



2018 Tamworth Local Health Report

## Acknowledgement of Country

Hunter New England Local Health District respectfully acknowledges Aboriginal people as the traditional owners and custodians of the land in which our health facilities are 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 has been another very busy and exciting year for Tamworth Rural Referral Hospital and its community based services. The hospital is the pre-eminent referral centre for the north of the Hunter New England Local Health District and this role has been further enhanced with additional services and improvements to the physical structure of the facility.

During the year, the Local Health Committee has remained informed and involved in the developments that have been occurring, and the health service owes them a debt of gratitude for their interest and input into the changes that have occurred.

Throughout 2018, work to refurbish the rehabilitation unit took place. This is particularly significant for patients that have longer stays, as they progress through their rehabilitation. Both the internal and the external environment received upgrades and the Hospital Auxiliary generously donated funds to replace and upgrade the furniture in the unit.

Major service enhancements this year included the funding and recruitment of a cancer care nurse, to improve coordination of a patient's cancer care journey. We also welcomed a Prostate Cancer nurse, to provide information and support to men affected by cancer. Both positions are funded and supported through generous donations from community organisations.

In an exciting enhancement to diagnostic services, Tamworth Hospital installed a state of the art Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI) machine. This provides doctors with the ability to accurately diagnose a range of injuries and illnesses for hospital inpatients.

During the year, further funding for enhanced maternity services was received from the State Government to support additional midwife positions at the hospital. Under the Birthrate Plus program, this funding has enabled Tamworth to reinvigorate its Midwifery Group Practice, offering care to low risk pregnant women.

Medchart- an electronic medication ordering and prescribing software program - was introduced and rolled out to all clinical areas in the hospital. The system provides more accurate and accessible provision of medications to patients and has inbuilt safety features to alert doctors and nurses to medication errors.

An additional highlight of 2018, was the continuation of the follow-up phone call service. This call is made by a nurse on the ward, and allows them to check on a patient who has been recently discharged. This also gives the patient an opportunity to address any questions and concerns.

All of this has been made possible by our wonderful staff and the partnerships that have been built with individuals, organisations and communities in the region. Many thanks also goes to the Local Health Committee, the Hospital Auxiliary, the amazing band of volunteers and the great community of Tamworth.

## Our Health Committee

It has been another year of activity and growth in services for Tamworth Hospital and Community Health.

We are thankful to JobLink Plus for their commitment to donate the salary of a Cancer Care Nurse for five years. This position is in addition to the appointment of a McGrath Breast Care Nurse in 2017.

Following extensive lobbying from many groups and individuals, we have had new appointments in the areas of Palliative Care Support and Maternity Services.

To raise community awareness of the most common chronic diseases affecting men, our health committee established a partnership with ABC Local Radio. Our goal was to inform men and their carers about how they can reduce their risk of chronic disease by regularly visiting their GP and adopting a healthy lifestyle. Topics include heart disease, stroke, diabetes, dementia, prostate cancer and respiratory illness.

Our committee advocates for and promotes active and healthy lifestyles. We thank the many organisations and individuals who are conducting educational programs and other initiatives within our communities, with the overall aim of improving health and wellbeing.

We gratefully acknowledge all staff in our Health Service. We are proud to live in a community which has such a high standard of health care and state of the art facilities. We thank the staff for their dedication and valuable work.

I would also like to thank the many community and business groups who are continually raising and donating funds to provide improved health care and services for our community. The commitment and contribution of our volunteers is greatly appreciated.

Thank you to the Tamworth Local Health Committee members for your enthusiasm, dedication and valuable input.

Tamworth Health Committee community members include:

- Helen Tickle (Chair)
- Chris Kennedy
- Narelle Langfield
- Heather Lynn
- Penny Milson
- Dimity Betts

- Michael Schmiedel



Helen Tickle

## Our Health Service



Tamworth Hospital is a Rural Referral Hospital which provides a range of healthcare services including:

- 24-hour emergency department
- High level surgical and medical services, including a diagnostic and interventional cardiac catheterisation laboratory
- Intensive care
- Coronary care
- Rehabilitation services (including brain injury)
- Mental health services
- Renal services
- Paediatrics
- Maternity
- Medical and radiation oncology
- Radiology
- Pathology
- Allied health services
- Outpatient clinics link the New England area with specialist tertiary hospitals in Newcastle and Sydney.
- Child and family allied health (including physiotherapy, occupational therapy, dietetics, Child Development Service)

- Audiometry
- Child and family counselling (including social work, psychology, child protection, sexual assault)
- Child and family health nursing (including Building Strong Foundations program)
- Child and family speech pathology
- Community nursing (including wound management and rural primary health care)
- Connecting care (including falls phone coaching)
- Continence management
- Day centre
- Diabetes centre
- Family Care Cottage
- Immunisation
- Palliative care
- Respiratory services
- Transitional Aged Care Program
- Women's health
- Hospital in the home

- cardiac rehabilitation support
- library trolley and courier assistance
- undertaking historical research and preservation
- fundraising endeavours

In 2018, volunteers contributed approximately 14,500 hours in support roles, in and around Tamworth Health Service. A further 14,000 volunteer hours were donated by our Hospital Auxiliary members.



