

# HEALTH IN FOCUS

NEWS FROM YOUR LOCAL HEALTH SERVICE

SPRING 2017

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## OUR NEW SURGERY

*App and Magazine*

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## *Aboriginal Health*

**PARTNERSHIP  
AGREEMENT SIGNED**

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*How we're working  
collaboratively to  
prevent suicide*

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*Gearing up for*  
**CONVOY 2017!**

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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**  
Illawarra Shoalhaven  
Local Health District

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This publication has been produced by the Corporate Communications Unit

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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

This photo was taken during the first week of spring - looking down the coast from North Wollongong.



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## A word from our CHIEF EXECUTIVE

I am pleased to provide the spring edition of our community magazine, Health in Focus and to share with you some of our latest achievements, health information and news from our Local Health District.

We recently launched the *My Surgery Journey* smartphone app and magazine at Wollongong Hospital. The first of its kind for a public hospital in Australia, the app was developed by our Division of Surgery to help our patients prepare for surgery by providing trusted, timely and easy-to-understand information. It makes me proud to see our staff thinking outside the box and using technology and innovative ways to engage with our patients to make their journey easier.

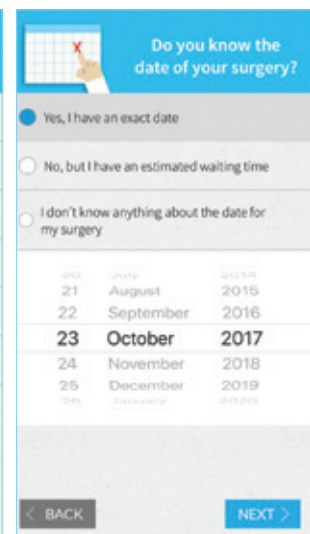
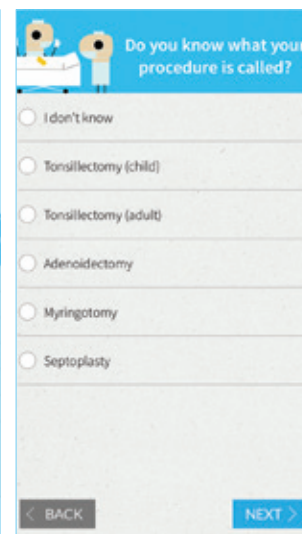
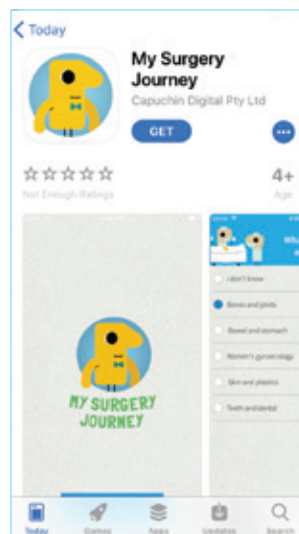
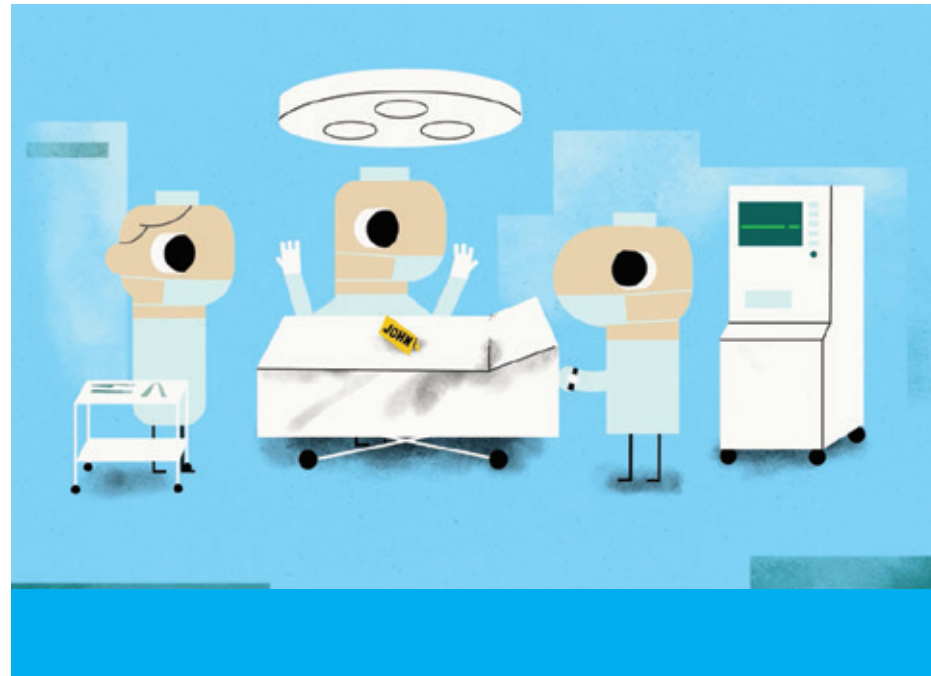
In August a function was held at Shoalhaven Hospital to mark the extension of the Clinical Excellence Commission's REACH Program. The NSW-wide enhancement of REACH is about ensuring patients and their families have a voice when in hospital and you can read more on page 14.

This edition of Health in Focus covers the signing of the Aboriginal Health Partnership Agreement between Illawarra Shoalhaven Local Health District (ISLHD) and leaders from local Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Services, the Primary Health Network and the University of Wollongong. This partnership is about ongoing collaboration and engagement to bring about positive health changes for Aboriginal people in our area (page 9).

I'd like to encourage everyone to support this year's i98FM Illawarra Convoy on Sunday, 19 November. I'm overwhelmed by how this event uniquely showcases the community spirit of the area and we're thrilled to have Wollongong Hospital Children's Ward as a benefactor of this generous fundraiser. Read more about the event on page 12.

Finally, I would like to acknowledge the hard work of all our staff across the District during the busy winter/flu season period. I am hugely proud of the way our staff responded to the demand of an unprecedented flu season and thank everyone, who went above and beyond during this time to ensure our community received the highest quality care.

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



ISLHD Chief Executive Margot Mains, Division of Surgery Clinical Nurse Consultant James Brinton and Northern Illawarra Hospital Group General Manager Nicole Sheppard at the launch of the *My Surgery Journey* app and magazine at Wollongong Hospital.

