

# HEALTH IN FOCUS

NEWS FROM YOUR LOCAL HEALTH SERVICE

SPRING 2018

How banking  
blood is helping  
**CANCER RESEARCH**

Celebrating  
**NAIDOC Week**  
*Inspiring stories of  
Aboriginal women*

**Kicking off our  
Fit for Frailty  
Program**



Health  
Illawarra Shoalhaven  
Local Health District

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

Illawarra Shoalhaven Local Health District acknowledges the people of the many traditional countries and language groups of our District. It acknowledges the wisdom of Elders both past and present and pays respect to Aboriginal communities of today.



**Health**  
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Local Health District

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Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are advised that this publication may contain images or names of people who have since passed away.

## ABOUT US

Illawarra Shoalhaven Local Health District (ISLHD) was formed in 2011 and covers the area from Helensburgh to North Durras. We provide health services for approximately 400,000 residents through our eight hospitals and community based services. **For more information visit our website:** [islhd.health.nsw.gov.au](http://islhd.health.nsw.gov.au)

## COVER IMAGE

Ashleigh Splitt has recently taken up the position of Oncology Biobank Manager. To read more about Biobanking and Ashleigh's role, turn to page nine.



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## A word from our CHIEF EXECUTIVE

It is my pleasure to bring you the spring edition of Health in Focus, our community magazine that provides a look at some of the main initiatives and events that have been happening across the Illawarra Shoalhaven Local Health District (ISLHD).

In this issue we have put a spotlight on research and innovation, which is one of the key priorities of our District's Strategic Directions.

On our cover we feature Wollongong Hospital's Biobank that is offering new insights into cancer research. On page 13 we detail the new ways we are improving the journeys of cancer patients to build on the care they receive in our hospitals. Further benefits to our patients were seen with staff participating in Dry July, raising substantial funds for cancer services in our District, which is featured on page 15.

In this edition you can also read about how patients at Wollongong Hospital have been enjoying the benefits of Wi-Fi, allowing them to stay connected with their families and friends while they undergo treatment, as well as some inspiring stories of women in our Aboriginal communities with our article on NAIDOC Week.

We feature stories on other new ideas and innovation including ISLHD staff taking the lead on our 'Fit for Frailty' program which is designed to help our patients who have frailty issues. Swapping their uniforms for PJs, our staff were able to engage with patients in a fun way to highlight the importance of mobility while in hospital.

In keeping with the theme of fun, staff at Wollongong Hospital used their creative minds to transform the Children's Ward into a party zone for Children's Party Week. This event was a huge success and helped staff create a more fun and engaging atmosphere for our young patients.

All of these initiatives and events have shown how dedicated our staff are in improving the quality of care for our community. I am extremely proud of this tireless work and look forward to sharing with you more exciting and innovative programs in the next issue of Health in Focus.

**Margot Mains**  
Chief Executive  
Illawarra Shoalhaven Local Health District



# Staff swap uniforms for PJs

... all in the name of improving care for people living with frailty



Staff at Shellharbour, Shoalhaven and Wollongong Hospitals have swapped work uniforms for their pyjamas as part of an initiative aimed at encouraging patients to get out of bed, into their day clothes and move around more while in hospital. The campaign, known as #endPJparalysis, aims to create awareness of bed rest and why it's not always the best medicine.

Illawarra Shoalhaven Local Health District's (ISLHD) Co-Director of the Division of Medicine, Associate Professor Spiros Miyakis, said "bed rest can often cause unintended harm to patients who are already frail."

"We know that just 10 days of bed rest in a hospital setting can age muscles in older patients by a massive 10 years. This rapid muscle deconditioning means patients can quickly become weaker, and it can take twice as long to get back on their feet. This can lead to other health problems and even longer hospital stays, so we are looking at ways to get patients up and about and reduce the risk of this cycle where possible," he said.

#endPJparalysis is an international campaign founded by UK Professor Brian Dolan. It aims to encourage patients who are well enough to get up, get dressed and get moving.

Research has shown that by better supporting patients to wear their day clothes while in hospital, recovery is boosted and they can return home and to their regular routines more quickly.

ISLHD Project Nurse Lead, Megan Foye said " #endPJparalysis will be trialled throughout the District to gauge the benefits for local patients. Staff have come to work in their nightwear to get a better understanding of how vulnerable patients can feel wearing their PJs all day."

"It's a common misconception that pyjamas should be worn at all times in hospital. We want patients, their families and staff to know that establishing a routine of getting up and out of bed to get dressed has been proven to assist recovery. Wearing pyjamas all day can often reinforce feeling unwell, while clothes say a patient is getting better," Ms Foye said

"We want to get patients back on their feet as quickly as possible so they can maintain strength, confidence and routine during their hospital stay allowing them to get back to their families and loved ones as soon as possible," she said.

This initiative is one of the projects currently being rolled out in hospitals across the Local Health District, part of a larger focus on improving how we care for patients who are frail.

The District's Fit for Frailty Program is looking at all aspects and challenges of the frail person's journey. This will allow us to develop systems and approaches that ensure that ISLHD is fit to care for frail people now and into the future.

Management of older people with frailty has been identified as a challenge. Locally, over 75 year olds make up nine per cent of the Illawarra Shoalhaven population, and while not everyone over 75 is frail, this age group accounts for 16 per cent of Emergency Department (ED) presentations, 60 per cent of falls and 43 per cent of medication issues. We also see higher rates of frailty in our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population from the age of 55.

"Taking all of this into account, reconsidering how we as a system treat our frail and elderly patients is crucial. The early identification of people with frailty, appropriate treatment plans, and improved access to internal and external services are the key enablers for ensuring people with frailty are cared for in the right place and at the right time," said Associate Professor Miyakis.

The Fit for Frailty Project is being led jointly by clinical leads; Associate Professor Miyakis and Professor Jan Potter - Co-Director Aged Care, Rehabilitation and Palliative Care. Project leads – Megan Foye and Padmini Pai.

1. Staff at Shoalhaven Hospital, Mat Bartley and Sam Jeffrey wear pyjamas to understand how patients feel wearing pyjamas everyday
2. Shellharbour Hospital staff get in the spirit of #endPJparalysis
3. No uniforms in sight on Medical Ward B at Shoalhaven Hospital
4. Staff of Shoalhaven Hospital Medical Ward B, Tyrone Dallas, Sam Jeffrey, Alison Cole, Natalie Wright and Mat Bartley with patient Pam French and her husband Roy

# NAIDOC WEEK CELEBRATED AROUND THE HEALTH DISTRICT

The Illawarra Shoalhaven Local Health District (ISLHD) is committed to marking cultural days of significance, including NAIDOC Week, which was celebrated nationally from 8-15 July.

A variety of NAIDOC Week 2018 activities were held across ISLHD in line with this year's theme, Because of Her, We Can! Which celebrates the essential role that women have played – and continue to play – as active and significant role models in the community at local, state and national levels. The District acknowledges the role that Aboriginal women have played and continue to play in the Illawarra Shoalhaven, particularly in ensuring that services are accessible and culturally safe.

## NAIDOC FLAG RAISING CEREMONIES

NAIDOC flag raising ceremonies were hosted at Wollongong, Shellharbour and Shoalhaven Hospitals. Stories were shared by some of our most treasured and well-known female Elders,

including Aunty Bev Armour at Wollongong, Aunty Lorraine Brown at Shellharbour, and staff member Jean Turner at Shoalhaven.

Two magnificent pieces of artwork were also unveiled at Shoalhaven Hospital, commissioned by local Aboriginal artist Cecily Carpenter-Wellington.

## STAFF AFTERNOON TEA WITH THE ISLHD BOARD ABORIGINAL HEALTH COMMITTEE

A special NAIDOC afternoon tea with the ISLHD Board Aboriginal Committee was held for staff at the Warrawong Executive Offices to acknowledge the history of the role that Aboriginal women have played as trailblazers across all areas of society from politics and sport, to music and the arts. Members of the Aboriginal Staff Talking Circle were guests of honour and had the opportunity to meet and chat with the Board members, Chief Executive,

Strategic Executive members, staff of the executive services and other senior staff. Afternoon tea incorporated local bush food, including Lilli Pilli cordial and lemon myrtle cheesecakes.

During the afternoon several short films were screened. Including two 'I Say Quit' films. The local Aboriginal community was involved in helping to develop the films and messages aimed at getting Aboriginal men to quit smoking. In addition, a new Carer's Booklet and short film were also showcased, to highlight the role of Aboriginal carers, particularly women.

