



# Healthtalk

December 2003



Better Health, Good Health Care

## Moving forward

Spearheading the reforms are clinicians working together with a new management team at SWSAHS and Campbelltown Hospital...



The development of a clinical strategy that will change how we deliver services across the area health service is currently underway.

Professor Jeremy Wilson, clinical associate dean, South Western Sydney Clinical School, University of NSW, is chairing a steering committee to develop the plan and clinical governance structure.

The group will build networks to deliver a common clinical approach, a minimum standard of care, cross-appointments and good systems of communications throughout the area health service.

The implementation of an area-wide clinical service plan is a key priority of the expert review team headed by Professor Bruce Barraclough that looked at systems of patient care in Macarthur Health Service.

The strategy is due for submission to NSW Health by February next year.

The clinical strategy team is consulting with clinical leaders across the area health service and the community participation councils to develop the three to five year plan.

**The aim of the initiative is to:**

- Create area-wide resources, that is one service with multi-campus delivery
- Define roles and centres of expertise for each healthcare site

- Ensure strong primary care services, and
- Provide quality training and personnel

The members of the team which meets twice weekly are Dr Teresa Anderson, SWSAHS advisor Community and Allied Health; Dr Martin Berry, director Cancer Services; Dr Neil Berry, surgeon and chair of Fairfield Clinical Advisory Committee; Dr Patrick Bolton, director SWSAHS Clinical Strategy; Matthew Daly, acting deputy chief executive officer; Professor Stephen Deane, professor of surgery UNSW; Associate Professor Brad Frankum, head of Medicine, at Campbelltown and Camden hospitals; Dr Kathy Gibson, rheumatologist, Liverpool Hospital; Professor Ken Hillman; professor Critical Care Medicine UNSW; Dr Neil Merret, upper gastro-intestinal surgeon, Bankstown Hospital; Jenny Morris, clinical nurse consultant in emergency medicine, Liverpool Hospital; Dr Mark Sheridan, neurosurgeon, Liverpool Hospital; and Tim Wills, director Health Service Planning, SWSAHS.

A/Prof Brad Frankum said other key improvements from the Barraclough recommendations were currently being implemented.

Extra intensive care beds, emergency department reforms, the appointment of specialist clinicians and nurses, and the establishment of renal and cardiac departments are among the extensive overhaul of services to improve the provision of care at Campbelltown and Camden hospitals.

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## From Deb's Desk



As this year draws to a close we can look ahead with renewed energy to a new era of healthcare in south-western Sydney.

While there is no hiding from the fact that this year has been difficult, the events around the Health Care Complaints Commission findings into 19 deaths at Camden and Campbelltown hospitals have triggered the need for positive reforms.

These changes, many of which you can read about in this edition of Healthtalk, are already underway.

They not only address current issues but also provide us with the tools to meet the healthcare demands of a growing population.

As Sydney's population expands in the south west and new suburbs are born, we too must plan to meet the demands of the future.

The HCCC investigation and the Barraclough Review are enabling us to scrutinise how we currently provide services at Campbelltown and Camden hospitals and throughout the entire area health service.

It would be easy to get caught up in the media barrage around the HCCC findings but we must get on with moving forward.

In the couple of months that I have been in the CEO's chair, I have witnessed the outstanding work of many departments and units throughout the area health service.

Importantly, I have been fortunate to meet some of the most dedicated and professional people in healthcare delivery.

Most of you will be aware that I have developed and implemented reform processes in my previous roles at Central Sydney Area Health Service, the NSW Health Department, Corrections Health Services, and New England Area Health Service.

I am acutely aware each health area is unique with its own set of strengths and challenges. To develop the best plan for South Western, it is important we work together and I encourage your involvement.

I have asked Professor Jeremy Wilson, dean of the Clinical School at the University of NSW, to head up a clinical strategy group to develop a clinical plan on the delivery of services across the area.

The group is made up of key clinical leaders from throughout the area health service.

