



Chief Executive's Board Report

February 2024

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CHIEF EXECUTIVE

NSLHD Overall Performance

Northern Sydney Local Health District (NSLHD) remains at Performance Level 0 – ‘No Performance Issues’.

This is the highest Performance Level attainable, in accordance with the NSW Health Performance Framework.

Patient Flow and Access

Overall Performance (December 2023)

In December 2023, there were 20,240 presentations to NSLHD Emergency Departments, a decrease of 0.9% (20,429 presentations) when compared to December 2022.

Emergency Treatment Performance (ETP) for admitted patients in NSLHD was 27% in December 2023 against the overall target of 50%. This demonstrates a decrease of 1% when compared to December 2022 (28%). Improvement action plans include patient flow initiatives to support access to ED accessible beds such as early discharge, and private hospital utilisation. To facilitate discharges, improvement action plans include increased utilisation of the transit unit, and daily discharge huddles to engage medical staff to support discharge planning. There has been additional hospital and executive oversight to review delays and support early escalation of issues.

Overall Transfer of Care (ToC) for NSLHD was 85% in December 2023 against the target of 90%. This is a 4% decrease compared to December 2022 (89%). Improvement action plans include enhancing Emergency Department (ED) models of care to support bed capacity in ED such as ED Short Stay and MAU, implementation of a protocol to offload ambulances to the waiting room protocol, enhanced utilisation of virtual models of care including HITH/virtual care services and Ambulance direct referral to Geriatric outreach services.

NSLHD had a total of 50 patients overdue for planned surgery at the end of December 2023. This is a decrease of 167 patients from November 2023, this equates to a 77% reduction in overdue patients. NSLHD has seen an improvement in ESAP performance across Cat 1 & Cat 3 urgency categories in December 2023 compared to the December 2022. This is a result of a decrease in the number of overdue patients. ESAP results are expected to remain under benchmark for Cat 2 and Cat 3 until 000 is achieved and sustained.

All Triage KPI’s at HKH and Ryde were achieved with Triage 2 and 3 at RNSH and NBH not being met. The increased number of Triage 1, 2 and 3 patients as a proportion of the overall number of presentations to the Emergency Departments has seen an impact on these indicators. Improvement strategies to achieve performance against these targets have been developed with working groups focussing on the following strategies: role out of nurse initiated protocols for treatment, clinical initiative nurses in the waiting room, administrative audits of eMR processes to ensure accurate recording of treatment time commenced and reinvigoration/re-education of team model of care.

Emergency Department (ED) Presentations Results (By Hospital)

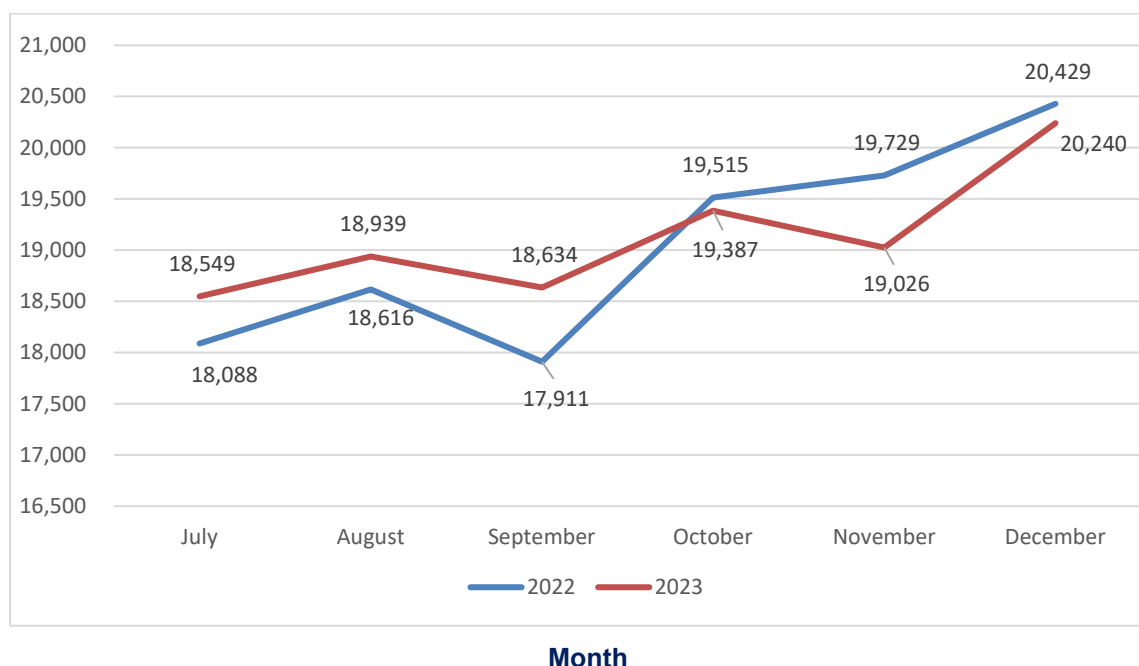
Hospital	ED Presentations December 2023		Change from December 2022
RNSH	7,540 presentations	↑	7,503 (0.5%)
HKH	4,346 presentations	↕	4,143 (4.9%)
Ryde	2,597 presentations	↓	2,689 (3.4%)
NBH	5,757 presentations	↓	6,094 (5.5%)
TOTAL	20,240 presentations	↓	20,429 (0.9%)

Average Length of Stay (ALOS) (Rolling 12 Months)

Hospital	Target	October 2023
RNSH	5.33	5.35
HKH	4.51	4.14
Ryde	4.37	5.18

Total NSLHD Presentations (Including Northern Beaches Hospital)

Emergency Department (ED) Presentations Results (Total NSLHD)



Emergency Treatment Performance (ETP) Results

Hospital	ETP December 2023		Change from December 2022
RNSH	25%	↓	1% decrease (26%)
HKH	42%	↑	3% increase (40%)
Ryde	37%	↓	4% decrease (41%)
NBH	16%	↓	1% decrease (28%)

Transfer of Care (ToC) Results

Hospital	ToC December 2023	Change from December 2022	
RNSH	78%	↓	2.8% decrease
HKH	94%	↑	7.3% increase
Ryde	96%	↓	1.1% decrease
NBH	84%	↓	11.6% decrease