## COMMUNITY DAYS

Community NAIDOC days at Nowra Showground and Ulladulla Civic Centre were attended by the Committee at the events. The Get Healthy Service and Quitline were key promotions by the Committee.



A special afternoon tea was held at the Health District's Executive offices



Saint Maitie with Richard Luland, Aboriginal Health Education Officer at NAIDOC Week celebrations

## Landmark agreement signed between ABORIGINAL COMMUNITY AND NSW GOVERNMENT



ISLHD Executive attended the historic agreement signing at Windang in May. Photo courtesy of Aboriginal Affairs.

The Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, The Hon Sarah Mitchell met with the chair of the Illawarra Wingecarribee Aboriginal Alliance Corporation, Geoffrey Maher at Windang in May to sign a landmark agreement between Aboriginal people within the Illawarra Wingecarribee region and NSW Government agencies. The

Illawarra Wingecarribee Local Decision Making Accord is led by the community, and is the result of three years' work, including 12 months of negotiation. It marks the beginning of a new relationship of trust, cooperation and shared responsibility between Government and Aboriginal people in the region.

Health is a key priority of the Accord with the Illawarra Shoalhaven Local Health District (ISLHD) playing a major role with a focus on:

- Developing, promoting and improving pathways for health screening for Aboriginal children in the region
- Improving cultural safety within hospitals and health services
- Increasing the availability of culturally appropriate drug and alcohol support services
- Expanding and restructuring support programs for Aboriginal elders with chronic illness, complex care or disability needs
- Implementing healthy lifestyle programs for Aboriginal children and families in the region.

For more information on the Accord - [www.aboriginalaffairs.nsw.gov.au](http://www.aboriginalaffairs.nsw.gov.au)

# Because of Her, We Can!

## - Q AND As

The NAIDOC theme this year was Because of Her, We Can! Four Aboriginal women, Sharon Bloxsome, Rani Lawler, Stefanie Mercy and Tina Constantine, who work within the Illawarra Shoalhaven Local Health District (ISLHD) shared what the theme means to them, the roles they have in health and the women who have inspired them along the way.



**Sharon Bloxsome**  
– Principal Aboriginal Health Worker, Shoalhaven Hospital

I was born in Nowra and my cultural identity is from Shoalhaven. My dad is from Wreck Bay and my mother is from La Perouse. I am a strong proud Dharawal woman. I love the south coast and feel very privileged to be working for my people on my country.

To the Aboriginal women across our region, Because of Her, We Can!

### What do you think of the theme of NAIDOC week – Because of Her, We Can!

Wonderful, such a great theme. To have the opportunity for all communities to acknowledge the roles our Aboriginal women play and have played in society. I reflect on the Aboriginal women of the Shoalhaven and what they have achieved for us in creating the communities of today. They have led the communities locally to ensure a better life and greater opportunities for all. These women influenced, changed and lobbied for funding for health. I have to acknowledge the passed Elders Aunty Jane Ardler, Aunty Nola Roberts and Aunty Grace Coombes. I also acknowledge present Elders, Aunty Iris McLeod, Aunty Jean Carter, Aunty Dawn Whaddy, and my mother, Lena Bloxsome, who

continue to be great leaders highlighting the issues affecting our Aboriginal communities.

### What is your job?

I am employed at the Shoalhaven Hospital as a Principal Aboriginal Health Worker. I have been with Health for more than a year and prior to this worked as a Branch Manager of Aboriginal Aged and Disability Services for the Department of Ageing, Disability and Home Care, for the Southern Region of NSW.

### What do you enjoy most about your role?

My number one priority is to ensure that the Aboriginal community has their health services delivered in a culturally acceptable way.

My role allows me to share my cultural knowledge and enable my co-workers to be equipped with a better understanding of our culture.

Identifying and working with different teams within the hospital to view service delivery from a cultural perspective is another aspect of my role that I enjoy.



**Rani Lawler**  
– Aboriginal Population Health Trainee

I am from the Torres Strait, and I was born on Thursday Island. I spent my formative years

in Dubbo. I am a podiatrist but I am currently undertaking a Masters in Public Health as part of my role as an Aboriginal Population Health Trainee.

### What do you think of the theme of NAIDOC week – Because of Her, We Can!

I loved the theme this year. It didn't make me think of any one person specifically, but Indigenous women collectively who have been cultural pioneers – those who navigated a new, Western culture while safeguarding and maintaining their own for their families and future generations.

### Which women have influenced you in your life?

There are **too** many to name – but I most admire the women in my life (family, friends and colleagues) who are quietly unwavering in their commitment to their families and their community. This is also why I like the theme so much this year. There are a lot of women who do amazing things for the benefit of others, their families and their communities.

### What is your job?

I am an Aboriginal Population Health Trainee. Trainees are able to do three to six placements in different areas over three years. I have completed placements with the Health Promotion team and the Aboriginal Chronic Care Unit, and am currently doing a placement with the Director of Primary and Ambulatory Care. Part of the training includes the completion of a Master's degree in Public Health.

### What do you enjoy most about your role?

I like that I am able to meet a wide range of people from different areas, both in the Illawarra Shoalhaven Local Health District (ISLHD) and in the community. I've loved getting to know this community and its rich history. I've also enjoyed learning new skills in this traineeship, from the many different people and areas I have been exposed to.



## Stefanie Mercy – Aboriginal Family Health Coordinator

I am a Yaegl woman from Maclean NSW on the Northern Rivers - my dad's country. I also have strong ties and connections with my mother's country -the Gumbaynggirr Nation and have spent a few years around Coffs Harbour while growing up.

As an Aboriginal specialist trauma counsellor, I am always looking for new ways to learn and create positive changes. I am passionate about Closing the Gap around the high incarceration rates of Aboriginal men, women, youth and our kids.

I am a firm believer and an advocate of walking together irrespective of the communities we belong to. At the end of the day we are all the same.

## What do you think of the theme of NAIDOC week – Because of Her, We Can!

The theme this year is amazing. It celebrates the achievements of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women, who fought tirelessly to be recognised for their valuable contributions to Australian society and communities. As Indigenous women, we are the cultural voices and leaders that can unify and make positive changes towards our communities and what is needed to unite us all to move forward together.

## Which women have influenced you in your life?

There are so many of my aunts, grandmothers, cousins and sisters, who influenced me growing up and shaped me to be the person I am today. I grew up around resilient women who had a strong cultural influence in the community and have always been strong advocates for justice.

My mother Gloria Mercy (Nee Flanders) has always been my biggest support and strongest influence in my life. I admire her

resilience and strength in helping raise her younger siblings in Coffs Harbour.

My mother raised us to always be humble, passionate and take pride in being Indigenous. It is 'because of her', I do the work I do.

## What is your job?

I am an Aboriginal Family Health Coordinator and I work as part of the violence, abuse and neglect service team. As a part of this service, we have a 24/7 on call sexual assault support, domestic violence counselling and Joint Investigation Response Team (JIRT) service that works with children and young people. I have been in this role for seven months now and have moved from the Northern Rivers to work down in this beautiful part of the country. My role is District wide, ranging from Wollongong to Ulladulla.

## What do you enjoy most about your role?

I love working in a new environment and with new colleagues, the many different roles that we have and in particular the cultural diversity in health and the South Coast community. I have appreciated the support and working with Aboriginal staff and other colleagues has been amazing. It has given me the opportunity to learn, grow and gain valuable insights into the communities down this way. Together we can close the gap and work in unity around health issues of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.



## Tina Constantine – Aboriginal Employment Officer

I am a proud Aboriginal woman from Wiradjuri Country, and I am passionate about achieving best quality outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, families and communities.

## What do you think of the theme of NAIDOC week – Because of Her, We Can!

This year's theme strongly resonates with me as an Aboriginal as it recognises Aboriginal women and the significant roles they play in communities, families and the political space advocating for justice and equal rights. I know I wouldn't have been given the educational and employment opportunities I have had if I didn't have strong, passionate, resilient Aboriginal women before me fighting for rights to education.

I reflect on the journey Australia has taken and am thoughtful of how far we still must go to achieve equality. In my mind, we are only at the beginning. Moving forward with this journey, we must empower the young Aboriginal women we work with. They are our future and our emerging leaders who will drive change.

As an Aboriginal woman, I am responsible for sharing knowledge I have learnt from my ancestors to grow and nurture the Aboriginal women who raised me, and the strong Aboriginal women I work with, and acknowledge how grateful I am that culture is alive and thriving. The 2018 NAIDOC theme Because of Her, We Can! is a prime example of this.

