

# Caring for our Community

Far West Local Health District  
2021-2022 Year in Review







## OUR VISION

Excellence in rural and remote health.

## OUR MISSION

Enabling health in our communities.

## OUR CORE VALUES

- Collaboration
- Openness
- Respect
- Empowerment

Far West Local Health District acknowledges the traditional owners of the lands within its boundaries, the Barkandji, Muthi Muthi, Wilyakali, Ngiyampaa, Wadigali, Malyangaba and the Wangkumara peoples. We acknowledge and pay respect to the Elders past and present and their ancient wisdoms. We acknowledge the communities of today and the Aboriginal community members who are part of our communities.

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Cover: Broken Hill Health Service psychology oncology counsellor Tayla Dwyer (left), palliative care nurses Shelley Hollingworth and Jenna Muscat. Photo by palliative care nurse Rebekah Jarvis. Left: Old mine site, Broken Hill



# About FWLHD

Far West Local Health District (FWLHD) is one of 15 local health districts (LHDs) in the New South Wales health system and the most remote.

WE ARE RESPONSIBLE for the management of public hospitals and healthcare clinics and institutions throughout the State's vast far west.

Against the backdrop of the effects of the COVID-19 global pandemic, our staff attended to 21,014 presentations in our emergency departments, 7817 inpatient admissions and 154,543 hospital non-admitted patient services, performed 1610 surgeries and delivered 211 babies during the past financial year.

Our network of hospitals and community services provide for the residents and tourists that populate 194,949 square kilometres, a land mass larger than Syria.

Bordering, South Australia, Victoria and Queensland, we are located in one of the most sparsely populated regions of NSW, characterised by breathtaking panoramas, historic colonial towns, and a rich Indigenous culture.

FWLHD encompasses the four local government areas (LGAs) of Broken Hill, Central Darling, Wentworth and Balranald and incorporates the traditional lands of seven Aboriginal nations of the Barkandji, Muthi Muthi, Wilyakali, Ngiyampaa, Wadigali, Malyangaba and Wangkumara peoples. It includes the immense Unincorporated Area of Far West NSW.

## OUR SERVICES

We are a major employer with 794 staff, many of whom are local to the communities they serve, with nurses and midwives making up nearly 44 percent of our fulltime workforce.

Our healthcare facilities are delivered from 12 sites including two hospitals and two multipurpose services (MPS).

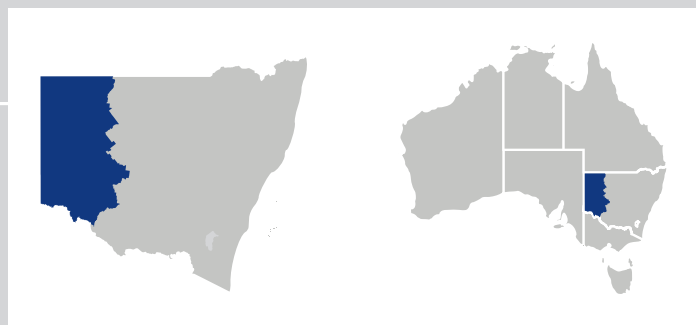
FWLHD partners with major Adelaide, Sydney, and Melbourne hospitals for those who require high-level specialist care.



Above left: Aerial view of Broken Hill. Above right: Mundi Mundi Bash-photo courtesy of the Barrier Truth. Bottom: AgFair camels-photo courtesy of the Barrier Truth







- 1. TIBOOBURRA**
  - Tibooburra Health Service
- 2. WHITE CLIFFS**
  - White Cliffs Health Service
- 3. WILCANNIA**
  - Wilcannia Multipurpose Service
- 4. BROKEN HILL**
  - Broken Hill Health Service
  - Broken Hill Community Health Centre – Wilyakali Palii-mala Kirra
  - Safe Haven Café
  - Broken Hill Community Health Dental Clinic – Wilyakali Palii-mala Kirra
- 5. MENINDEE**
  - Menindee Health Service
- 6. IVANHOE**
  - Ivanhoe Health Service
- 7. DARETON**
  - Dareton Primary Care and Community Health Service
  - Dareton Mental Health and Drug & Alcohol Service
- 8. BURONGA**
  - Buronga HealthOne
- 9. WENTWORTH**
  - Wentworth Health Service
- 10. BALRANALD**
  - Balranald Multipurpose Service



Anaesthetist Dr Wojciech Wierzejski mans the FWLHD booth at AgFair

## OUR COMMUNITY, OUR HEALTH

Our population fluctuates throughout the year with thousands of tourists attracted to local events and the unique remote arid terrain, an array of native species, 30,000-year-old Indigenous rock carvings, underground opal mines, and an eclectic collection of galleries featuring the works of internationally renowned local artists.

The landscape has long been a location of choice for global filmmakers. George Miller's *Mad Max* prequel movie, *Furiosa*, the largest production shot in NSW, got underway in Broken Hill in May.

Iconic local events including St Pat's Race meeting, the Mundi Mundi Bash music festival and AgFair attract more than 13,000 people a year.

The residential population of FWLHD is 28,717 with 13 percent, or 3733 people identifying as Aboriginal.

The number of people living in the area is projected to decrease to 24,743 by 2032\*.

The proportion of people aged 65 years and over is projected to grow to 29 percent by 2036, having a significant impact on the demand for healthcare services.

- Our major health issues are:
- Aboriginal health and wellbeing
  - Chronic disease, including diabetes, cardiovascular, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease and cancer
  - Smoking during pregnancy
  - Suicide; and
  - Childhood vulnerability.

While having the lowest hospitalisations compared to other LHDs in NSW, the rate of intentional self-harm was five times higher than the rest of the State.

Of our hospitalisations, 53 percent were same-day admissions with the majority for haemodialysis.

People aged 65 years and older make up 48 percent of all admissions.

The majority of emergency departments' presentations are for single-site injuries followed by digestive system illnesses.

## 2021-2022 AT A GLANCE



# 3520

Ambulance presentations



# 21,014

ED presentations



# 7817

Total admissions<sup>1</sup>



# 1610

Surgeries



# 211

Births in hospital



# 154,543

Hospital non-admitted patient services (occasions of service)

1. The process by which an episode of care for an admitted patient commences

Sources: Health Information Exchange (HIE), Enterprise Data Warehouse for Analysis Reporting and Decisions (EDWARD), NSW Health Bed Reporting System iPM -WNSW/FWLHD Domain report ADM001 eMR Discern Analytics 2.0

\* 2021 Estimated Resident Populations, ABS 2022



## FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY

Far West Local Health District aims to provide equitable, safe, high-quality, human-centered healthcare services.

Financial sustainability instills resilience, productivity, growth and innovation which is fundamental to providing excellence in rural and remote healthcare to the people of far west NSW.

FWLHD has policies and controls in place to effectively manage its assets and finances.

We recorded a \$3.1 million surplus for the past financial year.

Our expenditure for 2021-2022 was \$145.8 million with more than 57.5 percent consisting of salaries and wages for 700 full-time equivalent employees.

Total revenue was \$149 million.

The NSW Ministry of Health provided a further \$13.15 million for costs incurred due to the COVID-19 outbreak. Major services reimbursed included:

- Accommodation for symptomatic patients
- Security for the accommodation facilities
- Polymerase chain reaction (PCR) pathology testing for COVID-19

- Rapid antigen tests (RATs); and
- Vaccination drugs administered.

FWLHD's full-year results reflected a surplus of \$3.1 million and there was a \$1.1 million favourability compared to the budget.

Our capital redevelopments continued to progress with the completion of the \$10 million Buronga HealthOne facility on land leased from the Barkandji and Malyangaba traditional owners.

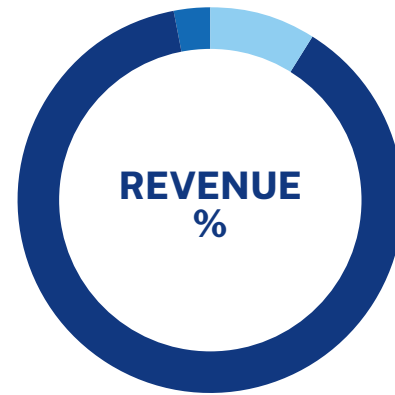
Preliminary and consultation works commenced on the new \$30 million State Government funded hospital in Wentworth that will transform health services and facilities in the south-western region of NSW.

