

# NSLHD

NORTHERN SYDNEY  
LOCAL HEALTH DISTRICT

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# NEWS



## EMERGENCY



### A DONATION ACROSS THE DITCH

With the world reeling from the horror of the New Zealand terrorist attack, the thoughts of RNSH ED nurse Dave Dobson and his co-workers went immediately to their colleagues in the Christchurch Hospital ED.

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Health  
Northern Sydney  
Local Health District



# MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIRMAN

## Trevor Danos

I was delighted to learn recently that the NSW Government had committed \$479 million to the redevelopment of Ryde hospital. The new investment is very exciting news and will provide a much needed transformation of the hospital into a world-class facility.

The Ryde community rightly have a deep affection for their local hospital and the redevelopment will ensure it will continue to provide excellent patient care. The historic Denistone House will of course be preserved and will be surrounded by modern buildings and enhanced services.

I was also delighted that an extra \$65 million was announced on top of the \$200 million for Stage 2 of Hornsby Hospital's redevelopment.

In partnership with Health Infrastructure planning is underway and we will be working closely with nurses, doctors, allied health and other staff as we scope out how we can maximise this investment to ensure we have world-class facilities at both of these hospitals.

This is fantastic news for both the Ryde and Hornsby communities and means more patients can be treated closer to home rather than travelling to other hospitals.

Consumer and community participation continues to be an important focus for the NSLHD Board and great progress is being made to improve the experiences of consumers, families and carers using our health services.

To that end the Board's Consumer Committee is developing a district-wide Framework for partnering with consumers and our community. This Framework will detail how the District will strengthen the ways we partner with our community to improve our services and meet the needs and expectations of our consumers.

A staff toolkit is also being developed to support staff to partner with consumers in the design, development, delivery and evaluation of our health services.

The Framework is expected to be released in late August 2019, while the toolkits will be made available to staff and consumers by the end of the year.

Finally, the Easter long weekend is fast approaching and I hope you enjoy a well-earned break and get to spend some quality time with friends and family.

For those of you who will be working and continuing to provide quality care to our patients I am extremely grateful and extend my thanks and appreciation and hope you still manage to enjoy some down-time with loved ones.

**Trevor Danos**  
Board Chairman  
Northern Sydney Local Health District

## A DONATION ACROSS THE DITCH

With the world reeling from the horror of the New Zealand terrorist attack, the thoughts of RNSH ED nurse Dave Dobson and his co-workers went immediately to their colleagues in the Christchurch Hospital ED.

While they couldn't be there to help with the sudden, massive influx of patients in a short space of time, they decided to make a difference in another way.

Dave (pictured right) asked his teammates to donate money to their Christchurch colleagues so they could get together for a debrief to mark the day they will never forget.

All up, RNSH ED staff kicked the can for \$1625 which has been donated to help our Christchurch ED friends.

"Like all Australians my heart immediately went out to the victims, their loved ones and the Muslim community," Dave said.

"As an ED nurse I wanted to acknowledge the extraordinary effort made by the emergency department at Christchurch Hospital in an unbelievable situation.

"The ED team at RNSH were incredibly keen to support their peers - there is a kinship within all emergency departments.

"Christchurch ED staff will be processing the trauma for a long time to come and it's important they know their peers are standing side by side with them.

"We hope that this small gesture will provide some comfort or distraction for them."



Christchurch Hospital ED's nurse manager Anne Esson said the donation was most generous and much-appreciated.

"It's been pretty tough on the staff and it will take time for people to reconcile, if they ever can, what has happened," she said.

"The staff did an amazing job given the lack of warning, speed of arrival and intensity of work, which was phenomenal - 39 gunshot victims into one department within 45 minutes.

"Staff from all over the hospital came to help and were fantastic."

RNSH ED's nurse manager Bryan McKee-Hata praised Dave's actions.

"This fantastic effort reflects the values and qualities which are so very important in our profession - compassion, empathy, respect, advocacy and teamwork - to name but a few," Bryan said.



Christchurch ED nurse manager Anne Esson (front, seated right) with staff



Ursula Cutting, Natalie Mills and Valerie Lay from Mona Vale

## SPREADING THE WORD ABOUT FALLS

**Our staff were out and about on 1 April for April Falls Day, spreading the word on falls prevention and informing visitors, patients and staff about the signs of frailty and the strong role it plays in falls.**

**Frailty was the focus of April Falls Day 2019 and if you are caring for an older person or someone with a chronic condition, knowing the signs of frailty is important. The signs include unintentional weight loss, weakness, slower walking speed, exhaustion and low activity levels.**

**Want to find out how you can prevent falls for you and your loved ones? Visit <https://bit.ly/2JdaGat>**

April Falls Day has special significance for the rehabilitation team at Mona Vale Hospital.

