



2018 Forster Local Health Report

Acknowledgement of Country

The Forster Local Health Committee respectfully acknowledges Aboriginal people as the traditional owners and custodians of the land in which our health facility is located, and pay respect to the Elders, community members and the community-controlled sector who partner with us to improve the health outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in our District.

Year at a Glance

This year the Local Health Committee has been able to attract four new members - Ed Harvey, Beth Reid, Judy Thompson and Colleen McGregor. They have become actively involved in the new project which is in the planning phase for next year - an Ageing at Home Forum, planned for October 2019.

Recruitment of Richard Barnes, a casual Maintenance Officer, just in time for long-term original employee, Ian Grant to retire, has proven to be a popular decision. Richard has adjusted to health service life and completed a garden makeover to increase the street appeal of our facility.

Sadly, Ian Grant retired after being the Maintenance Officer since the building was commissioned and his sense of humour, expertise and knowledge have been a significant loss to the facility. Ian and wife Anne are enjoying retirement, travelling overseas to spend time with children and grandchildren.



Ty Wicks, Ian Grant & Elliott "Nessie" Stewart - WH & S BBQ

Our Palliative Care Volunteer Support Program continues to thrive with an increase in volunteers each year. There are currently 34 active volunteers between our four Community Centres with two volunteers reaching 15 years of service. This was celebrated at the Christmas Lunch recently, recognising the wonderful support the volunteers provide to the patients, families and carers and our staff.

Each year, the Health Service conducts a staff survey with the results being able to be analysed down to each facility. This has created a friendly rivalry between some facilities, i.e. Forster and Gloucester. After coming second to Gloucester this year, Louise, the Manager at Forster has promised to improve the results and reverse Gloucester's position.



Karon Devenish, Quality Manager, presenting Louise Saville, Facility Manager, with the 2nd prize & Certificate



Karon Devenish & Louise Saville - challenge to Gloucester

Our Health Committee



Main photo back row: Louise Saville, Ed Harvey, Beth Reid, Karon Devenish

Main photo front row: Judy Thompson, Margaret Guider & Colleen McGregor

Top left inset- Anne McKay

Bottom left inset - Lyndie Hepple

Top right inset - Laurie Cullen

Bottom inset- Janice Paulson, "Miss Ida Down" & Pat Maunsell

Forster Local Health Committee farewelled Patricia Maunsell from the committee membership due to her other commitments and family keeping her busy. Pat was an active member for a number of years, always with suggestions and ideas. This was partly due to her extensive experience as a registered nurse, before moving into management and her role as an accreditation surveyor. Thank you for your hard work Pat!

We were also faced with extreme sadness when one of our members passed away after a long illness, Jenny Daniel is still missed - particularly her wicked sense of humour and ability to put forward the 'everyman' opinion in discussions. Jenny had plenty of experience with the health services as a patient, so was truly qualified to speak her opinion.

Laurie Cullen is a retired former Commonwealth Government employee, having worked in the Federal Police in a number of different areas, including Sydney International Airport, Family Law and the Child Protection Unit. Retirement has given Laurie the opportunity to spend more time with his wife and grandchildren and pursue his interests in radio controlled aircraft and tennis. Laurie Cullen actively participated in the Community and Patient Partnership Committee for the majority of the year. Laurie found this a very interesting experience, gaining insight into other areas of the District.

New member, Beth Reid, is semi-retired. A qualified Health Information Manager, she holds post graduate degrees in health services management. She is Principal Advisor at Pavilion Health Pty Ltd, concentrating on the topics of activity based funding, clinical classification systems and the quality of hospital activity data. Formerly, she was the Professor of Health Information Management at the University of Sydney.

Karon Devenish's background is in nursing and management, spanning over 30 years in both public and private health services. Prior to joining HNE Health in 2011, Karon was General Manager of Forster Private Hospital. Karon has also held senior management positions with Hunter New England Health in both Acute and Community settings. Karon's interests outside work, include pursuing a healthy lifestyle and spending time with friends and family.

Anne McKay has a background in human resource management, communications and organisation change. Anne's interests include the wellbeing of older people, chronic disease prevention and health services planning. Anne is also a volunteer at Forster Visitor Information Centre.

Margaret Guider is a community representative and current Chair of the Committee, having a background in education and a Masters Computers Education.

