

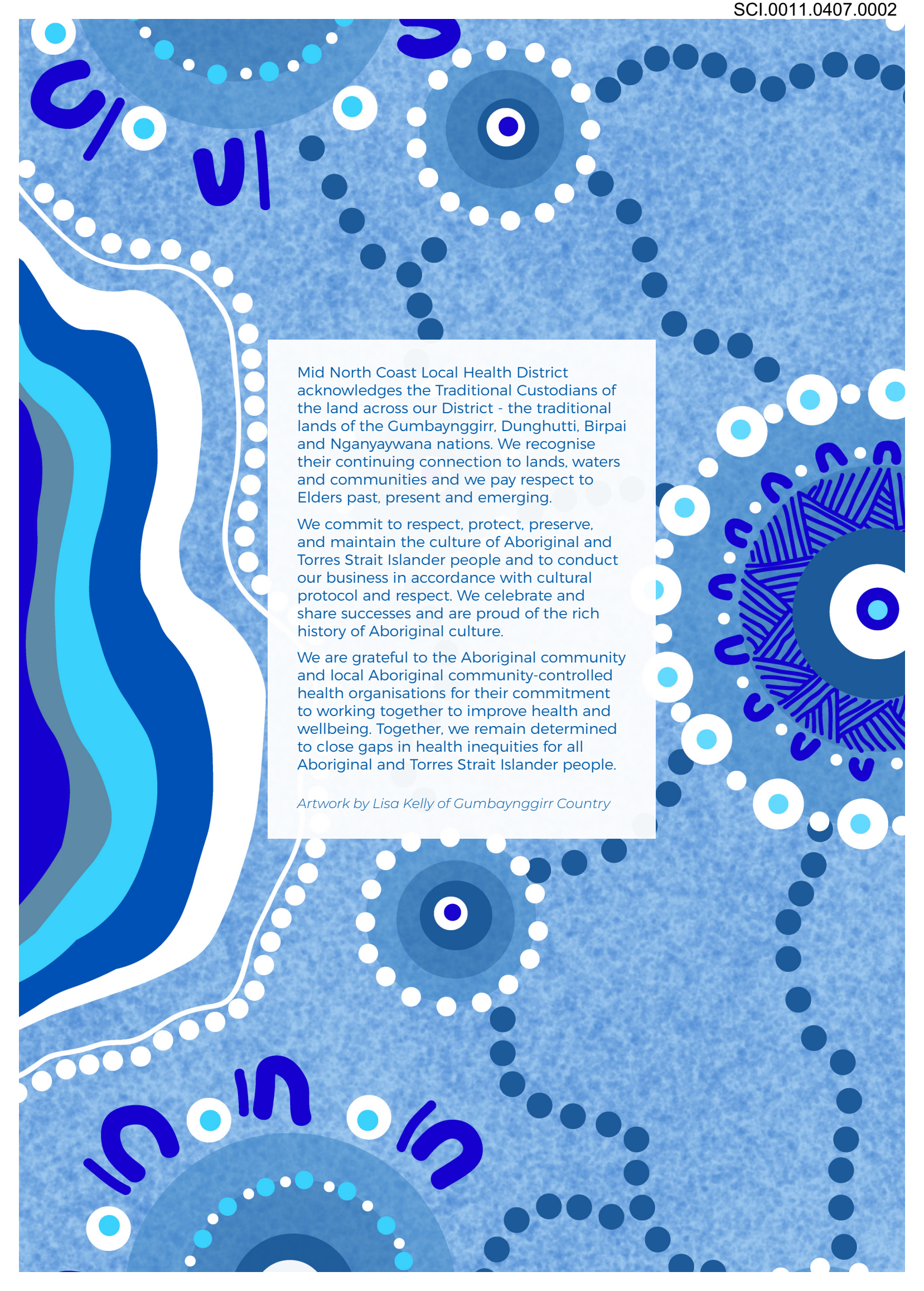


CARING FOR OUR COMMUNITY

Mid North Coast Local Health District
2022-23 Year in Review



Mid North Coast
Local Health District



Mid North Coast Local Health District acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the land across our District - the traditional lands of the Gumbaynggirr, Dunghutti, Birpai and Nganyaywana nations. We recognise their continuing connection to lands, waters and communities and we pay respect to Elders past, present and emerging.

We commit to respect, protect, preserve, and maintain the culture of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and to conduct our business in accordance with cultural protocol and respect. We celebrate and share successes and are proud of the rich history of Aboriginal culture.

We are grateful to the Aboriginal community and local Aboriginal community-controlled health organisations for their commitment to working together to improve health and wellbeing. Together, we remain determined to close gaps in health inequities for all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

Artwork by Lisa Kelly of Gumbaynggirr Country



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A photograph of three healthcare professionals in a hospital hallway. In the center is a young man with dark, curly hair and a beard, wearing teal scrubs and a stethoscope. He is smiling and has his hands on his hips. To his left is an older woman with short, wavy blonde hair and glasses, wearing purple scrubs. She is also smiling and looking towards the man in teal. To his right is a younger man with curly brown hair, wearing dark blue scrubs, who is smiling and looking towards the man in teal. The background shows a hospital hallway with a Philips monitor hanging from the ceiling, a sign that says "Bed 18", and other people in the distance. A blue rectangular overlay is in the bottom left corner.

OUR DISTRICT

2022-23 SNAPSHOT



141,145

Emergency
Presentations



23,833

Operations



2,071

Babies Born



4,972

Employees

About Us

Mid North Coast Local Health District (MNCLHD) extends from the Port Macquarie-Hastings Local Government Area in the south to Coffs Harbour Local Government Area in the north and provides healthcare services across a geographic area of approximately 11,335 square kilometres.

Traditional custodians of the land covered by the District are the Gumbaynggirr, Dunghutti, Birpai and Nganyaywana nations. It is estimated that more than 229,771 residents live within the District. People of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander heritage make up 6.9 per cent of the population, compared to 2.9 per cent* for all NSW.

An estimated 13 per cent of residents were born overseas. Coffs Harbour has a growing number of refugees settling in the area. The main refugee communities include Afghani, Sudanese, Burmese, Congolese, Togolese, Sierra Leone, Ethiopian, Eritrean and Somali. Smaller numbers of migrants also reside in Laurieton, Wauchope and Port Macquarie.