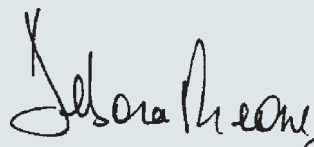
It aims to develop a strategy that will build networks to deliver a common clinical approach, a minimum standard of care, cross-appointments and good systems of communications throughout SWSAHS.

I encourage you to approach either Prof Wilson or any of the team members with your ideas.

The strategy is due for submission to NSW Health in February next year.

The warmth and cooperation from everyone I have met has made me feel very much at home. Although I do still miss my skinny flat whites from the Greenwood Plaza in North Sydney!

On behalf of the area health service executive, I would like to wish you and your families a happy and safe Christmas and I look forward to working with you and the community in the New Year.



**Associate Professor Debora Picone,  
Acting Chief Executive Officer, SWSAHS.**

A Cardiology Department, including the establishment of an echocardiography service, is being developed at Campbelltown Hospital...



**...continued from page 1**

Spearheading the reforms are clinicians working together with a new management team at SWSAHS and Campbelltown Hospital.

Acting chief executive officer Associate Professor Debora Picone has acted on the Barraclough recommendations with senior clinicians as matter of urgency since taking up the position in late October.

**The overhaul includes:**

- The appointment of a new management team at Campbelltown Hospital, including an acting general manager, and an acting director of nursing.
- Increasing the number of ventilated beds at Campbelltown Hospital's intensive care unit (ICU) to four.
- Recruitment is under way for additional ICU nurses.
- The ICU will be networked with Liverpool Hospital, making it fully functional under leading intensivist Dr Gillian Bishop.
- Radiology services have been enhanced at Campbelltown with 24 hour CAT scanning now available.
- After-hours scans will be transmitted to Liverpool Hospital for reading by a radiology physician.
- Ken Hillman, professor of Critical Care Medicine at the University of NSW, is reviewing the operation of medical emergency teams (METS) within Campbelltown and Camden hospitals to ensure a speedy response to patients whose condition may deteriorate.
- Ambulances with emergency patients will bypass Camden Hospital which provides low acuity care. They will be admitted into the South Western Sydney Area Health network.
- Four clinical nurse consultants (CNCs) are being recruited in Emergency Medicine, Intensive Care, General Medicine and Surgery at Campbelltown Hospital. The CNCs are clinical nurse leaders responsible for ensuring best practice clinical nursing.
- Two additional medical registrars are being recruited to Campbelltown Hospital.
- A director of Clinical Training will be appointed at Campbelltown Hospital in the New Year.
- A Professional Practice Unit has been set up to receive grievances and issues of concern on patient safety.
- The unit has been established with legal and clinical skills to appropriately and promptly assess any concern from members of the staff or the community.
- Retraining of senior staff across SWSAHS has commenced in the management of grievances and their resolution.
- A Cardiology Department, including the establishment of an echocardiography service, is being developed at Campbelltown Hospital.
- Two cardiology staff specialists and two visiting medical officers are being recruited.
- It is proposed that the new department will be the foundation stone for a centre of excellence in heart failure treatment and research.
- A Renal Department is being developed in Campbelltown Hospital with recruitment of a renal physician and expert nursing staff in place.
- It will include a six-bed haemodialysis unit due to open in February next year.
- A clinical fellow in neurology and a director of surgery will commence in the New Year. ■



## Ambulatory Care achievements

Improvements to patient care and satisfaction and increased quality of life were highlighted...

The SWSAHS ambulatory care conference showcased current innovative ambulatory care services at SWSAHS and looked at work being done at other area health services.

Our keynote speaker was Director of Post Acute Services at Prince of Wales Hospital, Dr Gideon Caplan.

His presentation was entitled Show me the way to go home which focused on how to avoid hospital stays through early discharge programs, minimising length of stay and hospital in the home.

The concept was framed at the ambulatory care nurses network meeting at the beginning of the year and culminated in the area working party convening the full day program.

It also presented an opportunity to provide the latest information on best practice and to instill a positive approach to the management of ambulatory care patients.

Improvements to patient care and satisfaction and increased quality of life were highlighted.



