



**Above, past and present members of the Lismore Base Hospital Auxiliary, special guests and Lismore Base Hospital staff gathered at Summerland House Farm to celebrate 100 years of the Auxiliary's volunteer service for the hospital.**

# \$1.5M and counting

A centenary of volunteer service was celebrated on 19 October, at a luncheon honouring the 100th birthday of the Lismore Base Hospital Auxiliary.

From humble beginnings as a group of women making and mending hospital linen, to annual tea tents at the agricultural

show, to supporting nursing students during exams, the Auxiliary has remained a strong presence in the community over the last 100 years.

"Words cannot express how fortunate we are to have such a vibrant and hard-working Auxiliary serving the Lismore Base Hospital,"

Lynne Weir, Director Clinical Operations for Northern NSW Local Health District, said.

"Through their tireless efforts, we are able to continually improve the care we provide to patients in this region."

Since 1917, the Lismore UHA has raised an estimated \$1.5 million for Lismore

Base Hospital, purchasing items ranging from pianos to children's toys, to vascular ultrasound machines and pacemakers.

In 1982, the word 'Women's' was removed from the Auxiliary's name, in recognition of the many men who were joining with their wives.



**Page 4:**  
Workplace  
injury team  
recognised at  
TMF Awards



**Page 9:**  
Interview with  
Chris Lowry,  
Lismore Base  
Hospital Staff  
Specialist  
Anaesthetist

**The Northern NSW Local Health District Board and Executive are committed to fostering a safe and inclusive work environment. Improving workplace culture is a key priority for 2017-18, with an emphasis on enhancing staff wellbeing and increasing communication throughout the organisation.**

Our safety and quality indicators continue to show great results which reflect the care and expertise of our clinicians and staff. This has been the case for some time now, with the Northern NSW Local Health District (NNSWLHD) tracking well against our reportable measures at quarterly meetings with the Ministry of Health. I thank all our staff for their continued contribution towards providing safe, effective and efficient healthcare to our patients.



We're taking the next step in developing a solid research platform for the LHD with the establishment of the Research Strategic Advisory Group. Led by NNSWLHD's Director of Research, Dr Alex Stephens, the group is tasked with providing oversight and governance to guide the LHD's Research Unit. It will hold its first meeting on 20 November.



We continue our eHealth evolution, with the implementation of eRIC now in place in the Intensive Care Units at The

Tweed and Lismore Base Hospitals, and soon to be rolled out at Grafton Base Hospital.

The system automatically uploads data at the patient's bedside, resulting in considerable data entry time-savings for staff.

The system has been working smoothly at The Tweed Hospital since it began three weeks ago, and has been well received by clinicians. Lessons learnt from the introduction of eRIC across our LHD will be applied at other sites as the rollout continues across the state.

I'm pleased to note that as well as our local Change Managers and Clinical Nurse Educators, we now also have a permanent eRIC Application Specialist, Jason Muller, who will provide support to the three sites running the system.



I have had the pleasure of working with Lismore Base Hospital Anaesthetist, Dr Chris Lowry for many years and I want to congratulate him on his amazing career as he winds down from theatre work. I'm delighted to see we will retain



his skills in other areas of clinical practice and training for a while yet. Dr Lowry has been an integral part of our Anaesthetic Department for over 20 years, and his expertise is an asset to our more senior staff members as well as our up and coming anaesthetic trainees.

*Wayne Jones  
Chief Executive*

## From the Board Chair



I was privileged to open the 84th Annual Conference of the NSW United Hospital Auxiliaries held recently in Tweed Heads. The conference was a wonderful celebration with around 240 delegates attending from across the state. I congratulate The Tweed Hospital and Murwillumbah District Hospital UHAs for bringing this event to Northern NSW.

As Board Chair I greatly value the relationships with the volunteers who generously give their time to support our health services and make a real

difference to the lives of patients, their families and staff.

I acknowledge the tremendous achievements of the fifteen UHA branches within our district who have raised vast amounts of funds which have been utilised to provide equipment and resources with a direct impact on patient care.

While this was the 84th Annual Conference of the NSW United Hospital Auxiliaries, a number of Northern NSW branches have existed under different names and have been contributing for over 100 years. Grafton, Coraki, Lismore and Casino are amongst these.

Two Northern NSW UHA members were honored with Life Membership at the conference this year. These were Byron Bay Hospital Auxiliary President Mollie Strong and Lismore Base Hospital Auxiliary Vice President Joan McKenzie.

I also note that Nimbin UHA has recently celebrated its 70th Anniversary.

Volunteering has a proud history in Australia and in Northern NSW we are blessed to have many individuals including UHA members, Pink Ladies, Cancer and Palliative Care Volunteers,

Community Representatives on Committees and many others who all enhance the care of our patients.

Each year at the Board's Annual General Meeting we have the opportunity to acknowledge a few of the individuals involved and the diversity of ways people contribute is remarkable.



This year's Annual General Meeting will be held on 13 December 2017 at the Ballina Quality Inn from 3.00pm to 5.00pm.

I am pleased to advise that Dr Richard Mahoney, Northern NSW Local Health District Director of Retrieval Services will be our Guest Speaker. Dr Mahoney will be showcasing the work undertaken by a Retrieval Service to a regional Base Hospital and will also speak on the development of the service since the new Helibase, Helicopters and the Lismore Base Hospital Helipad have come online.

*Brian Pezzutti  
Board Chair*

# League women deliver a knock out blow

Women's rugby league and the Health Promotion Talking Tobacco Team are playing a vital role in tackling smoking among Aboriginal communities.

Eight local women's rugby league teams competed in the inaugural Deadly Dubais nine-a-side tournament held in Lismore as part of the 2017 Koori Knockout.

