

ANNUAL REPORT 2017-18

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Murrumbidgee Primary Health Network

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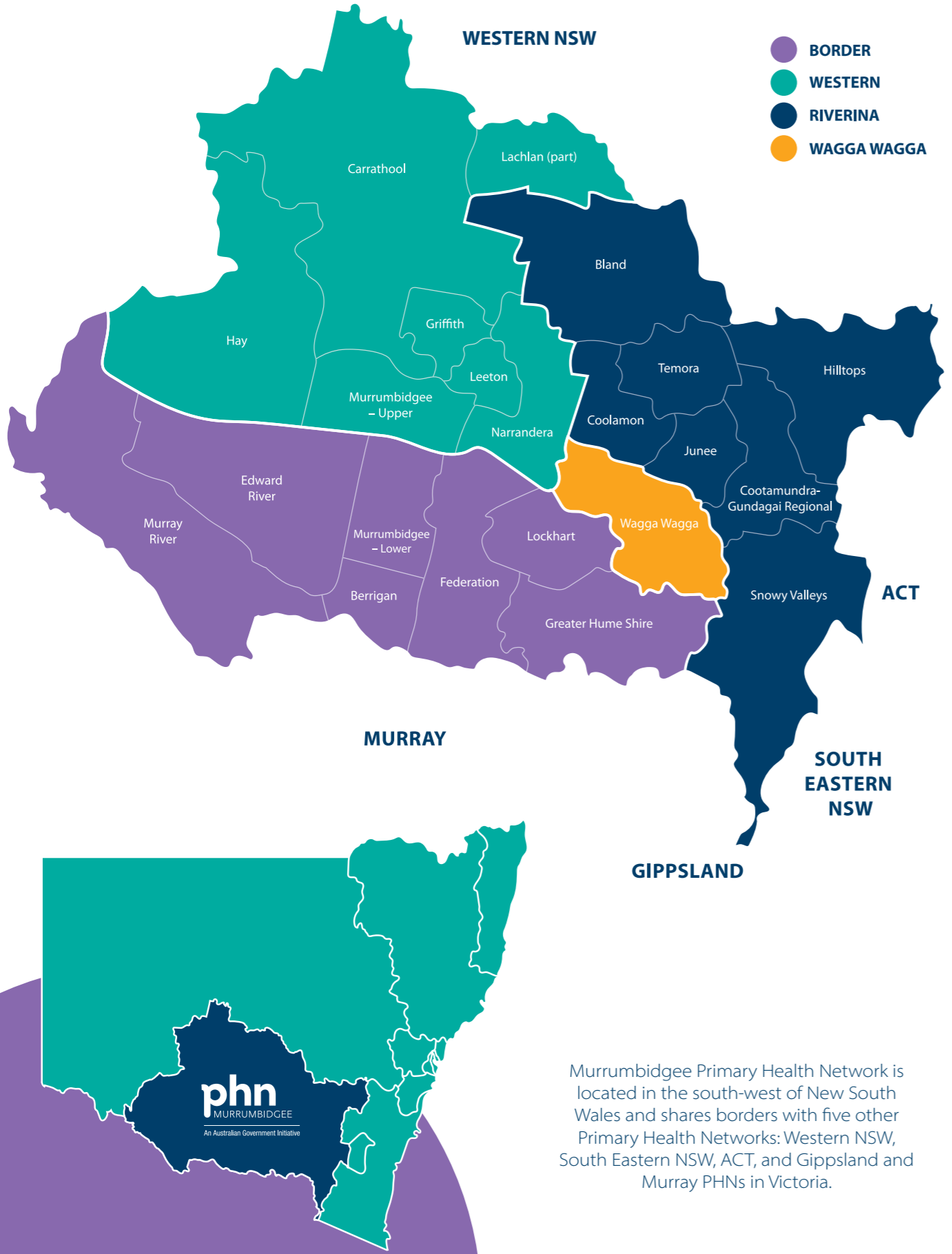
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Murrumbidgee Primary Health Network acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the land in the Murrumbidgee region. We pay respect to past and present Elders of this land: the Wiradjuri, Yorta Yorta, Baraba Baraba, Wemba Wemba and Nari Nari peoples.

Murrumbidgee Primary Health Network gratefully acknowledges the financial and other support from the Australian Government Department of Health. The Primary Health Networks Programme is an Australian Government Initiative.

OUR REGION

WELL PEOPLE, RESILIENT COMMUNITIES ACROSS THE MURRUMBIDGEE



Murrumbidgee Primary Health Network is located in the south-west of New South Wales and shares borders with five other Primary Health Networks: Western NSW, South Eastern NSW, ACT, and Gippsland and Murray PHNs in Victoria.

MPHN covers a geographical area of 124,413 square kilometres and has an estimated resident population of 242,962 people.



4 SECTORS

Riverina
incorporating the communities of Junee, Coolamon, Temora, Young, Boorowa, Harden, Cootamundra, West Wyalong, Gundagai, Tumut, Batlow and Tumbarumba

Wagga Wagga

Border
incorporating the communities of Barham, Deniliquin, Finley, Jerilderie, Berrigan, Tocumwal, Corowa, Culcairn, Henty, Holbrook, Lockhart and Urana

Western
incorporating the communities of Griffith, Leeton, Narrandera, Hay, Hillston and Lake Cargelligo



“ ”
 Through working together and in partnership, we can improve the health of all, living within our communities across the Murrumbidgee.

Dear members,

Three years of operation has enabled the Murrumbidgee Primary Health Network (MPHN) to progress towards achieving our vision, Well People, Resilient Communities across the Murrumbidgee. It is pleasing to note that MPHN membership has remained strong in 2018. The membership has ten new member organisations, taking the total membership to 88, across 32 locations throughout the Murrumbidgee.

The past 12 months have been once again a time of change. In November last year James Lamerton resigned from the position of CEO. The Board acknowledges the contribution James made during his time at MPHN. In particular, his work in relation to the commissioning of services based upon the social determinants of health.

Melissa Neal, the Chief Operating Officer became the Acting CEO during the recruitment for a new CEO. Following an extensive Australia wide recruitment process, Melissa was selected as the successful applicant. The Board is extremely appreciative of the manner in which the senior management team and all staff, under Melissa's leadership have worked to implement MPHN strategic plan. Staff have performed tirelessly to meet deadlines in updating the health needs analysis, completing reports back to the Commonwealth, engaging with stakeholders, and the commissioning of new and reviewing of contracts for existing services.

At the commencement of MPHN, the Board decided to call upon the expertise of the clinicians working across the Murrumbidgee, to establish four clinical councils. Each one is chaired by a medical practitioner and has a membership of a multidisciplinary team of health professionals practicing across their geographic areas. The clinical councils have informed the MPHN Board of the specific health needs identified from

their clinical practice. The insights from the members of the clinical councils have provided the opportunity to understand and address the health and service needs within these communities. The board are appreciative of the role taken by the Chairs, led by Dr Daniel Fry, Dr Alam Yoosuff, Dr Jane Goddard, and Dr Damien Limberger.

I would like to acknowledge the work and support of my fellow Directors over the past year. During 2018 three Directors retired. Dr John Pagdett, Cathy Maloney and Carl Cooper, all who made an excellent contribution during their time on the MPHN board. Dr Ken Mackey OA will not be standing for re-election this year.

Ken's dedication to primary healthcare in this region is demonstrated through his leadership as Chair of the Division of General Practice from 1993 to 2008, and his involvement on the boards of Murrumbidgee Medicare Local and MPHN. Ken's vision for quality and safety in healthcare is evidenced by his role in the establishment of the organisation's clinical governance committee in 2009. Ken has chaired this committee since inception until this year. Ken's insights into general practice, dedication to primary care and advocacy for small rural communities will be greatly missed.

Last year MPHN decided to showcase best practice in primary care through an awards program for member organisations. The winners were announced at a dinner following the AGM. Based on the success of last year's event it is continuing this year. The criteria has been revised to include innovation, outstanding contribution to the community, improving the health for vulnerable populations and communities, and primary healthcare provider of the year, to once again celebrate the achievement of our member organisations.

The future ahead is positive and I would like to acknowledge and thank the support from all our stakeholders and member bodies. Through working together and in partnership, we can improve the health of all, living within our communities across the Murrumbidgee.

Sue McAlpin

I'm honoured to be providing my first report as Chief Executive Officer of Murrumbidgee Primary Health Network (MPHN).

During our third year of operations we have strengthened our focus on increasing our understanding of the health needs of our population and factors impacting the health of our communities, particularly those who are most vulnerable. A robust health needs assessment is a critical foundation for PHNs, informing service development and investment decisions.

Our activities have been informed and co-designed through strong collaborations and partnerships with clinical councils, Community Advisory Committee, GPs, community members and health professionals. In the last 12 months we have committed \$13.3 million in funding to more than 118 commissioned providers, who deliver a range of initiatives and services across the region to improve the health of people in the Murrumbidgee.

Our annual report highlights just some of our work over the last 12 months. Some particular achievements include:

- The roll out of Murrumbidgee HealthPathways, a clinical pathway tool for GPs and other health professionals in our region. A joint initiative of Murrumbidgee Local Health District (MLHD) and MPHN.
- Berrigan became the first fully connected My Health Record town in Australia demonstrating the community spirit and connectedness of small rural towns. This achievement for Berrigan shows the town's community strength, and the town's willingness to uptake digital health technology.
- Our region maintained high rates of immunisation in two immunisation preventative activities, a collaborative effort by healthcare providers across all of our communities. The Murrumbidgee not only exceeded the national target for fully immunised one year olds but has achieved the highest rate in Australia.
- The launch of the Way Back Support Service, a program developed by beyondblue which provides intensive support in the three months following a suicide attempt when a person is most at risk.
- Our selection as one of 11 PHNs nationally to receive palliative care funding provides us the opportunity to improve access to safe palliative care and treatment at home particularly for those in smaller rural areas.