ED Triage Results

Triage Category Results					
Hospital	Category 1 (target 100%)	Category 2 (target 80%)	Category 3 (target 75%)	Category 4 (target 70%)	Category 5 (target 70%)
NSLHD	100%	79%	73%	77%	90%
RNSH	100%	77%	69%	75%	89%
HKH	100%	91%	81%	82%	94%
Ryde	100%	88%	89%	85%	88%
NBH	100%	72%	66%	68%	89%

Legend

● Hospital on or above target

Financial Performance**General Fund****Overview**

The District’s Net Cost of Service (NCOS) for January 2024 was \$3.69m (3.59%) favourable, resulting in \$18.6m (-2.64%) unfavourable position YTD. This unfavourable position incorporates costs associated with the higher level of activity, increased overtime costs, increase utility charges and CPI adjusted price increase for consumables. The district will address this deficit by working collaboratively with each hospital and service and closely monitoring their financial KPIs to ensure financial sustainability, as we continue to unwind from COVID-19.

Furthermore, the District is currently facilitating and providing support to each hospital and service to develop and execute Efficiency Improvement Plans (EIPs).

Total Expenses

Total Expenses were \$0.8M (-0.45%) unfavourable for the month and \$19.2M (-1.54%) unfavourable YTD. The un-favourability for the month is being driven by FTE and G&S costs mainly at RNSH and Hornsby due to clinical activity. YTD unfavourability includes one-off expenses of \$3.9M related to HGEN, \$2.5M related to Deferred Care and \$0.7M related to COVID Clinics.

The district will remain vigilant to limit financial pressures as FTE levels and activity returns to pre-pandemic levels.

District Finance will continue to direct effort to EIPs and engage with each service to reduce this deficit throughout the financial year. \$11.2m of EIPs have thus far been submitted to the Ministry, with several additional plans being finalised.

Full year expense forecast for the district is expected to be \$28.0m unfavourable.

Revenue

Total NSLHD Own Sources Revenue is \$4.46m (0.82%) favourable YTD, a result that is exceeding expectations, due in part to several Intrahealth Revenue and external user charges. However, meeting the overall revenue target will continue to present as a challenge to the district in the new financial year.

In response, the District’s Revenue team in conjunction with facility based finance teams will lead various Revenue generating initiatives such as increasing Private Health insurance conversions, improvements in staff specialist billings and improving ineligible patient billings.

Full year revenue forecast for the district is expected to be \$2.0m unfavourable

Other item/s

The end of January 2024 general fund bank account balance held at Westpac was \$2.5m. Under the Ministry of Health Cash Management Reform initiative, all Health Entity’s outgoing payments are paid centrally by Healthshare. The Ministry of Health sweep Health Entity’s general fund bank account to zero on a fortnightly basis.

Safety and Quality Indicators

Safety and Quality (January 2024)	MONTH				YEAR TO DATE			
	T	Target	Actual	Var	T	Target	Actual	Var
SA-BSI*		≤ 1.0	0.0	1		≤ 1.0	0.6	0.4
ICU CLAB Infection Rate*		= 0.0	0.0	0.0		= 0.0	0.0	0.0
Incorrect Procedures: OT		= 0	0.0	0.0		= 0	0.0	0.0
MH: Readmissions within 28 Days ¹		≤ 13.0%	11.7%	1.3%		≤ 13.0%	12.2%	0.8%
MH: APDC Follow Up Within 7 days ¹		≥ 75%	81%	5.9%		≥ 75%	82%	7.3%
Unplanned Hospital Readmissions [#]		6.0%	6.3%	0.3%		6.0%	6.0%	0.0

¹Data 2 month delay

[#] Unplanned Hospital Readmissions targets are prior year actual.

Clinical Care and Improvement

Clinical Governance and Patient Experience

Consumer Engagement

The NSLHD Consumer and Patient Experience (CAPE) Team is committed to support consumers and staff to create strong partnerships and take a whole of organisation approach to achieve the NSLHD’s vision of being “leaders in healthcare, partners in wellbeing”. In 2024 the following events have been scheduled to occur: Human Experience week (29th April to 3rd May 2024); What Matters to you day (4th June 2024-date tbc); and Gathering of Kindness (11th November to 15th November 2024). As in previous years, all events will be co-ordinated by the NSLHD CAPE team in collaboration with sites to participate and facilitate events locally.

The [Consumer, carer and community member remuneration guideline](#) sets out NSW Health’s commitment to remuneration and reimbursement of consumers, carers and community members for their time and contributions to agreed engagement activities. It provides guidance on circumstances where payments will be made, the rates of payment and the methods of payment. [Fact Sheets](#) are available for NSLHD Consumer Advisers providing advice. The NSLHD working party continues to work on implementation of the Consumer Advisor remuneration process. Existing and new Consumer Advisors will need to be added as vendors into Stafflink. A remuneration procedure has been drafted and reviewed by the Executive Director of Finance & Corporate Services. Finance are in the process of determining the funding arrangements to support the ongoing remuneration of the consumers, with a view to implement in July 2024.

NSLHD Drug and Therapeutic Committee and NSW Formulary

The new district -wide Drug and Therapeutic Committee (DTC) has completed its first calendar year in operation. An evaluation of the committee function and achievements is underway. The CEC led NSW Medicines Formulary (NMF), enters a business-as-usual (BAU) phase in 2024. This will result in several changed priorities for NSLHD.

- 1) Targeting improved NMF contract compliance: the Medication Safety Improvement Facilitator (MSIF) will provide monthly tracking, surveillance, and support to pharmacy distribution managers to better target opportunity savings.
- 2) Development of interim business tools and processes to support management of BAU consolidated views of the NMF, alongside NSLHD restricted medicines.
 - Standardised DTC medicine protocol template and governance process has been developed, with planning for implementation underway.
 - Standardised DTC formulary analysis reporting template has been developed, currently awaiting review by the DTC.
 - Consolidated NMF and NSLHD facility restricted formulary shared on the NSLHD internet site, as an interim measure pending eHealth developing and launching the state-wide modifiable platform (late 2024).
 - Bulk upload of NMF tagged items into eMeds is planned for early 2024.
- 3) Continued prioritisation and facilitation of the review and updating Policy, Procedure and Guidelines (PPGs) to align with ongoing NMF changes.