## What is your job?

I'm the Aboriginal Employment Officer within Aboriginal Health Strategy. My role focuses on enhancing cultural knowledge and understanding across ISLHD through face-to-face Respecting the Difference training, raising awareness for issues affecting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, promoting cultural respect and safety, assistance with increasing Aboriginal employment, and in recent times the development of ISLHD's Reconciliation – Respectful Cultural Plan, and significant dates calendar for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

## Tina attended the National NAIDOC Women's Conference 2018

With the support of my managers, I was fortunate enough to recently attend the National NAIDOC women's conference in Sydney.

It focused on celebrating the invaluable contributions Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women have made, and continue to make to our children, families, communities and country.

The speakers and presenters were leaders, politicians, activists and trailblazers who have fought for justice, equality, rights to country, access to education and employment, all while maintaining and enriching culture, traditional language, music and art.

They are our mothers, elders, grandmothers, sisters, daughters and aunts.

This conference provided a powerful statement to women of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander background to recognise the influential work we do.



Dr Nicole Caixeiro PhD, Biobank and Research Engagement Manager for the CONCERT Biobank, at Ingham Institute is pictured preparing samples for biobanking



# Focus on Biobanking to aid cancer research

**Illawarra Shoalhaven Local Health District (ISLHD) has expanded its focus on Biobanking, with the appointment of a newly created full-time position of Oncology Biobank Manager, based at Wollongong Hospital. This role organises the collection of biological samples – primarily tissue and blood – for the Centre for Oncology Education and Research Translation (CONCERT) Biobank, from patients within ISLHD who have been diagnosed with cancer.**

The CONCERT Biobank was established in 2012 as an open-access, multiple collection site facility providing high quality, and standardised biospecimens with health data, accessible to all cancer researchers in NSW.

It is part of a non-profit group funded by the Cancer Institute NSW (CINSW) through the CONCERT Translational Cancer Research Centre (TCRC), which is headquartered at the Ingham Institute for Applied Medical Research (IIAMR). The CONCERT TCRC is a large multi-institutional group of hospitals and local health districts (South West Sydney and Illawarra Shoalhaven) partnered with universities (UWS, UNSW, and University of Wollongong), medical research institutes (IIAMR and Illawarra Health and Medical Research Institute), and many collaborative links spanning across NSW.

ISLHD Oncology Biobank Manager, Ashleigh Splitt said the Biobank allows patient tumour

and blood samples to be used to research the genetic, lifestyle and environmental factors linked to cancer.

*"These findings are then translated into new ways to prevent, detect, diagnose and treat different types of cancer," she said.*

*"More than 1,500 patients have donated so far to the CONCERT Biobank, resulting in more than 20,000 biospecimens. Of these, more than 350 patients are from ISLHD, donating around 5000 samples. The CONCERT Biobank currently supports 31 cancer projects and plays an active role working with hospitals to establish more biobank collections within the region."*

It is hoped that an increased focus on oncology Biobanking in the Illawarra Shoalhaven will see more patients and staff involved in the Biobanking program, which provides essential support to global cancer research.

The process is very simple: once surgeons are signed up to the project they can identify patients who are good candidates. Patient consent is obtained, with everything organised before the day of surgery.

During surgery, blood is collected, which is prepared and stored. The tissue samples are sent to pathology where the pathologist selects all of the tissue required for routine clinical diagnosis. Following this, the Oncology Biobank Manager collects the biobank part of the tumour sample, and prepares it for biobanking.

**A patient's participation in the Biobanking project makes a valuable contribution to cancer research. For more information on the CONCERT Biobank or to get involved: [biobank.inghaminstitute.org.au](http://biobank.inghaminstitute.org.au)**

# Smoking in Pregnancy – No Butts Baby

**Pregnancy is an exciting time for expectant mothers, but it can also be a time of information overload. It's well known that smoking causes cancer and heart disease, but what about the effect on an unborn baby.**

To help pregnant mothers understand the risks of smoking during pregnancy, Illawarra Shoalhaven Local Health District (ISLHD) has developed an animated video clip, titled *Smoking in Pregnancy - No Butts Baby*.

ISLHD Health Promotion Officer Janet Jackson said *there are many myths out there about quitting smoking during pregnancy.*

*"One myth is that it is too stressful on the baby if the mother quits. The reality is, quitting during pregnancy is the best thing a mother can do for her baby,"* she said.

*"Smoking during pregnancy puts stress on the placenta. It also reduces the amount of oxygen flowing through the blood stream to the baby which can increase the risk of miscarriage, and the chance of having a baby that is weak and sickly,"* Ms Jackson said.

To help start the conversation between midwives and pregnant women, ISLHD developed a short animated video clip to make it easier to navigate the complex information.

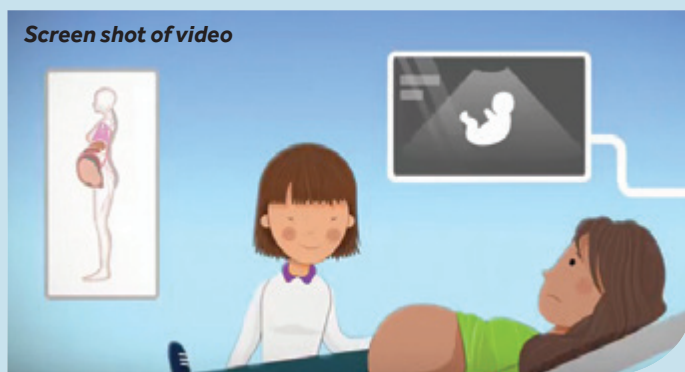
*"We've found that expectant mothers are often sceptical and overwhelmed about quitting smoking while pregnant and we wanted to*

*dispel some of the common myths and give information to help smokers take a step towards quitting.*

*"We hope that the video will be a conversation starter. It shows what happens to a baby when you smoke in a really easy to follow and understand format,"* she said.

Health Stats NSW most recent data shows that the smoking rate of pregnant women in the Illawarra Shoalhaven continues to fall, with a rate of 11.6 per cent in 2016, down from 15.7 per cent in 2011.

*"We're really pleased that our smoking prevention and control initiatives are making a positive impact on our community's decision not to smoke. However, we know there's more work to be done and we will continue to work with pregnant women and our Maternity and Women's Health Service to reduce this figure further,"* Ms Jackson said.



Visit the ISLHD YouTube channel to view the video.

## Oral Health implements growth assessments for children

Illawarra Shoalhaven Local Health District (ISLHD) Oral Health Service is leading the way as the first dental service in NSW to routinely complete growth measurements for all children (0-16 years) as part of good clinical care.

The routine completion of growth measurements in children started at the Nowra Dental Clinic in April this year and has now successfully rolled out to all Oral Health clinics in the Illawarra Shoalhaven.

ISLHD Oral Services Dental Therapist, Vikki Steele acknowledged that growth measures, specifically weight, may be a complex and sensitive issue for some with the team making the process as normal as possible.

*"We don't place any focus on the child's weight unless the family or child ask, in these cases we explain that these measures are to keep track of their growth,"* Mrs Steele said.

Normalising growth measurements was the focus of training provided to Oral Health by ISLHDs Health Promotion Service, as well as improving their skills and confidence in completing growth measurements.

NSW Health is leading the way by implementing a standardised approach for growth measurements. The Growth Assessment in Children policy, is to be completed for all children 0-16 years who are in contact with any NSW Health facility within the inpatient, outpatient or community setting.

Incorporating this as part of good clinical care aligns with the NSW Premier's Priority to reduce childhood obesity rates by five per cent in 10 years.

ISLHD Public Health Nutritionist, Julie Parkinson said, *"it is important that clinicians understand their role in identifying the*



Neve Ward (2) has her height measured by Dental Therapist, Vikki Steele while her brother Zane looks on

*growth pattern of children by tracking these measures over time, rather than focusing on a single measurement.*

*"We know that unusual or concerning growth patterns may go unrecognised in children,"* said Ms Parkinson.

*"By completing growth measurements in health care services we can identify these patterns and provide suitable management to the child and family as required,"* she said.



## KIDS WARD TRANSFORMED INTO A 'MAGIC KINGDOM'

The Wollongong Hospital Children's Ward and Illawarra Hospital School were transformed into a 'magic kingdom', for the inaugural Children's Party Week held in August.

Illawarra Shoalhaven Local Health District (ISLHD) Kids and Families Co-Director, Dr Susie Piper, said the event was a fantastic opportunity for children and their families to interact with staff in a fun and engaging way.

"A lot of things go on in hospital that may make children and their families feel anxious," Dr Piper said.

"Party week allows patients to see the hospital in a non-clinical way and engage with our staff to help create new and fun memories about being in the hospital," she said.