A large share of the patients within the hospital's Beachside Rehabilitation Unit have experienced a fall, and many have fractured their hip or a leg.

Clinical nurse educator Ursula Cutting said a fracture can have a long term impact.

"It means patients are in hospital for a long time, with many people needing at least a month for a break to heal.

There's often a lot of pain involved which can be really uncomfortable.

"In some cases, people may hit their head which can result in a serious, long term injury.

"For some people, a fall will mean they will now need more care and will go home needing more services, such as ongoing rehabilitation or wound care, or help with everyday activities like shopping and transport.

"It can really limit a person's independence, so we would encourage people to take a few steps to prevent a major fall.

"This can include keeping active and fit, removing fall hazards at home, eating well, attending group exercise classes and using a walking frame if people are unsteady on their feet," Ursula said.

Other hospitals across the District celebrated April Falls Day with a range of stalls, forums and activities. You can see more of the action on the right.



(L-R) Tracey Morton (registered nurse, 6E), Jane Jiang (CNE, 9E), Allyson Waird (Aged Care CNC) and Rachel Groth CNS (registered nurse ED) at the RNSH information stand



Ryde Hospital staff getting in to the spirit at the main entrance of the hospital



Staff attend April Falls forum in the Kolling auditorium

## JANN'S CLOSE SHAVE WITH THE WORLD'S GREATEST SHAVE

Jann Allchurch can literally say she has had a close shave with the administration officer shaving her locks for charity.

Jann, who works for allied health at Hornsby Ku-ring-gai Hospital, is now sporting shorter hair after she took part in the World's Greatest Shave fundraiser.

Staff at Hornsby rallied behind Jann's cause and helped her raise \$1373 for the Leukaemia Foundation's home away from home accommodation located close to the hospital.

"I had initially hoped to raise \$560 which would give a family a week's accommodation," Jann said.

"I believe more is still to come. Everyone including friends, family, colleagues and patients have been extremely generous in supporting me for this wonderful cause.

"I would like to thank Tyson from Tyson's Hair Salon at the hospital who made it such fun and was so supportive."



Jann Allchurch has a close shave for charity. Pre-shave (image 1), shave (image 2) and post shave (image 3)

## KATH GRIFFIN CELEBRATES 40 YEARS OF VOLUNTEER WORK

For 40 years, Kath Griffin has been volunteering at Hornsby Ku-ring-gai Hospital.

Every week since 1979 Kath has visited the hospital to help staff care for patients, performing a variety of roles from feeding babies to cutting hair.

Known for her "lovely smile and warm gentle nature", Kath started volunteering with her sister, rewinding bandages for nurses, photocopying papers for nurses to help with their exams, and folding nappies.

Over the years she has been behind the hospital shop trolley visiting wards and departments, while also looking after children in the hospital's

former crèche.

But Kath is best known for her work as one of the hospital's weekly hairdressers and Meals on Wheels volunteer.

Kath has spent 20 years assisting with the meals and 40 years hairdressing.

Over the decades, she has made many friendships with many volunteers and staff.

Kath said of her time volunteering: "I have enjoyed meeting friends each week, communicating and helping patients and staff, and I feel privileged to be able to help the local community for so long."

This year also marks another milestone in Kath's life – her 90th birthday, which she recently celebrated with her six children and 12 grandchildren.





NSLHD CE Deb Willcox joins staff at the inaugural Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff networking day

## INAUGURAL ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER STAFF NETWORKING DAY

The inaugural Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff networking day held this month has been hailed a success.

Around a fifth of the District's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff were in attendance, representing a diverse range of fields.

A cross section of professionals from across the district also attended to offer advice and talk about their journey and experiences in government and non-government agencies.

Advice on career progression and educational

pathways was available from NSLHD Workforce and Culture and Centre for Education and Talent Development representatives.

Sessions throughout the day engaged the network, finding out what NSLHD can do better to attract, retain, and support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff.

A number of strong ideas were generated throughout the day, which were later presented to and well received by CE Deb Willcox.



**SPREAD THE  
GOOD NEWS**

We know our staff do amazing things and we want to hear about it. Share your news, achievements and events with your District colleagues.