A total of \$10 million has been allocated to upgrade the emergency department at Broken Hill Health Service and \$10 million for the mental health inpatient unit capital works.

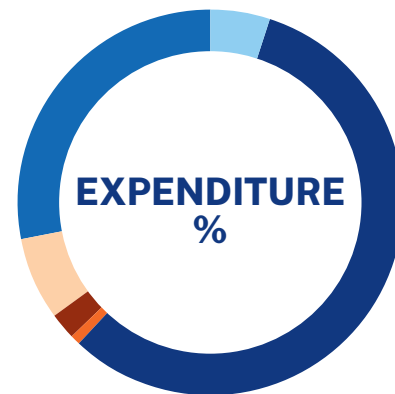
And \$15 million was announced for modern, sustainable accommodation for health workers throughout the far west.

The complete audited financial statements are published in the 2021-22 NSW Health Statutory Financial Report and are available on our website [www.nsw.gov.au/health/fwlhd](http://www.nsw.gov.au/health/fwlhd)

Buronga HealthOne is on land leased from the Barkandji and Malyangaba peoples



- 3% Patient fees
- 9% Other revenue
- 88% Government contributions



- 57% Salary and wages
- 1% Other items
- 2% Grants and affiliated health organisations
- 7% Visiting medical officers
- 28% Other operating expenses
- 5% Depreciation and amortisation



## A WORD FROM THE CHAIR & CHIEF EXECUTIVE

Caring for our community is at the very core of our values and this could not have been better demonstrated than in the past financial year. The coronavirus pandemic has been the most challenging period for Australian healthcare workers and organisations in recent history. COVID-19 showcased the care, ingenuity, collaboration and resilience of our workforce as we worked together to contain the devastating impact of the virus, especially in our vulnerable and remote communities.

This was particularly evident as the virus swept through Wilcannia where more than 61 percent of residents identify as Aboriginal generating a unique set of circumstances never before faced by our local health district or NSW Health.

The dedication and devotion of our staff from catering to clinicians is to be applauded as they tirelessly worked around the clock with State and Federal government agencies to ensure the best possible outcome for the community of Wilcannia.

From adversity comes opportunity brought about by new models of care that have enabled us to provide more complex services through virtual care and our collaborations with specialists at Sydney's major teaching hospitals enhancing patient safety and reducing the need for our patients to travel long distances.

As our models of care evolve so too does the need for our buildings to adapt to meet our needs.

The past year saw record investment in infrastructure across FWLHD and planning got underway for more than \$65 million in capital works over the next three years.

Buronga HealthOne was completed. Costing \$10 million it brings together GPs with our multidisciplinary teams to provide healthcare to the people of Buronga, Dareton, Gol Gol, Wentworth, Euston and Balranald.

A site has been chosen next to the existing Wentworth Health Service for a new \$30 million hospital with works expected to start next year.

Broken Hill's emergency department will receive a \$10 million upgrade, and the mental health inpatient unit will be enhanced as part of the NSW Government's Statewide Mental Health Infrastructure Program.

We take great pride in the valuable connection we have with our healthcare partners, our eight health councils, Aboriginal land councils and working parties, and community consultation committees.

They provide an important link between the community we serve and our local health district in assisting us to shape a quality health service that meets the unique needs of our local population. And we thank our many generous volunteers and donors who support us in providing quality healthcare and improving the health outcomes of our communities.

**DR ANDREW REFSHAUGE**  
CHAIR

**UMIT AGIS**  
CHIEF EXECUTIVE



# The year that was



## COMBATTING COVID-19

The effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on the healthcare landscape have been overwhelming.

Since the first case was diagnosed in Australia on January 25 2020, country NSW remained relatively immune. FWLHD recorded only two confirmed cases during 2020-21.

However as the past financial year unfolded so too did the impact of COVID-19 on those living in the State's regions with 8349 cases recorded in FWLHD as at June 30 2022.

There were 12 COVID-related deaths, all of whom were older than 60 years of age.

A total of 56,393 COVID-19 PCR tests were conducted across six

towns and we administered 23,849 COVID-19 vaccinations.

Of all our outbreaks, the tiny outback town of Wilcannia, 197km east of Broken Hill, was the most impacted and complex.

More than 61 percent of Wilcannia's 539 residents identify as Aboriginal generating a unique set of circumstances never before faced by the local health district and NSW Health.

The outbreak in mid-August saw a rapid response from FWLHD and the State Health Emergency Operations Centre (SHEOC) to minimise the outfall especially among Wilcannia's vulnerable Aboriginal population who live in tight-knit communities.

A massive State and Federal multi-agency operation contained the devastating impact of the virus in just over six weeks with 152 people contracting COVID-19 of which 148, or 97 percent, were Aboriginal.

During that period Wilcannia recorded no deaths as a result of COVID-19.

Testing, vaccination, isolating positive cases, and community education and engagement were key priorities.

A COVID-19 drive-through testing clinic was established and at-home testing was conducted on close contacts isolating in their homes or in alternative accommodation.

To speed up the wait time for the results NSW Health Pathology

supplied four Liat diagnostic analysers that provide results in 20 minutes. Charter flights were also employed to transport swabs to laboratories in Broken Hill and Dubbo where additional staff were engaged to process the samples.

Underlying the Wilcannia operation was FWLHD's Aboriginal COVID-19 response plan designed to meet the community's needs in a respectful and culturally safe way.

Our regular meetings with key Aboriginal leaders realised many initiatives including developing local communication tools in partnership with the Aboriginal health corporation Maari Ma that would resonate with the community to promote the *Keep Our Mob Safe* NSW Health campaign.

Thirty campervans were deployed to Victory Park Caravan Park providing temporary community-supported accommodation for those needing to isolate. The significance of the location near the river provided cultural connections for healing.

Onsite health, medical, food, laundry, and transport services were made available.

An increase in the Aboriginal health workforce provided holistic healthcare and an all-in-one at-home service including education, swabbing, vaccinations and referrals to other assistance including food, mental and general health for medication and chronic health monitoring.

Our COVID community response team (CCRT), comprising a

Left: Aboriginal health worker Bernie Kemp and nurse Fiona Lucas travelled to Wilcannia to assist with COVID-19 testing and welfare checks.

Above: The convoy of 30 motorhomes makes its way to Victory Park Caravan Park in Wilcannia to provide temporary accommodation for residents, helping to protect loved ones and reduce the risk of COVID-19 transmission





multidisciplinary workforce, undertook health and welfare checks on confirmed cases and positive households.

Pop-up clinics were established and masks, hand sanitiser and wipes circulated throughout the community.

A patient transport vehicle ferried non-urgent cases between their homes and community-supported or alternative accommodation seven days a week.

Wilcannia Multipurpose Service (MPS) inpatients were transported to other facilities in the LHD to free up beds for COVID patients and close contacts.

During the peak of the Wilcannia outbreak special food services were established including a click-and-collect program, community food

distribution, and snap-frozen meals from the Broken Hill Health Service catering team.

Community members needing to be close to Broken Hill Health Service for medical reasons were supported to relocate.

Part of the CCRT, mental health, drug and alcohol services were provided through a hybrid model involving virtual and or face-to-face consultations.

Child and adolescent mental health services (CAMHS) and violence, abuse and neglect services (VANS) collaborated in developing mental health information packs for children, young people, families and carers in consultation with Aboriginal health trainees and peer support workers.

Our relationship with key partners including Aboriginal medical services, the Royal Flying Doctor Service, NSW Police Force, NSW Ambulance, Resilience NSW and multiple non-government organisations (NGOs) was vital.

As the outbreaks moved throughout our local health district 14 agencies provided support across seven locations including Broken Hill, Dareton, Wilcannia, Wentworth, Menindee, Ivanhoe and Balranald.

NSW Health COVID-19 safety protocols were implemented across all our health facilities to help protect staff, patients, visitors and their family members from the virus.