Over the next decade, the District's population is expected to increase by about seven per cent. The largest increases are being projected for the Coffs Harbour and Port Macquarie-Hastings local government areas.

The main health issues facing the District are mental health illnesses, cancer rates and chronic age-related illnesses such as cardiac, pulmonary, diabetes, renal disease and dementia.

The Mid North Coast also has significant groups of disadvantaged people, including Aboriginal people and refugees, people on low incomes, and people living in small, isolated communities. All of these groups are at risk of poorer health outcome behaviours and risk factors such as increasing weight and obesity, low levels of physical activity, poor diet, and the number of people who continue to smoke.

The MNCLHD managed a budget of more than \$776 million in 2022-23.

*Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics 2021



Mid North Coast Local Health District extends from the Port Macquarie-Hastings Local Government Area in the south to Coffs Harbour Local Government Area in the north and provides healthcare services across a geographic area of approximately 11,335 square kilometres.

Key Achievements



Commenced construction of a \$21.5 million rooftop helipad project at Port Macquarie Base Hospital



Launched the Bubay Bangay Gathang Lullaby Project in partnership with Djiyagan Dhanbaan (Strong Sister) Movement Group, Djuyalgu Wakulda and Muurrbay to help provide Aboriginal parents and their infants with a stronger connection to their culture



Transitioned the Nambucca Valley Dialysis Unit from a privately leased health clinic into the purpose-built facility at Nambucca HealthOne



Established the Flying a Nurse Practitioner six-month pilot in response to the increasing demand and acuity of patients requiring outpatient treatment for their cancer



Celebrated the completion of the \$194 million Coffs Harbour Health Campus Expansion Project



Launched a McGrath Foundation breast care nurse position at Kempsey District Hospital focused on supporting patients and their families



Achieved recognition in the 2022 NSW Health Awards and 2022 NSW Health Excellence in Allied Health Awards



Established the North Coast Youth Vaping Taskforce to protect young people from the harms of e-cigarettes in collaboration with the North Coast Population and Public Health Unit, Health Promotion team and key stakeholders



Prioritised sustainability initiatives to address climate change such as the installation of a large-scale battery energy storage system at Port Macquarie Base Hospital, the establishment of a district-wide Sustainable Healthcare Team and the development of a draft Sustainable Healthcare Implementation Plan



Key Achievements - Reflections

The many achievements and milestones of the past year are testament to the resilience, and resourcefulness, of the Mid North Coast Local Health District team.

Fuelled by a drive to continually improve, the district has built on the strengths of its workforce and the robustness of its research to deliver health outcomes the people living on the Mid North Coast deserve.

Embracing innovation and change, and fostering new and improved ways of delivering care, has helped the district deliver on its commitment of best practice healthcare.

Over the past 12 months the district has continued to forge valued partnerships, driving collaboration and growth, and laying the foundation for innovation inspired by the healthcare needs of our communities.

Capital works projects including the opening a new pathology laboratory at Port Macquarie Base Hospital and transitioning of the Nambucca Valley Dialysis Unit from a privately leased clinic into the purpose-built facility at Nambucca HealthOne, helped to meet the growing needs of the Mid North Coast community.

Construction commenced on the \$21.5 million rooftop helipad project at Port Macquarie Base Hospital to provide patients with the most direct route to the Emergency Department and operating theatres.

The achievements of our teams were recognised at the 2023 MNCLHD Quality and Innovation Awards which showcased excellence across a range of clinical and non-clinical programs. We also celebrated the outstanding commitment of social worker Jessica Trembath who was named Allied Health Professional of the Year in NSW Health's 2022 Excellence in Allied Health Awards.

The 'Words Matter' Coffs Harbour Mental health project received the People and Culture Award in the 2022 NSW Health Awards and members of the Mid North Coast stroke care team were recognised as part of the award-winning Telestroke program.

The nursing team at Dorrigo Multi Purpose Service (MPS) was named a finalist in the Team of the Year category of the 11th annual NSW Health Excellence in Nursing and Midwifery Awards.

We developed the MNCLHD Aboriginal Strategic Framework 2024-2034 to ensure Aboriginal health is embedded into our core responsibilities and continued our work to support diversity, equity and inclusion in the workplace.

Helping the community, and supporting local hospitals, is something dedicated volunteers have been doing for decades. The return of all volunteers to their roles in the healthcare setting was celebrated by staff, patients and visitors.

The Mid North Coast Local Health District recognises the outstanding work of its 5,000 staff who provide health and support services to improve health outcomes of our patients and clients. It is through their commitment and dedication that the remarkable accomplishments of the local health district are possible.





Our Governing Board



Professor Heather
Cavanagh
Chair to 30 June 2023



Peter Treseder AO
Chair from 1 July 2023



The Hon Luke Hartsuyker
Deputy Chair



Dr Jenny Beange



Michael Coulter



Gary Humphreys



Susan McGinn



Neil Porter
to 30 March 2023



Dr Shehnarz
Salindera



Tracy Singleton



Jenny Zirkler

The Mid North Coast Local Health District Governing Board is responsible for establishing and overseeing an effective governance risk management framework, collaborating with key stakeholders on its strategic directions and ensuring high standards of professional and ethical conduct are maintained.

The Board engages with providers and the community in decisions that affect them, monitors the service delivery and financial performance of the agency against its targets and holds the Chief Executive accountable for their performance.