Contact our team on **9463 1722** or email [NSLHD-media@health.nsw.gov.au](mailto:NSLHD-media@health.nsw.gov.au) to submit your news.

## NORTHERN SYDNEY EXTENDS SUPPORT TO FOSTER CARERS

Foster carers were presented with some challenging information about the importance of the first 2000 days of life – from conception to five years – and the effects of chronic stress in childhood on future health and wellbeing.

More than 40 carers attended a forum at the Dalwood Spilstead centre at Seaforth - the first of its type for our local health district.

The event provided foster carers with resources, the latest academic research on child development and specific strategies to support foster children.

Chief Executive Deb Willcox opened the forum, thanking carers for their generosity.

“Foster carers are some of the most special people on the planet. Thank you for what you do and your tremendous efforts. You do one of the toughest jobs and we’re here to help you with your role,” Deb said.

Clinical Director of Child, Youth and Family Health Dr Elisabeth Murphy explained 90 per cent of a child’s brain develops in the first five years, with life-long implications.

“These first crucial five years of life can set children up for life, so the work you do as carers will not only protect children now, but will help them later in life.

“There’s now clear evidence that abuse and household dysfunction in the early years can lead to a greater chance of disease, cognitive impairment and early mortality,” Elisabeth said.

“There’s also growing research about the damaging effect of alcohol and stress during pregnancy, and the impact on brain development.”

Carers, however, have been told they can have a positive influence on their children’s lives and have been provided with specific techniques to help them.

Foster carers David Hua and Ben May grabbed the chance to attend the forum after welcoming their two-year-old foster son into their home just last week.

“We’re very grateful to be able to come along and gain some knowledge so that we can do a better job of raising our son. We feel there are children in need and we have a lot to give, so it’s a good thing to do,” Ben said.

Jenny and Harry Antognelli, who provide

emergency and respite care, also welcomed the opportunity to learn more about foster care.

“We’ve been offering help to children and other foster carers for the past six months as our kids are now grown up. We’ve had a very fortunate life and would like to give back where it’s really needed in society,” Jenny said.

Similar forums are expected to be held following the positive feedback following the event.





Physiotherapist Imogen Birch, Buddy, occupational therapist Grace Hosegood and Dr Jasmine Gilchrist

## BUDDY TAKES FIRST STEPS

Sheer determination along with a carefully structured rehab program have helped a Northern Beaches man reach a significant milestone.

Forty-eight-year-old Jason “Buddy” Miller has taken his first steps with prosthetic legs just weeks after arriving at Mona Vale Hospital’s rehabilitation unit.

Buddy’s hands and feet were amputated as a result of a life-threatening blood infection, but he has progressed well in recent weeks.

Buddy said it was a little overwhelming to be standing again after so long.

“It was a strange feeling and I kept thinking I was going to fall back.

“I’ve been working really hard and asking for extra exercises,” Buddy said.

Rehabilitation specialist Dr Jasmine Gilchrist said Buddy has done amazingly well in a short amount of time.

“Buddy has improved quickly, progressing from having very limited movement to being strong enough to take his first steps,” Jasmine said.

“He’s worked tremendously hard with our rehabilitation team, spending around three hours a day in the gym.”

“He’s received wonderful support from our medical, nursing and allied health teams and the specialised care is achieving results.”

“Our approach is to look at the whole person and what their goals are, which is quite different from the approach with acute injuries or illnesses.

“We look at what resources we have to help our patients lead independent lives. It’s about



Buddy takes his first steps

empowering them to get on and have a productive life, and I’m sure this will be the case for Buddy.”

Buddy will move to the Prince of Wales Hospital where he will receive his new prosthetic hands, before returning to Mona Vale for further support.

Buddy hopes to be walking independently within two months.

## DISTRICT CELEBRATES SOCIAL WORK DAY

World Social Work Day celebrations were held across the District on 19 March. The Ryde (pictured) and North Shore Health Service Social Work Department hosted a morning tea to celebrate Social Work Day. The theme for this year is 'promoting the importance of human relationships'.

The morning tea discussions focused on number of communication changes that impacted on human relationships. Topics such as the notion of tribalism, impact of technology on our daily communication, need for human connection and team work were peacefully



deliberated.

Kasia Rigley (pictured above, far right) said the debate led into exploration of the impact of the internet on our daily communication and whilst there are pro and cons of using modern technology, the overall feeling of the day was that enabling tools help us facilitate our relationships in different ways.

"The teams raised the importance of human connection and our primate need to be connected to one another from birth through to our death.

