

HEALTHIN FOCUS

NEWS FROM YOUR LOCAL HEALTH SERVICE

SPRING 2019

**Our Year
IN REVIEW**

**Meet 2019 Australian
Nurse of the Year**

**Building our
*Aboriginal workforce***

**OUR NEW
*Health Care
Services Plan***



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: isld.health.nsw.gov.au**

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A word from our CHIEF EXECUTIVE

I am pleased to provide this edition of our Health in Focus community magazine, showcasing some of the latest news and activity from across Illawarra Shoalhaven Local Health District.

This is also our Year in Review edition – where we give an overview of the busy 2018-19 year and the District's achievements, projects and developments. There's been a lot happening over the past 12 months; our facilities and services are busier than ever and I acknowledge the hard work and efforts of our staff.

Progress continues to be made on the building works underway at a number of our sites, as well as important planning for major hospital redevelopments in Shellharbour and Shoalhaven. You can read more on pages 14-15.

An important function of the Local Health District is planning for the future and we're keen to share our new Health Care Services Plan with the community. *It's your health that matters: Health Care Services Plan* sets out a 10-year vision for our services and how we'll support our community to stay healthy. You can read more on pages 6-7 or visit our website to view the full plan.

Speaking of our website, we've recently overhauled our site and launched a completely new, modern and mobile-friendly website. Not only does it look great, the new site will make accessing important health information easier and allow us to better keep the community up to date with the latest health news and activity. You can visit the site now at www.islhd.health.nsw.gov.au. Please let us know if you have any feedback or there's something else you'd like to see included.

This edition of Health in Focus also provides an update on some of the work we're doing to build our Aboriginal workforce. Our Aboriginal Employment Strategy is a significant priority for our District and we want to encourage our local Aboriginal community members to explore a career in health. We asked some of our current staff members to share their stories about working for the health service and the personal journeys they took to get here. You can read more on pages 10-12.

As always, the start of spring brings with it a fresh focus on health and wellbeing. It's a great opportunity to make some healthy lifestyle changes, such as exercising more or eating better, or even just to get out and enjoy the sunshine and fresh air more. Don't forget - the Make Healthy Normal website www.makehealthynormal.nsw.gov.au has a range of tips, information and free programs to help you, and your family, feel healthier.

Till next time.

Margot Mains

Chief Executive

Illawarra Shoalhaven Local Health District



Our Local Health District had an incredibly busy 2018-19 year, with unprecedented growth in demand during the 12 months. Our Emergency Departments treated an additional 7000 patients and the number of unplanned surgeries increased by almost 15 per cent on the previous year. This significant growth in our activity has driven much of the District's focus on improving efficiencies so we can deliver the highest quality care, where it's needed most.

During this period, we developed the District's new Health Care Services Plan that will guide the delivery of services over the next decade. The Plan outlines our vision for an integrated health system in the Illawarra Shoalhaven region which supports people to stay healthy in their homes and communities.

The District also continued to plan and develop the region's hospitals and facilities. The \$50.4 million purpose-built Bulli Hospital and Aged Care Centre reached the highest point of construction, while early works commenced on the redevelopment of Shellharbour Hospital. A \$434 million upgrade of Shoalhaven Hospital was announced by Premier Gladys Berejiklian late last year, with preliminary planning for the significant redevelopment now underway. Work also started on the construction of a \$11.8 million car park at Shoalhaven, delivering 220 more parking spaces to meet current and future demand. Planning continued for two new community health facilities at Ulladulla and Dapto as part of the NSW Government HealthOne project.

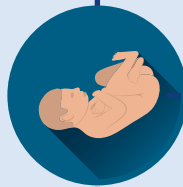
During the 2018-19 year, the Local Health District contributed to the development of the first regional plan for Mental Health and Suicide Prevention, in partnership with Southern NSW Local Health District and the Primary Health Network. The District also collaborated with stakeholders, such as Aboriginal Medical Health Services, on priority issues such as birthing on country and increasing the voice of Aboriginal people in decision making and planning of health services.

Year in Review 2018-2019

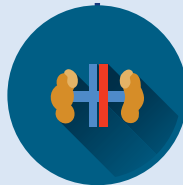
CLINICAL SERVICE DELIVERY



- **166,947** Emergency Department presentations
- **94,464** inpatient admissions to our hospitals
- Patients spent an average of **4.25** days in hospital
- **691,274** face-to-face community visits (includes hospital outpatient, community based and in-home treatment)



- Babies born: **3368**
- Cancer haematology and oncology occasions of service: **179,977**
- Mental Health bed days: **36,597**
- Surgeries: Planned / elective: **16,787**
Emergency: **9167**



- Oral Health Service Occasions of Service: **71,084**
- Renal Services Haemodialysis treatment: **18,834**
Home haemodialysis treatment: **2537**
Home peritoneal dialysis treatment: **15,022**

OUR STAFF



- More than **7100** staff, including:
 - 48%** nursing
 - 10.5%** medical
 - 11.6%** allied health
 - 15.8%** corporate services and hospital support
 - 5.7%** hotel services
 - 2.2%** of the workforce identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander

OUR POPULATION



- Total population: **409,692**
- **16,908** or **4.2%** of population identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander
- **71,066** or **18.1%** of the population were born overseas
- **12%** of the population speak a language other than English at home

Highlights



Illawarra Community Mental Health Service implemented a new 48 hour face-to-face follow up program for discharged consumers and achieved a first in Australia for providing seven day follow up.



Implemented an internationally recognised Standard Outcomes Set for Colorectal Cancer; a first for the District. The Framework, guided by the International Consortium of Health Outcomes Measurement, was presented at an international conference and received a nomination for both NSW Health Awards and NSW Premier's Awards.



Achieved 100 per cent full immunisation coverage for Aboriginal children at 60 months of age and consistently exceeded 95 per cent vaccination coverage for all local children at 60 months.



Developed the 'My Care Board' for use in hospital inpatient wards in support of the clinical handover process. The new tool aims to facilitate better communication among consumers, carers and clinical teams to enable stronger shared decision making.



Implemented technologies to improve patient care and experience including electronic medication records, patient and guest Wi-Fi and the roll-out of an electronic medical record for intensive care (eRIC) at Shoalhaven Hospital. A new website for the District was also developed to provide our consumers and community members greater access to the information they need to support their health journey.



Developed the District's first Consumer Engagement Framework to guide a robust and consistent approach to improved consumer interaction, feedback and connection with their health services.

THANK YOU

The Local Health District receives tremendous support from our local community, and the many dedicated volunteers who work tirelessly to enhance the care we provide to patients and their families. Thank you to our Hospital Auxiliaries, fundraising groups, organisations, community members and volunteers who generously support our hospitals and services.



Developed a new pathway for disadvantaged local families to be referred to Oral Health Services to improve access and experience. An Oral Health Waiting List Redesign Project was also launched to improve patient wait times. This halved the number of patients waiting for their assessment and reduced wait time for dentures from six to two months.



IT'S YOUR HEALTH THAT MATTERS: HEALTH CARE SERVICES PLAN 2020-2030

It's your health that matters: Health Care Services Plan (the Plan) presents a 10-year vision for the future of the Illawarra Shoalhaven Local Health District's health services. The new Plan describes an integrated health system for the Illawarra Shoalhaven region which supports people to stay healthy in their homes and communities.

In developing the Health Care Services Plan, we carried out extensive consultation and engagement with our community, partner organisations and other stakeholders. This consultation was vital in setting the direction for the District and the Plan's five key focus areas.

We know that the way forward will require us to think differently and change the way we deliver services. We also know that we will need to be adaptable and innovative as we move into this new era.