Staff and visitors were screened for symptoms on entry and QR code

check-ins were required for any contact tracing.

Visitation restrictions were implemented to manage the risk of patients and staff contracting or transmitting COVID-19 with compassionate exemptions granted following individual risk assessments.

There were four outbreaks in aged care facilities throughout FWLHD. The Australian Defence Force provided clinical and non-clinical support, and extra agency nurses were supplied through the Federal Government.

Aged care residents who contracted the virus commenced antiviral treatment within 24 hours of diagnosis and symptom onset,

reducing the severity of the virus and the need to be admitted to hospital.

Our COVID community response team was crucial in managing COVID outbreaks throughout the entire local health district through its model of swab and isolate; assess and monitor; and de-isolate and rehabilitation.

A community-centric positive household model was established to focus on clinical screening, care monitoring, care escalation and care navigation for the entire household including those who may not have been COVID-positive.

Embedded in the teams were key staff members who knew the

Top left: FWLHD executive manager Aboriginal Health & Community Relations Corina Kemp (left) meets with Wilcannia Aboriginal Community Working Party chair Reena Stalker. Bottom left: Our COVID community response and hospital-in-the-home teams were vital to the Wilcannia response. Above: BHHS COVID community response team. Top right: NSW Health Minister Brad Hazzard meets frontline staff during the Wilcannia crisis. Bottom right: Australian Defence Force personnel assist in the vaccination effort in Wentworth





## GETTING VAXXED

The communities of FWLHD rolled up their sleeves in the first line of defence against COVID-19 with

**23,849**

vaccinations administered by FWLHD.

Of those, more than

**95 percent**

of residents received two doses, 6830 had their first booster and 914 eligible residents had their winter booster.



Top to bottom: FWLHD CE Umit Agis (right) flies into Ivanhoe to meet staff, many who flew in and out daily as part of the coordinated health response. Broken Hill Health Service catering team went above and beyond supplying more than 2000 snap frozen meals to isolated residents. Broken Hill gets vaxxed.



## Feeling the love

Our neighbours across the border reached out to our staff with a morale booster. Love from SA supported and encouraged staff through a series of heartfelt messages.

The South Australian Commission on Excellence and Innovation in Health partnered with FWLHD through its Compassion Collaborative.

SA Health staff sent messages of support on a vibrant user-friendly platform with our staff accessing them 1019 times.



communities which enabled us to respond to their specific needs as situations evolved and changed.

Our mental health, drug and alcohol clinicians focussed on maintaining good mental health for those isolating through consultations, education and activity packs for children and young people.

A virtual platform enabled our mental health clinicians to provide timely services to all age groups and locations.

Drought support workers increased activities designed to increase community resilience.

Substance withdrawal management was provided in collaboration with clinicians specialising in alcohol and other drugs and general practitioners.

Managing the outbreaks called on the resilience and versatility of all our staff.

More than 2000 snap frozen meals made by the catering team at Broken Hill Health Service were sent to locations in Wilcannia, Wentworth and Broken Hill.

The Broken Hill Health Service laundry team made more than 1000 reusable masks for residents in remote sites.

And the Broken Hill Health Service cleaning team travelled throughout the LHD cleaning the community-supported accommodation in Wilcannia, Wentworth, Tibooburra and Broken Hill in accordance with the Clinical Excellence Commission's environmental cleaning recommendations.

Above clockwise from left: Dareton Primary Health Care and Community Health Service manager Trish Algate and Dareton Police Force's constable Zak Cranston race vaccines to Wentworth. Australian Medical Assistance Teams (AUSMAT) assisted our staff in Balranald, Dareton and Wentworth. People entering our facilities underwent strict screening procedures and were identifiable by a coloured round sticker. On leaving, the stickers took on a new life as they were placed on poles outside.





Opposite page: Smileyscopes open a whole new world to children undergoing painful procedures. Top to bottom: The calming virtual world of the Smileyscope™. Staff undergo telestroke simulation training

After-hours medical coverage via telehealth and video assists in providing relief for the GP VMO plus access to medical services 24/7.

**Smileyscopes**

Smileyscopes were introduced in all our facilities to alleviate stress and anxiety in young people undergoing painful procedures.

An Australian invention, the medical-grade virtual reality headsets distract the brain from pain and distress by creating a virtual world the patient sees and hears.

The Smileyscopes are especially helpful for children with complex medical conditions who require frequent blood tests and painful procedures.

Children experience a virtual world of activities such as swimming with whale sharks or dolphins, diving with fish, or playing with kittens.

Parents have noticed a marked decrease in their child's anxiety and our clinicians report feeling much better about being supported to provide care that is safe and less distressing.

The headsets can be programmed for short, medium and long procedures, breathing exercises, and relaxation making them useful in reducing distress during episodes of mental illness.

Their introduction to FWLHD has helped paediatric procedures to be kinder and less traumatic for the patient and their family.

Our executive manager of Aboriginal Health & Community Relations Corina Kemp is assisting the Smileyscope™ team to create an Indigenous program.

**INNOVATION**

Innovation is key to the evolution of models of care especially given our remoteness and size.

Our services are constantly evolving to meet patient needs closer to home and foster professional collaborations to improve the quality and delivery of healthcare.

**vICU**

Our critically ill patients now have immediate access to specialist intensive care clinicians.

Together with Sydney's Royal Prince Alfred Hospital (RPA) we developed a virtual or remote intensive care unit at Broken Hill Health Service that uses state-of-the-art technology to monitor critically ill patients and leverage the expertise and knowledge of experienced caregivers in real time.

The vICU allows remote surveillance and continuous

monitoring of critically ill patients in real-time. It provides us with:

- 24/7 video and phone access to an ICU intensivist at RPA
- Patient monitoring at RPA through a high-definition camera
- Live access to the patient's scans and electronic medical records
- 24/7 access to bedside clinician education for ICU and high-dependency unit patient care; and
- Specialist consultations and multidisciplinary team consultations via video.

Importantly the vICU allows for the timely transfer of deteriorating patients to a high-level ICU, and the ability to retain patients on site.

**Telestroke**

Stroke is a time-critical medical emergency.

Broken Hill Health Service's telestroke service connects our doctors virtually with specialist stroke

physicians 24/7 who assess, diagnose and provide a treatment plan for patients with suspected stroke.

The NSW Telestroke service, which operates from Sydney's Prince of Wales Hospital, enables local patient outcomes to be improved by having timely access to specialist stroke management.

The service allows our patients to receive care closer to home and family.

It improves the identification of patients who need to be transferred to a larger facility for more specialised treatment.

**Remote virtual care**

Balranald Multipurpose Service and Wentworth Health Service partnered with Broken Hill Health Service's emergency department to develop virtual medical services to support general practice visiting medical officers (VMOs) working in our remote facilities.



Clockwise from right: Glucose monitoring is critical in managing type 2 diabetes. Aboriginal health workers Desley McKellar (left), Holly Fabila and Kyeesha Jones (front) embrace the Nharatji-themed shirts during National Reconciliation Week. Justin Wonson, from the NSW Aboriginal Nursing and Midwifery Cadetship Program, undergoes hands-on training with clinical nurse educators Kahlia Liston (centre) and Grace Matthews

## COLLABORATING FOR BETTER HEALTH

Collaboration is essential to improving patient outcomes, efficiencies and increasing patient satisfaction.

The prevalence of diabetes in Far West and Western NSW is 6.1 percent of the population.

Higher than the national average of 5.5 percent, it is increasing annually with 40 percent of those affected more likely to die as a result of their diabetes than the rest of NSW.

Our Indigenous population is at particular risk with 20 percent living with type 2 diabetes.

The NSW Government's Collaborative Commissioning program is targeting type 2 diabetes in western NSW with a \$13.7 million *Living Better and Stronger* diabetes initiative.

The landmark agreement brings together Far West and Western NSW local health districts, the Western Primary Health Network and the NSW Rural Doctors Network in an historic partnership to identify and support local people with type 2 diabetes.

The integration of State and Federal service providers will allow care to be tailored to the needs of specific communities to reduce the complications associated with diabetes.

