DO YOU RECOGNISE THIS KOLLING SCIENTIST?
A portrait of one of our medical researchers is hanging in the NSW Art Gallery... and his eight-year-old son is the artist.

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JOHN BROGDEN VISITS RNSH
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NO BONES ABOUT IT LAUNCH
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It is National Volunteer Week – a time to celebrate the hundreds of volunteers who help our staff and patients so much across the length and breadth of our District.

I am always interested – but never surprised – when I hear how many of our wonderful volunteers have had first-hand experience of our services, many as patients.

People like patient-turned-volunteer Sharon Frazer, who spoke at Monday’s RNSH celebration and reminded us how a kind word or gesture can go such a long way to lift the spirits of our patients and their families.

Along with the addresses from our longest-serving volunteer Graham Whittaker (he started giving his time to RNSH in 1966) and former MP and now Lifeline chair, John Brogden, Sharon also gave us all something to think about. She reminded us our volunteers bring a special form of humanity to our health services.

This newsletter features the RNSH celebration but keep an eye out on the next edition which will showcase other events across the District.

In other celebrations, this edition brings you all the details of the District’s annual nursing awards – see P8 for the full list of winners.

Hearty congratulations to our Nurse of the Year Ryan Thomas (Hornsby); Midwife of the Year Tara Kelly (RNSH); and Team of the Year – awarded jointly to Mona Vale Hospital’s Urgent Care Centre team, and the NSLHD Palliative Care Team.

As we all know, our District is teeming with talent so it is no mean feat to take out any prize – let alone the top prize – in our awards.

There is also great news from Mona Vale Hospital with work underway on the Northern Beaches’ first inpatient palliative care unit, being built along with a new 10-bed specialist aged care facility.

The new construction follows a new drug and alcohol rehabilitation unit, a support services building and renovations to the Urgent Care Centre.

We are very fortunate to have a number of capital programs underway or in the planning. Hornsby Hospital is really coming out of the ground and early planning is commencing for the redevelopment of Ryde Hospital.

I also want to acknowledge the hard work of so many of you. Our Emergency Departments and hospitals have been very busy. As always your care for our patients is paramount but I need you all to keep well and encourage you to get your flu shot.

So far the take-up rate has been very encouraging but it is very important for you and our patients that you protect yourself against the flu.

Please make use of the easy-to-access flu shot form through the intranet home page under quick links - it will save you time. Our staff health team are here for you.

Deb Willcox
Chief Executive
Northern Sydney Local Health District
LIKE FATHER, LIKE SON

Kolling renal researcher Associate Professor Xin-Ming Chen used to worry that his young son Matthew resented his long hours at work.

There were times when Matthew, 8, struggled to understand why his dad’s commitment to reducing the risk of kidney disease for diabetics seemed to keep him away from his family.

But now, after reading Matthew’s beautiful tribute to his dad’s life-saving endeavours, Xin-Ming is thrilled his work is a source of family pride.

His entry reads: “I have drawn my dad because he is a great medical scientist and also a wonderful father. My dad’s daily job is to examine cells, a tiny world in the human body, through a microscope to find out if cells are healthy or sick. This information is very important for medical doctors. My dad can capture any small changes in a cell with his sharp eyes. My dad told me junk food may cause damage to cells in the human body. He loves me and cares about family. I want to become a medical scientist like my daddy when I grow up.”

The Young Archie portrait competition is open to artists between the ages of five and 18, and their work “must be of a person who is special to you – someone who is known to you and who knows you and plays a significant role in your life”.

Xin-Ming said he was delighted by Matthew’s words.

“He knows I do this because I want to help patients,” he said.

Xin-Ming and his team of 15 with Professor Carol Pollock are looking at ways to reduce the risk for the almost-50 per cent of Type 2 diabetics who develop kidney disease.

It’s a double jeopardy which is very close to home – Xin-Ming was diagnosed with Type 2 diabetes in 2003.

The Young Archie winners will be announced on August 10.

Matthew, in Year 2 at Hornsby North Public School, is a finalist in the 5-8 year category of the annual Young Archie award, part of the Archibald Prize run by the NSW Gallery.

His third Young Archie entry (his first earned an honourable mention three years ago; his second made the finals in 2017) is a stunning oil pastel of his dad at work in the lab.