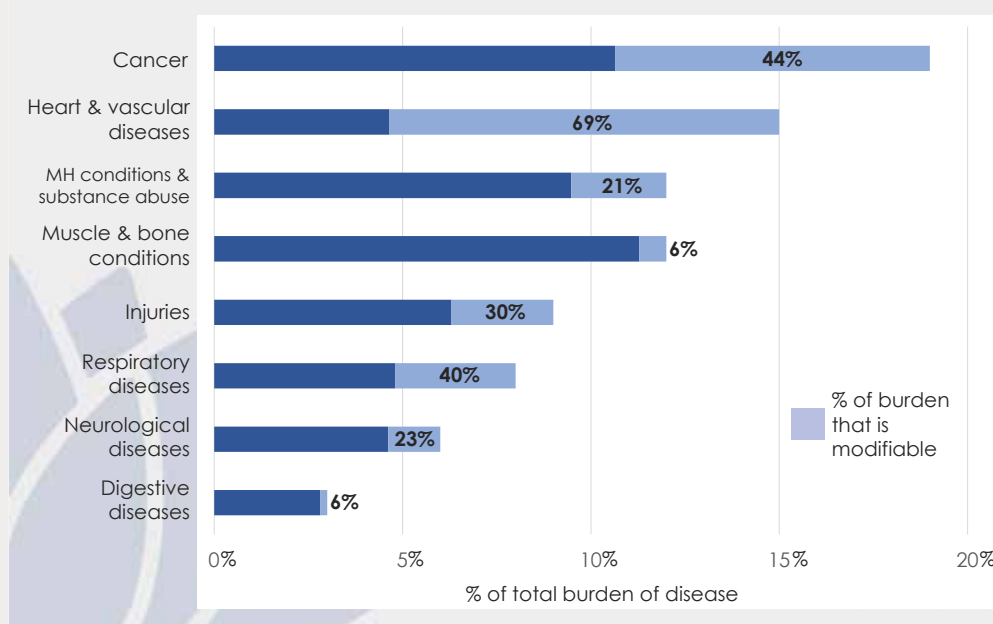
Why a new Plan?

The burden of disease in our population is growing. Approximately 50 per cent of the population are living with at least one of eight common chronic conditions (including arthritis, asthma, back pain and problems, cancer, cardiovascular disease, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, diabetes and mental health conditions). The health system is under pressure from this increased burden of disease in a growing and ageing population.

It has been estimated that one third of this burden of disease can be attributed to modifiable risk factors such as tobacco use, alcohol use, high body mass, physical inactivity and high blood pressure. We know that these risk factors can be altered or changed to prevent the onset or deterioration of disease.

We also know that the health of the community is shaped by a range of factors, many of which are outside the control of individuals. Genetics, geography, early childhood experiences, physical and social environments, employment, income and education level and interpersonal relationships play an important role in shaping a person's long term health.

Top 8 diseases causing the most burden for our population and health system



All of this information tells us that we need to consider how we are planning and delivering health care and ensure we make well considered, evidence based changes for the future.

What does the future look like?

Our vision is to move towards a health system that supports people to stay well in the community. To do this, we must strengthen services that support health care close to people's homes and carefully consider where we invest resources.

The other key focus of the Plan is improving the health of people by recognising the connections between health and other aspects of people's lives. Strengthening collaboration with the many partners who contribute to the community's wellbeing is an important way to address the social determinants of health for our communities.

To achieve this vision, we know that we need large scale change - one that sees a shift in public perception about how health care should be accessed and delivered.

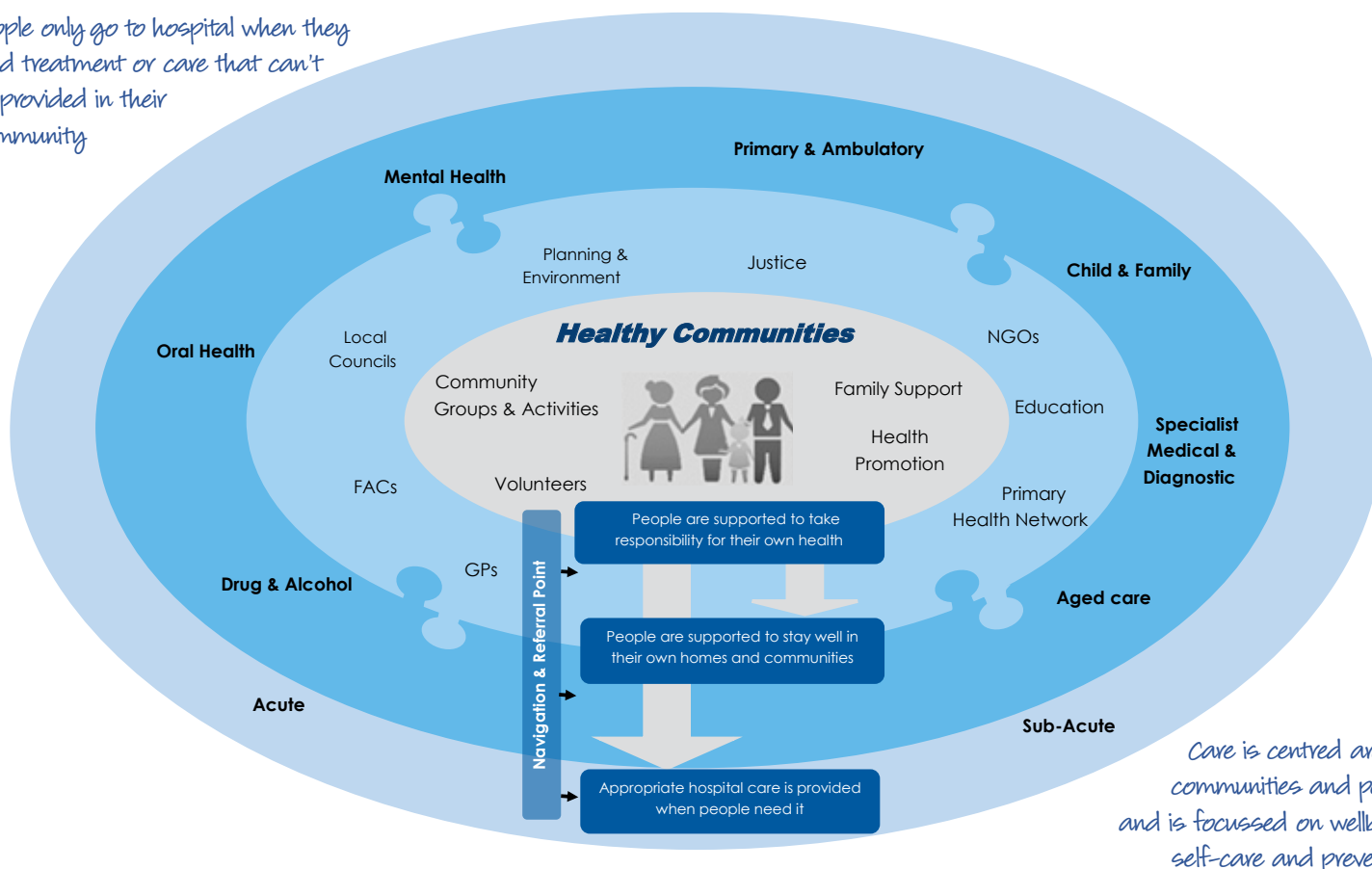
"We need to change the way we think about health care. We must focus more on prevention and early intervention to slow the progression of disease, so that people can stay healthy for longer."

We also need to pay special attention to our most disadvantaged communities, who tend to have higher health needs. There has been a lot of great work already started with ISLHD's partners, and we need to build on this collaboration with GPs, NGOs and other government agencies to help people to stay well, manage their chronic disease and access the care they need."

Dr Bill Pratt, Infectious Diseases Consultant, Co-Director, Medicine Division and ISLHD Board member

ISLHD'S FUTURE HEALTH SYSTEM

People only go to hospital when they need treatment or care that can't be provided in their community



EXCELLENT SERVICES | QUALITY PARTNERSHIPS

Adapted from Canterbury District Health Board

WHAT WILL WE FOCUS ON?