SLHD Applied Safety and Quality Program Graduation – Cohort 1

The NSLHD Applied Safety and Quality Program, in partnership with the Clinical Excellence Commission, is the highest level (adept-level) offering under the *Safety and Quality Essentials Pathway*. Over the last 12 months, the 13 graduates of the inaugural NSLHD Applied Safety and Quality Program have applied safety and quality tools,

methods and behaviours to champion, role model, support and lead safety and quality in their local workplaces.

On 30 January 2024, NSLHD recognised and celebrated the hard work of the graduates across the 12-month program as well as the faculty members who supported the participants in meeting their learning objectives. The day also showcased the quality improvement projects the graduates led to improve the services provided in their workplaces. These projects represent the diversity and breadth of the improvement projects that graduates have identified to focus the application of their learning.

Voluntary Assisted Dying

NSW VAD Support Service

The NSW VAD Support Service completed its second month of operations at end January 2024.

NVSS continues to evolve as a young service. A pilot program of small group clinical supervision with an external provider (People Sense) is commencing next month. A service redesign project for Care Navigator Service is underway, including anonymous survey feedback from LHD and Ministry of Health colleagues.

NSLHD VAD Local Support Team (LST)

NSLHD LST is experiencing high demand for VAD services. Additional medical recruitment to VAD-LST has been approved.

Transitioning the NSLHD Local Site Team (LST) to sit under the NSW Voluntary Assisted Dying Support Service (NVSS) as a fourth operational arm is underway and likely to be complete by end February 2024. The benefits include clear governance and clinical escalation pathways and sharing of resources, support programs, and some process efficiencies developed by NVSS.

Case referrals from the LST to NVSS will continue to operate under the same processes as apply to all LHD referrals, that is, considering case urgency, competing priority demands from regional areas, and current VAD-AS caseload.

Clinical Network Monthly Highlight

NSLHD Rehabilitation and Aged Care Clinical Network

NSLHD Rehabilitation Service Model

A NSLHD Rehabilitation Service Model that was developed in 2020 has been refreshed in 2023, with four priorities for service development that will position our rehabilitation services to deliver value-based rehabilitation in the coming decade. Managing the delivery of NSLHD’s rehabilitation services is now both important and urgent with evolving acute hospital demand and service models, reduced operational rehabilitation bed numbers since 2020, and with work progressing toward Ryde Hospital’s redevelopment. Improvements to connect reporting and governance systems are in progress. This is needed to support each part of NSLHD’s complex rehabilitation system to work together to provide timely, patient centred and effective rehabilitation care. Developing early supported rehabilitation on discharge services and rehabilitation in acute care are essential for admitted rehabilitation services to operate with existing and planned infrastructure into the next decade. Implementation of a three-year plan included in the service model will be a focus for 2024.

Dementia

Dementia is now the second leading cause of death and the leading cause of burden of disease in Australia. The prevalence of dementia will continue to increase in NSLHD’s population in the next 5 years. NSLHD is working to implement a NSW Health model of care for the provision of healthcare for people living with extreme and severe behavioural and psychological symptoms associated with dementia (BPSD). NSLHD will work with NSW Health to manage issues with implementation in NSLHD. Managing barriers to the transfer of care after hospitalisation in these complex and challenging circumstances is currently compounded by constraints in the residential Aged Care sector. This may ease as further recommendations of the Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety are implemented.

The Northern Sydney Dementia Collaborative is a vibrant partnership of government and non-government healthcare organisations, service providers and consumers. It is co-chaired by the NSLHD Clinical Director and the Sydney North Health Network, and includes Dementia Australia, CCNB Ltd and a number of NSLHDs clinical leaders and General Practitioners. The group has contributed to the Commonwealth Government’s consultation for a new National Dementia Action Plan. The new Action Plan will guide the workplan of this group over the planning horizon. All local councils in the region participated in meetings of the group in the last half of 2023. Ensuring access to consistent standards of care in each of NSLHD’s memory clinics is a priority for NSLHD in 2024. These clinics provide specialist early diagnostic and management support for General Practice.

NSLHD Geriatric Outreach Service

Each team of the NSLHD Geriatric Outreach Service has implemented changes to better align service delivery across the district including proactive links with NSW Ambulance. The Geriatrician Outreach Service provided critical support to patients requiring urgent care that otherwise may have called an Ambulance. Where patients/carers called 000 (771 of referrals in 2023), the service collaborated with NSW Ambulance to streamline care and prevent further emergency transfers, 41% avoiding the Emergency Department. This service provides outreach to residential care and the community for frail and older people ahead of a likely presentation to emergency departments. Ongoing improvements are being made to a dashboard that monitors key service indicators. Despite challenges in recruiting new team members, the service has been agile in preparing for a 7 day per week service, with extended hours. This service will deliver the NSW Ministry of Health’s Urgent Care Service program requirements. Northern Sydney’s Geriatrician Outreach Service responded to 4,023 referrals in 2023, 79% of referrals (3,178) avoided ED and remained at home.

Geriatric Evaluation and Management

Formative evaluation of Mona Vale Hospital’s Geriatric Evaluation and Management (GEM) service is in the final stage. This service was commissioned in 2021 and supports referrals directly from the community, a unique feature of this service compared with other GEM services in Australia. The service model aims to provide comprehensive specialist geriatric assessment and multidisciplinary care to frail and older people who are at risk of functional decline, to avoid hospitalisation, improve health management and quality of life, and reduce the burden of their care. It has been possible for the service to accept referrals from the community as intended, from 2022, after COVID-19 restrictions eased. Sydney North Primary Health Network has supported communication with General Practices regarding access to the service.

Integrated Care

Collaborative Commissioning and Urgent Care Services

Recruitment to critical roles in the Rapid Geriatric Outreach services has been positive despite the challenging environment. Expansion to after hours during the week (8pm) and across the weekends is commencing in late January with recruitment going to plan. Support services like imaging and pathology are being investigated to support the additional hours largely through private market providers.