# New app and magazine help improve the Surgery Journey

What day is my surgery? What should I pack?  
What time do I need to arrive?

These are just some of the questions that go through the minds of our patients as they prepare for surgery.

To make the process easier and less stressful, the *My Surgery Journey* smartphone app and magazine were developed by the Illawarra Shoalhaven Local Health District (ISLHD) Division of Surgery to help patients prepare for surgery by providing trusted, timely, essential and easy to-understand information.

Division of Surgery Clinical Nurse Consultant, James Brinton came up with the idea after seeing a need for patients to have targeted information.

Working with colleagues and patients over 12 months, they came up with Sir Gerry (*phonetically: sur-gery*), a light-hearted and relatable animated character, designed to simplify the surgery journey and give patients information and instructions in a relaxed and fun way.

Launched in July at Wollongong Hospital, the magazine and the app, which is the first of its kind for an Australian public hospital, will remind patients and their families and carers of important dates, with the app even allowing patients to set up a personalised countdown to their surgery.

Via the app, Sir Gerry then provides preparation advice through a number of short and entertaining videos that cover hospital directions, medication tips, contact details, surgery information, and more.

*"The magazine and app are education and information tools aimed at improving all stages of the surgery journey for patients, their families and carers, and staff. The resources provide detailed advice and information, ranging from what to do in the lead-up to your surgery right through to what to expect when you go home,"* Mr Brinton said.

Division of Surgery Clinical Co-Director, Kate Fish said the new resources will also help reduce surgery cancellations by educating patients about the surgery process and the importance of arriving at hospital, ready and on-time.

*"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,"* Ms Fish said.

The *My Surgery Journey* project was made possible through funding provided by ISLHD's Illuminate Innovation, an initiative of the Clinical Redesign and Access Unit designed to promote, develop and embed innovation throughout the District.

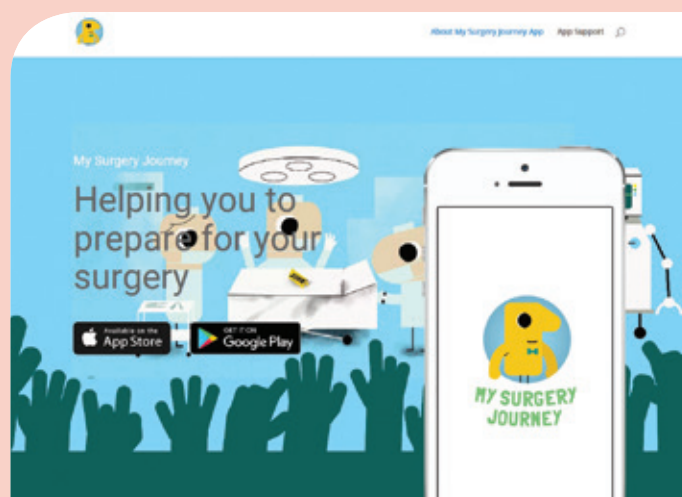
***My Surgery Journey* smartphone app was designed to keep you up-to-date during all stages of your surgery journey.**



**The *My Surgery Journey* is available for free download on iTunes and Google Play. Search 'My Surgery Journey' in the app store or use a QR scanner on the QR graphic above.**

*My Surgery Journey* magazine is a complimentary resource providing information about the time before, during and after surgery. It includes advice about food, exercise, hygiene, health and medication choices, as well as detailed information about our hospitals, what to expect on the day of surgery and instructions for optimum recovery.

Hard copies of the *My Surgery Journey* magazine will be given to pre-operative patients. The magazine is also available to read or download on our website: [isld.health.nsw.gov.au](http://isld.health.nsw.gov.au) on the surgery section listed under 'Our Services'.





# Award winning multicultural short films promote healthy living

## Our Multicultural Health Service is celebrating its success at the NSW Multicultural Health Communication Awards held in September after the team won an award in the audio-visual category for its series of short films promoting healthy living to women.

Multicultural Health Service Manager, Leissa Pitts said the theme of this year's Multicultural Health Week - *Women's Health: Supporting Woman's Journey to Good Health* provided the perfect opportunity to promote the new resources, which feature real women telling real stories about physical activity.

*"Each of the eight short films features a woman sharing her own, powerful story of hope and wellbeing to promote physical activity,"* Ms Pitts said.

*"The Healthy Women Active Women films aim to encourage other culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) women in the community to consider their own health and look at ways they*

*can increase their participation in regular physical activity,"* she said.

Funding to develop the films was received through the Heart Foundation, NSW Office – Women and Heart Disease Community Grants.

National Heart Foundation NSW Office, Manager of Women and Heart Disease, Angela Hehir said in Australia, heart disease is responsible for three times more deaths among women than breast cancer.

*"Women from culturally and linguistically diverse communities may experience a range of barriers to participating in regular physical activity contributing to their risk of poor cardiovascular health,"* Ms Hehir said.

The *Healthy Women Active Women* films are all under two minutes long, with four in Arabic and four in Italian – all with English subtitles.

*"In developing the resources, we interviewed Arabic and Italian speaking women who have made beneficial physical activity an important part of their busy lives,"* Ms Pitts said.

*"Their stories cover a range of different backgrounds and experiences – from a mother focused on building her self-esteem and mental*

*health after experiencing domestic violence through to an older refugee woman looking to reduce her sociocultural isolation through group-based physical activity,"* she said.

The *Healthy Women Active Women* films are all available to view on the Illawarra Shoalhaven Local Health District YouTube Channel.

For more information about the Heart Foundation project visit:

[www.heartfoundation.org.au/campaigns/making-the-invisible-visible](http://www.heartfoundation.org.au/campaigns/making-the-invisible-visible).

For further information on the *Healthy Women Active Women* short films please contact ISLHD Multicultural Health Officer, Estela Gimenez via email: [estela.gimenez@health.nsw.gov.au](mailto:estela.gimenez@health.nsw.gov.au)

- 1. National Heart Foundation NSW Office, Angela Hehir, with Estela Gimenez from ISLHD Multicultural Health Service and Cate Ferry and Julie Anne Mitchell from the National Heart Foundation NSW Office with their award.**
- 2. ISLHD Multicultural Health Officer Nadia Dghaich providing a thank you address for all the Arabic speaking film participants.**



# LOCAL MIDWIVES SUPPORT MILTON ULLADULLA MUMS, BUBS AND FAMILIES

Mums and bubs in the Milton Ulladulla area now have access to a 7-day antenatal and postnatal service, with the addition of three local midwives.