Our Senior Executive Team



Stewart Dowrick
Chief Executive



Dr Andrew Bailey
Director Research and Knowledge Translation



Jo Campbell
Acting Hastings Macleay Clinical Network Coordinator



Paul Connor
Director Finance and Performance



Dr Valerie Delpech
Acting Director North Coast Population and Public Health



Lydia Dennett
Coffs Clinical Network Coordinator



Vanessa Edwards
Director Communications and Strategic Relations



Carolyn Heise
District Director Nursing, Midwifery, Sustainable Healthcare and HSFAC



Penny Jones
Director Integrated Mental Health, Alcohol and Other Drugs



Robyn Martin
Director Aboriginal Health and Primary Partnerships



Melanie Mearns
Director Internal Audit and Risk



Taresa Rosten
Director People and Culture

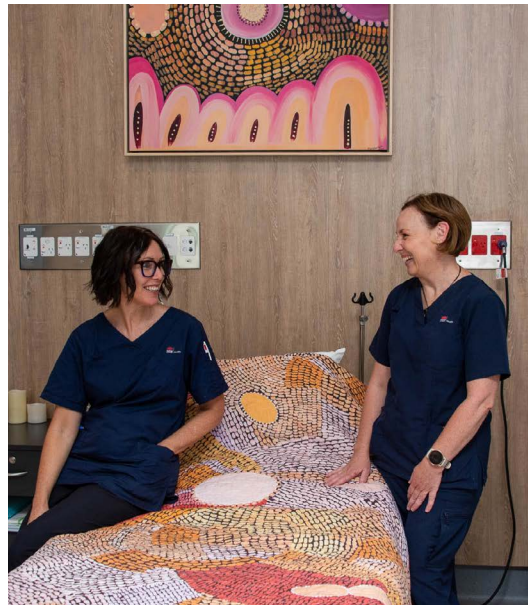


Kathleen Ryan
Director Clinical Governance and Information Services



Jill Wong
District Director Integrated Care, Allied Health and Community Services

Our Health Care Teams



Our Community



Our Volunteers

Our volunteers have had an enormous 12 months, returning to our hospitals and health centres after the COVID-19 precautionary years to continue their outstanding support of our patients, our staff, and our health services.

The MNCLHD volunteer family grew to include Blood Bikes, a global organisation that has a Northern NSW chapter providing emergency document, pathology, medical and equipment deliveries when usual courier services are not available.



And the Community Support Dogs at Coffs Harbour received a paw-fect boost in numbers thanks to four new graduates.

Our General Volunteers can now be seen in almost every unit and service at Coffs Harbour Health Campus, including the carpark where they run the Pink Ladies Buggy. And at Kempsey, the General Volunteers, who have a smart, fresh look, are growing swiftly in numbers and working closely with the Kempsey UHA and Pink Ladies. Together, they hosted the phenomenally successful Kempsey Hospital and UHA Spring Fair in September, not only raising about \$17,000 for the hospital, but bringing their community together for a common cause.

Our Pink Ladies and United Hospital Auxiliary branches have donated more than \$450,000 in equipment and patient comfort items – a truly remarkable effort surpassed only by the incredible volunteer hours they have given at our health sites – more than 60,000 hours!

Helen Mears, probably our most recognised and venerated Pink Lady after being named Volunteer of the Year at the 2021 NSW Health Awards, and NSW 2021 joint Senior Volunteer of the Year in the NSW Volunteer of the Year Awards, received her Medal of the Order of Australia in April from Her Excellency the Honourable Margaret Beazley AC KC, Governor of New South Wales.



The North Eastern Regional Representative, Dee Hunter, was named State Treasurer of the United Hospital Auxiliaries of NSW; recognition of her skills on the central executive for the past six years and at grass roots level as BowraMacksville Branch's long-standing treasurer.

At state level, the UHA has bestowed Life Membership on Jennifer Lucey, a volunteer who has given 30 years' service to the organisation's Camden Haven branch.

Life Membership is the UHA's highest honour - Mrs Lucey becomes just the 39th Auxiliary member on the Mid North Coast to receive the award since 1959.

The Wauchope branch received the Eleanor MacKinnon Trophy at the 90th annual UHA State Conference in October, in recognition of the most hours volunteered per member by a country auxiliary, and Coffs Harbour was named runner-up for the most money raised (net) by a country auxiliary in NSW.



And finally, a month after announcing their retirement from volunteering at Port Macquarie Base Hospital, Heart Health NSW members Max Heslehurst and Mike Storrier were given a memorable farewell by the hospital's Cardiology Services team. Both men, who started volunteering at the hospital 14 years ago, were finalists at the MNCLHD Health Innovation Awards; Max named Volunteer of the Year. In a further honour, Max was runner-up in the Volunteer of the Year category of the 2023 NSW Health Awards.



Directorate Highlights

Aboriginal Health and Primary Partnerships

District Aboriginal Health - Launched in November 2023, the MNCLHD Aboriginal Strategic Framework 2024-2034 aligns with the MNCLHD Strategic Plan 2022-2032 to ensure Aboriginal health is embedded into our core responsibilities as everyone's business to drive continued progress and achievement.

Oral Health - The Primary School Mobile Dental Program continues to deliver clinical services and improve children's dental care access. The Building Brighter Babies Grins program is working to increase oral health awareness for new parents.

Youth Vaping Taskforce - Health Promotion, in partnership with the North Coast Population and Public Health Unit, established the North Coast Youth Vaping Taskforce to ignite a community response to protect young people from the harms of e-cigarettes. Community consultations and forums were held with key partners to inform a regional action plan.

First 2000 Days webinar series - Awarded the People and Culture category award in the 2023 MNCLHD Quality and Innovation Awards, the First 2000 Days webinar series builds the capacity of health professionals to support the health and wellbeing of families and young children, improving health referrals and outcomes for the community.

Clinical Governance and Information Services

Safety and Quality Essentials Pathway - Implementation of the Safety and Quality Essentials Pathway has seen the Foundational Program delivered to more than 400 staff at face-to-face sessions and Safety and Quality Change Leaders identified to attend Train the Trainer workshops.

The 12-month MNCLHD Applied Safety and Quality Program begins in February 2024.

Accreditation 2022 - Clinical Governance is leading the work in short notice assessment for accreditation to the National Safety and Quality Health Service (NSQHS) Standards. The work will ensure our outcomes reflect day-to-day practices, identify gaps, and support health services to improve the systems and processes of safety and quality.

Closing the Gap - Participated in the Giingan Gumbaynggirr Cultural Experience Immersion Day at Niigi Niigi (Sealy Lookout, Korora) and learned about the local language, story, song and the use of native plants. The Respecting the Difference workshop that followed was an amazing experience and strengthened our resolve to be the difference we want to see in our communities.

Coffs Clinical Network

Nambucca Dialysis Service - Transitioned the Nambucca Dialysis Service from a privately leased health clinic into the purpose-built HealthOne Dialysis space. The service provides nurse-led haemodialysis to low-risk patients in the Nambucca Valley and surrounds. There are six treatment spaces, and the services operate mornings and evenings, six days a week.