A focus of Collaborative Commissioning has been to increase the engagement of GPs in the program. There has been some success to date with an increase in 140 patients being enrolled into the program – with twice as many patients enrolled in the most recent quarter showing some momentum. Additional strategies utilising additional GP champions and after-hours events with GPs are planned for the next 6 months to continue the momentum.

Remote Monitoring Pathways

We have commenced using remote monitoring for community-based patients with congestive heart failure with numerous patients being enrolled. RPM represents a new way to collect better information on our patients that attend our non-admitted services to help us better detect their health levels and needs. Subject to evaluation, remote monitoring will be expanded to more heart failure services and patient groups across the district in the future.

Community Nursing:

As GPs are patients’ medical case manager in the community setting, Northern Sydney Home Nursing Service (NSHNS) have a strong ongoing GP interface, with in-built robust communication systems to ensure continuity and seamless care provision. This is of particular importance in the provision of palliative and end of life care where strong clinical relationships are vital between GPs, NSHNS and specialist palliative care services are vital.

PACH continues to explore opportunities to build strong linkages with General Practice, as demonstrated by the current project enabling e-referrals to NSHNS and CDCRS directly from GP practice software via a portal to the NSLHD Health Contact Centre. This is being developed in partnership with NSLHD Digital Health Service and NSW E-Health, with staff training to commence in February 2024.

The Child, Youth and Family Health Service

The Child, Youth and Family Health Service is undertaking the following in partnership with the Primary Health Network (PHN):

- Convening a First 2000 Days evening session with General Practitioners to raise awareness about the importance of identifying vulnerable children and those who are not developmentally on track, and linking them to early intervention services.
- Revising the child health pathways to increase useability for GPs to improve ability to refer and quickly link patients to the correct NSLHD service.

Multicultural Health Service:

The NSLHD Multicultural Health Service is partnering with MHDA, and the PHN to develop a regional Northern Sydney CALD Mental Health and Alcohol and Other Drugs Strategy, an initiative of the Joint Regional Mental Health, Suicide Prevention, Alcohol and Drugs Plan 2021-2026. The Regional Plan is a joint initiative of NSLHD and Sydney North Health Network (SNHN).

The NSLHD Multicultural Health Service is partnering with the PHN to pilot a "Hello Doc" expo to be held on 12 March 2024 at St Leonards TAFE. The expo aims to provide newly arrived migrants and refugees studying English at TAFE with information on services provided by the NSLHD, SNHN and GPs and practical tips on accessing these services. Multilingual health promotion resources will also be provided to assist new in navigating the complex health system.

The NSLHD Multicultural Health Service is partnering with the PHN in 2024 to pilot a Tibetan Community Health Advisory Group. The Group aims to partner with Tibetan consumer representatives to identify the health and health service needs of the Tibetan community and to plan, implement, and evaluate culturally responsive initiatives to address identified health needs.

Discharge Summary and Specialist Letter Improvement

NSLHD and the PHN Co-Chair a Working Group improving the communication to GPs by increasing the number of discharge summaries and specialist letters that are sent to GPs. The rate of failed discharge summaries has reduced to 9% by the end of December 2023. The group has identified and commenced implementation of numerous strategies including:

- Automated letters to General Practices informing them of their missing documents and with a fact sheet on how to rectify issues.
- Monthly targeted engagement of the Practices with the most documents failing to send.
- Integrating with the Commonwealth Government's Provider Connect Australia (PCA) initiative. PCA will act as a database for NSLHD to utilise current details for GPs across Australia and reduce the number of documents failing to send.
- Promoting PCA with GP Practices to sign up, including information sessions, webinars and targeted communications.

The group has identified via it's GP and Practice Manager representatives that missing specialist letters is an issue. Going forward, a priority for the group will be investigating the timely provision of specialist letters to GPs.

Service Updates

Mental Health, Drug & Alcohol (MHDA)

MHDA attended the bi-monthly Steering Committee for implementation of the joint region plan with the SNPHN. The focus for 2024-2025 implementation is on CALD, physical health, and continuing to work in the youth and suicide prevention space joining the upcoming Black Dog Institute Suicide Prevention Capacity Building Program.

Preparation is underway with NSLHD MHDA co-hosting a 2024 Housing and Mental Health Forum on 26 March 2024 with Link Wentworth Community Housing, SGCH and Bridge Housing. The event will bring together frontline staff from NSLHD, Community Housing Providers, and CMOs providing support services to mental health consumers. It is an opportunity for networking, as well as learning about the services of these organisations to improve collaboration and communication.

Primary & Community Health (PACH)

Aged and Chronic Care and Allied Health (ACCAH) - In line with Commonwealth recommendation and endorsed by the Ministry of Health (MoH) and Northern Sydney Local Health District (NSLHD), have begun consultations with staff to form a Single Aged Care Assessment Service encompassing the existing Aged Care Assessment Team, Regional Assessment Team, and Australian National Aged Care Classification team.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Service

The NSLHD HAPEE Hearing Clinic ran in collaboration with the NSLHD Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Service and the NSLHD Child and Family Health Service at Bungee Bidgel Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Clinic seen 16 patients from September – December 2023.

Bungee Bidgel, the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Clinic at Hornsby GP Unit has reopened for 2024 running 3 days a week. The first clinic for 2024 was on the 8th January 2024.

The NSLHD Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Service’s Clinical Nurse Specialist 1 (CNS1) and Registered Nurse (RN) have been accepted into the Master of Nursing at Newcastle University. Studies will be undertaken part-time over 2 years.

Health Services Planning

Work on the 2023-28 NSLHD Clinical Services Plan (CSP) is entering the final stages after a lengthy consultation period with networks and services across the district.

The CSP 2023-28 will outline major challenges and details strategic directions and recommendations for clinical services across NSLHD, our hospitals, clinical networks and directorates. The CSP’s scope encompasses clinical services, revolving around existing clinical networks, hospital, and community health services, as well as clinical support services such as medical imaging, pharmacy, allied health, Aboriginal health, and support for carers.

A draft version of the 2023-28 NSLHD CSP is scheduled for consultation distribution in mid-March.

Counter Disaster

The district has been involved in two significant forums that have implications for Counter Disaster in 2024. The first of these included participation in the consultation phase of the revised NSW Health Plan. This comprised of attendance at “Drop-in Sessions” with the Health Service Functional Area Coordinator (HSFAC) and the State Preparedness Response Unit as well as Disaster Management Forums which provided opportunity to work through the proposed arrangements. The release of this publication will provide guidance as to the integration of Health in the emergency management arena.

