

# Protocols a winner for life-saving treatment

A project that is set to revolutionise emergency departments across NSW was the overall winner of this year's Northern NSW Local Health District Quality Awards.

The "Emergency Protocols" project team, led by Maclean District Hospital's Dr Dean Robertson and Lismore Base Hospital Emergency Physician, Dr Charlotte Hall, along with Dr Sabrina Pit, Dr Margaret Rolfe, Sharene Pascoe, Dr Megan Passey, Dr John Mackenzie and Dr Lindsay Murray, received their recognition at the annual Awards ceremony, held in Tweed Heads on Friday 15 June.

Through collaborative work by local clinicians and researchers from the University Centre for Rural Health, Lismore, the project team developed a set of quick reference manuals for use in emergency departments modelled on those used in the aviation industry.

Through controlled trials with 21 teams of doctors and nurses across 84 crisis scenarios, the team found a 54 per cent reduction in critical errors in the emergency setting.

The NNSWLHD Quality Awards recognise innovation in health, with this year's ceremony highlighting just how much innovation is thriving in the



▲ 2018 Quality Award winners, Dr Dean Robertson and Dr Charlotte Hall, with NNSWLHD Chief Executive Wayne Jones.

region.

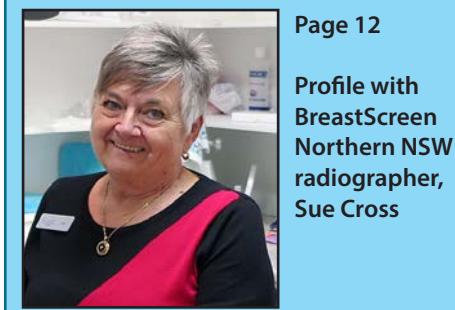
The awards are an opportunity to celebrate local ingenuity within the health sector and recognise initiatives in a variety of areas, all with the aim

of improving patient outcomes, staff health and wellbeing, and efficiencies in the health system.

□ For photos of category winners, see pages 6 & 7.



Page 10  
Palliative Care staff take their message to the people



Page 12  
Profile with BreastScreen Northern NSW radiographer, Sue Cross

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.

It's no secret that in Northern NSW we have some of the best clinicians, most innovative staff and an extremely dedicated and passionate workforce.

Each year when our Quality Awards come around, I am reminded of just how committed our staff are to improving the care we provide to patients and the systems we use every day in our workplaces.

This year was no exception, with a great collection of innovative projects addressing issues as varied as denture waiting lists, school canteen menus, mental health seclusion practices, pressure injuries and emergency treatment protocols.

I am proud to be the CE of this LHD, working with such incredibly talented and committed people. I congratulate each of our entrants and winners, and I look forward to seeing the projects expand to other facilities, other LHDs and other health care networks. I encourage everyone to consider what projects they might like to submit next year.



Winter is here and we're experiencing our first real cold snap, which reminds us to take care of our health as the temperature drops. Thanks to everyone

who has already taken up the free flu vaccinations on offer across the district.

We have had a significant improvement on the staff flu vaccination rates compared to last year, and this helps you, as well our patients and the wider community, to be as prepared as possible against the flu season.



We have recently had a number of appointments to key positions across the district. I welcome Dee Robinson to the role of General Manager, Mental Health and Drug and Alcohol Streams. I thank Ian McLeish for his time acting in this role during the extended transition period.

I also welcome Dr Abbey Perumpanani, formerly Director of Medical Services for Clarence, who will soon commence in the position of Director Clinical Programs. This is an LHD-wide role that reports to Lynne Weir, Director Clinical Operations. It will focus on developing and implementing a program to reduce use and prescription of opioid medications in Northern NSW in partnership with North Coast Primary Health Network.

We have also recently recruited new General Managers for The Tweed Hospital and Lismore Base Hospital. I



wish to welcome Joe McDonald (TTH) and Ian Hatton (LBH) to these positions, starting in July. This is an exciting time for these sites and for the LHD generally, as we bed down our new organisational structure to take us forwards.

Thank you to Dan Madden and Narelle Gleeson for their commitment in keeping these facilities operating at a high standard for an extended period while acting in these roles.

*Wayne Jones  
Chief Executive*

## From the Board Chair



As I write this I am returning from a Council of Board Chairs meeting for Health Board Chairs across the State.

This meeting provides a forum where the Secretary of Health and Minister for Health and Minister for Medical Research can meet and discuss issues of interest across the State and for Board Chairs to share information.

One such issue is the Northern NSW

Local Health District Board requesting that I table the 'Keeping them Warm' research paper, which was developed following a research project by clinicians at Lismore Base Hospital.

Interaction and sharing of information, both formally and informally across the NSW Health System, is important and it is with great pleasure that I read about the recent NNSWLHD Quality Awards in this edition of Northern Exposure.

The Quality Awards across the State allow for innovation to be shared for the benefit of the whole NSW Health System.

It is vital that Board members are actively involved with the health service, and over the years I have participated in a number of Governance Committees including the Mental Health Forum, Audit and Risk and Finance Committees.

Board Sub Committees include Audit and Risk, Finance and Performance, Health Care Quality, Health Services Development Committee, Community

Engagement Advisory Committee, Mental Health Forum and the Drug Alcohol Forum.

Board participation in these and other LHD Committees and Agreements such as the Northern NSW Aboriginal Partnership Agreement provide Board members with valuable interaction, understanding and advice in carrying out their Board duties.