"And lastly, any relationship, professional and interpersonal - 'with no trust is like a car without gas. You can stay in it, but it won't go anywhere'."

## A SEA CHANGE FOR DIRECTOR OF NURSING AND MIDWIFERY AT HKH

When Kathleen Thorpe closes the door of her office on Thursday (11 April) for the last time, she won't just be leaving her job at Hornsby. Kathleen is bound for a complete sea change, swapping Sydney's suburbs for Wollongong and leaving the 300-bed hospital in Hornsby Ku-ring-gai she has called home since 2007, moving to a 500-bed tertiary referral hospital.

"Hornsby has such a community feel that I have never felt anywhere else," she said.

"Staff genuinely care about each other's lives. I have loved every day here and I love walking around the campus and everyone knows each other, not just by name or face but the person. I will miss that greatly."

Kathleen started as the Deputy Director of Nursing in May 2007 and within six months she was acting Director of Nursing and Midwifery, a position she has



Kathleen Thorpe (middle front) with HKH nursing executive team

held since.

She began her nursing career when she was studying, starting as an Assistant in Nursing at a nursing home when still at high school. After becoming a Registered Nurse she worked at Westmead Hospital before becoming the first palliative care Nurse Manager for the former Hope Healthcare group which covered Neringah, Greenwich and other community centres.

One of her proudest achievements was placing residential 'in-reach' palliative care nursing services operating out of Mona Vale, Hornsby and Ryde hospitals while she worked at Hope Healthcare.

And now, in a full circle, Kathleen has been instrumental in gaining a Clinical Nurse Consultant in palliative care at Hornsby, a 0.5 staff specialist and a junior doctor also in palliative care.

"I believe that clinical care and patient care comes first and the Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) will follow," she said.

"Caring about each other is just as important a caring for our patients and their carers.

"The level of professionalism and care here (at Hornsby) happens every single day: that's the ordinary at HKH not the extraordinary."

# REMEMBERING MARGARET VANDERFIELD

Long-serving RNSH doctor and administrator the late Roger Vanderfield had a staunch ally in his wife Margaret, who passed away on 23 March aged 86.

Always warm and slightly cheeky, Margaret was a wonderful supporter of RNSH and her husband’s work, and was always by his side at functions and events.

The hospital’s honorary archivist Dr Cate Storey said Margaret “was an institution in her own right”.

“She was one of those ‘working wives’ who dedicated her life to that of her husband’s and was always around organising fund raising and other activities,” Cate said.



Margaret Vanderfield gives the thumbs-up to her husband’s portrait at his retirement in 1991. The painting hangs on Level 5 of the ASB, in the corridor which connects to the Kolling.

“She delighted in handing out nurses’ prizes and always had a smile and a nice word to say.

“All those people of my era will remember Margaret fondly.”

Her husband, who died in 2008, was a noted rugby referee and administrator who started at RNSH as a registrar in 1956.

He became Deputy Medical Superintendent in 1957 and, in 1994, succeeded General Medical Superintendent Wallace Freeborn on his retirement.

NSLHD CE Deb Willcox said Margaret’s contribution to RNSH would be formally acknowledged after discussions with the Medical Staff Council.

## NEW RECEPTION COUNTER AT RYDE HOSPITAL

Next time you are at Ryde Hospital you may be pleasantly surprised to see the hospital has recently installed a new front reception counter.

The counter has been upgraded to improve security and staff safety.

In the coming weeks the counter will have a newly designated administration officer stationed at the desk from 9am to 4pm.

This improved service will assist patients and visitors to find their way around the hospital.



Ryde Hospital’s Sam Johnston and Kate Stark take a seat behind the new counter

# Share your NSW Health ICT Experience to help us support you better



## Final days!

NSW Health and eHealth NSW invite you to give feedback on the ICT systems, programs and devices you use via the 'My NSW Health ICT Experience' survey.

Don't miss your chance to tell eHealth NSW what's working and what can be improved.

**Open until 5pm Friday 12 April**, the survey is faster than ever – with clearer language, fewer questions and multidevice access to make it easier for you to share your views and tell us what matters to you.

Depending on your use of ICT, it can take as little as **three minutes** to complete. If you've already started the survey but haven't completed it, you can pick up from where you left off by clicking the survey link again.

Your valuable feedback will be used to plan for the future and track the progress goals that were outlined in the eHealth Strategy for NSW Health 2016-2026. Click on the link below to access the survey.



Complete the  
survey in as little  
as 3 minutes



Open  
25 March to  
12 April 2019



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