



2021-22

# ANNUAL REPORT

**phn**  
NORTHERN SYDNEY  
An Australian Government Initiative



**SYDNEY NORTH**  
Health Network

# OUR SPONSORS

Thank you to our 2022 Annual General Meeting (AGM) and Primary Healthcare - Better Together Symposium Sponsors

## PLATINUM



## GOLD



## SILVER



## BRONZE



# ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

The Sydney North Health Network wishes to acknowledge Australia's Aboriginal people - the traditional custodians of the land on which we meet and work. We pay our respect and recognise their connection to land, water and community and honour their Ancestors, Elders past, present and emerging.

# CONTENTS

<a href="#">Health Profile</a>	<a href="#">4</a>	<a href="#">Systems Transformation</a>	<a href="#">13</a>
<a href="#">Location</a>	<a href="#">5</a>	<a href="#">Commissioning</a>	<a href="#">14</a>
<a href="#">About Us</a>	<a href="#">6</a>	<a href="#">Digital Health</a>	<a href="#">17</a>
<a href="#">Chair &amp; CEO Report</a>	<a href="#">7</a>	<a href="#">Community Activation</a>	<a href="#">18</a>
<a href="#">Board</a>	<a href="#">8</a>	<a href="#">An Exceptional Organisation</a>	<a href="#">20</a>
<a href="#">Executives</a>	<a href="#">9</a>	<a href="#">Symposium Series</a>	<a href="#">25</a>
<a href="#">Strengthening Primary Health Care</a>	<a href="#">10</a>	<a href="#">Financial Report</a>	<a href="#">26</a>
<a href="#">Member &amp; Provider Support</a>	<a href="#">11</a>		

# HEALTH PROFILE

## HEALTH DRIVERS

SNHN is ranked the least socio-economically disadvantaged PHN in Australia. However, there are pockets of high socio-economic disadvantage within Hornsby, Hunters Hill, North Sydney, Northern Beaches, Ryde and Willoughby LGAs.

**2.4%** of people aged 16-64 years receive unemployment benefits  
**NSW: 6.2%**

**43.1%** of people aged 17 years participating in tertiary education  
**NSW: 28.3%**

**28.8%** of low-income families experience financial stress from mortgage or rent  
**NSW: 29.3%**

## VULNERABLE GROUPS

**Children**  
**2.5% (4,643)** of children in low-income, welfare recipient families  
**NSW: 10.3%**

**Older People**  
**17.1% (158,142)** of the total population aged 65+ years  
**NSW: 17.2%**  
Between 2021-2041, there will be an increase of **57.8%** in the 65+ years population  
**NSW: 55.40%**

**Disability**  
**3.9%** of the population have severe or profound disability  
**NSW: 5.8%**

## HEALTH RISK FACTORS

**Obesity**  
**20.1 per 100** (18+ years) obese  
**NSW: 30.9**

**Alcohol**  
**16.6 per 100** (18+ years) engaging in high risk drinking  
**NSW: 15.5**

**Smoking**  
**7.9 per 100** (18+ years) current smokers  
**NSW: 14.4**

## CHILDHOOD IMMUNISATION



**1-year-old**  
**93.9%** fully immunised  
**NSW: 94%**



**2-years-old**  
**90.3%** fully immunised  
**NSW: 90.2%**



**5-years-old**  
**92.5%** fully immunised  
**NSW: 94.6%**

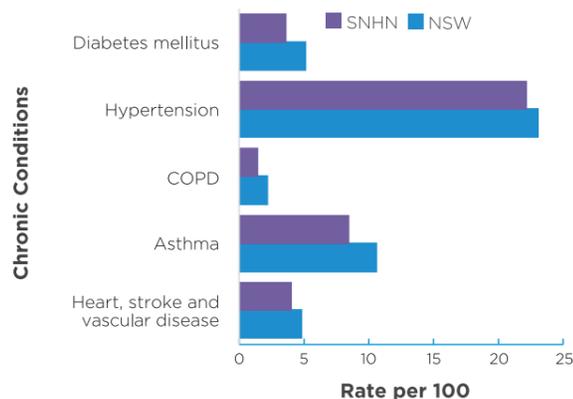
## CANCER SCREENING

**Bowel cancer screening** participation rate among people aged **50-74 years in SNHN (34.8%)** is lower than the NSW rate (36.3%).

**Cervical cancer screening** participation rate among women aged **20-69 years (62.7%)** is higher than the NSW rate (55.9%).

**Breast cancer screening** participation rate among women aged **50-74 years (48.5%)** is lower than the NSW rate (49.4%).

## CHRONIC CONDITIONS



## POTENTIALLY PREVENTABLE HOSPITALISATIONS

**1,569 per 100,000**  
**NSW: 2,064 per 100,000**  
Cellulitis, kidney and urinary tract infections, and dental conditions accounted for 36.2% of potentially preventable hospitalisations.

## PRIMARY HEALTHCARE

**292** GP practices in the SNHN region  
**131 GPs per 100,000 people**  
**NSW: 122 per 100,000 people**

# LOCATION

The SNHN region spans **899.9 square kilometres**, aligns with the Northern Sydney Local Health District and encompasses **9 Local Government Areas (LGAs)**.

HORNSBY

**TOTAL POPULATION:**  
**923,159**

**Between 2021-2041, the total population will increase by 13% to 1,079,354**

NORTHERN BEACHES

**0.5% (4,377)** of the SNHN population identify as Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander  
**NSW: 3.4%**

SNHN has a higher proportion of people who are culturally and linguistically diverse **(29%)** compared to **NSW (23%)**  
Chinese and Indian are the largest CALD groups

KU-RING-GAI

RYDE

WILLOUGHBY

HUNTERS HILL

LANE COVE

NORTH SYDNEY

MOSMAN

## OUR REGION'S POPULATION ORIGIN

The majority of the SNHN population (**57.4%**) were born in Australia, although a smaller proportion compared to NSW (65.4%) and Australia (66.9%).

The SNHN region has a growing population of people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, increasing from 25.7% in the 2016 Census to **29%** in the 2021 Census. Within SNHN, Ryde LGA has the highest proportion of people from CALD backgrounds (**44.3%**).

# ABOUT US

The Sydney North Health Network (SNHN), a registered not-for-profit organisation, operates the Northern Sydney PHN (NSPHN). NSPHN is one of the 31 Commonwealth Government funded Primary Health Networks (PHNs) operating across Australia.

SNHN commenced operating the Northern Sydney Primary Health Network (NSPHN) in July 2015, establishing a strong and vibrant organisation within the local primary health care environment. We have built partnerships across the health and social sector, with commissioning services reaching across our entire community.