I would like to thank the Board of Directors and our Chair, Associate Professor Sue McAlpin, for the support provided to our executive and senior management team through a period of further organisational change.

Our work and achievements would not be possible without a dedicated and committed team of staff, who work tirelessly towards our vision of Well People, Resilient Communities across the Murrumbidgee.

Melissa Neal



“ ”
 In the last 12 months we have committed \$13.3 million in funding to over 118 commissioned providers, who deliver a range of initiatives and services across the region to improve the health of people in the Murrumbidgee.

CHAIR'S REPORT

CEO'S REPORT

2017 WINNERS

Improving healthcare access and/or reducing health inequality

Trail Street Medical Centre

Opiate treatment in primary care

Dr Mary Ross had a vision when opening Trail Street Medical Centre to establish a private prescribing service for opioid dependent patients, and to integrate this within a mainstream GP practice to allow for the simultaneous treatment of opioid dependency and traditional GP care.

Over the last six years Trail Street Medical Centre has prescribed to a total of 79 patients on the Opioid Treatment Program to provide them access to a more normalised and clinical approach to their drug dependence treatment in a flexible, non-judgemental environment. Dr Ross' passion was evident throughout her submission and has no doubt been central to the success of this initiative.

Promoting healthy lifestyle

Murrumbidgee and Southern NSW Local Health District

Wathchya Gunna Do? Youth vaccine hip hop video

Wathchya Gunna Do? Youth vaccine hip hop video was created in an effort to address this issue of immunisation rates of Aboriginal students receiving their high school vaccines which was considerably lower than non-Aboriginal students in NSW.

After consultation with elders, community, students, Aboriginal medical services and Aboriginal education officers it appeared there was a lack of awareness of vaccine preventable diseases and immunisation. The development of the hip hop video was aimed at increasing high school student's awareness of vaccine preventable diseases and the importance of immunisation, via a media students can relate too.

The video has received positive feedback from communities and elders nationally, indicating the music video has created a positive community discussion about immunisation. The youth are educating other students and community about immunisation, which closes the gap for future in improving the overall Aboriginal health.

“ ”
Celebrating the achievements of our member organisations

Innovation

Therapy Connect

Delivers therapy supports to children with complex disability via telepractice.

Therapy Connect is a private Early Childhood Intervention service based at Deniliquin, NSW. Providing speech and occupational therapy supports in a unique way, delivering all therapy supports online via videoconference (telepractice). Founded by two rural allied health practitioners (Sue Cameron, speech pathologist and Simone Dudley, occupational therapist). Therapy Connect is passionate about rural practice and improving access to therapy supports for rural and remote families by delivering high quality innovative person-centered therapy.

Therapy Connect is a small business that, while being based in Deniliquin and serving the local region, has established a client base across Australia as well as reaching overseas into Asia providing timely access to highly experienced allied health practitioners for families isolated from services.

Significant achievement award

Wagga Wagga GP After Hours Service (WGPAS)

The Wagga Wagga GP After Hours Service Ltd was established in March 2003. A cooperative was formed with 20 doctors from Wagga Wagga and two doctors from Coolamon to provide a private billing after hours service to their patients, and any visiting or new patients requiring after hours primary healthcare. Since its inception, the WGPAS has provided more than 100,000 patient consultations, with most of these delivered from the clinic in Morgan Street and via a visiting service to residential aged care facilities.

The service continues to be delivered by a strong collaborative of dedicated and experienced Wagga based GPs working together to provide a quality healthcare service in the after hours period.

The Primary Healthcare Awards are an opportunity to recognise the valuable work in primary care across the Murrumbidgee region.

This includes those who are committed to delivering not only quality services to improve the health of the Murrumbidgee community, but also those who go above and beyond to show leadership, innovation and excellence in their field.

2017 PRIMARY HEALTHCARE AWARDS

Images above (left to right): Dr Mary Ross and Michelle Dean from Trail Street Medical Centre, Jacqui Walsh and Dr Max Graffen from Wagga GP After Hours Service, Barbara Wilson and Leanne Sanders from Murrumbidgee and Southern NSW Local Health District. Image right: Cathy Maloney and Simone Dudley from Therapy Connect.

OUR BOARD



SUE MCALPIN
Chair

Sue has worked most of her professional life in regional Australia, in community health, management and academia. She has been involved on boards of professional bodies and peak state and national organisations. Her passion has been to ensure people living in rural Australia, have the same or better health outcomes than those living in cities.



DAVID FRIEDLIEB
Treasurer

Raised in Albury, a chartered accountant since 1980, in Wagga Wagga since 1989. David has specialised in family businesses and the stakeholders involved, together with individuals and community organisations. He has a strong interest in social equity and the effective delivery of targeted health services.



CARL COOPER
Director

Carl is an experienced community pharmacist and until recently pharmacy owner. As an accredited pharmacist he has been a review pharmacist for various aged care providers in the Riverina. Currently on leave from CSU as a pharmacy practice lecturer he has been involved in the education of pharmacists in their education and pre-registration.



CATHERINE MALONEY
Director

Catherine is a qualified physiotherapist and experienced health professional based in Young. Having spent most of her professional life in rural communities, Catherine has a thorough understanding of the health needs of rural communities in the region.



DR KEN MACKEY
Director

As a GP in Lockhart, Ken has a thorough understanding of communities and general practice from the small town perspective through to state and national levels. He considers communities and patients central to healthcare. Quality improvements in healthcare is a specific focus.



DONNA MCLEAN
Director

Donna works as a practice nurse in primary health, and with more than 30 years nursing experience she has been witness to the changing needs within health. As a nurse leader, Donna promotes ongoing education for all who aim to provide a healthier future for our communities.



DR JODI CULBERT
Director

Jodi was a physiotherapist before becoming a GP in 2011. Her interests include musculoskeletal medicine, mental health, preventative health and medical student education. Jodi is a strong advocate for the role of general practice in primary care.



DR JACQUES SCHOLTZ
Director

A GP obstetrician in Cootamundra for 14 years who's also interested in family health and a strong voice for palliative care provision. Participates on MLHD and MPHNS committees, is principal/owner of a large general practice. He stands for equitable healthcare across all segments of society and works towards an integrated primary healthcare model.



MICHAEL ROWAN
Director

Michael has lived and worked in regional NSW since 1991. Having roots in rural areas, he has an acute understanding of the benefits of health, education and support to the community. He endeavours to ensure meaningful health outcomes for those living within the Murrumbidgee increasing their overall quality of life.



DR FAYE MCMILLAN
Director

A proud Wiradjuri woman, Faye is Australia's first registered pharmacist who is Aboriginal. She holds academic posts at Charles Sturt University and has a strong health background. She has sound governance skills, developed in a number of Aboriginal organisations and is an inaugural Atlantic Fellow for Social Equity.

OUR SENIOR MANAGERS



MELISSA NEAL
Chief Executive Officer

Melissa is an experienced executive and has held a number of senior roles in the non-profit sector. Melissa has spent most of her life working and living in regional and rural areas where she has developed an understanding of the challenges faced by communities. She commenced working in primary healthcare in 2012 and joined the primary health network in 2015.



JULIE REDWAY
Chief Operations Officer

Julie is a health manager with 30 years' experience in rural health. Commencing her career in medical science, Julie became interested in primary healthcare research in Bourke in the 1990's. Julie has a Bachelor's in medical science, Master's in health service management and is a graduate of the Australian Institute of Company Directors (AICD). She is a current executive board member of the Wagga Wagga Multicultural Council.



NARELLE MILLS
Senior Manager
Commissioning and
Procurement

Narelle has more than 20 years' experience in primary health program development and implementation with interests in quality improvement, chronic disease management, integrated care, aged and palliative care. Narelle has an Honours Degree in Applied Science and Graduate Certificate in Public Sector Management.



ANITA MCRAE
Senior Manager
Mental Health,
Drug and Alcohol

Anita joined MPHNS in 2013 as manager of the Partners in Recovery program after working in mental health support worker and community development positions. A strong belief in lived experience informing and driving service design and delivery is the foundation of Anita's working life, which she feels privileged to support.



ANDREW HEAP
Senior Manager
Primary Care
Engagement

Andrew has spent the last nine years providing support to general practices and has particular interest in digital health and continuous quality improvement. Andrew holds degrees in medical science (pathology) and music and also spent a couple of years as the practice manager of a large general practice.



ALISON KOSCHEL
Senior Planner and
Data Analyst

Ali Koschel has an extensive background in health research and population health planning with expertise and qualifications including epidemiology, biostatistics, nursing and health promotion. Ali is responsible for health needs assessment, data monitoring and service planning.



TROY SUTHERLAND
Senior Manager
Finance

Troy graduated from Charles Sturt University in 1997 and was advanced to the status of Certified Practising Accountant of CPA Australia 15 years ago. After having worked in public practice accounting firms in Wagga Wagga and Albury, Troy joined MPHNS in 2013 when it was then known as Murrumbidgee Medicare Local.

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Congratulations to our leadership team, who have worked tirelessly throughout the year to implement and achieve the vision of the organisation.

CLINICAL COUNCIL MEMBERS

Clinical leadership is important in shaping health service delivery and improving the effectiveness of healthcare outcomes. MPH N has four clinical councils which reflect the diversity of healthcare needs across the region. Membership includes a range of clinicians including GPs, allied and mental health professionals, nurses and pharmacists.

