmuir, Jhonany Ramsay, Ross McNall, Tracey Sheehan, Shannon Holgate, Vicki Martin and John Howley.

Taking stock

There's nothing like a good deadline to help you clear out the old and make way for the new.

Perhaps that's what's so appealing about New Year. It's like a reset button for your life.

I am hopeless at making New Year's resolutions, but I do relish the task of working hard to get things finished and then drawing a line under the last 12 months in order to start fresh in the new year.

It can also be a great chance to reassess goals you thought you'd achieve, but didn't for whatever reason.

If they are still important, you can pick them up again next year, if not, you can let them go to make room for something else.

We can easily be caught up in jumping the next hurdle that we don't take time to appreciate our own efforts or achievements along the way.

I hope you can find some time to take stock this holiday season, whether it's with friends or family, or relaxing on your own terms.

Northern Exposure will take a break too, and be back in February with a new format.

Best wishes for a great festive season, and see you in 2019!



Fiona Baker
Editor

Wish list a breeze for UHA

Each year, the Maclean/Lower Clarence Hospital United Hospital Auxiliary (UHA) supports patients living in the Clarence Valley by donating an average of \$100,000 worth of equipment to local health facilities.

In mid-2018, the UHA advised they planned to purchase all remaining items on the Maclean District Hospital's wish list, totalling around \$62,000.

Equipment generously donated by the Auxiliary to date includes Defibrillators, ECG Machine – TC50 Cardiograph, Oral Thermometers, Pool Wheel Chair, Lo Lo Bed, Invisa-Beam, Bariatric Shower Chairs, Milano Patient Chairs, Premier Recliner Chair, High Flow O2 Therapy AIRVO2 Machine, and

Drug Screen system.

A recent donation of \$450 from the Lower River 000 Group, a social group made up of emergency services officers from local Police, Fire Brigade and Ambulance will go towards a new ultrasound machine for the hospital.

Donations to the UHA are received from individuals and organisations across the district, in addition to regular fundraising.

"The hospital and local community are extremely lucky to have such a dedicated, hardworking and inspiring hospital auxiliary," Nurse Manager Maclean District Hospital, Tara Chambers said.



▲ From left, Maclean Nurse Manager Tara Chambers, UHA President Sandra Bradbury, UHA Treasurer Rita Nutt, Registered Nurse Ian Radin and UHA Secretary Trish Bowes UHA Secretary on the lo-lo bed.

Northern exposure

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Northern Exposure is published 11 times a year by the Northern NSW Local Health District. We welcome your contributions, suggestions and feedback.

Cover image: poinciana tree

Check out NNSWLHD Facebook page

The Northern NSW Local Health District Facebook page is used for a range of promotional activities, including the Health Promotion newsletter, pictured right, and by the LHD Media Unit to promote local events and celebrate the achievements of staff and volunteers.

It is regularly updated with the happenings across the LHD. Check out our [page](#) today!



Get Up, Get Dressed, Get Moving

Staff at The Tweed Hospital are working to reduce deconditioning in their patients and improve their health outcomes once they leave hospital.

The 'Get Up, Get Dressed, Get Moving' project aims to reduce the likelihood of a patient requiring assistance with activities of daily living or transitioning to a residential aged care facility (RACF) on discharge.

Deconditioning is associated with an increased risk of falls, increased risk of developing pressure areas and increased length of stay. These are the result of a reduction in muscle power and mass from a loss of physical fitness.

Patients who are deconditioned are more likely to require assistance from support services on discharge, referral and treatment in a rehabilitation unit, need RACF placement on discharge and a loss of independence.

The project team used the redesign methodology in designing their solutions for a specific cohort of patients, those aged over 65 years with multiple co-morbidities.

Some of the solutions included patient and staff education, leaflets and posters, revamping the Medical 2 courtyard and involving the whole multidisciplinary team and other support services to get



▲ Staff at The Tweed Hospital sign pledges to support reducing deconditioning in their patients.

behind this strategy.