THE DISTRICT'S FIVE KEY FOCUS AREAS FOR THE NEXT 10 YEARS WILL BE:

FOCUS AREA - A	Promote, protect and maintain the health of the community Minimise preventable diseases, reduce the impact of disease, promote self-management and coordinated care, and minimise hospital admissions.
FOCUS AREA - B	Strengthen care in the community Deliver care through community-based models, integrated with primary care and other service providers. Reduce the length of time people stay in hospital and support them to receive as much of their care as possible at home.
FOCUS AREA - C	Address the cultural and health needs of Aboriginal people Work with Aboriginal communities to design and deliver services that will improve the physical, cultural, spiritual and familial wellbeing of Aboriginal people to improve health and life outcomes.
FOCUS AREA - D	Commit to high value care Organise services using evidence based clinical guidelines to deliver maximum health outcomes for investment.
FOCUS AREA - E	Strengthen partnerships and engagement Strengthen collaboration with our partner organisations and other stakeholders to address the things that influence health and improve the health and wellbeing of the community.

You can read the full document *It's your health that matters: Health Care Services Plan* on our website: www.islhd.health.nsw.gov.au

PROFESSOR KATE CURTIS

2019 AUSTRALIAN NURSE OF THE YEAR!

We're proud to celebrate ISLHD nurse and clinical researcher, Professor Kate Curtis who was recently named the HESTA 2019 Australian Nurse of the Year. Kate was acknowledged for her tireless work in advocating to improve emergency hospital care across Australia and internationally, particularly for injured children.

In receiving the top honour at the 2019 HESTA Australian Nursing & Midwifery Awards ceremony, Professor Curtis said the award recognises her extensive research that is now helping many young patients.

"The most rewarding thing about this work is knowing that we're making a difference through research and advocacy for this pandemic that is childhood injury. Injury is the leading cause of death and disability in Australian kids," she said.

Professor Curtis was instrumental in obtaining federal funding to develop a National Injury Prevention Strategy, which will be implemented next year. She is also an internationally renowned emergency and trauma nurse clinical researcher,

whose studies into injury prevention and treatment have improved clinical practice both in Australia and around the world.

"Emergency and trauma care is an opportunity to help people at the worst time of their lives. It's also an opportunity to apply science and clinical skills to save lives," she said.

Professor Curtis combines her clinical work with academic roles to produce ground-breaking studies on paediatric and emergency trauma care. She also founded the Childhood Injury Prevention Alliance (CHIPA) to improve injury treatment.

Professor Curtis said she will put the prize money towards emergency care education sessions in the Illawarra and Shoalhaven, to help clinicians access the most up to date evidence-based care.

"I work across the four emergency departments in the District – Wollongong, Shellharbour, Shoalhaven and Milton Ulladulla.



We have such great groups of nurses and other health professionals, that's why I wanted to put the prize money back into education," she said.

Kate was also recently awarded *Best Academic Researcher Oral Presentation* at the 23rd Annual Scientific Meeting of the Australasian Trauma Society and was a finalist at the 2019 NSW Health Awards in the *Staff Member of the Year* Category.

WOLLONGONG HOSPITAL LEADS THE WAY IN NUCLEAR MEDICINE

with Australia's first digital gamma camera

Wollongong Hospital has welcomed the arrival of Australia's first digital gamma camera, and patients of nuclear medicine are already benefiting from the technology with faster scans at lower radiation doses.

Director of Nuclear Medicine Associate Professor Barry Elison said feedback has been extremely positive for the state-of-the-art device and both patients and clinicians are benefiting from the new technology.

"This new digital equipment allows us to complete the studies much quicker, with scans that might have previously taken 15 minutes completed in just four to five minutes,

"Not only is this more convenient for the patient, it means we can perform more studies on a daily basis, so patients get their results faster and treatment can commence sooner."

"We are thrilled that Wollongong Hospital is the first in Australia to have access to this brilliant technology," he said.

A gamma camera detects and makes images from the small amounts of ionising radiation emitted from patients having a nuclear medicine study. Scans completed with a digital gamma camera require significantly less radiation doses than other technologies.

"In some cases we are using up to 75 per cent less radiation than we did previously, and whilst these scans are very safe, it's always best to limit the amount of radiation we are exposed to," Prof Elison said.

He added that the new equipment also allowed other previously unavailable studies to be provided at Wollongong Hospital at no extra cost.

"We can now include additional diagnostic information, such as Calcium scoring for cardiac studies, which can provide incredibly useful information to our referring doctors and their patients" Prof Elison said.

The new \$1.3 million digital gamma camera replaces existing equipment that has come to the end of its useable life.



Deputy Chief Medical Radiation Scientist Jenny Calcott and Director of Nuclear Medicine Associate Professor Barry Elison

Stroke Week

Staff from the Local Health District, NSW Ambulance and the Stroke Foundation recently joined the local community to celebrate National Stroke Week at a special event in Nowra.

National Stroke Week is an annual campaign that encourages everyone to know the signs of stroke and take immediate action if they see them. The F.A.S.T acronym has been effectively promoted by the Stroke Foundation as an easy test to undertake if you believe someone may be having a stroke.

This year's National Stroke Week theme celebrated F.A.S.T Heroes – those in our community who have previously acted, whether to help a loved one, a neighbour, or even a stranger, by recognising the signs of a stroke and doing something about it. We were honoured to have our own local stroke heroes – Kim and Ian – share their story at the event, which you can also read below.

The F.A.S.T hero theme is also a call to encourage others to be heroes – by equipping themselves with the knowledge to identify stroke signs early, and act fast. Unfortunately, stroke is something that touches too many in our community – with statistics showing that across Australia – someone has a stroke every nine minutes.

Evidence shows that the earlier treatment is delivered – the better the outcomes for patients. We have some outstanding staff and teams in our hospitals, working at the forefront of stroke treatment, however we also rely on those out in the community to act fast if they notice the signs of stroke. Calling an ambulance immediately if you see any of the signs of stroke could be a life-saving action.

Awareness around stroke prevention is also about knowing the risk factors associated with stroke and the Local Health District works to inform and empower our community to reduce their own risk.

In keeping with the hero theme, nursing and allied health staff from Shoalhaven Hospital donned super hero capes to raise awareness about stroke, the signs and the risk factors, and ran health checks for members of the community.

— Recognise —
STROKE
Think **F.A.S.T.**

F Has their **FACE** drooped?

A Can they lift both **ARMS?**

S Is their **SPEECH** slurred and do they understand you?

T Call 000, **TIME** is critical

If you see any of these symptoms **Act FAST call 000**

Stroke FOUNDATION

KIM AND IAN'S STORY

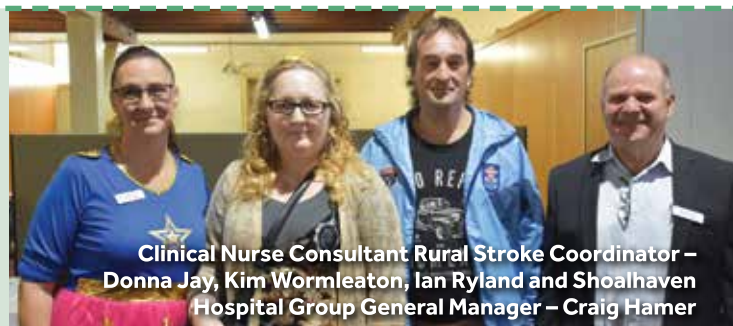
The morning in June 2017 started like any other day for 47 year old Kim Wormleaton and her husband, Ian Ryland. Kim woke up at 6am and was alert and chatting to her husband as they went about their usual morning routine. Just 19 minutes later, Ian called out to Kim from another room of the house and Kim responded with a mumble, which was immediately followed by a loud bang.

Ian rushed in and found Kim on the floor; her eyes were open but she was unresponsive. Ian immediately called an ambulance, a call that saved his wife's life. The ambulance arrived at their home within seven minutes.

Ian and his son helped the ambulance staff carry Kim from the house and into the ambulance. They arrived at Shoalhaven Hospital Emergency Department at 7.13am and Kim was taken straight into the resuscitation bay. When Kim was examined by the team, she was not able to speak but she understood when people were talking to her.

She had a CT scan of her head at 7.56am and a CT angiography – which is a special kind of brain scan that focuses on blood vessels. Kim was transferred to Liverpool Hospital via Helicopter at 10.09am to receive an endovascular clot retrieval (ECR).