The past year saw the transition of the Tresillian program to a face-to-



face service from a virtual and fly-in-fly-out model.

Our partnership with the not-for-profit early parenting service works with our child and family health service in Broken Hill to offer families guidance in the early years of their child's life.

Despite the impacts of COVID-19, the service supported 134 families during the past year.

We partner with Mission Australia across several initiatives including:

- The drug and alcohol continuing coordinated care program to help those with substance use issues engage with services and develop

functional living skills and maintain family and community connections

- The community living supports and housing and accommodation program
- Connections in the Far West which assists adults with lived experience of mental illness to address loneliness and social isolation; and the
- Safe Haven Café where mental health clinicians and peer workers provide rapid and compassionate care in a safe, friendly and non-clinical environment to those experiencing a suicidal crisis or acute psychological distress.



## ABORIGINAL HEALTH

The health and wellbeing of our Aboriginal communities is everybody's business in FWLHD with 13 percent of our residents identifying as Aboriginal.

Our local health district incorporates the traditional lands of seven Aboriginal nations.

Aboriginal health is more than physical wellbeing. It is the social, emotional and cultural wellbeing of the whole community in which each individual is able to achieve their full potential to bring about the total wellbeing of their community.

Each of our directorates works with our executive manager of Aboriginal Health and Community Relations to respectfully develop strategies to meet the needs of our Aboriginal peoples.

Our strong partnerships with Aboriginal community-controlled health services are critical to effecting positive change.

Together with our neighbour, Western NSW Local Health District, we are working with Murdi Paaki Regional Assembly (MPRA) to develop localised Aboriginal health action plans.

MPRA is the peak body that represents the interests of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in 16 communities across western NSW.

We work with local Aboriginal community working parties to ensure collaboration, respect, trust and the needs of our Aboriginal communities are met.

The Aboriginal community working parties provide cultural input and advice on planning, development and implementation of services and initiatives that may impact Aboriginal people and their communities.

COVID-19 consumed much of our focus on Aboriginal health during the past year as outbreaks swept through first nations communities with Wilcannia the hardest hit.

The threat of Japanese encephalitis virus (JEV) followed.



Aboriginal people are at higher risk of being exposed to JEV as the river is central to sustaining their social, cultural and economic wellbeing.

We worked with the Maari Ma Aboriginal Health Service and the Coomealla Health Aboriginal Corporation equipping the community with free RID mosquito repellent and launching a multi-platform awareness and education campaign.

There were only two cases of JEV reported in the past financial year.

Despite the challenges of working in a COVID-19 environment our health promotion programs saw a 7 percent decrease in the number of Aboriginal women smoking during pregnancy; and 100 percent of Aboriginal children were immunised at 60 months compared to 96 percent of non-Aboriginal children.

COVID-19 prevented the gathering of groups severely impacting National Reconciliation Week, NAIDOC Week and other community activities.

We developed Nharatji-themed shirts for all our staff, volunteers, board and health council members to wear during National Reconciliation Week.

Nharatji, means *together in company*. The shirts were designed by home-grown artist Corey Payne, a proud Paakintji/Wilyakali man.

His work represents the colours of the far west, holistic healthcare and connection to health, support and guidance and our seven Aboriginal nations.



**7%**

decrease in Aboriginal women smoking during pregnancy



**100%**

of Aboriginal children were immunised at 60 months compared to 96% of non-Aboriginal children

Data as at 30 June 2022.

## MENTAL HEALTH, DRUGS AND ALCOHOL

As a remote local health district, many of our mental health programs address social isolation and loneliness, which significantly impact mental and physical wellbeing, increasing healthcare costs.

Tragically, rates of self-harm and suicide increase with remoteness.

There was a particular emphasis on implementing programs during our COVID-19 outbreaks as people were forced to isolate, further increasing the range of stressors.

Prior to the outbreaks and once restrictions eased, we held butchering days on meat processing, sausage making, and mincing as part of our drought support program.

Targeting men and women's mental health and wellbeing in the farming communities of Tibooburra, White Cliffs, Pooncarie, Menindee, Wilcannia and Tilpa, the workshops build social interactions between farmers, communities and local services such as the Rural Adversity Mental Health Program (RAMP), Royal Flying Doctor Service (RFDS) and the Salvation Army.

The annual cricket match in Dareton, made up of mostly farmers who do not play competitive sport, played against the NSW Baggy Blues comprising former State cricketers.

The day provides the opportunity to link people with mental health resources and socialise.

The Write Road is a proactive mental health initiative for geographically isolated people. It was founded by award-winning journalist and author Stephanie Dale who pioneered writing for wellbeing in the Australian outback.

Partnering with The Write Road, a weekend women's wellbeing retreat was held at Lake Paika Station, near Balranald, focussing on challenging unhealthy thoughts and behaviours, setting goals and mapping ways forward; and during Women's Health Week workshops focussing on life post-COVID-19 and the invisibility of older women were held in Broken Hill.

About 35 governesses, or *govies*, are employed by families in the far west on remote pastoral properties to deliver School of The Air lessons to primary school students.

**"Great day, have been looking forward to this day for months. Great meeting new people and getting to know services in our area."**

– Pooncarie butchering workshop participant

Usually their first job out of school, the majority of govies are far from home. Orientation sessions were held for governesses in partnership with the RAMP, the RFDS and Resilience NSW providing wellbeing information and tips, communication skills, networking opportunities and safety and social information.

Love Bites, a respectful relationships education program, was held for Year 10 students at Broken Hill and Willyama high schools.

Conducted in partnership with Mission Australia the workshops focus on relationship violence, and sex and relationships.

Our opioid treatment program (OTP) expanded to Balranald.

Opioid dependence is a chronic relapsing and remitting condition often associated with increased morbidity and mortality.

OTP provides opioid substitution treatment (OST) which has shown to dramatically improve the social, economic and health outcomes of people dependent on illicit opiates or pharmaceutical opioids.

A telehealth initiative with Sydney's St Vincent's Hospital addiction specialists enables our Balranald and Buronga HealthOne nursing staff to administer OST under the guidance of St Vincent's Hospital specialists. Our mental health, drugs and alcohol team provides counselling and psychosocial support.

Our virtual clinics expanded to include a senior social worker in Glenn Innes; a child and adolescent mental health service (CAMHS) clinician in Adelaide; a perinatal psychiatrist and a clinical nurse consultant who specialises in perinatal mental health as part of the statewide perinatal outreach service, based in Western Sydney Local Health District.

Left: The governess program promotes wellbeing through a series of orientation sessions. Right: Telehealth has been a game changer for our staff who can administer treatments under the guidance of specialist clinicians located in Sydney hospitals





Left: Patient Warren Draper with oncology nursing staff Rose Martin and Ben Stellini. Right: Broken Hill Health Service nurse Hannah Crowley plays patient for student nurse Kirra Jackson during Wound Awareness Week. Photo by clinical nurse consultant Megan Jordan



## CANCER AND PALLIATIVE CARE

Palliative care aims to ease the suffering of patients and their families.

Our electronic palliative care resources have been identified as an exemplar for other rural and remote settings throughout NSW.

A joint initiative with Western NSW Primary Health Network, the far west palliative and end-of-life model of care is an electronic palliative approach.

Online resources assist carers and healthcare professionals to assess, plan and care for patients with advancing life-limiting illnesses.

Our palliative and end-of-life clinical nurse consultant (CNC) provides palliative clinical advice in aged care settings throughout FWLHD, including private facilities, identifying residents who are deteriorating and may need a palliative management plan ensuring symptoms are well-managed and goals of care are discussed early.

The CNC works with the resident's GP, with a referral to the specialist palliative care team if required.

We secured funding to incorporate a physiotherapist and an occupational therapist into our palliative care team

as well as the services of a dietitian who will also assist cancer patients.

The addition of these specialised and focused allied health clinicians to the district-wide specialist palliative care team has resulted in more timely and comprehensive care for people in the hospital, in the community and across the district. Occupational therapy alone has attended 414 occasions of service provision in 10 months across these settings.

Advance care planning involves making a plan for future health and personal care should a person lose their decision-making capacity.