SNHN works closely with our region's **292 General Practices, 1357 general practitioners (GPs) and over 2000 allied health providers** to improve health services for our community as well as improving the provider experience through education, quality improvement activities and fostering better connectivity between our region's health services systems.

SNHN is governed by a Board comprising 10 Directors, with strong governance processes, and supported by a Clinical Council and a Community Council. The organisation has demonstrated success and impact through its programs with strong engagement and support from local providers. This is backed by strong organisational governance, operating in a quality environment through the organisation's leadership, performance, evaluation, and improvement processes. This culture is present in all our programs and relationships, working with the community, local providers, and clinical services with a shared focus of achieving improved health outcomes through locally co-designed and co-delivered solutions.

Our five-year SNHN Strategic Plan 2018 - 2023 including the direction of our investment, the value we bring to our communities, our focus, goals and roles, and specific strategies can be found on our website under "About Us" here: <https://sydneynorthhealthnetwork.org.au/about-us/our-purpose>

## COMMUNITY & CLINICAL COUNCILS' - GUIDANCE AND SUPPORT

Sydney North Health Network seeks guidance from the Clinical Council and the Community Council to ensure effective, person-centred primary healthcare for our community. Each Council is chaired by a Board Director, with both Councils comprising of two Directors.

Our **14 member** Clinical Council continues to provide guidance on SNHN primary care programs and initiatives aimed at improving health outcomes within the region.

Our Community Council, comprising of **16 local community members**, represent diverse communities, health priorities and perspectives. Council members provide local knowledge and lived experiences to ensure health services meet community needs.



# CHAIR & CEO REPORT

## Welcome

“Coming together is a beginning, staying together is progress, and working together is success.”

Henry Ford



Throughout 2021-22 Sydney North Health Network (SNHN) has continued to work together in partnership with a growing network of local health professionals, including general practitioners, practice nurses, pharmacists, a large range of allied health providers, the Northern Sydney Local Health District (NSLHD), and other related health and social services to:

- Strengthen person-centred primary healthcare;
- Integrate care across the health and social care systems;
- Improve access to care and support; and
- Connect our community with available services.

Our partnership approach to person-centred care is reflected in our vision:

**Achieving together - better health, better care.**

As you read our Annual Report you will see how SNHN is working together across the primary healthcare system. A major focus this past year has related to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, including the vaccination and protection of the community, and supporting access to primary healthcare for individuals with COVID-19. SNHN has worked in partnership with the NSLHD, General Practices, pharmacists, and community partners to vaccinate the most vulnerable and to establish COVID-19 home visiting services and GP COVID-19 advice lines. In addition, SNHN has worked with each of our commissioning partners to continually adapt and expand services to meet our local needs during significant lockdown periods and increasing mental health support requirements.

During the year we have made significant progress in improving access to more timely care for frail and older people, using a collaborative commissioning approach with Northern Sydney Local Health District. The aim of the program is to design and implement innovative approaches and models to enable healthcare providers across the primary care, acute care, and aged care environments to work together to improve care for frail and elderly people in our region.

The Hornsby Village Hub was established in March 2022. It is a community-led initiative aimed at nurturing and supporting a connected and

compassionate community for seniors. This has been achieved through a funding grant from the Australian Government Department of Social Services. SNHN has partnered with Hornsby Shire Council, Fusion, Rotary Club of Hornsby District, PCYC, Ku-ring-gai Neighbourhood Centre, Hornsby Ku-ring-gai Hospital, NSLHD, Aboriginal Health Services, IABBV Hindi School, Women's Shed and Ku-ring-gai Police Area Command.

Thank you to our team, members, commissioned services, and partners who have adapted to the challenges COVID-19 continues to present us. The commitment of our small, resilient, and dedicated teams has enabled us to progress, making a positive impact throughout our region. Together we have strengthened primary health care, working to make our vision of achieving together, better health and better care a reality.

SNHN continues to implement changes to primary health care practice to help reduce the carbon emissions produced by our sector's environmental footprint. Taking a collaborative approach will help increase the results we can achieve in the race against climate change.

We also thank our Board, Community Council and Clinical Council. They have governed the organisation with attentive care, while providing support and encouragement for the SNHN team to work flexibly to meet local needs.

In the coming year, we will refresh our strategic plan in consultation with our members, partners, and local community. This task will ensure our future focus aligns with the community's needs while building the structure, integration, and capacity to strengthen person-centred primary healthcare across general practice, allied health, pharmacy, aged care, and mental health services.

We look forward to continuing our collaborative approach to improving the effectiveness and efficiency of our community's primary health care.

**KATE LOXTON**  
Chair of the Board

**LYNELLE HALES**  
Chief Executive Officer

# BOARD



**KATE LOXTON**  
Chair



**PROF. SIMON WILLCOCK**  
Deputy Chair



**DR MAGDALEN CAMPBELL**



**DR STEPHEN GINSBORG**



**BRYNNIE GOODWILL**



**GRANT CAMERON**



**DR CONNY HARRIS**



**SAMANTHA CHALLINOR**



**ROS KNIGHT**



**JANE FLEMMING**  
OAM OLY



**DR DANIEL NOUR**



# EXECUTIVES

From left to right:

**CYNTHIA STANTON** - Chief Operating Officer

**LYNELLE HALES** - Chief Executive Officer

**JIM KEECH** - General Manager, Strategy and Innovation

**ANNETTE BEWICKE** - Executive Assistant to CEO

**RAMON DEL CARMEN** - Chief Financial Officer

# STRENGTHENING PRIMARY HEALTH CARE

## PRIMARY CARE SUPPORT

The highlights for the Primary Care Advancement Team throughout 2021-22 included:

**Quality Improvement Initiatives** utilising General Practice data collected using CATPLUS for **206** practices in the region, including:



Quarterly data reports provided to practices capturing quality and opportunities for improvement.



PIP QI data reports provided quarterly to participating practices which provide a snapshot of current data quality benchmarked across the region.



Ongoing development of a National PHN Quality Improvement Framework to provide a consistent approach to education and resources for General Practices.



Dementia Quality Improvement Program defining key indicators for identifying dementia early and improving quality of care - 10 practices participating.



Continued focus on quality person centred care with a whole of team approach using Person Centred Medical Home principals:

- Leveraging leadership and collaboration to drive change in practice through a series of workshops
- Practice culture and engagement surveys to measure success in activities



**Practice Manager Networking Breakfasts** - held monthly across the region, through the support and sponsorship from Commonwealth Bank Australia, each session was dedicated to specific topic with guest speakers.



**Cancer Screening Quality Improvement Toolkit Promotion** - distributed with the aim to increase screening activities in General Practice.