The inclusion of Board Member, Pat Grier, in the Cultural and Wellbeing Program site visits is another example where the Board can be informed and involved with the health system. I encourage you to attend these visits when they occur at your local site. I also remind you of the People Matter Survey and urge to complete this if you have not already done so.

*David Frazer  
Deputy Board Chair*

# Karri wins trainee of the year

Casino based dental assistant trainee, Karri Williams, was awarded the Indigenous Trainee of the Year at the recent 2018 Hunter Valley Training Company Excellence Awards.

Karri is a trainee with Northern NSW Local Health District (NNSWLHD) Oral Health Services, and completed her traineeship at the Casino Aboriginal Medical Service over the past year.

"I was surprised when I was told I'd won the award," Karri said.

"It's an award that my family and I are proud of and that I achieved doing something I really enjoy."

In partnership with Bulgarr Ngaru Aboriginal Medical Service, NNSWLHD supports local indigenous trainees to complete their training in regional locations through the dental assistant trainee program.

"I'm thankful to have been given the opportunity to complete my traineeship in a service heavily involved around my local Aboriginal community with an amazing group of co-workers and am able to pursue my career in the field of Oral Health," Karri said.

"Karri has managed really well and has always been very eager to learn and support our team at the Casino AMS," Nanna Kreutzfeldt, Oral Health



▲ 2018 Indigenous Trainee of the Year, Karri Williams, receives her award at the Hunter Valley Training Company awards earlier this year.

Clinical Director said.

Tara Reade, Dental Assistant Site Leader at Casino Aboriginal Medical Service praised Karri's teamwork and calm nature.

"Karri adapted so well to the different duties as a Dental Assistant, assisting in the child clinic as well as

assisting with school assessments," Tara said.

"She was popular among our child patients who find her cheerful and calming in a reassuring manner."

Since completing her traineeship, Karri is now working with the Grafton Oral Health Service.

## Specialised volunteer teams growing

As part of National Volunteer's Week, four new volunteers were welcomed into the Confused

Hospitalised Older Person (CHOPS) team. The group attended volunteer training with Dementia Nurse

Practitioner, Anne Moehead and Diversional Therapist, Tracey Beck over two days at the University Centre for

Rural Health in Ballina.

One volunteer will work in Lismore, two in Ballina and one in Tweed, as their first CHOPS trained volunteer!

A volunteer appreciation lunch was also held on Friday 25 May, bringing together both new and current volunteers with a delicious lunch kindly supplied by Ballina District Hospital management.

Management, Rehab and General Ward representatives attended and spoke with heartfelt thanks for the volunteers and the wonderful patient-centred care volunteers they provide.

▲ Volunteers and staff enjoy lunch together in Ballina during National Volunteer's Week.



# Information overload!

If there's one thing we can say about the 21st century, it's that we are living in an age of information saturation.

From live news feeds in the palm of our hands, to 24hr news channels, to daily email updates from your favourite online shopping site, we are constantly bombarded with things we should do/buy/care about. It can certainly become overwhelming.

We recently held a staff communication survey, and thank you to everyone who responded. By a great margin, the most common issue identified by staff was the volume of irrelevant communication (emails!) they receive. This makes it hard to decipher which ones are really important, and which ones can go through to the keeper.

We're now going through the results to look at where we can make some improvements in the communication space.

Thanks to everyone who provided feedback on how we can make it easier for you to get the information you need to stay up to date with what's happening in your workplace.

As Rachel Hunter once said, "it won't happen overnight, but it will happen."



**Fiona Baker**  
**Editor**

# Indicators put Northern NSW at the top of the field

Northern NSW Local Health District regularly receives high results in the areas of quality and safety, financial management and patient satisfaction as reported in government and agency publications.

These include Auditor-General's reports, External Audit reports, Clinical Excellence Commission Reports, Site Accreditations and Patient Experience surveys.

"These consistently high standards are a tribute to the quality of care provided by our clinicians, and the dedication and hard work from our many support services," Wayne Jones, Chief Executive NNSWLHD, said.

Recently, the LHD received feedback via the Auditor General's Health 2017 Report, which examines the financial management and operation of health entities for the 2017 financial year.

At the end of June 2017, NNSWLHD was in a sound financial position and had met its performance targets for each quarter in the financial year.

NNSWLHD was one of 11 local health districts to meet all emergency triage targets in 2016-17, and the percentage of patients in the LHD who were treated within clinically recommended timeframes

improved compared to the previous year.

The latest Bureau of Health Information (BHI) report on patient experience in Emergency Departments (2016-17) also showed that hospitals in Northern NSW were providing patients with positive experiences across the board, from clinical treatment, to cleanliness, to communication.

## Maclean District Hospital patients said:

"I'd speak highly of my experience at the hospital"....83%

"Overall, the care was very good"....78%

"The Emergency Department treatment area was very clean"....95%

"The health professionals did everything they could to manage my pain"....80%

Overall, 79% of all patients in the survey rated ED nurses across the LHD as very good, and 80% of patients reported that the ED treatment area was very clean.

The vast majority of patients agreed that they received treatment that was appropriate to their children's needs, had test and x-ray results explained well, and that staff took family and home situations into account when planning their discharge.

"These results show that our staff are continually providing an extremely high level of care to our patients, and that they are also responding well to the individual needs of our patients," Mr Jones said.

"It's heartening to see these great results show up time and time again, and our staff should be proud of their efforts."