FWLHD employed an advance care planning project officer in October to partner with cancer and palliative care staff to help ensure a person's future healthcare wishes,

should they lose capacity, are made known through early conversation and documentation.

Prostate cancer is the most common cancer in Australia with one in six men diagnosed by the age of 85.

The Prostate Cancer Foundation of Australia funds a part-time prostate cancer specialist nurse who provides a point of contact for patients from diagnosis to care coordination, clinical advice, symptom management post-treatment, and support to men and their families.

The role facilitates the Broken Hill Prostate Cancer Community Group set up to provide support to men diagnosed with prostate cancer, share in common experiences and raise awareness of prostate cancer in a safe and confidential environment.

## OUR PERFORMANCE

Quality healthcare is care that is safe, effective, patient-centred, timely, efficient, and equitable.

Healthcare quality and patient safety are deeply connected.

Our performance in key areas was coupled with innovative programs to realise continual improvements.

### Safety and Quality

Each year NSW Health sets a series of safety and quality targets for FWLHD. The past year saw us do well with reductions in hospital-acquired pressure injuries, blood clots, and medication complications.

Hospital-acquired pressure injuries or pressure sores are areas of damage to the skin and underlying tissue caused by constant pressure or friction.

This type of skin damage can develop quickly in anyone with reduced mobility, such as older people or those confined to a bed or chair.

We bettered the target set for us for hospital-acquired pressure injuries by 57.8 percent.

Hospital-acquired venous thromboembolism (VTE) is a blood clot that starts in a vein.

It includes blood clots that form in the deep veins, known as deep vein thrombosis (DVT) and clots that become lodged in the lungs, known as a pulmonary embolism (PE).

We bettered the goal set for us for hospital-acquired VTEs by 45.7 percent.

And we bettered our set target for hospital-acquired medication complications by 61.7 percent.

Our hospital-acquired pressure injuries (HAPI) project empowers patients, families, communities, clinical and non-clinical teams to not only better manage pressure injuries, but prevent them in inpatient and community settings.

Multidisciplinary care teams are involved in care planning, determining factors that predispose patients such as fragile skin in older adults, comorbidities including diabetes, heart disease and obesity to issues such as pressure, friction and moisture to prevent or reduce the incidence of HAPIs.

Our wound care clinical nurse consultant has implemented regular multidisciplinary awareness, prevention and management sessions as part of our continual improvement program to better patient outcomes.

### Patient-centred culture

Measures of a positive patient-centred culture include the patient experience index for which patients provide a rating out of 10 for their overall care, staff performance, organised care, and if they would speak highly of the care they received to family and friends.

Our patient experience index score was above the State target for the reporting period.

We scored 9.17 for admitted patients, 0.52 above the NSW Health target.

Similarly, the patient engagement index scores patient perception on information provision, involvement in decisions on care and discharge, and continuity of care.

FWLHD scored 9.02 for admitted patients, 0.52 above the NSW Health target, and 8.53 for emergency department patients which was 0.03 above the target.

### Looking after our future

Get Healthy is a free telephone-based coaching service that supports people aged 16 years and older to make lifestyle changes with a focus on healthy eating, physical activity and achieving and maintaining a healthy weight.





## OVERALL PATIENT EXPERIENCE INDEX

ED PATIENTS  
NSW Health Target

**8.5**  
OUT OF 10

FWLHD

**9.17**

## PATIENT ENGAGEMENT INDEX

ADMITTED PATIENTS  
NSW Health Target

**8.5**  
OUT OF 10

FWLHD

**9.02**

ED PATIENTS  
NSW Health Target

**8.5**  
OUT OF 10

FWLHD

**8.53**

Get Healthy referral target exceeded by

**104%**

Get Healthy in Pregnancy referral target exceeded by

**23%**

All data as at 30 June 2022.

NSW Health sets targets for each local health district to increase the uptake of the service.

In FWLHD client referrals to the program by health professionals exceeded the target by 104 percent with enrolments surpassing the NSW Health goal by 12 percent.

Similarly, the Get Healthy in Pregnancy phone service supports women to make healthy lifestyle changes during pregnancy.

Pregnant women referred to the program by health professionals exceeded the NSW Health target by 23 percent.

Munch & Move is a fun, play-based program supporting young children to develop healthy eating and physical activity habits. Of the 65 percent of early childhood education and care services trained in the program in the far west 86 percent of the Munch & Move initiatives were implemented, exceeding the target by 6 percent.

Live Life Well @ School, a NSW primary schools program, creates whole-of-school environments which *get more students, more active, more often* and focus on healthy eating. Live Life Well @ School aims to enhance teachers' knowledge, skills and confidence in teaching nutrition and physical activity.

FWLHD exceeded its school participation rate in the program by 7 percent with 72 percent of NSW Department of Education, Catholic and independent schools trained in the Live Life Well @ School program implementing at least 70 percent of the program in their school.

## BUILDING FOR TOMORROW

The past year saw record investment in infrastructure across FWLHD and planning got underway for more than \$65 million in capital works over the next three years.

### Buronga HealthOne

The \$10 million HealthOne was completed to service the communities of Buronga, Dareton, Gol Gol, Wentworth, Euston and Balranald.

HealthOnes bring together multidisciplinary teams of GPs,

community health and other health practitioners.

Scheduled to open in early July 2022, the hub-and-spoke model brings together a wide range of health services including mental health, drug and alcohol, child and family health, Building Stronger Foundations, community midwifery, Aboriginal maternal and infant health, social work, psycho-oncology counselling, dental, women's health, continence, early intervention and diabetes education, chronic, complex and aged care, palliative care and allied health services.

The site for Buronga HealthOne was made possible by a landmark agreement signed between the NSW Government and the Barkandji and Malyangaba communities with Native Title preserved.

The facility was constructed by Barpa, a proud and dynamic majority Indigenous-owned building company.



Left: The gleaming new Buronga HealthOne. Below: Shaun Kennedy (left) and Fraser Colley, part of our maintenance team installing solar panels in our facilities

### Wentworth Health Service

Development is expected to start on a new \$30 million hospital in Wentworth in 2023 following comprehensive community consultation and master planning.

The facility will be built next to the existing hospital overlooking the Darling River and feature a 20-bed inpatient ward including 8 transitional aged care, 6 sub-acute, 5 low-level acute care beds and a virtual hospital in the home bed.

An urgent care centre and primary health consultation rooms will be incorporated into the state-of-the-art build.

The master planning phase commenced with the clinical service plan developed in consultation with consumers and stakeholders including key Aboriginal leaders.

The full range of services to be delivered will be identified as part of the ongoing community consultation process.

### Broken Hill Health Service

A \$10 million upgrade to the emergency department was announced in April as part of the Broken Hill Health Service redevelopment.

It will be reconfigured to better meet the critical health needs of the region including tailored treatment spaces for children and those requiring mental health services.

An enhanced acute mental health inpatient unit (MHIPU), was announced in May as part of the NSW Government's Statewide Mental Health Infrastructure Program.

It will provide a modern and contemporary therapeutic space with co-designed facilities for people with mental health needs, their families, carers and staff.

A scoping study commenced and design options for the acute mental health inpatient unit got underway.



**Balranald and Wilcannia multipurpose services**

A \$220,000 refurbishment of palliative care facilities next year in Balranald and Wilcannia will provide a home-like environment for patients receiving end-of-life care, their families and carers.

Works at both multipurpose services will see improvements to patient rooms and the courtyards.

**Solar sustainability**

FWLHD's commitment to reducing its carbon footprint continued on the back of the previous year with the installation of more solar panels across multiple facilities in Broken Hill, Tibooburra and Buronga.

The recent solar installations will save more than \$188,368 a year in power costs.

Our sustainability initiative this year generated savings of 1415.2 megawatt-hours (MWh), already exceeding next year's energy reduction target of 117.8 MWh set by NSW Health for our LHD.

**Online facelift**

Far West Local Health District was the first NSW Health website to be overhauled as part of a whole-of-NSW Government program to make online information easier to find, use and understand.