The project's success will be measured through reduced referrals to rehabilitation, reduced transfer of care to residential aged care facilities, reduced length of stay, reduced pressure injuries and falls, increased staff awareness of the risk associated with deconditioning and increased patient and carer satisfaction.

In a show of commitment, staff signed pledges to support reducing deconditioning.

The project team includes: Gisele Armitage, Shirley Walker, Muhammed Khan, Gregory Keppie, Armalie Muller, Mark Frost, Shujaat Syed, Kate Mclachlan, Matt Peterkin, Myra Drummond, Avril Cornwall and Medical 2 staff.

Opioid treatment in our sights

Reflecting a global trend, Australia is seeing a significant escalation in the use of opioids in recent years, along with deaths arising from opioid use.

In 2016 there were 1123 deaths from opioids overdoses in Australia. This is significantly higher than the

number of deaths from car accidents (751), and is also a reversal of the pattern seen in the early 2000s.

In Northern NSW, we have recently introduced an Opioid Treatment Program as a collaborative between the Northern NSW Local Health District and North Coast

Primary Health Network.

The aim of this program is to ensure the appropriate use of prescription Opioids for non-cancer pain in our community, while reducing over-prescribing.

The increasing use of prescription opiates is driven by an increasing burden of chronic illnesses, which can partly be attributed to increasing longevity, changing prescribing habits among medical practitioners, and community expectations in the management of pain. The solutions to the problem will have to be multi-pronged.

A steering committee has been set up to help with the implementation of various initiatives in the community, among prescribers, and with

the pharmacies in the area.

The committee is looking into four areas: integrating existing services; identifying and remedying gaps in service; providing education to prescribers; and increasing engagement with the community on correct opioid usage.

Several initiatives within these areas are currently at various stages of development and implementation.

Dr Abbey Perumpanani, the Director of Clinical Programs (NNSWLHD) is managing the Opioid Treatment Program. For more information, contact Dr Perumpanani at abbey.perumpanani@health.nsw.gov.au.



Lismore staff go the extra mile

Outstanding attendance at this month's Lismore Base Hospital's Staff Appreciation Awards is a marker of how keen staff are to celebrate the great work of their colleagues.

Lismore Base Hospital (LBH) General Manager, Ian Hatton, and Deputy Director of Nursing, Melanie Allan-Male were delighted to co-present the second awards for the

year.

Sponsor of the awards, Summerland Credit Union was represented by Branch Manager, Graeme Herne.

"The awards are an opportunity to acknowledge colleagues and staff from across the hospital, and we appreciate that staff have taken the time to nominate one another," Ian said.

"It really is quite a compliment to be nominated, to be recognised for going above and beyond in your day to day work and being acknowledged by your colleagues for doing so."

More than 60 staff members attended the presentation ceremony.

The staff award nominees were: Jack Wallace – Manual

Handling Co-ordinator; Sebastian Nilon – Registered Nurse C7; Jasmine Herne – Student nurse/AIN/ Administration – Endoscopy/ Intensive Care Unit; Katherine Willis-Sullivan – Director Medical Services; Anna Dodd – Midwife; Joy McKie – Customer Services; Rosemary Whitehead – CSO Intensive Care Unit/Renal/C6; Peter Alexander – Physiotherapist; and Matt Underhill – Patient Support Officer.

Joint winners were Joy McKie and Jack Wallace.

The Team awards nominees were: North Coast Cancer Institute; LBH Pharmacy Team; Medical Imaging Radiographers; Nursing staff Short Stay Surgical Medical Unit; Wardspersons Department; Endoscopy team; and Admissions/Surgical Waiting List Team.

The team award winner was the Wardspersons Department, and the hotly contested Hand Hygiene award winners were C7 once again. Congratulations to all nominees and winners!



▲ From left, Wardsperson team leader John Hall, Administration Support Officer Joy McKie and Program Coordinator, Work Health Safety and Injury Management, Jack Wallace.

Remembering our fallen soldiers

On 11 November Iluka Community Health paid tribute to local war heroes with a Remembrance Day display of photos and memorabilia.

Administration Officer, Shelby Mills, made crosses representing the life of each local World War One soldier.

