

HEALTH IN FOCUS

NEWS FROM YOUR LOCAL HEALTH SERVICE

WINTER 2016

The cooler
months are here

HOW TO KEEP WELL THIS WINTER

The other way BOTOX
is changing lives

Behind the
scenes of
surgery's
engine room

OUR QUIT SMOKING CRUSADER

- still kicking butt
20 years on



Health
Illawarra Shoalhaven
Local Health District

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

Illawarra Shoalhaven Local Health District recognises the unique position of Aboriginal people in our culture and history. We acknowledge the traditional owners of the lands in which we work, pay our respect to Elders both past and present and acknowledge the many traditional language groups and communities of today.



Health
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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 nine hospitals and community based services.

For more information visit our website: islhd.health.nsw.gov.au

COVER IMAGE

Pink Bellambi Pool Sunrise

– by Fiona McLauchlan



This image received second place in our 2015, *Your Hospital, Our Community* Photographic Competition.

Left: Fiona McLauchlan and ISLHD Chief Executive, Margot Mains at the opening night of the *Your Hospital, Our Community* Photographic Competition exhibition.

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Wollongong Hospital midwife's short story takes home second place award





A word from our CHIEF EXECUTIVE

I am pleased to share our latest edition of *Health in Focus* (Winter 2016) and to provide the community with an update on what's happening throughout our District.

In this edition, you can read a collection of tips and health advice from our staff for the cooler months as part of a special feature – *Be Winter Wise*. We've included advice on how to stay healthy during the colder season as well as info on what you can do to help reduce the spread of illness. Flu vaccinations are recommended for those who want to reduce their chance of becoming ill with influenza – as you can see below – I've already had my shot this year.

During winter, our Hospital Emergency Departments can get extremely busy and we're urging the community to remember that emergency departments are for emergencies. You can read more about this on page 11.

In other news, it's exciting to see construction start on the new Renal and Palliative Care Unit at Milton Ulladulla Hospital and the Kiama Integrated Primary and Community Health Centre, located on the current Kiama Hospital site (see page 19). We look forward to providing updates on these projects as construction progresses over the course of the year.

We also have a number of articles that highlight innovations in health care: from the Botox Clinic at Wollongong Hospital (did you know it's not just used for cosmetic reasons?), to a simple but highly effective communications tool to keep surgery patients informed about what's happening in theatres. Speaking of theatres, we take a behind the scenes tour of our Sterilising Services Department on pages 14-15, and find out how they get our medical instruments ready for surgery.

To all members of our community, keep warm this winter and I hope you enjoy reading this edition of *Health in Focus* and learning more about your health service in the Illawarra and Shoalhaven.

Margot Mains
Chief Executive
Illawarra Shoalhaven Local Health District



Wollongong Hospital Deputy Director of Nursing, Marian Brown volunteered to administer my flu shot

Construction starts on Renal and Palliative Care Unit



1.



2.

Construction work on Milton Ulladulla Hospital's new \$4.6 million Renal and Palliative Care Unit kicked off recently, with an Aboriginal smoking ceremony and sod turn marking the start of the project.

Phillip and Melanie Butler, representing the local Budawang people, carried out a smoking ceremony that included smouldering native plants, which are believed to have cleansing properties and the ability to ward off bad spirits. Following the ceremony, Phillip and Melanie joined Member for South Coast, Shelley Hancock and General Manager Shoalhaven Hospital Group, Ian Power to officially turn the first sod on the project site.

The start of construction comes after extensive feasibility and planning works to determine

the best option for maximising use of space and accessibility of the site. Tenders were called earlier this year and following evaluation, Patterson Building Group was selected to deliver the project.

When complete, the new facility will include a dedicated Renal Unit with six dialysis chairs and a purpose-built Palliative Care Unit, with two beds and two family rooms. It is anticipated the new facility will take its first patients by the end of this year.

The project has received significant community support and funding. We acknowledge the continued and generous contribution of the dedicated and hardworking members of the Milton Ulladulla Cancer Outpatients Appeal Inc, the Milton Ulladulla Hospital Auxiliaries and the local community.

Photos:

1. Helen Manoharan (Hospital Director of Nursing), Melanie Butler (representing local

Budawang people), Shelley Hancock (Member for South Coast), Phillip Butler (representing local Budawang people), Ian Power (General Manager Shoalhaven Hospital Group) and Craig Parsons (Patterson Building Group Construction Manager - Southern Region)

2. Phillip and Melanie Butler carry out a traditional Aboriginal Smoking Ceremony on the site of the new construction

3. Phillip Butler performs part of the smoking ceremony

4. Clockwise from left: Patrick McKenna (MUH Hospital Auxiliaries), Melanie Butler, Peter Still (President MUH Cancer Outpatient Appeal), Ian Power (General Manager), Helen Manoharan (Hospital Director of Nursing), Narelle Ober (President MUH Hospital Auxiliaries), Phillip Butler and Robyn Bean (Secretary MUH Cancer Outpatient Appeal)

5. Milton Ulladulla Hospital Director of Nursing / Site Manager, Helen Manoharan proudly displays the ceremonial shovel.



Hollywood "must have" to medical marvel What you don't know about Botox®?

Treatment for neurological conditions isn't the first thing people usually think of when they hear the word Botox®, however that's exactly what a new clinic at Wollongong Hospital is now delivering to local patients.

Botulinum toxin, also known as Botox®, has been used for over 20 years to treat neurological conditions, however until now, neurology patients in the Illawarra and Shoalhaven have had to travel to Sydney to receive this treatment. The recently established Botulinum Toxin Neurology Clinic is held weekly in the Wollongong Hospital Neurology Clinic, providing local residents with access to this advanced treatment much closer to home.

"As a form of treatment, Botox® is injected in extremely small concentrations and used to temporarily relax overactive or contracting muscles. When injected into muscle, it works by blocking neuromuscular signal transmission, in effect, temporarily leaving the muscles without instructions to contract," Wollongong Hospital Senior Staff Specialist Neurologist, Associate Professor John Carmody explains.

Botox® can play a significant role in the management of a number of medical conditions including:

- Chronic migraine
- Excessive sweating
- Focal spasticity – such as after stroke, spinal cord injury
- Cervical dystonia – eg torticollis
- Blepharospasm – involuntary closure of the eyes
- Hemifacial spasm
- Excessive saliva – such as in Parkinson's disease
- Focal dystonia – eg writer's cramp
- Facial twitching – such as after Bell's palsy
- Oromandibular dystonia
- Dystonic tremor
- Jaw clenching/bruxism

The Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS) reimburses many treatments. Patients or health care professionals looking to refer can contact the clinic to discuss treatment options.