*2018 Volunteers Christmas Party*

Auxiliary members have managed a successful craft table within the hospital, which operates Monday to Friday. Proceeds from this venture has generated fundraising income, allowing the Auxiliary to donate equipment the hospital. Our enthusiastic Auxiliary run many other fundraising functions including; Bunnings BBQs, hospital BBQs, lamington drives and external catering.

Tamworth Hospital held a Christmas luncheon in November 2018, in appreciation of the efforts of our wonderful band of hospital volunteers. Tamworth hospital staff acted as wait staff for the day showing volunteers to their seats, delivering meals and cleaning up after the event. The hospital executive team also attended this function in support of volunteer efforts. Around 130 volunteers attended the function and a great time was had by all.

### United Hospital Auxiliaries

Tamworth Hospital is fortunate to be supported by the United Hospital Auxiliaries (UHA) branches – Tamworth Branch.

The United Hospital Auxiliary undertakes various fundraising activities to support the Tamworth Hospital with a wide range of services and equipment. The Tamworth Hospital Auxiliary work in collaboration with the executive nursing staff to ensure that the funds raised provide the best possible outcomes for patients and families.

The Tamworth UHA currently has 82 members. It was established in 1917 and became affiliated with the State UHA organisation in 1939. The Auxiliary provided 14,351 volunteer hours in 2018 to support Tamworth Hospital.



## Partnering with Our Community

### Volunteers

Volunteers contribute in a wide variety of ways to the economic and service capacity of the Tamworth Health Service. These contributions include:

- assisting palliative care patients and staff
- way-finders (Welcome Desk) meet and greet
- social work support
- pastoral care
- community health support (car washing, car safety checks etc)
- gardening and outdoor maintenance
- nursing and medical support
- immunisation clinic support



- 95% of patients indicated that every staff member involved in their care introduced themselves.
- 98% of patients indicated that every staff member treated them with courtesy and respect.

## Donations

Tamworth Health Service continues to receive wonderful support from local community and service clubs. More than \$87,000 was generously donated to the Tamworth Health Service in 2018, to enhance equipment and services to our patients and their families.

### Tamworth Hospital Auxiliary craft and lolly shop

The financial contribution from fundraising was \$25,529 in 2018 to assist in the refurbishment of the Rehabilitation Unit. High back chairs and gym equipment to aide rehabilitation was purchased, as well as raised flower beds for the rehabilitation units' outdoor area. Other equipment purchased for the hospital included bariatric chairs and medical scales for Medical Ward 1.

## Patient experience

Tamworth Hospital has been engaged in the use of the Patient Experience Tracking System (PETS) over the past 12 months, to gain real-time feedback into patient experiences. The PETS have been rotated throughout the hospital in the emergency department, acute wards, rehabilitation unit, renal unit, outpatient clinics, maternity, paediatrics and the North West Cancer Centre.

READY

Please take a moment to provide us with your valuable feedback

**PATIENTS**

Has every staff member involved in your care introduced themselves to you today?	NEVER	SELDOM	SOMETIMES	MOST OF THE TIME	ALWAYS
Have you been kept well informed about your treatment and care?	NEVER	SELDOM	SOMETIMES	MOST OF THE TIME	ALWAYS
Did each staff member treat you with dignity, courtesy and respect today?	NEVER	SELDOM	SOMETIMES	MOST OF THE TIME	ALWAYS
Have staff done everything they could to manage your pain today?	DID NOT HAVE ANY PAIN	NEVER	SELDOM	MOST OF THE TIME	ALWAYS
When you asked questions, did you get answers you could understand?	DID NOT HAVE ANY QUESTIONS	NEVER	SELDOM	MOST OF THE TIME	ALWAYS

THANK YOU FOR YOUR FEEDBACK

**NSW GOVERNMENT** | **Health** Hunter New England Local Health District

### PETS system

In 2018, 2,908 patients took the opportunity to provide feedback using the PETS devices.