As the Community Health office shares the building with Iluka library, local school children were able to get involved, and staff put together packs with information about Nurses in WWI for children to take home.

"A group of our local Returned Service League members joined us for morning tea and talked about their own experiences or family members who fought in earlier wars," Shelby said.

"It was lovely to see our Executive Team giving us the opportunity to mark this special occasion.



Building healthy communities together

The first ever Northern Rivers Healthy Communities Summit was held in Ballina in December, encouraging the community to create environments that promote healthy eating and active living.

Around 90 people from across government and non-government agencies, councils, education, health services, sport and fitness, community services and farmers' markets attended the summit, getting behind a

whole-of-community approach to healthy and active living.

The summit was organised by the Northern NSW Local Health District (NNSWLHD) Health Promotion Unit as part of a broader Healthy Communities project to tackle growing rates of overweight and obesity.

Since 1985, the proportion of Australian children who are overweight has doubled and the prevalence of obesity trebled.

In NSW, child overweight and obesity has been relatively stable over the last ten years, but at 21% is still a cause for concern.

NNSWLHD Health Promotion Manager Jillian Adams said it is alarming that two thirds of Australian adults are now overweight or obese.

"For the first time in the modern era, our children may have a shorter life expectancy than their parents.

"The rise in childhood

and adult obesity is causing unprecedented levels of heart disease, diabetes, and liver disease and increased risk of stroke, respiratory disease and cancer," Ms Adams said.

In 2018/19 NSW Health is investing \$38 million to tackle obesity, \$25 million of which has been allocated specifically to fight childhood obesity, through the Healthy Eating Active Living Strategy, with targeted programs, public education and health professionals' advice to reduce childhood overweight.

Ms Adams said that tackling this issue goes beyond individual willpower.

"There are many social and environmental factors causing these increasing rates of overweight, including our sedentary lifestyles- our car-based, screen-based, fast-food world.

"We need to change the direction we're headed, but the Health sector can't do this alone, so we are calling for a whole of community approach."



▲ A workshoping session at the first Healthy Communities Summit.

Tweed digs deep for BreastScreen

Tweed Heads community members have raised \$3,200 in donations for breast cancer screening.

Members of the Tweed District Tuesday Tennis Ladies raised \$1,600 for the Tweed Heads BreastScreen Unit and Lou Lyston, Owner of DermElite, a local small business matched their contribution.

"The donated money will be used to create a relaxing, quiet and calming space in the BreastScreen unit for the women to enjoy," said Jane Walsh, Director BreastScreen NSW North Coast.

The tennis enthusiasts have generously been donating to the Tweed BreastScreen Unit on a

regular basis over many years.

"Our sincere thanks to both the Tuesday Tennis Ladies and Lou Lyston for helping make our local BreastScreen service a more welcoming place for women to visit."

The BreastScreen mobile unit is visiting Northern NSW throughout early 2019 at the following locations:

Ballina: now until 10 January
Murwillumbah: 14 - 30 January
Mullumbimby: 30 January -13 February
Ocean Shores: 14 February - 4 March.

For more details visit the BreastScreen website www.breastscreen.nsw.gov.au.



▲ From left, Stephanie Edwards; Ruth Coram; Director BreastScreen NSW North Coast, Jane Walsh; Secretary Tweed District Tennis Association, Evelyn Marshall; Lou Lyston; and Darnel Bond.

Recovery through movement, mindfulness

At first glance, the Movement and Mindfulness for Trauma Recovery support group may appear to be a simplistic therapeutic practise model.

It takes participants through activities such as circus skills, self-defense and trauma-focused yoga whilst forming lasting friendships and support networks.

In fact, the theory behind group is in line with cutting edge neuroscience which focusses on the intrinsic connection between brain and body in trauma recovery.

Northern NSW Local Health District (NNSWLHD) and Lismore City Council created the support group as part of an 8-week exercise program designed especially for clients of the NNSWLHD Violence Abuse and Neglect (VAN) Service.

12 women met weekly at the Goonellabah Sports and Aquatic Centre (GSAC) where they had free use of the gym and shared morning tea together.