Ian's family drove him to Liverpool to be with Kim. Terrified about his beloved wife's health, Ian had no idea what condition Kim would be in when he first saw her, whether or not she was OK, if she could speak, if she would even recognise him. However when



Clinical Nurse Consultant Rural Stroke Coordinator – Donna Jay, Kim Wormleaton, Ian Ryland and Shoalhaven Hospital Group General Manager – Craig Hamer

Ian and his family walked into the hospital room, Kim smiled and recognised them immediately!

Two days later, Kim was transferred to Wollongong Hospital where she spent the next six days. Just two days after the stroke, she was walking assisted by a frame and the help of a nurse. Five days post stroke, Kim was walking with the frame unassisted. It was still quite an effort for her to speak but she was understanding well.

Eight days after her stroke, Kim was transferred back to Shoalhaven Hospital. She was seen by the allied health team including a physiotherapist, an occupational therapist and a speech therapist. She was referred to the domiciliary stroke service to enable her to go home and still have regular follow ups in her own home.

In January 2018, not quite seven months after her stroke, Kim was discharged from all services and continued to do really well in her own home. The staff said they loved helping Kim and Ian who were a fantastic team. Ian and Kim thanked the doctors and nurses, who they said were all amazing.

Ian is a true F.A.S.T hero and saved Kim's life.



BUILDING OUR Aboriginal Workforce

As one of the largest employers in the region, our Local Health District is committed to providing employment opportunities for local Aboriginal community members. We need Aboriginal people employed right across the District, in a wide range of roles, and at all levels – from trainees to department heads and executive roles.

We've been developing and implementing employment pathway programs to build a vibrant, skilled and professional Aboriginal workforce. Our Aboriginal employment strategies focus on four key areas (see diagram at right).

If you think you'd like to work with us, get in touch now to find out more about our many different roles and start planning your career with the health service.

ABOVE: ISLHD Chief Executive, Margot Mains and Shoalhaven Hospital Group General Manager Craig Hamer with some of our Aboriginal workforce. L-R: Ryan Dashwood, Renae Allard, Sharon Bloxsome, Matthew White, Margot Mains, Craig Hamer, Lee Lloyd and Julie Solberg.

BUILDING A VIBRANT & PROFESSIONAL ABORIGINAL WORKFORCE

- Aboriginal targeted employment opportunities
- Aboriginal identified roles
- Traineeships/apprenticeships
- School based apprenticeships and traineeships (SBATs)

Meet some of our Aboriginal health staff

We recently asked a number of Aboriginal staff about their journey in health and what working in the Local Health District has meant to them



Dr Ryan Dashwood
Consultant Emergency Physician
- Shoalhaven Hospital

Who are you and where are you from?

I am a Budawang man (Yuin) who grew up in Sydney.

What journey did you take to get here?

I was an average high school student who tried hard. I worked casually in labour type jobs and saw my family all do physical work and I did not see that as fit for me long term. I enjoyed science and my HSC mark was good enough to earn me a spot in Bachelor of Science in Biotechnology. I went part time in my second year so I could work full time as a trainee Hospital Scientist in cytogenetics during the rest of my degree. This led to my employment as a Hospital Scientist in the area after graduation. I realised that there was so much more to learn and my interests led me to study Indigenous Community Health at post graduate level. I then felt I wanted to be an actual pathologist, as the doctors I worked with inspired me with their amazing minds. I sat the GAMSAT and applied and earned a position at the University of Sydney School of Medicine. After a hard four years I became an intern in 2010. After nine years of intensive work hours, study, multiple examinations and many missed birthdays and other social activities, I am now a specialist emergency physician.

During my journey I have participated in working groups and committees, such as the steering group for a Reconciliation Action Plan for the Australasian College for Emergency Medicine. I have been an active member with the Australian Indigenous Doctors Association, teaching and being a mentor to medical students across the country. I am also a lecturer of Indigenous Health at the Western Sydney School of Medicine, which has started to teach me about curriculum development and medical education.

What has this role meant for you?

It's allowed me to make an actual difference. Sometimes it is not the medical care itself but the humanity component. The power of a cuppa tea and a yarn can help tease out the real issues and allow appropriate referrals and therapeutic relationships. The ED is a busy place and realistically, not the best place for this type of medicine as the care is often too short, but the times I can bring that extra piece of care are the days I feel I have made a real difference..... That, and a successful trauma resuscitation.



Jean Turner

Aboriginal Health Worker in the Aboriginal Chronic Care Unit

Who are you and where are you from?

I was born in Nowra and have lived here for most of my life.

What journey did you take to get here?

I left school at 14 years and 7 months and went to work in factories in Sydney. I travelled back and forth to Sydney for a number of years before meeting my husband and having my children. I went back to school when I was 32, as my eldest daughter had started high school and I wanted to further my education so I could be a role model for her and encourage her to stay at school and finish the year 12 certificate. By returning to education I completed my Tertiary Preparation Certificate and then successfully sat an exam to get into university. I was offered a position in the Associate Diploma of Social Welfare, a three year course for which I had to travel away to residential school. I graduated this course and then three years later went back to complete my Bachelor of Arts in Social Welfare. Since then, I've also gained a Diploma in Community Development and Certificate IV in Community Health from the Aboriginal Health College.

What has this role meant for you?

Being employed in Aboriginal health for the past 30 years has enabled me to see many changes take place in the workforce and I've been very proud to be part of some of those changes. It has also given me skills that have enhanced my ability to work in community and hopefully gain respect from community and colleagues over time. It has also enabled me to take on leadership roles where and when necessary and I have learnt that as a health worker we need to understand how to take care of ourselves and that it is okay and important to do so.

Did you know:

Jean Turner has been the recipient of an ISLHD Chief Executive Award for Excellence and was a former finalist in the NSW Premier's Awards for Public Service?



Courtney Allan

Dental Assistant
- Warilla Dental Clinic

Who are you and where are you from?

I am a mother of two small children, living and working in the Illawarra region. I originally come from a small town in the North West called Quirindi, which is also home to my tribe the Kamilaroi people, also acknowledged as the Gamilaraay people.

What journey did you take to get here?

I moved to the Illawarra in 2014 and started a traineeship working full time and doing night classes twice a week to gain my Certificate III in Dental Assisting.

I originally worked in Education so health was a new field for me that I previously had an interest in but I didn't really know where to start. When the opportunity arose to complete a traineeship, with the commitment of a position once I had completed my course, I decided to take it.

What has this role meant for you?

The satisfaction of being able to engage and assist in providing a service that is very much needed within the community. It has also introduced me to other health services that I or many others didn't know existed and therefore I'm able to pass my knowledge of those services and how to access them onto the community.



Matthew White

Registered Nurse - Shoalhaven Hospital

Who are you and where are you from?

I am 27 years old and a proud Budawang man from the Yuin Nation

What journey did you take to get here?

After finishing year 12 at Bomaderry High School, I studied Nursing for 3 years at the University of Wollongong through the Indigenous Admissions Program. This was perfect for me as there was tutoring available if I needed it and plenty of support around me.

to Shoalhaven Hospital because I wanted to come back to the area where I grew up so I could provide care to our people.

When I was 17 years old, I became unwell and spent most of 2009 in hospital. It was during this time I had an incredible nurse, which really showed me what amazing work nurses do. This is why I became a nurse.

What has this role meant for you?

I find this role very fulfilling, especially working back down here in the Shoalhaven, as I am able to care for our people in their time of need. I have found that I've really been able to engage with the community since working here.

I started out in Wollongong Hospital Emergency Department. I decided to come



Dr Paul Saunders
Project Manager – Aboriginal
Healthy Hearts Project

Who are you and where are you from?

I am a proud Biripi man with my family coming from Taree and also having connections to the Kamilaroi nation. I was born and raised in Campbelltown.

What journey did you take to get here?

As a high school student I was always fascinated by science, namely biology. My passion for biology and sport naturally meant I was destined to become a physiotherapist; however an opportunity presented itself to study undergraduate Medicine at the University of Western Sydney and I was offered an indigenous placement. Following graduation I undertook an internship within South Western Sydney Local Health District, however my medical officer days were short lived as I doubted my passion for clinical medicine. After a few years within the medical devices field, I gained further clarity into my career path and undertook a Master of Public Health with the intention of pursuing indigenous research. Now nearing the end of my postgraduate studies, my decision to leave clinical medicine brings with it a silver lining and an opportunity to influence indigenous

health from a much higher research and policy level. A quote that I always like to have in the back of mind when working in indigenous health is: *treating disease is futile if you do not, at the same time, treat the person.*

What has this role meant for you?