Tel: 4253 4430 **Fax:** 4253 4436

Mail: Neurology Clinic, Level 4, Block C, Wollongong Public Hospital, Crown Street, Wollongong, NSW 2500.



Esme's story

Esme Nasser, a patient of the Wollongong Hospital Botox Clinic, shares her story about how Botox has helped treat her chronic migraines.

Thank God for Botox! About six years ago I began experiencing severe and debilitating migraines. They increased in frequency and severity until culminating in a migraine that I thought would never leave. It lasted for two months, the last month of which was spent in St Vincent's Hospital. That's how long it took to get it under control. My symptoms included pain in the head, visual disturbances, vomiting, inability to speak clearly and weakness down the right side of my body. It became impossible for me to work.

I tried a number of medications, most of which were of limited benefit and all of which had many side effects. I had physiotherapy every week. I

limited my contact with people and could not commit to any activities. I found that everything triggered a migraine, even laughing.

I kept looking for a solution and stumbled across Botox. I found a clinic in Sydney but had to drive myself two hours each way. Since driving was one of my migraine triggers you can imagine my relief when I discovered that Wollongong Hospital had started a Botox clinic.

Botox has changed my life over the last few years. I have one main migraine trigger that I have not been able to overcome and that is perfume. However, I have noticed that if I do get a migraine now because of someone's perfume, although unpleasant, it's nowhere near as severe and it will respond to something as simple as aspirin.

Thanks to Botox I can work again (in a perfume free environment) and I have a quality of life that

was lacking for too many years. It has been so convenient having treatment at Wollongong Hospital because I no longer have to take a day off work and endure the Sydney traffic. The team at Wollongong Hospital is really compassionate and gentle with the injections, which are far less painful than a migraine and they are over in a fraction of the time. Again I say, thank God for Botox and thank God for the team running the clinic at Wollongong Hospital!



Esme Nasser

NEW PROGRAM TO TACKLE ICE ADDICTION

Assistant Minister for Health, Pru Goward recently visited Wollongong to officially launch a new Stimulant Treatment Program (STP) for the Illawarra and Shoalhaven.

The STP gives local people access to highly effective treatment programs and services for individuals, and their families, experiencing difficulties with stimulant use including methamphetamines. The STP, which has a focus on young people aged 16-25, builds on partnerships with organisations including Headspace and the Illawarra Aboriginal Medical Service to offer a range of support including counselling, medication-assisted management, therapeutic groups and referral to other programs including residential rehabilitation.



The free and confidential service can:

- Provide information about stimulants
- Work with clients to cut down or stop stimulant use
- Check physical health
- Discuss treatment choices
- Link clients with other services
- Support partners, parents, family and friends
- Provide group support

At the official opening, local Aboriginal Elder, Aunty Muriel Davis commenced proceedings with a Welcome to Country and acknowledgment of the traditional owners of the land. The Minister was then joined by Parliamentary Secretary for the Illawarra and South Coast, Gareth Ward; our Chief Executive, Margot Mains; and Director of Drug and Alcohol, David Reid to speak about the importance of the new service and its benefits to the community.

The launch event also included the presentation of an artwork by local Aboriginal artist, Daniel Lonesborough. Daniel's painting depicts his own journey with drug addiction and the recovery journey. His artwork features pathways and footprints, sharing an insight into some of Daniel's darkest days in the grip of ice addiction through to his rehabilitation process and a brighter future.

The STP operates from the Illawarra Drug and Alcohol Service in Wollongong Monday to Friday and from Crossroads Youth Health Service in Nowra on Tuesday and Thursday.

Anyone concerned about how ice or other stimulants are affecting them or a loved one, please call the Illawarra Shoalhaven Drug and Alcohol Helpline on 1300 652 226.



Margot Mains (ISLHD Chief Executive), Gareth Ward (Parliamentary Secretary for Illawarra & South Coast), The Hon. Pru Goward MP (Assistant Minister for Health), David Reid (Director Drug and Alcohol), Aunty Muriel Davis and Daniel Lonesborough



Artist Daniel Lonesborough with the artwork he has donated to the service



Health
Illawarra Shoalhaven
Local Health District

STIMULANT TREATMENT PROGRAM



STIMULANTS INCLUDE:
Methamphetamines (Ice, Crystal, Meth, Speed, Base),
Cocaine and Ecstasy

It doesn't matter how much or how often you use, we're here to help

1300 652 226

(Mon-Fri: 9am-4.30pm)



* Please note-If you are calling from a mobile, call costs to 1800 and 1300 are set by your mobile service



BE WINTER *Wise*

We're ready

Each year, our health services prepare for the busy winter season and an increase in illnesses such as cold and flu. Some of the things we do to get ready for winter include:

- A public health immunisation program for high risk members of the community
- Providing flu vaccinations for frontline health staff
- Developing winter plans for our hospitals to cope with an increase in service demand.

Keep well this winter season

Use these general tips to help be winter wise:

Good Hygiene

Good hygiene practices can help reduce the spread of illness. Here are some simple things to remember:

CATCH IT AND BIN IT

Germs can spread easily. Always carry a tissue and use it to catch your cough or sneeze. If you don't have a tissue, coughing into your elbow is better than your hands. Germs can live for several hours on tissues. Throw used tissues in a rubbish bin as soon as possible.

AVOID TOUCHING YOUR NOSE AND EYES

The flu virus can enter your body through your nose and eyes. If you have any infected droplets on your hands, then you could potentially give the virus access to your system by touching these areas.

WASH YOUR HANDS

Hand washing is the single most effective way to reduce the spread of germs that cause respiratory disease such as colds and flu. Hands can transfer germs to every surface you

touch. Wash your hands thoroughly and often, especially after coughing, sneezing or blowing your nose. An important part of hand washing is making sure you know how to do it effectively - wash hands for at least 10 seconds with soap and water or use an alcohol-based hand rub (see image at right for more info).

STAY AT HOME

Wait at least 24 hours after your fever ends before you return to work or other public activities so you do not infect others. Keep sick children away from school and other activities.

Get a jab

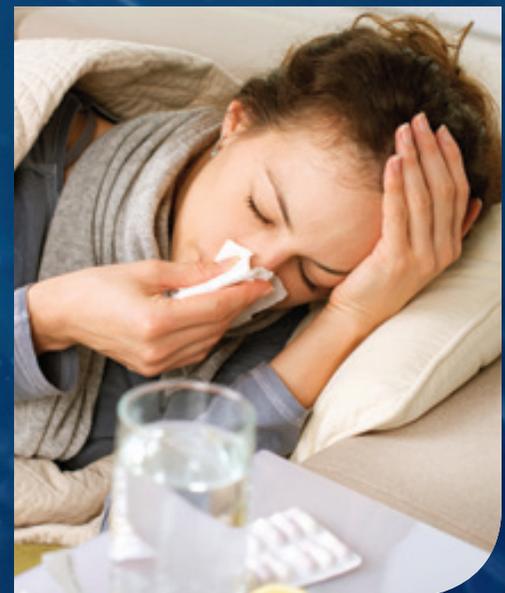
Annual influenza vaccination is recommended for anyone aged over 6 months to reduce their chances of becoming ill with influenza. You can organise to have a flu vaccination through your GP.