*ALL SMILES: Nora Hewett (left) Cathy Crowe, Bradley Warner, Hugh Dickson, Collin McArthur, Raad Richards, Stephen Wilson.*

Individual SWSAHS ambulatory care programs were promoted with each sector encouraged to identify differences between the provision of these services at different levels.

More than 80 people attended the day and workshop evaluations showed the forum was very well received.

Thanks goes to Nora Hewett, Professor Hugh Dickson's secretary, who provided clerical assistance and design work. We also wish to thank the sponsors of the day Baxter, Aventis, Roche and BD. ■

## Weathering the winter months



*WINTER SEASON: Planning for the future.*

Staff from around the area came together for the Winter Forum to reflect on initiatives implemented to manage access and other winter activity strategies.

Each sector was given an opportunity to showcase their strategies identifying what was successful and others that

needed to be reassessed, using the contributing factors as a learning tool for next year.

Candidates worked together in groups, collectively drawing upon expertise and experience to see where we could further improve our strategies for managing patient access and winter activity for next year. ■

The objective of this project was to enhance the knowledge of parents and staff with regards to asthma management....

## SWSAHS wins State's top health care accolades

The Baxter NSW Health Awards are held annually to acknowledge innovative quality health projects implemented by NSW Health and NSW Health Services.

The following projects received awards under the categories of Education and Training and Effectiveness.

The State's top project for the Education and Training category was "Evaluating the effectiveness of the provision of paediatric asthma education" – by nurse unit manager Paediatrics, Michael Peregrina and physiotherapist Fiona Brown from the Division of Women's and Children's Health at Liverpool Health Service.

Asthma remains an increasing problem for children throughout the world.

The objective of this project was to enhance the knowledge of parents and staff with regards to asthma management.

A multi-disciplinary approach was used through the Paediatric Asthma Interest Group to develop and implement asthma education packages for staff and parents.

Eighteen months after implementation there has been an increase in staff and parental knowledge, and a reduction in length of stay.

The provision of standardised, evidence based asthma education for parents and staff results in significant benefits for children with asthma.

The winner in the Effectiveness category was: "Development and implementation of practice guidelines for haemodynamically unstable patients with pelvic fractures" – by Trauma clinical nurse consultant, Erica Caldwell, Trauma Department, Liverpool Health Service.

Patients in shock as a result of bleeding (haemodynamically unstable) with a pelvic fracture pose a major clinical challenge.

This project successfully developed and implemented clinical practice guidelines for this subgroup of trauma patients.

Patients are stabilised with the aim of transferring them out of resuscitation within 45 minutes of presentation.

Implementation of the guidelines resulted in an increase of overall optimum quality of care from 41.3 per cent (1999 – 2001) to 95.8 percent (2002) and a decrease in mortality from 34 per cent to 12.5 per cent.

The project has resulted in a palpable and significant improvement for patient outcomes. ■



*WINNERS: Trauma Dept at Liverpool Health Service, Scott D'Amours, Michael Sugrue & Erica Caldwell pictured with Frank Sartor, Minister for Science and Medical Research, Minister Assisting the Minister for Health (Cancer), (far left) & Robyn Kruk, Director General, NSW Health (far right).*



This year's AGM, attended by more than 150 people, was held in the tranquil setting of Camden's picturesque Civic Centre....

## Staff star at AGM

This year's Annual General Meeting highlighted the key element that makes South Western Sydney Area Health Service unique, its staff.

Guest speaker Professor Beverley Raphael, the director of NSW Health's Centre for Mental Health, recognised teams for their contribution to quality improvement when she presented the SWSAHS Quality Awards.

This year's award was a dead heat with two groups taking out the prestigious accolade.

The Macarthur Kids Asthma Project, and the Toxic Drug Monitoring Program teams were joint winners.

Macarthur Health Service has improved the management of acute paediatric asthma patients at Campbelltown Hospital through the Macarthur Kids Asthma Project.

The initiatives include the development of emergency department asthma guidelines, and an education kit for children and families.