**Heart Connect Program** - a heart health initiative in collaboration with researchers to improve outcomes for patients at risk of cardiovascular disease.



**LUMOS** - 55 practices participating in ethically approved program that securely links encoded data from General Practices to other NSW Health datasets, providing an overview of a patient's journey across the health system.



**General Practice Covid Response Grants** - 30 grants were awarded in recognition of practices' contributions and ongoing efforts to the region's COVID-19 response, comprising of improving vaccination rates for specific vulnerable populations, including CALD, non-medicare card holders and people experiencing homelessness.



**Shared Care 4Kids Blue Book Development Checks Pilot Program** - a partnership with NSLHD Child and Family Health (CFH) service, included 5 practices across the SNHN region and aimed to increase knowledge of child health checks and referral pathways to CFH.

# MEMBER & PROVIDER SUPPORT

## CLINICAL ENGAGEMENT & EDUCATION PROGRAM

Sydney North Health Network's Clinical Engagement and Education program remains committed to providing a high quality, evidence-based education program that is aligned with our local and national health priorities.

This program supports general practice and primary care providers to build capacity in developing a high performing, person centred workforce.

SNHN is an Education Provider with the Royal Australian College of General Practice (RACGP) with education overseen by a clinical interdisciplinary Education Advisory Committee.

### Highlights



**5,551** GPs, Practice Nurses, Practice Managers, Pharmacists and Allied Health Professionals participated in a SNHN education opportunity.



The Future of Primary Healthcare hybrid symposium.



**89** education opportunities provided including webinars, online learning, face-to-face and hybrid formats.



Education sessions for the Primary Care Nurse Network.



COVID-19 support education and training webinars delivered covering topics including - Allied Health Services in Residential Aged Care Facilities; Vaccination rollout support; Self-care during the pandemic; Living and working with COVID-19; PPE training; Caring for low risk COVID-19 positive patients and referral pathways available.



Ongoing education for the GP Shared Antenatal Care program.



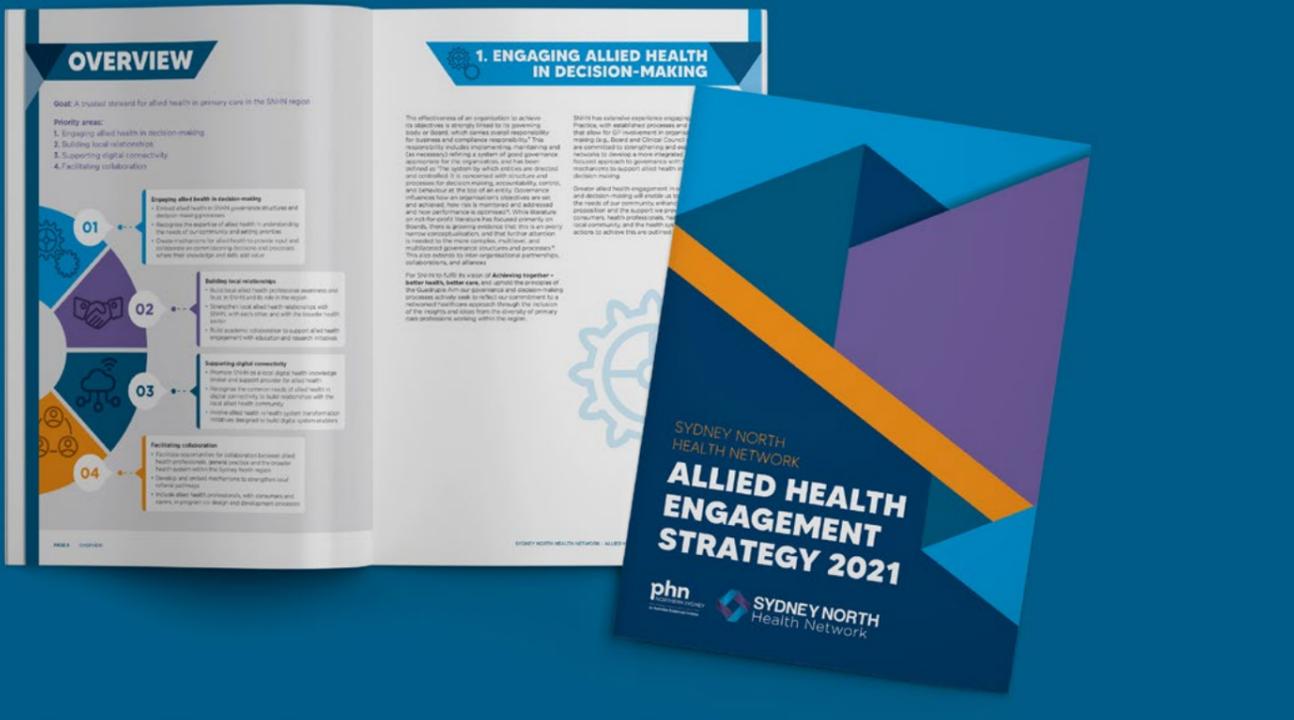
After Hours Urgent Care education sessions.

### Quotes from our education participants:

“Excellent! Speakers great, useful industry displays and well organised!”

“Keen to attend similar events and gain input from multidisciplinary teams.”

“Thank you very much to the SNHN and panel for this excellent event!”



## HEALTH WORKFORCE

### Allied Health Engagement Strategy

SNHN's first Allied Health Engagement Strategy was launched in October 2021, with the implementation of the first phase well underway.

### Allied Health Grants

In recognition of their expertise, **21 small Allied Health grants** were awarded.

In brief, the grants will help support delivery of activities aimed at:

- Increasing vaccinations
- Managing the symptoms of prolonged COVID-19
- Screening and providing management strategies for older people at risk of frailty and falls
- Preventing and managing chronic conditions
- Enhancing mental health and wellbeing
- Improving access to allied health services for vulnerable groups
- Building skills and capacity of the health workforce
- Enabling connected care with general practice and other primary healthcare providers

### Nurse Transition Program

This program now runs two distinct streams - **New Graduates** and **Nurses new to Primary Care**. These nurses are supported to transition into primary care, upskilling and developing their professional scope. Mentor nurses that work with transition nurses are supported to ensure they have the skills to help them develop.

## Network and Education

Online education modules accessed by the Nurse Transition participants are now also available for all nurses in general practice, providing education and update opportunities whilst working at their own pace. The **Northern Sydney Nurses Network** is now facilitated by SNHN and was restored in May 2022. The Network provides opportunities for local primary care nurses to meet, seek and provide support to one another.