Teams from Tweed, Lismore, Coraki, Ballina/Cabbo, Kyogle, Tabulam, Casino and Lower Clarence battled it out in uniforms displaying totems and smoke-free messages specially chosen by each team.

Northern NSW Local

Health District (NNSWLHD) Health Promotion sponsored the event with help from a Cancer Institute NSW funding grant for tobacco treatment support within local Aboriginal communities.

NNSWLHD Chief Executive, Wayne Jones, presented trophies to the winning team, Kyogle Tiddas, and runners up Casino Wahalbul Dubays. The best and fairest medal was awarded to Levina Robinson from the Kyogle Tiddas.

The Cancer Institute grant is also being used to roll out a social marketing project 'Putting out the fires in our communities.' The project will involve a social marketing

campaign reinforcing positive messages from the community as well as strategies to improve community uptake of tobacco treatment support and resources.

The campaign will also focus on the importance of having community conversations with children, teenagers, families, including pregnant women and older



adults. Messages from smokers, ex-smokers and non-smokers about how tobacco affects their communities will also feature prominently.

Tobacco smoking is the most preventable cause of ill health and early death for Aboriginal communities.

**Above and left, players and supporters show their colours at the inaugural women's Deadly Dubais Koori Knockout tournament in Lismore earlier this year.**

## Golf day a winner for Tweed patients

The Tweed Renal Dialysis Unit will soon have a new set of scales for their patient hoist, thanks to the fundraising efforts of a group of local golfing enthusiasts.

The 3rd annual Brian Duffy Memorial Golf Day was held at Palm Meadows Golf Course on 8 October, raising \$5300 for the Dialysis Unit.

"On behalf of our patients and staff, I want to sincerely thank all involved in the Golf Day," Tweed Renal Unit NUM, Andrew Gosling, said.

"We are grateful to the sponsors, Palm Meadows Golf Club, Helensvale Tavern, Print Rescue Brunswick Heads, and NAB Tweed South branch, as well as the Thomson, Collis and Duffy families who gave their time and talents to organise the event, and the many individuals who contributed to making the day a success."



**Above, from left, Alistair Thomson, Annette Duffy and Nikki Collis present Tweed Renal Dialysis Unit NUM, Andrew Gosling, and The Tweed Hospital A/ Director of Nursing, Peter Jeffree with a donation for The Tweed Hospital Renal Dialysis Unit.**

# Wanna buy a raffle ticket?

Are you feeling rushed, and don't have time to help out your local sporting group or kid's school P&C? It seems you're not the only one.

According to the statistics, volunteering rates in Australia are on a downward trend.

The 2014 General Social Survey by the Australian Bureau of Statistics showed that in 2014, 31% of Australians volunteered, compared to a peak of 36% in 2010. For the first time in almost 20 years, the numbers went backwards.

People seem to be busier than ever, and as a result, unpaid involvement in sporting groups, political organisations and community organisations is waning.

Volunteering might be declining at the national level, but you wouldn't know it around here. We have some extremely robust volunteer groups in the form of our Hospital Auxiliaries, who show no sign of slowing down.

The Lismore Base Hospital Auxiliary this year reached 100 years of continuous service, and with a membership base of around 40, there are plenty of people to share the load.

The Nimbin Auxiliary just celebrated 70 years of service, and last year the Murwillumbah Auxiliary celebrated its 90th birthday.

At the recent UHA State Conference it was reported that in 2016-17, volunteers contributed the equivalent working hours of 540 full time staff to our hospitals.

That's a lot of time spent helping, talking, listening, baking, fundraising, organising, crafting and advocating for hospitals and their patients.

We mustn't take for granted the contribution that these and many other volunteers make to our lives, simply by putting their hand up.

I think a great way to show our appreciation would be to pay it forwards, and contribute in our own way to whatever cause we hold dear.

As well as finding time to say thank you, of course!



**Fiona Baker**  
Editor

## Recovery at work: a fresh approach

An innovative injury management approach has received state-wide recognition at a recent award ceremony.

The Northern NSW Local Health District's Collaborative Injury Management project was named "Highly Commendable" for Excellence in Risk Management at the 2017 NSW Government TMF Awards in Sydney.

The team, led by Yvette Bowen, Manager Work Health Safety and Injury Management, developed a case management approach to injury management. It was aimed at reducing the high costs of annual workers compensation premiums and improving staff return to work rates.

Together with QBE Insurance, NNSWLHD successfully implemented an injury management framework which delivered improvements for individuals returning to work, as well as significant financial savings for the health district.

Over three years from 2014-15 to

2016-17, the organisation has seen savings of over \$1.6 million in workers compensation premiums.

Since the introduction of the framework, injured workers have reported high levels of satisfaction, up to 95%, and managers have shown a 41% increase in rates of satisfaction, up to 85%.

These figures highlight the excellence of the NNSWLHD framework and also showcase the continuous journey of improvement and the potential for future improvements thanks to the cultural mind shift around workers compensation in the workplace.

NNSWLHD Chief Executive, Wayne Jones, praised the team behind the project for their commitment to the long term success of the plan.

"The turnaround in workers compensation performance reflects the commitment, leadership and hard work of the return to work team," Mr Jones said.



**Above, NNSWLHD Collaborative Injury Management team of Clarence/ Ballina Return to Work Coordinator Julie McFadden, Senior Claims Officer Robyn Sears, Manager Work Health and Safety Yvette Bowen, Tweed/ Byron Return to Work Coordinator Paul Raphael and Lismore Return to Work Coordinator Solange Santander at the TMF Awards.**

## Check out NNSWLHD Facebook page

The Northern NSW Local Health District Facebook page is used for a range of promotional activities, including the Health Promotion newsletter, pictured right, and by the LHD Media Unit to promote local events and celebrate the achievements of staff and volunteers.