The second forum convened by the NSW Government Organisational Resilience Group provided insight from the Business Continuity Institute regarding forthcoming reforms in Business Continuity Management Systems (BCMS). This session provided guidance on how businesses could adapt with these changes.

Prevention and Response to Violence, Abuse and Neglect (PARVAN)

Safe Wayz Program

The NSLHD Safe Wayz Clinician commenced in late January. The role is tasked with implementation of the NSW Health Safe Wayz Program across the District. The Safe Wayz Clinician coordinates an integrated response for children under the age of criminal responsibility (currently 10 years in NSW) with problematic or harmful sexual behaviours (PHSBs). Safe Wayz adopts a strength based, family focussed and culturally centred trauma-informed approach to working with children and families to help behaviours from escalating. The Safe Wayz Program coordinates primary prevention initiatives to educate children, families, schools, carers, community, and professionals about problematic and harmful sexual behaviours (PHSB) including guidance on developmentally appropriate sexual behaviours. This role specifically builds capacity to identify and understand PHSB, collaborates with agency partners, provides consultation and training and advocates for system and practice changes. This role coordinates pathways into specialist counselling services for children and families who need them and will hold a small clinical case load. The Safe Wayz Identified Clinician position remains vacant after the preferred applicant withdrew, the role will be readvertised.

Domestic Violence Research

An ethics application was submitted by PARVAN Services, in collaboration with the University of Sydney. The proposed research is looking at “Improving response for victims of domestic violence: Understanding women’s domestic violence journey and evaluating their experience with PARVAN and other agencies.”

Integrated Domestic and Family Violence Crisis Model Project

Two of the PARVAN Service Doctors have been recruited to a six-month temporary contract and commenced development of a planned bookable integrated psychosocial medical/forensic clinic for victims of domestic violence. This project is part of the Ministry of Health led statewide Integrated Domestic and Family Violence Crisis Model Project.

Our Staff

People and Culture

Accreditation Dashboard

The People and Culture, Systems and Analytic Team is in the final stages of development of a modern digital solution which aims to support the district in managing workforce related processes that support the maintenance of accreditation standards. The solution currently being trialled at Ryde Hospital, is a single intranet portal for both internal (staff) and external (assessors) users and includes unique security and access permissions, document control, draft, endorsement ‘publication’, and archive functions, and ability to tag evidence across Standards and Actions.

NSLHD Draft Psychological Health & Safety Framework

People and Culture have appointed a new project lead to develop and support implementation of the new framework.

Turnover Report Goes Digital

The People and Culture, Systems and Analytic Team has been working on providing General Managers and Service Directors with Turnover data using the BI Tool. This allows for the data to be readily accessible once loaded into the system, eliminating the need for a paper report to be generated and circulated.

Exit Survey Data

The People and Culture, Organisational Development and Capability (ODAC) Team successfully launched the new NSLHD exit survey in October. It has captured over 80 completed surveys to date. The People and Culture Systems and Analytic Team have developed a dashboard to support reporting and analysis that will inform ongoing retention and engagement of our people. This exit survey forms part of a suite of surveys. The ODAC Team are working on including a ‘Stay’ survey which aims to gather data earlier in an employee’s lifecycle to support retention and engagement further.

Nursing and Midwifery

Nurse Manager – Operations

A busy year for the Nursing & Midwifery Directorate conducting various workshops, forums and Professional Development Days for NUMs/MUMs, CNEs/CMEs, Nurse Managers, CNCs/CMCs and hosting a Nursing & Midwifery Person Centred Care Showcase. The NMD held a planning day in early February to plan 2024 events and activities.

Practice Development, Quality & Safety Team

Eight MIM workshops were successfully conducted in 2023. Fifty-seven midwives (26% of the midwifery workforce) have completed the training in total surpassing the Ministry of Health's set target of 25%. Twenty-two workshops have been scheduled throughout 2024 to continue to develop capability and to ensure a new target of 75% for 2024 is met. The MIM Research; exploring the impact of using and Appreciative Inquiry methodology in mentoring has gained ethics approval and midwives are currently being recruited to participate.

This program is the result of a successful partnership between the NSLHD NMD and the Australian College of Nursing (ACN). It will be delivered as five virtual leadership modules and five face-to-face Inspiring Change Active Learning (ICALS) sessions aimed at cultivating foundational leadership and change capabilities needed to lead person-centred care.

Applications were primarily opened to second and third-year registered nurses and midwives. 30 staff were nominated and selected by facility DON/Ms and line managers to participate in the program. This includes 10 from MHDA, 8 from HKH, 3 from Midwifery HKH, 3 from Ryde, 3 from RNSH, 2 from Mona Vale and 1 from District services. Graduates of the program will receive a record of completion and awarded 20 x Continuing Professional Development (CPD) points at the program graduation on 4 July 2024. The evaluation from this cohort will inform the implementation of future programs.

Nursing and Midwifery Workforce Team

Ongoing workforce strategies include:

International Recruitment

NSLHD have a total of **116** International/overseas candidates who have been deemed successful and suitable for employment following interview and reference checks.

Visa Status	Total
Commenced in NSLHD	14
PR/482 approved awaiting to commence/ start date	30
Visa Nomination approved awaiting PR/482	20

Visa Nomination lodged awaiting approval/payment	1
With Employee Services, pending checks before nomination	10
Awaiting documents from candidates	41

NSLHD continues to attract experienced international nursing staff interested in relocating internationally via agency and local requisitions.

The NMD International Recruitment team are assisting candidates post arrival in Sydney with a welcome pack, employment information, facility/site tours, information re accommodation, banking, working with children check (WWCC), childcare, schooling and local cultural groups to ease transition to life in Sydney and Australia.

Nursing Agencies

An extension approval for 12 months is in progress for NSLHD current agencies whilst the new state-wide agency tender is being undertaken by Ministry of Health (MoH) and HealthShare.