"The goal of the program was to give participants the skills and experience to manage their own trauma therapy," Tamahra Manson, VAN Manager for NNSWLHD, said.

"The women in the group were encouraged to take risks and push

boundaries while being in control and developing skills to manage the impact of their own trauma in a space that felt secure, where they felt safe and enabled."

Louisa Harwood, NNSWLHD Sexual Assault Counsellor, Roberta O'Brien Healthy Programs Coordinator at



GSAC and Regan Semmens, Exercise Physiologist were instrumental drivers of the program and attribute their partnership to trust and the sharing of a common goal.

"Roberta approached me with an idea to develop a program where

women can exercise and unload. She tailored the health assessments to make sure everyone was comfortable and exercising safely," Louisa said.

"Ultimately I think it is the connection the women have felt, with their own bodies, with the members of the group and with the facilitators that have been a significant influence on the success of the program."

One participant said "The program helped with my anxiety. I now know if I get up and move around I can regain control."

"I love the routine of coming every week, getting out of the house and hanging out afterwards," said another participant. "I have pushed my own boundaries and feel more confident."

"I have been in counselling since 2016 and am doing all the other therapy I need to do.

"Doing that along with this program I now have a feeling of being physically safe; I am now able to let other people into my personal space and feel physically comfortable to do that."

Participants received free gym memberships on finishing the course, enabling them to continue managing their own healing into the future.

Medical workforce plan one step closer

A medical workforce plan to help attract skilled staff to healthcare in Northern NSW is taking shape through a joint project by health and university partners in the region.

Northern NSW Local Health District (NNSWLHD) is partnering with the University Centre for Rural Health (UCRH) and the Lismore and Clarence Valley Regional Training Hubs to develop a strategic medical workforce plan which will cover the whole LHD.

"Our region is in a great position to make the most of the opportunities provided by the regional training hubs in Lismore and Clarence," NNSWLHD Chief Executive, Wayne Jones said.

The project is addressing the medical workforce needs of the LHD footprint as a priority, and consultation with local and state stakeholders is now underway.

Dr Vahid Saberi of VSA Australia is engaged to lead the project, with a steering committee including



NNSWLHD's Wayne Jones, Director UCRH Ross Bailie, University of Wollongong Associate Professor David Garne and North Coast Primary Health Network CEO Julie Sturgess.

"The Medical Workforce Plan will be very important for guiding the work of the UCRH and the Regional Training Hubs, enabling us to focus our efforts for delivering the greatest benefit to communities in our region," Ross Bailie,

Director UCRH, said.

"The engagement of key people in the public and private sector across Northern NSW will be important for ensuring the plan reflects existing and emerging workforce needs for all communities in Northern NSW."

Mr Jones said it was pleasing to see the support from across the health sector.

"This is enabling us to get an accurate picture of the medical workforce requirements right across this region, both now and into the coming years," Mr Jones said.

The methodology used as part of this work will also support the workforce planning being done for the new Tweed Valley Hospital.

For more information contact Rebekah Carter, Operations Manager Medical Workforce and Lismore Regional Training Hub on 02 6620 0886 or Rebekah.carter@health.nsw.gov.au.

Profile: Tim, Willie and Micheal

This month, Northern Exposure caught up with Lismore Base Hospital tradesmen, Tim Knight, Wayne 'Willie' Garrett and Micheal Beale, also known as the A-Team.

Wayne Garrett, better known as 'Willie', Micheal Beale and the 'youngster' of the trio, Tim Knight have collectively knotted up over 60 years of service for Northern NSW Local Health District (NNSWLHD).

When something needs moving, fixing or replacing around Lismore Base Hospital, chances are these handymen will be the ones to answer the call.

Willie, Micheal and Tim go by any number of affectionate nicknames, known to some as the A-Team, to others as Hewey, Dewey and Louie, the Three Musketeers or simply, 'The gang.'

Willie began working for the District when he was 24 years old, and over the last 37 years he has earned his grey hairs.

He grew up on a cane farm in Wardell, attending local schools.