It is regularly updated with the happenings across the LHD. Check out our page today!



# Emergency training an Australian first

Experts from health and aviation combined their wisdom in Lismore last month to deliver an innovative approach to trauma care.

The first-ever Advanced Emergency Performance Training (ADEPT) workshop was held at the University Centre for Rural Health, with local nurses and doctors seizing the opportunity to advance their teamwork and communication skills.

International Pilots Michael Aspinall and Anthony Lock teamed up with Dr Charlotte Hall and Dr Dean Robertson to create the ground breaking 'Human Factors' training workshop.

Dr Hall said the weekend workshop was a success, with participants learning valuable skills to improve their performance in complex emergencies.

"We were blown away by the positive feedback from workshop participants at the end of this weekend's course," Dr Hall said.

"They arrived with few expectations but left with an armful of ideas and skills that they said will change how they practice from now on."

This course is the first of its kind for health workers in Australia, and has

been accredited by the Australasian College for Emergency Medicine and the Australian College of Rural and Remote Medicine.

The workshop also showcased the Emergency Protocols quick reference guide that was developed by Dr Dean Robertson from Maclean District

Hospital and Dr Charlotte Hall from Lismore Base Hospital.

The Emergency Protocols quick reference guide has been endorsed by the Emergency Care Institute within the Agency for Clinical Innovation, and is now available to staff in all NSW Emergency Departments.



**Above, facilitators and participants attend the first ever Advanced Emergency Performance Training (ADEPT) workshop held in Lismore in October.**

## Valley's sights set on home grown medicos

Post-graduate medical training in the Clarence Valley will see a significant boost thanks to a new training hub.

The Valley is one of the locations to receive a Regional Training Hub under a new collaboration between the Commonwealth government and the University of Wollongong.

The hub will boost the opportunities available for junior medical officers to complete more of their training locally.

It will also play a vital coordination role, connecting local clinicians, education and training providers, health service staff, General Practitioners and the broader community to set up and manage the arrangements needed for local doctors to be able to do more of their training without leaving the region.

Associate Professor Jean Collie has been appointed as the Clarence Valley Regional Training Hub's Medical Director. A/Prof Collie brings knowledge and experience from her previous role as the Director of Medical Services with Grafton Base Hospital, and a lifelong interest in the education of medical and health

professionals.

"I am delighted to be involved in increasing training opportunities for young doctors in the Clarence Valley. This is the first step in encouraging more doctors to work and live in the Clarence," A/Prof Collie said.



**Above, Joanne Chad and Associate Professor Jean Collie will head up the new Clarence Valley Regional Training Hub, designed to increase training opportunities for junior medical officers in the region.**

Joanne Chad has been appointed as Program Coordinator for the Regional Training Hub. During her recent tenure at the University Centre for Rural Health in Lismore, Joanne worked closely with many university medical schools across NSW and QLD, coordinating medical teaching programs across multiple disciplines in hospitals and GP practices.

Jean and Joanne live and work in the region and their local knowledge and personal connections will be invaluable in setting up the hub and maximising the training opportunities available to local junior doctors.

The program also aims to increase the number of medical practitioners working rurally in future. Community engagement and developing strategies for attracting and retaining medical professionals in the region will also be a key focus for the hub.

A/Prof Jean Collie and Joanne Chad are based at Grafton Base hospital. Please email Joanne at [jchad@uow.edu.au](mailto:jchad@uow.edu.au) for more information.

# State conference a border affair

Around 240 delegates converged on Tweed Heads last month for the 84th Annual State Conference of the United Hospital Auxiliaries (UHA).

Auxiliary members came from all over NSW to network and celebrate the great contribution their many hours of volunteering and fundraising make to hospitals throughout the state.

Tweed Heads Auxiliary President, Annette Alexander, said hosting the conference in this region was a wonderful experience for her and her branch.

"It was hard work, however the hard work has been worth it, and it's been great to welcome the wonderful members of the UHA," Annette said.

The Tweed Heads and Murwillumbah Hospital Auxiliaries started their



campaign to secure the conference in the Tweed region around 4 years ago.

"The Tweed UHA worked so hard for this conference, with the help of the Murwillumbah UHA and their president Val Foster," Tweed Heads Auxiliary Treasurer and Deputy North Coast Regional Representative, Jennifer McKellar, said.

In the 2016-17 financial year alone,



**Above, Tweed Hospital Auxiliary members attend the NSW UHA State Conference at Twin Towns, Tweed Heads.**

**Left, NSW Ministry of Health Executive Director Health and Social Policy Branch, Tish Bruce, UHA Deputy State President, Marion Dickins, NNSWLHD Board Chair, Brian Pezzutti and UHA State President, Linda Swales attend the conference.**

## 70th Anniversary no small feat

Staff at the Nimbin Multi-Purpose Service honoured the women and men of the Nimbin Hospital Auxiliary on 8 November with a morning tea recognising 70 years of service.

The Auxiliary punches well above its weight, raising a substantial amount of money from its small membership base. At present there are only around 15 active members, and 29 members in total.

In 2016-17 financial year, the Auxiliary raised \$26,851 and during that year it gifted the Nimbin MPS with over \$33,000 worth of medical equipment and furnishings.

"It's a pleasure to mix with people wanting to give back to their community, and so inspiring to see all the effort our members put in," Nimbin Hospital Auxiliary President, Robyn Roos, said.

During the last 10 years, the Auxiliary has donated \$90,650 in items to benefit Nimbin patients.

"I sincerely thank the Nimbin Auxiliary for their tireless work," Executive Officer/Director of Nursing MPS Network, Nancy Martin, said.