# SYSTEMS TRANSFORMATION

## EMERGENCY RESPONSE

### COVID-19 vaccination highlights on 2021-22 included:



In-home vaccination program delivering **244 individual vaccinations** to people unable to leave their homes.



**105 Residential Aged Care Facilities** were supported to deliver **7,650 vaccines** to residents and staff, reaching 95% winter booster vaccinations.



**33 pop-up clinics delivering 434 vaccines.** These clinics focused on people experiencing homelessness, including those living in transitional housing and women's refuge; young people; Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples; people from a CALD background.



**33 Pharmacists** and **23 GPs** participated in the clinic and RACF vaccination programs.



**Intensive support provided to 221 (93%)** General Practices to on-board and deliver COVID-19 vaccinations.

### COVID Care

SNHN supported the management of COVID-19 in the community by developing three new services in response to consultation with local general practice and NSLHD Virtual Care Clinic.

- The **GP COVID-19 and Flu Advice Line** was established within the Virtual Care service at the NSLHD. This service received **499 calls from local GPs** asking for clarification around management and treatment of complex covid positive patients. 97% of these patients remained in the care of their GP and avoided emergency department presentation.
- The **Clinical Home Visiting Service** was established in March 2022 with **386 patients** being referred, and **232** requiring a clinical home visit.
- The **COVID Home Isolation Support Service** was established in March 2022 and assisted **58 people** to manage their home isolation period.

SNHN distributed **over one million Personal Protective Equipment** items to general practice, pharmacies, commissioned services and allied health providers. **Over 87 thousand Rapid Antigen Tests** were distributed to **105 Residential Aged Care Facilities.**





# COMMISSIONING

## STRATEGY, PLANNING & SERVICE IMPROVEMENT

In 2021-22, the key areas of focus for the Strategy, Planning and Service Improvement Team included the development of the SNHN Needs Assessment 2022-25, development, and implementation of the Data Science Plan, and implementing the Primary Health Insights platform.

### SNHN Needs Assessment 2022-25



SNHN Needs Assessment 2022-2025 was developed in February 2022. The assessment included a focus on the impacts of COVID-19, current and emerging needs within the region to inform commissioning of targeted programs and services.



The Needs Assessment was informed by a range of quantitative and qualitative data sources, including consultation with a range of stakeholders and regional data from the **45 & Up Study** accessed through a partnership with the Sax Institute.

### SNHN Data Science Plan



SNHN Data Science Plan developed in collaboration with the SNHN Data Science Steering Committee to support SNHN's development as a data science organisation.



The SNHN Data Science Plan is aligned to SNHN's strategic goals, with implementation underway including a focus on utilisation of data visualisation tools, building staff capacity and capability in data science and collaboration with universities and research organisations to develop clinical decision support tools.

### Primary Health Insights



SNHN partnered with PHNs nationally to implement the Primary Health Insights platform which provides a single data storage and analytics solution that can be shared by all PHNs.



SNHN has utilised the platform to automate data extraction, analysis, and integration of general practice data, supporting continuous data driven quality improvement within general practice.

## COMMISSIONING HIGHLIGHTS



Over the past year, SNHN has worked in partnership with **18 commissioned service providers** to ensure the delivery of **27 high-quality services**.

### Low Intensity Mental Health Services

- Low intensity mental health services form part of an integrated stepped care system and offer a lower intensity, easy to access option for people who are at risk of the onset of mental illness or have mild mental conditions and do not require psychological interventions.
- In July 2021, following consultation with key stakeholders, SNHN commissioned Anglicare to deliver low intensity mental health services across the region. The **Emotional Wellbeing Space Program** aims to relieve psychological distress and improve daily functioning through the delivery of services by mental health wellbeing practitioners. Services are provided in-person and virtually via one-to-one and/or group sessions to support the emotional and mental wellbeing of clients.
- Over the last year, SNHN has worked collaboratively with Anglicare throughout the implementation phase of the service which has had strong uptake, with clients reporting positive experiences and improved mental health and wellbeing.

### Allied Health Group Therapy Program in Residential Aged Care Facilities (RACFs)

- In 2021, the Department of Health provided funding to eligible PHNs across Australia to commission physiotherapists, exercise physiologists and/or occupational therapists to support residents in RACFs affected by outbreaks of COVID-19.
- In August 2021, SNHN commissioned **Vivir Healthcare** to deliver the **Allied Health Group Therapy Program** at BaptistCare Dorothy Henderson Lodge in Macquarie Park. The Group Therapy Program is a temporary measure aimed at improving physical functioning of residents at eligible RACFs who are at risk of deconditioning due to COVID-19.
- SNHN worked collaboratively with BaptistCare and Vivir Healthcare who rapidly implemented the program through the mobilisation of an experienced allied health workforce. The program had good uptake with all willing and able residents participating in the program. RACF staff reported improvements in the overall wellbeing of residents and all participants demonstrated an improvement in physical functioning upon completion of the program.

### SNHN Commissioning Evaluation Toolkit Implementation

- The **SNHN Commissioning Evaluation Toolkit** has been implemented to provide staff with practical guidance to utilise the Evaluation Framework comprehensively across the commissioning cycle. The toolkit has enabled SNHN to embed evaluation across the commissioning stages and increase capability to support the consistent design and implementation of evaluation activities.
- In March 2022, the Commissioning Team presented the Evaluation Toolkit at the National Commissioning Showcase event to showcase examples of best practice and innovation. The team received positive feedback and several requests to share further learnings across the Commissioning Network.

### headspace Wait Time Reduction Grant Activities

- In 2021, SNHN and **New Horizons** (lead agency of **headspace** in the SNHN region) were successful in securing an additional \$1.8million of funding via the Department of Health's **headspace Demand Management Enhancement Program** grant opportunity.
- The additional funding supports wait time reduction activities over three years to improve demand management, reduce wait times, enhance service offerings, and improve the health outcomes of young people accessing headspace services in the Northern Sydney region.
- SNHN continues to work closely with New Horizons, the headspace leadership team, and the headspace National Clinical Practice Team to support the implementation of the grant activities in the Northern Sydney region. Additional clinicians have been recruited to provide brief intervention services, assessment, and psychological therapy at headspace Brookvale through staff development and training. **Wait Time Reduction** activities will continue through to June 2024.



## COLLABORATIVE COMMISSIONING



Sydney North Health Network and Northern Sydney Local Health District have joined forces in an historic partnership which will see new services designed, and existing health and social services adapted to better support people aged 75 years and older.