The feedback received is summarised as follows:

- 94% of patients indicated they were satisfied with their overall care.

# Hunter New England Local Health District



## Highlights

### MRI machine

Tamworth purchased its first MRI machine in late 2017. Having an MRI machine located in Tamworth Hospital means that our clinicians and inpatients will have faster access to this higher level diagnostic service when required. Our \$2.5 million investment includes the purchase of the MRI, supporting equipment and the specialised fit out of the room. Inpatients have been able to access the MRI service at Tamworth Hospital since early 2018.

### eRIC - electronic Record for Intensive Care

From late 2018, Intensive Care Unit (ICU) practitioners and patients at Tamworth Hospital have benefited from new clinical system eRIC — electronic Record for Intensive Care. eRIC is a software system that integrates clinical data every minute from bedside monitors, ventilators and other specialised equipment. The specialised electronic application provides the complex minute-by-minute patient monitoring and analysis necessary to safely manage our critically ill patients. The eRIC system will replace all current paper-based documentation. Once deployed across New South Wales, eRIC will be one of the largest ICU clinical information systems in the world.



*eRic launch - L to R: Tamworth Hospital Director of Nursing Michelle Keir, Executive Director of Rural and Regional Health Services Susan Heyman, ICU Nurse Manager Samantha Gardner, Parliamentary Secretary for Regional and Rural Health Leslie Williams, Member for Tamworth Kevin Anderson MP and Peel Sector General Manager Catharine Death*

### Prostate Cancer Nurse

A specialist Prostate Cancer Nurse commenced at Tamworth Hospital in May 2018. The position is focused on helping patients understand their diagnosis, what to expect and connect them to services that help address the challenges along the way. The nurse will work closely with other health professionals to ensure local men have access to services and information that will help support them from diagnosis

right through treatment and beyond. The Prostate Cancer Foundation Australia (PCFA) has funded the position at Tamworth Hospital for the next three years.



*New Specialist Prostate Nurse, Natasha Bissell. Photo courtesy of Northern Daily Leader*

### Refurbishment of rehabilitation unit

The \$500,000 renovation of the Tamworth Hospital Rehabilitation Unit was completed in May 2018. Significant improvements were made to make the ward as comfortable and functional as possible, for patients and the staff who care for them.

The major revamp, funded by Hunter New England Health, has provided a range of major improvements including new showers, bathrooms, a kitchen, staff station and laundry, complete with new vinyl flooring and energy-saving appliances.

All patient rooms have new wardrobes, fresh paint, over-bed LED lighting, new window coverings and service panels for medical gasses and equipment. Outside, the garden has been revitalised and is screened by a new fence. New non-slip tiles have been installed on the veranda.

### My Food Choice

A new initiative has transformed meal options and service for Tamworth Hospital patients. From June 2018, the My Food Choice initiative has allowed patients to pick from a coloured, picture menu and give their meal orders to staff with Wi-Fi enabled mobile devices. They can choose their meal only a few hours before they eat it, rather than choosing days in advance.



### My Food Choice for Tamworth patient's

Food services staff are spending more time on the wards, offering personalised service at the bedside and answering any questions patients might have about the dishes or ingredients. My Food Choice will be rolled out in all New South Wales hospitals by late 2019.

### High-Risk Foot Service

The High-Risk Foot Service commenced in August 2017. This service is suitable for patients suffering from diabetic foot ulcers, cellulitis, osteomyelitis, charcot neuroarthropathy (charcot foot), ischemic wounds or any other suspected high-risk foot pathology.

Referral forms for this service can be found on the Healthpathways website under High-Risk Foot Service. Referrals are triaged on the same day by the Senior Podiatrist and all new patients undergo a full assessment including an ultrasound. The High Risk Foot Service relocated into the Tamworth Hospital Outpatients building in December 2018.

### Deadly dot paintings provide a warm welcome

Beautiful Aboriginal dot paintings, local landscapes and painted animals are giving patients at Tamworth Hospital's Emergency Department a warm, bright welcome. The artwork was unveiled at an official ceremony in early 2018, following two years of combined effort between Tamworth Hospital, the Lighthouse Project and local artists from the Gomeroi Gaaynggal Art Health Program.

The images serve a dual purpose, providing a colourful welcome to patients - particularly Aboriginal people visiting the service - and a helpful tool to help people find their way from the emergency department to the imaging department. Local paintings have also been displayed in the day surgery unit, coronary care unit and medical unit.



Artwork in Tamworth ED.