Based at Milton Ulladulla Hospital, the midwifery service is being provided by midwives Melissa Waterton, Leanne Whitehouse and Christine Duff who look after mums and their babies before and after they give birth at Shoalhaven Hospital.

The service is part of the Level 1 Model of Care which has been established for the Maternity Service at Milton. Under the model, the midwives will provide services to families from Sussex Inlet to South Durras. An Obstetrician will continue to visit each Wednesday morning for appointments and women will continue to birth at Shoalhaven Hospital.

The first appointment at the clinic is recommended at 12-14 weeks of pregnancy, where a comprehensive medical history is taken and information is discussed.

The midwives have also developed antenatal education classes for women and their partners to provide knowledge, support and education for pregnancy, childbirth and parenting. The classes are now up and running.

The Antenatal Clinic is located on the Ground Floor of Milton Ulladulla Hospital in the Allied Health Department. Phone: 4454 9116.



## Celebrating World Breastfeeding Week



World Breastfeeding Week is an opportunity to celebrate and acknowledge women, families and the broader community who are actively involved in supporting, protecting and promoting breastfeeding.

In 2017, World Breastfeeding Week celebrated its 25<sup>th</sup> year and the theme was *Working together for the common good!* For us as the Local Health District, this theme is about all of us having a part to play in supporting a woman's breastfeeding journey and helping babies get the best start in life!

Breastfeeding is the normal and most beneficial way for feeding. Breastfeeding provides all your baby's essential needs for growth, development and protection from illness and disease.

During World Breastfeeding Week, our Child and Family Health Nurses highlighted the importance of breastfeeding to mums and their families across the District. A small celebration occurred at our four drop-in breastfeeding groups, which run on the principle that peer support, along with professional, timely advice is the greatest contributor to women maintaining breastfeeding.

If you or your family or friends need any breastfeeding support, make an appointment or drop-in to one of our four drop-in breastfeeding groups and say hello. For more information about Child and Family Health Services visit our website: [islhd.health.nsw.gov.au](http://islhd.health.nsw.gov.au)



# SUICIDE PREVENTION – WORKING TOGETHER

The Illawarra Shoalhaven Suicide Prevention Collaborative officially launched the Black Dog Institute's LifeSpan trial in the Illawarra Shoalhaven on R U OK? Day.

LifeSpan is a new evidence-based, integrated approach to suicide prevention. It combines nine strategies for suicide prevention into one community-led approach. Based on international estimates, LifeSpan has the potential to reduce suicide deaths by 20 per cent and suicide attempts by 30 per cent.

The Illawarra Shoalhaven was selected as one of the four pilot sites for LifeSpan in NSW as suicide rates in the region remain higher than state averages.

The Illawarra Shoalhaven Suicide Prevention Collaborative is coordinating the local implementation of LifeSpan, led and supported by the Black Dog Institute. The Collaborative, which was established in 2015, consists of representatives from more than 30 community and health organisations, including Illawarra Shoalhaven Local Health District, COORDINARE – South Eastern NSW PHN, Lifeline South Coast, Illawarra Health and Medical Research Institute (IHMRI), Grand Pacific Health, all four local councils, University of Wollongong and all sectors of education, and local Aboriginal support services.

*"LifeSpan is about working together to prevent suicide by implementing the strategies that work. Suicide prevention is everyone's business, and so we want everyone in the community to understand what role they can play in reducing suicides, and to feel confident to play that role. The LifeSpan framework aims to better connect existing supports, and build evidence based services that are targeted for our local needs,"* said Dr Alex Hains, Regional Manager of the Collaborative.

Work to date includes the establishment of five working groups, each focused on a specific area of suicide prevention including health, community and school interventions, restricting access to means, and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander suicide prevention. The working groups involve a range of services and sectors, as well as people with their own personal experiences of suicide and mental health recovery.

ISLHD Director Mental Health Services, Julie Carter spoke at the launch event and acknowledged that in order to make a serious

impact on suicide rates, it is crucial that we work beyond the usual scope of health services.

*"Only by working across sectors, reaching out into the general community and involving people with lived experience will we make notable progress. The LHD is very proud to be a member of the Suicide Prevention Collaborative and enthusiastically support any initiative that may help reduce suicide,"* Ms Carter said.

*"The momentum for a different approach to suicide prevention has gathered locally at the same time as the LifeSpan project has come into play, and we are very pleased to be at the forefront of such an exciting and innovative approach,"* she said.

The launch provided a great chance for our local community to find out more about what's happening in suicide prevention in the region, speak with members of the Collaborative and find out how they too can get involved.

**MORE INFORMATION VISIT:**  
[www.suicidepreventioncollaborative.org.au](http://www.suicidepreventioncollaborative.org.au)  
[www.lifespan.org.au](http://www.lifespan.org.au)

## Help save a life – THREE STEPS ANYONE CAN LEARN TO HELP PREVENT SUICIDE

As part of the LifeSpan trial, the Suicide Prevention Collaborative is encouraging people to sign up to the Question, Persuade and Refer (QPR) training, a one-hour online course available from the Collaborative website for just \$10.

QPR training will provide three simple steps anyone can learn to help save a life from suicide:

- Knowledge and skills to identify warning signs that someone may be suicidal
- Confidence to talk to them about suicidal thoughts
- Connect them with professional care

To access the QPR training visit:

[www.suicidepreventioncollaborative.org.au/QPR](http://www.suicidepreventioncollaborative.org.au/QPR)

The nine LifeSpan strategies:



**IF YOU OR SOMEONE YOU KNOW IS IN NEED OF MORE URGENT CARE PLEASE CONTACT:  
LIFELINE: 13 11 14  
BEYONDBLUE SUPPORT SERVICE: 1300 224 636**



Members of the Doonooch Dancers perform in the grounds of Shoalhaven Hospital

# Aboriginal Health – IT'S EVERYONE'S BUSINESS

A modern day Corroboree was held at Shoalhaven Hospital in September to mark the signing of an Aboriginal Health Partnership Agreement between the Illawarra Shoalhaven Local Health District (ISLHD) and leaders from local Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Services, the Primary Health Network and the University of Wollongong.