Over the past year, the partnership has undertaken an extensive process to identify patient needs and co-designed the local care pathway, including:

Consultation and engagement through consumer interviews and surveys with:

- **253** people aged **75yrs** and over
- **92** carers with the support of **34** community organisations
- **74** GPs and nurses
- **80+** LHD staff, NSW Ambulance and **10** aged care and commissioned services

### GP Engagement + the Keeping Well & Independent Program

- During the co-design process, the Collaborative Commissioning team consulted with GPs on the role they play in management and coordination of an older person's health and wellbeing. GPs shared that they see their role as being central in assisting patients in navigating and coordinating their health and wellbeing as they get older.
- Consultations with patients and their carers displayed similar sentiments, with 98% of patients turning to their GPs when seeking health and social assistance.

- In consultation with GPs, and through reviewing best practice on the development of preventative models and approaches to primary health care, the Collaborative Commissioning team developed a Quality Improvement Program - **'Keeping Well & Independent'**.
- The aim of the program is to assist GPs with preventative planning activities for patients 75+ years who are at risk of unplanned hospitalisation.
- A key component of the program is the automation of a data dashboard to provide more transparency between primary and acute care. The monthly dashboard provides GPs information on patient hospital trends enabling them to deliver targeted support to those most in need.

### Geriatrician Outreach to Primary Care

- The Geriatrician Outreach to Primary Care service is newly commissioned and designed in response to direct consultations with GPs.
- GPs told SNHN they would benefit from the support of Geriatricians for complex patients before the point of deterioration or unplanned hospitalisation.
- The Collaborative Commissioning team worked with NSLHD, GPs and various other stakeholders to design this responsive model of care.
- The service commenced March 2021 and since then has had more than **1,000 referrals**.
- Feedback from GPs has been overwhelmingly positive.
- Unplanned admission rates for patients managed by **GP/Geriatrician relationship** are **14% lower** in the 75+ age group in Northern Sydney.
- Geriatricians are fostering relationships with GPs who have been hard to engage with in the past.
- The service **won the NSLHD Quality & Improvement Award** in the 'Delivering Value-Based Integrated Care' category.

Geriatrician Outreach to Primary Care team from L to R: Dr Radheshan Baskaran, Dr Praveen Sivabalan, Dr Linda Xu, Hoda Sanai and James Inglis.



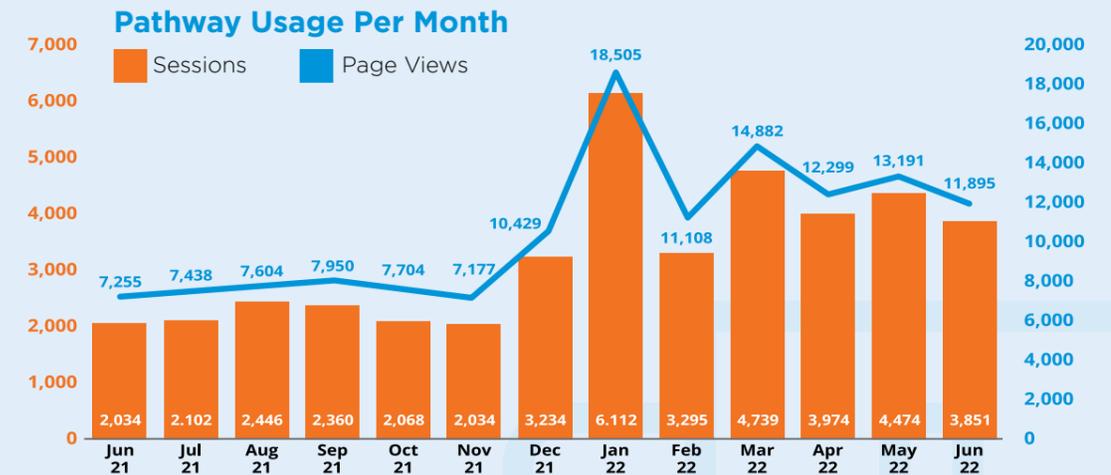
## DIGITAL HEALTH HEALTH PATHWAYS

HealthPathways played a pivotal role in the local response to COVID-19 and demonstrated how collaboration at a state level was critical in providing clinicians with the latest updates on best practice management at speed and scale.

Usage more than doubled over the Christmas and New Year period when the case numbers accelerated and NSW Health rapidly changed the management model, advising lower risk COVID positive patients to contact their GPs.

The increased usage was then sustained throughout the first half of 2022.

A total of 478 pathways are now localised for Northern Sydney on the site.



## MEDICAL SPECIALISTS

This year SNHN started new work with medical specialists in the region. This included mapping an expanding baseline of medical specialists. This is new work for PHNs and has involved developing relationships with almost 400 individual specialists.

## SAFE SCRIPTS

Safe Scripts is a real-time prescription monitoring application, which was deployed across the Sydney North region throughout 2021-22. Working with eHealth NSW to deliver the Safe Scripts service; 48% of GPs and 36% of Pharmacists have registered to use this technology to help manage patient welfare.

## CLIMATE & HEALTH

Our Climate and Health Strategy has been developed in partnership with the Australian Healthcare and Hospitals Association (AHHA). The strategy's aim is to support our region's response to the impact of climate on local people's health and wellbeing. When we were developing our Climate and Health Strategy, we also viewed our organisation's overall strategic business direction through a climate and health lens, ensuring both strategies were working cohesively.

SNHN is at the forefront of Australia's Primary Health Network in forming and implementing a Climate and Health Strategy. SNHN are committed to collaborating closely with our partners and local community to make this strategy a reality. Throughout 2021-22 we facilitated internal and external stakeholder

workshops to identify the region's key priorities to act on. We were fortunate to have representation from a broad range of stakeholders, including primary care providers, council sustainability and development leads, Northern Sydney Local Health District and NSW Department of Planning, Industry and Environment.

We have implemented the following Health and Climate Strategic priorities:

- Development of a dedicated Climate and Health webpage on the SNHN website, providing a range of climate and health resources for the community, health professionals and other PHNs.
- Establishment of a Climate and Health Practitioners' Network to facilitate sustainability programs within general practice, supported by access to climate and health education programs delivered by the Centre for Sustainable Healthcare.
- Embedding sustainability in the commissioning processes through inclusion of climate and health as an assessment criterion for all requests for proposals and monitoring and reporting processes.
- Promotion of a culture of energy and waste reduction at SNHN through establishment of an internal 'green team,' Better Business Partnerships accreditation through Willoughby City Council and development of internal resources and policies.



