



2018 Singleton Local Health Report

Acknowledgement of Country

We acknowledge the traditional custodians of the land, the Wanaruah People, and pay our respects to Elders, past and present.



Another beautiful artwork joins the collection of culturally valuable paintings by local aboriginal artists. Pictured Singleton Diggers general manager Gerard McMillan with Singleton Health Service Manager Wendy Mason-Jones



The smoking ceremony begins at the official opening of the new entry to Singleton Hospital

Year at a Glance

The best comes to us

Providing the best health service, closest to home, is always our goal.

These were the words uttered when the \$7million upgrade of Singleton Hospital was officially opened by Member for Upper Hunter Michael Johnsen in March.

The new two-level upgrade integrates seamlessly into the existing building and accommodates increased renal dialysis services, community health, specialist clinics, pathology and much improved imaging services. (You can read more on the redevelopment later in the report.)

About 90 people took the opportunity to take a guided hospital tour. A Special tour was organised for the local Scouts group.

A car boot sale was also held in the car park to coincide with the opening. Participating community groups included the fire brigade, local Rotary Clubs, Red Cross Singleton branch, Country Women's Association and many more.

Our community appreciated the opportunity to attend the hospital to celebrate this outstanding redevelopment.

Too often the experience at a hospital is confronting and stressful and in many cases is associated with a medical emergency. This event was a wonderful opportunity to open the hospital to members of the community in a fun, interactive manner.





Images from the open day which involved many community groups and other emergency services. Member for Upper Hunter Michael Johnsen officially opened the facility and some 90 people took the opportunity to take a guided tour of the upgraded areas

Hospital food steps up to the plate

What started out as a trial for Singleton Health Service is now standard practice for ordering meals in NSW hospitals.

My Food Choices is giving patients greater choice of foods they would like to eat. The new system is also making food ordering and preparation more timely and efficient.

Food services staff discuss the foods available with each patient and help patients make their choice on a tablet device. This links in with other relevant dietary information and is relayed to kitchen staff automatically.

The new system means that special diets and allergies are adhered to, with little risk of error. The technology means food services staff already know any special dietary restrictions or requirements the patient may have, such as diabetes, before they show the patient their menu to choose from.

Reports from staff and patients is that this has reduced to time to prepare and serve meals and patients have commented that the variety of meals on offer and the quality has improved.

About Our Health Committee

Singleton Health Committee is made up of a diverse cross section of the Singleton community and we work together to ensure local health needs are met.

We enjoy a positive dialogue with the health service staff at all levels and appreciate their commitment to the general health of all Singletonians.

In 2018, Tony Jarrett stepped into the role of chairperson after Bob Winter served his three years in leadership.



Tony Jarrett

Tony brings a depth of knowledge to the committee as a former principal of Singleton High School and is also deputy mayor of Singleton Council. His experience in meeting protocol and knowledge of the broader Singleton community is highly valued.

Other members are Shirley Braye, Kay Sullivan, Juleen Partridge, Dorothy Kingdom, Margaret McDonald, Graeme O'Brien, Bob Moore, Jade Perry and Di Sneddon.



Kay Sullivan, Dorothy Kingdom and Margaret Macdonald

Their involvement covers experience in organisations such as the local Cancer Appeal, mental health, diabetes, the Mens Shed, the local clergy, mine-related issues, Rotary and Service clubs, Indigenous representation historical organisations and community committees such as the Singleton branch of the Red Cross.

This year the committee has attempted to promote their work and conducted a survey at the community opening of the hospital redevelopment, distributing members' personal contact details to ensure our community knows they always have somewhere to discuss their personal issues.

Facebook has been a wonderful platform for people to comment and we are proud of the comments that have been extremely complimentary of the care of our hospital staff and the service that is available both from a professional aspect as well as the facilities.

About our Health Service

Singleton Health Service provides health care to the community of Singleton and surrounding areas.

The emergency department is staffed 24 hours a day by registered nurses, with visiting medical officers, who are local General Practitioners (GPs), are on call.