Brendan McCorry
Dr Jane Goddard
Dr Jonathon Ho
Eamonn Purcell
Dr Jodi Culbert
Kim Aylward
Luke van der Rijt
Martin Finnegan
Michael O'Reilly
Paul Colenso
Rachael Fikkers
Sandra Skaf
Tom Shumack
Adam Reinhard
Alam Yoosuff

Amanda Shand
Jeremy Carr
Karen Solah
Dr Ken Mackey
Lourene Liebenberg
Marison Magee
Belinda Guest
Carrie Stewart
Damien Limberger
Donna McLean
Dr Sultan Noormolideen
Elizabeth Dixon
Emma Kelly
Graham Clarke
Irene Grigoris

Karen Ingram
Laura Ross
Leanne Kennedy
Sally Hill
Sandra Royal
Brett Causer
Dr Daniel Fry
Dr Tom Douch
Dr William Meagher
Jeanette Lautier
Lee Francis
Luke Peacock
Nang Win
Dr Jacques Scholtz

COMMUNITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE

The Community Advisory Committee (CAC) provides a local, relevant and diverse perspective on health-related issues to the MPH N Board. Consumers, carers and representatives from at-risk populations collaborate, helping to develop programs and services for the community alongside MPH N. The CAC is informed by 33 Local Health Advisory Committees (LHAC) from across the Murrumbidgee region. Four LHAC Chairs from each of the geographic regions sit on the CAC, representing their local health bodies.

CAC Members

Gayle Murphy	Kerry Geale
Pamela Ellerman	Stan Warren
Linda Swales	John Moi
Sue McAlpin	Alison Koschel
Melissa Neal	Jenna Roberts
Julie Redway	Pat Lawson

LOCAL HEALTH ADVISORY COMMITTEES

LHAC forums are held twice a year, hosted by MPH N and MLHD and attended by more than 100 community representatives. Topics discussed at the recent LHAC forum included:

- My Health Record
- At home palliative care initiative
- Domestic violence
- NDIS
- CEO presentations (MLHD and MPH N)
- Panel discussion
- Research innovation

Our LHACs

Adelong-Batlow	Gundagai	Moulamein
Barham	Murrumburrah-Harden	Narrandera
Berrigan	Hay	Temora
Boorowa	Henty	Tocumwal
Coolamon-Ganmain	Hillston	Tooleybuc
Cootamundra	Holbrook	Tumbarumba
Corowa	Jerilderie	Tumut
Culcairn	Junee	Urana
Deniliquin	Lake Cargelligo	Wagga Wagga
Finley	Leeton	West Wyalong
Griffith	Lockhart	Young



It was an absolute honour to be presented 2018 Guild Pharmacy of the Year by Health Minister Greg Hunt.

A big reason for our success was that we collaborated with local healthcare professionals to solve local problems. Working as members of the Clinical Council gave us a great insight as to how community pharmacy can assist local doctors in providing optimal healthcare to people in the Murrumbidgee area.

Through initiatives with Murrumbidgee PHN, we were able to accredit 91 front line pharmacists and pharmacy staff in Mental Health First Aid, 20 pharmacies participated in the promotion of screening for bowel, breast and cervical cancer and three local pharmacists received scholarships to become diabetes educators.

We look forward to our continual work with MPH N and local healthcare professionals to mould our services to best suit the needs of the community.

Luke van der Rijt

Proprietor | Pharmacist - Southcity Pharmacy





The Planning and Integration (P&I) Committee is a subcommittee of the MPH Board, with members from MPH and MLHD. Its focus is prioritising identified health needs of the Murrumbidgee community, while addressing new priorities as they emerge. It helps develop local, integrated strategies, systems and structures to improve healthcare for patients in the MPH region. It also employs evidence-based, cost-effective investment and innovation, highlighting health outcomes and wellbeing.

Specific and emerging issues and priorities are identified through needs assessment processes, clinical councils and the Community Advisory Committee. The committee also commissions and helps encourage the market to offer continuously improving, high quality, innovative services, while addressing areas of market failure.

Population health planning is aligned and resources are then allocated to areas of need. The committee also provides recommendations to the MPH Board about the planning, implementation and evaluation of services.

During 2017-18, the committee significantly contributed to the development of the 2017 Murrumbidgee Health Needs Assessment refresh. This included changing from a disease focus to a population based approach, with a particular focus on vulnerable communities.

A number of proposals for new models and services have been developed and reviewed by the committee during the past 12 months, resulting in the commissioning of new services, including:

- Palliative care
- Shared care planning
- Digital health
- Youth mental health services
- Cancer screening
- Local health podcasts

In addition to new services, the P&I committee has also considered service decommissioning and the associated long term impacts on allied health services.

PLANNING AND INTEGRATION COMMITTEE

PRIORITIES

Nationally, all Primary Health Networks have been set six key priorities for targeted work; mental health, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health, population health, health workforce, eHealth and aged care.

MPHN is working with health service providers, consumers and communities to improve coordination of care, ensuring patients receive the right care in the right place at the right time.

MENTAL HEALTH



ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER HEALTH



POPULATION HEALTH



HEALTH WORKFORCE



eHEALTH



AGED CARE



Improving outcomes for communities

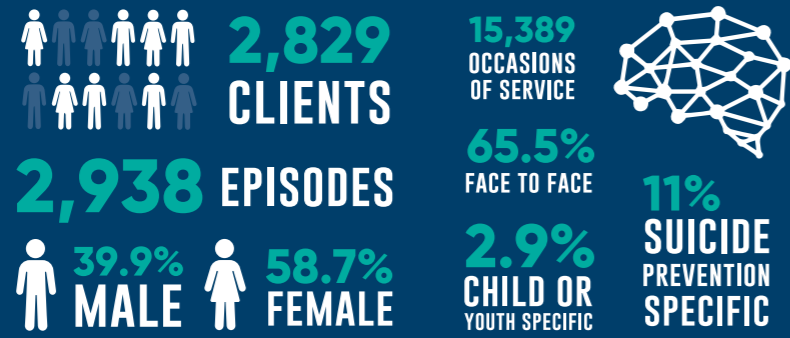
MPHN is committed to addressing social disadvantage in communities, identifying health needs across the lifespan of people in the region. This is achieved by commissioning activities that prioritise and address the needs of those most vulnerable.

Through partnerships with health professionals, government agencies, community based organisations and community members we are working to better understand the health and social needs of our population.

The importance of preventative education is paramount, as we try to raise the living standards of those with the greatest needs. "Health education at preschool, primary school, high school so as to try and avoid the chronic illnesses in the first place."

This year MPH has worked to locate areas of social disadvantage across the region. Through the launch of HNA Live, we receive feedback from consumers and carers of people using healthcare services and professionals about what is and isn't working well. This feedback allows us to better understand local community needs and supports us to improve outcomes for vulnerable people.

MENTAL HEALTH

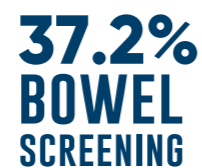
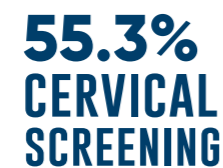
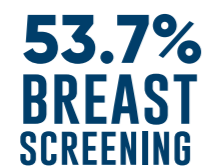


CPD EVENTS

GP AFTER HOURS



CANCER SCREENING



ALLIED HEALTH

7,908 OCCASIONS OF SERVICE



IMMUNISATION



MY HEALTH RECORD
OUR DIGITAL HEALTH TEAM HAVE CONNECTED





PRIMARY CARE ENGAGEMENT

96.2% of one-year-olds in the region are fully immunised; the highest rate in Australia

Supporting general practices and primary healthcare providers to deliver safe, high quality services continues to be a key priority for MPH. Our primary care engagement team assists both general practice and other primary care organisations in accreditation, quality improvement, digital health, workforce, immunisation and more. The team also promote commissioned services as well as relevant MPH programs.

MPHN primary care engagement staff use a continuous quality improvement approach with practices to provide direction and support to achieve better outcomes for patients. Quarterly de-identified data is collected, providing practices with their data benchmarked against the mean of other practices' data within MPH area. This provides the opportunity for practices to regularly review their data and systems to inform changes in practise.

The primary care engagement staff represent MPH at LHACs and other community focused meetings, acting as a two-way conduit identifying primary health issues and providing community information.

Capability development to improve patient care

Twelve general practices across the region have taken part in a program designed to develop systems-based approaches to improving patient outcomes. Participating practices have developed a strong community practise, focusing on quality improvement projects relating to chronic conditions, plan-do-study-act cycles, and data driven results. Practices have also participated in a range of activities to help support the initiative including information sessions and workshops with industry experts, using online project management tools and monthly teleconferences.

The Australian National University has been commissioned to evaluate the program with an interim report showcasing the improvement of practice data and the collaboration within practice teams. One staff member commented, "I have never been involved in a whole practice project before and I've enjoyed seeing how the whole team works together... it has been very motivating hearing how everyone is working towards the one goal".

The initiative will continue over the next year, with a greater focus on Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD) and building a sustainable integrated care model.

Immunisation

Our immunisation program continues to support general practices and primary care staff to maintain high immunisation coverage for children in the region. MPH recognises the importance of a whole-of-life immunisation status and works with practices to ensure this is being captured beyond childhood.

Individual support is offered directly to practices and staff, providing the most up to date resources and monitoring cold chain to ensure vaccine efficacy in the community.

MPHN region has the highest rate of fully immunised one-year-olds in Australia at 96.2 per cent. The Tumut-Tumbarumba local area shared the highest rate of fully immunised five-year-olds in Australia at 98 per cent, and immunisation rates for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children remain well above the national average.

MPHN also achieved the highest rate in Australia for fully immunised 15-year-old boys against the human papillomavirus with 83.5 per cent, well above the national rate of 74 per cent.

In partnership with MLHD, six immunisation updates were delivered with 133 immunisers attending, providing upskilling and networking opportunities for nurse immunisers.