Anyone can get the flu, but it can be more serious for certain people. As part of the Immunise Australia Program, flu vaccination is free for high-risk groups, including:

- Those with chronic respiratory conditions
- Pregnant women (especially 2nd and 3rd trimester)
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people
- People aged 65 years or older
- People with certain other chronic medical conditions

Make a Winter Wise Plan

Cold weather during winter can worsen pre-existing chronic illnesses such as asthma, Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), bronchiectasis and other respiratory diseases, as well as diabetes, so it's best to be prepared. Ensure you review your illness management plan or speak to your GP if you do not already have one in place. Other things like developing an exercise program and quitting smoking are also important (for more advice and support on quitting smoking read our article on page 18).

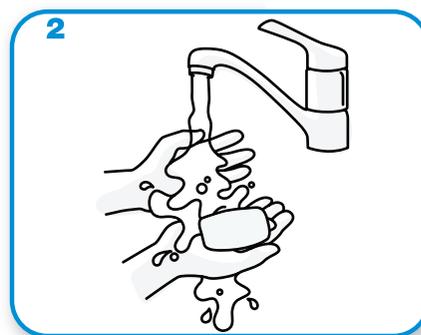
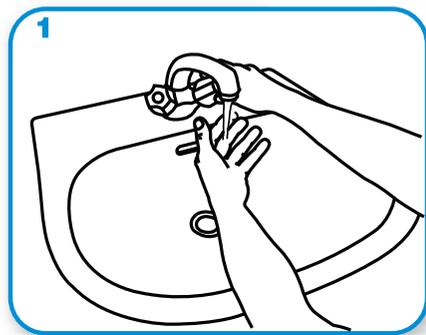


How to handwash? in the community

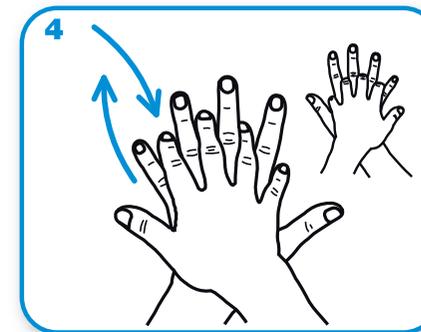
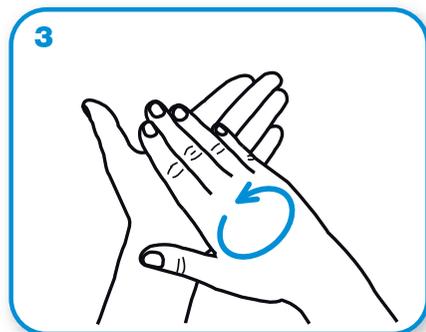


Duration of the entire procedure:

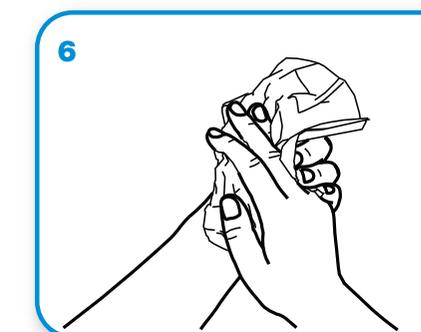
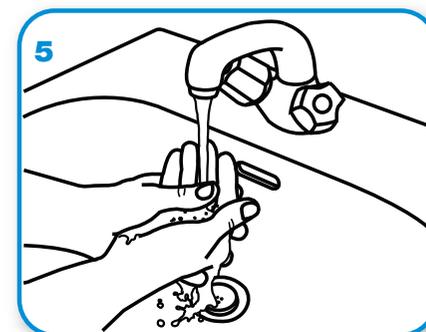
15-20 sec.



Wet hands with water and soap



Wash hands together making sure you wash your thumbs,
between your fingers and the backs of your hands



Rinse hands with water

Dry thoroughly with a single use towel

Clean Hands Saves Lives



Health



World Health
Organization

SHPN (Q5) 090061



Healthy eating and active living

With shorter days and colder weather, there is a tendency to stay indoors where it's warm resulting in many of us becoming less active and eating more high fat foods. For healthy living this winter, make sure you:

- Choose amounts of nutritious food and drinks that meet your energy needs
- Enjoy a wide variety of nutritious foods from the five major food groups and aim to include 2 serves of fruit and 5 serves of vegetable in your diet each day

- Limit intake of foods containing saturated fat, added salt, added sugars and alcohol.
- Keep hydrated - drink plenty of water
- Be active every day in as many ways you can
- Reduce sitting time in front of the television or computer
- Include physical exercise in your daily routine



Get Healthy Service

The Get Healthy Service is a free health telephone coaching and information service funded by NSW Health to help people live healthier and more active lives.

The service focuses on healthy eating, being physically active and achieving and maintaining a healthy weight. You will receive help in developing your own personal health goals to maintain motivation, working out your problem areas and support to make lifestyle changes.

When you sign up for the Get Healthy Service you will be given your own personal health coach who will support you over a six-month period to help you on your way to a healthier you. You'll be able to access the website to download tools and keep an eye on your progress.

To talk to a Get Healthy Service Health Coach call **1300 806 258** or visit gethealthynsw.com.au for more information.



Warm Roasted Vegetable Salad

Boost your vegetable intake during winter with this delicious recipe that will warm you up during the cooler months.

INGREDIENTS

- 300g butternut pumpkin, peeled and chopped into 2cm cubes
- 2 potatoes, peeled and chopped into 2cm cubes
- 1 capsicum, seeded and cut into large pieces
- 1 onion, chopped into eighths
- 100g flat mushrooms, quartered
- Olive or canola oil spray
- 1 bunch English spinach leaves, washed and drained

DRESSING

- 1 tablespoon balsamic vinegar
- 1 teaspoon olive oil
- 1 tablespoon honey
- 1 tablespoon fresh basil, chopped

METHOD

Preheat oven to 220°C. Line a large baking tray with baking paper. Place pumpkin and potato in a microwave dish with a little water, cover with cling film and cook in microwave on HIGH (100%) for 4 minutes. Toss pumpkin, potato, capsicum, onion and mushrooms together then spread in a single layer over tray. Lightly spray with oil. Bake for 30-40 minutes, turning after 15 minutes. Mix dressing ingredients in a small bowl. When vegetables are cooked, pour over dressing. Line serving dish with spinach leaves and pile roast vegetables on top. Serve immediately.