Rehabilitation Award - Coffs Harbour Health Campus Rehabilitation Unit was awarded an Australian Rehabilitation Outcomes Centre (AROC) award recognising and certifying the high standard of our patient rehabilitation outcomes.

Angels Gold Status awards - Coffs Harbour Health Campus earned two World Stroke Organization Angels Gold Status Awards, recognising best practices in acute stroke care. The introduction of the Telestroke Service in 2020 means patients in our district can expect the same level of care in a similar timeframe to those living in capital cities.



Communications and Strategic Relations

Film production - the easing of COVID-19 restrictions saw filming recommence and we delivered significant materials for the District and other organisations, including six “Ask Able” short films promoting disability awareness and support, a new corporate film used in recruitment activity locally and worldwide, ISistaQuit film series to assist in smoking reduction, clinical training videos, patient perspective films and four short videos showcasing the stories and experience of local Aboriginal Elders.

Multicultural celebration - Promoted the Journey Stories arts in health project. This multicultural and multimedia arts project celebrates the moving stories of how refugees and culturally and linguistically diverse communities came to call Coffs Harbour home. Members of the local multicultural community collaborated with MNCLHD and Health Infrastructure on the project which is now permanently on display at the Coffs Harbour Health Campus entrance.



Quality and Innovation Awards - the 2023 awards received a record number of submissions and showcased a broad range of clinical and non-clinical programs including cancer and cardiac services, research, staff wellbeing and patient safety, and acknowledgement of the many individuals who are the current and future leaders in health care.

Finance and Performance

Capital Works and Asset Management - The state's first regional Vectra machine for melanoma screening was installed at Port Macquarie Community Health as part of a \$10 million Australian Cancer Research Foundation initiative to build research capacity in the early detection of melanoma.

Major upgrades have been completed at Dorrigo Multi Purpose Service and Wauchope District Memorial Hospital's Palliative Care Unit, while the Capital Works and Asset Management team has been busy with the district's generator and chiller maintenance and rotoscope upgrades.

Performance and Analytics - In collaboration with the Mid North Coast Cancer Institute, the Performance and Analytics team significantly improved data compliance and the quality of oncology data across the LHD. Reporting was streamlined through a standardised and automatic process for core clinical reports, enhancing the accuracy, consistency, and timeliness of clinical information in delivering actionable data.

Hastings Macleay Clinical Network

ED Nurse Practitioner - Port Macquarie Base Hospital gained NaMO enhancement funding for a nurse practitioner. This role will review patients, order and interpret diagnostic testing, work alongside medical, nursing and allied health clinicians, and improve health outcomes for ED patients.

Midwifery Model of Care - In 2023, the Midwifery Model of Care project gained steering committee endorsement. The project identified models of maternity care that best meet the community's needs and support sustainable midwifery and medical workforce. We are now working to secure funding to progress implementation.

First Year Nurse Experience project - Port Macquarie Base Hospital participated with NaMO on a pilot project, First Year Nurse Experience. NaMO staff and Professor Belinda Dewar and Adel Roddy (Appreciative Inquiry Experts from the UK and Ireland) visited and held a workshop and staff interviews across inpatient areas.

Integrated Care, Allied Health and Community Services

New Movement Disorders service - Launched a Movement Disorders Medical Specialist Service in partnership with Western Sydney Local Health District Movement Disorders Unit and Parkinson's NSW to ensure patients with Parkinson's and other movement disorders can receive gold-standard care in Coffs Harbour. The service enables patients to consult with specialist via face-to-face clinics and telehealth consultations, supported by a Parkinson's Clinical Nurse Consultant in Coffs Harbour.

Aboriginal Cervical Screening project

- Received two Cancer Institute NSW grants to increase awareness and uptake of cervical screening for Aboriginal women. The grants enabled us to deliver 25 community and workforce education events in and around Coffs Harbour and Kempsey, reaching 307 women and 56 clinicians. Pop-up clinics were also held and 59 women were screened for cervical cancer and followed up by healthcare teams.



Aboriginal Health Workers reported increased knowledge and confidence in promoting screening. The successful implementation of the project contributes to the global goal of eliminating Cervical Cancer by 2030 and supports Closing the Gap.

Kempsey health and wellbeing program - Shady Ladies Health and Wellbeing program is designed to improve lifestyle factors associated with chronic disease through weekly education, food preparation and group discussions. Participants are encouraged to direct the conversation to their areas of need, share their experiences and share knowledge.

Funded by Healthy North Coast, the program is facilitated by a dietitian and members of the Aboriginal Chronic Care team.

Integrated Mental Health, Alcohol and Other Drugs

A one-of-a-kind initiative - A formal international collaboration, immersive leadership and research knowledge exchange was fostered this year with the Mental Health, Learning Disabilities, and Psychosocial Care faculty at Cardiff University in Wales in the UK. MNCLHD staff visited Wales to gain international insight into mental health nursing practice, policy, leadership, and mental healthcare. The visit was reciprocated in September when the university's Senior Lecturer Dr Seren Roberts visited mental health, alcohol and other drug services, including specialist medical aged care, across the Mid North Coast, Western Sydney, Ministry of Health, Clinical Excellence Commission, Southern Cross University, and the Agency for Clinical Innovation.

Reviewing our service with our partners - Community Mental Health (CMH) services are undergoing a significant redesign in collaboration with our partners in the public, other government, and private healthcare sectors. This work is expected to meet our communities' needs more effectively and efficiently in a changing environment.

Disaster Recovery Team - The Disaster Recovery clinician positions (formerly the Bushfire Recovery) have been extended until June 2027. This is very welcome news to ensure the ongoing support for the mental health of communities impacted by the recent multiple natural disasters since 2018-19 and with the bushfire risks anticipated this coming summer season.

Internal Audit and Risk

Internal Audit - New ways of working with audit customers were introduced in 2022 which resulted in significant increases in stakeholder engagement during 2022-23, particularly in relation to the internal audit plan which was completed in accordance with timelines agreed with the Audit and Risk Committee. The completion of all internal audit recommendations facilitated continuous improvement across the District in various areas, including governance, financial stewardship, cultural safety, fraud, and corruption

prevention. Feedback surveys commenced in relation to individual internal audits, with 100 per cent of respondents rating their experience as 'satisfied' or better.