GradStart 2024

On 19 February 2024 approximately 127 nurses and 9 midwives will commence as the first intake of 2024 GradStart nurses and midwives. 15 vacant GradStart 2024 positions have become available as candidates are either not able to complete university in time to qualify for their nursing registration in 2024 or have accepted positions elsewhere. Further candidates are currently being vetted to fill these vacancies.

NSLHD Casual and Agency Pool

Currently there are 1134 nursing and midwifery staff listed on the NSLHD Acute and MHDA Casual Pool and 303 nursing and midwifery agency staff onboarded for NSLHD.

NSLHD/UTS UGN pilot

The 38 successful UTS first year students who are a part of the NSLHD/UTS UGN pilot are currently completing their first clinical placements with NSLHD. Uniforms with both the UTS and NSLHD have been designed specifically for this cohort of students. These students are in the process of being onboarded to become a part of either the Acute or Mental Health Drug and Alcohol NSLHD Casual Pool as Casual Assistants in Nursing.

Midwifery Services

The Hyperemesis Gravidarum (HG) project is now in the final stages of implementation and evaluation. The New HG Health Pathway has been published and the NSLHD guideline for referral and care is approved. Evaluation of the project is underway at a district level via PREM surveys and NSLHD is participating in the NSW HG Initiative evaluation. The Ministry of Health are collecting data on the reach of available models of care being accessed by women with NVP/HG in each LHD.

Centre for Nursing and Midwifery Research

A research and grant writing workshop was held in early February to support nursing, midwifery, and allied health staff in answering applied clinical questions.

Planning is underway to call for nominations for the inaugural Mary Chiarella AM Medal for Clinical Nursing and Midwifery Research which will be awarded on International Nurses Day 2024.

A/Professor Rosalind Elliot has resigned and we thank Roz for her hard work supporting NSLHD nurses and midwives to advance their research.

Medical Services

RNSH is currently recruiting to their Director of Medical Services position.

Dr Michelle Mulligan OAM has accepted the position of Executive Medical Director, NLSHD. Michelle commenced in the role on Monday 5 February 2024.

The new cohort of intern medical officers started their new roles in NSLHD on 5 February 2024.

Allied Health

The NSW Health Excellence in Allied Health Awards acknowledge the passion, dedication and contributions that allied health professionals and their support staff provide in NSW. The awards also demonstrate NSW Health’s commitment, respect and value to the critical contribution that allied health has in delivering patient-centred care.

We are so proud of the NSLHD Finalists for 2024 and incredibly grateful them as a part of our NSLHD allied health team.

- Meryl Abao, Allied Health Assistant Physiotherapy, Royal North Shore Hospital
Allied Health Assistant / Technician / Support Person of the Year
- Mia Whitehall, Speech Pathologist, Royal North Shore Hospital
Early Career Allied Health Professional of the Year
- Kerry Crannis, Child Life Therapist, Royal North Shore Hospital
Allied Health Professional of the Year
- Avindu Vithanage, Physiotherapist Hornsby-Ku-ring-Gai Health Services
Allied Health Educator of the Year

The winners will be announced at the Awards ceremony at the Art Gallery of NSW on Thursday 29 February. The event will also be livestreamed.

LGBTIQ+ Strategy

The LGBTIQ+ Strategy implementation project is underway. Jemma Clifton, Project Officer, NSW Health LGBTIQ+ Strategy, NSLHD has created a new ‘LGBTIQ+ Health’ intranet page which serves as a one-stop-shop for educational information about LGBTIQ+ language and terminology, health disparities, inclusive healthcare provision, trans and gender diverse healthcare, and additional resources. It can be found under the ‘clinical services’ drop-down menu. Gemma has established the ‘Gender and Sexual Diversity Steering Committee’ for NSLHD to guide the planning and implementation of the LGBTIQ+ project, with members from the NSLHD executive, Pride+ Network, and various LGBTIQ+ community organisations. The inaugural meeting to review the LGBTIQ+ Project Plan for 2024 is scheduled to be held on 19 February 2024. Gemma has also finalised NSLHD’s submission to the Health & Wellbeing Equality Index (HWEI) benchmarking for LGBTIQ+ inclusive healthcare provision.

Research and Innovation

Research

NSLHD via the NORTH Foundation has received a \$20-million donation from Kay Van Norton Poche and her husband Greg Poche to develop a cancer clinical trials centre at the St Leonards campus. The centre will be a collaboration involving the Northern Sydney Local Health District, Ramsay Health Care and the Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Centre in New York, which is a world leader in cancer research and treatment. The first planning day for the centre will be held with key stakeholders in February 2024.

A clinical trials focused Clinical Council was held in early February, with presentations from the Ministry of Health, the NHMRC Clinical Trials Centre at USYD, and Sydney Health Partners. Key feedback from this meeting was around ensuring staff have adequate time for conducting clinical trials alongside other clinical duties.

Kolling Institute

It has been wonderful to see substantial new funding (\$2.35M) coming to the Kolling as part of our high-quality and impactful program of research. Pleasingly, our teams secured significant funding throughout last year, and in recent weeks our researchers were awarded more than \$1.6 million through the National Health and Medical Research Council; Professors Chris Little (MSK), Anastasia Milhailidou (CaR) and Dr. Cindy Shu (MSK) received ~\$1M (IDEAS) and Dr. Jillian Eyles received an Investigator Grant for \$660,000. Additionally, the National Institutes of Health has awarded more than \$9M (USD) towards investigating the impact of length of stay on rehabilitation outcomes following spinal cord injury. Professors James Middleton and Ashley Craig and Drs. Illaria Pozzato and Mohit Arora will receive more than \$750,000 for their collaborative contributions to this prestigious 5 year award.

Digital Health and Communications

Digital Health Services (DHS)

Digital Health Services Transformation

Changing our name to Digital Health Services (DHS) is the first step in transforming the services we provide to NSLHD. The Digital Health Services Leadership Team have embarked on a Customer Service journey to improve access, engagement and support for our clinicians and staff. Key initiatives identified during include:

- A physical and digital presence with onsite kiosks and digital staffed chat rooms (Live Chat) to assist with answering questions and support
- Regular DHS forums and “Innovation Days”
- Customer Service Training for DHS Staff and creation of Customer Service Leads
- Recommendations addressed as part of regular Customer Service Surveys
- Creating a formalised Engagement Group for new ideas and innovations

Artificial Intelligence in Healthcare

Artificial Intelligence (AI) stands as one of the most transformative shifts in contemporary history, reshaping how we live, work, and interact. Within the healthcare sector, it offers both incredible opportunities and challenges.