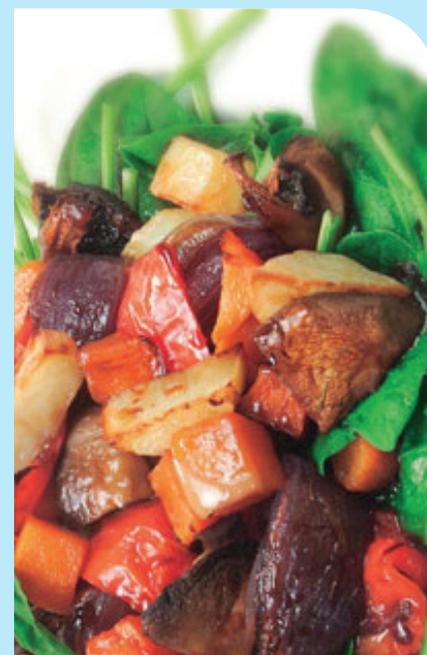
VARIATION

Try including sweet potato, zucchini, carrots, beetroot, squash and baby eggplant when in season.

SERVING SUGGESTION

Serve with roast meat.

Recipe sourced from gethealthynsw.com.au



COMMUNITY ADVICE:

Accessing the right services, at the right place this winter

I need help - but it's not an emergency, where can I go?

Did you know? Use of our hospitals and emergency department's increases during winter as health conditions can become more serious during the cooler months.

- **YOUR LOCAL GP:** Make sure you have a local GP. If you haven't seen a doctor in a while, or have recently moved house, you should establish contact with a local GP. Whenever you're unwell, always speak to your GP first.
- **CALL HEALTHDIRECT** on **1800 022 222** to speak to a registered nurse. This service is free and is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.
- **BULLI URGENT PRIMARY CARE CENTRE:** for minor injuries and illnesses between 7am-10pm every day of the year: **4284 4344**. Hospital Rd, Bulli NSW 2516.
- **CONTACT RADIO DOCTOR ILLAWARRA** for after-hours home doctor visits servicing the area from Scarborough to Gerroa. Phone: **4228 5522** or visit radiodoctor.com.au
- **A NEARBY MEDICAL CENTRE:** If you aren't a resident, consider visiting a Medical Centre where you can see any doctor.
- **PHARMACIST:** See a pharmacist for common health problems such as coughs, colds or sore throats.

Hospital Emergency Departments

The following hospitals across the District provide an emergency service:

- *Wollongong: Loftus St, Wollongong*
- *Shellharbour: 15-17 Madigan Blvd, Mt Warrigal*
- *Shoalhaven District Memorial: 2 Shoalhaven St, Nowra*
- *Milton-Ulladulla: 104 Princes Hwy, Milton*

The most seriously ill patients presenting to the Emergency Department are given priority, regardless of whether they arrive by ambulance or via the ED waiting room. All patients are treated according to their medical needs; which means those with less serious conditions may sometimes have to wait.

Save Triple zero 000 for saving lives

NSW Ambulance Triple Zero (000) answer a call for help on average every 26 seconds, however just 10 per cent of these calls are for patients with life-threatening conditions. It is important to recognise that ambulances are for saving lives and are not taxis.

Call 000 immediately if the situation is life-threatening or a medical emergency, including if someone is experiencing chest pain, breathing difficulties, unconsciousness or sudden onset of weakness, numbness or paralysis of the face, arm or leg.



CLINICS KEEPING LOCAL WOMEN WELL

The Illawarra Shoalhaven Well Women's Clinics provide free and confidential health services for women throughout the District, with a focus on early detection, illness prevention and health screening. The Clinics are staffed by women, for women, with three Women's Health Nurses delivering services from 12 locations across the Illawarra and Shoalhaven.

The three Women's Health Nurses provide a range of services for women, including:

- Information on breast health and breast checks
- Advice on the available types of contraception
- Resources and advice for women planning pregnancy or for women who are pregnant
- Post-natal checks
- Free pap smears
- Advice about your pelvic floor muscle or control of urine
- Information about menopause
- Information on osteoporosis
- Advice on how to maintain general health
- Any women's health concerns

The service is available to all women in the Illawarra and Shoalhaven and we welcome:

- Women who identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander
- Women who are socio-economically disadvantaged
- Women who are refugees or have recently moved in Australia (Interpreters provided for free)
- Lesbian, bisexual, trans-gender and inter-gender women
- Women with physical and intellectual disabilities
- Women who experience violence (sexual, domestic and family violence)
- Women who are having difficulty finding health services
- Women who are carers
- Any women needing extra time to discuss their health concerns



Veronica Best (Clinical Nurse Specialist Ulladulla), Annette Heather (Clinical Nurse Consultant Illawarra), Maureen Cable (Clinical Nurse Consultant Nowra)

To make an appointment or referral, call the Illawarra Shoalhaven Access and Referral (ARC) Service on 1300 792 755.

If you wish to talk to a nurse, find out more information or locate a Women's Health Clinic near you, please contact your local ISLHD Women's Health Nurse:

Illawarra: 0477 723 421

Shoalhaven / Ulladulla: 0401 991 684

Illawarra Clinics

- Berkeley Neighbourhood Centre
- BreastScreen (Crown Street)
- Bellambi Neighbourhood Centre
- Albion Park Rail Neighbourhood Centre
- Port Kembla Hospital – Sexual Health Rooms

Shoalhaven Clinics

- Nowra Community Health Centre
- Shoalhaven Women's Health Centre
- St Georges Basin Community Health Centre

Ulladulla Clinics

- Ulladulla Community Health Centre
- Sussex Inlet Community Health Centre



Miinya Biyanga Boori & Binji and Boori

Aboriginal Maternal Infant Child Health Service

As a health service, we know how important it is to provide culturally appropriate care for women pregnant with an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander baby. Our Aboriginal Maternal Infant Child Health Service (AMICHS) operates from two locations and provides pregnancy and baby care for Aboriginal women or women with Aboriginal partners.



Artwork by Bronwyn Bancroft, from NSW Health's Quit for New Life brochure

The Illawarra service is known as Miinya Biyanga Boori (which means mother father baby) and is based at Shellharbour Hospital. The Shoalhaven service is known as Binji and Boori (which means pregnancy and baby) and is located in Nowra.