Surgery is performed at the hospital by visiting specialists and includes orthopaedics, gynaecology, and general surgery.

The day surgery unit provides short-stay admissions for minor procedures or those that do not require a longer recovery period, including procedures using local or short acting anaesthetic.

Our maternity unit has 8 beds and 2 birthing rooms. GP obstetricians offer care at the hospital and work in partnership with midwives to provide a woman-and- family-centred service.

Pregnant women planning to birth at Singleton are encourage to contact us and speak with a midwife so that information about booking in can be provided. We also offer childbirth education classes for minimal cost. These are available to any pregnant woman.

The medical ward provides care for people who have chronic and acute medical conditions, requiring treatment, assessment and for close observation. The unit also provides palliative care.

Visiting medical specialists provide outreach services for nephrology, cardiology, paediatrics, orthopaedics, immunology and gynaecology patients as well as pain management.

Ambulatory care includes community health (nursing and allied health services), renal dialysis and specialist clinics. This department contributes significantly to the community through health promotion and educational activities. A range of services are provided by nurse-run clinics including foot care, respiratory/asthma, diabetes, continence, immunisation, smoking cessation, and audiometry. Allied health include physiotherapy, dietetics, occupational therapy, psychology, speech pathology,

Singleton Hospital also provides inpatient pathology. Imaging is available for inpatients and outpatients, including x-rays. Sonography and CT scanning is available on site through Hunter Imaging Group.

Contact details

Telephone: 6571 9222

Visiting hours

We have open visiting hours. However, obstetrics and special care patients have a rest period between 1.30pm and 3pm.

Parking

There is ample free parking near all facilities. Drop-off points are located near the emergency department, community health, specialist clinics, imaging and pathology.

Where to find us

Singleton Hospital is located off Dangar Road, and there is a new access road via Boonal Street. See www.hnehealth.nsw.gov.au/facilities/hospitals/Pages/Singleton-Hospital.aspx for directions.

Partnering with Our Community

Singleton Hospital enjoys an extraordinarily close relationship with the people of Singleton and its various community, civic and business organisations.

Perhaps because the land and the original hospital was the beneficiary of many generous donations, the philanthropy of the community has continued along this vein.

Singleton Hospital Auxiliary continues to work extremely hard to raise funds towards the additional comforts of our patients.

Singleton Cancer Appeal supports large project such as special care rooms at the hospital and fundraising to enhance the grounds with tribute pavers, and sensory garden to provide a space for reflection and time out for patients, visitors and staff.

Then there are the little things.

Red Cross provides Trauma Teddies and basic supplies to patients who come to hospital urgently. The teddies provide distraction for youngsters as they face their own medical emergencies. Red Cross also provides urgent supplies include items that help comfort including a toothbrush, toothpaste, comb, soap, tissues.

Singleton Men's Shed has made outdoor seating for the grounds through liaison with the Hospital Auxiliary. This seating provides another space for people to relax and enjoy the quiet or listen to birds and cicada's.

Partnering in Aboriginal health

Artwork throughout the hospital is a constant reminder of the connection the health service has with the local Aboriginal community, and the importance of our continued partnership and efforts to close the gap in health outcomes between indigenous and non-indigenous Australians. This original artwork has been commissioned to invite Aboriginal patients and their families into a welcome and safe space that will work with them to meet their health needs.

Jade Perry our Aboriginal Health Worker has brought her generosity of spirit and connection to culture to the health service. She is a great advocate for young Aboriginal people and provides outreach services to the local Aboriginal community.

One of Jade's projects, 'Shake a Leg', works within schools to promote fitness and nutrition for local Aboriginal children. This also provides an opportunity for Jade to speak to the children and promote a healthy lifestyle in a range of areas..

Singleton Health Service also has the expertise of Aboriginal Health Liaison Officer Rae Reed and project officer Stacey Hands. These staff members play an important role in ensuring that the needs of the local Aboriginal community is known and in supporting changes to meet these needs.