(L-R) SNHN CEO and Chair, Hornsby Village Hub Steering Committee, Mayor Hornsby Shire Council, the cultural Jacaranda Dance Group, and contributing community stakeholders

# COMMUNITY ACTIVATION

## Asset-based Community Development (ABCD)

In the last 12 months, SNHN's community activation has been guided by **an asset-based community development (ABCD) approach**. New community program, The Hornsby Village Hub demonstrates the ABCD approach through its citizen-led membership program that works with the communities' strengths; its people and places; and connecting them through social events, groups, and activities. The aim of the Hub is to support social connection for people aged 55 years and over (or 50 years and over for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples) and reduce the threat of social isolation and loneliness which can severely impact upon a person's wellbeing.

## The Hornsby Village Hub

Funded by the Department of Social Services, the **Hornsby Village Hub** has completed its first year of operation in the 2021-2022 financial year. In that time, the social connectedness program has achieved many milestones including:

- Establishing a Steering Committee of **11 Community Connectors** - Sydney North Health Network, Hornsby Shire Council, Fusion, Hornsby Ku-ring-gai Hospital, the Women's Shed, KNC, Ku-ring-gai PAC, Northern Sydney Local Health District Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Services, Hornsby PCYC, IABBV Hindi School, and Rotary Club of Hornsby District - to lead the direction of the Hub.
- A partnership between **SNHN and Hornsby Shire Council**.

- A **community launch** event at Storey Park, Hornsby on 22nd March 2022 with keynote address by Professor Sue Kurrle, Geriatrician, Hornsby Ku-ring-gai Hospital.
- **100 Hub Members** onboarded to the program.
- **Community consultation sessions** - 72 Hub members met to discuss the development of a Hub activity plan.

The Hub has had a strong start in its first 12 months of operation and is in good shape to deliver on its next 12 months of goals.

## GPs in Schools

SNHN's youth health literacy program, GPs in Schools, introduces year 11 students to health and wellbeing information delivered by general practitioners and practice nurses attending their school. The presentation and facilitated workshops in peer groups shares information on sexual health, mental health, alcohol and other drugs, as well as how to access primary care services. In 2021-2022 GPs in Schools was interrupted in term 3 due to the COVID-19 lockdown, however the face-to-face workshops resumed in term 4, 2021.

In 2021-2022:

- **32** GPs in Schools workshops were held for year 11 students
- **5150** students attended a GPs in Schools workshop
- An **online session** was facilitated for Bradfield College
- **18** new GP and practice nurse facilitators were trained to build capacity for the program

## Helping Vulnerable Communities

SNHN advocates for its vulnerable community populations in the region through direct services and programs that support health and wellbeing, or indirectly by building community workforce capacity.

Highlights of the 2021-2022 year included:

- ✓ Creating two new **Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultural Safety Training** programs for the community workforce (youth and frontline) because of a grant from the Mental Health Commission of NSW.
- ✓ SNHN's Indigenous Health Coordinator delivering **Cultural and Social Connectedness** groups in the Hornsby and Northern Beaches for young people. In Ryde, **the Ryde Women's Group** continues to enjoy fortnightly gatherings.
- ✓ The **Carers Connected Northern Beaches Program** launched in May this year and offers senior carers 65+ the opportunity for social connection, respite and wellbeing. The program is trialling a social prescribing model providing local GPs and health providers with an easy referral pathway for their patients.
- ✓ **39 Healthy Living workshops** and vaccination clinics targeting 1955 community members throughout 9 LGAs were conducted in the last 12 months. Workshops delivered included COVID-19, Wellbeing & Resilience, Food & Nutrition, and Bone Health Information. These workshops were delivered in English and in-language for CALD communities.



## Vaccination Clinics for Community Groups

Service	Community	Number of Vaccinations
Street Side Medics	Homeless	<b>82</b> - 1st & 2nd COVID-19 vaccination <b>28</b> - COVID-19 booster <b>7</b> - Flu vaccines
Women Shelters	Women	<b>11</b> - 1st & 2nd COVID-19 vaccination <b>21</b> - COVID-19 booster
Community Northern Beaches	Northern Beaches	<b>156</b> - 1st & 2nd COVID-19 vaccination
St George Community Housing	Social Housing	<b>12</b> - 1st & 2nd COVID-19 vaccination
Phoenix Youth Services	Youth	<b>10</b> - 1st & 2nd COVID-19 vaccination <b>11</b> - COVID-19 booster
Bridge Housing	Social Housing	<b>18</b> - 1st & 2nd COVID-19 vaccination <b>35</b> - COVID-19 booster
Link Wentworth	Social Housing	<b>10</b> - 1st & 2nd COVID-19
Brookvale TAFE	Tibetan Students	<b>20</b> - Flu & COVID-19 vaccines <b>6</b> - COVID-19 booster <b>7</b> - Flu vaccines

# AN EXCEPTIONAL ORGANISATION

Here are some of the achievement and highlights in 2021-2022 from the SNHN Corporate Services team.

## INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY



**Multi-Factor Authentication** successfully implemented in August 2021 strengthening SNHN email security.



**Engagement of Adventus** as an outsourced helpdesk function to improve efficiency within the organisation.



**Cloud Server** - completion of project for on premise servers to move to the cloud.



**Printers** - new printer contract negotiated with replacement printers delivered in May 2022.



**Equipment Upgrade** - replacement and upgrade of staff laptops.



**Remote Support** - supporting all areas of the business even during periods of remote operations.

## HUMAN RESOURCES



**HR Information System Upgrade** - upgraded the Human Resources Information System (PeopleStreme) to a contemporary and user-friendly system inclusive of performance and learning modules.



**New Learning & Development System** - implementation of new online learning system Go1 (accessible through PeopleStreme HRIS).



**2021 PHN Benchmarking Survey** conducted by BPA Analytics with a high response rate of 98% and an outstanding result in the category of "Truly Great Place to Work" at 93%. In the category of "Success Culture" SNHN had an 86% rating and has consistently maintained this rating over 3 survey periods. This is above the norm for PHNs at 63% and Health & Community at 47%.



**SNHN Restructure** - HR successfully supported the internal organisation in the staff restructure which was reflected in operations from 1 Oct 2021.

## GOVERNANCE



**Amendments to the SNHN Constitution** for 2021 AGM.



**Trademark obtained** for "Sydney North Health Network" as a brand.



**Project for enhancements to the budgeting and forecasting process** - work has commenced with service provider Nexon, for SNHN to implement a Solver Budgeting model to improve budgeting and forecasting automation.



**Procuring RAT tests** - sourcing tests in a time of scarcity for staff protection.

## WORK, HEALTH & SAFETY



**SNHN Safety COVID-19 Outbreak Response Plan** updated and communicated.



**Remote working** - maintaining a high level of communication when all staff were assigned to work from home for part of the year.