We worked with NSW Health and the Department of Customer Service to design a new website that is easier to access and navigate, especially on mobile devices.

Community, staff and stakeholder feedback will inform continual improvements.

Our new website is [www.nsw.gov.au/health/fwlhd](http://www.nsw.gov.au/health/fwlhd)

Right: Broken Hill Contribution Fund president John Bacich and Broken Hill Health Service kiosk volunteer Cheryl Meuret brew up a storm with the new coffee machine. Top: Cure Cancer's Give Australia a Hug campaign was felt by patient Diane Williams

**PARTNERING WITH OUR COMMUNITY**

We work in partnership with key organisations, consumers and the community to provide healthcare tailored to the unique needs of our region.

Our consumer groups are essential in shaping our services and contributing to the wellbeing of our patients and clients.

Due to our remote location combined with the implementation of new models of care, we continue to grow our relationships with multiple organisations including:

- Coomealla Health Aboriginal Corporation
- Maari Ma Health
- Local Aboriginal Land councils
- NSW Rural Doctors Network
- Royal Flying Doctor Service (South Eastern Section)
- Western NSW, Murrumbidgee, Sydney, Western Sydney and South Eastern Sydney local health districts
- Broken Hill University Department of Rural Health

- Western NSW Primary Health Network
- New South Wales Ambulance
- SA Health
- Tresillian
- NSW Department of Education
- Mission Australia
- Flourish
- Lifeline; and
- Headspace.

**Community Consumer Engagement**

Consumer engagement involves users and potential users of our services in decision-making and design.

For clients who utilise our mental health, drug and alcohol services we engage consumers with a lived experience.

The Mental Health Drug & Alcohol Consumer and Carer Action Group is a committee of consumers and carers from across our region who through their lived experience provide invaluable input into improving service planning, delivery and evaluation.

We have eight health councils that advocate for Broken Hill, Dareton



and emotional assistance to the families of patients in our emergency department from reporting issues or concerns to the nurse in charge, offering comfort, working with staff to ensure the families' non-clinical needs are met, and assisting with arranging transport.

In White Cliffs volunteers run aqua fitness classes; in Wentworth the fit and strong program to prevent osteoporosis; and throughout the LHD they provide patient transport to and from appointments.

**Our donors**

We received more than \$53,100 from our small but very generous communities.

The Balranald Hospital Auxiliary donated a \$7400 AccuVein® AV500 used to find veins for venepuncture and intravenous cannulation on infants and adults with difficult-to-find veins.

Cure Cancer's Give Australia a Hug campaign was felt in our oncology unit with 30 patients each receiving a beautifully curated Big Hug Box containing products to promote wellness.

The extraordinary generosity of individuals saw Tibooburra Health Service receive an \$8000 donation and the local health district \$10,000.

The children's charity Supertee brought smiles to 100 children on admission to Broken Hill Health Service with their donation of superhero T-shirts.

North Broken Hill Cricket Club donned pink uniforms to raise breast cancer awareness and \$1500 for the oncology unit.

The Broken Hill Aquatic Stingrays raised \$6120.

The Broken Hill Contribution Fund perked up the Broken Hill Health Service kiosk with a new coffee machine costing nearly \$10,000 with freight and delivery donated by Broken Hill Supplies.

and Wentworth, Wilcannia, White Cliffs, Menindee, Balranald, Ivanhoe and Tibooburra. They comprise local community members including Aboriginal people, those located on outback stations, and former healthcare staff.

Each health council has an action plan that guides the work they do in their community including promoting health programs, education sessions and services; identifying services their residents may require such as hospital in the home, transport, support and information on telehealth; and supporting and/or identifying the need for clinics such as Q fever and COVID-19.

Health councils provide a vital link between the community and our local health district.

The Two Rivers Health Council which covers Dareton and Wentworth was integral to the development of Buronga HealthOne providing a conduit between the community and FWLHD through consultation and feedback.

The Balranald Health Council successfully lobbied for a replacement bus for community members to access health services.

We are working with local Aboriginal community working parties to promote collaboration, respect and trust.

The dedication of our volunteers and the generosity of our donors is invaluable to making a difference to the patient experience.

**Our volunteers**

Our 65 volunteers work across FWLHD, giving of their time in a variety of roles.

Despite the impact of COVID-19 lockdowns, they donated more than 1600 hours to run the kiosk at Broken Hill Health Service.

Palliative and dementia care volunteers make a valuable contribution to palliative care outcomes by relieving distress and strengthening interpersonal bonds.

Our patient family support volunteer program provides practical





Right: NSW Health Excellence in Nursing and Midwifery Award winner Tim O'Neill (left) with colleagues Sara Maciejewski and Pawan Prasad. Bottom: FWLHD Innovation and Staff Excellence Award trophies ready for presentation

## OUR STAFF

We employ 794 individuals throughout our remote facilities making us one of the largest employers in the region.

Nurses and midwives make up nearly 44 percent of our workforce.

While COVID-19 presented recruitment challenges our graduate program saw the onboarding of three graduate doctors, known as junior medical officers, 26 graduate nurses and one graduate midwife and eight dental students.

The NSW Aboriginal Nursing and Midwifery Cadetship Program provides financial and mentoring support for First Nations people studying an undergraduate nursing or midwifery degree at university. We employed two cadets as part of the scheme.

Three Aboriginal health workers were recruited during the year with two located at Buronga HealthOne and the other at Menindee Health Service.

The importance of developing local long-term employees was recognised with 10 year 11 students and five year 12 students undertaking our school-based apprentice and traineeships (SBATS) in Broken Hill, Menindee and Ivanhoe.

NSW Health announced \$1.7 million to fund our recruitment initiatives next financial year.

### Education

Healthcare is continually changing and it is imperative our staff stay up to date, not only with new practices and procedures but to refresh their previously learned skills.



Those who work in FWLHD are required to undertake extensive training, both mandatory and voluntary.

We participated in the NextGen® program which aims to develop NSW Health managers and leaders of the future.

Participants learn to identify emerging healthcare opportunities and challenges and to proactively pursue strategies for improved service delivery to patients, their families, carers and communities.

The FWLHD cohort addressed four challenges, including access to virtual care across our LHD, creative ways to manage waiting lists

and demand for limited services, improving patient experiences for Aboriginal people, and ways to sustain our workforce.

As the largest component of our workforce, nurses undertake the majority of education and training.

We participated in the Northern Sydney Local Health District Nursing and Midwifery Research and Health Informatics 2022 Mentorship Program which encourages nurse/midwife leaders to become broad knowledge brokers and apply translatable research skills into clinical practice.

The NSW Health eLearning system provides high-quality, self-managed online learning.

### PEAK AWARDS

Two nurses from FWLHD won prestigious NSW Health Excellence in Nursing and Midwifery Awards for 2021.

**Dawn Evans** from Wilcannia Health Service was named Aboriginal Nurse/Midwife of the Year, and Far West's **Tim O'Neill** took out the Healing Heart (colleague) Award for exceptional care.

The FWLHD Innovation and Staff Excellence Awards celebrate our staff and their achievements with the following projects and teams awarded:

#### ★ Building the Future of Peer and Consumer Workers in FWLHD

Department: Mental Health, Drug and Alcohol  
Project Lead: Chelsea Edwards

#### ★ Colourful Libraries

Department: Mental Health, Drug and Alcohol  
Project Lead: Breeze Navarro

#### ★ Prevent, Recognise and Effectively Manage Hospital Acquired Pressure Injuries

Department: Clinical Governance  
Project Lead: Megan Jordan

#### ★ Primary Healthcare Registered Nurse: Schools-Based Program

Department: Integrated Care, Allied Health, Partnerships and Innovation  
Project Lead: Rebecca Smith

#### ★ FWLHD Up and Running. Men's Diabetes Prevention Program

Department: Remote Health Services, Balranald Multipurpose Service  
Project Lead: Ferna Vagg.