During the 2018 NAIDOC Week celebrations, Singleton Health Service staff participated in a flag raising ceremony and a 'decorate your door' competition that incorporated the theme for 2018, Because of Her We Can. These activities continue to raise the awareness of staff on issues and relating to Closing the Gap.



Hunter New England Local Health District



Your food choice

Hospital food often gets a bad rap.

Singleton Health Service was a trial site for the new food preparation and ordering system that is now being implemented to hospitals in Hunter New England Local Health District.

The new system called My Food Choice was introduced at Singleton Hospital in April and has made a big difference to the way food for patients is prepared and served.

This system provides patients with greater choice of the meals they provided with up to 15 delicious options each meal time. Patients make decisions about and order from a menu just a few hours in advance, rather than thinking about food choices days in advance whilst being treated for an illness.

Local dietitians and clinicians were consulted to help develop the menu for Singleton Hospital. Options such as chicken parmigiana, satay beef with noodles, salmon fillet, or spinach and ricotta ravioli are now on the menu. Patients can also order a freshly prepared sandwich or salad if they prefer.



Members of Singleton Health Committee were also consulted and took part in a tasting day along with hospital staff to help determine the menu items included in the trial.

Nutrition plays an essential role in a patient's recovery and is often the one aspect that can ultimately define the overall experience of a hospital stay. Along with improved food choice, the new system offers to the potential to eliminate errors, especially when it comes to dietary requirements.

Under the new system, the hospital's Food Services staff show each patient a pictorial menu, taking their order two to four hours before meal time. The order is entered on a mobile device and transmits to the hospital kitchen by Wi-Fi. The kitchen staff prepare the meals and they are delivered to patients at just the right temperature, regardless of whether a hot or cold choice is made.

REACH out to voice your concerns

REACH is another new initiative that is important for any stay in hospital.

REACH recognises that you know yourself or the person you care for best. It empowers you or your family to raise concerns if you feel your condition or that of your loved one is changing for the worse, and you don't feel staff have listened to your concerns.

We encourage patients and families to first raise any concerns directly with their nurse or doctor. However, if you remain worried you can request a clinical review. If you feel your concerns are still not being listened to, you can make 'a REACH call' to a specified number.

The phone number to call is included on posters near each patient's bed.

The REACH patient, family and carer escalation program was one of the main topics of conversation at a Hunter New England Health Community Partnerships Forum in November.

More than 100 people attended the forum including community representatives from more than 30 local Health Committees, health service managers, health executives and members of the Local Health District Board.

Singleton Health Committee was represented by Tony Jarrett and Di Sneddon as well as Health Service Manager Wendy Mason-Jones.

Positive survey results

Singleton Hospital performed very well in the latest Bureau of Health Information (BHI) survey of adult admitted patients.

We outperformed the state average for more than 30 of the more than 87 performance questions in the survey.

Hunter New England Local Health District also performed extremely well as a whole, significantly outperforming the state results for for 20 or more of the survey questions.

The BHI released the fifth year of results from the Adult Admitted Patient Survey in October. The survey data looked at the experiences of patients in 77 NSW public hospitals for the full year of 2017, and compared them with the previous year's results. The results are used as a source of performance measurement for individual hospitals, Local Health Districts and NSW as a whole.



Singleton Health Service and Hunter New England Health continues to focus on improving the delivery of safe, high-quality and patient-centred care.

If you would like to know more, see the BHI website for a full copy of the results from the 2017 Adult Admitted Patient Survey. Visit http://www.bhi.nsw.gov.au/nsw_patient_survey_program/adult_admitted_patient_survey

Helipad back in action

In November, the Singleton Health Service and community celebrated the re-commissioning of the helipad on the hospital grounds.

The helipad wasn't able to be used for most of the year, due to changes to helipad requirements following the introduction of new Westpac helicopters.

The Local Health Committee appreciated the responsive communication between the Health Service and Westpac Rescue Helicopter Service to clarify and implement minor modifications for the Helipad surrounds to meet required standards.