The service offers support, advice and health care for Aboriginal families with children aged 0-5 years throughout the Illawarra and Shoalhaven region. Midwives, child and family health nurses, Aboriginal health workers and social workers, provide services including:

- Information and education on pregnancy and childbirth
- Culturally appropriate continuity and flexibility of antenatal and postnatal care
- Quit smoking advice and support – including the Quit for New Life program for women pregnant with an Aboriginal baby

- Assessment and monitoring of children's growth and development (Blue Book checks)
- Infant feeding and nutrition
- Parenting advice, support and education
- Counselling and emotional support
- Education and advice on women's health issues, contraception, pap smears, breast health checks and continence
- Cultural support and community development

Binji and Boori also has an Occupational Therapist and Speech Therapist.

CONTACT

To make an appointment or for more information about the service, contact
Miinya Biyanga Boori, Shellharbour Hospital
 Phone: 4295 2417
Binji and Boori, 54 Worrigeer St, Nowra
 Phone: 4423 9900.

LIFE-SAVING TECHNOLOGY: VISION FOR LIFE

Hospitals in our District recently joined more than 70 others throughout NSW to implement state-of-the-art technology that can help in the diagnosis of sick children and babies.

High definition camera equipment, known as Vision for Life, has now been installed at Wollongong, Shellharbour, Shoalhaven and Milton Ulladulla Hospitals Emergency Departments, Children's Wards and Special Care Nurseries.

The cameras add another dimension to the communication between our hospitals, the Newborn/paediatric Emergency Transport (NETS) service and specialists at the Children's Hospitals in Sydney. The technology allows all the teams to see and hear the patient



when local hospital staff call for advice or to organise a retrieval or transfer. The equipment also enables NETS to visually diagnose a child and communicate with the local staff during an emergency situation.

A generous contribution last year from Illawarra Coal employee, Ben Mason, who received a safety initiative award which funded a donation to his charity of choice, paid for the cameras at Wollongong Hospital and Variety contributed the funds for the cameras at Shellharbour, Shoalhaven and Milton Ulladulla Hospitals.

Our Kids and Families Division Co-Directors Dr Susie Piper and Jenny Claridge joined other staff, NETS State Director, Dr Andrew Berry, representatives from Variety – the Children's Charity and Ben at Wollongong Hospital to officially launch the new Vision for Life technology within our District.

Photo: Dr Catherine Carmo (NETS), Dr Susie Piper, Dr Andrew Berry (NETS), Ben Mason and Suanu De Jong with son, Elijah De Jong

Behind the scenes: SSD – THE HEART OF THE HOSPITAL

A brand new Sterilising Services Department (SSD) recently opened at Wollongong Hospital as part of the \$106 million hospital redevelopment. Manager, Susanna Sheen takes us on a behind the scenes tour of the department affectionately known as the 'heart of the hospital.'

"Our department is like the arteries and veins of the hospital – items are cleaned, sterilised, sent to the theatres / wards / clinics, used, then returned to us for processing again. SSD is an integral part of the Perioperative Service," Susanna says.

A vital component of the operating theatre system, SSD ensures that reusable medical devices are cleaned and sterilised with military precision, and in strict accordance with Australian standards.

Almost all of the staff who work in SSD are fully-accredited Sterilisation Technicians, with some bringing up to three decades of experience to the department. Over the years, staff have had to adapt to constant changes to the way surgery is performed from open procedures to laparoscopic techniques, and most recently, a shift to surgery using laser equipment.

We find out what makes SSD tick...

All equipment goes through a number of processes from the time it enters the Department until it leaves again to be used on patients. There are many delicate items that require special care and attention.

1. Quality check in the decontamination area to ensure all items are returned as per count sheet after surgery/ procedure.
2. Fully-automated washer/disinfectors clean equipment on a 45 minute wash cycle. Ultrasonics are also used to ensure that cannulated and other difficult items are thoroughly cleaned. *"Cleaning is the most important part of the process; if a device is not clean, then the disinfection and sterilising processes will be compromised," Susanna explains.*



Susanna Sheen at the doors of the SSD



Sally Godfrey quality checks items



Andy Gella loads items onto conveyor, the fully automated system will then assign the cart to the next available washer/disinfectors



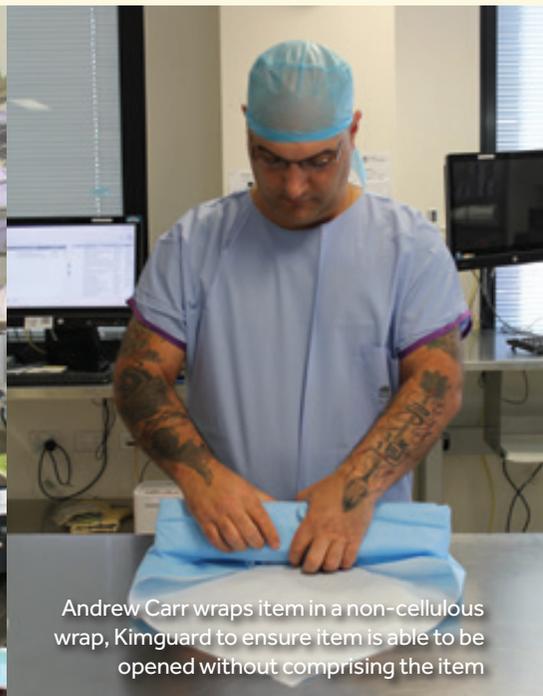
Items exit the washer/disinfectors into the inspection/assembly area



Claire Moss uses magnification light to inspect item



Andrew Carr seals item in Steripeel



Andrew Carr wraps item in a non-cellulose wrap, Kinguard to ensure item is able to be opened without compromising the item



Brenda Walton scans barcoded items on the trolley for sterilisation
All sterilisers are interfaced with the tracking system



Margaret Iliev removes trolley from steriliser for cooling

3. Inspection / Assembly – A visual check is performed on all items. Items must be dry and free from debris. They should be in working order and dismantled as per manufacture instructions for sterilisation. Most instruments have serial numbers that need to be cross referenced.
4. Wrapping / Packaging – Appropriate wrapping material is chosen depending on the sterilisation process. Correct label and sterilisation tape is affixed (tape will change colour when subjected to the sterilisation process to assure the end user).
5. Sterilisation – steam steriliser 47 minute cycle for instrument load, 55 minutes for a loan load. Low temp steriliser (VPro) takes between 30-55 minutes.
6. Cooling time – 30-60 minutes cooling time is allowed. Sterilised items must remain on the steriliser trolley to cool to prevent condensation and ensure they are safe for handling and transportation.
7. Staff check that all parameters have been met before items are released to theatres or wards.