## FWLHD STAFF PROFILE



**54.00**  
Allied Health



**65.00**  
Hotel Services



**154.00**  
Corporate Services & Hospital Support



**6.70**  
Oral Health Practitioners & Support Workers



**15.00**  
Maintenance & Trades



**54.00**  
Other Prof & Para Professionals & Support Staff



**305.00**  
Nursing



**9.10**  
Other Staff



**27.00**  
Medical



**700.0**  
Grand Total\*



**9.90**  
Scientific & Technical Clinical Support Staff



**794**  
Number of Individuals employed

Source: Corporate Analytics (rounds up the numbers\*). All data as at 30 June 2022.



# Appendices

## APPENDIX A

### FWLHD BOARD<sup>1</sup>

The members of the FWLHD Board are appointed by the NSW Minister for Health.

There are three board subcommittees that oversee specific areas of business including providing advice on the organisation's strategy, safety and quality of services, monitoring performance and compliance, ensuring major risks are identified and managed, and assisting the FWLHD Board in achieving its objectives. The three board subcommittees are:

- Safety and Quality
- Finance, Performance and Workforce; and the
- Audit and Risk Committee.



#### Dr Andrew Refshauge

MBBS, FAICD

##### Chair

Chair of FWLHD since June 2017, Andrew has a special interest in remote and Aboriginal healthcare. He was the NSW deputy premier for more than 10 years under Premier Bob Carr and served as Treasurer, and minister of numerous portfolios including Health, and Aboriginal Affairs. Andrew is chair of CareFlight, and past chair of the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, and the Aged Care Standards and Accreditation Agency. He worked for the Aboriginal Medical Service in Redfern during his formative medical career.



#### A/Prof Lilon Bandler

MBBS, MHPol, FRACGP

Lilon is a principal research fellow for the Leaders in Indigenous Medical Education (LIME) Network. She is a member of the Macquarie University Humanities and Social Sciences Human Research Ethics Committee. Lilon works with the Wayside Chapel providing healthcare in inner-city Sydney. She is involved in teaching medical students and specialist trainees. Lilon joined the FWLHD Board in 2018.



#### Justin Files

BHSc (Mental Health), AdvDip Bus Admin  
A Barkindji man from far west NSW, Justin is an accomplished healthcare manager with 20 years' experience in local Aboriginal health. He specialises in the management of innovative complex community-based Aboriginal health models that are flexible and sustainable whole-of-community approaches to care. He joined the board in 2022.



#### Pamela Tucker

A resident of Broken Hill, Pamela is qualified in business management and has more than 45 years' experience in the local multi-resource industry. She is actively involved in the Broken Hill community and is a board member of Foundation Broken Hill which facilitates employment opportunities and encourages social development. Pamela was appointed to the FWLHD Board in 2022.



#### Paul Kemp

Paul Kemp is general manager at Murdi Paaki Regional Housing, a position he has held for 24 years, overseeing 300 Aboriginal-owned and managed properties throughout the Murdi Paaki region. He is the president of the Saints Rugby League Football Club and vice president of the BH Musicians Club. Paul was appointed to the board in 2018.



#### Wincen Cuy

A lifetime resident of the Broken Hill district, Wincen is a passionate community leader with a strong focus on promoting the region. He served as the city's mayor from 2009-2016. He is the managing director of Silver City Tours and a managing partner of Helloworld Travel Broken Hill. Wincen joined the FWLHD Board in 2016.



#### A/Prof Michelle Dickson

PhD (Medicine and Health), MEd, PGCert Dev, PGDip Ed (Adult), BA (Hons)  
A proud Darkinjung woman, Michelle is deputy head of the University of Sydney's School of Public Health (SPH) and an associate professor of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Public Health and Wellbeing. She co-chairs a collaboration between the SPH and the Broken Hill University Department of Rural Health and has a strong commitment to health workforce development, equity and inclusion. She joined the FWLHD Board in 2016.



#### Jason Masters

BEC, GACID

Jason has a special interest in healthcare. He chairs the Audit and Risk Committee of the board of the Justice Health and Forensic Mental Health Network, and is a volunteer with the AIDS Council of NSW (ACON). He previously chaired the Audit and Risk Committee of the Health Care Complaints Commission and has served as a councillor with the Medical Council of NSW. Jason lectures in corporate governance and was appointed to the FWLHD Board in 2022.



#### Sally Pearce

BCom, JD

Sally's senior executive roles have spanned the public and private health sectors and tertiary education. She is focussed on transformative change, increased efficiency and achieving strategic objectives through collaboration. Appointed to the FWLHD Board in 2019, Sally has more than 10 years' experience as a chief financial officer and finance director across a range of health services.



#### Mariette Curcuruto-Dunlevy

LLB (Hon), LLM

Mariette has a strong social justice ethic, dedicating her career to improving the lives of others. She is president of Silverlea Early Childhood Services which supports disability or developmental delay; and is on the board of Advocacy Law Alliance. Mariette was the acting chief executive officer of Far West Community Legal Centre and the Broken Hill Aboriginal Family Violence Legal Service. She joined the FWLHD Board in 2016.

### Acknowledgement

We recognise the commitment, dedication and stewardship of outgoing board members John Harris and Stephen O'Halloran who served from July 2011 to June 2021.

1. As at June 30 2022



## APPENDIX B

### FWLHD LEADERSHIP TEAM<sup>1</sup>

The members of the FWLHD executive support the chief executive to guide and coordinate the operations and performance of the local health district. They formulate and execute business strategies to produce results critical to the organisation.



#### Umit Agis

*BSocWk, PGDipHlthSc, MBusMgt, GAICD*  
**Chief Executive**

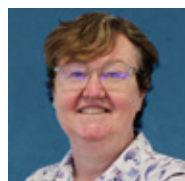
Umit was appointed chief executive in January 2020 and is committed to delivering the best possible accessible healthcare to the communities of far west NSW. His healthcare career spans 26 years, including 16 years in senior management and executive roles. Umit is passionate about patient-centric service design and delivery and enabling leadership. He is a fervent believer in the value of service partnerships and collaborative service provision to holistically meet the needs of patients, their carers, and the broader community.



#### Jodie Miller

**Acting Director Clinical Operations**

Jodie is accountable for the provision of clinical operations across the local health district, providing leadership, advice and direction on the delivery of quality and safety of care in a variety of healthcare settings and governance structures.



#### Wendy Gleeson

*BN, M (Emerg N), MN (Advanced Clinical Education)*

**Executive Director Nursing & Midwifery and Director Clinical Governance**

Wendy is responsible for nursing and midwifery workforce planning, education and ensuring effective people management strategies are in place to attract, recruit, develop and retain quality nursing and midwifery staff to provide excellent patient care. As director of clinical governance, she oversees the quality and safety of services, and systems of care. Wendy has an extensive background in critical care, emergency nursing and clinical education.



#### Gunjan Kothari

**Acting Director Performance & Strategy**

Gunjan is responsible for ensuring the LHD's financial and performance outcomes are consistent with its key performance indicators and strategy formulation. He has held various senior roles in NSW Health for the past 10 years.



#### Dr Timothy Smart

*MB BCh, Dip Obs, FRACGP, FRACMA*  
**Director of Medical Services**

Tim oversees medical services, and the recruitment, retention and development of medical staff across the LHD. His clinical and medical administrative background at an executive level in Australia and internationally has seen him work predominantly in rural and regional areas. He is also experienced in tertiary services. Tim has had extensive involvement in change management and is passionate about the delivery of safe and comprehensive rural and regional healthcare.



#### Melissa Welsh

*B App Sci (Occ Therapy), Grad Cert Clinical Redesign, Dip Project Management, Dip Mgt*

**Director Allied Health, Partnerships and Innovation**

Mel's focus is on leading services that provide holistic, collaborative, integrated care. The Allied Health, Partnerships and Innovation directorate was critical in delivering COVID-19 support to the communities of Far West LHD during the past financial year and is leading key initiatives for hospital avoidance programs.



#### Vanessa Smith

*BA*

**Acting Program Director Mental Health, Drug and Alcohol, Violence and Neglect**  
Vanessa has worked in mental health for more than 33 years and is committed to building the Aboriginal mental health workforce through traineeships and the Peer-Supported Transfer of Care Program. She has a strong interest in the principles of codesign to ensure the lived experience voice is the driver of change and innovation in healthcare.