"These young patients and their families are so resilient, and we are full of admiration of them. We hope to give them something back and

remind them they have the support of the whole community as they manage their illness," Dr Piper said.

Illawarra Hospital School Principal, Kim Bell, said the children had a wide variety of experiences during the week.

"We transformed the Children's Ward into a 'magic kingdom' where people were invited to dress up and be part of a range of fun-filled events," she said.

"The ward and school room were decorated and there was also a range of special community guests invited to be part of the action," Ms Bell said.

"Party week was a fantastic initiative which was the result of the hard work of dedicated staff from ISLHD and the NSW Department of Education as well as several other community partners and local businesses who have volunteered their time and resources to give these children and their families respite from their illness," Ms Bell added.

Children's party week was hosted by the Wollongong Hospital Children's Ward and the Illawarra Hospital School to enhance the hospital experience of young patients and their families.



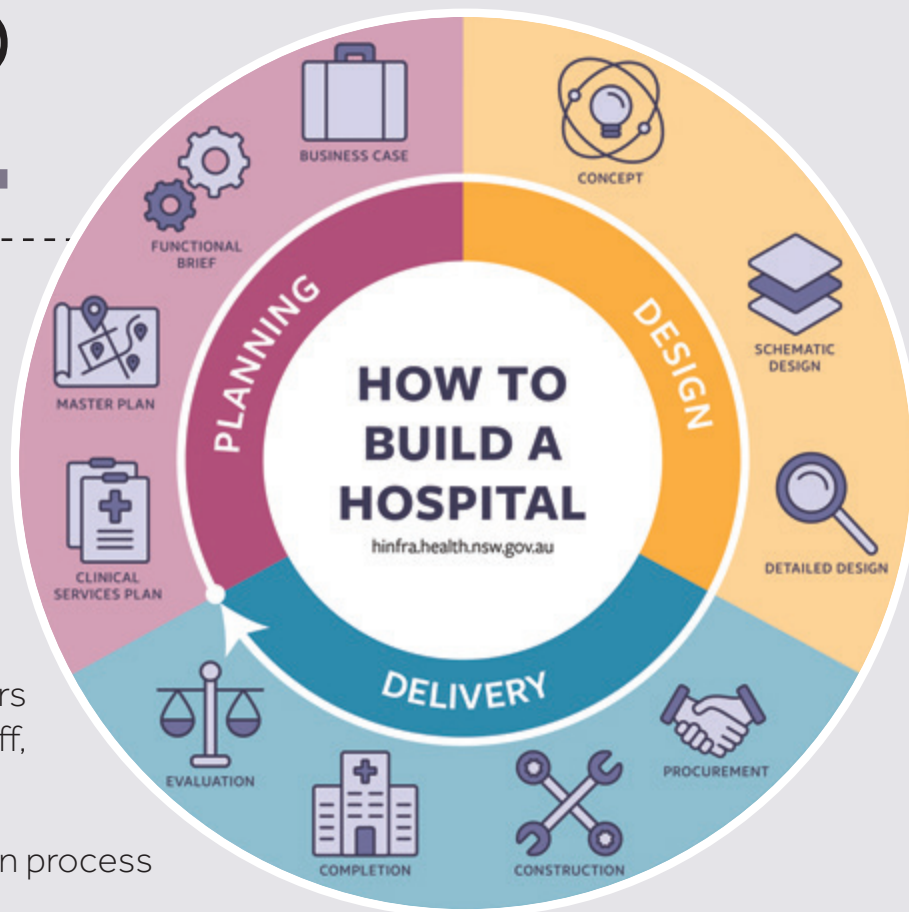
# HOW TO BUILD A HOSPITAL

Redeveloping a hospital is a complex process. This handy graphic shows the three key phases - planning, design and delivery - and the process for a typical hospital redevelopment.

Each project is unique and tailored to the specific needs of its community.

Throughout each phase, consultation occurs with key stakeholders including hospital staff, patients and community members.

Only after the extensive planning and design process occurs can construction start.



## Shellharbour Hospital Redevelopment

Shellharbour Hospital is being redeveloped to cater to the needs of the local community and strengthen connections across the hospital network.

The \$251 million Shellharbour Hospital redevelopment will deliver more operating theatres, a new emergency department including a paediatric assessment unit and mental health observation area, expanded surgical services, inpatient units, ambulatory care, medical imaging, allied health, and clinical and non-clinical support facilities to enhance the existing services at Shellharbour Hospital.

The project will deliver significant benefits for the community and staff including enhanced access to services in the Illawarra, new and

contemporary facilities, new models of care which better meet the needs of the community and continued improvements to patient safety and service quality.

The redevelopment will be fully funded by the NSW Government and once built will be operated by the Illawarra Shoalhaven Local Health District.

Since the project was announced, the Redevelopment Team has had many conversations with key stakeholders to ensure the redevelopment will meet the needs of the community now and into the future.

# IMPROVING SURGERY JOURNEYS

## for cancer patients in Illawarra Shoalhaven

The Illawarra Cancer Carers has pledged \$10,000 for enhancements to *My Surgery Journey* – a patient education project recently rolled out by Illawarra Shoalhaven Local Health District (ISLHD) that includes a magazine and smartphone App to help patients prepare for their surgery.

*"The free app is the first of its kind for an Australian public hospital,"* explained James Brinton, ISLHD Division of Surgery Clinical Nurse Consultant (CNC) who led the development of the My Surgery Journey resources.

*"Each of the tools provide detailed, trusted, timely, essential and easy-to-understand advice and information. This ranges from what to do in the lead-up to your surgery, right through to what to expect when you go home."*

The \$10,000 was used to add additional consumer information like Patient Blood Management options and transfusions, and person-centred care planning resources to the My Surgery Journey portfolio.

More than 600 people have cancer surgery every year at Wollongong Hospital, with 40 per cent identified as anaemic and iron deficient. This is why cancer patients need better blood management during the time leading up to surgery.

*"A diagnosis of cancer is always a stressful time for a patient and their families. Add to this the normal anxieties felt by all patients leading up to surgery,"* said Kate Fish, ISLHD Division of Surgery Co-Director.

*"It is very important for cancer patients to be better educated about blood management before their surgery. This will give them more opportunity to be 'fit for surgery'."*

*"Having patients who are informed and know what to expect also leads to less pre-operative anxiety, which has been linked to faster recovery and a shorter length-of stay in hospital,"* she said.

*"This partnership with Illawarra Cancer Carers makes sure we have all the information and resources we need to tailor our procedures and patient learning materials for the needs of this group of patients."*

### PETER EMPOWERED ON HIS CANCER JOURNEY, THANKS TO MY SURGERY JOURNEY

Local Oak Flats local Peter Schulze had a seven hour prostate cancer surgery last year.

Peter said that the *My Surgery Journey* magazine and app helped him during his difficult time.

*"When you have cancer it can feel like you aren't in control of your own body anymore,"* Peter explained. *"My mind wasn't thinking straight, either, because I was always scared. It was hard to keep things straight, because suddenly there's so much information coming through, all the time."*

After being diagnosed with cancer, Peter had already been through lots of blood tests, scans and physical investigations. Expectedly, a surgery was quite overwhelming for him.

Peter secured a copy of the My Surgery Journey magazine and downloaded the App. He learnt about the things that would be happening to him, how to prepare for his surgery in terms of fitness and diet. The magazine provided him information on the types of things he needed to ask his surgeon and other health care staff. The magazine also helped him learn about how to care for himself after he was discharged.