Serena Richardson loads transport cart with cooled items, then carts are transported to theatres

“IS IT ALWAYS THIS BUSY?” A simple solution to keeping patients better informed

“Can you please tell me what’s happening?”... This a common question for the staff at Wollongong Hospital Day Surgery Centre that’s prompted a new initiative, aimed at keeping patients and families as informed as possible while they wait for their surgery.

Emergency and trauma surgery lists can change by the hour, which can often impact waiting time. Wollongong Hospital Registered Nurses, Helen Brownlee and Kate Wilmott, through their Essentials of Care Working Party, developed a simple communication tool to describe the inner workings of the Hospital’s Operating Theatres and help those waiting to better understand the reasons for any delay.

They recognised that communication is the key to reducing anxiety and frustration in waiting patients and went about developing information boards to be displayed in the waiting areas. These large boards describe the business of Operating Theatres in easy-to-understand language,

outlining how many operations are happening each day and how many patients are waiting.

“It really helps for my patients to understand that in addition to elective surgery, we are also performing lifesaving emergency and trauma surgery at the same time,” Kate said.

The project has been through a trial phase, which included seeking feedback and suggestions on how to improve the next version. Feedback from staff and patients has been extremely positive so far. *“It really helped me*

understand why some people were going into the theatre area ahead of me,” said a recent patient.

The next stage of the initiative is the implementation of an electronic board, which will allow staff to more easily update information throughout the day.

The NSW Agency for Clinical Innovation has already expressed interest in the project, describing it as ‘an elegantly simple solution’ for an operating theatre complex that sees up to 55 patients every day.



Registered Nurses, Helen Brownlee and Kate Wilmott in front of their innovative surgery information board

To Theatre, Ready and On Time

Across our District, more than 22,000 surgeries are performed every year at Wollongong, Shellharbour, Shoalhaven and Milton Ulladulla Hospitals.

At Wollongong Hospital, there are more than 45 operations every day, and this doesn’t include the 40 or so endoscopy procedures performed in a separate unit. Almost half of all surgery performed at Wollongong is unplanned emergency surgery including trauma operations for people injured in accidents, major abdominal surgery for critically unwell people and the emergency delivery of babies.

Together with the introduction of Elective Surgical Liaison Nurses, staff have partnered with patients to develop detailed surgery information to make the experience of surgery a little less daunting. Many patients told us that they weren’t given enough information before and during their hospital stay - so we listened. The Day Surgery Centre staff developed a Surgery Patient Journey Poster to describe, in simple terms, each of the steps that occur during a hospital day procedure – from

admission to discharge. This is part of a package of updated information that all patients, and their families and carers, will receive to better prepare for hospital.

Shoalhaven theatre staff are also working towards improving the journey from the pre-operative stage to the day of the operation. They are looking at the reasons patients arrive late for surgery, or simply don’t show up. The team also recently streamlined the booking of emergency surgery, saving valuable minutes in critical situations. Overall, the aim is to ensure that operating theatres are running as effectively and efficiently as possible.

Keep an eye out for all the new initiatives that are helping us improve the care we provide. If patients, families or carers have more ideas on making the journey to surgery even smoother, please contact the Division of Surgery office at your local Hospital.

Ann Palmer and Leanne Davey from Shoalhaven Hospital’s theatre team, managing the electronic booking of emergency surgery

Research Update

The Illawarra Shoalhaven Local Health District (ISLHD) and University of Wollongong (UOW) Clinical PhD Scholarship Program was established in 2014. The unique initiative is a highly competitive scheme introduced by the District to provide scholarships to any ISLHD clinician or higher-degree UOW candidate who can demonstrate they have a PhD research program that has direct clinical relevance. In other words - projects that can help enhance the delivery of health services and translate into better patient outcomes.

We caught up with the first four recipients of the scholarship to see how each of their PhD projects are progressing:

KELLY LAMBERT

Senior Clinical Dietitian, Wollongong Hospital

Project: Investigating early recognition of cognitive impairment in renal patients. This project should help develop targeted education, training methods and treatment strategies for renal patients.

Kelly has completed phase one and two of her research project. The phase one findings suggested that cognitive impairment was highly prevalent in one out of three people with end-stage kidney disease and in half the people receiving dialysis. The most common deficits in cognition were those relating to attention, memory, and executive functioning (including reasoning, decision making, flexibility and planning). The phase two results indicated that around 75% of renal diet information on the Internet was evidence based, but had high readability and low understandability. By comparison, only a small number of the easier to understand information available was evidence based; YouTube videos – 20% and renal diet apps – 35%.

The next phases of Kelly's PhD will be qualitative, and will involve interviews with patients with

kidney disease to find out how they make sense of complicated renal dietary information, given the high proportion of low health literacy and cognitive impairment. This will inform the design of future interventions and education strategies.

MARYAM GHAHRAMANI

Engineering student, UOW

Project: Development of an objective and quantifiable approach to falls risk assessment in older people. This is of particular relevance given the difficulty in assessing the likelihood of falls in the frail elderly.

Maryam has been collecting data for 11 months from Bulli Hospital on older patients undertaking the Avoidance for the Aged program. The program examines balance from a series of exercise sessions, where the Berg Balance Scale was used to assess balance. Maryam has also published a conference paper, submitted a journal article which is under review, and is currently working on two other journal articles. Data collection is still ongoing, and Maryam hopes to finish both data collection and data analyses in the next six months.

SINA AMELI

Engineering student, UOW

Project: Development of an objective method to track cancer patient's physical status using

inertial sensors to assist oncologist to make a decision about treatment.

Sina has been focusing on the experimental tests of cancer patients, and followed this up by developing a mathematical model of chemotherapy induced-fatigue. Sina has won prizes and has received great feedback from within the industry and participated in different demonstrations and competitions to represent the project for business leaders. The next stage involves expanding the project for different groups of patients (in addition to cancer patients).

ILIJANA BABIC

Medical and Health Science student, UOW

Project: Improving schizophrenic treatment, with a focus on cognition and the metabolic side effects of medications.

Ilijana has been focusing on completing experiments that will form a chapter of her thesis dedicated to understanding the mechanisms of Liraglutide for the treatment of Schizophrenia. Ilijana is in the process of completing post-mortem analysis and is currently quantifying plasma hormone changes. She has completed brain sample preparation for receptor binding western blot analysis, to explore the effects of Liraglutide in the brain.

Right: Ilijana Babic and Sina Ameli

Far Right: Maryam Ghahramani and Kelly Lambert



Does the price of tobacco STRESS YOU OUT?

Tobacco is becoming increasingly more expensive and the cost is probably the cause of more angst to many smokers. It's true that smokers are caught in a cycle of unnecessary stress due to their nicotine dependency and, as prices go up, so too can stress levels.