This role has given me a golden opportunity to share my health and cultural knowledge with local Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal health staff. I feel honoured to be able to share my health experience with such passionate Aboriginal Health Workers and Practitioners. I thrive off teaching my indigenous brothers and sisters about health and disease, and take pride in witnessing their knowledge, skills and confidence grow. This role has also allowed me to educate our non-indigenous hospital cardiac nurses about Aboriginal culture. Enhancing cultural awareness will lead to improved access to cardiac services for Aboriginal people in the Illawarra and Shoalhaven region, and ultimately better health outcomes and hospital experiences of our local Aboriginal community.



Dr Paul Saunders, Project Manager for Aboriginal Healthy Hearts with Daniel Dawson, Dale Wright, Athol Lester and Elizabeth Campbell – the Aboriginal Health Workers who will be delivering the new model.

Chronic disease is a major factor contributing to higher mortality, increased hospitalisations and reduced quality of life for Aboriginal people. Aboriginal Australians are twice as likely to have a heart attack as non-Aboriginal Australians and more than 10 times as likely to die from coronary heart disease. Cardiovascular disease also strikes Indigenous Australians much earlier, with statistics showing that more than 20 per cent of 35 to 44 year olds are already afflicted. There is a particularly high incidence around the Shoalhaven region.

The Aboriginal Chronic Care Unit works across the District to improve access to health services for Aboriginal people with or at risk of developing chronic health conditions, including cardiovascular disease. The team, made up

primarily of Aboriginal Health Workers, has close working relationships with a wide range of clinicians to help improve referral networks and pathways as well as provide care in a culturally appropriate way.

An example of this is the Aboriginal Healthy Hearts Feasibility Study which has been funded from NSW Health's 2018 Translational Research Grant Scheme – Round 3.

This is a two-year project to evaluate an outreach, family-centred model of cardiac rehabilitation for Aboriginal people experiencing heart disease, and their family members, residing in the Illawarra Shoalhaven. An eight-week program of cardiac rehabilitation, followed by a series of follow-up appointments, will be delivered by Aboriginal Health Workers supported by clinicians.

Aboriginal people who have experienced a heart condition with subsequent presentation to a public hospital, and their family members aged 15 years plus residing in the same household, will be eligible to participate.

Dr Paul Saunders is the project manager and has been providing skills and education to Aboriginal Health Workers to deliver the new model. The program will focus on exercise, healthy eating, health education, and support with tackling harmful lifestyle practices, such as tobacco and alcohol use. The program will also provide education and information to family members to help relatives to support rehabilitation and also identify their own risk factors for heart attacks.

Artwork on pages 11 and 12 by Cecily Wellington-Carpenter

WOLLONGONG HOSPITAL BIRTHING UNIT to undergo \$2.2 million upgrade



Birthing Unit staff, Stacey Moselen and Liz Kerle are excited for the redevelopment

Wollongong Hospital's Birthing Unit will receive a major transformation to provide a more modern, functional and welcoming birthing space for local mothers and their families.

The Hospital's Birthing Unit was last refurbished two decades ago and over that time has seen the birth of more than 40,000 babies.

Plans for the refurbished unit include remodelling assessment areas and bathrooms to better support modern birthing standards; waiting areas will be enhanced to facilitate an improved flow through the unit; and the colour scheme will be inspired by nature to provide a more calming setting.

We want to make birthing mums as comfortable as possible and improving their surroundings will hopefully contribute to a better birthing experience for them and their families.

Illawarra Shoalhaven Local Health District (ISLHD) Chief Executive Margot Mains said the Hospital has worked closely with consumer advocacy group, Better Births Illawarra, to ensure local women have had input into the new design.

"Better Births Illawarra has provided great support and advocacy for local mums and they will no doubt be equally thrilled that the project can commence," Ms Mains said.

The Birthing Unit refurbishment project will require an extensive plan for the temporary relocation of the facility while the works are occurring.

"Detailed plans have been developed for relocating the Unit to a temporary space while construction is being undertaken. That space is the former Intensive Care Unit, which has itself undergone refurbishment," Ms Mains said.

We've developed a walk through video of the temporary facility to show mums and families what to expect when visiting hospital. You can watch this video by visiting the ISLHD YouTube Channel or via our website: www.islhd.health.nsw.gov.au

Construction for the \$2.2 million upgrade will commence in January 2020 following a funding commitment from the NSW Minister for Health and Medical Research, Brad Hazzard.

"Our Board Chair Professor Denis King and I are delighted the Minister has agreed to allocate additional funding for the unit to undergo this extensive upgrade," Ms Mains said.

"Wollongong Hospital spends around \$19 million each year on maternity services and the staff provide excellent care. The support provided by the Minister means we can now provide a more modernised birthing unit," ISLHD Board Chair Professor Denis King said.

Capital Works 2019

– OUR YEAR IN REVIEW



Bulli artist's impression

It's an exciting time for building works across the District and, with six important projects currently underway, we're working to ensure we provide our community with the best health facilities – now and into the future.

Capital Works are significant infrastructure projects like hospital redevelopments, new community centres and car parks. These projects are an important part of our business and help to deliver the best health outcomes for our community and ensure our facilities are modern, safe and accessible.

Executive Project Director, Suzanne Harris said involvement and advice provided by staff and consumers help make our projects a success.

"Our team works closely with those who use our hospitals and facilities – our staff, patients, consumers and visitors, to ensure we can provide the best buildings and spaces that meet their needs," Ms Harris said.

Building, redeveloping or upgrading hospitals is a complex task. You can learn more about the process by viewing the how to build a hospital resources on Health Infrastructure's website: hinfra.health.nsw.gov.au

Some of the projects that have been completed within the District over the last few years have delivered greater access to elective surgery, mental health, cancer care, emergency, ambulatory care services and car parking across the region.

Here's a recap of what the Capital Works team has been focussed on in 2019:

BULLI HOSPITAL AND AGED CARE CENTRE

Construction of the new Bulli Hospital and Aged Care Centre has continued, with the project reaching some important milestones.

In February this year, the building reached its highest point in construction, and the milestone was celebrated with a "topping out" ceremony.

Traditionally, topping out in the construction industry is a ceremony held to mark the highest point achieved at the top of a new building. Quite often a tree or monument is placed as a symbolic gesture of this achievement.

For Bulli, a beautiful tree was selected and hoisted up, via crane, to the highest point of the new facility.

Throughout the second half of the year, internal construction of walls, installation of lifts, and external structural steel works have been completed. Consultation with staff has been ongoing to discuss the move plan, new ways of working and models of care.

Bulli Hospital and Aged Care Centre is a collaboration between the District and IRT and will provide 60 aged care beds managed by the District, 60 residential care suites managed by IRT, an Urgent Primary Care Centre, ambulatory care services and on site clinical support services.

Construction of the new Bulli Hospital is set to be completed late this year, while commissioning, set up and orientation is set to happen in early 2020.

HEALTHONE

HealthOne is part of \$100 million investment from the NSW Government that will see 20 community health projects delivered across the state – including in Ulladulla and Dapto.

HealthOne Ulladulla

The HealthOne Ulladulla Project includes the demolition of the existing Ulladulla Community Health Centre building and the construction of a brand new multi-storey building which will provide community health services under the HealthOne model.

Earlier this year, most of the current Community Health Care Centre Services were temporarily moved to Milton Ulladulla hospital to enable the build of the new HealthOne Centre.

In August, the Development Application for the new building was approved and the contract for the construction works for the project was awarded to a local construction company.

With these two milestones achieved, the current Centre was recently demolished and construction should start soon, with the project expected to be completed in 2020.



Ulladulla artist's impression



Dapto artist's impression



Topping out ceremony

Shoalhaven car park artist's impression

HealthOne Dapto

The Development Application for HealthOne Dapto has been lodged and the project team expects approval within the coming months. Following this, a construction contract will be awarded and the current Dapto community centre will be temporarily located. Construction on HealthOne Dapto is also expected to commence before the end of the year.