To make sure our district is using the technology in a safe, effective, and ethical way, I have initiated the creation of the Northern Sydney Local Health District AI Governance Committee. The new committee will act as a steward and have a range of responsibilities, including supervising AI projects, enforcing regulations, managing vendors, aligning investments ethically, and building employees’ skills across the district.

Expressions of interest have been called from up to five clinical NSLHD staff to join this important new initiative. Applications close on 16 February 2024.

Single Digital Patient Record (SDPR)/eMR

The SDPR program aims to provide a secure, holistic, and integrated view of the care a patient receives across the NSW Health system.

In January 2024, multiple briefing sessions were held around the new eHealth roles being created to resource the program. Recruitment for around 300 roles was advertised at the end of January 2024.

The Steering Committee has endorsed the implementation sequence and a high-level timeframe for the roll out of the SDPR platform across NSW Health. The lead sites are Hunter New England Local Health District (HNELHD), HNE-based laboratories in NSW Health Pathology North Network, along with the Justice and Forensic Mental Health Network, who are scheduled to go live in March 2026. Northern Sydney LHD, Central Coast LHD, Northern NSW LHD, Mid North Coast LHD and the rest of NSW Health Pathology North Network will follow with a scheduled go live in November 2026.

The overarching SDPR program governance model has also been endorsed by the Steering Committee. This includes an Integrated Governance Committee and design governance that includes discipline-specific councils. In addition, it is expected that there will be approximately 70 specialised groups that will lead the configuration of the SDPR. DHS is working with the SDPR Team, LHD Executive and Senior Leaders to identify key stakeholders and are leading the clinical engagement work within the district.

Cyber Security Strategy and Roadmap

Aligned with the NSLHD Cyber Security Strategy, DHS is actively working to mature the Districts Cyber Security posture by implementing several solutions and risk mitigators to strengthen our ability to defend against vulnerabilities.

DHS is implementing a solution to prevent data exfiltration. Microsoft BitLocker will be implemented across the computer fleet to encrypt all data stored on computers and laptops. Work has commenced with a third-party service provider to prepare the network and our users for this change.

DHS is also implementing a solution to block unauthorised Microsoft Office macros from being executed to prevent automated scripts from running on the NSLHD network. This is an NSW Government Cyber Security Policy mandatory requirement. Implementation is planned for the first quarter of 2024.

Health Grade Enterprise Network (HGEN)

HGEN is a state-wide initiative that will provide planned and ongoing refresh of the IT network infrastructure assets, to ensure they meet the evolving clinical, patient and staff future needs.

Benefits of this initiative include:

- Improved coverage, reliability, and performance of the network within the hospitals and health facilities

- Enhanced network security
- Enablement of future NSW Health innovations such as SDPR and Virtual Care
- Greater buying power through pooled funds
- Standardise approach to buying and managing network assets state-wide
- Kick-off sessions occurred in January 2024 at NSLHD, with a focus on Royal North Shore Hospital and Hornsby Ku-ring-gai Hospital. The next 6 months will see the Discovery, Design, Procurement and Readiness phases of the project allowing the installation of the upgrade network to begin in late 2024 and completed in 2025.

This timeline aligns with the scheduled NSLHD go live of SDPR, the first of the major health innovations that the new upgraded network will support.

Dragon Medical One Speech Recognition / Transcription

Following a successful transition to Dragon Medical One in 2023, there are more than 60 active NSLHD users dictating notes directly into the eMR and/or clinic letterhead, enabling quicker clinical documentation and saving on transcription costs. A trial of this technology will begin with Allied Health and Palliative Care services to evaluate the benefits for them.

NSLHD Communications

Internal Communications

- Chief Executive email to staff on the year ahead
- Announcement on the newly-formed Artificial Intelligence (AI) committee
- Chief Executive Christmas message to staff
- Invitation to staff to comment on the Planetary Health Framework
- Nomination invitation for the Exceptional People Awards
- Publication of three *NSLHD News*
- Promotion of Kolling Institute symposium
- End-of-year message from Kolling Institute Academic Director

External Media

- *Channel 9* featured Royal North Shore Hospital’s Party Program
- *The Daily Telegraph* published an article on Royal North Shore Hospital’s Master Plan
- *North Shore Living* published an article on Royal North Shore Hospital’s Master Plan
- *Channel 9* featured a story on Kolling Institute’s clinical trial for those with a spinal cord injury using world-first breathing therapy technique.
- Birth of quadruplets at Royal North Shore Hospital featured on Channel 9.
- Opening of Royal North Shore Hospital’s Total Body PET Scanner published in *The Australian Hospital and Healthcare Bulletin* and *The Limbic*
- Media release issued on \$20 million cancer clinical trials research centre at Royal North Shore Hospital

Social Media

- Urgent care centres promoted across social media
- Stay safe campaign for holidays
- Promotion of NSLHD Year in Review

Platform	January 2024	% Change from December 2023
Facebook	41,645 followers	0.4%
		(41,491 followers)
LinkedIn	15,343 followers	2.1%
		(15,026 followers)
Instagram	1,578 followers	5.2%
		(1,500 followers)
Twitter	2,242 followers	0%
		(2,244 followers)

Projects

- Assisted Ryde Hospital with communication material for staff on hospital redevelopment
- Produced publication of NSLHD Year in Review
- Supported planning of the NSLHD EPA Awards
- Supported development of NSLHD orientation video
- Progressed website development for NSLHD services
- Supported development of plans for Mona Vale Hospital’s 60th anniversary

Upcoming Events

- Graduate nurses start (18th February)
- International Women’s Day (8 March)

Philanthropy

NORTH Foundation Update

- Latest Annual Report was launched and distributed electronically and via NSLHD and Kolling newsletters: <https://online.flippingbook.com/view/10146793/>
- Christmas Appeal recently closed, raised almost \$200k. In comparison to the previous year, the average donation increased by 23% from \$287 to \$354.
- Currently establishing and growing connections with community groups and schools via our Community Engagement Officer.
- About to embark on a new revamped Donor Journey (both online and offline) focusing on Major Donors initially.
- Cases for Support and specific landing pages for renal medicine and planetary health currently being developed.
- We received 2 new bequests in January totally over \$900k.
- Developing a Free Will campaign with Safewill to promote to donors and NSLHD staff and volunteers. Free Will week is 18-24 March. Pilot campaign is being offered to HKH and Mona Vale.
- Working closely with NSLHD CE and Chair of Research re: launching a Capital Campaign (quiet phase) over the next few months for Clinical Trials Centre, securing further gifts and building on a more detailed Case for Support.