Enterprise-wide Risk Management (ERM) - The District's ERM risk register information system was embedded during 2022-23. Weekly risk workshops engage staff at all levels and provide education in risk management and control effectiveness. The ERM procedure was updated to support quality risk management decision-making, incorporating feedback from the leadership team to provide 'local' guidance on governance, processes, roles and responsibilities for managing risk. Reporting was further enhanced to incorporate operational, network and board-sub committees, contributing to an increasingly positive risk culture.

North Coast Population and Public Health

Anti-vaping efforts - The Environmental Health team, in partnership with NSW Police, initiated a series of tobacco and vape compliance operations across Northern NSW, Coffs Harbour and Port Macquarie. These resulted in the seizure of 26,759 vape devices, 552,759 illegal cigarettes and 279kg of loose-leaf tobacco. The estimated value of these products was more than \$1.5 million and they were ordered for destruction.

Refugee Health - The Refugee Health Service has seen 172 new arrivals in 2023 from seven countries (Iraq, Myanmar, Syria, Afghanistan, Sudan, Ethiopia and the Democratic Republic of Congo) speaking more than nine languages. The service teamed up with local multicultural groups to celebrate the launch of the Journey Stories short film and photographic exhibition at the Coffs Harbour Health Campus in conjunction with Multicultural Health Week in September 2023.

Combatting the outbreak of syphilis - There has been a significant reduction in syphilis cases in 2023, compared to 2022, thanks to a multipronged approach that includes working closely with Primary Care teams. The Syphilis Support Program ensures all clinicians have the knowledge and confidence to manage syphilis and are supported by our sexual health specialist if required. We have produced educational materials and engaged with key stakeholders (PHN, GPs, AMS', Community Corrections, Community Pharmacies) to reduce rates in populations most affected by the outbreak across both Mid North Coast and Northern NSW LHDs.



Nursing and Midwifery

International recruitment - A recruitment drive across Ireland and the United Kingdom was held in mid-2023 with more than 417 applications received in response. Currently, 187 candidates are progressing through recruitment, with 22 visa nominations submitted to the Australian Government. It is anticipated that these nurses will start in 2024.

Exploring your Experience project - We are partnering with the NSW Health Nursing and Midwifery Office (NaMO) and Scottish Appreciative Inquiry experts Professor Belinda Dewar and Doctor Edel Roddy to understand the experience of first-year registered nurses and those who support them. Using AI methodology, MNCLHD facilitators conducted focus groups, interviews, and in-practice sessions to understand what they value and care about. This information will be used to inform future transition programs and career pathways.

Paediatric Complex Care - The Paediatric Complex Care Coordination Service involves a district Clinical Nurse Consultant supporting coordinator of care for children within our region with chronic or complex medical conditions. The service has had more than 50 referrals to date with 38 children currently enrolled. It has also helped to avoid 36 tertiary visits, one inpatient admission, 132 school absences, 33 work absences for parents and saved approximately 30,016km of travel for families through telehealth appointments. This service has had positive feedback from families navigating challenging circumstances.

People and Culture

Safety and Leadership Award Program - Introduced in 2021, the quarterly award program recognises staff and teams who demonstrate excellence and innovation to strengthen our workplace health, safety, culture and wellbeing. Over the past year, we have awarded three incredible staff members and a team – all of whom help create nurturing environments for patients and staff to flourish.

Your Care Hub - Our CARE collaborative is a small group of passionate staff working to enhance Connection, Awareness, Respect, and Empathy and build a positive workplace community. The hub is also an online platform with health and wellbeing resources to share and build a positive and connected workplace, boosting the CARE ethos and NSW Health CORE values. An authentic and supportive workplace enables our people to perform their roles to the best of their ability.

Coffee and Conversation - Thanks to QBE Insurance, this program raises awareness of psychological safety and wellbeing for all MNCLHD employees. It's part of our Wellbeing Check-In initiative which allows staff and managers to learn more about our range of available support services. The People and Culture team visited workplaces to grab a coffee and speak with staff.

Schwartz Rounds - We are committed to delivering this program with the support of NSW Health. Schwartz Rounds are forums where clinical and non-clinical staff meet to discuss the emotional and social aspects of working in healthcare. The focus is on wellbeing, compassion and resilience while contributing to safety and high-quality care. Themes this year included Stories of Hope and Inspiration, the Patient I'll Never Forget, and Balancing Act.



Research and Knowledge Translation

Associate Professor's research and grant success - Health Services Research Development Manager Associate Professor Chris Williams was awarded an HCF Research Translation Grant of \$310,000 for an implementation trial focusing on treatment for pain conditions with support to change behaviours that contribute to chronic disease, such as weight, inactivity, smoking and poor diet. A/Prof Williams was also named as an Investigator on two Medical Research Future Fund (MRFF) applications:

1. The NOTUS trial - non-pharmacological treatment for chronic low back pain using digital health technology. Total funding: \$1.7 million.
2. CAPACITY - A telehealth effectiveness-implementation hybrid trial to increase physical activity in adults with low back pain. Total funding: \$1.4 million.

HETI Rural Research Capacity Building program - The Health Education Training Institute (HETI) Rural Research Capacity Building Program (RRCBP) is a two-year experiential research program for novice researchers based in rural, regional, and remote NSW. Since the program's inception in 2016, 45 staff from MNCLHD have been accepted. Eight have continued their research journey to enrol or complete a higher research degree. Three applicants were awarded placements in the RRCBP in 2022 for their projects covering weekend physiotherapy care in hospitals, peer education to share nutrition information with Aboriginal families, and whether self-directed childhood feeding education leads to improved practices.

Our Virtual Care Service

Our Virtual Care service was established in September 2021 in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Initially named COVID Care in the Community, the service delivered timely, accessible virtual healthcare to people with COVID-19, in the comfort of their homes, to reduce clinical deterioration and unnecessary reliance on hospital emergency departments (EDs).

The service has evolved over the past two years to provide episodic one-off or short-term care to Mid North Coast patients at risk of presentation to hospital, and to support early discharge from hospital.

Now called MNC Virtual Care, the service comprises a team of medical officers, nurses and allied health clinicians, as well as administration staff who can provide rapid assessment, clinical intervention, monitoring and care navigation via virtual modalities, including NSW Health's My Virtual Care telehealth platform.