"Their generosity is evident in the

state-of-the-art lifting machine, the lovely new aged care furnishings and practical items like pressure-relieving mattresses they have generously provided to the facility."



**Above, members of the Nimbin Hospital Auxiliary at a morning tea celebrating their 70 years of volunteer service to the Nimbin Multi-Purpose Service.**

# Can you pass me the map, please?

As a public health service with an annual budget of approximately \$780 million, the Northern NSW Local Health District (NNSWLHD) is charged with providing health care services to over 280,000 people across a geographic area of around 20,732 square kilometres.

The decision-making process for service delivery and funding allocations is guided by a series of plans which inform each step in the planning process.

Combined together, these plans and processes act as the LHD's GPS in guiding the organisation and its Business Units to develop strategies and actions to achieve the priorities set by the Board and Executive.

The NNSWLHD Planning and Performance Unit is responsible for health service planning, supporting facility planning and strategic business planning across the district.

This Unit ensures that health service development is informed through consultation and input from managers and staff, clinicians, non-government organisations, other government departments, community members and groups, and professional organisations.

## Northern NSW LHD Strategic Priorities 2017-2022

- **Value, develop and empower our people**
- **Our community value our excellent person-centred care**
- **Closing the gap in Aboriginal Health**
- **Integration through partnerships**
- **Effective Clinical and Corporate Accountability**
- **Champion of innovation and research**

At the Board Strategic Workshop in August, the Board and Executive identified the six top strategic priorities for the LHD's 2017-2022 Strategic Plan. These priorities are shown in the breakout box above.

The Strategic Plan outlines the organisation's vision, purpose and objectives to guide the future actions

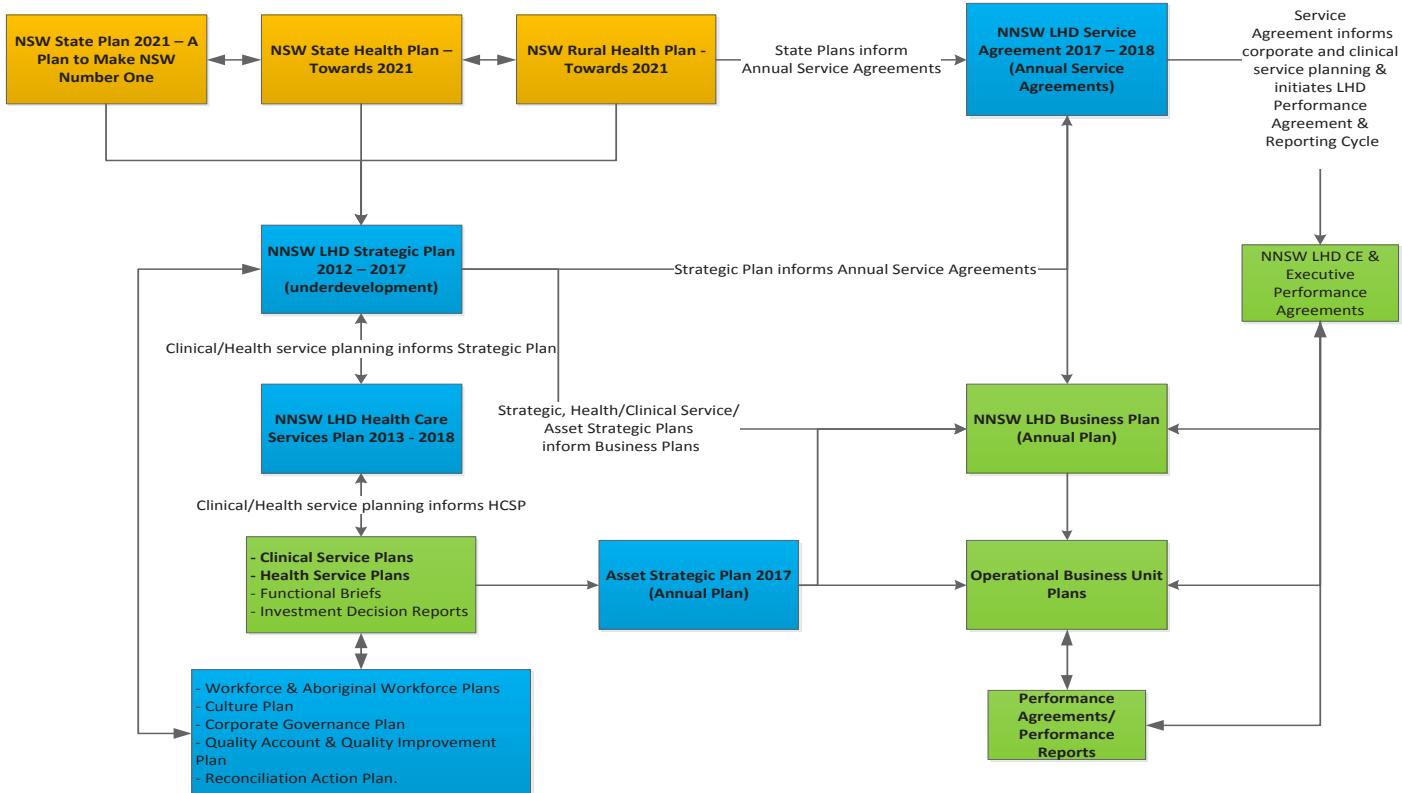
of the NNSWLHD. It is currently under development, and will replace the previous five-year strategic plan which guided the health service from 2012-2017.

When drafting the Strategic Plan, NNSWLHD is guided by three overarching NSW State Health Plans which set out the key targets for the state's healthcare system between now and 2021. These Health Plans also inform the LHD's Annual Service Agreement, which is renegotiated each financial year and which guides our operational and business planning as well as performance agreements for Executive members.