- NORTH Foundation looking to secure Health Professionals Bank as a Corporate Partner to sponsor various NSLHD staff events and initiatives in 2024 including this year’s Exceptional People Awards.

Chief Executive

Royal North Shore Hospital Staff Barbeque

On Thursday 7 December 2023, I joined the Royal North Shore Hospital staff over a barbeque lunch to celebrate the 2023 year’s achievements.

Reporting for Better Cancer Outcomes

On Monday 11 December 2023, members of the Senior Leadership Team and I attend a meeting with the Cancer Institute of NSW Chief Executive to discuss the with the Reporting for Better Cancer Outcomes (RBCO) data for Northern Sydney LHD and Northern Sydney PHN.

Bushfire Tabletop Exercise

On Monday 11 December 2023 members of the Senior Leadership Team and I attended a Bushfire Tabletop Exercise.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultural workshop at Berry Island Reserve

I am pleased to advise that on Monday 18 December 2023, the NSLHD Senior Leadership Team, along with members of the NSLHD Executive Unit attended the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultural Workshop at Berry Island Reserve.

NSLHD Performance Review with the Secretary for NSW Health

On Wednesday 17 January 2024, Mr Trevor Danos AM, NSLHD Board Chair and I attended the NSLHD Performance Review with the Secretary for NSW Health.

Royal North Shore Hospital Interns

I was pleased to meet and welcome to Northern Sydney Local Health District the 2024 Royal North Shore Hospital Interns on Monday 22 January 2024.

Site tour of the Tresillian Wollstonecraft facility

On Monday 22 January 2024, the Executive Director, Office of the Chief Executive, and myself attended a site tour of the new Tresillian facility at Wollstonecraft. It was an opportunity for us to hear about the facility and professional parenting services offered.

Meeting with Member for Ryde

On Tuesday 23 January 2024 I had the pleasure of meeting with Mr Jordan Lane, MP, Member for Ryde.

Australian Healthcare & Hospitals Association (AHHA)

On Monday 29 January 2024, members of the Senior Leadership Team and I attended an initial meeting with AHHA to discuss opportunities following NSLHD membership for accessing planetary health and low value care resources.

Applied Safety and Quality Program Graduation

I was pleased to deliver a keynote address at the inaugural Applied Safety and Quality Program Graduation on Tuesday 30 January 2024. I was proud to inform the attendees that 2023 was the first year that we introduced the Applied Safety and Quality Program at NSLHD, noting that this state-wide learning pathway initiative is designed to meet the current safety and quality capability needs of everyone in NSW Health from the foundational to the adept levels. The Graduates of the program gained adept level capability in healthcare safety and quality and are entitled to university credits towards

subjects related to safety and quality at several partner universities. Thank you to Acting NSLHD Board Chair, Emerita Professor Mary Chiarella AM for joining us at the Graduation.

Visit to Burns Unit – Royal North Shore Hospital

On Tuesday 30 January 2024, I also had the opportunity to visit the Burns Unit at Royal North Shore Hospital.

Intensive Care Nurse Practitioner Program

On Wednesday 31 January 2024 I was pleased to meet the NSLHD Intensive Nurse Practitioners.

Executive Masterclass on AI Governance and Risk

On Thursday 1 February 2024 the NSLHD executive, key AI stakeholders and I attended an Executive Masterclass on AI Governance and Risk.

Meeting with Mayor of Willoughby Council

On Monday 5 February 2024, Acting Board Chair Professor Emerita Mary Chiarella, the Executive Director, Office of the Chief Executive, NSLHD and I had the pleasure of meeting with the Mayor of Willoughby Council, Tanya Taylor and other Council staff.

Clinical Council focus on Clinical Trials

I am pleased to advise that on Monday 5 February 2024, the first targeted Clinical Council was completed with a focus on Clinical Trial opportunities in NLSHD.

Appointment of Executive Medical Director NSLHD

I am pleased to announce that Dr Michelle Mulligan OAM has accepted my invitation to be appointed as Executive Medical Director for NLSHD. Michelle commenced in the role on Monday 5 February. Michelle will also continue with her part-time clinical work as one of our senior anaesthetists.

Michelle is an experienced board director who has served on the NSLHD Board since 2017, the ACI Board from 2020 to 2023 and the CEC Board from 2017 to 2023 as well as the NSW Health System Advisory Council and the Medical Council of NSW.

New Graduate Health Management Program participants

On Thursday 8 February 2024, I was excited to welcome the 2024 four new graduate Health Management participants at a formal NSLHD event. I also took this opportunity to congratulate the participants of the program who graduated in 2023.

Year 1 Medical Students

On Tuesday 6 February 2024, I was pleased to meet and welcome to Northern Sydney Local Health District the 2024 Year 1 medical student Interns from the Northern Clinical School of the University of Sydney.

AI Conference

On Wednesday 7 February 2024, NSLHD representatives and I attended the Microsoft AI Conference.

Minister Visit to Royal North Shore Hospital Emergency Department

On Thursday 8 February 2024, we welcomed the NSW Premier, the NSW Minister for Health and the Secretary for NSW Health. At the visit the Premier, Minister and Secretary were briefed on the work of the trauma service and "code crimson" and to launch the ED Taskforce and safe staffing levels.

Welcome to 2024

I would like to take this opportunity to welcome all our staff, volunteers, and partners back following a well-deserved break. I would like to also extend a warm welcome to all the new staff members who have joined NSLHD this year.

Lastly, thank you to our staff who continued to support our patients in our hospitals and services over the festive season. Your commitment to the health and wellbeing of our community is much appreciated.



Adjunct Professor Anthony M. Schembri AM

Chief Executive

Date: 13 February 2024