## Murwillumbah District Hospital patients said:

"I'd speak highly of my experience at the hospital"....88%

"Overall, the care was very good"....85%

"The nurses who treated me were very good"....94%

"The doctors who treated me were very good"....87%

# Northern exposure

**Editor:** Fiona Baker  
**Phone:** 6620 2141  
**Email:** [fiona.baker2@ncahs.health.nsw.gov.au](mailto:fiona.baker2@ncahs.health.nsw.gov.au)

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

Cover image: Whian Whian

## 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!



# Joining forces for rural communities

On 7 May the new Ministerial Advisory Committee for Rural Health (MACRH) met for the first time at The Tweed Hospital.

MACRH is co-chaired by Mrs Leslie Williams, Parliamentary Secretary for Rural Health and Dr Austin Curtin, General Surgeon.

Members have significant experience across the rural health sector, with

clinical, nursing, consumer, carer and not-for-profit representatives.

The theme of the meeting was how NSW Health could look to partner with other entities to achieve change for rural communities, especially for mental health and workforce issues.

Presentations included successful approaches such as the Northern NSW Local Health District Winter

Strategy and Northern NSW Aboriginal partnerships and exploring how we could work closely with Universities.

The objective of MACRH is to provide advice to the Minister for Health on rural health issues and drive partnerships and outcomes for rural communities.

The next meeting of the committee will be held in Tamworth in August.



▲ Back row, from left, Stewart Dowrick, Chief Executive, Mid North Coast LHD; Dr Nigel Lyons, Deputy Secretary, Strategy and Resources, NSW Ministry of Health; Dr Ian Kamerman, General Practitioner/ Australian Medical Association representative; Kerry Geale, Health Consumer representative; Lindsay Cane, CEO Royal Far West; Dr Ros Bullock, General Practitioner / NSW Rural Doctors Network representative. Front row, from left, Maryann Tarrant, Carer representative; Adjunct Professor Nicole Turner, Chairperson, Indigenous Allied Health Australia; Leslie Williams MP, Parliamentary Secretary for Rural Health; Dr Kathleen Atkinson, General Practitioner / State-wide Director, NSW Health Education and Training Institute; Leonie Parker, Nurse Practitioner representative; Tanya Davies, Minister for Mental Health and Geoff Provest MP, Member for Tweed at the first MACRH meeting in May.

## Nurses take time out to reflect, recharge



International Nurses and Midwives Days were celebrated in style at Murwillumbah District Hospital (MDH) during May.

Nurses and midwives reflected on exactly why they enjoyed their careers by filling in and displaying speech bubbles depicting why they do what they do.

The team celebrated with a hearty BBQ burger lunch with

◀ Murwillumbah Registered Nurse, Alba Bonomi, at the International Nurses Day celebrations. Alba was also awarded Staff Member of the Month at MDH.

healthy accompaniments, kindly donated by the local IGA supermarket.

Acting Executive Officer/ Director of Nursing, Wendy Howell, said she felt very privileged to be able to help cook a little treat for such amazing, dedicated nurses and midwives.

"Thank you for all your hard work, and for all you do for our patients," Wendy said.

# 2018 Quality Awards - Winners

## Innovation on show

### From Page 1

Winners from each category in the 2018 Quality Awards are shown below and on the following page.

Some categories also had one or more runners up.

"It's so exciting to see our staff develop home-grown initiatives to improve the care we provide to patients and the way we go about our daily work in the health system," Wayne Jones, CE

NNSWLHD, said.

The 2018 Quality Awards were proudly sponsored by Cerner, Smartsalary, North Coast Primary Health Network, University Centre for Rural Health and COS.

Congratulations to all the entrants.

A full list of the finalists, their presentations, and more photos from the night are available on the NNSWLHD [intranet](#).



▲ A Safe and Healthy Workplace - category winner Lyn Harris (centre) accepts the award from Sharyn White and Naree Hancock of North Coast Primary Health Network.



▲ Keeping People Healthy - category winner Anna Huddy accepts the award from Cerner representative, Paul Willma.



▲ Clinical Practice Improvement - from left, Andrew Hume; Damon Buckle from award sponsor, COS; Linda Casuarina and Lucy McCarthy. The team also won the People's Choice Award for Best Poster.



▲ Delivering Integrated Care - category winner Chris Lowry accepts the award from sponsors Sharyn White and Naree Hancock of North Coast Primary Health Network.



▲ Patient Safety - category winner 'Emergency Protocols'. Charlotte Hall and Dean Robertson accept their award from Frances Barraclough, University Centre for Rural Health

# 2018 Quality Awards ~ Winners



▲ Excellence in provision of mental health services - Cassandra Porter and Julie Butler accept the award from Smartsalary representative, Annemarie O'Rourke (centre).



▲ Patients as partners - Kim Grey and Nicole Ellevsen accept the award on behalf of Urbenville MPS, from Annemarie O'Rourke (centre) of Smart Salary.

◀ Corporate Practice Improvement - Jason Muller, right, accepts the award from sponsor, Paul Willma, Cerner.



▲ ACI innovation Award - Deborah Jansen is congratulated by, ACI Rural Health Manager, Jenny Preece.

◀ ACI Innovation Award - Anthony Zuill accepts the award from ACI Rural Health Manager, Jenny Preece.



# My Health Record: your health in your hands

By the end of 2018, a My Health Record will be created for every person with a Medicare or Department of Veterans' Affairs card, unless they choose not to have one.

Already 5.8 million Australians have a My Health Record, which is a secure online summary of a person's health information.

Having a My Health Record means important health information – including allergies, medical conditions and treatments, medicine details and scan reports – can be accessed through one secure system.

My Health Record allows patients to take more control of their own health and wellbeing, manage their children's health, and upload key documents such as advance care directives.

