

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

21st Nov 2017

### ***Sydney North Primary Health Network Launches 2016/17 Annual Report with focus on strengthening communities***

The Sydney North Primary Health Network (SNPHN) has released their 2016/17 Annual Report which celebrates a year of rapid growth and delivery in the primary healthcare space in Sydney's North.

Lynelle Hales, CEO SNPHN, launched the report at the AGM evening on 9<sup>th</sup> November 2017, pointing out to the audience that the report "tells the story of the PHN, who we are, and how we are working to help the community while strengthening our primary healthcare neighborhood. This last year has been a significant year of achievement in putting in place programs and services that do exactly that."

The report highlights the funding and establishment of new services to meet local community health needs, with over 60 organisations receiving grants and contracts in the program areas of After Hours Healthcare Services, Mental Health, Alcohol and Other Drugs, Aboriginal Health, Innovation, and Vulnerable Populations.

"As healthcare commissioners we aim to work with our healthcare providers and community to improve population health, improve patient experiences, create better value within the healthcare system, and provide greater clinical workforce satisfaction and sustainability," says Sydney North Primary Health Network General Manager of Partnerships and Commissioning, David Grant.

Improving the mental health services of the Sydney North region is one such focus. The SNPHN received \$22.5 million over three years from the Australia Government to redesign and deliver effective and responsive mental health services within the region. In response to this grant, SNPHN has commissioned a range of innovative mental health services, providing care across a range of needs. This is underpinned and supported by a mental health triage service to assist with the navigation and availability of mental health services for General Practitioners and members of the Northern Sydney community who need to access and use these services.

The Sydney North Primary Health Network also received \$3.58 million of Australian Government funding over three years for local drug and alcohol rehabilitation services. The first newly commissioned health service - a partnership between **Odyssey House McGrath Foundation** and **New Horizons** - delivers a drug and alcohol rehabilitation day program for up to 400 adults a year from across the region.

SNPHN has also established a youth specialist day rehabilitation program to be operated by the **Sydney Drug Education and Counselling Centre**. This much-needed service will provide a support program for young people aged 14-25 years across the region who are experiencing moderate to severe drug and alcohol addiction, including ice addiction. Finally, **ACON** will deliver alcohol and other drug treatment services to LGBTQI community members residing in the region.

A range of the SNPHN's existing services have been aimed at improving the experience of Northern Sydney's vulnerable populations when accessing health services. These people include the socially and financially disadvantaged, youth, those from a culturally or linguistically diverse background, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community members, older people, and people with poor mental health.

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### > Greenway

Greenway at Kirribilli continues to be a focus of health improvement. During the last twelve months, SNPHN has worked in collaboration with Community Care Northern Beaches, to establish a social work program called **Greenway Connect**, to assist with the identification of mental and social issues, and coordination of referrals.

This program has managed 23 long-term clients and 73 short-term clients, working with them to assess their needs and link in with appropriate services. Work has also commenced on converting a ground floor unit into a clinic and educating area.

*"I used to be scared and ashamed to live here. Now I am so happy and healthy, and it feels like home."*  
Greenway Resident

### > Aboriginal Health

During the year SNPHN successfully commissioned the **Integrated Team Care (ITC)** program, a chronic disease management program designed to support and improve health outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in the region.

"In addition, the Sydney North Primary Health Network has partnered with key agencies, including the Northern Sydney Local Health District to deliver Aboriginal health events across the region including: women's health check days, chronic disease management, and mental health addressing youth and trauma management. SNPHN is actively engaged in the regional Aboriginal Health Advisory Committee and has funded 28 Group Hydrotherapy sessions and six regional 'Yarning Circles' for the local community," says SNPHN CEO Lynelle Hales.

Finally, a community health literacy website ([www.communityhealthpathways.com.au](http://www.communityhealthpathways.com.au)) has been established as a hub for health topics, information resources, and top tips from local GPs. Focus areas include Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health, Aged Care, Alcohol and Other Drugs, Cancer, and Chronic Conditions.

To read more about some of the key highlights in the full 2016/17 SNPHN Annual Report:

[CLICK HERE](#)

For high resolution photos from Annual Report to support your article please contact Abby Edwards below.

### Media Enquiries

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### Interview Opportunities

SNPHN CEO Lynelle Hales  
All Commissioned Services listed above

### **About the Sydney North Primary Health Network (SNPHN)**

The Sydney North Primary Health Network (SNPHN) is focused on enabling the 907,008 people in the Sydney North region to care for their own health and effectively navigate a complex healthcare system. This is achieved by providing better information, education, and networking opportunities for health professionals, establishing connections across the health system, and working with partners to deliver a better experience for health providers and better healthcare to the community.

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