The ceremony commenced with a significant and moving Welcome to Country performed by Uncle Tom Moore, who recognised past Elders that made a significant contribution to establishing Aboriginal health programs in the Shoalhaven, including Aunty Nola Roberts, Aunty Jane Ardler and Aunty Belle McLeod.

This was followed by a smoking ceremony and Corroboree led by Joe Brown-McLeod and members of the Doonooch Dance troupe to signify the historical practice of Corroboree in celebrating elders coming together to make agreements. This ceremony reminded us of the importance of our leaders in Aboriginal health coming

together to talk and make an agreement in the present day environment.

The Partnership Agreement was formally signed by the leaders of the following local organisations:

- Illawarra Shoalhaven Local Health District
- COORDINARE - South Eastern NSW Primary Health Network
- Illawarra Aboriginal Medical Service
- Oolong House - Drug and Alcohol Rehabilitation Centre
- South Coast Aboriginal Medical Service
- University of Wollongong
- Waminda South Coast Women's Health and Welfare Aboriginal Corporation

ISLHD Aboriginal Health Strategy Director, Pauline Brown said the Partnership Agreement is a commitment to work together to bring about positive changes to close the health and life expectancy gap between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Australians.

*"The Agreement aims to support, promote and strengthen the existing local relationships and strong ties that have been developed over many years," she said.*

ISLHD Chief Executive, Margot Mains reiterated it marks a new beginning for our journey in working collaboratively to create pathways for clients between different service providers, to empower Aboriginal people to make healthy lifestyle choices, and to feel culturally safe when they do need to access our range of services.

The Partnership Agreement was signed following the inaugural meeting of the Aboriginal Health Partnership Committee. The committee brings together each of the participating organisations, as equal partners, in order to determine key priorities for future Aboriginal health planning across our District and incorporating Aboriginal leadership and participation in decision making.



Organisations in the new partnership came together before the signing (back from left) ISLHD Chief Executive Margot Mains, Nick Zwar representing Alison Jones from the University of Wollongong, Dianne Kitcher from COORDINARE – South Eastern NSW Primary Health Network, Larry McLeod from the Doonooch Dancers, Uncle Tom Moore and Joe Brown-McLeod from the Doonooch Dancers

Front: Jo Naughton representing South Coast Aboriginal Medical Service, Tanya Bloxsome from Oolong House, Cheone Wellington of Waminda and Julie Booker of the Illawarra Aboriginal Medical Service



# RARE BIRTH: Team of experts at Wollongong Hospital bring baby Alexander into the world

Tineke Dobson is the proud mother of a six-month-old boy, named Alexander, due in part to the wonderful work of specialist surgeons and their teams at Wollongong Hospital.

Early in her pregnancy, Haywards Bay local Tineke was advised that she had an ectopic pregnancy, which is one that develops outside the uterus, usually in one of the fallopian tubes and almost always results in the embryo dying. She was referred to Dr Warren Davis, one of Wollongong Hospital's Obstetrics and Gynaecology specialists, and it was discovered that the pregnancy actually wasn't ectopic; however there was a problem as the placenta had attached to her caesarean scar.

"Dr Davis was very reassuring," Tineke said.

"Immediately he knew there was a problem. Since it wasn't ectopic, there was a slight chance that the baby would survive. Dr Davis was wonderful. He explained everything to my husband and me, in plain terms that we could understand," she said.

From the outset, the delivery of Alexander was going to be complex and involve a variety of medical professionals from Wollongong Hospital, including senior specialist surgeons and their teams from Obstetrics and Gynaecology, Vascular, Urology, Paediatrics, Haematology, Intensive Care Unit (ICU), Anaesthetics and Nursing.

Throughout her pregnancy, Tineke was continually monitored - each scan showed Alexander growing, but below normal expectations. The scans also showed placenta percreta, a rare and severe condition where the placenta grows in or past the uterine wall and affects the bladder. This is a potentially life threatening condition because it is more likely to cause severe haemorrhage during delivery.

At the 28 week mark, there were signs baby Alexander was growing but the placenta wasn't working properly. At the 33 week scan, Dr Davis advised Tineke that she would have her baby the following week.

Wollongong Hospital was then able to put in place plans for a birthing procedure which would give Tineke and her baby the best possible chance.

Senior Anaesthetist, Dr Tanya Selak said all members of this newly-created team were clearly briefed on this case and its significant risks.

"We developed a well thought-out plan and were able to communicate our ideas, concerns, and specialist knowledge constantly in the lead up to the birth. On the day we were very clear on everything all of us needed to do," she said.

On 30 May, the day of the surgery, the team worked together to successfully bring Alexander into the world. Tineke then needed a host of procedures during the almost four hour intensive operation, which included an open phone line with the Anaesthetic Registrar to the blood laboratory during the entire procedure.

"It wasn't until I got into hospital, that I realised how much support I would be getting."

"There was a team of 30 people in the theatre. The doctors explained that everyone was here for me, to support me, and to give me and my baby their specialist skills. At that point I accepted that my situation was unusual. Instead of being anxious, I was calm because I felt very supported. I knew I needed to let the staff do their job, and that my job was to stay as calm as possible," Tineke said.

"The smooth implementation and successful outcome of this procedure highlights that in the Operating Theatre, it's all about the team. Operations require the involvement of every single person, including the patient, for the best outcomes," said Dr Selak.

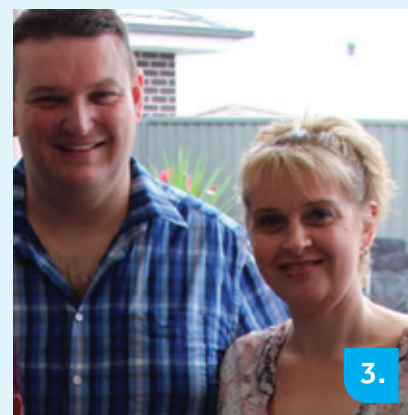
Today, Alexander is a thriving six-month-old at home with his mum, dad Shane and two older brothers, Callum and Max and living up to his namesake Alexander the Great.