A My Health Record is available 24/7, saving valuable time and helping you to provide the best care possible to your patients.

During the three-month opt out period which runs from 16 July to 15 October, people who do not want to have a My Health Record will have the opportunity to opt out.

NSW Health clinicians can access information about a patient's recent

health history from all NSW Local Health Districts and the My Health Record, via HealtheNet.

In Northern NSW Local Health District, education about My Health Record is being provided to staff and clinicians, in collaboration with North Coast Primary Health Network.

Once the opt-out period begins, there will be a public campaign to provide information to consumers and the general population.

Visit the NNSWLHD staff intranet

[here](#) for more information about the expansion of My Health Record in coming months.

For general enquiries about the system, email [healthenet@health.nsw.gov.au](mailto:healthenet@health.nsw.gov.au).

For technical support requests, contact [EHNSW-HealtheNetSupport@health.nsw.gov.au](mailto:EHNSW-HealtheNetSupport@health.nsw.gov.au).

The My Health Record Helpline is now open, on 1800 723 471 (select 1 for consumers, 2 for providers) or visit [www.myhealthrecord.gov.au](http://www.myhealthrecord.gov.au) to find out more.



## Variety the key to making fitness fun

Looking for fun and fitness? CHEGs classes are an initiative of the Northern NSW Local Health District Health Promotion Unit and are delivered by local, qualified group fitness instructors.

Unlike fitness fads that come and go, CHEGs has been helping Northern Rivers

residents stay active since 1979. Every week, some 40 low cost CHEGs classes are held at 12 locations between Tweed Heads and Grafton.

As anyone who goes to these classes knows: once you choose CHEGs, you're hooked.

"The classes are not an option, or negotiable; I have to go, I need to go, I want to go!" said one dedicated follower.

Many CHEGs-goers have been attending classes for years. One participant recalled joining as long ago as "the late 1980s".

A major drawcard to CHEGs is the variety of classes available - there really is something for everyone. Classes range from very gentle to resistance strength training, low impact aerobic, and stretch, as well as Tai Chi and Qigong.

Many CHEGs-devotees are also attracted to the low cost. Classes are currently priced at just \$60 for 10 classes or \$8 for a casual visit, and concessions are available.

"I was attending other fitness classes which were more expensive," said one participant. "After being made aware of the CHEGs subsidised classes I can now attend three classes a week!"

For more information about classes, call the program coordinator on 02 6620 7523 or 0408 665 282, or visit the website [www.chegs.org.au](http://www.chegs.org.au).



# Warm up with exercise, not comfort food

Stay active this winter, and exercise for at least 30 minutes on most days to keep the extra kilos at bay in the cooler months.

"The winter months cause changes to our internal biological clocks – our circadian rhythms – which affects how we sleep and when we wake, our metabolism, our desire to be outdoors and even perhaps our desire for richer foods," said Katherine Samaras, Professor of Medicine at the Department of Endocrinology at St Vincent's Hospital.

"In the US, studies indicate people commonly put on 2-3kgs in autumn and winter. We don't have specific data on seasonal inactivity in Australia, but our experience is likely to be similar and for some people those small gains each year will accumulate."

Physical activity is good for your health, but you don't need to run a marathon for it to be beneficial. Small amounts of exercise can make a big difference to your health.

Simple tips to keep unwanted extra winter kilos at bay are:

- Be active every day
- Sit less and move more, you'll burn more kilojoules
- Plan ahead - get your exercise clothes ready the night before
- Choose smaller portions of richer winter foods
- Up the H2O to stay hydrated.



## Northern NSW Compassionate Communities Forum

Hosted by the **Northern NSW Local Health District & North Coast Primary Health Network**

### One thing's for sure – everyone dies.

Let's open up conversations about death and dying and talk about fostering more compassion within our communities.

Come along to this free community forum and join health professionals, community members and friends to talk about this sometimes awkward subject.

- Hear from others about their experiences with dying and grief
- Contribute your stories and ideas
- Help start building our Northern NSW Compassionate Communities
- Tea, coffee and light snacks provided

Get involved - register at:

Eventbrite <https://compassionate-community-forum.eventbrite.com.au>

or contact Anna Law on 0418 797 478 or anna.law@ncahs.health.nsw.gov.au

**Monday 2nd July 2018**

**5.00-8.00pm**

**Ballina RSL, 1 Grant St**

**THE GROUNDSWELL PROJECT**



# Is your practice informed about consent?

Clinicians and students will have a rare opportunity to focus on informed decision making in maternity care at an upcoming workshop.

Dr Bec Jenkinson, a leading expert and co-author of health policy on informed decision making

and informed consent in maternity care will be hosting the event, 'A Close Look at Informed Consent' at Southern Cross University (SCU) on 9 July.

The event will help clinicians learn from scenarios and clarify your responsibilities, with a Q & A

around questions you want answered.

This live event will be held at SCU's Gold Coast campus, from 5.30-7.30pm.

When: 9 July 2018

Where: SCU, Gold Coast Campus, Building B, Level 6, Room 25.

Tickets are available for

purchase via the [website](#) or the event Facebook [page](#).

Live screenings of the event can also be arranged at workplaces across the region.

For more information, contact Pregnancy Birth and Beyond Media at [hello@pbbmedia.org](mailto:hello@pbbmedia.org).



# Get to know what matters most

As part of National Palliative Care Week, from 20-26 May, we asked the community to think about 'What Matters Most?'

Across the Northern NSW Local Health District, staff manned information stands in hospitals and shopping centres to help people start a conversation around what would be most important to them if they became seriously unwell.