Image above: Practice nurse immunisation update

Murrumbidgee HealthPathways

In October 2017, MPH partnered with MLHD to commence the Murrumbidgee's HealthPathways journey.

HealthPathways is an online system used by clinicians to help make assessment, management, and specialist request decisions for more than 700 conditions. The system can be accessed from a GPs computer desktop, providing access to the latest treatments and referral information and improving the transfer of care across the health sector. A team of experienced local GPs are working with specialists and health services to increase coverage of crucial clinical conditions and their associated services.

In June 2018, Murrumbidgee HealthPathways was launched. Clinical Lead, Dr Max Graffen said, "our dedicated team at MPH have worked hard to launch with more than 100 pages of localised clinical and referral information. It is free, online and easily accessible."

A grant from the NSW Cancer Institute has facilitated a focus on the development of colorectal cancer care pathways. The development of these pathways has helped to identify current care practices and issues by a clinical working group. The group has identified information for inclusion in the HealthPathway and opportunities for professional development and systems redesign. An evaluation framework has been developed as part of the project, auditing the patient journey within the region compared to optimal colorectal pathways.

Images below: HealthPathways Launch with Dr Max Graffen, Colorectal Clinical Working Group in Action



Cancer screening

Effective cancer screening is critical in the prevention and early detection of cancers including bowel, breast and cervical cancer. A Cancer Institute NSW grant funded a pilot screening program within MPH, trialling and evaluating strategies in general practice to improve recording and increase participation in screening programs. The University of Notre Dame was commissioned as the pilot evaluator, demonstrating a statistically significant improvement in bowel and breast screening rates. These strategies have been replicated in other general practices across the region with support provided to facilitate implementation.

A GP lead was recruited to provide clinical education and support to participating practices, together with Cancer Institute NSW and MPH project staff. Evaluation demonstrated an improvement in knowledge and skills of GPs and practice staff. In addition, a cancer screening podcast was recorded and uploaded to MPH's podcast channel. This is available to all general practices and included discussions on the changes to the national cervical screening program.

To complement the general practice based pilot, MPH also funded community pharmacies and LHACs to promote cancer screening across the region with a wide range of resources and strategies employed including promotional banners, pens, printed material and the use of local media.

Images above: Recording a cancer screening podcast, Narrandera LHAC cancer screening promotion banner outside Narrandera Hospital





Upskilling our primary care workforce

Access to local education opportunities is critical to ensuring the region maintains access to a skilled workforce. MPHN has worked collaboratively with a number of organisations including MLHD, Black Dog Institute, Kidney Health Australia, National Asthma Council, Imaging Associates, and Emergency Medicine Training and Education to deliver a range of professional development opportunities across the region.

More than 1,500 GPs, practice nurses and allied health professionals attended 82 events delivered throughout the region, including 15 weekend workshops.

Image below: Emergency Medicine Training and Education, University of Notre Dame



GPs with a special interest in mental health

Mental health skills development for Murrumbidgee GPs continues to be focus. MPHN has partnered with Black Dog Institute, the Centre for Rural and Remote Mental Health and the Australian College of Rural and Remote Medicine to develop an evidence-based learning pathway to upskill GPs with a special interest in mental health. Eleven GPs are currently engaged in the pilot, with the guidelines and advice on training options to be made available to all PHNs following completion.

Image above: GPs with a special interest in mental health

More than 1,500 GPs, practice nurses and allied health professionals attended 82 events delivered throughout the region, including 15 weekend workshops.



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It was a fantastic opportunity to up-skill and build confidence in managing trauma situations which are invaluable skills when working in our region's rural hospitals.

Management of severe trauma

We continue to support access to emergency skills development, offering nine scholarships for GP Visiting Medical Officers (VMO) to complete training in 2017. The GPs attended a two-day early management of severe trauma workshop in Wagga Wagga in early November, delivered by the College of Surgeons. GPs from Young, Hay, Holbrook, Tumut and Leeton were extremely grateful to be given the chance to expand their knowledge in this critical field. Dr Melinda Lattimore from Young said, “it was a fantastic opportunity to up-skill and build confidence in managing trauma situations which are invaluable skills when working in our region's rural hospitals.”

Image right: Dr Khanal from Hay and instructor



Substance use in pregnancy and parenting workshop

The health of pregnant mothers and parents is paramount to the health of their children. Health professionals in the Murrumbidgee were offered the chance to learn more about this valuable topic by an identity at the top of the field. Ju-Lee Oei, Neonatologist and Conjoint Professor at the University of New South Wales, presented on the effects of substance use in pregnancy and parenting. The workshop took place in April with more than 40 professionals in attendance.



MPHN, in partnership with the MLHD continues to provide financial and mentoring support to nine healthcare providers to complete a post graduate certificate in diabetes education and management, while undergoing credentialing.

Increasing access to diabetes education in the bush

In recognition of the importance of access to credentialed diabetes educators across the region, MPHN, in partnership with the MLHD, continues to provide financial and mentoring support to nine healthcare providers to complete a post graduate certificate in diabetes education and management, while undergoing credentialing. Scholarship recipients have included pharmacists, a dietitian, physiotherapist and podiatrist, hailing from a number of communities across the Murrumbidgee.

Collaborations with communities and partners to build a sustainable GP workforce

We continue to work strategically with other workforce agencies on committees including the Murrumbidgee Medical Succession Committee, Murrumbidgee and Riverina Training Hubs Collaborative Forum, Riverina Specialists Recruitment Committee and the Tumut Workforce Action Group to maintain a sustainable GP workforce.

MPHN continues to facilitate the Murrumbidgee Medical Succession Committee. This committee allows those with a vested interest in GP workforce to meet and provide assistance to general practices in their recruitment activities. Members of this committee are Rural Doctors Network, MLHD, GP Synergy and Regional Vocational Training Scheme.

The Tumut Workforce Action Group was formed by MPHN and NSW Rural Doctors Network in response to an emerging GP workforce crisis in Tumut. The group works with the local community and other partners to develop strategies to plan for a future sustainable GP workforce.

MPHN continues to work with local universities to encourage medical and allied health students to stay and work in the region. The organisation continues to auspice the University of Wollongong's (UOW) placements of long term medical students. This year saw the ninth cohort of these students undertake placements.

The Three Rivers University recently entered into an agreement with MPHN to utilise the learning and teaching centre in Griffith for their allied student placements.

Image below: UOW students, Omar Noori, Sanampreet Rajput, Yelise Foon, Madeleine Kelly, Dr Marion Reeves, Alvin Tan, Ben Pearce, Lachlan Evans.

MPHN continues to auspice the University of Wollongong's placements of long term medical students.



MY HEALTH RECORD EXPANSION

We continue to promote and support digital health achievements through the use of secure messaging, telehealth, electronic transfer of prescriptions, mobile applications and more during visits to organisations and through MPHNS communication channels.

The digital health team is facilitating the expansion of My Health Record by supporting providers, including GPs, pharmacists and allied health professionals, while helping to promote the program to consumers. By the end of June 2018 the digital health team has connected 70 per cent of pharmacies, 95 per cent of general practices, 100 per cent of public hospitals, 13 aged care facilities and 11 allied health organisations. The service has also delivered nine training events in Wagga Wagga, Deniliquin, Young and Griffith. Some were industry specific, while one was multidisciplinary with live webinar or post-event recording options for those unable to attend.

Face to face engagement with the community is being achieved by attending local events and delivering information sessions at libraries, community groups and various meetings. By the end of June 2018 the team has participated in 34 events including Festival of the Falling Leaf in Tumut, the National Highland Cattle Show in Junee, Sikh Games in Griffith and library information sessions at Griffith, Wagga Wagga, Hay, Carathool, Junee and Tumut.

Image below: MPHNS Communication Lead – My Health Record talks to a guest at our information stall at the Celebrating Diversity event in Wagga Wagga.



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 Like many older Australians I don't have easy access to my online health information, but if people who need to have access to My Health Record have access when it matters most, then I'm happy.



BERRIGAN AUSTRALIA'S FIRST MY HEALTH RECORD CONNECTED TOWN

A particular milestone was celebrated March this year following Berrigan's achievement as the first town in Australia to have all healthcare providers and more than 50 per cent of locals fully connected and using the My Health Record system.

This was well attended by local and federal dignitaries, including the Federal Member for Farrer, the Hon Sussan Ley MP, and media coverage proved positive across print, radio, online and television platforms.

Images above: Dr Saad Mohammed and Amaroo Aged Care nurse show ADHA's CEO Tim Kelsey how they use My Health Record; Federal Member for Farrer Sussan Ley and ADHA's CEO Tim Kelsey cut the cake to celebrate Berrigan being the first town in Australia connected to the My Health Record.

Image below: ADHA's CEO Tim Kelsey and Chief Medical Adviser, Clinical Professor Meredith Makeham with Berrigan's health providers Berrigan Multi Purpose Service (MPS) Manager Karen Garth; Amaroo Aged Care Manager Andrea O'Neill; Pharmacist Kim Collins; and Dr Saad Mohammed.



MENTAL HEALTH



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They love him. They ask if Bear will be here when they come back...

Strong Minds

Strong Minds is a medium to high intensity mental program providing effective treatment for people with a mental illness, with short term psychological interventions in a primary care setting. The service is delivered at no cost to the client. MPHN commissions Marathon Health to deliver this service.

The Murrumbidgee Strong Minds program has recently received an added boost with the introduction of Bear, the trainee therapy dog.

Bear is a labrador cross border collie and will be working with provisional psychologist, Millie Caspers to assist with clients experiencing stress, anxiety, depression and even the more severe symptoms associated with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) once his training is complete.

Therapy dogs have been used in a clinical setting to provide stability and a calming, soothing physical presence; sitting by clients and supporting them during sessions. Bear is especially popular with children using the Strong Minds' services.