#### Corina Kemp

**Executive Manager Aboriginal Health & Community Relations**

A proud Dieri, Barkandji, Mulyangaba woman, Corina's primary focus is to assist the LHD to address the healthcare needs of its Aboriginal communities through the delivery of services and prevention programs in a culturally appropriate environment. Corina's community relations role is critical in enabling our consumers to assist in shaping services to best meet their needs.



#### Julie Manoel

**Broken Hill Health Service Manager, Director Nursing & Midwifery**

As manager of Broken Hill Health Service, Julie is responsible for the operational delivery of day-to-day patient care, as well as managing its nursing and midwifery workforce. Born and bred in Broken Hill, Julie's extensive nursing career spans two states. She is passionate about embracing technology and new models of practice to deliver high-quality patient care. She believes the individual needs of the patient are paramount.



#### Denise McCallum

**General Manager Remote Health Services**

Denise is responsible for the operational and strategic oversight of eight remote health service facilities and aged care services. She collaborates with partners and Aboriginal community members to remodel healthcare services to meet their needs. A registered nurse, she has spent more than 30 years in clinical, strategic, leadership and operational roles.



#### David Green

**Director People & Culture**

David is responsible for all people and culture programs and practices including attraction and retention, learning and development, employee relations and benefits, workplace health, safety and wellness, and human resource policy and procedures. Commencing in 2022 David's senior and executive background spanning numerous industries underpins his focus in transformation, culture, organisational development, industrial relations and human capital management systems.



#### Melissa Cumming

*RN, ONC, MPallC*  
**Program Director Cancer & Palliative Care Services**

Melissa is a registered nurse with more than 37 years' experience in specialist palliative care, of which 34 have been with FWLHD working in rural and remote communities. She has strategic and operational oversight of cancer, oncology and palliative care, providing patients and carers with high-quality services wherever they live. Melissa believes organisational culture, where staff feel supported and valued in their roles, is fundamental to health outcomes.

1. As at June 30 2022



## APPENDIX C

### LOCATION DIRECTORY

#### Public Hospitals

**Broken Hill Health Service**  
Thomas St, Broken Hill NSW 2880  
Ph: (08) 8080 1300 Fax: (08) 8080 1182

**Wentworth Health Service**  
Silver City Highway,  
Wentworth NSW 2648  
Ph: (03) 5027 5700 Fax: (03) 5027 5740

#### Multipurpose Services

**Balranald Multipurpose Service**  
Market St (PO Box 10)  
Balranald NSW 2715  
Ph: (03) 5071 9800 Fax: (03) 5071 9864

**Wilcannia Multipurpose Service**  
14 Ross St, Wilcannia NSW 2836  
Ph: (08) 8083 8700 Fax: (08) 8083 8780

#### Non-Inpatient Health Facilities

**Ivanhoe Health Service**  
Columbus St (PO Box 1)  
Ivanhoe NSW 2878  
Ph: (02) 6990 2800 Fax: (02) 6990 2880

**Menindee Health Service**  
21 Perry St (PO Box 25)  
Menindee NSW 2879  
Ph: (08) 8083 2700 Fax: (08) 8083 2780

**Tibooburra Health Service**  
5 Sturt St, Tibooburra NSW 2880  
Ph: (08) 8083 2900

**White Cliffs Health Service**  
Johnston St, White Cliffs NSW 2836  
Ph: (08) 8083 6200 Fax: (08) 8083 6280

#### Community Health, Mental Health, Drug & Alcohol Services

**Broken Hill Community Health Centre – Wilyakali Palii-mala Kirra**  
2-4 Sulphide St, Broken Hill NSW 2880  
Ph: (08) 8080 1100 Fax: (08) 8080 1755

**Safe Haven Café**  
Old War Vets Drive, Broken Hill NSW 2880  
Ph: 0418 442 767

**Buronga HealthOne**  
3 Pitman Avenue, Buronga NSW 2739  
Ph: (03) 5021 7200 Fax: (03) 5021 7280

**Dareton Primary Care and Community Health Service/Mental Health and Drug & Alcohol Service**  
44-46 Tapio St, Dareton NSW 2717  
Ph: (03) 5021 7200 Fax: (03) 5021 7280

#### Oral Health Clinics

**Broken Hill Community Health Dental Clinic – Wilyakali Palii-mala Kirra**  
2-4 Sulphide St, Broken Hill NSW 2880  
Ph: (08) 8080 1100 Fax: (08) 8080 1755

**The Lower Western Sector Dental van** regularly visits Balranald and is located at: **Buronga HealthOne**, 3 Pitman Avenue, Buronga NSW 2739  
Ph: 0419 990 264

#### FWLHD Administration

**Broken Hill Community Health Centre – Wilyakali Palii-mala Kirra**  
2-4 Sulphide St, Broken Hill NSW 2880  
Ph: (08) 8080 1100 Fax: (08) 8080 1755

## APPENDIX D

### ABBREVIATIONS AND GLOSSARY

**ACON**  
AIDS Council of NSW

**AOD**  
Alcohol and other drugs

**BHHS**  
Broken Hill Health Service

**CAMHS**  
Child and adolescent mental health services

**CCAG**  
Consumer and carer action group is a committee of consumers and carers that works with FWLHD mental health, drug and alcohol services

**CCRT/s**  
COVID community response team/s

**CHAC**  
Coomealla Health Aboriginal Corporation

**CNC**  
Clinical nurse consultant

**COVID-19**  
Coronavirus is a contagious respiratory and vascular disease. First identified in Wuhan, China in 2019, it has caused an ongoing pandemic

**ED**  
Emergency department

**FWLHD**  
Far West Local Health District

**GP/s**  
General practitioner/s

**HAPI**  
Hospital-acquired pressure injuries

**HealthOne**  
An integrated primary and community health initiative bringing together multidisciplinary teams of general practitioners, community health and other health practitioners

**ICU**  
Intensive care unit

**JEV**  
Japanese encephalitis virus

**LHD/s**  
Local health district/s

**Maari Ma**  
An Aboriginal community-controlled health organisation dedicated to improving health outcomes for communities in far west NSW

**MHDA**  
Mental health, drug and alcohol

**MPRA**  
Murdi Paaki Regional Assembly

**MPS**  
Multipurpose service is a model of care specifically designed for regional and remote communities to provide coordinated delivery of health and aged care services

**MWh**  
A measure of electricity. A unit of energy equal to the work done by a power of a million watts in one hour. One megawatt-hour equals 1000 kilowatt-hours

**NGO/s**  
Non-government organisation/s

**OST**  
Opioid substitution treatment

**OTP**  
Opioid treatment program

**PCR**  
Polymerase chain reaction is a test to detect genetic material from a specific organism, such as a virus

**Q fever**  
A bacterial infection that can cause a severe flu-like illness, usually spread to humans from farm animals

**RAMP**  
Rural Adversity Mental Health Program

**RATs**  
Rapid antigen tests

**RFDS**  
Royal Flying Doctor Service

**RPA**  
Royal Prince Alfred Hospital

**SBATS**  
School-based apprentice and traineeships

**SHEOC**  
State Health Emergency Operations Centre led the state-wide operational response to the COVID-19 pandemic

**SPH**  
School of Public Health, the University of Sydney

**VANS**  
Violence, abuse and neglect services

**vICU**  
Virtual intensive care unit

**VMO/s**  
Visiting medical officer/s

**VTE**  
Venous thromboembolism

**Western NSW Primary Health Network**  
One of 31 primary health networks across Australia, established to support frontline health services and increase the efficiency and effectiveness of primary healthcare

Back cover: Broken Hill Health Service midwife Naomie Marks looks over new mum Ashleigh Lehman and her baby Willow Picken. Photo by student Isabel Schumacher





## FAR WEST LOCAL HEALTH DISTRICT

2-4 Sulphide St, Broken Hill NSW 2880

+61 8 8080 1300

[FWLHD-Feedback@health.nsw.gov.au](mailto:FWLHD-Feedback@health.nsw.gov.au)

[www.nsw.gov.au/health/fwlhd](http://www.nsw.gov.au/health/fwlhd)



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