Matthew spent nine hours on his entry, which is one of 10 in the running to take out the prize for his age group.

You are invited to the official launch of Northern Sydney Local Health District’s Carer Strategy 2018-2023

Join us on Friday 24 May at 11.30am in the main foyer of Royal North Shore Hospital

RSVP not required
Volunteer and speaker Sharon Frazer

John Brogden and Deb Willcox with the volunteers who clocked up 10 years of service.

John Brogden with 53-year volunteer Father John Daskalakis and Deb Willcox.

John Brogden and Deb Willcox with the volunteers who clocked up 15 years of service.

John Brogden and Deb Willcox with the volunteers who clocked up five years of service.
HERE’S CHEERS TO VOLUNTEERS

RNSH’s fabulous volunteers were honoured on Monday as this year’s annual National Volunteer Week kicked off.

Awards were given to vollies with five, 10, 15, 25 and 30 years-plus service to our patients and staff.

NSLHD CE Deb Willcox said RNSH would not function as it does without the help of the volunteers.

“Whatever your volunteer role here – whether you are a Pink Lady, or a greeter, or helping our patients eat their meals – you play a vital role in helping us deliver the best care we can for all our patients,” she told the audience in the Kolling Auditorium.

RNSH GM Alison Zecchin and Operations Manager John McMurray said the contribution of volunteers made the world of difference.

“Each duty you perform, each patient, visitor and carer you help and support and every dollar you donate from fund raising is enormously appreciated as you make our roles much easier,” Alison said.

Former politician John Brogden, the guest speaker, drew on his experience as chairman of Lifeline to praise the contribution volunteers make across all areas of the community.

He told how his dad, now 86, had had 20 rewarding years as a volunteer after leaving the paid workforce.

Mr Brogden said volunteering helped reduce the burden of loneliness, not only for those helped by volunteers, but often by the volunteers themselves.

The hospital’s longest serving volunteer Graham Whittaker and the newest recruit to the volunteer ranks, Sharon Frazer, explained why they give up their time to help others.

Graham, who began as a volunteer way back in 1966, said he had always been interested in people and volunteering was a way to serve without monetary reward.

“You are giving without thought of receiving anything in return,” Graham said.

“I believe there is a real need in our communities to reach out to people and especially those who are lonely to show them that somebody cares about them in a hurting world.”

Sharon told how she was given small odds of survival when she started treatment for leukaemia at RNSH.

From this experience I have great empathy with what patients go through while in hospital facing a life-threatening situation,” she said.

“When I reflect on my own time as a patient, maintaining one’s sanity and perspective in an environment that is by definition very sterile and clinical ... comes down to personal interactions with others.

“A smile is free and can really make a difference.

“Happiness is infectious - and is probably the only infection anyone ever wants in a hospital.”

See our next edition for more coverage of volunteer’s celebrations across the District, including Ryde’s awards day.

MORE PHOTOS OVERLEAF
RNSH General Manager Alison Zecchin thanked the volunteers.

John Brogden, Deb Willcox, Alison Zecchin and John McMurray with volunteer Dusan Zalek, awarded for five years of service.

John Brogden, Deb Willcox, Alison Zecchin and John McMurray with volunteers Ruth Jansen, Nan Burley and Nancy Marsden who clocked up 25 years of service.

Acting Volunteer Manager Judy Hogan-Wright, John Brogden, Deb Willcox, Alison Zecchin and John McMurray with 30-year volunteers Judy Smith and Jane Whittaker.

RNSH General Manager Alison Zecchin thanked the volunteers.

Acting Volunteer Manager Judy Hogan-Wright, John Brogden, Deb Willcox, Alison Zecchin and John McMurray with our longest-serving volunteers John Daskalakis, Graham Whittaker and Jeanette McInerney.
Mona Vale Hospital’s Urgent Care Centre team took out a coveted District award as part the International Nurses’ Day celebrations.

Acting District Director of Nursing and Midwifery Jenny Neilsen presented staff with the award for the nursing team of the year. They were named joint winners with the NSLHD Palliative Care Team.

General Manager Jacqui Edgley welcomed the recognition saying the award is especially significant after just six months of operation.

“I’d like to congratulate our urgent care centre staff for their hard work in recent months establishing the new centre.

“We’ve received plenty of good feedback from the community, and now it’s great for our team to be recognised by the District as well,” Jacqui said.