The service has expanded to include direct point of care referrals from NSW Ambulance and has increased the scope of practice to include medical conditions such as acute respiratory, diverticulitis, percutaneous coronary intervention, pulmonary embolus pathway, COPD, care navigation, wound care, catheter care, and post-surgical monitoring. This is in collaboration with current services such as Hospital in the Home and Community Nursing.

In 2022-23, MNC Virtual Care provided more than 56,000 occasions of service to 10,800 individual Mid North Coast residents. This directly prevented 6,394 emergency department presentations.

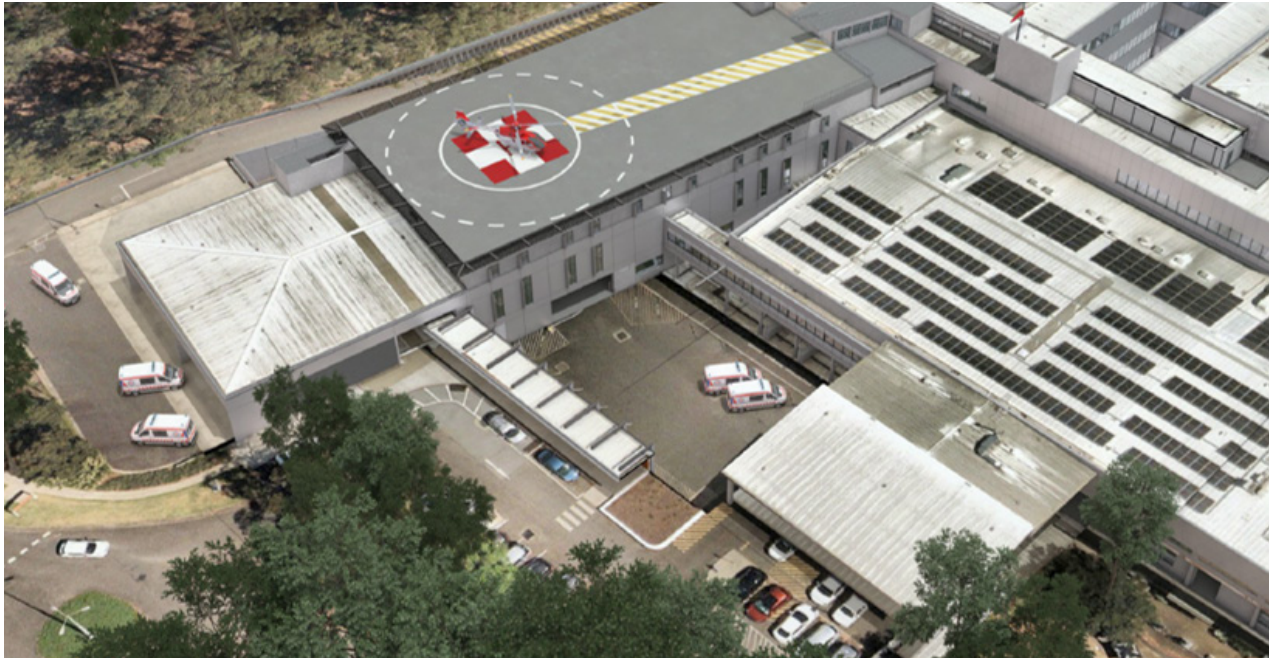
The service received 165 referrals from the direct point of care by paramedics or post-attendance of NSW Ambulance, and 1,084 patients have been referred to the service from ED triage to prevent an inpatient admission. In addition, 586 patients have been referred directly from ward teams and discharge planners and received intervention via MNC Virtual Care to support early discharge from hospital.

This person-centred care model has been well received by our community, our patients and their families.

The seven-day a week service will continue to expand and improve patient outcomes, providing sustainable healthcare and reducing the burden on our facilities.



Capital Works



PMBH Helipad Relocation and Car Park Project

Construction of a new state-of-the-art rooftop helipad above the Emergency Department at Port Macquarie Base Hospital is almost complete, improving access to life-saving emergency care for patients on the Mid North Coast.

The \$21.5 million Helipad Relocation and Car Park project enabled the relocation of the helipad from its existing ground level site to the rooftop above the Emergency Department to provide patients with a fast and direct connection to the hospital's Emergency Department and operating theatres.

The new helipad will strengthen accessibility to health services at Port Macquarie Base Hospital, which is a major referral hospital for the Mid North Coast region, providing specialist services to Port Macquarie, Hastings and Macleay communities.

Once construction of the rooftop helipad is complete, work will begin in early 2024 to build a new street-level car park on the old helipad site, which will provide more than 180 additional parking spaces.

The car park project will help to provide safe and convenient access to hospital services for patients, visitors and staff, now and into the future.



Nambucca Renal

In late 2022, the Nambucca Valley Dialysis Unit transitioned from a privately leased clinic into the purpose-built facility at the expanded Nambucca HealthOne to meet the growing needs of the local community.

A smoking ceremony was held at the new renal unit on 9 December 2022, before the first patients were welcomed on 12 December 2022.

The renal unit operates as a nurse-led facility providing dialysis to the Nambucca Valley patients requiring low level dialysis with continuity of care for renal consumers.

The transition of the renal unit wrapped up the five-year Mid North Coast Local Health District (MNCLHD) HealthOne program which included the \$4 million refurbishment of the Bowraville HealthOne building, construction of a new \$4.5 million Camden Haven HealthOne facility and establishment of innovative ICT services at Urunga and Bonny Hills.

The HealthOne program enables MNCLHD to provide improved, integrated primary health care services to the local community. The integrated approach to primary and community health brings together general practitioners with community health and other health professionals in multidisciplinary teams to improve case management of patients outside of the hospital system.



PMBH Pathology Lab

A new state-of-the-art pathology laboratory was opened at Port Macquarie Base Hospital to boost patient services for the Port Macquarie, Hastings and Macleay communities.

The new laboratory links Port Macquarie with services provided by NSW Health Pathology in the wider Hastings Macleay region, allowing clinicians faster access to vital pathology results.

This includes access to NSW Health Pathology's network of clinical and scientific experts and diagnostic testing such as highly specialised pathology services such as genomics.