REDEVELOPMENT OF SHELLHARBOUR HOSPITAL

In May this year, the Commonwealth Government announced a further \$128 million in federal funding for the redevelopment of Shellharbour Hospital. This is in addition to the \$251 million already allocated by the NSW Government for the redevelopment.

Detailed planning works for the new hospital are ongoing and we hope to have a more detailed update in our next Health in Focus.

SHOALHAVEN HOSPITAL MULTI-STOREY CAR PARK

Construction of the \$11.8 million Shoalhaven Hospital multi-storey car park reached its highest point in August, bringing the project a step closer to completion.

The multi-storey car park project is progressing well and is on schedule to be completed by the end of this year. A topping out ceremony celebrated the project reaching its highest point, with a tree hoisted to the top beam by crane.

The new five split-level car park will provide more than 220 new spaces in addition to the 80 at grade car park spaces that will finalise the project, as well as the 60 ground level spaces that were constructed as early works. When complete, the project will increase the hospital's overall parking capacity to over 550 spaces.

Providing accessible and safe car parking for patients, staff and visitors is an important deliverable for the Capital Works team.

SHOALHAVEN HOSPITAL REDEVELOPMENT

The NSW Government has committed \$434 million to the redevelopment of Shoalhaven Hospital. The redevelopment is expected to include increased surgical, acute medical and aged care beds, more operating theatres and expanded elective surgery, increased capacity in the Emergency Department and expansion of outpatient and ambulatory care zones.

A Master Plan has been developed for Shoalhaven Hospital which is the Local Health District's long-term view of what could be possible on the hospital site in the future. Pre-planning is underway for the redevelopment, which includes development of a Clinical Services Plan.

As planning for the redevelopment progresses, consultation will be undertaken with a diverse range of stakeholders including staff, patients and consumer representatives, and local residents to ensure the redevelopment meets the unique needs of the local community.

Spring into our new website!

We were thrilled to launch the Local Health District's new website at the start of spring and we're encouraging everyone to jump online and check it out.

The District's website has a fresh new layout and design as well as a range of information about health, our sites, services and staff and latest news.

The new website includes up to date information about:

- Health and wellbeing
- Accessing our hospitals as a patient or visitor
- Our services, clinics and community health centres
- Our staff and specialists
- Hospital and facility redevelopments and construction projects
- Latest news and what's happening around the District
- Working with us
- Research and innovation
- Referring a patient

We know that more than half of the visitors to our website are doing so on a smart phone or tablet, so we've put a lot of work into making sure our site is mobile friendly and easy to use on the go.

We've also integrated HealthDirect's helpful 'Symptom Checker' into the site, which provides users with an easy to understand guide to appropriate care, such as whether to seek advice from their local GP or the nearest emergency department.

ISLHD Chief Executive Margot Mains said providing improved access to information for patients, carers, clients and families will better support the health and wellbeing of our community.

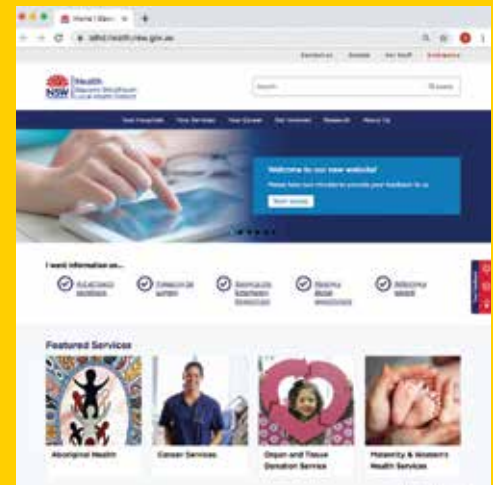
"Good communication with our consumers and their loved ones is key to delivering great health care, and results in a better patient experience and outcomes. Our new website is aimed at giving the community more information about local services, who we are and what's happening within health," she said.

Dr Elias Nasser who has been a key supporter of the website redevelopment from day one said its new design delivers a fresh, modern consumer-focussed site that better responds to the needs of our local community.

"We live in the information age and our consumers want to be as informed as possible about health care, their local services and how to access them. It's vital that as a Health District we provide information and advice that not only promotes local services but also supports the care delivered by our doctors, nurses and allied professionals," he said.

The launch of the new website is just the beginning. We will be continually updating the site and adding content to ensure we are providing the latest and most accurate and helpful information to our community.

The new website can be accessed by visiting www.islhd.health.nsw.gov.au



TELL US WHAT YOU THINK

If you've visited the new site we want to hear from you. We're asking our consumers, community members, partner organisations and other stakeholders to let us know what you think of the website and if there's anything else you'd like to see included.

You can give us feedback by completing the short survey on the website home page or sending us an email at: ISLHD-website@health.nsw.gov.au

ISLHD TEAM WINS AT Multicultural Health Communication Awards

Drug and alcohol film resources for community members from new and emerging language backgrounds

The Illawarra Cultural & Linguistically Diverse (CALD) Local Drug Action Team, in partnership with Illawarra Shoalhaven Local Health District (ISLHD) has developed new film resources to assist community members from new and emerging language backgrounds and their families to understand how to access drug and alcohol information and support.

The resources were announced as Winner in the 2019 NSW Multicultural Health Communication Awards in the category of Patients and Consumers as Partners at NSW Parliament House in September.

Di Woods, Health Education Officer for ISLHD Drug and Alcohol Service and chair of Illawarra Cultural & Linguistically Diverse Local Drug Action Team said the contribution of the local community helped make the resources so successful.

"Recognising that our community members are experts in their own culture and working together with them has underpinned the success of these resources. Community members shared the messages that were most important to them and ensured that the resources were culturally appropriate, they also volunteered as actors for the resources," Ms Woods said.

"Community members from a range of different cultures volunteered to be a part of this project. They strongly believed that the films would reduce stigma when seeking help and would start robust conversations about this topic within their communities."

The Illawarra CALD Local Drug Action Team (LDAT) is a coalition of community members and a unique mix of community and government services who have come together to reduce drug or alcohol related harm. A range of ISLHD services support this team which includes Drug and Alcohol,

Health Care Interpreter Services and Multicultural Health teams.

The Illawarra CALD LDAT's focus is to build and extend partnerships in the community; and to use local knowledge to deliver evidence-informed alcohol and other drug harm prevention and minimisation activities tailored to the needs of the local area. This collaboration has also attracted state-wide services who also focus on the co-design approach that the group has embraced.

While research indicates that the use of alcohol and other drugs is generally lower in culturally and linguistically diverse communities compared to the general population, this situation is not universal. Drug and alcohol issues may emerge in newly arrived communities as the stress of re-settlement, unfamiliar cultures and the pain associated with loss can lead to negative feelings, depression, anxiety and loneliness.

New and emerging communities are defined as communities which are:

- Recently settled compared with more established CALD communities;
- Smaller in number of residents but with significant increase in the past 5 to 10 years;
- Lacking sufficient infrastructure and resources compared with more established CALD communities;
- Experiencing significant barriers in accessing health care and/or poorer health outcomes; and
- Isolated in their geographical area.

The films have been locally produced but are set to be used across NSW. You can view the films on our YouTube channel. You can view the films on our YouTube Channel (search Illawarra Shoalhaven Local Health District).



The films are available on our YouTube Channel in the following languages:

- Arabic
- Assyrian
- Burmese
- Cantonese
- Chaldean
- English
- Farsi
- Hazaragi
- Hindi
- Karenni
- Kirundi
- Mandarin
- Nepali
- Swahili
- Tigrinya
- Vietnamese

EXERCISING for the body and mind

The weather is getting warmer, making it the perfect opportunity to get out and active. If you need another reason to be active beyond the fact that it is great for your physical health, how about the fact that exercise can improve mental health and even help manage depression.

Evidence shows the most significant benefits for mental health are gained through strength training or high intensity progressive resistance training. This is weight-based training using either weights or body weight. Progressive resistance means to keep building on the exercises and making them harder to do. This could be either increasing the weight you are using or increasing the repetitions. The idea is to keep challenging your body, which has a flow on positive affect on mental health and wellbeing.