The Toxic Drug Monitoring Program established by Liverpool Hospital's Rheumatology Department ensures appropriate monitoring, follow-up and education of patients taking high-risk medications in an ambulatory care setting.

Patients are educated on the side effects of their medications and the importance of blood tests and follow-up visits.

A highly commended honour was awarded to the Rapid Emergency Assessment Teams (REATs) at Fairfield Health Service.

The program sees an Emergency Department medical officer and an experienced triage registered nurse initiate rapid assessment of the patients waiting for treatment.

### **Finalists in this year's Quality Awards were:**

- Wingecarribee Pulmonary Rehabilitation Program
- A Stepped Care Approach to the Treatment of Postnatal Depression: Group Program





- Evaluation of the Satisfaction with Fairfield and Liverpool Divisional Mental Health Intake Service
- Evaluating the Effectiveness of the Provision of Paediatric Asthma Education

This year's AGM, attended by more than 150 people, was held in the tranquil setting of Camden's picturesque Civic Centre.

The now former acting chairman of the board, Brenton Banfield, told community and staff that the past financial year had been marked by growth.

He said planning was underway for the Emergency Department expansion and the new Mental Health Unit at Liverpool Hospital.

State-of-the-art Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI) and Positron Emission Tomography (PET) are now functional at Liverpool Hospital.

Mr Banfield said \$4.9 million from the Greater Metropolitan Transition Taskforce saw enhanced neurosurgery services for Liverpool and Macarthur; new patient

transport at Fairfield and Macarthur; stroke services planned for Macarthur and enhanced stroke services in Liverpool and Bankstown; improved radiology and medical services at Fairfield and Macarthur; continued networking of orthopaedic surgery at Fairfield; development of brain injury services at Liverpool and an increase in senior clinical staff.

In his financial statement, the chairman of the Management of Resources Committee, Arnold Vitocco said hospital admissions had increased in the past financial year by 6,074 to 139,499.

Non-inpatient occasions of service totalled 2,177,019 for the year, representing an increase of 196,412 occasions over the previous year.

Births totalled 10,011, an increase of 412 over 2002/2003.

To meet the increased throughput and workload, staff numbers increased by 426 to 8024 full time equivalents.

For copies of the SWSAHS 2002/03 Annual Report phone 9828 5700; or go to [www.swsahs.nsw.gov.au](http://www.swsahs.nsw.gov.au) ■





## Women's Health Unit wins bronze award



**COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT:** Rukhshana Sarwar (l) (Afghan Women's Network) and Wafa Zaim (r) (Bankstown Area Multicultural Network Inc.) at the launch of Afghan Women Speakout.

The Women's Health Unit in the Division of Population Health, has developed a best practice model for implementing the SWSAHS Strategic Framework for Women's Health 2000-2005.

The Bronze Award was won through the NSW Premier's Public Sector Awards for its Seeding Grants Program under the category "Community Development".

The judges commented that the seeding grant program was a fine example of capacity building with hard to reach agencies and a model that could be picked up by other government services.

The bronze award goes together with the two silver awards and the commendation that the Women's Health Unit has received in previous years. ■

## Junior volunteers bring joy



**VOLUNTEER PARTNERSHIP:** Students from Liverpool Girls High School receive certificates of appreciation for their dedicated efforts.

This year 30 Year 10 students visited patients and helped volunteers at Liverpool Hospital as part of their volunteer program.

Liverpool Girls High School teamed up with our hospital volunteers four years ago to learn about giving their time to help people in need.

The program is run over three school terms where ten students each term "buddy up" with a hospital volunteer.

President of the volunteer group Ms Valma Spruce said it was always a pleasure to have the girls undertake the program. ■

## Growing health in Macarthur



**HOME GROWN:** Cultivating vegetables the traditional way.

The Macarthur Diabetes Service has been working with the local Samoan community to promote health through exercise and a return to traditional diets.

For the past 12 months, residents of Samoan decent have been encouraged to grow their traditional crops to promote the importance of a healthy diet and an active lifestyle in the prevention of diabetes.