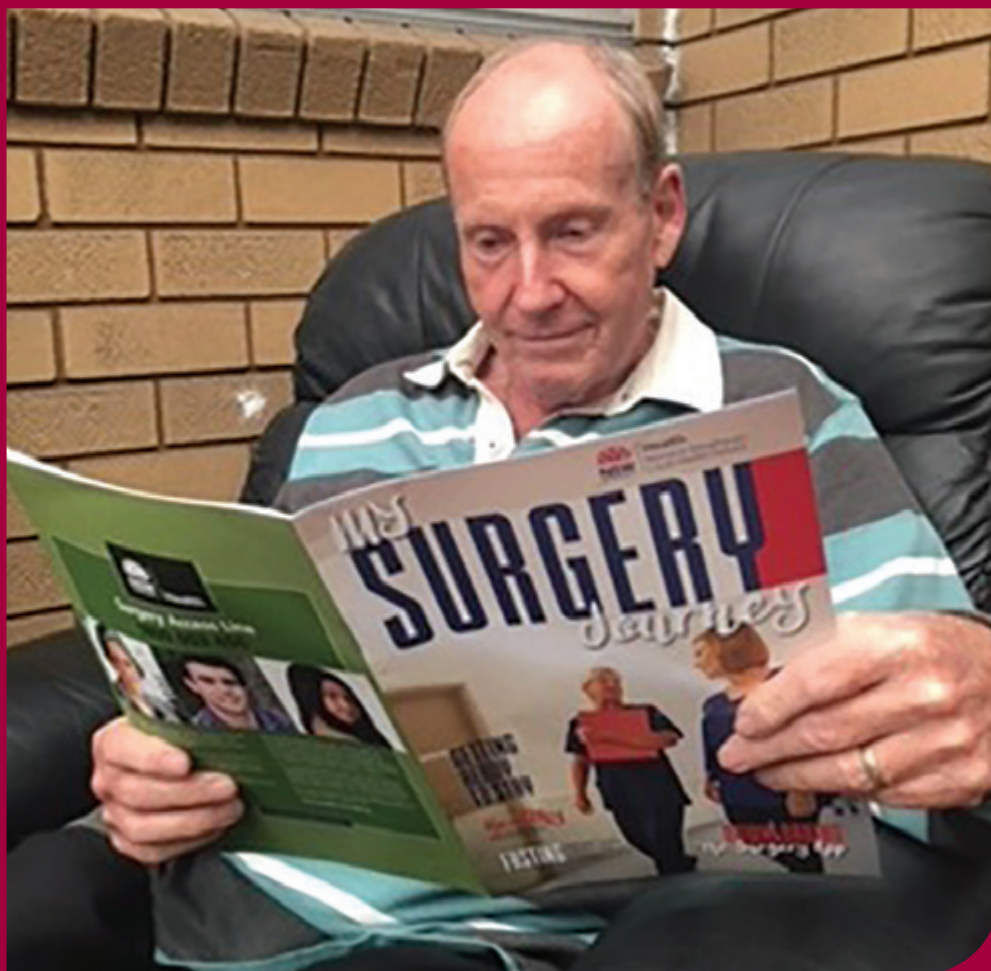
One of the things that *My Surgery Journey* made Peter aware of leading up to his surgery, was getting his blood iron levels checked.

*"I gave a lot of blood for testing. One thing I do know is that my blood iron levels were checked, because the magazine asked about 'My Iron Plan', so it was something I asked my doctor about."*

*"The magazine and app made me feel like I was somewhat in control of my health, and that I could play an active role in getting better,"* he said.

Peter's recovery from his surgery is going very well. His cancer journey continues, with him currently receiving a session of radiation treatments.

**For more information visit, [www.islhd.health.nsw.gov.au/Surgery/docs/MySurgeryJournemagazine.pdf](http://www.islhd.health.nsw.gov.au/Surgery/docs/MySurgeryJournemagazine.pdf)**



# WI-FI AT WOLLONGONG HOSPITAL

A new Wi-Fi service for patients and visitors was rolled out across Wollongong Hospital in August following a successful trial in the Paediatric Unit.

The Wi-Fi system has a free and paid service, with the premium option available for activities that require faster download speeds such as streaming entertainment programs.

*Wollongong Hospital General Manager, Nicole Sheppard said the recent trial had been a success.*

*"Many of our young patients were thrilled to learn they could get online during their hospital stay so they could keep in touch on social media or stream their favourite shows," Ms Sheppard said.*

*"Having a child in hospital can be a stressful time, so it has been helpful for parents to stay connected, too," she said.*

Patient Wi-Fi is currently available at 12 NSW Health hospitals from Wollongong to Wagga Wagga, with plans for more across the state.

The service is being rolled out by eHealth NSW under a \$20 million NSW Government initiative to allow patients and visitors to stay connected with friends and family and access entertainment.



Four-year-old Jaylen Warren watches a show using the Wi-Fi in the Children's Ward

## More free meningococcal jabs FOR SCHOOL STUDENTS

Many more school students across the Illawarra and Shoalhaven will be offered the free meningococcal vaccine to protect them against the debilitating disease, thanks to the extension of the NSW Meningococcal W Response Program.

Illawarra Shoalhaven Local Health District Public Health Director, Curtis Gregory, said the vaccine will be available over the next 12 months.

*"Parents of Year 10 and 11 students are being encouraged to take advantage of the free vaccine in the next two terms to give them long-term protection against four strains of this potentially fatal disease," Mr Gregory said.*

The statewide program was introduced in 2017 to protect teenagers against the rising threat of the W strain, which has an eight per cent mortality rate compared to four per cent of other strains.

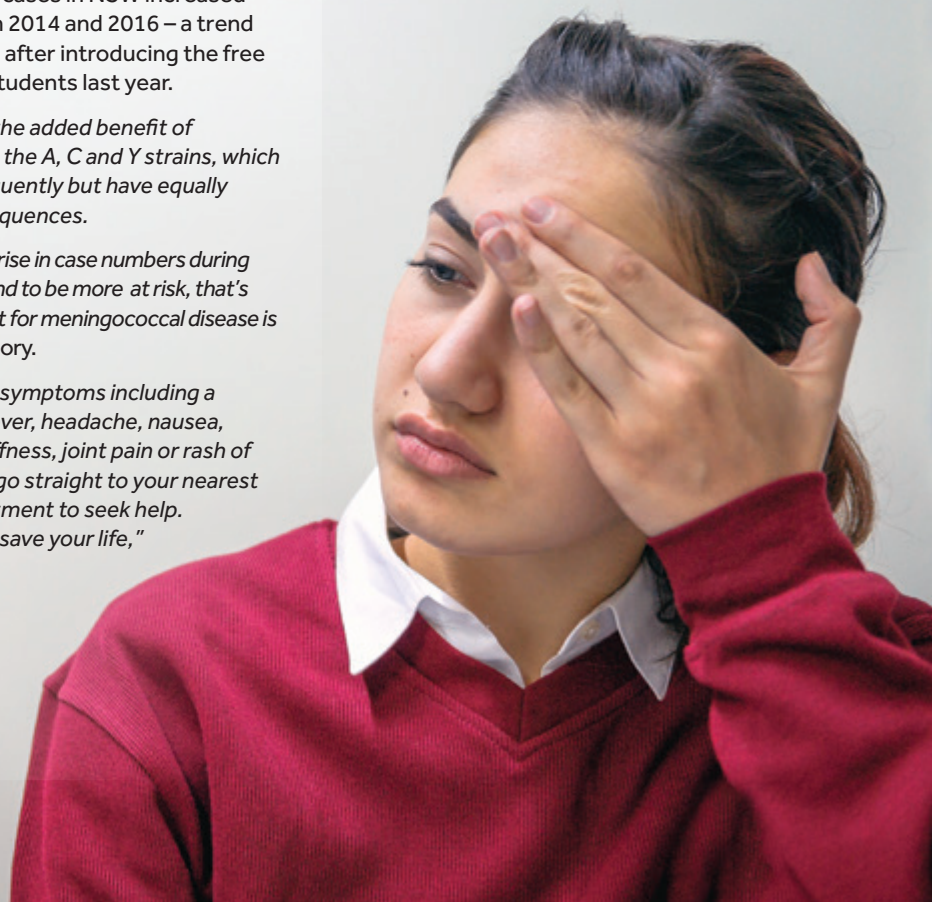
*"Upper high school students are particularly vulnerable to meningococcal but just one dose of this vaccine provides strong, long-term protection and helps prevent the spread of this crippling disease," Mr Gregory said.*

Meningococcal W cases in NSW increased four-fold between 2014 and 2016 – a trend that was reversed after introducing the free vaccinations for students last year.

*"This vaccine has the added benefit of protection against the A, C and Y strains, which don't occur as frequently but have equally devastating consequences.*

*"We normally see a rise in case numbers during spring so people tend to be more at risk, that's why early treatment for meningococcal disease is vital," said Mr Gregory.*

*"If you experience symptoms including a sudden onset of fever, headache, nausea, vomiting, neck stiffness, joint pain or rash of red-purple spots, go straight to your nearest emergency department to seek help. Acting quickly can save your life," he added.*



# Raising comfort and care of cancer patients

Staff from the Illawarra and Shoalhaven Cancer Care Centres, in partnership with generous supporters in the community, raised a fantastic \$44,000 during the annual Dry July campaign.

ISLHD Divisional Support Officer Alexis Gazzard said staff participants gave up alcohol for 31 days, encouraged donations from family and friends, and got behind a number of fundraising activities.

*"For many of us, foregoing alcohol for a month is easy compared to what those with a cancer diagnosis will experience, and that thought keeps all of us going throughout July,"* she said.