Leaving high school, Willie tried a few jobs before taking on some contract work at the hospital.

In 1981 he became a permanent member of staff.

"When people ask me what breaks in a hospital, I say EVERYTHING!" Willie said.

Throughout his career, Willie has seen many changes to the health service, its Chief Executives and even his own uniform.

Willie's colleagues are what he enjoys most about his job.

When he isn't busy at work, Willie likes to be outdoors, camping, travelling and it is said that he likes to sing in the car, although he strongly denies these rumours.

Micheal Beale was born in Walgett, and later moved to Bathurst where he became



▲ From left, Lismore Base Hospital handymen Tim knight, Wayne 'Willie' Garrett and Micheal Beale.

a bricklayer. He now lives in Goonellabah.

Micheal's fondest memory of being a "brickie" was when he left the physically-taxing trade for good to become a full time handy man for the health service.

"I'd like to think that my work now has an impact on patient satisfaction," Micheal said.

Micheal is a proud dad who enjoys spending time with his children when he's not at work. He also loves experimenting with recipes in the kitchen.

After leaving school, Tim Knight worked as a mechanic for 20 years until he started working at Casino and District Memorial Hospital in 2015.

Now working at Lismore Base Hospital, Tim is a true local, born in the same hospital where he now works. He sites job satisfaction and his colleagues as favourite things about his job.

When he isn't working, Tim is a typical mechanic, enjoying his cars, motorbikes and anything motorsports, he was quick to add that his family rates as a top priority, too.

Tim was born the same year that Willie began working at Lismore Base Hospital, and Willie enjoys reminding Tim of his many years of experience. He doesn't miss a chance to impart wisdom to Tim on a daily basis.

"I've taught him everything he knows, and he still knows nothing," Willie said with a smile.

The colleagues are clearly fond of each other and despite their cheeky banter describe themselves as a small family.

There is plenty of in-joking and each of them has a great sense of humour.

The three trades assistants are part of a small maintenance team and

there are often times when laughter makes the day more manageable.

Often seen together changing fluorescent lights throughout the hospital, Tim, Willie and Micheal would be rich men if they had a dollar for every time someone asked them how many people it takes to change a light.

In case you're wondering, the answer is three: one to hold the ladder, one to control the traffic and of course one to hold the lightbulb.

The handymen find that most staff are friendly and respectful towards them.

"Staff seem to look to maintenance as saviours, so are generally really happy to see us," said Tim.

"It is a great place to work, the colleagues, conditions are good, what more could you want?" said Willie, and the others agreed.

Christmas comes knocking

The staff at Lismore Base Hospital have decked the halls with gum leaves, bottle brushes and redback spiders on toilet seats!

The theme for the 6th annual Christmas Door Competition was 'Christmas in Australia'. Teams had to relate the displays to their service, demonstrate teamwork and, most of all, have fun. Extra points were given for singing and costume design.

Judges had their work cut out for them with every display ticking the boxes, not to mention the songs!

The displays included plenty of Australiana, there was a 'great white Christmas', tributes to Snugglypot and

Cuddle Pie's 100th birthday, Christmas on the beach including patients in costume, self-composed Christmas carols, Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australian flags, staff pictures and craft made by patients.

The winner was announced at the Lismore Base Hospital staff Christmas lunch, with winners taking home a host of Christmas goodies. Congratulations to everyone who took part!

Joint winners:

Ward C6

Physiotherapy Department

Runners-Up:

Dietetics and Speech Pathology

Occupational Therapy.



▲ Ward C6 with their May Gibbs display.

▼ Physiotherapy department with their 'great white Christmas'.



JobAccess opens doors

Australian statistics show that people living with disability are significantly less likely to participate in the labour force than those living without disability.

A significant barrier for people with disability when seeking employment can be stereotypical assumptions and attitudes about what people with disability can and cannot do.

Northern NSW Local Health District (NNSWLHD) recognises that people with disability can bring a range of skills, abilities and valuable perspectives to the workplace, and has partnered with Australian Government program JobAccess, committing to improve employment opportunities for people with disability.