Mona Vale also hosted a special lunch and awards ceremony to mark International Nurses Day.

Acting Director of Nursing Sophie Lange said the awards honoured an outstanding commitment to patient care within our services.

“They give us a chance to thank our nurses for their compassion, professionalism and dedication,” she said.

“Leanne Jarrett, from the Beachside Rehabilitation Unit, was named RN of the year for her excellent clinical, assessment and team leading skills.

“TRN Beaudette Juan, also from the BRU, was recognised for her kind and caring approach and for always being a great team player.

“The Assessment and Rehabilitation Unit award went to senior RN Michelle Haines for her exceptional care. Michelle embodies our CORE values and is always willing to support other staff.”

Karen Birrell was recognised for supporting the Urgent Care Centre and for mentoring new and junior staff.

At Ryde Hospital, Graythwaite Rehab Unit’s Ranjani Rao claimed the title of the District’s Clinical Nurse Educator of the Year.

She was nominated for a number of reasons, including her warm and welcoming attitude to new learners and visitors to the department.
Tyson Manktelow was “everybody’s mate”: always smiling to the dozens of people who walked past his hair salon every day at Hornsby Ku-ring-gai Hospital.

For more than 20 years, Tyson had been cutting and colouring hair at the hospital, from staff to patients and community members.

But sadly, Tyson passed away on Tuesday May 7 following a medical episode. His unexpected passing prompted many to leave cards and a floral tribute at the front of his salon.

HKH’s General Manager Lee Gregory said: “Tyson provided wonderful community hairdressing service at the hospital for many years and will be very sadly missed by the Hornsby Hospital community.”

Many long-serving staff remember Tyson’s contribution to the Spring Fairs which Tyson helped to organise and also offer his services for free. He also served on the former staff auxiliary and gave his time and services for fundraising.

Switchboard operator Allan Kennedy described Tyson, 48, as community-spirited and hospital-minded who would be remembered fondly.

“He was just a really genuine likeable guy,” Allan said.

“He was part of the hospital’s fabric in those early years.”

Tyson leaves wife Michele, who works at the hospital, and their two daughters Tamara and Hayley.

Tyson’s funeral was held yesterday.
DISTRICT NURSE OF THE YEAR CELEBRATED AT HORNSBY

Ryan Thomas has spent most of his nursing career working with the most critically ill patients; at times confronted with challenging situations. Yet it is those challenging circumstances and complex cases that Ryan finds so rewarding.

Ryan (pictured left above with Mark Telford) is this year’s NSLHD Nurse of the Year. The Clinical Nurse Consultant at Hornsby Ku-ring-gai Hospital was nominated by his peers for the way he works in partnership with patients’ families and other clinicians.

Acting Director of Nursing and Midwifery, Jenny Neilsen, presented Ryan with his award and said he was described as a “fantastic clinician” by his colleagues.

“Ryan is a collaborator: he goes out of his way to share his knowledge to empower clinicians and patients,” she said.

“He is respectful and takes the time to understand where other individuals and services (involved in the patient’s case) are coming from and the challenges they face.”

Having started as a Registered Nurse in 2003 at Westmead Hospital, Ryan moved to Hornsby in November 2015.

“The majority of my career has been in ICU and working in high dependency units. Working in critical care has always piqued my interest and been my passion,” he said.

“I like it because you always get something new and different every single day. It’s always a challenge but very rewarding. There’s always a patient and families that strike you and stay with you, but to cope, my family and my friends are my greatest support.

“In nursing, it is often our colleagues who we rely on for support. Nurses know what each other have been through and rely on each other.

“A huge reason for my success, for enjoying my role and being at Hornsby is because of the people I work with and the community. I really enjoy the people here.”

DISTRICT MIDWIFE OF THE YEAR NAMED

Royal North Shore Hospital’s Tara Kelly claimed the title as NSLHD’s Midwife of the Year as part of International Nurses’ Day celebrations.

Tara has been a familiar face across a range of midwifery services, having held a number of roles at Royal North Shore since arriving in 1997.

She settled in her current role as a Clinical Midwifery Specialist at the Birth Unit in 2008.

After more than 20 years, Tara loves her job as much as the day she first started, now with the added bonus of being able to help staff who were once in her shoes.

“I love looking after women in labour,” she said.