Margaret has a passion for teaching in many roles and is committed to continual self-improvement. Margaret has interests in genealogy, tennis and walking.

Lyndie Hepple is the coordinator of Community Strengthening for MidCoast Council. This position is responsible for all of Council's community development activities. Lyndie is also responsible for Council's Ageing and Disability Inclusion Action Plans and has a strong interest in advocating for improved health services for residents in that demographic.

Ed Harvey has recently retired to Forster from Croydon in Sydney. Due to having a daughter who has worked in NSW public health system as a social worker and a son in law who is an accident and emergency staff specialist at Westmead, Ed has accordingly developed an interest in community health matters.

Ed has qualifications in economics, human geography, valuation of real estate and project management, together with over 40 years work experience in the private sector (consulting engineers, mining companies and property development), local government (Central Tablelands Water, Liverpool and Warringah Councils) and NSW State Government (Public Works, Planning and Infrastructure). His roles have included property portfolio management, asset management and the management of teams involved in the development of infrastructure and building projects. Ed is a MidCoast Council volunteer involved in Second Head Reserve maintenance.

Judy Thompson is a new member of our committee and previously worked at Sydney Legacy for 23 and a half years. Judy was the Office Manager at the Southwest Metropolitan Division, assisting the widows and children. Judy has retired to Forster and has an interest in Forster Family History Advisory Group and the Wallis Lake Tourers Travel Club.

Janice Paulson is retired and has been a domestic engineer for 21 years. Janice has held a number of positions over the years including training as a Nursing Aide at Manning Base Hospital, Aboriginal Health Promotions Officer at Taree Community Health and Aboriginal Liaison Officer at the women's refuge as an advocate and social support person. Janice is a Cultural Mentor at Tobwabba Aboriginal Medical Centre with any new Registrars or General Practitioners working at the service.

Pam Paulson, although now retired, has led a busy life, having achieved a Diploma in Teaching, Advanced Diploma in Community Development and worked as a Nurses' Aide at Manning Base Hospital. Pam worked with Dr Fred Hollows' team as a coordinator, setting up meetings with Aboriginal students and parents from Taree to the Queensland border. Pam remains community minded and loves to organise events where she gets to meet other Elders and do beading and bark art.

Louise Saville is the Site Manager of Forster Community Health and Service Manager of Generalist Care Services across the Lower Mid North Coast Sector. Louise has a background in nursing and private enterprise. Louise's interests include gardening, water activities and spending time with her family.

Forster Community Health Centre is located at 14 Breese Parade, Forster, on the alluring Mid North Coast. The area is surrounded by beautiful lakes, beaches and State forests and is appealing to a variety of lifestyles.

Services located in our facility include:

- Aboriginal Health
- Aged Care including a visiting Geriatrician
- Antenatal clinic for Manning Hospital patients
- Audiometry; Cardiac Rehabilitation
- Integrated Care
- Childhood immunisation (0-5 years)
- Child protection counselling
- Child & Family Health services
- Continence Clinics
- Counselling - Children and Families
- Diabetes
- Dietetics
- Drug and Alcohol Services
- Community Nursing
- Genetic Counselling
- Harm Reduction Program
- Hospital in the Home
- Mental Health services
- Occupational therapy for children
- Oral Health
- Palliative Care
- Physiotherapy for children
- Pre-admission Clinic for Manning Hospital
- Podiatry and foot care
- Port-a-cath Clinics
- Regional Assessment Service
- Renal Outreach Clinic
- Respiratory Rehabilitation
- School based Immunisation
- Sexual Assault Counselling
- Sexual Health Clinic
- Speech Pathology for children
- Women's Health
- Wound Clinic.

Our Health Service



Forster Community Health

Our commitment is to provide high level care delivered in a professional, safe and compassionate manner within our local community.

Community Services provide patient care which may include clinic visits, home visits or mixed visits. We work in close partnership with doctors, private health professionals and community organisations to ensure you, our patients, receive appropriate care.

We ensure open communication, respecting beliefs, values and culture. Our focus is on delivering a high standard of care working with you to support your health and well-being.



Refreshed garden



Chase Barnes - Small Consumer Consultation - hanging his decoration



Decorated Reception

Partnering with Our Community

Our Local Health Committee members have once again provided valuable input into our recruitment process, participating on interview panels. Although initially surprised by their presence, the applicants have made positive comments.