### Elders yarn heart health for cardiac education

A new DVD resource for Aboriginal people about preventing heart attack and disease was launched in 2018. The videos titled 'Talkin' Country, Talkin' Health - Heart Health' feature stories from four Aboriginal Elders from the Kamilaroi, Gomeroi and Gamilaraay communities. The Elders have spoken about their very personal heart health journeys in a bid to reduce the rate of heart disease in the community.



'Talkin' Country, Talkin' Health - Heart Health' DVD launch.

Presented by Aboriginal people for Aboriginal people, the stories use the Macintyre River as a metaphor for the circulatory system, which in better times flows freely to support life. The stories also reflect on the tragedy that heart disease stills holds over the Aboriginal community in the New England region.

A DVD launch was held and provided an opportunity for Elders, along with their families, friends and health service staff to make the videos together, yarn and share stories.

Tamworth Community Health Service had a very busy 2018. Throughout the year we provided 73,799 occasions of service. Our services vary and are provided to pregnant women, newborn infants, children and families and older people with a range of health conditions.



*Aboriginal staff from Tamworth Health Service*

Community Health continues to provide flexible services - either as home visits, clinics on the health service campus, clinics at Kathleen Street Family Care Cottage, Coledale Community Centre, Nundle Health service, Tamworth Aboriginal Medical Service and as outreach clinics to communities outside Tamworth.

In July 2018, we celebrated NAIDOC week. Approximately 200 staff and community members attended. Dr Casey Sullivan, Wiradjuri woman and local GP, addressed the theme "Because of her, we can" saying it was the strong maternal link that made it possible for her to finish university and become a doctor. She acknowledged the contribution of Aboriginal women in families, communities, in history and across the nation.

### New England Community Aged Care Service

During 2018, the New England Community Aged Care Services (NECACS), formerly HACC and Disability, became a team within Tamworth Community Health Service. The services within NECACS align very closely to Community Health and include community occupational therapy, podiatry, Get Active New England (GANE) physiotherapists, equipment services and home modifications.



*Mandy deRoover NECACS Manager, Cathy Smith Equipment Services Manager and Hana Skilton and Donnae Rikkmans Occupational therapists.*

These services are provided throughout the Mehi, Tablelands and Peel sectors. One of the significant events during the year was the relocation of the podiatry clinic to the Tamworth outpatients centre. This move occurred to improve integration with other acute, outpatient and community services.

### Tamworth Community Health achievements during 2018

- An additional Palliative Care registered nurse commenced
- The Tamworth Parkinson's Disease clinics re-commenced during 2018. These were held as telehealth and outreach clinics and are supported by a Clinical Nurse Specialist from John Hunter Hospital
- The introduction of NSW Health Leading Better Value Care has resulted in the reorienting of the Diabetes Service to ensure greater inpatient coverage
- The Aboriginal Chronic Disease (ICCAPP) program continued their excellent work in supporting Aboriginal people with chronic illnesses
- New England Brain Injury Service is working with employees as part of the Vocational Intervention Program (VIP) to improve employment opportunities for people recovering from brain injury
- The Continence CNC position was filled and is maintaining a busy caseload
- Kameruka Transitional Living Unit (TLU) continues to support the rehabilitation for people recovering from a brain injury. This year the TLU garden had some excellent produce as a result of a client with a very productive green thumb
- Child Psychologists conducted 5 Circle of Security and a Healing Garden group for children
- Aboriginal Child Health staff conducted the Before School Screening program
- New Directions staff are working closely with Tamworth Family Support Service and attending local playgroups providing nutrition, oral health and infant feeding advice to Aboriginal mums
- Paediatric Occupational Therapists provided education to pre-schools and play groups and commenced a School Starters group involving the Aboriginal Health Workers from the New Directions service to proactively engage Aboriginal children
- Speech Pathology have continued clinics for children at Coledale and TAMS
- Wound management education evening sessions were conducted with staff and received excellent feedback
- Hearing services were maintained and the Infant Hearing Service exceeded their targets of assessments for newborns

- The Dementia Pathway super training was implemented across Peel Sector sites and is in progress for Tamworth Hospital
- The Psychologist and Physiotherapist within the New England Brain Injury Service have commenced a project looking at the influence of pain for people who have experienced a traumatic brain injury
- Genetics Counsellor participated in a University of Sydney Research project “Exploring barriers preventing Indigenous Australians from accessing cancer genetic counselling”
- Staff within the Connecting Care team commenced using the Patient Flow Portal to identify and enrol eligible patients for the Connecting Care service 48 Hour Follow up exceeded the target of 90% when contacting and supporting Aboriginal patients discharged from hospital



*Emma Martin Podiatrist and Deanne Hynch, Administration Officer*

## Our Medical Leaders

Tamworth Hospital and Community Health is serviced by a large number of wonderful medical practitioners. Over 200 hundred doctors provide care to people who come into contact with the Tamworth Hospital.