The new laboratory has also delivered an enhanced point-of-care testing service and provided expanded on-site microbiology testing enabling an Anatomical Pathology service hub to be established in the region.



Recognition and Awards



Allied Health Professional of the Year - Jessica Trembath

Social Worker Jessica Trembath was named the Allied Health Professional of the Year at NSW Health's 2022 Excellence in Allied Health Awards.

Jessica, who works in Perinatal Mental Health at Port Macquarie Community Health, received the prestigious award at an awards ceremony in Sydney, with several members of her team by her side.

She was recognised for actively contributing to various initiatives, including her collaborative efforts with Birpai Elders on the Lullaby Gathang project. This project involved creating a song in Birpai language for newborns.

2022 NSW Health Awards

The team from the Coffs Harbour Acute Mental Health Unit took out the People and Culture category in the 2022 NSW Health Awards for their Words Matter program.

The award is a fitting tribute to the compassion and commitment of the team members who created this program to improve staff awareness about the impact of our words and how they reflect our attitude.

The program encourages discussion about alternative non-judgemental words used during general conversations, written notes and in handover. This is particularly relevant when describing patients and within the multi-disciplinary team to ensure respectful and dignified communication.



2023 NSW Health Excellence in Nursing and Midwifery Awards

The nursing team at Dorrigo Multi Purpose Service (MPS) were named a finalist in the Team of the Year category of the 11th annual NSW Health Excellence in Nursing and Midwifery Awards.

The small but exemplary team of committed professionals was honoured to receive the accolade – a reflection of the team's dedication, commitment and compassion shown to the Dorrigo community.

2023 NSW Health Awards finalists

Clinical Nurse Educator Alison Taylor from Coffs Harbour was a finalist in the Staff Member of the Year category of the 2023 NSW Health Awards, while volunteer Max Heslehurst from Port Macquarie was runner up in the Volunteer of the Year category.

Community Engagement

Partnering with consumers

Our District is committed to partnering with patients, consumers and their families and carers in health decision-making and the co-design of services.

Partnering with consumers means we build positive, personalised care experiences that support best practice and ensure our community is informed and engaged in their health and wellbeing.

In early 2023, the Governing Board endorsed the establishment of MNCLHD Local Health Advisory Council as a new peak consumer engagement advisory group.

The Local Health Advisory Council fulfils a District-wide role in providing advice to the Governing Board to support effective coordination and promotion of purposeful engagement with our community. This includes seeing feedback from communities about local health issues and service planning.

Journey Stories

An innovative arts in health project *Journey Stories* was launched at Coffs Harbour Health Campus in conjunction with Multicultural Health Week 2023.

A partnership between MNCLHD and Health Infrastructure, *Journey Stories* celebrates cultural diversity and shares the moving stories of how refugees came to call the Coffs Coast home. The project led to dozens of community-led cultural events documented in a short film and a photographic exhibition that links the hospital's old and new sections.

Refugees and people from culturally diverse backgrounds will see familiar faces on the walls when visiting the hospital or using our services.



Consumer Reference Group

A working group of MNCLHD Partnering with the Consumers Sub Committee of the Governing Board, the One District Consumer Reference Group is the peak consumer forum of MNCLHD, providing advice, consumer insights and perspectives to the Governing Board and Chief Executive.

MNCLHD Strategic Plan 2022-2023, and MNCLHD Partnering with Consumers Framework for Patient Safety and Quality 2021-2026, reinforce our vision for building thriving communities through excellence in person-centred care in partnership with our community.

Acknowledging the critical role health consumers play in the effective planning, design, implementation and evaluation of our health services, the primary role of the Consumer Reference Group is to ensure the representation of the voice of the health consumer through lived experience as a patient, family, carer and/or community member.

The goal is to ensure organisational decisions, investments and innovations are aligned to the delivery of the Strategic Plan and Framework and support health services that are patient-centred, cost-effective and aligned to community needs, experiences and expectations.

Closing the Gap



Bowraville HealthOne mural

Mid North Coast Local Health District collaborated with artists from Bowraville-based women's group Nyami Gawbarrigam and Jaanyмили Bawrrungga Inc. to paint a mural on the western wall of the Bowraville HealthOne facility.

The mural depicts stories from the past, land animals, pregnant women, ancestral traditions, and bush medicine.

Artists Jasmin Stadhams, Rebecca Stadhams, Yaara Straede and Denise Buchanan worked with Newcastle-based art consultant Ellie Hannon to design the artwork following community consultation about the local stories that should be depicted on the wall.

Forever captured in the mural are stories such as the birthing walking track. This is a sad but significant moment in Bowraville's history where women in labour walked more than 30 kilometres across rugged terrain and mountains to give birth in Bellingen.

Dorrigo MPS Mural

Dorrigo Multi Purpose Service celebrated NAIDOC Week with an official opening of a mural collaboration painted by Uncle Allan Phillips and mosaic artist Jenni Francis.

The community came together to thank the artists, recognising their hard work and creativity.





It was fitting for this year's NAIDOC Week theme *For Our Elders* that the artwork concept was given to Uncle Allan by a local Elder, which he entitled *Grandmother Mountain Healing: One Mob Dreaming*.

The mural signifies healing and pays tribute to the leaders in the Aboriginal community, past and present.

Gathang Lullaby project

The Gathang Lullaby Project is a partnership between the MNCLHD Perinatal Infant Mental Health Service, the Djiyagan Dhanbaan (Strong Sister) Movement Group, Djuyalgu Wakulda and Muurrbay.

In a first of its kind, the Gathang Lullaby project will assist in preserving and revitalising the Gathang language for Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians for generations to come.

The lullaby replicates the sounds of nature connecting parent and baby to Mother Earth and assists with bonding, connection and early language development in a culturally safe, relevant and empowering way.

The project was conceived in the spirit of the First 2000 Days and was supported by the Close the Gap Innovation Fund.

Women's Health and Wellness Expo

A collaboration between Mid North Coast Local Health District, Durri Aboriginal Corporation Medical Service, Dunghutti Elders and the Kempsey Neighbourhood Centre, the Women's Health and Wellness Expo was a one-stop event to provide information and a little pampering.

Held in conjunction with Women's Health Week 2023, the expo provided its 140 participants with information, free health checks and access to financial and legal services, disaster relief information and some alternative healing.