Over the next 12 months, the LHD is working with JobAccess to:

- Review recruitment policies and procedures
- Increase internal disability confidence through training and awareness raising activities
- Develop strategies to increase employment opportunities for people with disability

This work will help to remove barriers and assure policies and practices are fair and inclusive to everyone.

1 in 5 Australians live with disability and this proportion is increasing, particularly as the population ages.*

It's likely that many of us know someone who lives with disability, or that we personally live with disability.

Disability can be visible or hidden, permanent or temporary and may have a minimal or substantial impact on a person's abilities.

Creating an inclusive and disability confident workplace can improve employment opportunities for people with disability.

In many cases, small adjustments can make all the difference to ensuring a person with disability can be supported and productive.

JobAccess is the national hub for workplace and employment information for people with disability, employers and service providers, see www.jobaccess.gov.au.

*Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2012

DIGITAL DOSE - eHealth News

eMeds is well underway

The eMeds project is now live at three sites across Northern NSW Local Health District.

Lismore Base, Byron Central and Murwillumbah District Hospital have all moved across to prescribing, reviewing and administering medications in eMeds.

Preparations for the upcoming go-live at The Tweed Hospital in March are commencing. The project team will also support the Riverland's Drug and Alcohol Centre go-live in February.

We've recently improved the Transfer of Care processes so that all Medical Officer, Nursing and Pharmacist positions can now view a summary of the eMeds Medication Administration Record (MAR) in their patient's Powerchart record.

This is the eMeds equivalent of the paper medication chart (NIMC). The Tweed Hospital, not live with eMeds yet, can view medications ordered and administered at Lismore Base Hospital, where eMeds is live. Likewise, smaller sites are able to see medication records from larger sites.

During the holiday period we have

an increased number of locums on the roster. A locum training process is now in place, including Christmas cover by the eMeds team to ensure adequate training is available.

The eMeds project would like to take this opportunity to thank the staff of Lismore Base, Byron Central and Murwillumbah District Hospitals for being so welcoming to the project team and for embracing eMeds so well.

eMR eMEDS
Smarter Safer Better

This has resulted in fantastic go-lives so far! We look forward to seeing more faces around the district as eMeds rolls out in 2019.

Get better results by searching with three fields

When searching for patients in Cerner, we recommend you search with three fields to activate the full potential of the program's search engine.

If you add a new person because you cannot find them this means the

patient's eMR history will not be visible to the clinical staff treating them. It also affects other systems such as ERIC, MOSAIQ Titanium, pathology and radiology.

To get the best search result, always search using at least three fields: **i.e. Surname, First Name and DOB**. You can also enter sex and Medicare card details. Remember, the more information you enter into the patient search screen the better result and the greater the chance of finding the historical record.

Using the three fields above means you will get weighted results. These weighted results are shown as a percentage and the closer you get to 100% the better. 100% is a complete match.

When you find the correct patient record always select "Add Encounter".

If you have checked and double checked and still can't find the patient, only then should you proceed to Add Person.

If you would like some help with patient search or setting up your screen correctly, contact your local eMR trainer or contact the SWSD on 1300 285 533 and request an eMR Trainer to get in contact with you.

HealthPathways News - December

Take care in thunderstorm asthma season

It is timely that the HealthPathways team have recently developed a [Non-acute Asthma in Adults HealthPathway](#).

NSW Health's Director of Environmental Health, Dr Richard Broome, said late spring saw high levels of pollen in the air, which could trigger asthma and respiratory conditions, especially during thunderstorms.

"Even if you don't have asthma, you should take extra care because pollen is at its highest level now and may spark breathing difficulties in some people," Dr Broome said.

Asthma can be defined as a chronic inflammatory lung disease with variable respiratory symptoms (wheeze, shortness of breath, cough or chest tightness), and variable airway narrowing. Asthma is very common, affecting about 1 in 10 Australians of all ages.

The new [Non-acute Asthma in Adults HealthPathway](#) provides Clinicians with best practice guidelines on assessing and managing asthma symptoms and referring patients to services for treatment. In the 'For Health Professionals' section there is information and further education resources. In the 'For Patients' section, there are links to 'how to videos' and fact sheets to assist with discussing and reviewing inhaler techniques.