As well as the five-year Strategic Plan, NNSWLHD has other, targeted long-term plans which guide service delivery in particular areas, such as Mental Health, Drug and Alcohol, Kids and Families, Clinical Services, Reconciliation, Workforce and Corporate Governance.

There are also a series of annual plans which offer short term goals for the LHD, covering Business Units, Workforce, Clinical Services, Corporate Governance, Quality Improvement and Culture, to name a few.

## Relationship of key NSW and Northern NSW Local Health District Plans



## Health Literacy on holidays

As many people prepare to hit the road over the Christmas break, there are some simple things people can do to manage their health while away from home.

This is a good chance to remind patients to:

**1. Make sure they have an up-to-date medication list.** Check this with your doctor or pharmacist and remove any medications you are no longer taking. Remember to include over-the-counter medications and supplements. You can carry this with you when you go on holidays, use a smartphone app (e.g. Medicinewise) or save the list in your online My Health Record.

**2. Update their My Health Record.** This is an online record of your important health information. Once you set up your record, you can access it from anywhere in Australia or overseas. It's a great way to be able to access vital information about yourself if you become unwell or have to visit an emergency department.

This may include information about your allergies, medications, or your health history. When you get home, your regular doctor will be able to see a shared summary of the care that you had while you were away.

**3. Ask their regular doctor for a Sick Day Action Plan.** This can help someone with a chronic condition recognise early if their symptoms are getting worse and take action. Often this can mean changing a medication, or visiting a GP. This means you may be able to avoid having to go to the Emergency Department while on your holiday.

Visit <http://healthliteracy.nswlhd.health.nsw.gov.au/> for more tips and tricks.

# Got it! - Getting it done

Children in Northern NSW can now be part of an early intervention program helping them take charge of their feelings and become better problem solvers.

Got It!, (Getting on Track in Time), is an exciting initiative for early intervention mental health in young primary school children.

The program is a collaboration between the NSW Ministry of Health and the NSW Department of Education involving mental health clinicians, Department of Education staff, primary school teachers and families in delivering a multi-faceted program to school children in years K-2.

Northern NSW Local Health District has its own Got It! team, split between Byron Central Hospital and Yamba Community Health to meet the needs of primary schools across the large geographical area that is our LHD.

Got It! identifies children with social and emotional difficulties and supports them to respond to challenging behaviours. It teaches them skills for continued use throughout their lives.

This early intervention aims to reduce conduct-related behaviours within school and home environments, with the goal of increasing the child's learning opportunities and improving the family dynamics as well as reducing mental health concerns later in life.

For children, Got It! provides opportunities to learn about and manage their feelings and behaviours both at home and school. Kids involved in the program develop problem solving skills and become more confident and resilient within themselves.

The targeted clinical component of Got It! also involves the parents and carers of children and offers support in their parenting roles to promote a positive family environment.

The second component of Got It! provides training to teachers under the 'Fun Friends' resilience program which enables schools to implement social and emotional learning structures within their classrooms to benefit every K-2 child.

This year has seen the new Northern NSW Got It! team working extremely hard setting up the program, while commencing roll-out across six primary schools from Tweed Heads to Grafton.

So far the response from schools has been overwhelmingly positive. Teachers, parents and children are reporting many encouraging changes as a result of completing the program.

As 2017 comes to a close the team is already busily preparing for the new schools coming on board next year and looking forward to continuing to positively influence the mental health of many of the families in the region.



**Above from left, Community Mental Health Nurse Unit Manager Ciarán Carolan with the Northern NSW Got It! team of Camille Smith, Kirsty McMillan, Tara Bales, Alice Hinde, Lisa Mitchell and Emma Cronin.**

# Interview with Chris Lowry

*Northern Exposure recently sat down with Lismore Base Hospital Staff Specialist Anaesthetist, Chris Lowry, to find out about his pathway into Anaesthesia, his love of the ocean, and his upcoming plans for retirement.*

Halfway through his medical degree, Chris Lowry was conscripted into the Army. It was the 1960s and Australians were being sent to fight in the Vietnam War.

Chris was able to postpone his Army service thanks to his study, and at the same time, he discovered an alternative avenue for mandatory service. Chris obtained a Naval Cadetship which provided him with a living allowance and money for textbooks for the final few years of his course.

On completion he'd be bound to serve four years in the Royal Australian Navy, rather than two years in the Army, and since Chris was a keen swimmer and surfer, the Navy seemed a much better fit.

Chris graduated in 1970 and began his sea service, before being stationed at HMAS Penguin in Balmoral, with the Royal Australian Navy School of Underwater Medicine.

"When I was still a student I did courses in diving medicine with the navy during the holidays. When I came into the navy they earmarked me to do specific training in diving medicine," said Chris.

When his four years ended, Chris went looking for something that would align with his skills in diving medicine.

"Anaesthetics was all to do with gases, volumes, and partial pressures," Chris said. He took up an Anaesthetics trainee position at Royal North Shore Hospital, where he stayed for four years before moving overseas to continue his training.

In 1980, Chris returned to Australia as a qualified Anaesthetist, and went back to Royal North Shore Hospital as a Visiting Medical Officer (VMO).

In his youth, Chris had had the idea of one day becoming a General Practitioner on the North Coast of NSW.

So, after more than 20 years working and raising their two children in Sydney, Chris and his wife, Robin realised they could still go north if they wanted. It meant that Robin would have to give up her job as a high school teacher.

"I researched where the best hospitals were with the widest experience, and I thought Lismore was the best one between Newcastle and the Gold Coast," Chris said. He organised a few locum appointments to get a feel for the place, and eventually settled here in 1992.