Macarthur Diabetes Service Manager Mr Brad Marney says diabetes is the world's fastest growing disease.

"Approximately one million Australians have diabetes and about 50 percent are not aware," he said.

One of the highlights of the Samoan project was the garden competition, which was part of the Samoan Visual Impairment Prevention Program (VIPPP), a commonwealth funded program that aimed at reducing diabetes eye disease.

The Samoan project was one of four successful pilot sites in NSW and the project is now nearing completion. ■

## Santa's special visit to Bankstown



**CHRISTMAS CHEER:** Ho! Ho! Ho!



**ENTERTAINING:** Camp quality puppets.

It was smiles all round at the Bankstown Hospital annual children's ward Christmas party.

There were 45 children, including patients and their brothers and sisters and children from the Birralee Childcare Centre, who were entertained by the Starlight Foundation, the Camp Quality puppets and of course Santa.

There was face painting, plenty of party food, fairy floss and donuts which were kindly donated by Donuts-To-Go at Kings Langley.

Paediatric Registrar, Mark Johnson, did a wonderful job as Santa. ■

## Community participation training

...key factor to providing more accessible and effective health services....

Our community representatives have now almost doubled with over 160 members many of whom are on committees such as planning, aged care and mental health.

More than 60 of these representatives from across SWSAHS took part in a two day residential training program to learn more about the health service, its processes and how to be an effective community representative.

Active participation of consumers and the community in our health service planning, development, service delivery and evaluation is a key factor to providing more accessible and effective health services and is an important dimension of quality health care. ■



**NETWORKING:** Representatives from the community and staff enjoying the orientation dinner.



**TEAM WORK:** Community Representatives working in groups at the orientation training.

## Salary packaging soars at SWSAHS

SWSAHS  
now has one  
of the highest take  
up rates for salary  
packaging....



What would you do with an extra \$60-\$100 a fortnight?

More and more Health Service employees are asking themselves this question as salary packaging soars at South Western Sydney Area Health Service. SWSAHS now has one of the highest take up rates for salary packaging with in excess of 4000 employees enjoying its benefits.

Angie Young from the SWSAHS Salary Packaging team says that most people don't believe it when they are told they could have more cash just by packaging their earnings.

"We can give you extra dollars in your pay packet each fortnight and arrange for your bills to be paid directly from the pay office. It's fantastic!"

The scheme allows for payment of mortgage, rent, personal loans and other bills to be paid directly from gross (before tax) income. It works because the Area Health Service has an exemption from the Tax Office concerning fringe benefits tax. Salary Packaging is a voluntary scheme that doesn't change gross salary or any entitlements determined under the relevant industrial awards.

Angie and her team are available to talk about the options for salary packaging.

"Even if they don't have a mortgage or pay rent there are many other items that staff can Salary Package. We can sit down with them and work out how much they can save."

If you're interested call the hotline to find out how to start: 9828 6999

### Custom packages available

Most employees choose to package evenly over the whole of the fringe benefit year, which starts from April and finishes in March, but the salary packaging team can customise your package.

#### **For example:**

Mary's daughter is getting married in June and she wants extra money prior to the big day – her salary packaging can be customised so that she receives extra money in time for the wedding.

Joe has his rego coming up in September and he knows he will need at least an extra \$1000.00 but he doesn't know where it's going to come from. It can come from his salary packaging!

Sandra and Pete want extra dollars for Christmas and their Summer Holidays. They can get that extra money through salary packaging.

**Don't miss out on your share.... ring your salary packaging team today!  
Angie or Kris 9828 6999**



Debora Picone



Matthew Daly



JoAnne Fisher



Jenny Becker

## Joining our team

**Welcome to Associate Professor Debora Picone**, CEO SWSAHS. Debora has a long-standing and distinguished career over 28 years in the New South Wales public health system.

A/Professor Picone began her career as a General Nurse at Prince Henry Hospital, Little Bay in 1975. Her wide-ranging public health experience includes many leadership positions in nursing, clinical management, academia, executive management and the senior executive service.