The pathway also provides a link to Asthma [Action Plans](#) which are available in PDF and medical software format for Best Practice and Medical Director. The plans can be provided to your patient to help them manage their condition better and know who to contact if they become acutely unwell or just feel sicker.

Listed below is a list of all the other Asthma HealthPathways currently available on the website.

- [Acute Asthma in Adults](#)

- [Differentiating Asthma between COPD](#)
- [Acute Asthma in Children](#)
- [Asthma in Children - Non-acute](#)
- [Asthma in Pregnancy](#)

SelfAccess all the localised Mid and North Coast HealthPathways here:

<https://manchealthpathways.org.au/index.htm>

Username: manchealth

Password: conn3ct3d

For more information contact Kerrie Keyte at kkeyte@ncphn.org.au

See links below to HealthPathways relating to articles in this edition of Northern Exposure:

- [Lifestyle and Preventative Care](#)
- [Long Term Opioid Use and Deprescribing](#)
- [Breast Screening](#)
- [Domestic and Family Violence](#)
- [My Health Record](#)
- [Immunisation](#)

Staff honoured at annual meeting

The 2018 Annual Community Stakeholder Meeting was held in Lismore on 12 December.

Northern NSW Local Health District (NNSWLHD) Board Chair, Brian Pezzutti, and Chief Executive Wayne Jones, shared the LHD's performance and highlights from the year.

In 2017/18, NNSWLHD saw a marked increase in hospital activity, with 98,230 hospital admissions from over 200,000 emergency department presentations, as well as 2,844 births and 28,839 elective and emergency surgery patients treated.

Our activity was 2.9% above target for the year, with emergency treatment performance at 79.2%, just shy of the 81% target. Guest speaker, Member for Lismore, Thomas George, shared his experiences of campaigning for health services over

many years.

As well as the formal proceedings, we also honoured staff from a number of sites for their long service.

Staff recognised as having spent more than 45 years working for NSW Health included:

Cheryl Ryan - 48 years
Virginia Morris - 47 years
Susan Crompton - 47 years
Jo-Anne Ezzy - 46 years
Joanne Bridge - 46 years
Carmel Forrest - 46 years
Narelle Johnston - 45 years
Heather Hancock - 45 years
Robyn Perry - 45 years
Judith Murray - 45 years
Jennifer Jurd - 45 years
Narelle Herman - 45 years
Carol Gill - 45 years
Joan Olive - 45 years.



▲ Board Chair, Brian Pezzutti presents Cheryl Ryan with her long service certificate.



▲ Board Chair, Brian Pezzutti presents staff with long service certificates. Pictured clockwise from top left: Jo-Anne Ezzy, Virginia Morris, Joanne Bridge, Carmel Forrest, Judy Murray and Narelle Herman.

Have a merry Christmas!



To all our staff and volunteers, we wish you a very merry Christmas and a safe and happy New Year!

Thank you for all your commitment and hard work this past year. If you are taking time off to be with family and friends, may you return refreshed and energised for the year ahead.

For those of you working during the holiday period, thank you for looking after our community, our loved ones and our visitors. Best wishes for a joyful workplace and a safe festive season.

Stronger protections for My Health Record

In November, the Australian Parliament passed legislation to strengthen privacy protections as part of the My Health Records Act 2012.

The changes allow Australians to opt in or opt out of having a My Health Record at any time during their life. Records will be created for every Australian who wants one after 31 January 2019. After this date, a person can delete their record permanently at any time.

The changes will:

- Allow Australians to permanently delete their records, and any backups, at any time.
- Explicitly prohibit access to My Health Records by insurers and employers.
- Provide greater privacy for teenagers 14 years and over.

- Strengthen existing protections for people at risk of family and domestic violence.

- Clarify that only the Agency, the Department of Health and the Chief Executive of Medicare (and no other government agency) can access the My Health Record system.

- Explicitly require law enforcement and other agencies to produce a court order to access information in My Health Records.