"They love him. They ask if Bear will be here when they come back or if they can babysit him," Millie said.

Image above: Bear enjoys a story with some young friends at the Marathon Health office.

Connect tele-psychology

Travelling restraints, remoteness and long waiting lists for face to face services can hinder Murrumbidgee residents looking to access psychological services. 'Connect Tele-CBT' is a free telephone and video-conference based cognitive behavioural therapy service which helps to overcome these barriers. A client from Deniliquin completed 12 sessions over a period of seven months with a Melbourne based provider and reported, "the service was convenient, ringing me at home at a set time. The counsellor was caring and insightful and made me feel very welcome. I appreciate having an experienced counsellor available which we would not normally have access to in rural area. Thoroughly recommend to others."

The impact of the service is summed up by a Tumut resident who reported the effectiveness of the services as "...how accessible my clinician is. A message sent will mean an answer promptly back to organise a session. I am incredibly grateful to have her as my clinician as I am in a small country town. I had no services at my disposal. I would love to have the opportunity to meet personally and thank her face to face."

“ ”

I find Martin very easy to talk to and he puts me at ease. We have been working together for a few years making progress when I haven't been able to with previous counsellors or psychologists.

Team care for people experiencing severe mental illness

Team care for people experiencing severe mental illness (Team Care) is a program developed in conjunction with mental health support agencies to increase support available for people experiencing severe mental illness. The program ensures those who have complex care coordination needs can benefit from the services of a Team Care nurse or a mental health nurse. This includes support via evidence-based, focused psychological interventions, physical health screening and medication support and monitoring.

A client who participates in Team Care with mental health said, "I find Martin very easy to talk to and he puts me at ease. We have been working together for a few years making progress when I haven't been able to with previous counsellors or psychologists."

Image above: Martin Alster, mental health nurse, delivers Team Care in several communities across the Murrumbidgee region.

Practical solutions for day to day pressures

NewAccess is a low intensity mental health service providing support in the form of a specially trained coach at no cost to clients. MPHN has commissioned Intereach to deliver NewAccess across the Murrumbidgee. The coach assists participants to set goals, providing practical solutions to assist with managing stress during times when day to day pressures are causing mild to moderate depression and/or anxiety. Access to coaches is available to all Murrumbidgee residents, including in headspace centres. Anyone can self-refer to the program.

One NewAccess participant reported great success from being involved in the program.

"I was referred to the program by my local doctor," she said. "At first I felt as though I was wasting the coaches' time but I began to realise I had a problem and needed some help. I was very nervous about putting my thoughts and feelings into words. Feeling as though I would be judged for my problem. But I wasn't. The program allowed me to work through things step by step. Making me see that I did have a real problem and there was a solution. Realising that the solution was at my fingertips I put into practice the skills that my coach spoke to me about. It was hard at first but after a few days the difference was amazing. I was much calmer; I thought less about the past, stressed less about the future and started to enjoy being a mum and wife again. If I started to have negative thoughts I would say "STOP", let's look at this to see what, if anything, I can do about this situation.

"After only three weeks I could see and feel a difference in the way I looked at and reacted to certain triggers and situations. I was gaining some control over my life again. The best experience was when my husband commented on how I had changed. He noticed how I was more relaxed and more honest in various situations. This made my day. I couldn't wait to share with my coach.

"My relationships with my children have improved so much. We spend more time relaxing or playing games together. They have noticed that I don't get as upset as I used to. So this allows them to come to me with their questions/problems. After the six weeks I know I have the skills to continue living life to the fullest and allow my family to do the same."

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After the six weeks I know I have the skills to continue living life to the fullest and allow my family to do the same.

Low intensity support for young people

There are many young people in the community who would benefit from a headspace service however for a number of reasons, do not engage with health services. Headspace Griffith provides outreach services to engage with such young people.

The reach of this program is evident in the testimony of one young person who was able to significantly boost her level of well-being so she could attend the Recovery Program in Wagga Wagga, meeting one of her goals.

"I like the help I am getting it makes me feel better about myself and have hope for the future," she said.

This young person was diagnosed with major depressive disorder, anxiety, low self-esteem and was self-harming. Her personal goals included to stop her self-harm, stabilise her mood, increase self-esteem and stop negative self-talk, reduce social anxiety, move out of home and gain employment.

Therapeutic approaches have included Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) and Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT). She has been supported to connect with a doctor, start medication and apply for access to the recovery unit. She has been accepted to participate in the eight-week recovery program and is excited about attending in order to gain self-confidence, further reduce social anxiety and experience living away from home.

Youth Health Forum

Youth Health Forum is a series of community health education seminars which provide regular opportunities for hospital, community-based workers and education professionals to meet with young people and their families.

This year, seminar topics have included drug trends, family break-up: supporting through separation and conflict, and all fired up: aggression and violence in young people. Eighty-seven people attended the three workshops.

Low intensity services for parents at risk of perinatal depression

Low intensity mental health services for parents at risk of perinatal depression helps to identify and prevent perinatal depression in at-risk groups throughout the region. These groups utilise a number of different approaches, including face to face sessions and access to educational resources.

Activities have recently commenced across the region to provide social and emotional well-being information to parents attending playgroups and parenting groups. Other planned activities include the provision of psycho-education and information to parents participating in pregnancy education classes. The contents of all information packs for new parents provided at all hospitals in Murrumbidgee is under review to ensure local and current information about emotional wellbeing is included.

Connect for Kids

Royal Far West's team of 14 specialist child psychologists use videolink technology to provide the Connect 4 Kids program to children in their local communities. Funded by MPH, the service has helped more than 90 local children with anxiety and behavioural issues who would otherwise have little or no mental health service support.

"Mental health services for children aged 0-15 remain difficult to access across rural and remote Australia," said Royal Far West Health Director Katherine Burchfield. "By using technology we can offer many of these children the support they deserve. We're thrilled to be working with Murrumbidgee Primary Health Network to support local children with mental health issues since 2016. Children and their families access Connect for Kids at home or school, saving travelling time and money, and decreasing stress or worry about navigating unfamiliar healthcare settings. An individual therapy plan is created for each child based on their needs, often with 10 sessions given weekly or fortnightly. We pride ourselves on working in

collaboration with the government and local health services to obtain the best outcome for country children, regardless of where they live."

Royal Far West has remained relentlessly focused on the health and wellbeing of country children for 94 years. Families who have used the Connect for Kids program have said, "my son can communicate his feelings better, and has an understanding of tools to calm down his anger and outbursts" and "the program was extremely helpful to my family. Living in a rural area having access to this kind of thing is unbelievably helpful."

Images below and left: Connect for Kids session



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My son can communicate his feelings better, and has an understanding of tools to calm down his anger and outbursts.



Estimates suggest that the application of all LifeSpan strategies may be able to prevent up to 20 per cent of suicide deaths and 30 per cent of suicide attempts.



LifeSpan Murrumbidgee

LifeSpan is a new, evidence-based approach to suicide prevention. It combines nine strategies that have strong evidence for suicide prevention into one community-led approach. For each strategy, LifeSpan selects and implements the interventions or programs that have the strongest evidence-base.

LifeSpan is being implemented in local communities in the LGAs of Bland, Cootamundra-Gundagai, Griffith, Hay, Junee, Leeton, Snowy Valleys, Wagga Wagga and Hilltops.

Estimates suggest the application of all LifeSpan strategies may be able to prevent up to 20 per cent of suicide deaths and 30 per cent of suicide attempts. Reductions like these will take time to achieve, however in the first 12-18 months of implementation, we hope to see improvements in the local suicide prevention safety net and detect reductions in local suicide attempts and deaths after two years.

Some of the programs being rolled out include Question Persuade Refer (QPR) which involves training targeted at the general community and Youth Aware of Mental Health (YAM) a program for year nine students. Advanced Training in Suicide Prevention (ATSP) for GPs, psychologist and other medical professionals will also be rolled out alongside Mindframe Plus, targeted at the local media.

Image above: The LifeSpan Collective members meeting with representatives from Black Dog Institute

Murrumbidgee Suicide Prevention Program

The Murrumbidgee Suicide Prevention Program consists of a multi-faceted approach delivered across the region by Wellways Australia.

The Way Back Support Service was officially launched in February by Senator the Hon. Bridget McKenzie. The service is a program developed by beyondblue, providing intensive support in the three months following a suicide attempt when a person is most at risk.

Wellways Australia also works with communities across the Murrumbidgee to develop and implement post suicide support strategies. This program aims to empower each community while ensuring there is support to implement strategies in the event of a suicide death.

The final element of the program allows for the facilitation of community based suicide prevention, which includes awareness and education initiatives.

Image below: Georgie Harman, beyondblue Chief Executive Officer; Gavin Bussenschutt, Wellways General Manager ACT and NSW; Hon Michael McCormack MP; Senator the Hon Bridget McKenzie; Laura Collister, Wellways Australia Director of Mental Health Services Research and Development; and Melissa Neal, MPHNS CEO

Partners in Recovery

Partners in Recovery (PIR) offers support to people experiencing severe and persistent mental illness with complex needs. This is a non-clinical care coordination model.

PIR has been supporting clients to test eligibility for the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) since transition commenced in the Murrumbidgee on 1 July 2017. As part of transitional arrangements with the Department of Health, PIR support facilitators provide information and guidance to consumers and carers about the scheme's access process. This includes assistance with the initial call to the National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA), and sourcing the required documentation to prove eligibility. If found eligible, PIR provides support coordination under the scheme. Support coordination helps build capacity, assisting the participant to implement their plan using informal, mainstream, community and funded supports.

This has been a time of growth for the PIR team and demand for the service has been high across the Murrumbidgee, particularly for Cootamundra and Young. To meet demand, an additional NDIS transition officer has been employed and is based in Young.