Accreditation

The Hospital was successful in gaining 4 years Accreditation from the Australian Council of Health Care standards and also successful in the Work Health and Safety Numerical Profile.

The staff worked exceptionally hard to achieve these fantastic results.

Community Health Highlights

Singleton Community Health has had a year unlike any other.

The year began with finalising the new building and moving all community health services. This has meant changes have occurred to continue to improve and meet the needs of the community.

The highlights for the year are more about the programs that the staff have delivered outside the walls of the health service.

Listening to community needs is one of the strengths of the staff at Singleton community health. They are regularly requested to present locally and to provide up-to-date health promotions. Some groups and celebratory days where this was provided include the Men's Shed, Singleton Saleyards, Singleton High School, Singleton Multicultural Day, and Senior Citizens day.

Being present at meetings about a health issue such as diabetes, immunisation, or drug and alcohol use is also a key part of how Community Health continues to link with residents.

Providing meaningful information to help people navigate funding and services such as the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) and My Aged Care is a growing need, which the team is doing its best to meet.



A leader in his field

In 2018, Dr Peter Lee was awarded a 2018 Rural Medical Service Award in recognition of his service to the Singleton community and general practice. The award recognises doctors who have provided more than 35 years' service to rural, regional and remote NSW.

Dr Lee has been a GP in the Singleton community since 1978. As a GP supervisor for the Royal Australian College of General Practitioners since 1979, Dr Lee has generously shared his wisdom and expertise to support the training and development of medical officers who are specialising in general practice.

Singleton Health Service is fortunate to have the services of many of our local General Practitioners (GPs) and specialists, who also serve as Visiting Medical Officers at the Hospital.

There are more than 17 medical officers who provide VMO services including specialist surgery, some of whom have been with the hospital for many years.



Dr Peter Lee



Dr Tuan Au



William Debelak



Dr Cecil Ford



Dr Sarah Galloway



Kumaravel Kaliyaperumal



Coren Ged



Dr Aijaz Majeed



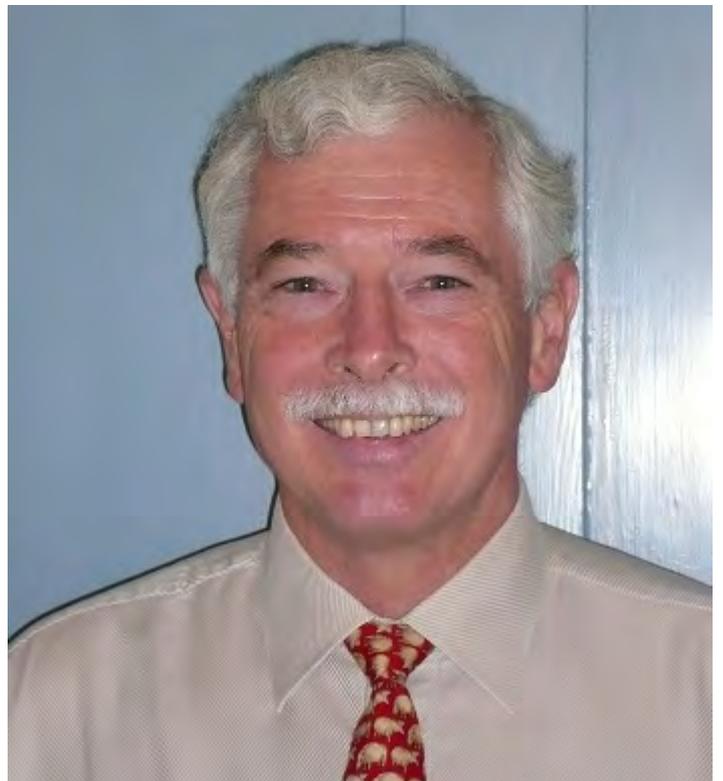
Simon Marrable



Abe Mathew



Dr Richard Marshall



David Sanders



Dr Robert Vickers



Jun Zhao



Dr David Woods

In the Spotlight

Redevelopment brings improved services and facility

Singleton Hospital's \$7.5 million redevelopment officially opened in September.