"He needed to have a warrior's name, because he is a fighter. From the very beginning he has fought to be alive, and every day he has battled to make it through. He is our little fighter, our Alexander, and we couldn't be happier or more thankful," Tineke said.



"I am very grateful to all the staff at Wollongong Hospital involved in our journey and care. All the staff in that operating theatre deserve recognition - if there is some kind of award for operating theatre staff - they really deserve it. They were truly wonderful." - Mum, Tineke.

1. Alexander with his doting big brothers 13-year-old Callum and Max, 20 months
2. Baby Alex
3. Proud parents Shane and Tineke Dobson





# Thank you to Greenwell Point Hospital Auxiliary

Shoalhaven Hospital was proud to host a special morning tea for Greenwell Point Hospital Auxiliary recently as a way to thank the members for their generosity and ongoing support of the hospital and its patients and to show the Auxiliary the results of their fundraising.

A stalwart of the area, the Auxiliary and its members have raised funds for our hospital for 67 years. This year was no exception with the members holding events including a high tea, fashion parade, stalls and bus trips.

It was fitting that a morning tea be held in their honour, as usually the Auxiliary members are the ones baking up a storm to raise money for the hospital.

Over the years the Auxiliary has donated funds to provide numerous pieces of equipment, and this year funds were used to purchase two iPads for the occupational and speech therapy units which will be used for patient therapy.

A syringe driver, which is a small portable device used to administer medications in palliative care, was also donated, as well as two sofa beds for



Shoalhaven Hospital staff gather with members of the Greenwell Point Hospital Auxiliary to say thanks for their hard work throughout the year and show their appreciation for the donated items. Photo courtesy South Coast Register

families, friends or carers of people who need to stay with their loved ones overnight.

Operations Manager Critical Care/Deputy Director of Nursing, Brad Scotcher said the auxiliaries do a wonderful job in supporting the hospital.

*"Because of their hard work over the course of the year we are able to purchase these items which will help support our patients, their carers and families," he said.*

**Meetings: 1.30pm – 1st Thursday of the month (excl. January) at Greenwell Point Community Hall**

**Contact:** President Sandra Walter: 4447 1822,  
Vice President Diana Metcalf: 4447 1602,  
2nd Vice President June Innes: 4447 1255,  
Secretary Donna Swan: 0419 206 730  
– New members always welcome.

# Want to give back? Shoalhaven Hospital Auxiliary welcomes new members

Volunteering is in Pat Glasby's blood; for more than 30 years she has volunteered with hospital auxiliaries firstly in South West Sydney and then in the Shoalhaven.

As the current President of the Shoalhaven Hospital Auxiliary, Pat has been a stalwart of the group which raises money for Shoalhaven Hospital. She was awarded the Illawarra Shoalhaven Local Health District (ISLHD) Volunteer of the Year in 2016.

Mrs Glasby said she enjoys giving back to people and the community.

*"When I first started at the Auxiliary I was new to the area and it was a great way for me to meet new people and to become part of the community," she said.*

*"I am so proud of all that we have accomplished over the years. It is a lovely group and the Auxiliary members do a wonderful job in raising money for the hospital. We also provide a service to the patients via the book trolley and washing patients' clothes."*

The Auxiliaries key activities are fundraising and charity events, buying and filling the vending machines, stalls, washing patients' clothes and the book trolley.



Shoalhaven Hospital Auxiliary volunteer Pat Glasby receives her 2016 Volunteer of the Year award from ISLHD Chief Executive Margot Mains, Operations Manager Critical Care/Deputy Director of Nursing Brad Scotcher and Shoalhaven Hospital Group General Manager Ian Power

The Shoalhaven Auxiliary meets the third Wednesday of the month at the CWA rooms in Bomaderry.

**Are you interested in joining the Shoalhaven Hospital Auxiliary?**

The Auxiliary always welcomes new members, if you would like to find out more contact Shoalhaven Hospital: 4421 3111.





i98FM breakfast show hosts and ambassadors of the i98FM Illawarra Convoy Christie Hayes, Marty Haynes, Ryan Cram and ISLHD Clinical Director Kids and Families Dr Susie Piper with supporters at the launch of the 13th annual convoy

Revamp starts on  
Children's Ward

- thanks to the generous  
support of the community

Construction has commenced on the redevelopment of the Wollongong Hospital Children's Ward thanks to an incredibly generous donation of \$250,000 from the Illawarra Community Foundation.

The Foundation is behind the i98FM Illawarra Convoy, one of our region's most iconic fundraising events.

The donation is supporting the first stage of a major redevelopment of the Children's Ward, which will see construction of a new, fit-for-purpose school room. The school room relocation also creates new space within the ward for the Paediatric Assessment Unit and Outpatient Clinics.

Illawarra Shoalhaven Local Health District (ISLHD) Clinical Director Kids and Families Dr Susie Piper said planning for the redevelopment has been underway for several years, with initial support from The Cotton On Foundation through the Run Wollongong events.

*"A concept plan has been developed and there are already some changes such as purchasing purpose built chairs that fold out into lie flat beds, allowing parents to sleep beside their child,"* Dr Piper said.

*"Over the next few years the Children's Ward will see a complete overhaul to improve the facilities for children and their families and reduce the stress of having a child in hospital,"* she said.

The next stages of the redevelopment will involve building a new playroom and parent facilities.

*"The generous contribution of Convoy and the Illawarra Community Foundation has allowed us*

*to start to reconfigure the ward to enhance the way we provide services to the more than 3600 patients we see each year. We look forward to building a lasting relationship with Convoy that will greatly benefit the kids and families of the Illawarra,"* Dr Piper said.

The 2016 Convoy saw 720 trucks and 1020 motorbikes pass through the Illawarra on the 70 km journey from Appin Road to Albion Park Rail. At the end of the day, a total of \$1,805,306 was raised - marking the greatest success in the event's 12 year history.