Those doctors might encounter people who are retrieved by helicopter following a trauma, those who present to the emergency department, in the operating theatres, as medical patients, in outpatient clinics, in rehabilitation or during palliative care.

Our medical leaders stand out because of their human qualities combined with their knowledge, skill and expertise.

They stand out because of their compassion for the difficulties and suffering of those they treat and for the ways in which they respect and appreciate the efforts of all those who are part of the treating team, including relatives and carers.

They are acknowledged for their generosity in teaching their junior colleagues and for sharing their knowledge with their peers.

Because of this we have chosen not to single out individuals, but rather to value the contribution that all of them bring to Tamworth Health Service.

## In the Spotlight

### Tamworth Hospital Excellence awards

The Tamworth Brudelin Excellence Awards are awarded annually in four professional categories. Staff of the Health Service are nominated by their peers as fulfilling qualities against the following criteria:

- Personal qualities and professional commitment to service
- Achievements
- Other contributions to the Health Service and
- Respect of peers

All nominees are worthy candidates for the Award and have earned the esteem of those that they work with.

The winners of the Tamworth Brudelin Excellence Awards for 2018 were:

- Medical - Dr Dolapo Sotade
- Allied Health - Ms Nikki Swan
- Support Services - Ms Robyn Webster
- Nursing - Ms Kelly Ison

In late 2018, Hunter New England Local Health District recognised staff members who had been employees of the District’s Health Services for more than 25 Years. More than 200 staff were awarded with a certificate, acknowledging their contribution to the health of their local community and an inscribed Parker pen as a small token of appreciation from HNELHD.

Of the many that surpassed the 25 year mark, there were many who have been employed by the Health Service in its variations for over 30 years.

### Society of Hospital Pharmacists of Australia Awards

Sarah Marsh, an early career Pharmacist at Tamworth Hospital, was awarded the Highly Commended Practitioner Award at the inaugural Society of Hospital Pharmacists of Australia (SHPA) Resident of the Year award ceremony. The award reflects the values of SHPA residency; a professional development program focused on optimising the medication management of our patients.

### 2018 HNE Excellence Awards

This annual event is an opportunity to acknowledge the creative and innovative ideas of our staff who are making a difference to patient care and health outcomes.

The High Value Healthcare Awards recognise work that achieves the triple aim of meeting population health needs at the highest quality and lowest cost per capita. They also highlight the excellence work of teams that have increased the standard of care by improving the delivery of service to patients.

The Achievement Awards encourage and reward outstanding performance to individuals, teams and volunteers within Hunter New England Health.

Congratulations to Dr David Healey, Director - Orthopaedics, Tamworth Hospital, who took home the Collaborative Leader of the Year award.

The Collaborative Leader of the Year award is open to clinical and non-clinical staff and recognises a successful leader/manager/mentor who has shown true leadership qualities by managing their services effectively.



*Dr David Healey*



43,068

patients presented at our emergency department



70%

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



222,879

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



1,058

Babies were born



2,555

Day only surgical procedure were performed



100%

of Category A patients received their elective surgery within the 30 day timeframe<sup>φ</sup>



100%

of Category B patients received their elective surgery within the 90 day timeframe<sup>φ</sup>



100%

of Category C patients received their elective surgery within the 365 day timeframe<sup>φ</sup>



840.9

Full-time equivalent staff



\$177,771

Expenditure budget<sup>^</sup>

## Feedback & Acknowledgements

Many thanks to those who helped to compile this report, including:

- Helen Tickle
- David Monk
- Linda Baylis
- Luke McGrath
- Michelle Keir

We also acknowledge the work and commitment of the staff and volunteers of Tamworth Health Service. We convey our thanks for their delivery of quality health care.

If you wish to provide feedback, please contact:

### Tamworth Hospital

Dean Street, Tamworth, NSW 2340  
Phone: 02 6767 7700

### North West Cancer Centre

Phone: 02 6767 8720

### Tamworth Community Health Service

Dean Street, Tamworth, NSW 2340  
Phone: 02 6767 8165

- Child and Family Allied Health team Phone: 02 6767 8148
- Connecting Care team Phone: 02 67678826
- Family Health team Phone: 02 67678276
- Integrated Aged Care Phone: 02 6767 8276
- Primary Care Services Phone: 02 6767 8218

### Inala House

Phone: 02 6767 8880