Staff continue to provide support facilitation for clients who do not meet eligibility requirements, or chose not to access the NDIS.

Women's Wellness and Recovery Program

The Women's Wellness and Recovery Program was officially launched in Wagga Wagga in April by Deputy Prime Minister and Member for Riverina, the Hon. Michael McCormack. This \$1.6 million MPHNS funded program is delivered by Calvary Riverina Drug and Alcohol Centre to support pregnant women and/or women with children under five years who are experiencing alcohol and other drug (AOD) issues. This free service aims to improve the health and wellbeing of women and their children, providing counselling, referral and treatment which may include:

- midwifery support and antenatal assessment
- individual counselling
- access to AOD treatment services
- withdrawal support
- education and positive parenting
- referral and links to other service providers who can support treatment.

There is an open referral pathway to this outpatient based program enabling women to maintain family, community and social supports whilst engaged with the service.

Images above: Melissa Neal (MPHN CEO) with the Hon. Michael McCormack MP; Melissa Neal, Joe McGirr (University of Notre Dame) and Sue McAlpin (MPHN Board Chair) at the Women's Wellness and Recovery Program launch



The Way Back Support Service provides intensive support in the three months following a suicide attempt when a person is most at risk.

Access to after hours mental health support

In response to increasing GP type presentations to emergency departments and identified need for awareness of mental health support available in the after hours period, MPH N commissioned the commercial production firm, Juntos, to undertake market analysis and develop an commercial advertisement and social media campaign promoting access to mental health services, specifically in the after hours period. This initiative was managed by the Murrumbidgee Mental Health and Drug and Alcohol Alliance. The campaign's research driven tag line 'life doesn't always go according to plan' resonated with people across the region. The media campaign by the ran over 13 weeks, commencing in mid December and targeting the peak mental health risk periods of Christmas, New Year and return to school and study.

The campaign achieved significant improvements in the overall awareness of the targeted after hours mental health support services in the Murrumbidgee region. Comparing results of the pre and post evaluation survey, there was a 66 per cent increase in awareness of phone support services, 59 per cent increase in awareness of other relevant support services and a 241 per cent increase of awareness of MPH N's dedicated Murrumbidgee Accessline. The social media components of the communications campaign reached more than 191,000 of the total 241,487 people in the Murrumbidgee region. The television commercial was viewed in full on social media more than 12,900 times, and post engagement was strong.

Image below: Juntos campaign artwork

The campaign achieved significant improvements in the overall awareness of the targeted after hours mental health support services in the Murrumbidgee region.



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It's nice to know that I'm not the only one that feels like this.

After hours support for Murrumbidgee women

Access to after hours crisis services for women in the community is limited, especially for those experiencing forms of violence including domestic violence, sexual assault and relationship issues.

In response, MPH N has funded the Wagga Women's Health Centre to extend its capacity to deliver counselling services and support in the after hours period including evenings, weekends and public holidays. Services can be accessed face to face or via telehealth.

A number of women accessing the extended service have provided feedback such as:

"Thank you, I was thinking I was going nuts but I now feel heard."

"So glad you are open on the weekend. I come here to reduce my social isolation on weekends."

"it's great I know I can come and work on what I need to achieve."

"it's nice to know that I'm not the only one that feels like this."

Images above: Gail Meyer and Julie Mecham from Wagga Women's Health Centre, Wagga Women's Health Centre sculpture



POPULATION HEALTH

Murrumbidgee Lifestyle and Weight Management Program

The Murrumbidgee Lifestyle and Weight Management Program is a multi component service delivered in 15 general practices across our region. The program responds to findings that Murrumbidgee has the highest rates of obesity related hospital admissions in New South Wales.

The program was co-designed locally and uses nutritional, physical activity and psychological levers to support patients on their journey to an improved sense of health and wellness. GPs and staff are supported by a dietitian and a health coach, while workshops are held regularly to bring together communities of practice.

Program delivery commenced May 2017 and has been extended to June 2019. To date, 556 patients have been enrolled in the program. Charles Sturt University is evaluating the program and early findings show positive trends for both wellness and weight loss.

"Working with the team from MPH and LiveBetter to design a general practice healthy lifestyle project helped with some great skills," said Dr Jodi Culbert from Peter St Medical Centre. "Not only to know and tell patients about the changes they might need to make, but to find new ways to help motivate patients to take action and make meaningful change."

Image below: Weight Management Sustainability Workshop



Wagga GP After Hours Service celebrating 15 years

In March this year, the Wagga GP After Hours Service celebrated 15 years of service. Over this time the WGPAAHS has provided more than 100,000 patient consultations with most of these delivered face to face from the clinic in Morgan Street. GPs also provide an after hours visiting service to aged care facilities.

"For the local community and visitors to our town, this continues to be an important service," said Chair of the Service Associate Professor Ayman Shenouda.

Forty-nine GPs from 12 general practices currently staff the clinic on a rotating roster. During the last 12-months there has been 5,318 patient consultations provided in the clinic and 319 home visits.

Image above: Celebrating 15 years of the Wagga GP After Hours Service

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Working with the team from MPH and LiveBetter to design a general practice healthy lifestyle project helped with some great skills. Not only to know and tell patients about the changes they might need to make, but to find new ways to help motivate patients to take action and make meaningful change.

Integrated Care Coordination

Integrated Care Coordination (ICC) is an Aboriginal health program assisting patients with chronic disease to manage their complex healthcare needs, and reduce unplanned hospital admissions. ICC is delivered locally by Marathon Health.

A care coordinator works collaboratively with patients and carers using a team-based approach to establish a care plan, documenting health issues, setting personal goals for wellness, and assisting the patient to effectively navigate the health system. Coordinators facilitate case conferencing with the patient's GP, liaise with other local service providers and provide assistance with health literacy support and smoking caseation.

Care coordinators are located in 30 communities across the Murrumbidgee. Marathon Health works closely with MLHD under the Integrated Care Strategy to ensure care coordination services are available to clients across the region.

Greater Choice for At Home Palliative Care Program

MPHN is one of 11 PHNs across Australia to receive funding for the Greater Choice for At Home Palliative Care Program, to be implemented over the next two years. The program aims to reduce unnecessary hospitalisations by improving access to palliative care services at home. An area of focus will be to establish a multidisciplinary approach across six communities, which includes the use of telehealth. The local community will also be mobilised to complement primary health services using the 'Compassionate Communities' framework. In the April quarter of 2018 a project steering committee was formed with key stakeholders.

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Your work and passion drives very real change... I now have a daughter traditionally totally averse to all things green, particularly lettuce, now requesting san choy bow be on the regular weekly family menu.

Integrated allied health services

MPHN has continued to support access to high quality allied health services in rural and remote communities across the Murrumbidgee with 9,503 occasions of service delivered in 2016-17. Barefoot Lifestyle is one such provider.

This year Barefoot Lifestyle was the first dietetics/nutrition provider in Australia to achieve voluntary accreditation through the Quality Performance Innovation (QIP) against the National Safety and Quality Health Service (NSQHS) Standards. This group of dieticians offer simple, evidence based nutrition and healthy lifestyle counselling, impacting not only the client but extended family members as well. As one client stated, "your work and passion drives very real change. I now have a daughter traditionally totally averse to all things green, particularly lettuce, now requesting san choy bow be on the regular weekly family menu, and a partner who thought every meal has to overflow with food and meat. I have lost measurements across my waist, and am consuming less caffeine with increased energy levels."

Image below: Daniel Thompson, Barefoot Lifestyle



Vitality Passport

Vitality Passport is a lifestyle program aimed at reducing or halting the progression of frailty in older people through improved nutrition, physical activity, social interaction and cognitive functioning. The program has been delivered by Back On Track Physiotherapy since early 2016. By January 2018 referrals had been expanded beyond general practice to allied health practitioners, with a total of 700 referrals received by June 2018.

The Vitality Passport program continues to attract fantastic feedback and results. Back On Track Physiotherapy Principal, Jeremy Carr is extremely grateful for the opportunity to assist community members with the project. He recalls the story of a patient named Angela, who when referred into the program showed a very low frailty score. One of her goals was to walk around the house again. On discharge, Angela achieved this and more, stating that the program helped her “get her independence back”. Angela continues to report in with the Vitality Passport team with achievements such as “walking down to the shops”. The improvement in participants extends beyond frailty, helping clients to stay socially connected with other participants through group led activities.

In the interim evaluation report from the University of Notre Dame, results from the patient satisfaction surveys showed positive outcomes with more than 25 per cent of participants indicating the program delivered more than they expected. Between 75 and 90 per cent of participants agreed that their quality of life and overall health had improved, with better physical function, ease of socialising and less fear of falling all a result of the program.

Image below: Participants from a Berrigan run program

Parkinson's Support Nurse Service

The Parkinson's Support Nurse Service (PSNS) is an MPHND funded program delivered by MLHD. It is commissioned to support people diagnosed with Parkinson's disease, their family and carers to understand the condition, and assist with self-management and navigation of the health system. Activities include linking GPs with specialists and allied health professionals, and conducting nurse assessments and care coordination activities. The service also coordinates education sessions for GPs with Parkinson's specialists and advocates for people living with the disease.

Over the last year the service has received 117 new referrals and delivered more than a thousand occasions of service. To date, Parkinson's support groups have been established in Cootamundra, Temora, West Wyalong, Griffith and Wagga Wagga and the nurse provides ongoing support and advice to the groups.

Client John Lynch is currently living with Parkinson's disease and said the service hugely benefited him. “When I first found out about my diagnosis, I was really depressed,” he said. “Kate helped me get over my depression. She is always there for advice from the Parkinson's Institute, and Parkinson's website and holds regular meetings at West Wyalong. She is always ready on the end of the telephone, keeps close contact with patients and give me positive motivation.”