This year, in addition to discussions and advice regarding our services from our “consumers”, the Reception team at Forster Community Health involved the younger visitors to our Centre. They were asked to colour in a Christmas decoration and then hang it at the counter. This proved to be a popular activity with the children and the young at heart, helping to brighten the atmosphere.



Levi Hagarty - Small Consumer Consultation - hanging his decoration

Following the Consumer Led Surveys that were conducted with the patients in the Public Beds at Forster Private Hospital, a meeting has been convened with the Chief Executive Officer, to discuss the results and further considerations.

Planning is well underway for an exciting year in 2019, with the Local Health Committee planning to hold a forum called Ageing at Home Project in October. The demographic for the Great Lakes area shows that we have the largest percentage of persons over the age of 65 within regional New South Wales and it is anticipated that this will continue to grow - 30.1% of the population is aged 65 years and over compared with 20.6% for regional New South Wales.

The plan is to showcase the options available to members of the community to enable and support them to age in their own homes. Expected to attend are not just elderly but community members in their 50s. This age group will be able to make the necessary plans and increase their awareness of support available for elderly parents and family members including home modifications, equipment suppliers, financial planners, legal decision making around Enduring Guardianship and Power of Attorney, aged and disability care service providers and Service Clubs. Physical and psychosocial wellbeing activities will be promoted to maintain good health as we age. The Working Group have met a number of times, already making progress with their plans.

Hunter New England Local Health District



Highlights

During the year, the Hunter New England Local Health District Board travelled around the Health District to have the monthly Board Meetings. In September we were privileged to have them meet at Forster.

The visit gave staff an opportunity to speak with the Board Members, outlining some of their successes and concerns. Ken White, a current member of the Board, was the General Manager of the then Mid North Coast Health Service when the facility was commissioned. Ken oversaw the construction and occupancy of the building in 1996, he was appreciative of the opportunity to revisit the facility which has been maintained at a high standard, particularly with the fresh paint and garden makeover to welcome our visitors.

High profile patient, Dr Harold Cooper, a vet known for his television program *Harry's Practice* completed Cardiac Rehabilitation with our Chronic Care team. While initially being resistant, Dr Harry was impressed with the program. Because of his busy lifestyle with television commitments, Dr Harry has been able to utilise some of the ideas and education provided to him at the exercise groups. His personal assistant now books motels with a gym while travelling for his commitments. Dr Harry was happy to be interviewed and for us to use his story to promote the importance of Cardiac Rehabilitation Services.



Peter Ivey, Cardiac Rehabilitation Nurse & Dr Harry Cooper



Dr Harry Cooper



Our Sector achieved full Accreditation at the National Safety and Quality Health Service Standards held in September. Two of the five Surveyors visited Forster and they were surprised

by the willingness of our Committee members and patients of the Respiratory Rehabilitation to meet with them to discuss successes, concerns and issues.

Our Sector was selected to be the pilot site for the newly released Security Improvement Audit Tool. The internal security audits have previously been completed each year with an external audit conducted every five years. The new process requires the facility staff to self-assess and respond to 30 criteria on a two-yearly cycle. Initial feedback from the team of assessors has been positive.

In June this year, the final stage of the air conditioning replacement took place. Due to the enormous costs, this has been staged over three years. Thanks go to our staff for their patience and the team from Mackie Electric & Refrigeration for their professionalism and consideration of our patients and staff.

The staff at Forster Community Health continue to enjoy the fifth Wednesday of the month themed lunch. This provides an opportunity for everyone working at the facility to network and share time in a relaxed environment. Themes are chosen to align with the work health and safety calendar. October was National Safe Work Month so the launch of "We're Safe Culture Program" was included.

Community Health Highlights

This year saw the introduction of wound management specialist clinics in Forster, Bulahdelah and Gloucester. Roger Reville, our wound management specialist, is based in Taree and travels weekly to the other centres. The purpose of this specialist clinic is for the treatment of hard to heal or non-healing wounds, referrals are derived from our current community nursing patients. Roger has had extensive training in wound care and takes part in the Wound Management and Practice Committee.