*"Our staff got on board in a big way. Irene Hobart, from Hotel Services, volunteered her time to make 30 curries for staff to buy for lunch. Radiation Oncologist, Jeremy de Leon, took to the BBQ and cooked a cheese toasty lunch for staff. We had a number of dress up days, where staff got into the themes of 'World Cup Dress Up' and 'Flanno Friday'. All of these initiatives added up,"* she said.

Many people in the community also contributed to the campaign by going dry, and nominating the Illawarra or Shoalhaven Cancer Centre as the beneficiary of their individual fundraising efforts.

Cancer Care Division Co-Director Anthony Arnold has participated in Dry July for many years.

*"I support Dry July for a number of reasons. It really is a great cause. It's unique as money raised goes towards improving the experience of cancer patients. In 2017 we surveyed patients and their families and learned exactly what we can do to make their experience a more positive one,"* he said.

In the last year, the team has brought to fruition patient-suggested improvements, including:

- New and diverse reading materials in waiting areas;
- Music being played to radiation therapy patients during treatment;
- Calm colouring packs for all patients;
- Investigating more comfortable waiting areas in the Wollongong Centre; and
- Living well programs such as Tai Chi, and post cancer workshops.

This year's funds will enable the team to build on current programs, introduce a patient yoga and wellness program, as well as look into new ways to prepare radiation therapy patients for treatment.

*"Personally, Dry July is a small sacrifice in comparison to what those with a diagnosis will experience. For me and for many of my colleagues, Dry July is a small tribute to those who have been touched by cancer,"* Anthony said.

*"We are truly grateful to our community for their continued generosity towards our annual Dry July campaign. We also recognise the Dry July Foundation for enabling us to bring so many patient experience initiatives to life,"* he said.



**Decorating ICCC: Robyn Hladik, Administration Officer, decorating in signature Dry July bunting**



**Cheese toasty Tuesday: Oncologists, Jeremy de Leon and Mori Aghmesheh, getting into the spirit**

# Hospital tour raises awareness of health literacy

Illawarra Shoalhaven Local Health District's Multicultural Health Service celebrated Multicultural Health Week by hosting a group of local Adult Migrant English Program (AMEP) students on a tour of Shoalhaven Hospital and Wollongong Hospital.



The theme this year was *Health Literacy – Talk, Listen, Ask*. The aim of Multicultural Health Week was to raise health workers' awareness of the importance of health literacy when working with people from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) backgrounds.

Tours have been held across the Health District for more than five years. It gives students an opportunity to familiarise themselves with the hospital and the health services.

The tours include visits to the Emergency Department, Maternity/Birthing Unit, Outpatient's clinics and the Children's Ward.

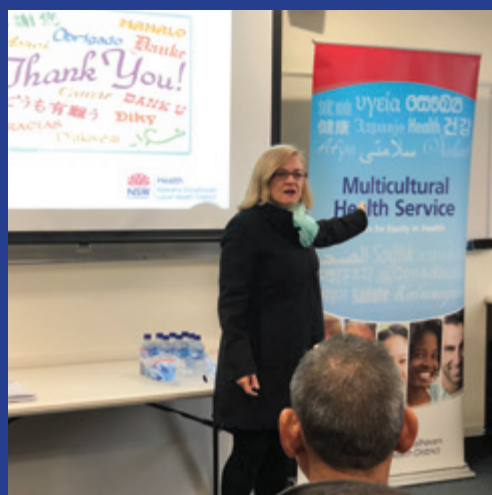
Multicultural Health Service Manager, Leissa Pitts said the tour aimed to address some of the common barriers many of the CALD community have in accessing health services.

*"When English is not your first language, navigating the health system can be confusing and complex,"* she said.

*"The feedback from the students has been overwhelmingly positive. The tour makes the hospital more familiar, they are aware of where things are and what particular wards they may need to access such as the birthing unit or the children's ward,"* Mrs Pitts said.

*"It makes it less daunting,"* she said.

The students participating in the tour come from a range of different cultural backgrounds including: Filipino, Chinese, Japanese, African, Afghan and Thai.



The tour also reminds health staff of the language and cultural barriers that CALD clients face. Being aware of health literacy needs and the role interpreters play in reducing miscommunication and misunderstanding.

*'This information is very good, because I'm new to Nowra and will need to use the hospital soon to have my baby' – CALD CONSUMER*





# START A CONVERSATION ABOUT 'What matters most?'

The Illawarra Shoalhaven Local Health District (ISLHD) encouraged families, friends and carers to start a conversation during Palliative Care Week about 'What matters most?'

This simple question addressed the need for people in the Illawarra Shoalhaven to plan ahead for their end-of-life care and discuss it with their loved ones and health professionals.

ISLHD Director Palliative Care Service, Dr Greg Barclay said palliative care isn't just about end of life, it's also about care provided to those with a life-limiting illness; Life-limiting illnesses are those which doctors recognise can often be controlled or slowed down, but will limit a person's life.

These can range from metastatic cancer, to kidney, heart or lung disease. They can't be cured, but managing the symptoms can add quality of life back to the person living with the disease.

Dr Barclay said an important focus of palliative care is to improve the quality of life for people.

*"To achieve this, Palliative Care Services are involved earlier in the disease process, to help manage a range of symptoms, often patients are admitted into a palliative care ward, or seen at home, to get specific symptoms sorted, and then go on to live well at home for months or even years,"* he said.

*"Our Palliative Care Service aims to follow and support patients and family members on their journey and be involved when we are needed throughout the course of their illness, not just at the end,"* Dr Barclay said.

ISLHD's Palliative Care Service includes a team of doctors, nurses, allied health staff, social workers and volunteers, who work in collaboration with GPs and other specialists and provide services both in hospital and at home.

*"It's never too early to think and talk about what you want. Talking about what matters most to you can help family members, as well as doctors providing your care, to really help you,"* Dr Barclay said.

**Further resources are available at [www.dyingtotalk.org.au](http://www.dyingtotalk.org.au)**



## Joanne Davis - END OF LIFE CARE COORDINATOR

For more than a year Joanne Davis has been working as the End of Life Care Coordinator for the Illawarra Shoalhaven Local Health District (ISLHD). It's a job that Joanne is passionate about. She gives us an insight into her role and how she can make a difference to the lives of patients and families.

### **What motivated you to take up the role as the ISLHD End of Life Care Coordinator?**

I have always had a passion and want to help people have a wonderful end of life experience. Not just the patient, but families as well. Since I was a new graduate nurse, I sat with people and held their hand while they were dying, supported families through initial bereavement and tried to find ways to make it a little easier. I think it's something I would say is my dream job and making a difference even for one person or family, means I am making a difference.

### **What do you enjoy about your role?**

I enjoy the challenge of my role. I enjoy working with diverse groups of people including clinicians, allied health, community members and patients. Knowing that end of life care is a priority for others makes me determined to do a better job,

and make this a special part of our job, something we can do with pride and confidence.

### **What is a typical day for you?**

A typical day for me can involve a diverse range of things. Quality improvement projects, event planning, education to staff and community groups, and providing advice and support to patients and families. I want people to not be afraid of death and dying, for them to know that it is a privilege as a clinician to provide excellent end of life care to someone. That is what I work towards every day.

### **What are some of the key achievements your role is helping to implement within ISLHD?**

Some of the key achievements my role is involved with:

- improving advance care planning for our consumers
- providing information, and tools to complete an advance care directive
- organising information sessions for community and staff, including Dying To Know Day

- working with clinicians on the provision of end of life care.

I think my role has helped to raise the profile of end of life care across the District and that is a priority for me.

### **Why do you think it is so important for people to talk about end of life planning?**

I think it's something I would say is my dream job and helping even one person or family, means I am making a difference. It can be empowering for a family member to know what you want at the end of your life, so that if the time comes they can make informed decisions, and know they stood by your wishes. Dying has so many associated taboos, and by normalising the conversation, we can ensure that people aren't left wondering, What if I had known? Did I make the right decision? It's an act of love, trusting someone enough that you allow them to share in this important information.



# Video series celebrating cancer survivorship in MUSLIM COMMUNITIES

**Illawarra Shoalhaven Local Health District (ISLHD), in partnership with the Sisters' Cancer Support Group and Multicultural Communities Council of Illawarra, recently launched a series of videos celebrating cancer survivorship aimed at multicultural Muslim communities.**

Project SAHA (Survivorship, Access, Healthy Living and Awareness) seeks to improve the quality of life of Muslims affected by cancer by promoting stories of survivorship, improving access to support services, promoting healthy living in the adoption of holistic health principles. It also aims to improve awareness of access issues and barriers of the community members to support services. Part of Project SAHA, are the short videos featuring four women, each reflecting on their personal journey of diagnosis, treatment and living with cancer.