"By having the

conversation with their loved ones and health professionals, people can ensure their treatment and care best aligns with their values and preferences regarding both the type and place of care and place of death," Anna Law, End of Life Care Project Officer with NNSWLHD, said.

"We encourage everyone to discuss their end-of-life wishes with their loved ones and health care team.



Knowing what is important to you will reduce their burden at a difficult time and ensure you get the care you desire," Anna said.

Anna said that dying is a normal part of life so it is

important for all Australians to have discussions about death and dying and the type of care they would want to receive if they could no longer speak for themselves.

▲ From left, Lismore Base Hospital Nurse Unit Manager E9, Lea McAllister and Palliative Care Registrar, Dr Nicola Close model t-shirts for Palliative Care Week.

◀ Clarence Valley Palliative Care Clinical Nurse Consultant 2, Jennifer Smith, with an information stand.

## Don't get the sits, make a move on heart disease

You might be shocked to know that over half of all Australians are not active enough, almost two in three Australians adults are overweight or obese, and one in four children are overweight or obese.

The team from The Tweed Hospital (TTH) Cardiac Unit addressed these issues head on during Heart Week, from 29 April to 6 May.

Focussing physical activity and the steps needed to reduce the risk of heart disease, they encouraged staff to come for a walk after work to reap the rewards that physically activity provides for our mind and body.

Staff from various disciplines joined the

afternoon walk; a fantastic way to finish off a busy day.

"Having a chat and taking in the beautiful scenery that the Tweed River has to offer left everyone feeling more energized and relaxed," Sally McLean, Cardiac Assessment Nurse, TTH, said.

If you struggle to regularly get 30 minutes of physical activity in each day, try exploring various options to get moving. That could be walking, running, jumping rope, dancing or swimming in the ocean.

"Grab a mate and get them moving too. Being active with friends is a great motivator. The key is to find something you enjoy."

Remember, any movement



▲ TTH staff walk for heart health. From left, Michael Daley, Hazardous Manual Handling Coordinator; Carolyn Campbell, Return to Work Coordinator; Liz Petterson, RN; Sally McLean, Cardiac Assessment Nurse; and Colleen Shepherd, RN.

is better than none and you are never too young or too

old to benefit from being physically active.



# BreastScreen celebrates 25 years of life-saving screens

BreastScreen NSW North Coast celebrated 25 years of service in May.

The program has been available on the North Coast since 1993.

In that time, Director Jane Walsh and her team of dedicated staff and clinicians have steadily increased the number of women who have participated in the program

to just over 30,000 this year.

This means women who have no symptoms but have a small breast cancer have had their cancer detected which has improved their

treatment options and in most cases their outcome.

BreastScreen NSW North Coast was also recently awarded four years' accreditation by the BreastScreen National Quality Management Committee.

The program received commendations for its work with the Primary Health Network and vulnerable communities to improve their access to the program.

"The program is about saving lives, it's delivers a high quality service, employs highly specialised clinicians, has access to state of the art equipment and it's free," Jane said.

"We're very proud that we've been recognised nationally as providing a high standard of service to the women on the North Coast," Jane said.

"Personally I'd like to thank all the staff and doctors who work for BreastScreen North Coast for their dedication and commitment to the program."



▲ BreastScreen staff at the Lismore clinic, with BreastScreen NSW North Coast Director, Jane Walsh, far right.

## Tobacco teams kick butt for health

World No Tobacco Day (WNTD), is a WHO initiative internationally celebrated on May 31 to raise awareness of the impact of smoking across population groups.

This year the focus was on tobacco and heart disease with the message 'tobacco breaks hearts'.

Health Promotion ran a competition and WHS Committees from across the LHD were asked to Kick Butts for May 31.

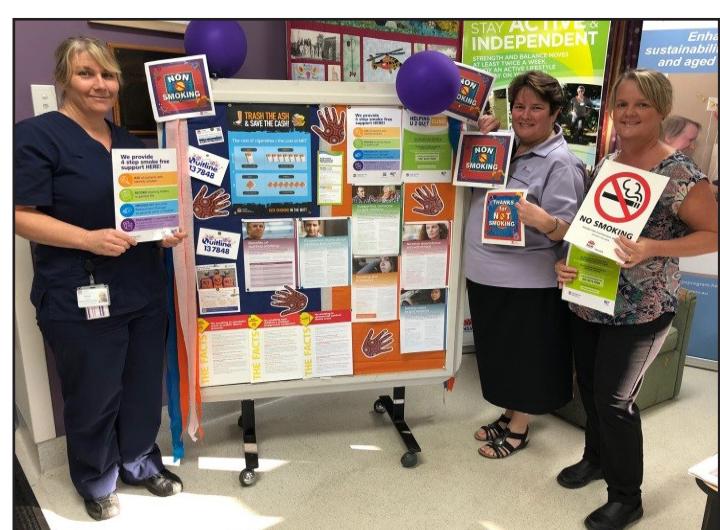
1st Place went to Shelby Mills and Iluka Community

Health Centre.

Rachael Keys, Cathie McLaughlin and Melissa Ingram of Kyogle MPS received the Runners Up Award.

Both the Runners Up and 1st place getters will receive a healthy morning or afternoon tea courtesy of NNSW Health Promotion.

► Kyogle MPS staff with their display for World No Tobacco Day. From left, Rachel Keys, Cathie McLaughlin and Melissa Ingram.



# Profile : Sue Cross

This month, Northern Exposure chats with radiographer, Sue Cross, about her work with BreastScreen, and the development of the service over the last 25 years.