Last year, it was announced that the much-loved charity event would be broadening its focus with a greater charitable reach. The establishment of the Illawarra Community Foundation in 2016 allowed funds raised during Convoy to be distributed to a range of groups and individuals via a submissions process.

i98's Marty Haynes said it is great to see the funds raised in Convoy benefiting a range of individuals and groups in the Illawarra and South Coast regions.

*"We are lucky to have some amazing organisations in the region supporting people suffering from life threatening medical conditions. The i98FM Illawarra Convoy and Illawarra Community Foundation are extremely proud to support the Wollongong Hospital Children's Ward*

*Redevelopment project with a donation of a quarter of a million dollars,"* Marty said.

i98FM Illawarra Convoy manager Mark Rigby said he was excited to be approaching Convoy for another year.

*"As always, the event would not be the success it is without the generosity of the community, in particular the truckies and bikers who are at the heart of the Convoy along with our local businesses,"* he said.

This year's i98FM Illawarra Convoy will be held on Sunday, 19 November. The Convoy will depart under police escort from the Illawarra Coal's West Cliff Colliery on Appin Road at about 8am and follow a route down Mt Ousley through Warramong and past Stockland Shellharbour, then onto Croome Road, Albion Park Rail.

The action continues with a free Family Fun Day at the Croome Road Sporting Complex, when the registered motorbikes and trucks begin arriving at around 9am. The Fun Day includes lots of great entertainment, rides and stalls and concludes just after 3pm.

**For more information or to make a donation visit: [illawarraconvoy.com.au](http://illawarraconvoy.com.au)**



# STAFF SUPPORT CANCER patients through fundraising

Each year, staff from our Wollongong and Shoalhaven Cancer Care Centres join members of the community to raise funds for local cancer patients and their families and carers through the national fundraising campaign, Dry July.

The fundraising challenge calls for participants to give up alcohol for the month, and raise funds by asking friends and family for donations as well as organising local fundraising activities.

ISLHD Cancer Services Co-Director Anthony Arnold said that he and his staff get involved in Dry July because they see the difference the money makes to the comfort and wellbeing of their patients.

*"Dry July helps us deliver real change to patients, carers and the cancer environment,"* Anthony said.

*"When a patient comes into our care they spend a lot of time with us. Dry July funds help us to make their stay a little bit more comfortable, and a little less intimidating,"* he said.

More than \$58,000 was raised locally this year, with the Illawarra Cancer Care Centre team raising the fifth highest amount nationally at \$15,000 – a huge effort.

This takes the total amount raised in eight years to almost \$560,000 which has been used to fund murals, digital skylights, new chemotherapy chairs, free Wi-Fi, information kiosks, patient accommodation upgrades as well as new equipment for local patients.

One unique project currently underway thanks to last year's Dry July campaign is a Tai Chi program at the Illawarra Cancer Care Centre. The program runs a few times a year over six weeks.

Oncology Clinical Nurse Specialist Sara Moylan came up with the idea as part of a falls prevention strategy. Falls are a concern for

many patients in the health system, with cancer patients at a higher risk of complications after a fall because of the nature of their treatment and disease.

*"Staying active is one of the key ways to reduce the risk of falls,"* Sara said.

*"Patients who are identified as 'at risk' as part of a falls assessment are invited to join the Tai Chi program. It offers a gentle way to increase their strength, balance and core stability. We were fortunate to have access to Dry July funding to get this project off the ground,"* she said.

Patient, Peter Hannemann has been catching the bus into town with his wife Uta to attend the class.

*"We've done Tai Chi a couple of times and we like it. The body is moving and stretching without being strenuous,"* Peter said.

Uta says the only problem is that they don't do it often enough.

*"Once a week is not enough for it to go into the brain and remember it!"* she laughs.

Peter and Uta expressed their thanks to the staff who contributed funds towards to Dry July.

Sara said many of the patients who were involved in the first Tai Chi program were keen to sign up for more in November.

Patients (and carers) undergoing cancer treatment at the Illawarra Cancer Care Centre or Wollongong Hospital can contact Sarah via [sara.moylan@health.nsw.gov.au](mailto:sara.moylan@health.nsw.gov.au) to register their interest in future classes.

*"These brilliant ideas that our staff bring to life with Dry July funding are incredibly important to cancer patients. Survivorship from cancer is increasing, and these programs help promote a healthy and productive lifestyle both during and after a cancer diagnosis,"* Anthony said.



- 1. Cancer Services team members got in the spirit of Dry July**
- 2. Oncology Clinical Nurse Specialist Sara Moylan came up with the idea of a Tai Chi class as part of a falls prevention strategy**
- 3. Peter and Uta Hannemann have benefited directly with Tai Chi classes at the Illawarra Cancer Care Centre from the funds raised by Dry July**



# REACH PROGRAM EXPANDED: helping patients, families and carers *'Raise their Hand'*

**A function was held recently at Shoalhaven Hospital to mark the extension of the Clinical Excellence Commission's (CEC) REACH Program - a rapid response program that focuses on recognition and appropriate care of deteriorating patients by encouraging patients and families to work together with clinicians and 'raise their hands' to signal if they need help.**

The NSW-wide enhancement of REACH came about following the tragic death of six month old Kyran Day and the subsequent advocacy by his parents, Naomi and Grant Day to ensure all patients and families have a voice.

In addition to the REACH resources that focus on all patients, there are also new resources specifically aimed at parents and family members of children in our care, which feature Kyran's photo and story. Members of Kyran's family came together with Shoalhaven Hospital and District staff and the CEC to honour Kyran and acknowledge the work that has been carried out to enhance the REACH Program.

REACH stands for Recognise, Engage, Act, Call, Help is on its way. The program encourages patients, family and carers to engage with their nurse or medical team if they feel their loved ones health is deteriorating.

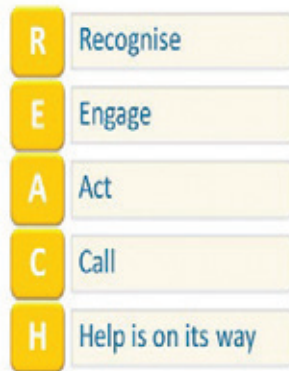
Developed by the CEC in 2013, REACH was built upon the surf lifesaving analogy by encouraging patients and family to *'put their hands in the air'* to signal they need help. This is consistent with the emergency response systems already in use in NSW health services.