Image below: Professor Simon Lewis, Professor of Cognitive Neuroscience, University of Sydney, presenting at Wagga Wagga Parkinson's Support Group Education Day.



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This forum has been very much needed from my point of view and very valuable for me in my practice - great day!

Wagga GP telehealth pilot into RACFs

The GP telehealth pilot was established in Wagga Wagga in February 2017 to enable telehealth consultations between general practitioners and patients in Residential Aged Care Facilities (RACFs)

The pilot aims to improve timely access to primary care by residents during business hours, reducing the potential for escalation of symptoms requiring urgent medical care, and reducing presentations to hospital.

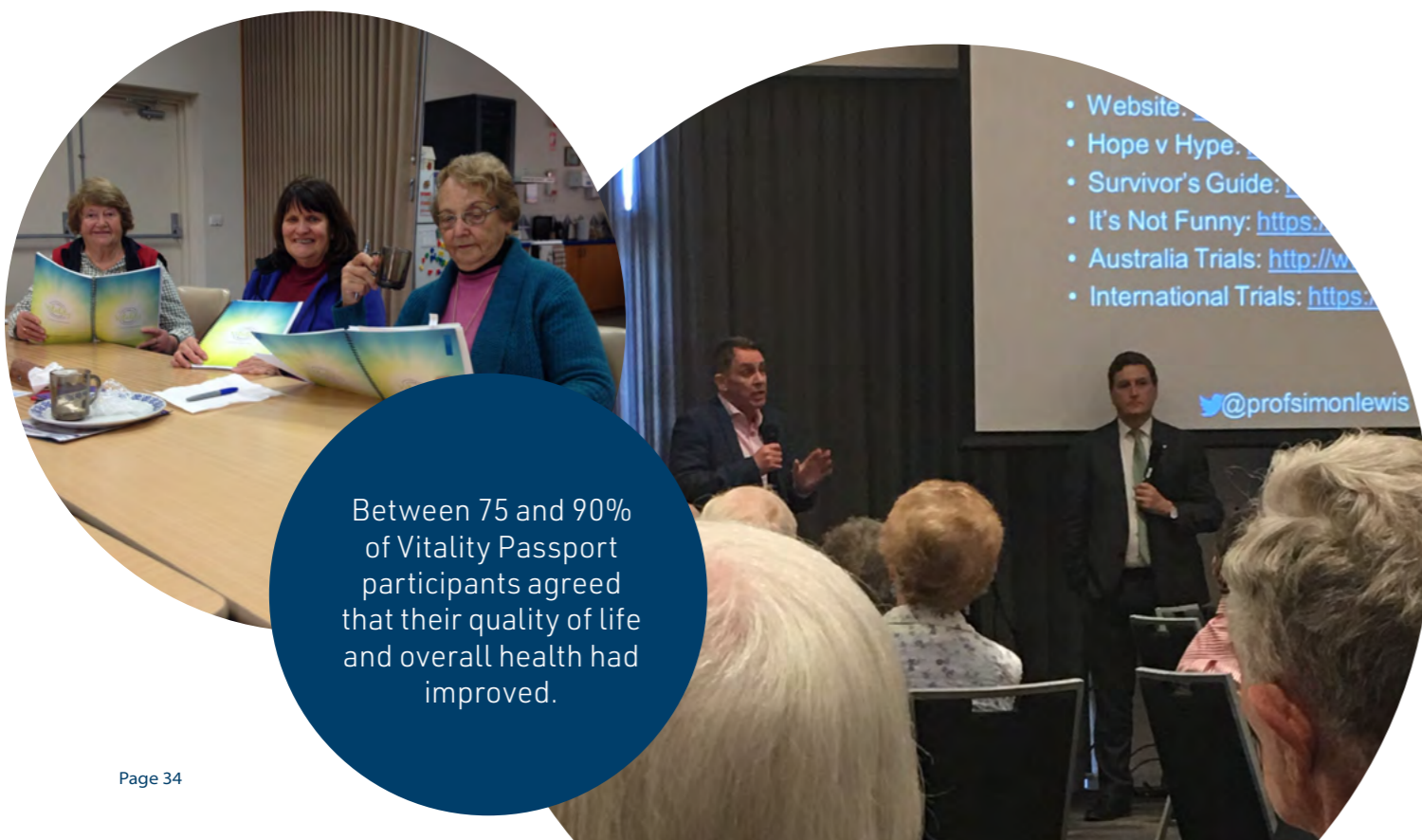
Four general practices and all Wagga Wagga based RACFs participated the pilot in response to an expression of interest. The pilot was rolled out in February 2017 with 142 primary health consultations up until June 2018. Feedback indicates the telehealth consultations were sufficient, equal or better than face to face and that telehealth had enabled them to address issues in a timely manner that otherwise may have resulted in a hospital transfer.

Images below: Amanda Crouch (RN), supporting Clare Hall during a telehealth consult; Dr Azab providing a telehealth consult to Clare from Gumleigh Gardens

Murrumbidgee Aged Care Consortium

The Murrumbidgee Aged Care Consortium facilitated an Aged Health Forum in Griffith this year, focusing on the older persons' mental health. This included how health problems, age related changes and loss can affect mental health. More than 75 health professionals working in aged care across the Murrumbidgee attended, learning about mental health conditions like psychosis and major depressive disorder, while referral pathways and the Lifespan suicide prevention program were studied. The day was a great success, with one participant stating, “this forum has been very much needed from my point of view and very valuable for me in my practice - great day.”

Images above: Robyn Bryon (Aged Care Service Emergency Team Clinical Nurse Consultant, Wagga Wagga Rural Referral Hospital) and Alison Bradney, Practice Nurse, KRS Health; Aged Care Forum in Griffith



Between 75 and 90% of Vitality Passport participants agreed that their quality of life and overall health had improved.

ABORIGINAL HEALTH

The Integrated Team Care (ITC) program seeks to improve health outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with chronic disease.



Integrated Team Care

The Integrated Team Care (ITC) program seeks to improve health outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with chronic disease through access to care coordination, multidisciplinary care and support for self-management. It also aims to improve access to culturally appropriate mainstream primary care services.

The program is offered by Aboriginal Medical Services (AMS) delivered by a consortium of RivMed, and in mainstream general practice delivered by Marathon Health. Support delivered includes care coordination, outreach services, and financial aid to facilitate appointments with specialists and allied health (including transport and accommodation) and the purchase of medical aids.

The program has a broad reach and contributes to improving health outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people across the region.

Image above: Members of the RivMed ITC Team: (from left) Annika Honeysett (Outreach Worker), Michelle Little (Care Coordinator) and Melinda Green (Indigenous Health Project Officer).

Red Dust Healing workshop

Red Dust Healing uses an ancient Aboriginal perspective to support individuals to explore and heal unresolved hurt, anger, grief, loss and issues in their lives.

One hundred people from across the Murrumbidgee attended the Red Dust Healing workshop facilitated by Tom Powell, founder of Red Dust Healing. The workshops use practical tools to address feelings of hurt, rejection and loss, targeted at the heart and not the head.

Following the one day workshop, Tom commenced an intensive six day 'train the trainer' workshop with 11 people including staff from each AMS located in the Murrumbidgee. Investing in the 'train the trainer' component of Red Dust Healing has ensured the one day workshops can be held into the future, all the while benefitting more community members.

Aboriginal cancer screening

In 2016, the Aboriginal Health Consortium identified four priority areas in the Murrumbidgee Aboriginal Health Plan, including strategies to increase Aboriginal participation in the bowel, breast and cervical cancer screening programs. A small working party developed the script for a 30 second commercial and an animator was contracted to develop a television advertisement. A local Aboriginal man agreed to provide the voice over. The commercial has been running on three commercial television stations across the Murrumbidgee since March 2018. Screening rates are being monitored for the period of the intervention to measure impact.

The journey not the destination

We are committed to the health and wellbeing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People across the Murrumbidgee. A skilled mental health workforce is central to ensuring service access is timely and effective. MPHNS has offered two scholarships through local AMSs to subsidise local Aboriginal people to study a Bachelor of Health Science in Mental Health offered by Charles Sturt University.

One scholarship recipient said "I was born and raised in Canberra but all my mob is from the Tweed Heads area. I am a proud Bundjalung man," he said. "Soon after college I went to work in a few different government departments in the public service but ultimately found the work unfulfilling and discovered it wasn't for me.

"I moved to Wagga and soon after I got a job as a receptionist at the local Aboriginal Medical Centre. An opportunity to study a Bachelor of Health Science came up and I decided to grab it with both hands. I am proud to be the first person in my family to attend University.

"The discipline and hard work required has been a real eye opener.

"This traineeship has been great because it has given me real life experiences that I can call on when doing my theory work for assessments.

"I am extremely grateful to MPHNS for allowing me to undertake studies that allows me to work in a field that I have a passion for and ultimately affords me the ability to help people that are suffering with a mental illness."

“ ”

I moved to Wagga and soon after I got a job as a receptionist at the local Aboriginal Medical Centre. An opportunity to study a Bachelor of Health Science came up and I decided to grab it with both hands. I am proud to be the first person in my family to attend University.



“ ”
 Revenue from funders has increased by 22% from the prior year to \$18.9m, which has all been applied for the provision of services throughout the Murrumbidgee, in accordance with the funding agreements.

I'm pleased to present the highlights of the 2017-18 financial report for Firsthealth Limited.

The company's major activity remains the conduct of MPHNS under contract with the Australian Government Department of Health. This contract requires services be delivered through commissioned providers. The company also delivers some health-related services directly and under separate contracts.

Revenue from funders has increased by 22 per cent from the prior year to \$18.9 million, which has all been applied for the provision of services throughout the Murrumbidgee, in accordance with the funding agreements.