BreastScreen Northern NSW celebrated 25 years this May, and if you visit the Lismore screening unit you might meet someone who has been there since the very beginning.

Sue Cross answered a call for radiographers to specialise in mammography to be part of the first breast screen service in the region when it was getting off the ground in 1993.

"I was taking one of my boys to school one morning and the old Commonwealth Employment Service used to run ads on the radio," Sue said.

"They wanted radiographers who wanted to re-enter the workforce and specialise in mammography."

Sue had trained in radiography in South Africa after finishing high school, but had been out of the field for some years with family commitments and a change of career as an interior designer. She jumped at the chance to get back into the profession.

"I did my training at Royal Women's Hospital in Brisbane in February 1993, we started setting up in April in Lismore and I've been here ever since," Sue said.

The Lismore Breastscreen unit was one of the first rural programs in NSW, originally housed in the basement of the old x-ray department at Lismore Base Hospital.

They moved into their current Uralba Street headquarters in 1994, and the building has had a number of renovations to accommodate the program's expansion and the state-of-the art equipment used today.

"We have gone from a film/screen radiography through computed radiography and now direct digital imagining," Sue said.

"We take a picture and within seven seconds it's on the monitor."

With the fixed headquarters based in

Lismore, the mobile aspect of the program grew steadily in the early years.

"The early philosophy was that we'd take the service to the people," Sue said.

The first mobile service began in November 1993, and in 1994 a second unit came on board, based in mid north coast to reach Coffs Harbour and Port Macquarie regions. More mobile units were added to reach smaller, remote communities.

Originally a non-government organisation, Breastscreen North Coast became part of the Mid North Coast Area Health Service in 2004, moving to the United North Coast Area Health Service during the period when both districts were centrally managed.

Today the management sits with Northern NSW Local Health District while the geographical area they cover still incorporates both LHDs.

"We've come a long way in 25 years. We're screening more and more women each year, but the population is always growing around us so we're fighting to meet our targets each year," Sue said.

On an average day, Sue screens 35 women, working extended hours to complete a full time load over 4 days. She is also often away for several days at a time with the mobile unit.

"I love my job, really I do. I love the women so I love coming to work," Sue said. "I always go home thinking at least if I find one breast cancer this week we've saved somebody."

Although nearing that age when people start to think about winding down, Sue said she has no plans to stop anytime soon.

"I could retire but I think I've got a few more years in me. I try to keep fit and healthy so I can keep at it."



## Partnership leads to specialised winter care

The Winter Strategy is a joint project with the NSW Health District (NNSWLHD), North Coast Primary Health Network (NCPHN) and 21 general practices in Northern NSW working together to better respond to the surge in healthcare demand over

winter.

Launched on 14 May, the aim of the 2018 Winter Strategy is to support the most vulnerable patients to stay well and safely at home during winter. It builds on the pilot program run in 2017 and emphasises:

- Ensuring at-risk patients have priority access to their general practice

- Actively engaging with patients (through phone calls and home visits) and taking action early if their health deteriorates

- Stepping up patient self-

- management through Sick Day Action plans and other health coaching

- Coordinating hospital staff, Chronic Disease Management Teams and general practice staff to communicate effectively and provide tailored care.

## eMeds boosts patient safety

The eMeds project has now been expanded to include all inpatient facilities throughout Northern NSW Local Health District including Emergency Departments and Pre-admission Clinics.

eMeds does more than move all medications currently written on the NIMC into the Cerner eMR system: it gives clinicians access to clinical information at the point of prescription and administration, automatically checks drug to drug interactions and patient allergy status and helps to reduce the risk of adverse medication events through clear, legible orders.

eMeds also places the medication history into the eMR to be reviewed by teams throughout treatment, and eMeds information will also be included in the discharge summary for GPs.

Lismore Base Hospital has already started preparations for eMeds and will Go Live in the first week of October.

We are pleased to announce the following dates for the remaining sites:

Lismore	3 October 2018
Byron Bay	7 November 2018
Murwillumbah	5 December 2018
Riverlands	6 February 2019
Tweed	18 March 2019
Ballina	29 April 2019
Casino	27 May 2019
Grafton	26 June 2019
Maclean	15 July 2019
Kyogle	14 August 2019
Nimbin	21 August 2019
Bonalbo	28 August 2019
Urbenville	4 September 2019

In order to reach all the staff within the LHD, the eMeds team has expanded. The first of the new Change Managers, Sam Culver and Aidan Brendish, have joined the project team and have started their training with eClinician, Lee Cameron.

Sam and Aidan will be working across sites to help staff become familiar with eMeds and start preparations to make the transition to this new form of medication management.

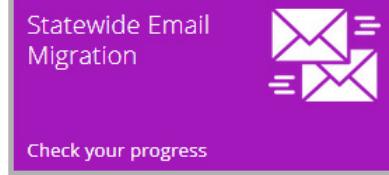
For further information or to ensure your team is involved in change activities, contact Mary Mackenzie, Implementation Lead at [Mary.Mackenzie2@ncahs.health.nsw.gov.au](mailto:Mary.Mackenzie2@ncahs.health.nsw.gov.au) or James Nunn, Program Change Manager at [James.Nunn@ncahs.health.nsw.gov.au](mailto:James.Nunn@ncahs.health.nsw.gov.au).