Living in Lennox Head, Chris spent almost 10 years as a VMO on the North Coast before obtaining a Staff Specialist position at Lismore Base Hospital. At the end of this year, Chris will retire from theatre work, but will continue working in other areas of the hospital.

Chris says part of the appeal of Anaesthetics is that it gives him a good overview of the workings of the entire hospital.

"We're involved in many parts of the hospital, not just in the operating theatres. We're consulting on the wards, doing preoperative assessment, pain management, radiology department, obstetric department, cardiology, intensive care." There is a downside, though. The long hours and on-call work isn't easy.

"That's fun and exciting when you're younger, but it becomes very tiring as you get older," Chris said.

During his time in Lismore, Chris has been Director of Anaesthesia, Director of Clinical Training for Junior Medical Officers, and Anaesthetics Training Supervisor.

"I've enjoyed teaching registrars and residents. It's rewarding when you see trainees come back to work as consultants here, and we've had quite a few."

When he isn't working, Chris can be found swimming and surfing in the ocean,

as well as scuba diving here and overseas. His favourite dive location is Palau in Micronesia.

Aid work has also been a large part of Chris' career. Since 1985, Chris has been donating his time and expertise on annual trips with Interplast, a non-government organisation set up by Australian plastic surgeons to provide plastic and reconstructive surgery in countries where this treatment isn't accessible.

In the early years, the program sent Chris to Pacific countries, which also happened to be ideal destinations for a keen scuba diver.

"We'd work during the day and have a dive at night, or on the weekends."

Since 2000, Interplast work has taken Chris to Laos, as part of a larger team performing bigger surgeries and training staff on the ground. In February, Chris will take his last trip with the group to Vientiane.

In retirement, Chris will pursue his love of the ocean, as well as his interests in photography and travel. He caught the photography bug about 10 years ago, meeting and photographing people in their own environment as part of his aid work. Today whenever he travels he packs his favourite digital SLR, along with 'quite a few lenses'.

# Biobank to revolutionise research

Australia's first storage bank for human biospecimens opened in Sydney this month.

As the largest facility of its kind in the southern hemisphere, the NSW Health Statewide Biobank is set to revolutionise medical research in Australia.

Minister for Health and Medical Research Brad Hazzard said the \$12 million Biobank will help researchers change the way life-threatening illnesses are treated.

"The Biobank will house more than three million human samples including DNA, tissue, blood and tumour cells which researchers can use to unlock the puzzle of disease.

"The NSW Government is proud to have fully funded this world-class facility which may one day support a cure for cancer, diabetes, dementia and more," Mr Hazzard said.

Members of the public wishing to contribute to research projects should speak to their doctor about donating tissue samples.

## Drinks set to change

You may have begun to notice some changes to the drinks being sold through cafeterias and vending machines throughout the Northern NSW Local Health District (NNSWLHD).

Retailers have started making adjustments to their beverage offerings, helping to make healthier choices easier for staff and visitors.

By December 1, NNSWLHD facilities will be offering drinks which meet the 'Healthy Food and Drinks in NSW Health Facilities' initiative, and drinks that contain only sugar (with no nutritional value) will no longer be available for purchase.

## Healthy dose of talent on show

The marriage of community health and community art proved very successful when the new Coraki Campbell HealthOne facility recently hosted the Coraki Art Prize.

A record number of entries were received for this year's show, and over 500 visitors came to see the artworks and have a look through the new HealthOne over the weekend of 28 and 29 October.

The 17th Annual Coraki Art Prize attracted entries from artists,

photographers and sculptors, young and old, amateur and professional, from all over the Northern Rivers and beyond.

Coraki Art Prize President, Melva Thompson, said the feedback about the venue was overwhelmingly positive.

"Many visitors commented on the crisp, clean venue and in particular the excellent lighting. We are very grateful to the Northern NSW Local Health District for making the HealthOne available for this community event," Melva said.



**Above, visitors admire the artworks displayed in the corridors of the Coraki Campbell HealthOne at the 17th Annual Coraki Art Prize.**

## Valley goes fancy for festival

Visitors to the Grafton Base Hospital (GBH) on Thursday, 9 November, may not have recognised any of the usual staff.

The annual Jacaranda Festival provided a great opportunity for staff to get dressed up and support the community.

Each year, the GBH Staff Health and Welfare Committee encourage wards and departments to decorate their work areas and dress up in theme.

"This year's themes ranged from 'Down on the farm' to 'African Safari', 'the 80s' and 'Getting your Purple On', Health Information Manager, Alison Lollback, said.

An independent (and often secret) judge makes their deliberations over the winning unit, with the Children and

Adolescents' Ward taking out the prize this year.

Following the success of the Jacaranda Festival, GBH staff celebrated the Melbourne Cup

with an afternoon tea, ladies in hats and men in ties. And it doesn't end there.

"You should see what we have in store for Christmas!"



**Above, the Aruma Community Nursing 'African Safari' team, L-R, Michelle Thornton, Gail Turnbull, Jo Andrews, Ros Hatfield, Annette Cornish, Julie Charles and Alison McIntyre.**

# Donations bring warmth, relaxation to new unit

Patients in Lismore's newly-renovated Mental Health Unit will be able to relax with purpose-built therapy chairs and hand-made quilts, thanks to generous donations by two local fundraising groups.

The Lions Club of Lennox Head, together with the Northern NSW Local Health District Mental Health Support Group have raised funds for six massage



therapy chairs for use by Mental Health patients in Lismore.

Over the past 12 months, the Lions have helped donate 10 massage chairs worth over \$11,000 throughout the district.

The chairs will be allocated across four areas: the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Unit (Kamala), the acute Adult Mental Health Unit (Tallowood), the

Older Persons' Mental Health Unit (Lilli Pili) and Riverlands Drug and Alcohol Centre.