Aerobic exercise has also been shown to be effective but you need to do about 150 minutes a week at a moderate intensity to get the most benefit.

There are added bonuses to using exercise to help with mental health - it can help prevent chronic diseases such as type 2 diabetes, obesity and heart disease, which are in themselves risk factors for depression.

So what are you waiting for? The Make Healthy Normal website has some great suggestions of weight bearing exercises for you to try. You don't need to go to a gym, you can use items you have around the house such as cans of food or bottles filled with water or sand. Many of the exercises only require your body weight. Visit makehealthynormal.nsw.gov.au/activity/workouts

The website provides general advice for all people. However, if you are concerned about starting an exercise program, see your GP for advice.



Travelling overseas?

BRING BACK MEMORIES NOT MEASLES

Make sure you and your family are fully protected against measles

If you are planning an overseas trip, it's important to make sure you are up-to-date with all of the recommended vaccines, including the measles, mumps and rubella (MMR) vaccine, as part of your holiday preparation.

Measles remains a risk in many parts of the world including some places that you wouldn't expect it, like New Zealand, the US, the UK, and some countries in Europe.

Measles is a serious, highly contagious, viral illness that is easily spread through the air when an infectious person coughs, sneezes or breathes. If you and your family are not fully vaccinated, or have never been vaccinated, you are at risk of contracting the measles.

Unsure if you're fully protected? In Australia, the measles vaccine (MMR) consists of two doses. If you're not sure whether you've had two doses of the measles vaccine, visit your doctor. It's safe to receive another dose.

CHILDREN BORN IN AUSTRALIA

- If your children were born in Australia, they may have received the measles vaccine at 12 months old and the second dose at 18 months, in accordance with the National Immunisation Program.
- If you have a baby under 12 months old, please consult your doctor about getting their measles vaccination.

ADULTS BORN IN AUSTRALIA

- Born before 1966 – you were most likely exposed to measles as a child and are generally considered to be immune. If in doubt, ask your GP.
- Born between 1966 and 1994 – you may not have received 2 doses. Talk to your doctor about the free vaccine if you're unsure.
- Born after 1994 – the National Immunisation Program offers 2 doses, and you can check your vaccination status using the Australian Immunisation Register.

For more information about measles vaccination, visit www.health.nsw.gov.au or consult your local doctor.

Travelling Overseas?

Bring back memories, not measles

Measles is a risk for unvaccinated travellers



Rural Adversity Mental Health Program – Nowra Coordinator

Alison Tye has recently been appointed as the new RAMHP Coordinator working across both Illawarra Shoalhaven and South Western Sydney Local Health Districts. This is a new role for our District and a welcome addition to our Mental Health Service.

The Rural Adversity Mental Health Program (RAMHP) is a state-wide initiative, funded by NSW Health under an agreement with the Centre for Rural and Remote Mental Health.

The Centre for Rural and Remote Mental Health (CRRMH) is a state-wide organisation that is committed to improving the mental health, wellbeing and resilience of rural and remote residents.

RAMHP Program Manager Tessa Caton said the decision to appoint a new RAMHP Coordinator based in Nowra was due to the growing need for more mental health support for people living in rural areas across the region.

“We want to help our rural communities to be better educated and informed about mental health concerns so they can help each other. If someone is experiencing a mental health concern, we want them to be able to find help and recover,” Ms Caton said.

“Alison brings significant experience to this position including management, education, communication and networking skills. Her comprehensive knowledge, connections and understanding of rural mental health issues will be a great asset to RAMHP and the local community.”

Alison is returning to the Mental Health Services after a brief period working in other organisations; she was previously the Team Coordinator for the Whole Family Team. Alison is based with the Shoalhaven Community Mental Health Rehabilitation Service in Nowra, however spends most of her time in the isolated areas of the community.

The primary aim of the RAMHP Coordinator is to identify communities and individuals who live in rural and remote NSW and are experiencing, or at risk of developing, signs and symptoms of mental illness or distress. The Coordinator then works to develop pathways to care so that community members, and their families and carers, can be connected with available services and programs.

The RAMHP Coordinator will provide information about mental illness and services and programs to the rural community in general as well as to targeted individuals in order to facilitate recognition of when an

individual may need extra support for their mental health.

They will also provide education services to targeted rural agencies and services that have contact with people experiencing adversity and build their capacity to respond and refer to appropriate services. There is a suite of free training offered by RAMHP to support community members to identify and manage distress in themselves and others.

The RAMHP Coordinator does not fulfil a clinical role with any individual or family, if a person is identified as requiring clinical support this will be referred to the appropriate team, or service. The Coordinator will work in partnership with local mental health teams, clinicians and their respective communities to improve mental health referral processes. This will include strategies to improve the mental health literacy and referral/response capacity of people working in rural areas, and promote a system of care that is closely integrated, linking industry and other health sectors.

The RAMHP Coordinator will work with and support the mental health and family and carer teams to ensure that patients, families and carers are provided with the information they need to look after their own mental health.

Since commencing in the role Alison has partnered with the Shoalhaven Suicide Prevention Awareness Network (SSPAN) to facilitate the G'Day Mate Men's BBQ. A free event held each month in a community space in Nowra, where men are able to chat freely about their journey through life, and give support and advice to one another without judgement.

In October, for Mental Health Month, Alison launched the new edition of the Glove Box Guide to Mental Health, a magazine resource published each year by RAMHP in conjunction with The Land newspaper. The Glove Box guide can be downloaded from the RAMHP website at: ramhp.com.au

Contact Alison on: 0436 826 672 or: Alison.Tye@health.nsw.gov.au for mental health support, service access and information about mental health and training. Please note, RAMHP Coordinators should be contacted regarding non-crisis situations during business hours.

If you have any concerns about yourself or someone you know, please contact the NSW Mental Health Line on 1800 011 511 (free call for landlines), the Alcohol and Other Drugs Information Service (ADIS) 1800 422 599 or call Lifeline on 13 11 14. For best practice guidelines on Mental Health and Suicide Reporting, visit: www.mindframe-media.info/



Alison Tye

'MY CARE BOARDS' STRENGTHENING COMMUNICATION BETWEEN PATIENTS AND STAFF

Coledale Hospital recently launched the My Care Board project – an initiative that aims to enhance communication between staff and patients, their families and carers and promote shared decision making.

If you've spent time in hospital, you are likely familiar with the whiteboards that typically sit behind a hospital bed and have patient information written by staff, such as patient's name, dietary and other needs.

Following a series of collaborative workshops with staff and consumer representatives, we've designed a new style of board that can be used not just by staff, but also patients and their carers and loved ones.

Known to patients as 'My Care Board', these will soon be rolled out to all hospital wards across the District.

No longer behind the bedhead, the boards are positioned in an easy to reach and visible location, and capture important information about a patient's care and needs.

Coledale Hospital Director of Nursing Melissa Rees said the staff were excited to start using the boards to improve two way communication.

"The boards are a great tool as they are flexible in what they can include, which means that all the important information is captured, but we can also have information that may be specific to the individual patient," Ms Rees said.

"Previously, only staff would write on our information boards, but with the new design we are encouraging patients and loved ones to be more involved in the communication of their needs."

Susan (pictured) spent some time as a patient at Coledale Hospital recently and said it was great to tell hospital staff what she needed during her stay.

"Even though I am in hospital, things I do every day may be able to be put in place. It was also a great plan of my care. I could look at the board and see what I need to do," she said.

My Care Boards will start to be rolled out to all hospitals in the District later this year.



Edward Davidson Physiotherapist, Susan (patient) and Stephanie Kane Registered Nurse

The boards are updated together with the patient at shift change times and in the event that a patient's needs change. They include important information such as:

- The **names of nursing staff** and key clinicians involved in the patient's care, so they always know who is looking after them
- **Agreed plans or goals**, to help ensure everyone is on the same page
- The patient's **requirements to move around safely**, as well as what they might need to help **eat, drink, and communicate**
- Space for **questions and other information**
- The current **date and planned discharge date**

Calling for volunteers at SHOALHAVEN & MILTON ULLADULLA HOSPITALS

We're looking for local community members who'd like to get involved in volunteering programs to support older people at Shoalhaven Hospital and Milton Ulladulla Hospital.