Before too long, cigarettes could cost as much as \$40 a pack which makes now an ideal time to quit (and reduce your stress level).

Smoking Prevention and Treatment Officer, Annie McDonald provides advice to those trying to (or thinking about) kicking the habit.

"If the thought of going cold turkey is too much for you, see your doctor for help to make quitting less stressful. Nicotine patches and other quit smoking medications are subsidised and available on script from your GP, making these treatments more affordable than smoking," she said.

Nicotine replacement products, such as patches, gum, lozenges and sprays, can give you the nicotine you crave without the harmful effects of the smoke and help keep you calmer while you quit. You can also use these products while you are still smoking as a way to cut down, making quitting easier.

"It's a common myth that smoking helps relieve stress or helps people relax. Smoking doesn't help, it actually adds to the problem. Smokers who quit often say that they are happier, less stressed and not as anxious.

"The good news about quitting is that, in the long run, you will feel calmer and less stressed than if you continue to smoke and you'll have more money in your pocket too," Annie said.

The World Health Organization's (WHO) World No Tobacco Day was celebrated on 31 May – encouraging smokers to give quitting a go.

"Don't ever give up giving up. Every time you try to quit you learn more about getting it right and your body will love you for trying," Annie said.

Don't forget all of our hospitals and health facilities are smoke free.

For more information or support to quit see your GP, call the Quitline on 137 848, download the My Quit Buddy phone app or visit icanquit.com.au. If you're pregnant you can talk to your midwife about how to quit smoking.

iCanQuit
.com.au

Quitline
13 7848

QUIT SMOKING CRUSADER still kicking 'butt' two decades on...

Our Smoking Prevention and Treatment Officer, Annie McDonald has been helping the community on their quit journey for the past 20 years.

Annie is passionate about helping people cut down or quit smoking and has provided valuable support to many community members and staff over the years. Annie has also been at the cutting edge of tobacco control, implementing a number of quit smoking initiatives and programs. She has also championed the treatment of nicotine dependent inpatients, provided professional development for clinical staff and shared a long-term partnership with our Health Promotion Service to spread Quit messages and highlight smoking legislation throughout our District.

When asked about her 20 year career milestone, Annie said:
"It's been an absolute pleasure to work in this role and witness the many changes within the world of tobacco control and I have been

incredibly fortunate to meet and work with such wonderful people across the whole Health District."

"It's such a fantastic feeling when a person comes to me and says 'I've done it, I've finally quit'.

If you would like some help to address your smoking call the Quitline on 137 848.



Annie McDonald



Annie shows her nemesis, Nicci Butt, the door

Work commences on new health facility for Kiama

Construction recently started on a new \$3.6 million community health facility at Kiama. The Integrated Primary and Community Health Centre (IPCHC) is a purpose-built facility, which will provide improved access to a comprehensive range of primary and community health services to the local community.

The District's new IPCHC will replace outdated facilities currently at Kiama Hospital. The facility will be built on a portion of the land which currently houses the Hospital and will sit alongside the \$45 million Kiama Hospital Redevelopment project being led by Kiama Council. The project received funding under the NSW Government's Restart NSW Illawarra Infrastructure Fund, which was established to drive economic growth in the region.

The Centre will deliver contemporary models of care, ensuring that clients and their families receive timely, safe and high quality outpatient health care. Services that will be provided from the new centre will range from early childhood right through to aged care, and include:

- Dental
- Primary Health Nursing
- Violence, abuse and neglect services
- Occupational therapy



Architect's Impression of the Kiama Integrated Primary and Community Health Centre Project



Director Ambulatory and Primary Health Care, Paul van den Dolder; Kiama Hospital Director of Nursing, Megan Foye; Project Manager, Vince DeSantis; Parliamentary Secretary for the Illawarra & South Coast and Member for Kiama, Gareth Ward; and Mayor of Kiama, Brian Petschler

- Physiotherapy services
- Diabetes
- Audiology
- Early childhood
- Podiatry
- Speech pathology clinics
- Health promotion services
- Chronic disease rehabilitation services
- Women's health services
- Multicultural health services
- Aged care services
- Immunisation clinics
- Specialist clinics.

The IPCHC is scheduled for completion later this year.

PROFESSOR receives honorary doctorate



Prof Wilf Yeo and Prof Philip Clingan

Our Director of Medical Oncology, Prof Philip Clingan recently received an honorary doctorate from the University of Wollongong for his outstanding contribution and dedicated service to the medical profession, particularly in the fields of cancer research, education and treatment.

Prof Wilf Yeo, ISLHD Medicine Division Co-Director and UOW Associate Dean: Teaching Hospitals, commented that Prof Clingan deserves recognition for his efforts in developing cancer services in our District, including the establishment of resources for cancer care that allow patients to be treated locally.

"Phil has been very active in several domains to allow this to happen, namely lobbying for support with the government and being an advocate for oncology services with the hospital executive for over 30 years, while at the same time providing one-to-one clinical care for patients with cancer.

The tribute paid to him by the university reflects his standing in the profession and mirrors the Order of Australia Medal (OAM) that Phil received in 2012," Prof Yeo said.

Speaking at the Admission of Prof Clingan as an honorary Doctor of Science, Prof Alison Jones, Executive Dean – Faculty of Science said, *"Prof Clingan is a highly talented and dedicated oncologist and cancer researcher who has made substantial contributions to the people of the Illawarra and Shoalhaven, and an outstanding national and international contribution to cancer research. His skills and expertise as an oncologist have saved countless lives and his significant contributions to cancer research have set the standard for treatment regimes around the world for colon, breast and lung cancer."*

Congratulations Professor Clingan!

Free program TEACHES KIDS TO BE HEALTHIER

Go4Fun is a free and fun program aimed at helping children become fitter, healthier and happier. The program has been specifically designed for kids aged 7 to 13 who are above a healthy weight, together with their parents. Go4Fun runs once a week during school term either after school or on the weekend.



The program helps youngsters and their families adopt a positive, long-lasting attitude towards food and exercise. Kids get to make new friends, play games to get their heart rate up and learn tips to create a positive view on healthy food.

The program includes practical demonstrations about healthy foods, label reading and portion sizes as well as fun ways to improve your child's nutrition, physical activity and self-esteem.

Local Clinical Nurse Specialist, Narelle Ilic and her daughter Katrina attended one of the local Go4Fun programs during Term 1 and found the experience rewarding.

"This was an excellent program. I thought I had a good understanding about being healthy, but the program has taught me about goal setting to increase activity and how to read labels more thoroughly," Narelle said

A great outcome from attending the program has seen Narelle's daughter getting away from the iPad and computer games and being active playing outside with her siblings and friends.