**NSW Government roadmap** for re-opening implemented.

## FINANCE



**Excelling in business support in a remote set-up** - maintaining the finance functionality in a hybrid work environment. Finance has excelled in remote reporting throughout 2021-22 producing over 1800 reports in twelve months for a range of stakeholders including Australian Tax Office, Department of Health, Finance and Risk Management, Auditors, Managers, and the Board.



**Program reporting upgrade** - finance successfully completed the implementation of this project to streamline the sharing of program reports with managers.

## ADMINISTRATION



**Maintaining a COVID safe office** - keeping office QR codes, sanitiser/wipes, masks, and social distancing requirements in place and preserving a high standard of cleanliness in the office.



**Distribution** - provided support to the Emergency Response Group in the distribution of PPE to General Practices, Pharmacies and Allied Health Professionals.



**RAT tests** - distributing tests regularly to SNHN staff.



## STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS & MARKETING



The SNHN Communication and Marketing team work to:

- Build awareness within our Northern Sydney operating region, Sydney, and state of NSW.
- Provide important and essential information to our members and primary healthcare providers.
- Inform our local community of how our organisation's work positively impacts the everyday life and health of those living in our operating region.

A key communication strategy from the team has been the creation of person and community centred stories to help educate and inform people about the benefits of primary healthcare. Much of the work throughout 2021/22 continued to focus on disseminating COVID-19 vaccine rollout information to health care professionals and the community.

Despite the challenges of the recent pandemic, the team has continued to support the Northern Sydney community through the following projects:

### Health Awareness Campaigns

The team has implemented impactful and engaging messaging to effectively reach our local community using a diverse range of mediums:

- **COVID-19 vaccine rollout** - what COVID-19 vaccines were available and who was eligible.
- **Head to Health** - pandemic mental health support.
- **Winter resilience** - how to best prepare for the winter season and maintain physical and mental health.

### Digital Website Innovation launch of Chatbot "Jane"

In September 2021 we launched a 'Chatbot' artificial intelligence application to help community members and healthcare providers find COVID-19 infection and vaccination information quickly and easily. This was a first for an Australian PHN.

The Chatbot integration resulted in over 12 hours' worth of website visitor interaction from September 2021 - June 2022.



## CORPORATE PARTNERSHIPS

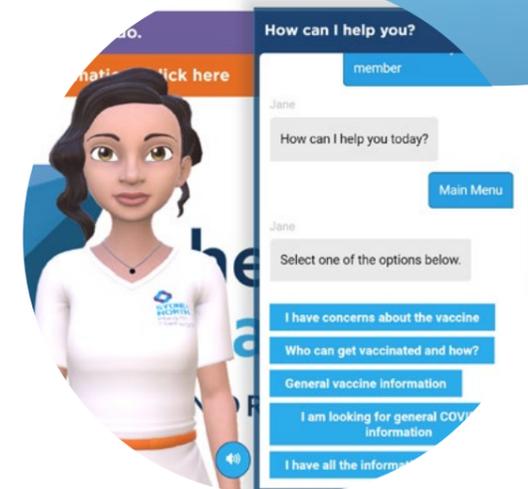


We enhance our community's health outcomes through collaborative partnerships with corporate organisations and government departments.

The additional funding we have received through these partnerships has enabled us to increase community health literacy, improve social connectedness and wellbeing, implement our climate and health strategy, and expand our primary health care programs and events.

We thank the partners and sponsors for providing funding in 2021/22 for the following:

- ✓ **Department of Social Services** - establishment of the Hornsby Village Hub.
- ✓ **Consumer Healthcare Products (CHP) Australia** - GPs in Schools Program.
- ✓ **Department of Industry, Science, Energy and Resources** - for resilience and preparedness initiatives for primary care and community in relation to extreme weather events.
- ✓ **CommBank Health** - Practice Manager Networking Breakfasts.
- ✓ **Mental Health Commission of NSW** - Indigenous Mental Health Literacy education and resources for healthcare professionals.
- ✓ **Department of Communities and Justice** - Connections for Carers and an Indigenous Youth Group.
- ✓ **City of Ryde** - cultural activities as part of the Ryde Aboriginal Women's Gathering.
- ✓ **Northern Beaches Council** - Northern Beaches Dementia Alliance and the establishment of the Connected Mobs Youth Group.
- ✓ **Australia Post** - development and delivery of Community Wellbeing workshops.
- ✓ **Mosman Council** - community wellbeing and health literacy initiatives.
- ✓ **HESTA, AbbVie, and BOQ Specialist** - Person-centred and Multidisciplinary Symposium Series sponsors.
- ✓ **Ramsay Mental Health, Novo Nordisk, Abbott Diabetes Care, Douglass Hanly Moir, Ku-ring-gai Neighbourhood Centre (KNC), and Australasian Medical & Scientific Ltd (AMSL)** - Symposium Event sponsors.
- ✓ **Genea, Astra Zeneca, and Women's Imaging Group** - Education & Events.



## Brand Presence - growth and engagement across social and traditional media

SNHN utilise social media to engage our local communities and primary health care professionals.

Our social media growth continued throughout 2021/22, building on the trend of years previous. This is a positive indication that our social media content is achieving continued relevance and engagement with our audiences.



**Facebook**  
Growth of **11%**

**3.6%** above the category average 2%



**LinkedIn**  
Growth of **24%**

**7.4%** above the category average 6%



**Instagram**  
Growth of **20%**

**8.5%** above the category average 3%



**Twitter**  
Growth of **9%**

**1.3%** above the category average 1%

By telling powerful and personal stories and building awareness through our SNHN health experts, we have achieved the following traditional (radio, print, TV) media coverage in 2021/2022:

**ABC Sydney - Afternoon Drive Radio with Richard Glover:** Launch of the Hornsby Village Hub.

**2GB - Afternoons with Deb Knight:** Dr Fiona Robinson talking about benefits of COVID-19 vaccinations for the community.