ISLHD Multicultural Health Service Manager, Leissa Pitts said, the District identified the benefit of providing cancer information to the multicultural Muslim community using a new approach.

*"The powerful Celebrating Cancer Survivorship videos aim to reduce the stigma and social misunderstanding of cancer treatment"*

*within the multicultural Muslim community, while promoting positive stories of cancer survivorship and encouraging cancer screening and appropriate lifestyle changes,"* Mrs Pitts added.

Funding for Project SAHA, which includes the videos, development of a new website for the Sisters' Cancer Support Group and community engagement and education sessions for health services was received from Cancer Institute NSW, as part of their work to improve the experiences of people with cancer in multicultural communities.

Cancer Institute NSW is a pillar organisation of NSW Health and provides the strategic direction for cancer control in NSW.

The videos will be available in five languages: Arabic, Turkish, Urdu, Farsi and English and can be viewed on ISLHD's YouTube Channel.

Sisters' Cancer Support Group is a community based, not-for-profit, registered organisation that provides support for women from multicultural backgrounds who are affected by cancer. The SAHA video series is available to view on ISLHD's YouTube Channel.

**Right: Cancer Institute NSW multicultural community liaison officer, Visakesa Chandrasekaram, Sisters' Cancer Support Group chairperson, Thit Tieu and ISLHD Multicultural Health Service manager, Leissa Pitts**



**Founder and chairperson of Sisters' Cancer Support Group Thit Tieu at the launch of the video series**



**Sisters' Cancer Support Group vice chairperson, Nadine Hadaya, ISLHD multicultural health officer, Nadia Dghaich and Sisters' Cancer Support Group secretary, Amina Bello**



## KATHERINE BROWN – inaugural Australasian Sexual Health Medicine Award recipient

Associate Professor Katherine Brown is well known in the Local Health District, as the Director of the Sexual Health Service. Katherine was recently the recipient of the Royal Australasian College of Physicians (RACP), Australasian Chapter of Sexual Health Medicine division for her contribution to the discipline of sexual health medicine. It was the first time the award has been given.

Passionate about her work and mentoring others, Katherine has played a pivotal role in the advancement of sexual health services within the Illawarra Shoalhaven and more broadly through her clinical service development, community development, policy and advocacy and the promotion of the speciality through undergraduate education and general practice training.

Katherine has initiated many innovative outreach models of care in the District. These include screening and flu vaccination of sex workers, chlamydia screening at local music festivals, as well as providing a clinical presence in local drug and alcohol services. For more than 20 years she has been the only sexual health physician in the District and has developed the service as an excellent regional centre for HIV care.

As an Associate Professor Katherine is also a devoted teacher and has promoted the speciality widely through undergraduate degrees, general practice, nursing and advanced training.

Katherine is also a state wide leader in sexual assault and forensic medicine and recently held a position as Clinical Advisor to NSW Health in Sexual Assault.

When asked about the award Katherine said, *"I was both surprised and honoured to receive this award. It has been a privilege to be involved in the development and recognition of Sexual Health Medicine as a specialist field of clinical practice, which now allows for the development of a sustainable workforce. I look forward to continuing our work in ISLHD with two great multidisciplinary teams to expand service delivery in both sexual health and forensic medicine."*



# Kids get healthy and gain confidence WITH GO4FUN

The Illawarra Shoalhaven Local Health District (ISLHD) Health Promotion Service has been running the Go4Fun® program for seven years with great success.

More than 700 children (aged between 7 - 13 years) have participated and as well as having fun, the children have seen a reduction in their Body Mass Index during the program, improvements in healthy eating and increased self-esteem.

Go4Fun Leader, Megan Powell has watched many kids and families complete the program and shared her personal observations on what changes she has seen in the children who attend.

*"Many of the children who come to Go4Fun leave with a greater understanding and acceptance of food. They see other kids in the program try new foods, so they are willing to give new healthy foods a try and discover they like it,"* said Megan.

*"Parents often tell us their kids won't try some fruits, vegetables or a meal that looks different to what they are used to and once they start with Go4Fun they are much more willing to give new foods a go."*

During the time of the program 70 per cent of participants have reduced the frequency of sweet snack food consumption and 61 per cent of participants reduced the frequency of confectionary consumption.

*"Another lovely thing to see is the confidence in children building, not only with their food acceptance but physically and socially too. Many children avoid physical activity because they don't like being involved in sports. Go4Fun focuses on active games instead of sports, which kids love. Once children realise they won't be judged by others, they start to play the games and realise how much fun being active can be,"* Megan said.

*"It's great to hear back from parents who tell us their kids are now running around more and playing active games with the friends at school and on the weekend because Go4Fun has given them the confidence to do so,"* she said.

A total of 60 per cent of participants increased the number of days per week that they met the national Physical Activity Guidelines.

The Go4Fun program runs each term in the Illawarra and Shoalhaven. It is free for families but children do need to be above a healthy weight to attend. If you aren't sure if your child is above the weight required (and often it isn't easy to spot), it's still a good idea to register.

**Visit [www.go4fun.com.au](http://www.go4fun.com.au) or call 1800 720 900 for more information, locations and to register.**



1. Go4Fun Leaders Hayley Callahan and Megan Powell, with Kayla, Daisy, Jaymee-Lee, Reece and Riley
2. Go4Fun Leaders Donna D'Antonio and Megan Powell with Gervis and Moses
3. Go4Fun Leaders Donna D'Antonio and Megan Powell with Chelsea

# Convoy drives change for local **KIDS AND FAMILIES**

The early works associated with the redevelopment of the Children's Ward at Wollongong Hospital are complete, thanks to a generous \$250,000 donation from the Illawarra Community Foundation.



Illawarra Hospital School staff, Gabbie and Emily, in the new schoolroom

The donation followed the success of the Foundation's 2017 i98FM Illawarra Convoy event.

Illawarra Shoalhaven Local Health District (ISLHD) Co-Director for Kids and Families Dr Susie Piper said, the donation helped kick start a major redevelopment of the ward which is expected to take several years to complete.

*"We are thrilled to be working in partnership with the Illawarra Community Foundation to bring the redevelopment project to life,"* Dr Piper said.

*"Our team continues to deliver high quality care in our current ward, but with the support of our community we have an opportunity to reconfigure the space to better reflect our model of care."*

Susie explained that many things have changed since the ward was last renovated two decades ago.

*"There is now a greater awareness of the role parents and carers have in the wellbeing and recovery of their children, and we want to give them spaces to rest, eat and recharge,"* she said.

*"We also run more clinics, and have services dedicated to providing care to children with chronic conditions where they can come in for day treatment rather than being admitted to the ward."*

The Convoy-funded early works allowed the team to relocate the Illawarra Hospital School, to make way for a new ward entrance, reception area and clinic space. The completion of the early works paves the way for future changes, such as improved parent facilities and clinical spaces.

*"We are sincerely grateful to the Convoy team and the many people in the community who support the event for helping us get the redevelopment project started,"* Dr Piper said.

*"We still have a lot of work to do on this project, and we hope to continue our association with Convoy to enhance the service we provide to more than 3600 local children each year,"* Dr Piper said.

**For more information on i98FM Illawarra Convoy 2018 visit [www.illawarraconvoy.com.au](http://www.illawarraconvoy.com.au)**



Updated schoolroom



New ward entrance and reception area



The Illawarra Community Foundation, represented by i98FM's Marty Haines, presented a \$250,000 donation to Dr Susie Piper in 2017 to get the early works underway at the Children's Ward



Representatives from the Illawarra Community Foundation tour the completed early works in 2018 along with our staff

# NEW BIRTHING PROPS AT WOLLONGONG HOSPITAL

Local women are being given more choice during labour, with Wollongong Hospital introducing a range of new birthing props to its Maternity Ward.

Beanbags, balls, stools and mats are among the items that women can access, and staff have been trained in their use to guide women on how best to utilise this equipment.

Illawarra Shoalhaven Local Health District (ISLHD) Clinical Co-Director Maternity and Women's Health, Dr Henry Murray, said the new props are part of a collaboration between the hospital and advocacy group, Better Births Illawarra to enhance the birthing experience of women at the hospital.

"We have greatly appreciated the opportunity to hear feedback and stories from the Group as well as local mothers about their own stories of their birthing experiences," Dr Murray said.

"This feedback has helped guide us in providing the highest quality care for women accessing our maternity services," he said.