REACH actively promotes engagement with the treating team. It encourages patients, family and carers to initially engage with their nurse or medical team, if they are concerned that 'something is not right'.

If they continue to be worried they can then escalate their concerns by requesting a clinical review knowing that this should occur within 30 minutes.

Finally, if they are still concerned and all other avenues have been exhausted, an independent review or rapid/emergency response can be activated by the patient, family or carer by calling a unique number made available by the facility. REACH casts the safety net wider and provides assurance that help is on its way.

A plaque honouring Kyran Day and his family was unveiled at the function. This plaque has been placed on the 'safety wall' at Shoalhaven Hospital together with updated REACH posters and other safety information for staff, patients and visitors.



Naomi and Grant Day with the memorial plaque for Kyran.

## Are you worried your **child** is getting sicker?

**If yes... tell someone right away**

If you are still worried that your child needs more help you should follow these steps:

### STEP 1

Speak to your Nurse or the Nurse in Charge.  
Tell them why you're worried and ask them to look at your child.

### STEP 2

If you are still worried and want a doctor to look at your child,  
ask your nurse to call for a 'Clinical Review'.

### STEP 3

If the doctor has seen your child but you're still very worried,  
you can call 'REACH' on (unique number for each hospital)

#### KYRAN'S STORY

Kyran was only 6 months old when he died. His parents saw a worrying change in his condition and told staff how worried they were. Their concerns were not given the attention they should have been given, and Kyran's condition continued to worsen.

"The bottom line is that children and babies don't have a voice. I had to be the voice for Kyran" said his mum.

Patients and their families know themselves better than anyone. Listening to their concerns can prevent devastating outcomes.

We will continue to support all parents, grandparents and families to 'raise your hand'.

Thanks to Grant and Naomi Day for allowing the CEC to use the story of their late son Kyran

**R.E.A.C.H** out to us  
Because together we make a great team.



Check out the CEC website to learn more of Kyran's story and view CEC resources for REACH.



# CONSUMERS: *the critical link to quality improvement*

Consumer Engagement (also known as participation) has been happening across the Illawarra Shoalhaven Local Health District (ISLHD) for many years. We engage with consumers in a number of ways including project based work, document review and committee membership.

Working with our communities, listening to their feedback and involving them in the overall discussion and planning of our service delivery is critical to empowering them to feel part of their health care outcomes.

## Who are consumers?

Consumers are people who use our health services, as well as their families and carers.

This includes people who have used a health service in the past or who could potentially use the service in the future.

## How does Consumer and Community Participation work with the Local Health District?

Consumer and community engagement is about getting the end user into the conversation at the earliest possible stage. We work within a co-design framework to ensure that we are involving and talking to consumers who are interested in the subject matter, feel passionate about improving service and are constructive in their approach to helping us to create lasting change.

## How can you get involved?

Call us and find out what is happening in your area. There is always a project or activity taking place across the Local Health District that requires consumer feedback.

You don't have to commit to a lengthy project to become involved. You can complete a survey, participate in a document review, attend a focus group, or participate on committees and councils.

## Do I need to have a background in health?

No, not at all. We have plenty of staff who can provide professional expertise within their services. Our consumers are regular community members who have an interest in a specific area in the health service, usually due to a personal experience. We want to hear your stories, get an idea of what worked for you and what didn't. We want to know what your vision is for local health services and how they can benefit the people who live in your community.

We can't fix everything at once. But we can start a conversation and together make improvements to the local health landscape one consumer at a time.

## Do you have a consumer related activity you'd like to get started?

We have many projects and areas of interest across the District that may interest you. We are equally interested in what you have to contribute to the discussion. Don't wait for us to call you. Let us know if you have an issue you would like to put on the consumer engagement agenda.

Contact the Communications and Partnerships Officer via email:

[islhd-community@health.nsw.gov.au](mailto:islhd-community@health.nsw.gov.au),  
phone: 4221 6860 or visit the website:  
[islhd.health.nsw.gov.au/Community\\_and\\_Consumer\\_Participation](http://islhd.health.nsw.gov.au/Community_and_Consumer_Participation) for more information.



## Our Language Matters – NAIDOC celebrated across the District

### Our Language Matters was the theme for the 2017 NAIDOC week celebration.

The first week in July is a time to celebrate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander history, culture and achievements. It is an opportunity to recognise the contributions that Indigenous Australians make to our country and our society.

The theme this year celebrated the role that languages play in cultural identity and the communication of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander history through song and story.

The Illawarra Shoalhaven Local Health District (ISLHD) took part in the NAIDOC events held at Kanahooka, Ulladulla, Nowra and Wreck Bay.

Staff attended from a number of services including the Aboriginal Chronic Care Unit,

Sexual Health, Violence and Neglect Unit (VAN), Health Promotion, Renal Service, Drug and Alcohol, Workforce, Mental Health, Aboriginal Maternal and Infant Child Health Service, Public Health, Oral Health and the Organ and Tissue Donation Service.

The Aboriginal Chronic Care Acting Project Officer, Lara Acevedo said it was great to see staff work collaboratively to help make the days a great success.

*"The events provided opportunities for our staff to engage with the community to provide service information and build meaningful relationships with the local Aboriginal communities, in a fun and relaxed environment," she said.*

Staff across our District are already planning for the 2018 NAIDOC celebrations.



Dale Wright and his son Jayden with Athol Lester and Richard Luland

On a winning note, our Aboriginal Health Workers from the Aboriginal Chronic Care Unit took out the Shoalhaven NAIDOC Family Fun Day – Koori Cook Off. The four team members won the title of the Make Healthy Normal competition with salmon fish cakes from The Flavours of the Coast Koori Cookbook.

# Work starts on the Bulli Aged Care Centre of Excellence

In October we celebrated the official start of construction on the new \$50.4 million Bulli Aged Care Centre of Excellence, which will incorporate a purpose-built public hospital, co-located with a residential aged care facility.

**ISLHD Board Chair Professor Denis King OAM joined Director IRT Group Tineke Robinson, Parliamentary Secretary for the Illawarra and South Coast Gareth Ward and Member for Heathcote Lee Evans to turn the first sod on the new development.**

The Centre of Excellence will become a leader in the aged care sector, providing fully functional and integrated aged care through a continuum into residential care, provided by IRT. The Centre aims to meet the needs of the local Illawarra population, with people aged over 65 being the fastest growing demographic in the region.