## Email migration coming soon

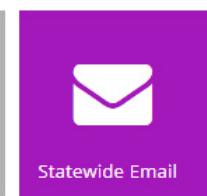
Mid North Coast and Northern NSW Local Health Districts, in conjunction with eHealth NSW, have initiated a project to migrate the current email systems to the NSW Health (State-Wide) email platform during June and July 2018.

The State-Wide email platform is hosted by eHealth NSW and delivers a searchable, accessible and reliable email platform for you and your teams.

Staff will receive notifications



Check your progress



Fact sheets, FAQs, and reference guides are available on the SWIS Email Migration project [website](#).

You can access the project website and the State-Wide email archive through the staff [intranet](#).

# Research database now available

To recognise, celebrate and share the fantastic research done by staff in Northern NSW Local Health District (NNSWLHD), an LHD Register of Research was launched earlier this month.

The Register is populated by a capture tool, accessible [here](#), which is designed to record summary information for research projects, guiding investigators through the process of adding key information by completing various fields.

The Register aims to capture the major research-related activities and

projects conducted by staff, including ethics approved, ethics exempted and Quality Improvement/Assurance (QA) activities.



The Register will be a valuable source of information for measuring research activity, informing reports generated by

the Research Office for wider distribution throughout the LHD, including to Executive staff and the NNSWLHD Board.

The Register will also provide the opportunity to share our research activity throughout the LHD with key research partners including Universities and neighbouring or partner LHDs.

The Register should also promote greater collaboration and communication between research groups within and outside the LHD, and raise the awareness and profile of the high quality research conducted by our staff.

# Take steps for child protection now

In March this year the Minister for Health, Brad Hazzard launched new online child protection training.

This training supports health workers to be curious about children and young people's safety and wellbeing; know how to contact the NSW Health Child Wellbeing Unit 1300 480 420; make a report to the child protection Helpline 13 2111 or eReport; and know what supports are available to you in your role.

So far, over 1200 NNSWLHD staff have completed Part 1 of the training. The training is mandatory, and all staff need to complete Parts 1 and 2 by 30 September, 2018.

Staff working with families also need to complete Part 3 of the training by 30 September, 2018.

Check your My Health Learning Homepage for your completion requirements. New staff are encouraged to complete the training within 4 weeks of commencing employment.

Health staff working directly with children, young people and vulnerable adults with children in their care must also complete one-day face-to-face



▲ From left, Craig Hughes-Cashmore of Survivors and Mates Support Network; The Hon. Brad Hazzard, Minister for Health; Annette Solman, Heath Education and Training Institute and Lorna McNamara from NSW Health.

training. More information about Northern NSW LHD training requirements is available at [on the intranet document library](#). If you have any difficulty with

the training or applying a child-at-risk alert, contact the child protection team at [NNSWLHDchildprotection@ncahs.health.nsw.gov.au](mailto:NNSWLHDchildprotection@ncahs.health.nsw.gov.au).

## HealthPathways News - June

### Sick Day Action Plans

Sick Day Action Plans are used by clinicians in partnership with their patients to prevent or better manage exacerbations associated with their condition. This is an extension of the familiar Asthma Action Plan idea.

In conjunction with the upcoming winter season and the 2018 Winter Strategy, the relevant Sick Day Action Plans have been updated on the HealthPathways. Most of the plans provide a detailed description and suggested steps for writing a plan.

Action Plans enable patients to make well-informed and guided decisions about their own healthcare, leading to better health outcomes. When personalised and regularly reviewed, these plans are associated with an increase in patient self-efficacy, fewer unplanned hospitalisations and timely contact with a GP or health professional when they need it.

Some conditions and templates are simpler than others. Asthma, COPD, CCF, Chest pain, and Anaphylaxis are a good set to start with to become familiar with

preparing and training patients and carers in their use.

The plans are available for download in PDF format and they are also available as templates to upload into Best Practice or Medical Director Clinical software for GPs.

To access these plans, simply click on the links below or log into [HealthPathways](#) and click on the Blue 'Action Plans' icon on the homepage or access the Action Plans HealthPathway.

- [Asthma Action Plan](#) (National Asthma Council Australia)
- [Action Plan for Anaphylaxis](#) (ASCI)
- [Chest Pain/ Heart Attack Action Plan](#) (Heart Foundation)
- [Chronic Kidney Disease Action Plan](#) (NCPHN)
- [COPD Action Plan](#) (Lung Foundation Australia)
- [COPD for Indigenous patients](#) (Queensland Department of Health)
- [Delirium Action Plan](#)
- [Heart Failure Action Plan](#) (Heart Foundation)
- [Keep Me Safe Plan - Mental Health](#) (Mid and North Coast HealthPathways)
- [Sick Day Action Plan](#) - Type 1 Diabetes

- [Sick Day Action Plan](#) - Type 2 Diabetes
- [General Action Plan](#) - General

Access all the localised Mid and North Coast HealthPathways here:

<https://manc.healthpathways.org.au/index.htm>

Username: manchealth

Password: conn3ct3d

To access HealthPathways related to articles in this edition of Northern Exposure, click on the links below:

- [Physical Activity Support](#)
- [Hydrotherapy](#)
- [Falls Prevention Programs](#)
- [Excercise Physiology](#)
- [Advance Care Planning](#)
- [Heart Failure](#)
- [Obesity Management in Adults](#)
- [Weight Management in Children](#)
- [Eating Disorders in Adults](#)
- [Eating](#)

Disorders in  
Children &  
Adolescents

- [Breast Screening](#)
- [Q Fever](#)



# Thank you!

*Following her daughter's admission to The Tweed Hospital, Louise Payne wrote to the staff to thank them for the great care her daughter received.*

*Louise is also a staff member at the hospital, and her letter is published here with permission.*

I am writing to thank your staff for the incredible, holistic care my daughter received while in Tweed last week.