A/Professor Picone was appointed Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the NSW Corrections Health Service in 1997 and acted as CEO of the New England Area Health Service in 1999. In 2000, she was seconded to the NSW Health Department to provide strategic advice as Director of the Action Plan Coordination Unit and subsequently appointed Deputy Director General, Policy.

**A/Deputy CEO Matthew Daly** has managed in a variety of health settings including teaching hospitals, district hospitals, private hospitals and community health services for the last twenty years.

He is currently Executive Director of Concord Repatriation General Hospital, a 500 bed teaching hospital of the University of Sydney, and Canterbury Hospital, a 160 bed District Hospital.

Matthew holds tertiary qualifications in health administration and business and is a surveyor for The Australian Council on Healthcare Standards and State Branch Councillor with the Australian College of Health Service Executives.

**JoAnne Fisher** has been appointed Acting General Manager of Macarthur Health Service. JoAnne was most recently the Executive Director of the Greater Metropolitan Transition Taskforce (GMTT) and was responsible for building the framework to provide a sustainable program for clinical involvement in service delivery.

Jo's exemplary career in the NSW health system includes senior management positions with Royal North Shore, Concord and Royal Prince Alfred hospitals.

**Jenny Becker** has been appointed acting director of Nursing and Acute Services for 6 months at Macarthur Health Service.

She has been seconded from Central Coast Area Health Service where she has been the director of Nursing and Clinical Services since 1998.

Her dedication to nursing and change management, building teams, clinical practice development and the nurse as the knowledge worker have seen her present papers internationally. ■

"The response this year has been overwhelming..."

## Staff give generously to our senior citizens

SWSAHS staff their families and friends were asked to support an annual Christmas appeal by donating gifts to patients in local nursing homes.

Personal Assistant to the CEO Anne Crowley said "The response this year has been overwhelming and is indicative of the generosity of SWSAHS staff."

Over 350 gifts have been donated and were delivered by a number of area staff on 18th December to Kilbride Nursing Home Campbelltown, Carrington Centennial Nursing Home Camden, The Abbey Nursing Home at Mittagong. ■



## Mailbag

"I must mention Linda, that I am especially grateful to you and a few others at Corella (Detoxification Service, Fairfield) for making me feel so normal and listening to me with patience, gentleness, empathy and love. For that and a couple of other reasons I shall remain forever grateful to you all. Thankyou."

"Your educational programs were marvellous and very much in line with some of the topics and activities we undertake here at (Palm Court)- albeit in more detail."

"The cognitive skills we learn are put to the test; we are challenged at every application"

"I plan to attend post-rehab care at Pathways"

"I thankyou once again for the time you spent with me and I look forward to popping in one day to say hello to you all"

**N.M.**

***This letter was received via the Palliative Care Association of NSW***

"I would like to pass on my congratulations to Bob, Anna, Stephanie, Camden PCU staff and all staff who participated in the care of Mr B.

It's very encouraging to have received such great feedback and a testament to the commitment you all have to your patients and their families. Well done."

Regards

**J.H.**

## Join our cops and have a ball

The Charity Ball will be held at the Liverpool Catholic Club on Saturday 21st February, 2004.

Tickets will be \$60.00.

Police from the Fairfield Local Area Command are hosting a Charity Ball and Auction. Event Coordinator Fairfield/Liverpool Charity Ball, Holley Carmichael said "After much thought the local police felt that the local communities would benefit most from a charity event to raise much needed funds for South Western Sydney Area Health Services."

"We also want to see the people who live here benefit from better health services, increased access to services and closer community ties."

The Charity Ball will be held at the Liverpool Catholic Club on Saturday 21st February, 2004. Tickets will be \$60.00 and are available from each sector's General Managers Unit and Doug Cameron at Area HR on 98285753. ■

## Health Talk Contributions:

To contribute stories or photos to "Health Talk" please send an email to Area Public Affairs - Email: [clair.cameron@swsahs.nsw.gov.au](mailto:clair.cameron@swsahs.nsw.gov.au)  
Phone: 9828 6039 Fax: 9828 5704

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