Commissioning in 2017-18 utilised 65 per cent of revenue from funders, compared to 56 per cent in the prior year. This can be expected to continue to increase.

At 30 June 2018, the company held an additional \$6.9 million in hand to fund future services. Significant effort has been undertaken during the year to address delays in achieving service delivery, while maintaining the effectiveness of services provided.

Please refer to the graphics on the next page showing the sources and applications of funding.

The company operates on a not-for-profit basis and is precluded from making any profit on government funded services. In 2017-18 the company incurred a loss of \$52,805 largely due to employment termination expenses which are not underwritten by the Department of Health.

Full financial statements are available on the company's website. I particularly draw your attention to Note 1 Basis of Preparation, Note 2 Summary of Significant Accounting Policies, and Note 3 Critical Accounting Estimates and Judgements.

David Friedlieb

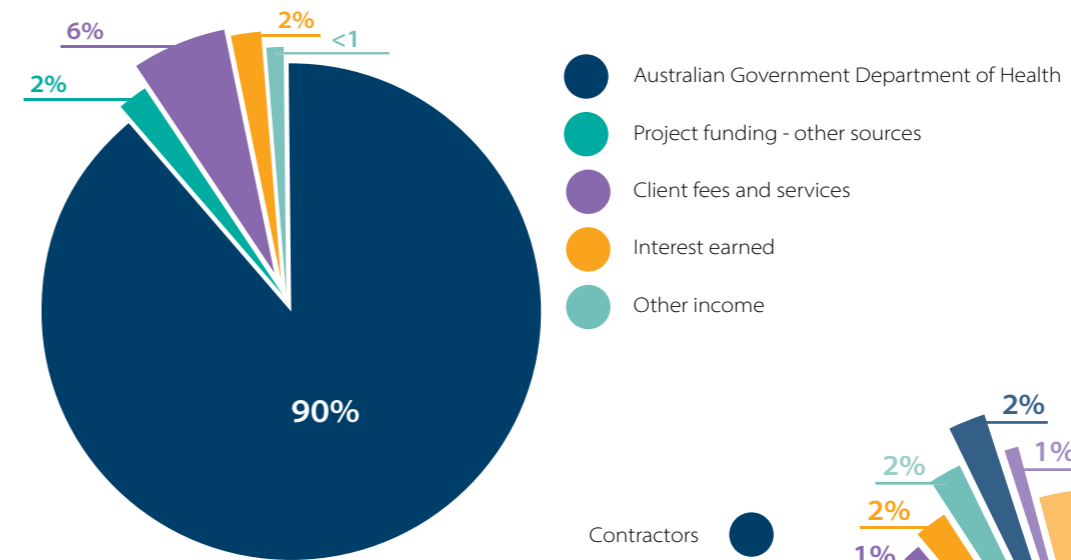
The financial statements and notes have been compiled in accordance with Australian Accounting Standards and the Corporations Act 2001.

Full financial statements are available at www.mphn.org.au/mphn-reports

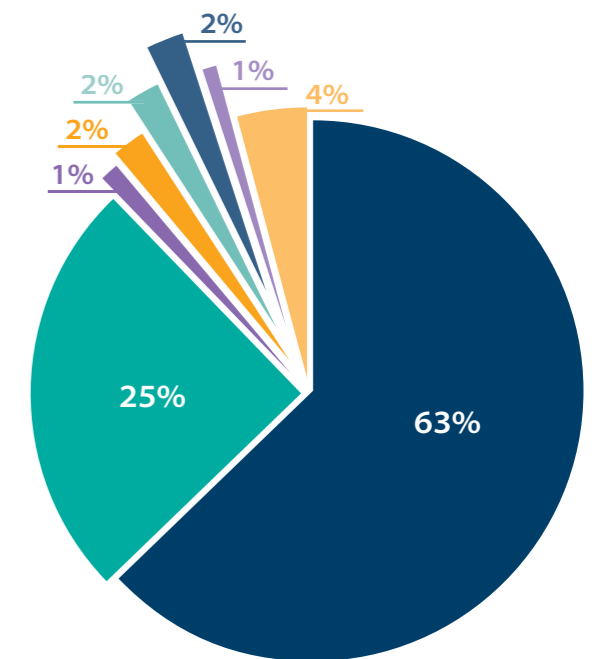
TREASURER'S REPORT

REVENUE

Source	2017-2018	2016-2017
Australian Government Department of Health	\$17,508,407.45	\$14,800,496.34
Project funding – other sources	\$1,181,623.72	\$521,539.24
Client fees and services	\$389,047.45	\$575,710.19
Interest earned	\$320,991.20	\$253,003.26
Other income	\$88,315.18	\$157,728.97
Total	\$19,488,385.00	\$16,308,478.00



- Contractors
- Employment costs
- Board and committee costs
- GP payments
- Occupancy costs
- Communications
- Motor vehicle expenses
- Other expenses



EXPENSES

Source	2017-2018	2016-2017
Contractors	\$12,361,842.66	\$8,788,313.66
Employment costs	\$4,961,357.47	\$5,320,863.72
Board and committee costs	\$226,559.84	\$184,061.67
GP payments	\$345,197.11	\$386,512.23
Occupancy costs	\$352,299.46	\$405,053.59
Communications	\$436,854.35	\$337,922.06
Motor vehicle expenses	\$75,590.80	\$132,926.12
Other expenses	\$781,488.31	\$699,878.95
Total	\$19,541,190.00	\$16,255,532.00

COMMISSIONED PROVIDERS

Adelong Batlow LHAC	Griffith Aboriginal Medical Service	Narrandera Chemmart Pharmacy
Amcalf Max Griffith	Griffith LHAC	Narrandera GP Management
Australian National University	Griffith Medical Centre	Narrandera LHAC
Back On Track Physiotherapy	Gundagai LHAC	Pamela Ling
Balance-up Nutrition	Gundagai Medical Centre	Peter Street Medical Centre
Barham and District Medical Centre (Ochre Health)	Gundagai Pharmacy	Priceline Pharmacy Griffith
Barham LHAC	Harden Pharmacy	Rao Medical Centre
Berrigan LHAC	Hay Medical Centre	Relationships Australia
Berrigan Medical Centre	Henty LHAC	Riverina Medical and Dental Aboriginal Corporation
Berrigan Pharmacy	Holbrook LHAC	Riverina Paediatrics
Best St Physiotherapy	Ingrained Nutrition	Roths Corner Medical Centre
Beyond Blue	Intereach Limited	Royal Far West
Black Dog Institute	Jerilderie Medical Centre	Shepparton Foot Clinic
Blamey Street Surgery	Jerilderie Pharmacy	Shiloh Medical Practice
Bland Medical Centre	Junee LHAC	SoPhysio Health
Blooms The Chemist Griffith	Junee Medical Centre	SouthCity Pharmacy
Boorowa Pharmacy	Juntos Marketing Pty Ltd	St George Family Medical Centre
Boorowa Street Medical Practice	Karralika Programs Incorporated	St Mary Pharmacy
Border Dietetics	Kincaid Medical & Dental Centre	Swan Hill District Health
Calvary healthcare Riverina	Kookora Surgery	Taylor-made Diabetes Education
CBT Institute	Koorringal Medical Centre	Temora Capital Chemist
Centacare South West NSW	Koorringal Pharmacy	Temora Medical Centre
Charles Sturt University	KRS Health Family Medical Practice	Temora Podiatry
Close Narrandera Pharmacy	Lake Cargelligo Family Practice	The Bush Chemist Tumut
Connection Medical Centre	Lakeside Medical Centre	The Bush Chemist Young
Coolamon-Ganmain LHAC	Laming Flat Enterprises	The Lung Foundation
Cootamundra Medical Centre	Leeton Family Clinic	Lives Lived Well
Corowa Medical Centre	Leeton Medical Centre	Tocumwal LHAC
Corowa Mediclinic	Leeton Medical Practice	Trail Street Medical Centre
Culcairn LHAC	LiveBetter	Tristar Allied Health
Culcairn Pharmacy	Lockhart LHAC	Tumbarumba Medical Practice
Deniliquin Clinic	Lockhart Medical Practice	Tumut Family Medical Centre
Deniliquin LHAC	Marathon Health Limited	Tumut Pharmacy
Deniliquin Medical Centre (Ochre Health)	Martin Alster	University of Notre Dame Australia
Directions Health	MediCoach	Urana LHAC
Dr Mary Freeman	Megan English	Urana Pharmacy
Drive thru Pharmacy	Melbourne Primary Care Network	Vincent Fernon Pty Ltd
Echuca Moama Family Medical Practice	Michael O'Reilly Pharmacy	Wagga Foot Clinic
Eric Sim Pharmacy	Moama Village Pharmacy	Wagga Wagga Medical Centre
Finley Medical Centre	Morgan Street Healthcare Clinic	Wagga Women's Health Centre Inc
Fitzroy Medical Centre	Moulamein LHAC	Walla Walla Pharmacy
Flourish Australia Services	Murrumbidgee Local Health District	Wellways Australia
Footsteps Podiatry	Murrumbidgee Medical and Primary Care	West Wyalong Medical Centre
Glenrock Country Practice	Murrumbidgee Nutrition	Young District Medical Centre
Grand Pacific Health Limited	Murrumburrah Harden	Young LHAC
	Murrumburrah Harden LHAC	Your Health Griffith

Murrumbidgee Primary Health Network gratefully acknowledges the financial and other support from the Australian Government Department of Health. The Primary Health Networks Programme is an Australian Government Initiative.

While the Australian Government Department of Health has contributed to the funding of this material, the information contained in it does not necessarily reflect the views of the Australian Government and is not advice that is provided, or information that is endorsed by, the Australian Government. The Australian Government is not liable in negligence or otherwise for any injury, loss or damage however arising from the use of or reliance on the information provided in this material.



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