Roger's first introduction to nursing was as a medic in the Royal Australian Navy back in the early 1990's. In 2009, Roger began work at St Vincent's Hospital in the role of Clinical Nurse Specialist, which sparked an interest in wounds. Building on this interest, he completed a Post Graduate Diploma in Wound Management at Monash University. Roger is a Wounds Australia member and previously a committee member of the NSW Australian Wound Management Association.



Roger Revill, Wound Management Specialist

In June 2017, the NSW Government announced an additional \$100 million for palliative care services over the next four years. This includes funding for a range of palliative care initiatives including education and training for the NSW Health workforce. Our local palliative care team received funding from this source to hold two workshops for nurses working at local hospitals and aged care facilities. The team was able to secure excellent speakers, including Kate Munro, End-of-life Care Coordinator and Dr Rachel Hughes, Director of Palliative Care, Calvary Mater Hospital. Both workshops received excellent feedback and were well supported by local clinicians.

Some of our palliative care nurses were also successful in sourcing some of this funding to attend conferences and seminars around the State which in turn benefits our patients and their families and carers.

Community Nurses at Forster have expanded their clinical skill set and are now running a specialist nursing clinic, including port-a-cath management. This specialist clinic reduces the need for patients to travel to Manning Hospital.

Use of Telehealth continues to increase for our patients and staff with some patients accessing specialists via SCOPIA, in their own homes. SCOPIA is similar to FaceTime or Messenger Video Call, but through secure site where a health staff member sits with a patient and accesses the specialist clinician is via a virtual consultation. Forster has a video conference computer in a clinic room outside the secured area of the building to enable non-patients' access to this service to save extensive travel to Newcastle and other areas.

This year Glenn Daley, our Clinical Nurse Educator in Community Health completed the District's Emerging Leaders Course. This involved Glenn travelling to Newcastle for some face to face education and completing other modules in his own time. Glenn frequently travels between Taree, Forster, Gloucester and Bulahdelah to provide education and assess staff on clinical competencies and support students while completing their clinical placements.

Our Medical Leaders

Forster Community Health is privileged to welcome Dr Bronwyn Crawford, Specialist Endocrinologist from Sydney's Concord Repatriation General Hospital. Dr Crawford has over 20 years experience in clinical endocrinology. In addition to diabetes, an endocrinologist specialises in disorders of the thyroid, calcium, bone, pituitary, adrenals as well as disorders of menstruation, menopause and male hormone deficiency. Since 2014, Dr Crawford has provided an outreach endocrinology consultancy service for the Mid North Coast region supported by the Rural Doctors Network.



Dr Bronwyn Crawford

Dr Charles Estibeiro, Psychiatrist, visits Forster Community Health each week to provide a clinic for the community patients in our area. This is a valuable service which allows local patients the opportunity to have access to a specialist without the need to travel.



Dr Charles Estibeiro

Dr Jacinta Guthridge a Geriatrician continues to provide a much needed and appreciated clinical service to the Great Lakes area community. Dr Guthridge obtained her Bachelor of Medicine and Bachelor of Surgery at Monash University in 1990, she is a Fellow of the Royal Australasian College of Physicians and has been a Specialist Geriatrician since 1999.

Dr Guthridge takes a whole person approach to the care of older adults, whose profile may include multiple chronic health issues. Based at Manning Hospital, Dr Guthridge sees patients in outpatients, on the wards and also in Residential Aged Care Facilities. Dr Guthridge also provides a clinic at Forster

Community Health up to twice per month. A referral from the treating GP is required to access bulk-billed services. Dr Guthridge keeps current with advances in treatment by attending and participating in international conferences and forums.



Dr Jacinta Guthridge

In the Spotlight

Community Palliative Care Volunteer Program

Mal Lyon and Ros Tarplee have been valued members of the Community Palliative Care Volunteer Program for the last 15 years. They have so far provided well over 600 visits, offering practical help, companionship and comfort care to more than 50 patients and their families.

Palliative care volunteers enhance the quality of life for patients and their families by providing social and emotional support with sensitivity, empathy and a willingness to be there for the patient and their family and friends.

We are very grateful to all of our palliative care volunteers as they help to bring humanity and compassion into the lives of people in our community who are facing a particularly challenging time of their life.