- Make clear that the system cannot be privatised or used for commercial purposes.

This is backed up by harsher penalties and fines for inappropriate or unauthorised use of My Health Records.

For more information, visit the My Health Record website www.myhealthrecord.gov.au/.

Save the date to vaccinate

The 2019 'Save The Date To Vaccinate' campaign was recently launched by NSW Health, and includes a refresh of the existing 'Save The Date To Vaccinate' app.

This app helps parents and carers to stay on top of their child's immunisations by creating a personalised immunisation schedule.

Based on the NSW Immunisation Schedule and the date of birth provided by users, the app sends a notification to parents and carers whenever it's time to vaccinate their child and lets them know which vaccinations they need.

In NSW, over 94% of children are now fully immunised.

The 'Save The Date To Vaccinate' campaign by NSW Health has helped to improve coverage from 91.4% in 2012 to 93.9% in 2017.

The 'Save The Date To Vaccinate' campaign is also focused on decreasing the number of parents and carers who believe immunisation should be delayed due to minor illness.

To explore the app, download it free from the App Store or Google Play today.

For more information on the app and immunisation, visit immunisation.health.nsw.gov.au.

Win tickets to Backtrack Boys

The Northern NSW Local Health District Child Protection Service is giving you the chance to win tickets to a must-see documentary, Backtrack Boys.

This is an inspiring coming of age story about a program run in Armidale NSW, and gives insight to the lives of three young boys at risk in rural Australia.

Featuring scenes from Grafton, this award winning, beautiful and sensitive documentary was filmed over two years by producer Catherine Scott.

There are 5 sets of 2 tickets to

be won to a screening at Star Court Theatre, Lismore on Sunday 20 January at 2.30 pm.

To enter the draw, email NNSWLHD-ChildProtection1@health.nsw.gov.au with 'Backtrack Boys' in the subject line.


Winners will be asked to provide one sentence about their view of the documentary after the screening. Entries close Friday 11th January, 2019.

To view the trailer visit <https://www.backtrackboys.com/>.



SAVE THE DATE TO VACCINATE

On-time vaccination is your child's best protection against serious diseases.



Download the free Save The Date To Vaccinate app

It's in your hands
immunisation.health.nsw.gov.au

The last word...

The art of healing on display

This summer, Byron Central Hospital is hosting its first art exhibition, with works from Pottsville-based artist Debra Barrand.

From 4 December to 1 February, the public is able to view Debra's work on display in the main hospital corridor.

Debra's talent for painting came to light as part of her treatment journey through the Drug and Alcohol Service in Northern NSW Local Health District (NNSWLHD).

In 2017, a \$2000 grant provided



▲ From left, BCH Business Manager Louise Tingey, Executive Officer/Director of Nursing Keryn York, artist Debra Barrand and Drug and Alcohol counsellor Michael Burgess.

Debra and another client with equipment and resources each to create an art piece. The grant formed part of the funds allocated to NNSWLHD from the NSW Health and the Arts Framework.

"It's amazing to see how much the project has helped Debra through her

treatment and recovery," said Michael Burgess, Drug and Alcohol Counsellor for NNSWLHD.

"This project has evolved from small beginnings, and Debra has since been able to complete a number of other paintings which are now forming this exhibition."

Byron turns pink for cancer research

November 19th marked the annual Pink Ribbon Morning Tea at Byron Central Hospital to raise money for Breast Cancer research.

There was a wonderful turn out on the day, with staff from all areas of the hospital and ambulatory services joining in.

Deanna Bowen, Northern NSW Eating Disorder Coordinator, baked treats with a pink theme, and together the staff reached their goal of \$500!

A special thanks to ward staff for their great assistance with clean up, and Anne Maclean for decoration assistance and money collection.



▲ Byron Central Hospital staff, from left, Rita Youssef-Price, Joy McGrath, Steve Green, Tracey Brooke, Anne Maclean, Paul Pattison, Deanna Bowen, Louise Tingey, EO/DON Keryn York, Jannine Campton, and Vicki Milgate.