As well as donating funds towards the massage chairs, the Mental Health Support Group donated 46 patchwork quilts to adorn the beds of the new Lilli Pili Older Persons' Mental Health Unit, and 57 quilts to the Tallowood Adult Mental Health Unit. These were made by local quilting groups.

**Below left, members of the Lennox Head Lions Club with a new massage chair.**

**Below, quilters Ruth Harris, Lorna Simpson, Diane Brown, Barbara Stoker, Lee Winderbon and Liz Denman with Mental Health Support Group founder, Barbara Swain, present handmade quilts to the Mental Health Unit.**



## Does your patient have a Thrombotic Disorder?

HealthPathways has recently localised the **Thrombotic Disorders** HealthPathway which adds another live pathway under the Haematology Category.

Thrombotic disorders (also called thrombophilia) refer to patients who are at significantly increased risk of thromboembolism. This can also be due to inherited causes or acquired causes.

The pathway provides a comprehensive list of risk factors for the condition, guidance on when testing is recommended and information about negative test results.

The assessment section, in summary, provides a list of factors to assist you in assessing if your patient is at thrombotic risk and indicators for possible condition re-occurrence.

In the management section you will find a

link to a printable pdf which offers education for your patients on recognising symptoms of deep vein thrombosis and lists other precautions and preventative measures that could be undertaken to reduce thrombotic risk during long-haul air travel.

The referral sections provide criteria for referral to a non-acute haematology assessment which provides information on public haematology providers and also provides a link to the **Deep Vein Thrombosis** HealthPathway for specific information on this condition.

We currently have over 370 live pathways on our website! To view all localised Mid and North Coast Health pathways, follow this link:

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

Username: manchealth

Password: conn3ct3d

## New Cancer HealthPathways

Click on the links below to view:

- [Breast Cancer Established](#)
- [Breast Cancer Follow-up](#)
- [Head and Neck Cancer – Established](#)
- [Endometrial Cancer](#)
- [Familial Cancer Syndromes](#)
- [Familial Breast or Ovarian Cancer Syndromes](#)
- [Familial Colorectal or Endometrial Cancer Syndromes](#)
- [Head and Neck Cancer – Established](#)
- [Cervical Screening](#) - This new pathway describes renewed changes to the National Cervical Screening Program (NCSP) being implemented on 1 December 2017.

For further information email [kkeyte@ncphn.org.au](mailto:kkeyte@ncphn.org.au).

# Integrated Care - what does it mean for me?

The annual Community Engagement Advisory Council (CEAC) conference is on again in December.

The one-day event will focus on Integrated Care, and feature presentations and a panel of clinicians, health consumers, subject experts and health service management.

Come along and find out what Integrated Care means for you and your community.

This year's keynote speaker is Jay Allen, Community Coordinator for Melanoma Institute Australia (MIA).

Jay Allen is a former truck driver and patient of MIA.

As MIA's Community Coordinator, Jay has devoted the last six years to spreading the sun-safe message to schools, organisations and communities around Australia.

He recently trekked 1200kms from Brisbane to Sydney to raise vital money for a clinical trial for advanced melanoma patients.

Jay's story about surviving melanoma is raw, honest, and inspiring.

"Melanoma Institute Australia saved my life and I want to give back by raising awareness about melanoma and how to reduce the risks," Jay said.

The conference will be held on Thursday, 14 December at Ballina Surf Club.

Click [here](#) to see the program and to register to attend the conference.

Community  
Communication  
My Collective  
Specialists Record  
Home Hospital GP Experience  
**HealthCare**  
Lived Me Integrated  
Carers Chronic Clinicians Action  
Literacy People  
Connected

# Walking to work just got easier

Have you heard about the Make Healthy Normal campaign? It's a NSW Health campaign to increase healthy eating and active living, with the aim of reducing overweight and obesity rates.

Now staff at Lismore Base Hospital (LBH) have a chance to take part, with the recent installation of pavement stickers leading from the hospital to the Lismore Central Business District (CBD). These novel stickers are spaced at 200m intervals and act as markers for measuring walking distance from the hospital to downtown.

Did you know it's exactly a one kilometre walk from the hospital to the edge of the CBD? This equates to burning 220kJ of energy, about as much energy as in an apple, so you'll need to do it a few times!

It's also about 1300 steps, so a return trip downtown and back can provide nearly a third of your recommended

10,000 daily steps.

Evidence suggests that more walking means less time spent in hospital as a patient. Walking and cycling have also been associated with a lower risk of adverse cardiovascular outcomes, particularly for women. Parking downtown and walking to work each day would help achieve this.

Next time you're at LBH, please cross the road and look for the Make Healthy Normal pavement sticker to set you on your healthy walking journey.

The Health Promotion team has installed these as a trial to see how they stand up to the rigours of feet, rain and sun. They would love to hear your nominations of walking routes near other facilities across the health district. Contact Adam Guise at [adam.guise@ncahs.health.nsw.gov.au](mailto:adam.guise@ncahs.health.nsw.gov.au)

You never know who you might inspire to Make Healthy Normal.



# DIGITAL DOSE - eHealth news

## eHealth Northern NSW – Connecting with Clinicians

The new eHealth Clinical Advisory Group will hold its inaugural meeting on 28 November. The group's primary purpose is to provide advice on matters relating to Clinical eHealth services in the Northern NSW Local Health District (NNSWLHD), including applications and devices.

Nominations have been received from a diverse group of Clinicians and successful members will be notified soon. Wendy Roulston, Clinical eHealth Service Manager is the Secretariat, contactable via email: [wendy.roulston@ncahs.health.nsw.gov.au](mailto:wendy.roulston@ncahs.health.nsw.gov.au)



eHealth Northern NSW is continuing to investigate WiFi connection problems with computer carts.