Mal and Ros receiving their 15 years of service awards at the Community Palliative Care Volunteer Christmas Party with Program Co-ordinator Karen Rudge in the background

Regional Assessment Service

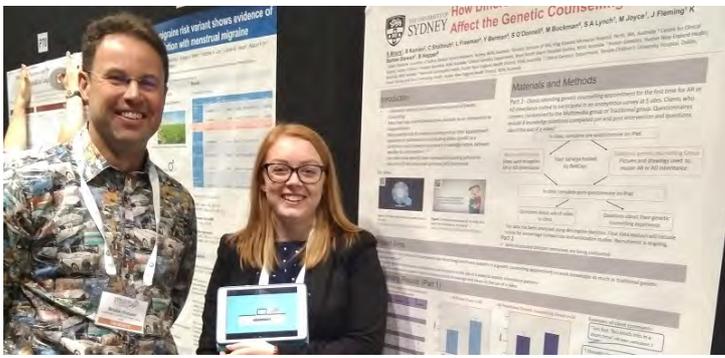
Introducing a new service to Forster Community Health, the Regional Assessment Service. Patricia Kilsby, known as Trish, has over ten years' experience working within the NSW Health Care industry, working across a variety of positions and is currently employed with the Hunter New England Local Health District as a Home Support Assessor with the Regional Assessment service. The Regional Assessment Service (RAS) is one of two My Aged Care Assessment services conducting nationally standardised assessments to eligible clients and assisting clients to understand, connect, and engage with the most appropriate Commonwealth subsidised Aged Care Services. The Home Support assessments are non-clinical and approach each client holistically to determine their current needs and level of supports required to allow them to remain in their homes independently and safely. With a strong focus on wellness and enablement, Home Support Assessors deal mainly with entry level services and are able to refer on to Aged Care Assessment Teams should the need present itself during the assessment or subsequent support review.



Patricia Kilsby, Regional Assessment Officer

Genes for Jeans Day

Bruce Hopper, Genetic Counsellor based at Forster Community Health, hosts a stand at the shopping centre on Genes for Jeans Day each year. Pictured here with supporters, the stand attracts quite a bit of interest. Bruce has been collaborating with colleagues in Ireland and has made videos of the Genes for Jeans stand experience. The Irish team will be evaluating the videos and Bruce will be meeting up with the team in Ireland next year. Bruce has been busy not only in his clinical role but also as a student mentor, having had students for 14 weeks of this year.



Bruce Hopper & Kathryn Moore

Tobwabba Men's Group

Aboriginal Health Education Officer, Elliott "Nessie" Stewart, has had a busy year working with the Tobwabba Men's Group to establish a safe environment for men to gather and discuss a range of topics, including health, diet, employment and basic life skills. The Group meets fortnightly and Nessie can be contacted at Forster Community Health for further information. During NAIDOC Week, the annual NAIDOC Aboriginal men's golf challenge celebrated its 10th anniversary. This year, local NRL celebrity Latrell Mitchell attended and represented his community in the Taree team. The participants enjoyed having a celebrity attend to present prizes, share photos and sign autographs.



N/A



N/A



13,025

patients presented at our emergency department



N/A

of patients presenting to the ED were admitted or discharged within 4 hours*



N/A

Day only surgical procedure were performed

patients accessed services (like blood tests, clinics & community nursing) but were not admitted

Babies were born



N/A



N/A



N/A

of Category A patients received their elective surgery within the 30 day timeframe^φ

of Category B patients received their elective surgery within the 90 day timeframe^φ

of Category C patients received their elective surgery within the 365 day timeframe^φ



N/A

Full-time equivalent staff



N/A

Expenditure budget[^]

Acknowledgements & Feedback

Forster Local Health Committee acknowledges the commitment and dedication of all health professionals providing services to the residents of the Great Lakes area.

We also acknowledge the contribution members of the community provide through suggestions within the compliments and complaints form, cards, letters and the patient suggestion box. Their ongoing willingness to review and provide feedback on our patient brochures and forms has been invaluable.

The Health Committee Members are recognised publicly for their outstanding assistance in the recruitment process to ensure that the result is hiring the best person for the role. The enormous commitment of their time to provide support to our Management team to participate in the recruitment process is recognised and appreciated.

Forster Community Health staff acknowledge the exemplary level of commitment provided by our the Committee, this cannot be overstated as without this our communities would not be the beneficiaries of improved health care.