The facility has been designed following significant input from local user groups including doctors, nurses, allied health and support staff.

It will include:

- 60 public inpatient aged care beds
- Development of on-site clinical support services
- Provision of a range of non-clinical support services
- An urgent primary health care centre
- A 60-suite IRT Care Centre co-located on site

The new facility is being built opposite the existing Bulli Hospital and construction is expected to be completed in early 2019.

In order to accommodate the development, there are now changes to car parking at Bulli Hospital.

For more information visit the Capital Works page of our website [islhd.health.nsw.gov.au](http://islhd.health.nsw.gov.au) or speak to staff at the hospital.



1.

1. Board Chair Professor Denis King, IRT Group's Tineke Robinson, Parliamentary Secretary for the Illawarra Gareth Ward and Member for Heathcote Lee Evans.

2. Artist's impression of the new Bulli Aged Care Centre of Excellence.



2.



# ICU COURTYARD GETS A REVAMP



***"To feel the sun on my face, was like water to a thirsty man". This quote from a former Shoalhaven Hospital patient became the unofficial motto for the revamp of the Intensive Care Unit's (ICU) courtyard earlier this year.***

A team of ICU staff – led by Clinical Nurse Educator, Christine Trost and Clinical Nurse Specialist, Kathy Schofield came together to raise money for the project, with the aim of creating a therapeutic environment for critically ill patients, their families, carers and staff.

Christine said the project was made possible through the generosity and support of community members, local business and assistance of funding from the Veolia Mulwaree Trust.

*"Our idea to refurbish the courtyard was about building on the invaluable work that takes place within the Intensive Care Unit. We wanted to enable more patients to access the outdoors as part of their recovery as well as help prevent sleep disturbance issues for longterm patients,"* Christine said.

Evidence shows that sleep disturbance and stress while intubated in the ICU can potentially delay a patient's healing, increase sensitivity to pain and may even increase length of stay on the unit.

One of the main focuses of the project was to be able to help recreate normal day and night routines by taking some patients outside to enjoy the sunshine, fresh air and a change in surroundings.

The project delivered a range of enhancements – from practical changes like installing the double-width doors, so hospital beds can easily be wheeled outside, through to more of the personal creative touches such as the installations.

One of the installations is a sign featuring the above words of former ICU patient, Tim O'Brien, which has been erected on a metal board in the courtyard.

*"Tim's words really stuck in our minds as we worked on the enhancements and became a sort of motto for the project. We decided to include the quote in the courtyard as a way to really exemplify why this project was so important,"* Kathy said.

*"It's about the difference some of life's simple pleasures can have, whether it's a patient being able to feel the warmth of the sun or breathing in fresh air or having a quiet, calming space where patient's loved ones and even staff can go for a break from the highly stressful and emotional environment of the ICU."*

*"We'd like to thank the patients and families, community members and local businesses who have rallied in support of our idea and the many fundraising events we've held over the last few years to make this project a reality,"* she said.

The refurbishment included: a new roof that provides shade over the courtyard; an access point for medical oxygen, air and suction; new double-width access doors; plants and freshly painted garden beds; outdoor seating area for families and creative installations.



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You can also search for Illawarra Shoalhaven Local Health District as a publisher, and follow us so that you get notifications whenever we add a new magazine to issuu.

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## 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

# 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.

We will be working throughout the year to build up our YouTube channel and add new videos as they become available. In the meantime, check out the videos we already have on our channel by visiting [youtube.com](http://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)**

## 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.**



# THUNDERSTORM ASTHMA – PLAN AHEAD

Thunderstorm asthma was the key theme for the 2017 National Asthma Week with health experts encouraging asthmatics to plan ahead for unexpected weather changes.

NSW Health's Director of Environmental Health, Dr Ben Scalley said if you have asthma, spring is an important time to make sure you have an asthma action plan and are proactively managing your symptoms.

*"It's also important for people to know asthma first aid, so they can help family and friends when they need it."* he said.

*"For those who suffer from hay fever, and sneeze or wheeze their way through spring, get checked by your doctor to ensure you don't actually have asthma. If so they can develop a plan for you to manage the symptoms."* he said.

## DID YOU KNOW?

Each year, approximately 10,000 people are admitted to NSW Hospitals for treatment of asthma. Around one in nine adults and one in eight children has asthma in NSW.

Asthma first aid – the four steps to remember:

1. Sit the person upright
2. Give four separate puffs from their reliever puffer
3. Wait four minutes. If there's no improvement, give four more puffs and
4. If there's still no improvement, dial 000

### WHAT IS THUNDERSTORM ASTHMA?

It's the perfect storm, a powerful mix of pollen and weather conditions which can trigger severe asthma symptoms in a large number of people over a short period of time.

During pollen season (October to late December) is when thunderstorm asthma is more likely to occur.

This is because there are high levels of pollen in the air and on a hot and windy day when the storm hits, the pollen can absorb the moisture and burst into tiny particles. The wind from the storm blows the particles down to ground level, where they can be inhaled and trigger an asthma flare up.

People who have seasonal hay fever may also experience breathing problems during these weather conditions as well, even if they have never been diagnosed with asthma.

### DECREASE YOUR RISK OF HAVING A THUNDERSTORM ASTHMA EPISODE

- Manage your asthma or hay fever throughout the year, especially during spring
- If you have asthma, use your preventer medication regularly as directed by your doctor, carry your asthma reliever (puffer) with you, and ensure that you have a current, personal Asthma Action Plan
- If you have not been diagnosed with asthma but wheeze and sneeze during spring, see your doctor to determine if you may have asthma and develop an action plan
- If you have hay fever you should see your doctor about medications you could use to manage your symptoms
- Stay alert to the symptoms of wheeze, chest tightness, difficulty breathing and cough
- Recognise the signs of an asthma attack or rapid escalation in symptoms such as:
  - difficulty breathing, laboured breathing making it difficult to speak in full sentences, or lips turning blue
  - asthma reliever medication providing little relief.

For more information visit [health.nsw.gov.au](http://health.nsw.gov.au)



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