“The excitement of birth is unbelievable and I am still amazed by it every time.

“I enjoy helping junior staff in their midwifery learning and having my experience be a resource for my colleagues if needed.”

As for a highlight, Tara said it would have to be being named as this year’s NSLHD Midwife of the year.

Tara was nominated for the award by two medical officers from with RNSh maternity.

They described her an an excellent leader and an exceptionally skilled midwife who “who displays sensitivity, compassion and empathy in caring for women.”
GRADUATION DAY FOR NSLHD STAFF

It may not be school holidays, but for some NSLHD staff the final bell has rung following their graduation from the Agency of Clinical Innovation Centre for Healthcare Redesign school.

After 12 months of work, the 10 clinicians and staff from NSLHD attended a special graduation ceremony to celebrate their achievements in redesign models of care for our public health system.

Attended by NSW Health Secretary Elizabeth Koff, the students were presented with their graduation certificates at the Sydney Living Museums - The Mint.

The 2018 class of NSLHD and their projects were:

- Eyes Open: Improving service delivery for the RNSH eye clinic - Tae Park, Scott Collins, Michael Mihail, Andrew Kam
- Increasing access and efficiency of the medical imaging department’s service ED patients – Katherine Erdman, Calum Rogerson, Lenae Dean
- Creating an integrated and responsive community acute care mental health service to improve the quality of consumer outcomes – Regan Runnalls, Melanie Perry, Sonia Reilly

Congratulations to our staff for your amazing achievements.

A very generous donation was delivered to RNSH’s maternity unit from HomeHQ in Artarmon. HomeHQ donated 50 cashmere blend scarves to new mums on Mother’s Day.

The centre’s Sarah Higgins said RNSH was an integral part of the community and they were thrilled to be able to give back.

“We wanted to show our appreciation to RNSH by giving mums who spent Mother’s Day in hospital a small gift,” Sarah said.
HISTORIC START OF WORKS AT MONA VALE HOSPITAL

Construction is underway on the Northern Beaches’ first inpatient palliative care unit.

Donnelley Constructions has been awarded the tender for the project, which includes the dedicated 10-bed palliative care facility and a 10-bed geriatric medical unit.

General Manager Jacqui Edgley said the new facility is set to offer specialist care and support for patients and their families.

“The inpatient units will be a major addition to Mona Vale Hospital, creating more employment opportunities and providing wonderful local care,” Jacqui said.

“The palliative care unit will be the first of its type on the beaches to provide specialist physical and emotional care during the final stages of illness. It follows many years of lobbying by the community for a local facility.

“The geriatric unit, to operate alongside the palliative care facility, will offer co-ordinated care for elderly people with complex health needs, giving them more independence and allowing them to stay at home or in self-care accommodation within a retirement village,” Jacqui said.

The project follows the construction of a new drug and alcohol rehabilitation unit, a support services building and renovations to the Urgent Care Centre. Construction is expected to be completed in mid-2020.

ACCOLADES TO OUR CLINICAL RESEARCHERS

It has been an exciting month for two of researchers based at the Kolling Institute of Medical Research who have won awards for their clinical research.

Dr Sarah Hilmer, who is a geriatrician and pharmacologist at RNSH, picked up the Innovation Development and Evaluation Award for her work into “Minimising the Functional Burden of Medications in Older Inpatients: Implementation of the Drug Burden Index”.

Sarah and her team are investigating polypharmacy in older patients and the effects of de-prescribing, with this particular project on the Drug Burden Index, funded by NSW Health’s Agency of Clinical Innovation.

Royal North Shore-based rheumatologist Prof David Hunter was awarded the Clinical Research Award from the Osteoarthritis Research Society International. This is the pre-eminent organisation internationally for this disease.

Accolades to our Clinical Researchers

Professor Sarah Hilmer accepts the award from ACI’s Chief Executive Dr Jean-Frederic Levesque

WWW.NSLSH.EDU.AU
This has been implemented as part of the NSLHD response to People Matter survey results.

Speaking Up For Safety is a new evidence-based initiative at Northern Sydney Local Health District. All staff – clinical and non-clinical – are encouraged to speak up about quality and safety, at any time.

New training will help us deliver the best care we can.

We all need to speak up if we see something that’s not right.

Check the Speak Up For Safety intranet page for training dates and times.