"The new props will aid women in spontaneous labour to have a birth where they are mobile and in the best position for their needs and brings Wollongong Hospital into line with all other similar obstetric units around NSW," Dr Murray added.

Better Births Illawarra spokesperson, Giselle Coromandel, said the group was pleased the hospital had responded to requests from local women to purchase the new equipment.

"Using these props is a really simple but effective way for women to remain active in labour, which evidence shows can lead to shorter labours and less intervention," Ms Coromandel said.

"Hospital staff have been regularly meeting with women to get their feedback on giving birth at Wollongong Hospital. This shows that they

are listening to women and want to give them a choice."

Wollongong Hospital spends more than \$19 million a year on its maternity service, which supports women to make informed decisions about their birth options.



Wollongong Hospital maternity service Operation Manager Melissa Cooke and Midwife Christina Spence with the new birthing props

## Queen's Birthday honours list 2018: LYN THOMPSON

The Shellharbour Hospital Auxiliary President Lyn Thompson was recently awarded an Order of Australia (OAM) for her dedicated services to the Auxiliary and the Shellharbour community.

The OAM recognises Australian citizens for achievement or meritorious service.

Lyn said she was very shocked and excited to receive the award.

"I feel very humble for being rewarded for doing something I really enjoy, and I might add, my husband is almost as active as I am and I couldn't do as much as I do without his support," she said.

The Shellharbour's Citizen of the Year in 2011, Lyn, started voluntary work decades ago at her children's school by helping in the canteen and raising money for more sporting equipment. She then joined her mother-in-law at Port Kembla Hospital, where she did voluntary work for many years until Shellharbour Hospital opened 32 years ago.

As enthusiastic about the Auxiliary as she was when she started, Lyn said "I hope I can continue for many more years to come, it is just so rewarding

to see a patient happier or more comfortable from what we provide and see equipment added to our hospital so the staff can give better care. How good is that!"

She hopes to reach the \$1million mark in donations in 2019.

Lyn has also recently been awarded life membership of The United Hospital Auxiliaries (UHA) NSW, life membership of the Shellharbour Branch of the UHA and life membership of the Berkeley Eagles Baseball Club. Special thanks and congratulations to Lyn and her dedicated team.

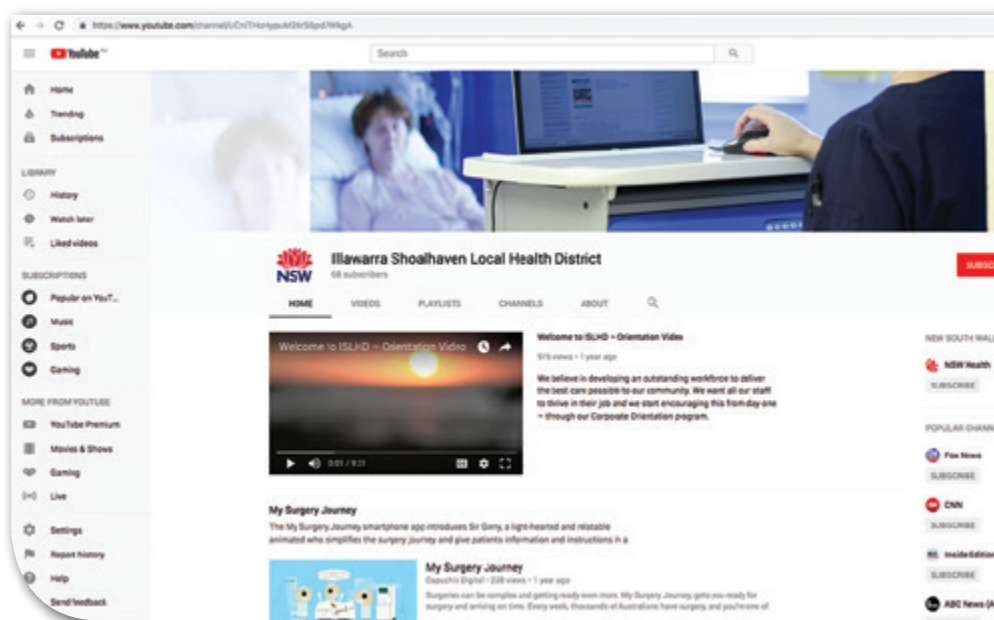
The Shellharbour Hospital Auxiliary at present has around 65 members. Auxiliary members offer a range of services to patients including a six-day a week trolley service. They raise funds for the hospital through craft stalls held at regular intervals during the year, including Easter and Mother's Day. They also hold a monthly book stall and raffles in conjunction with the stalls. **For more information: [lyntom19@dodo.com.au](mailto:lyntom19@dodo.com.au)**



Lyn Thompson

# ISLHD YouTube CHANNEL

Visit or subscribe to the ISLHD YouTube channel and find out more about what's happening in your District.



We use our YouTube channel as a way to share video resources and stories with the community and engage in a new, interactive way. YouTube provides us with a fresh approach to informing and educating our patients and their family and carers, as well as an opportunity to promote positive health behaviours and other health initiatives to the wider community.

New videos will be posted regularly. Check out the videos we already have on our channel by visiting [youtube.com](https://www.youtube.com) and searching: Illawarra Shoalhaven Local Health District.

**If there's something you'd like to see on our Channel you can send us a suggestion at [ISLHD-Communications@health.nsw.gov.au](mailto:ISLHD-Communications@health.nsw.gov.au)**

## Give us your feedback

We'd love to hear your thoughts on our magazine, Health In Focus.

The survey should take approximately 5 to 10 minutes to complete.

Your responses will help shape the direction of the magazine.

**Here is the link: [surveymonkey.com/r/ISLHD\\_HIF](https://surveymonkey.com/r/ISLHD_HIF)**




## TWITTER

**Did you know you can follow us on Twitter? @IllaShoalHealth**


We use our Twitter feed to let the community know about things such as:

- Upcoming events and workshops
- Local and state-wide health initiatives
- Public health notifications
- Our innovations and achievements

## Read me online



**You can read or download the current edition of Health in Focus online at [islhd.health.nsw.gov.au](http://islhd.health.nsw.gov.au). You can also read past editions of Health in Focus online.**



Keep track of your  
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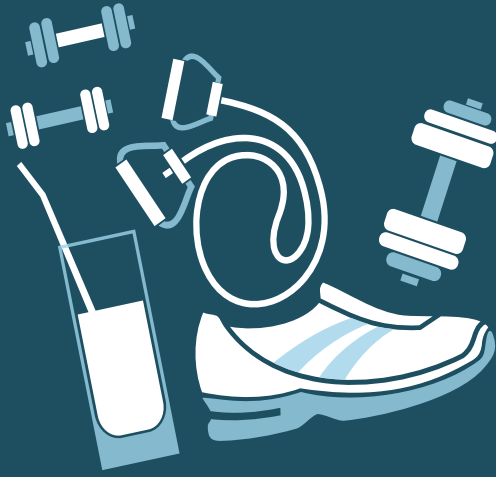
Go to [myhealthrecord.gov.au](http://myhealthrecord.gov.au)  
Call **1800 723 471**



Australian Government  
Australian Digital Health Agency



My Health Record



# HEALTH MOVES

## GROUP EXERCISE & HEALTHY LIVING PROGRAM

### WHAT IS HEALTH MOVES?

Health Moves is an easy exercise program for people with health conditions such as diabetes, heart problems, high cholesterol, blood pressure or osteoarthritis. You'll attend two sessions a week for a minimum of 12 weeks.

**COST:** \$99.00

*\* Cost includes individual assessment and program as well as access to leisure centre facilities for the 12 weeks of the program.*

### WHERE:

Beaton Park Leisure Centre (Gwynneville)  
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Starting early 2019 at:  
Lakeside Leisure Centre (Kanahooka)  
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- ✓ Will help you manage your health condition
- ✓ Get simple ideas about being healthy
- ✓ Each session costs less than a cup of coffee
- ✓ Group classes suitable for all ages
- ✓ Run by trained fitness instructors



**To register your interest or for more information please contact:**

**Illawarra Shoalhaven Diabetes Service**

**Phone:** (02) 4231 1910

**Email:** [ISLHD-WollDiabetesAdmin@health.nsw.gov.au](mailto:ISLHD-WollDiabetesAdmin@health.nsw.gov.au)



Watch the Health Moves video on YouTube  
Illawarra Shoalhaven Local Health District

This program is run by Illawarra Shoalhaven Local Health District in partnership with Kiama Municipal Council, Shoalhaven City Council and Wollongong City Council.