Claudia Payne was discharged from Gold Coast Private with ongoing severe pain from her ulcerated tonsil on Friday 11 May.

As a Registered Nurse myself (I work on pool in ED and Paeds at Tweed) I knew she was too unwell to be discharged so I took her into Tweed Emergency. She has a background of Postural Orthostatic tachycardia Syndrome and requires 3L minimum oral intake daily. With her throat as sore as it was she wasn't tolerating any intake. Unfortunately, I don't have anyone's surname but the following people were fantastic:

Jennifer (RN) triaged her quickly and appropriately and was kind.

Sharon (EDMO) saw her swiftly and

was very thorough in her examination and listened to her needs.

Trish (CN) observed her near faint post dexamethasone and panadiene forte and swiftly put her into a bed and ensured she was safe and escalated her to seeing ENT.

Mark (in charge RN) checked we were settled and kept me informed of the progress because she was going to John Flynn.

Joe Jaboor from ENT thoroughly examined her and noted the ulcer and pus, admitted her and commenced her on IV Benpen, IV dexamethasone, Targin and xylocaine viscous.

Kym in EMU was compassionate to her pain and gave excellent nursing care.

We were then transferred to Medical 1 (her first adult admission).

Due to her age they kindly put her in a single room. Tayla (RN) was thorough, kind, and holistic in her care.

Annaliese the next day was again excellent and holistic. Charlotte (Grad RN) was not directly involved in her care but came and chatted to us and gave her Uni advice. Claudia said the night nurses were equally lovely.

I'm so proud to say I work there, especially after this experience.

## Q Fever: serious, but preventable

Northern NSW Local Health District covers a wide range of geographical areas, from rural and farming areas, right through to densely-populated cities.

Q fever is a bacterial infection which mainly causes concern in rural areas, but there are patients living in metropolitan areas being diagnosed.

It can cause a severe flu-like illness.

The bacteria are spread from animals, mainly cattle, sheep and goats as well as a range of domestic animals. Anyone who works with animals is at risk.

People who live near livestock or occasionally visit farm environments could also be at risk.

For some people, Q fever can affect their health and ability to work for many years.

Vaccination is the most effective way to prevent Q fever infection and is recommended for anyone aged 15 years and older, working or living on a farm.

For people who can't get vaccinated, there are other simple things they can do to reduce their risks. Speak with your doctor or visit [www.health.nsw.gov.au/qfever](http://www.health.nsw.gov.au/qfever) for more information.

## People Matter Survey - have your say

The 2018 People Matter Survey is on now, and you're encouraged to participate. You can access the survey [here](#) and via our intranet site. It closes 2 July.

You, our staff, are our health service's biggest asset, and we are taking steps to put workplace culture and organisational development front and centre in our LHD.

Ensuring we maintain our positive and supportive Workplace Culture is a major strategic objective for the LHD in the coming years.

We have already started putting actions in place to help improve staff wellbeing, culture and communication within our facilities and work units.

In the past year we have formed a Culture and Staff Engagement Committee with staff representation from almost all departments and locations, and been working hard on



▲ At left, acting Senior Administration Assistant, CE office, Madeline Gray, with the NNSWLHD Executive Team.

improving workplace communication.

We have expanded the regular schedule of Chief Executive roadshows, held more staff forums with General Managers and other senior

management, and received feedback from clinician engagement forums which are being run by the NNSWLHD Clinical Council.

Complete your survey today!

# The last word...

## Farewell Betty Bennett

Registered Nurse and well known Casino identity, Betty Bennett, is retiring after almost 48 years of caring for patients.

Betty commenced general nursing training at Casino & District Memorial Hospital in January 1967 and went on to work there following registration.

In 1978 Betty started her Midwifery training at Royal Woman's Hospital Brisbane, returning to Casino again afterwards.

Over the course of her long career, Betty has worked in all areas of the hospital including general medical / surgical, Emergency Department, Operating Theatre / Recovery, Maternity and Paediatrics (when both were open). She has also worked as relief Nursing Unit Manager and After Hours

### Supervisor.

Throughout her career, Betty maintained a high level of professionalism and integrity, and was well-respected by her colleagues. Betty has been a great advocate for her patients and received many cards and letters of thanks for her work.

Betty was recently honoured with a parliamentary mention by local Member for Page, Kevin Hogan this year, and will retire from nursing on 15 July. With her free time, Betty plans to do more gardening, help with school reading and focus on her watercolour painting. We wish you a happy retirement!

► Casino Registered Nurse, Betty Bennett, is retiring after almost 48 years of nursing.



## Clarence volunteers strike the right balance

Northern NSW Local Health District Rural Adversity Mental Health (RAMHP) Coordinator, Sam Osborne partnered with local service providers

and community members to honour Clarence Valley volunteers as part of National Volunteer week in May.

They delivered Volunteer Wellbeing

workshops and attended community events to thank local community members who give their time generously to others.

RAMHP Coordinator Sam Osborne, Clarence Valley Mayor, Jim Simmons and Our Healthy Clarence Coordinator, Sue Hughes, joined the local volunteer celebrations at the Grafton Ten Pin Bowling Club.

There, the enthusiastic and highly skilled group of volunteers embraced the opportunity to take a moment to unwind, laugh and to look after themselves.



◀ Clarence Valley volunteers enjoy a day of fun and relaxation at Grafton Ten Pin Bowling Club during National Volunteer Week.