We know it takes a special type of person to be a volunteer; giving up your time for someone else is a selfless act that requires empathy and a passion to help those less fortunate or unwell.

Across the Illawarra and Shoalhaven we're fortunate to have many generous volunteers working to support our services and people – but there are always areas that can use more help.

The Volunteers Assisting and Supporting Elderly patients (VASE) program at Shoalhaven Hospital and the Safe Patient Area (SPA) program at Milton Ulladulla Hospital aim to provide social, emotional and practical support to patients to enhance their care and wellbeing.

Volunteers can provide help and support through a number of different activities. This can include, offering companionship, reading, playing games, assisting at meal times, providing respite

and support for carers and, most importantly, being a friendly ear with a good sense of humour.

Shoalhaven Hospital Nurse Unit Manager, Nicole Ledger, said these programs have terrific benefits for patients, carers, staff and the community.

"The VASE initiative will complement our 'Fit for Frailty' program and will support our shared goals of physical and emotional wellness and recovery for older patients," she said.

"Volunteers make a significant difference to people's lives and contribute to the wellbeing of patients in our hospitals and people in their homes. Our volunteers tell us that helping others gives them a sense of purpose and is also a great way to meet new people and make friends."

Volunteer, Robyn Hill, said her experience has been very rewarding.

"Being a volunteer with the Local Health District allows me to take the time to really get to know a person and learn about their past. The more

we know about a person the more we can help them, which is very satisfying," Ms Hill said.

Extensive training is provided and new volunteers work alongside experienced people to gain practical skills. They are also provided with ongoing education and support.

If you are interested in becoming a valued volunteer please contact Volunteer Co-ordinator Elanne Thompson on 4464 6985.



Nurse Unit Manager Nicole Ledger, Volunteer Ellen Burton and Aged Care Clinical Nurse Consultant Steve Swan



Energy efficient hospitals CREATING A SUSTAINABLE FUTURE

Our hospitals are some of the largest buildings in the region. In operation 24 hours a day, seven days a week – these facilities are also some of the busiest and consume a considerable amount of energy. Parts of our hospitals will always have a higher rate of energy consumption than others, medical equipment for example, a lot of which is required for life-saving activities, as well as air conditioning and lighting such large buildings. However, we knew that there were some things we could improve, and we started investigating areas where energy savings could be made.

The District accepted an invitation for three of our facilities to participate in the Energy Efficient Government Program, an initiative of the NSW Government established to help agencies make sustainable energy improvements which would also return cost savings. Under the program, we investigated potential reductions in the use of electricity, gas and water at Wollongong Hospital, Shoalhaven Hospital and Shoalhaven Cancer Care Centre.

Following a detailed facility study report being submitted, the District engaged the services of environmental solutions provider, Veolia, to identify key areas where energy consumption could be reduced in order to make our buildings more efficient.

As a result, a number of improvements were implemented including:

- Upgrades to heating, ventilation and air conditioning systems at Shoalhaven Hospital to allow better temperature and humidity control.
- Full LED lighting upgrades across all three facilities.
- Installation of solar photovoltaic systems (solar panels) on the roof at Wollongong Hospital Renal Unit & Shoalhaven Cancer Care Centre.

- Water conservation measures at Shoalhaven Hospital.

These upgrades will enable the buildings to run more efficiently, leading to cost savings for the District, as well as significant environmental benefits through a reduction in greenhouse gas emissions. Veolia identified that approximately 4,000 tonnes of carbon emissions will be saved each year – this is equivalent to the emissions of 1,100 cars.



CHILDREN'S WARD UPGRADE TAKING SHAPE THANKS TO \$1 million Convoy donation

The first stage of the Wollongong Hospital Children's Ward redevelopment is now complete, thanks to a generous \$1 million donation from the i98FM Illawarra Convoy & Illawarra Community Foundation.



Stage one of the project is the largest in the overall planned development which will take place over the next few years.

Dr Susie Piper, Paediatrician and ISLHD Co-Director Kids and Families said she was pleased to see the District's vision for the ward starting to take shape.

"This first stage of work is critical as it paves the way for future enhancements by expanding the overall footprint of the ward so we can better utilise the space and provide a holistic approach to caring" she said.

"Importantly, we've been able to do this work while managing access to the ward and minimising disruption to patients and families."

The realignment of the main corridor outside the ward has allowed space for a new family room where parents will be able to take a break, relax and have a cuppa and something to eat.

Approximately 3,500 children per year are admitted to the Children's Ward and several thousand go through the Paediatric Assessment and Paediatric Outpatient clinics.

"Having a child in hospital can be a stressful and overwhelming experience. By providing spaces

that are welcoming and comfortable, we aim to help reduce some of that stress and anxiety for parents and carers," Dr Piper said.

The \$1 million dollar commitment from the i98FM Illawarra Convoy is in addition to the generous contribution of \$250,000 from the Illawarra Community Foundation in 2017, which enabled the Children's Ward to relocate the Illawarra Hospital School and make way for a new ward entrance, reception area and clinic space.

The foundation has also supported the hospital with a new humidicrib, cough assist device, electric cars for children undergoing day surgery, and continues to directly support any families affected by potentially life threatening medical conditions, who are unfortunately often regular patients in the Children's Ward.

"On behalf of the children and families who benefit from Convoy and the broader Illawarra community's support, thank you for helping to make this possible" Dr Piper said.

A \$250,000 investment from the NSW Government as part of paediatric amenity upgrades to services across the state will assist in allowing the Children's Ward to deliver improvements to family facilities.



TWITTER

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

The Illawarra Shoalhaven Local Health District YouTube Channel is how we share video resources and stories with our community. We're always looking at new ways to communicate and engage with our consumers and we use YouTube to showcase who we are and what we do. Our YouTube Channel 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're constantly adding new videos as they become available. In the meantime, check out the videos

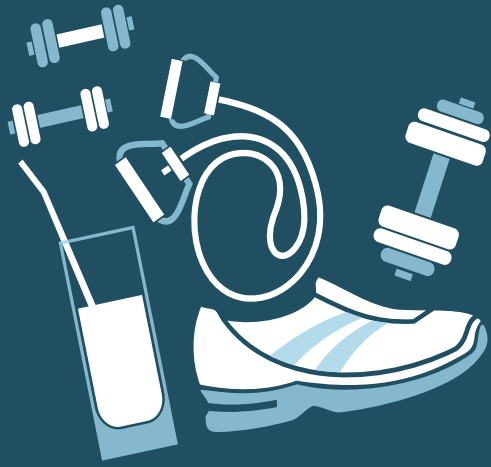


we already have on our channel by visiting **youtube.com** and searching: **Illawarra Shoalhaven Local Health District**. You can also subscribe to our channel so you're alerted when we upload new content.

Read me online



You can read or download the current edition of Health in Focus online at **islhd.health.nsw.gov.au**. You can also read past editions of Health in Focus online.



HEALTH MOVES

GROUP EXERCISE & HEALTHY LIVING PROGRAM

WHAT IS HEALTH MOVES?

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

COST: \$99.00

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

WHERE:

Beaton Park Leisure Centre (Gwynneville)
Ulladulla Leisure Centre
Lakeside Leisure Centre (Kanahooka)
Kiama Leisure Centre

- ✓ Will help you manage your health condition
- ✓ Get simple ideas about being healthy
- ✓ Each session costs less than a cup of coffee
- ✓ Group classes suitable for all ages
- ✓ Run by trained fitness instructors



To register your interest or for more information please contact:

Illawarra Shoalhaven Diabetes Service

Phone: (02) 4231 1910

Email: ISLHD-WollDiabetesAdmin@health.nsw.gov.au

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

Illawarra Shoalhaven Local Health District has a new website!

islhd.health.nsw.gov.au



Learn more about:

- Coming to hospital as a patient or visitor
- Services and clinics
- Health information
- Referring a patient
- Latest news and what's happening around the District
- Working with us
- Research and innovation



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Local Health District

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