The redevelopment is an extension of the hospital's West Wing - an area that accommodates imaging, renal dialysis and provides facilities for primary and community health services.

The work included an increase in the number of renal dialysis chairs, an enhancement that will help cater for demand and ensure that residents can receive care close to home.

The new and refurbished hospital building brings all services at Singleton Hospital under one roof. Patients no longer have to leave the hospital building for essential services such as CT scans or ultrasounds, which were previously located in older buildings and demountables on the hospital campus.



Member for Upper Hunter Michael Johnsen, HNE Health Chief Executive Michael DiRienzo, and Singleton Health Service Manager Wendy Mason-Jones at the official opening

Imaging services for example were previously split between two locations on campus but are now located in one purpose-built area.

Many of the new clinical services actually began operation in March.



A new CT scanner is just part of the suite of new imaging equipment

The final stages of the project involved demolition of the old nurses home to make way for a new Community Health services building which houses specially-built consultation rooms.

A new 40-space car park and access walkways were also built, along with a new entry from Boonal Street.

This provides direct access to the new hospital main entry on the western side. A special smoking ceremony formed part of the opening of the new hospital entry and was well received by all in attendance.



An aerial view of the community open day for the redeveloped Singleton Health Service

The hospital redevelopment offers patients and visitors a welcoming, connected, user-friendly environment. It has centralised reception and waiting areas and is easier to navigate. It also incorporates a children's play area and there has been a concentrated effort to encourage new services to the hospital.

The clinical areas are over two levels and include:

- **Community Health Consultation rooms.** These comprise consultation rooms for visiting specialists including cardiology, orthopaedics, renal, gynaecology, ear nose and throat, ophthalmology, mental health, sexual health, drug and alcohol, community detoxification, methadone outreach, and women's health services.
- **Imaging Department.** The new Imaging Department includes new x-ray, CT scanner, ultrasound, mammogram and dental x-ray machines. All but the general x-ray machine is operated by Hunter Valley Imaging under a partnership with Hunter New England Health.
- **Renal Unit.** The new renal dialysis unit has two additional dialysis chairs and, if required, an area to isolate patients that may pose an infection risk. The room is also able to be linked into other hospitals via the telehealth system. This technology capability is a new feature of the redevelopment.

The redevelopment follows construction of the hospital's new emergency department, which was completed in 2015.



11,630

patients presented at our emergency department



88.9%

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



16,205

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



117

Babies were born



338

Day only surgical procedure were performed



100%

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



99%

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



100%

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



93.54

Full-time equivalent staff



\$17,986

Expenditure budget[^]

Vale Vera Smith

It is often said volunteers are both the glue and the soul of a place.

At Singleton this is very much the case. Volunteers have always provided support to the health service as well as strengthen the connection to community.

Vera Smith is one volunteer who dedicated 50 years visiting patients and fundraising. Early on she provided and served afternoon tea to patients. Vera then joined the Pink Ladies and spent time washing and setting patients' hair and doing shopping for those who were admitted longer term.

Vera was a member of the hospital Auxilliary, and served as president for 15 years before being appointed as patron. She contributed to fundraising for the health service which help improved patient care and provided comfort.

Her regular trips to the hospital to visit patients were met with warmth and appreciation.

Vera's 50 years of voluntary service at Singleton Health Service was celebrated in March. An article in the Singleton Argus at the time described the variety of voluntary roles that Vera performed and the impact that it has had.

Sadly, Vera died in 2018 after a short illness. We acknowledge her contribution to and passion for Singleton Health Service. Her presence is missed by staff and patients alike.

We welcome any feedback about the Singleton Health Report and our services. Please send your comments to Singleton Health Committee or Health Service Manager Wendy Mason-Jones via:

Address

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25 Dangar Road
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