For more information or to register for a program call 1800 280 900 or visit go4fun.com.au



Narelle Ilic and her children attending a Go4Fun session

BreastScreen - 20 MINUTES COULD SAVE YOUR LIFE

BreastScreen estimates that there are 2000 women in NSW, aged 50-74, who may have breast cancer but not know it because they haven't had a mammogram. The 'Find the NSW 2000' BreastScreen NSW campaign is a mission to locate these women. Finding breast cancer in the early stages gives women the best chance of surviving it.

Breast cancer is the most common type of cancer affecting women in NSW, with 1 in 8 developing the disease during their lifetime. Early detection is the key to successful treatment - a free 20 minute mammogram every two years can save your life.

Breast cancer survivor, Kerri Welsh has teamed up with BreastScreen NSW to urge women to have their mammograms.

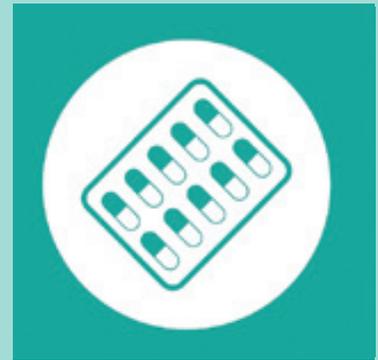
Kerri was diagnosed with breast cancer in 2009 after a routine mammogram. On a number of occasions, Kerri had delayed the mammogram that ended up saving her life. She urges other women not to be complacent about prioritising their health.

If you are a woman aged 50-74 who has not had a mammogram in the past 2 years, call BreastScreen NSW on 13 20 50 to book your free screening mammogram.

The BreastScreen clinics in our District are located at Wollongong, Shellharbour and Nowra, with an outreach screening van that visits Ulladulla each year. Appointments for all locations can be made by phoning 13 20 50 or for more information visit breastscreen.nsw.gov.au



GOOD NEWS FOR HEPATITIS C TREATMENT



The main goals of the NSW Hepatitis C Strategy 2014-2020 are to reduce hepatitis C infections in NSW and improve the health outcomes of people living with the disease.

The three priority actions to achieve these goals are:

1. Build on established hepatitis C prevention efforts
2. Improve management of chronic hepatitis C
3. Improve access to new hepatitis C treatment

In a big step forward, four direct-acting antiviral medicines for the treatment of hepatitis C have recently been listed on the

Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS) and are now available.

These new medicines have a cure rate of greater than 90 percent. The PBS has advised that for the purposes of the PBS subsidy, gastroenterologists, hepatologists, or infectious disease physicians experienced in the treatment of chronic hepatitis C infection will be eligible to prescribe the new medicines.

All other medical practitioners, including general practitioners (GPs), will also be eligible to prescribe under the PBS, provided that it is carried out in consultation with a gastroenterologist, hepatologist, or infectious disease physician experienced in the treatment of chronic hepatitis C infection.

Access to these medicines is critically important for people with hepatitis C and

exciting news for both clients and those treating them. Earlier treatment can avoid longer-term health impacts to the individual as well as costs to the health system.

On a wider scale, Illawarra Shoalhaven Local Health District is developing an Action Plan to address all the priority targets in the Hepatitis C Strategy and ensure that patients get access to these new treatments and that there is an integrated approach to the management of the disease in this area.

Information for patients and consumers, implementation queries and guidance regarding the medicines and prescriber eligibility is available via the PBS website at pbs.gov.au

NSW Health Alert: Measles

NSW Health is warning the public to be alert to the symptoms of measles after cases were reported in the community earlier this year.



The measles virus is highly contagious and is spread through the air, such as coughing and sneezing by someone who is unwell with the disease. Symptoms include fever, sore eyes and a cough followed three or four days later by a red, blotchy rash spreading from the head and neck to the rest of the body. Measles can have serious complications, particularly for young children.

If you develop symptoms of measles, seek medical advice from your GP in the first instance. Please call ahead to your doctor or emergency department so that arrangements can be made to keep you away from others to minimise the risk of infection.

Children or adults born after 1965 who do not have documented evidence of receiving two doses of measles vaccine, or evidence of

previous measles infection, are likely to be more susceptible to measles and should be vaccinated.

For young children, the measles vaccine is recommended at 12 months and again at 18 months of age. Two doses of the vaccine are required for lifelong protection.

Anyone born after 1965 should have two doses of vaccine (at least four weeks apart). NSW Health offers free MMR (measles-mumps-rubella) vaccine through GPs for people born after 1965 with no records of having received two doses of MMR vaccine. People who travel overseas should ensure that they are fully vaccinated against measles.

For more information visit: www.health.nsw.gov.au/Infectious/factsheets/Pages/Measles_Factsheet.aspx

CELEBRATING OUR NURSES AND MIDWIVES



Wollongong Hospital nurses celebrating International Nurses Day

We recently celebrated our fabulous nurses and midwives as part of International Day of the Midwife and International Nurses Day, which fall within a week of each other. We have exceptional nurses and midwives working throughout the District and we thank them for their hard work and dedication to our community.

Congratulations to Wollongong Hospital midwife, Emma Gedge who was named first runner-up in the NSW Nurses and Midwives Association's 2016 short story and poetry competition for her story *Watchful Waiting*. The competition is held annually to mark the international days of celebration for nurses and midwives. You can read the award-winning story on the Nurses and Midwives Association website: www.nswnma.asn.au/short-story-poetry-competition-2016/

NSW Health Minister, Jillian Skinner recently launched the nomination period for the 2016 Annual Excellence in Nursing and Midwives Awards, recognising dedication and skill across NSW Health. If you would like to nominate a nurse, midwife or manager/leader visit NSW Health's website health.nsw.gov.au

READY FOR A CHALLENGE?

DRY JULY



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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

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COUGHS & SNEEZES SPREAD DISEASES

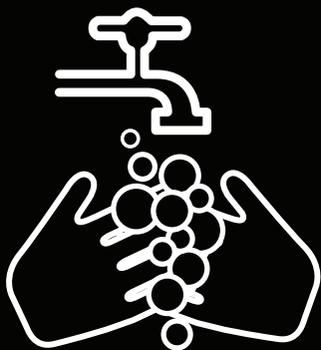


CATCH IT

Germs spread easily. Always carry tissues and use them to catch your cough or sneeze.

BIN IT

Germs can live for several hours on tissues. Dispose of your tissue straight away.



KILL IT

Hands can transfer germs to every surface you touch. Wash your hands thoroughly – especially after you cough, sneeze or blow your nose.

Get vaccinated to reduce your risk of flu. Speak to your GP now.

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