Our Facilities

Community Health Centres



Bowraville HealthOne
2 George Street
Bowraville NSW 2449
(02) 6691 1125



Camden Haven HealthOne
Laurie Street
Laurieton NSW 2443
(02) 5525 4760



Nambucca HealthOne
4 Fred Brain Avenue
Nambucca Heads NSW 2448
(02) 6598 6100



Port Macquarie Community Health Centre
Morton Street
Port Macquarie NSW 2444
(02) 6589 2100



South West Rocks Community Health Centre
7-9 Steve Eagleton Drive
South West Rocks NSW 2431
(02) 6561 2990



Woolgoolga Community Health Centre
29 Beach Street
Woolgoolga NSW 2456
(02) 6691 1110

Mid North Coast Cancer Institute



Coffs Harbour Health Campus
Pacific Highway
Coffs Harbour NSW 2450
(02) 6656 5737
Freecall: 1800 209 187



Port Macquarie Base Hospital
Wrights Road
Port Macquarie NSW 2444
(02) 6580 1807

Public Hospitals



Bellinger River District Hospital

1 Church Street
Bellingen NSW 2454
(02) 6659 5800

Bellingen Community Health Centre

(02) 6659 5842



Dorrigo Multi Purpose Service

Beech Street
Dorrigo NSW 2453
(02) 6692 7700

Dorrigo Community Health Centre

(02) 6692 7715



Macksville District Hospital

100 Darruya Road
North Macksville NSW 2447
(02) 6598 3300

Macksville Community Health

(02) 6598 3500



Wauchope District Memorial Hospital

69 High Street
Wauchope NSW 2446
(02) 6580 8000

Wauchope Community Health Centre

(02) 6580 8060



Coffs Harbour Health Campus

345 Pacific Highway
Coffs Harbour NSW 2450
(02) 6656 7000

Coffs Harbour Community Health

(02) 6656 7820



Kempsey District Hospital

119 River Street
Kempsey NSW 2440
(02) 6561 2600

Kempsey Community Health

(02) 6561 2790



Port Macquarie Base Hospital

Wrights Road
Port Macquarie NSW 2444
(02) 5524 2000

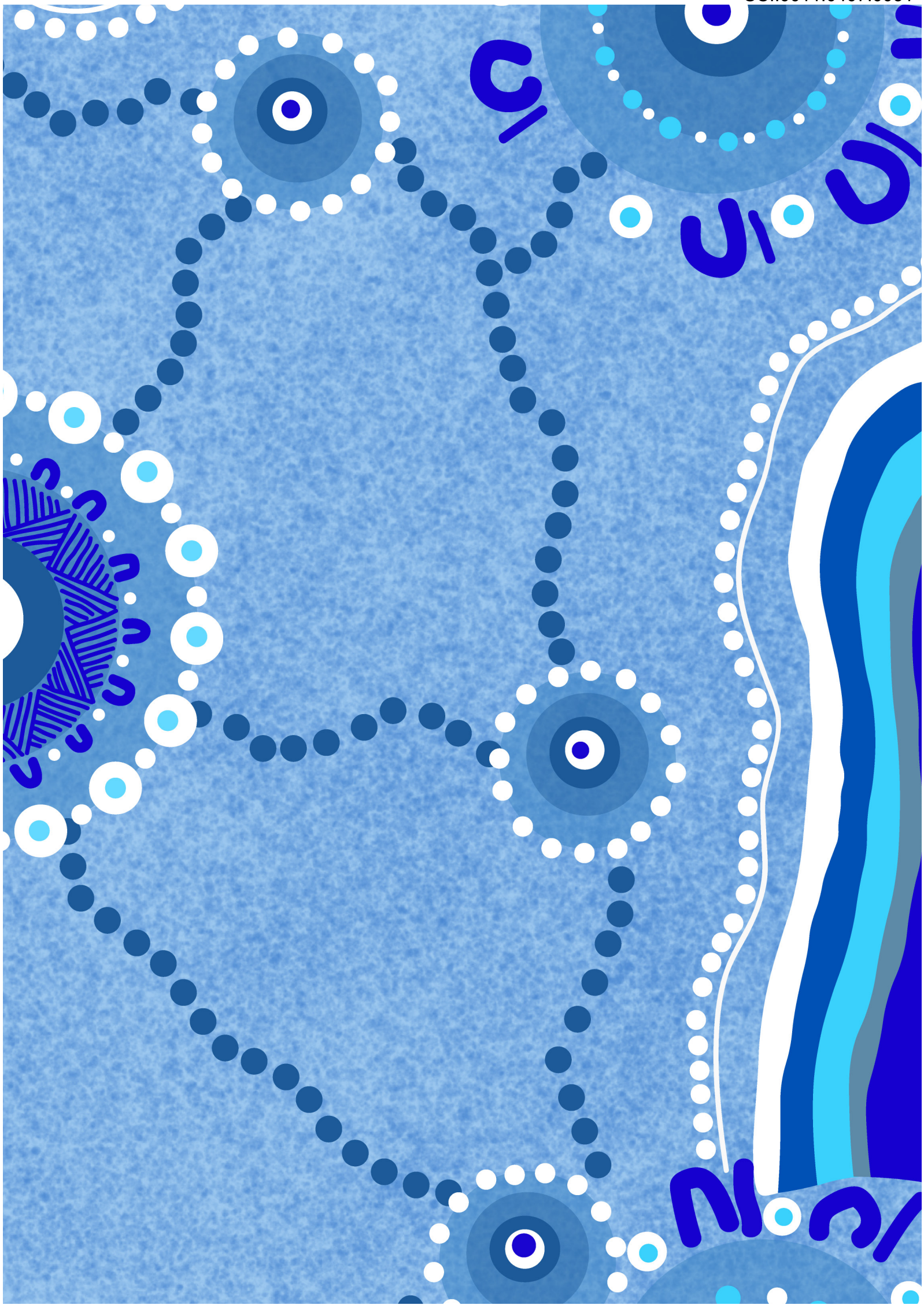


Mid North Coast Local Health District

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1800 726 997

Notes





 MNCHealth

 midnorthcoasthealth

 @mnclhd

 Mid North Coast Local Health District

 mnclhd.health.nsw.gov.au