**KIIS 1065 and WSFM:** Dr Fiona Robinson talking about Winter Resilience.

**Nine News Sydney:** Community benefits of winter flu and COVID-19 vaccinations.

**SBS News:** Launch of the Hornsby Village Hub.

**The House of Wellness:** Clinical Psychologist and SNHN Board Member, Ros Knight, talking about coping strategies for COVID-19



# SYDNEY NORTH HEALTH NETWORK'S PERSON-CENTRED, MULTIDISCIPLINARY CARE SYMPOSIUM SERIES 2021 - 22

Working together to provide person centred, multidisciplinary care

## Mental Health and Integrated care



## The future of primary health care symposium at the Annual General Meeting, November 2021



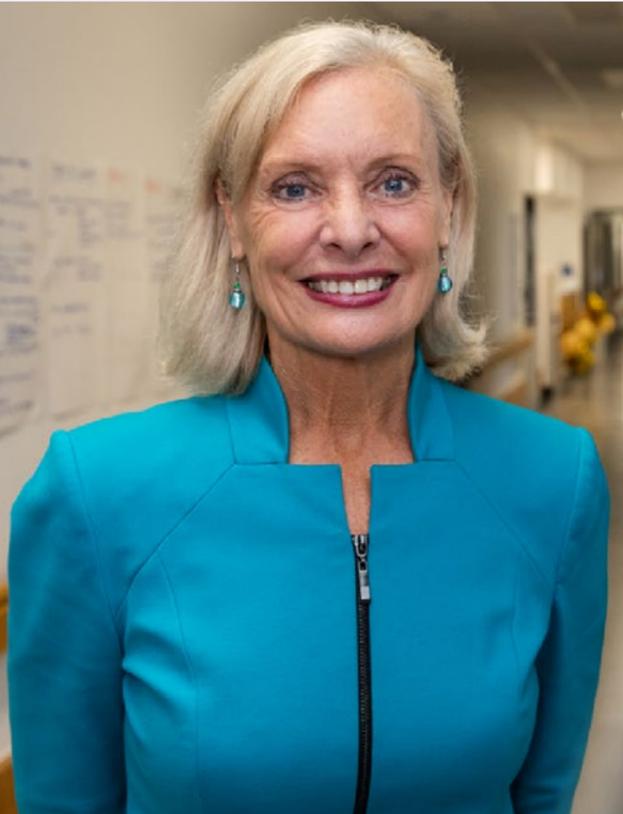
## Diabetes Care



## Enhanced Primary Care



## Healthy Ageing and Hospital Avoidance through Integrated Care



# Winter Resilience

**Dr Fiona Robinson**  
General Practitioner  
& Associate Professor

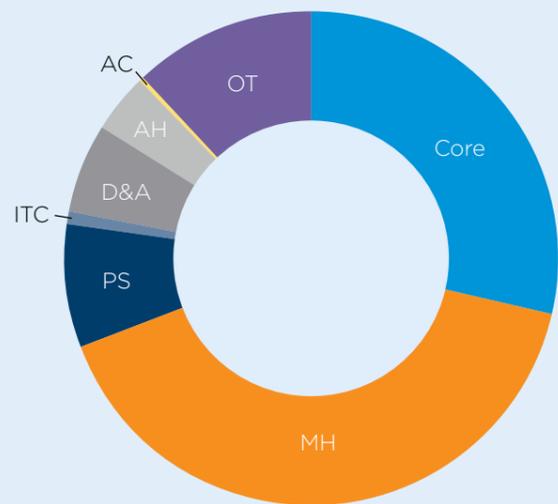


# STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

As at 30 June 2022

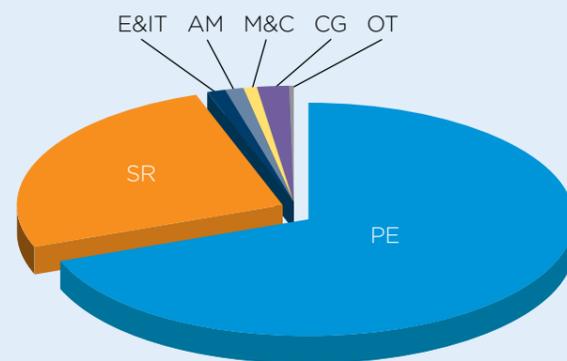


## EXPENSE CLASSIFICATION



- Core (Corporate Governance, Flexible, Health Systems Improvement, COVID-19) (28.7%)
- MH - Mental Health (40.6%)
- PS - Psychosocial Support (8.1%)
- ITC - Integrated Team Care (0.7%)
- D&A - Drug and Alcohol (5.9%)
- AH - After Hours (4%)
- AC - Aged Care (0.2%)
- OT - Other (11.8%)

## EXPENDITURE (\$ in thousands)



- PE - Program Expenses (\$21,770)
- SR - Staff Related Expenses (8,080)
- E&IT - Equipment and IT (\$313)
- AM - Amortisation (\$420)
- M&C - Marketing and Communications (\$252)
- CG - Corporate Governance (\$561)
- OT - Other (\$51)

# STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

As at 30 June 2022

### ASSETS

#### CURRENT ASSETS

Cash and cash equivalents  
Trade and other receivables  
Prepayments

#### TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS

#### NON-CURRENT ASSETS

##### Right-of-use assets

#### TOTAL NON-CURRENT ASSETS

#### TOTAL ASSETS

	2022 \$	2021 \$
<b>ASSETS</b>		
<b>CURRENT ASSETS</b>		
Cash and cash equivalents	15,761,336	9,589,403
Trade and other receivables	367,351	420,744
Prepayments	1,431,182	186,593
<b>TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS</b>	<b>17,559,869</b>	10,196,740
<b>NON-CURRENT ASSETS</b>		
Right-of-use assets	1,017,854	1,437,570
<b>TOTAL NON-CURRENT ASSETS</b>	<b>1,017,854</b>	1,437,570
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>	<b>18,577,723</b>	11,634,310

### LIABILITIES

#### CURRENT LIABILITIES

Trade and other payables  
Contract liabilities  
Employee benefits  
Lease liabilities

#### TOTAL CURRENT LIABILITIES

#### NON-CURRENT LIABILITIES

Employee benefits  
Provision for make good of premises  
Lease liabilities

#### TOTAL NON-CURRENT LIABILITIES

#### TOTAL LIABILITIES

#### NET ASSETS

	2022	2021
<b>LIABILITIES</b>		
<b>CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>		
Trade and other payables	3,721,398	2,675,610
Contract liabilities	11,451,324	5,406,977
Employee benefits	618,762	472,051
Lease liabilities	473,327	436,753
<b>TOTAL CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>	<b>16,264,811</b>	8,991,391
<b>NON-CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>		
Employee benefits	378,347	323,409
Provision for make good of premises	344,731	319,462
Lease liabilities	626,581	1,099,908
<b>TOTAL NON-CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>	<b>1,349,659</b>	1,742,779
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES</b>	<b>17,614,470</b>	10,734,170
<b>NET ASSETS</b>	<b>963,253</b>	900,140

### FUNDS

Accumulated surplus

#### TOTAL FUNDS

Accumulated surplus	963,253	900,140
<b>TOTAL FUNDS</b>	<b>963,253</b>	900,140

**Please note:** The accompanying summary financial information reflects the organisation's effective financial stewardship of its valuable resources. Although only extracts are provided, the audited 2021-22 Financial Report can be provided on request.

# CONNECT WITH US



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