An eHealth Incident team meets weekly to review proposed fixes and identify whether they can be applied across the District. Changes to equipment and settings are underway with reported improvements implemented at Ballina District Hospital.

**All sites note:** please continue to log these problems with the State Wide Service Desk (IT help desk) and request "Attention the WiFi queue."

## eMR-eMEds

Smarter Safer Better

A workshop was recently held to review the new workflows and confirm how clinicians will use eMeds.

Northern NSW Local Health District (NNSWLHD) sent three clinical representatives: Dr Alasdair Arthur (Dep. Dir. ED TTH), Andrea Thawley (CNC Emergency Tweed-Byron) and Ahmad Sayar (A/Dep. Dir. Pharmacy LBH). They were joined in North Sydney by the District's eMeds Project team.

The Project team are very excited to have received 70% of the eMeds build for testing. The testing phases are extensive and will take-up a large component of the team's time during the next several months.

The eMeds project team are pleased to announce that a new Change Manager will start on 20 November.

James Nunn has been appointed to replace Wendy Roulston in the District Program Change Manager role. James is a Registered Nurse with extensive experience in the Drug and Alcohol Withdrawal Unit, most recently working in the Mental Health after hours' patient flow role. James worked as the Network Change Manager, Richmond Mental

Health and Drug and Alcohol Services, during the eMR-CHOC Project.

You can contact James via email at [james.nunn@ncahs.health.nsw.gov.au](mailto:james.nunn@ncahs.health.nsw.gov.au).

For more information, please check out the web page [here](#).

## eRIC Update

Congratulations! Lismore Base Hospital (LBH) ICU – eRIC went live on 13 November.

eRIC landed at The Tweed Hospital (TTH) on 30 October, and Grafton Base Hospital is following closely with eRIC scheduled to deploy in early December.

As a state-wide system, eRIC puts into effect standard practice across all ICUs. This is the first time a state-wide electronic ICU system has been deployed across Australia and will be one of the largest in the world.

Jason Muller has been appointed as the LHD's eRIC Application Specialist. Jason is responsible for the ongoing maintenance of eRIC, which includes granting access to use eRIC, training and coordinating enhancement requests, and system upgrades. Jason is a Registered Nurse and has a background in ICU. You can contact Jason via email at [Jason.muller@ncahs.health.nsw.gov.au](mailto:Jason.muller@ncahs.health.nsw.gov.au).

## Bombe Alaska in revival for Radiation Therapists

Retro food and fashion was brought back to life at the North Coast Cancer Institute – Cancer Care and Haematology Unit (NCCI) in celebration of World Radiography Day on 8 November.

Staff in the Radiation Oncology unit donned retro revival outfits and dined on Scotch eggs, cocktail onions and bombe Alaska to honour to the birth of technical innovations which are still delivering

results for patients today.

NCCI employs 18 radiation therapists, who range from graduate placements to highly experienced therapists with worldwide expertise.

Senior radiation therapist, Richard Ford, says developing good relationships with patients during their treatment, and the flexibility to travel the world working in different places are some of the perks of his job.

"I've always worked in big cities, so it was nice to come to a regional centre. I'm enjoying a more rural lifestyle, and we're so close to the ocean and to brilliant cities, it's an absolutely fantastic place to live," Richard said.

Radiation therapists complete a four-year university degree, with training placements during the final year.

**Left, Radiation Therapists at NCCI go retro in celebration of World Radiography Day.**



# The last word...

## Off and racing for Our Kids Luncheon

The annual Our Kids Melbourne Cup Luncheon was a sell out this year, attended by 200 people dressed to impress and raise a few dollars for the charity.

The luncheon at Southern Cross University raised over

\$20,000, with punters also taking home around \$58,000 worth of prizes.

Lismore Base Hospital Special Care Nursery NUM, Jo Ezzy, attended the lunch with several colleagues and many well-known Lismore

identities.

"The ladies all looked splendid, and some of the fascinators worn on the day were amazing," Jo said.

The money raised on the day will go towards a piece of equipment for the

Children's Ward at Lismore Base Hospital.

Now in its 15th year, the Our Kids Melbourne Cup Luncheon is renowned for its stylish decor and superb food.

"On behalf of the staff in the Special Care Nursery, I want to thank Dr Chris Ingall and Rebekka Battista for their tireless work in promoting Our Kids in the community. The equipment purchased assists the staff of Special Care Nursery and the Children's Ward to give the best care possible," Jo said.

**Pictured at left, back row, L-R, Sally Butchers, Carmel Kinkead, Sue Sheaffe, Clare Warren, Marion Pipper, Katrina Beohm, Julie Roberts, Carolyn Lindwell and Jo Ezzy (front) attend the Our Kids Melbourne Cup Luncheon.**



## Casino staff commemorate armistice

For the first time, Casino District Hospital held a Remembrance Day ceremony in the Harmony Garden on 8 November.

Members of the Casino RSL sub-branch conducted the service, and wreaths were laid by staff, RSL members and a community member.

Around 25 people attended to pay their respects to those men and women who have died or suffered in armed conflicts around the world.



**Above, back row, Casino RSL sub-branch members with, at front, Casino District Hospital Nurse Manager 1 Christine Bulmer, Casino Hospital Auxiliary President Robyn Spruce, ex-staff member Robyn Cooper, Enrolled Nurse Shirley Roach and A/EO DON Melissa Ingram.**

**Left, Casino District Hospital domestic services staff Leanne Mason, Rosemarie Newman, community member Maree Flanagan and staff member Marcia Armstrong.**

