Royal Prince Alfred and Canterbury hospitals have been accredited by the World Health Organisation for the standard of support provided to breastfeeding mothers.

Sydney is one of only two local health districts in NSW to be granted the Baby Friendly Health Initiative status, a credit to staff across both hospitals.

Babies who are breastfed are less likely to suffer from infectious illness and a large number of acute and chronic diseases including diabetes, lymphoma, obesity, high blood pressure, heart disease and respiratory infections. Mothers who breastfeed are at lower risk of developing certain cancers and may be at reduced risk of diabetes, cardiovascular disease and osteoporosis.

These health outcomes significantly reduce the burden placed on the nation’s health system.

In a Baby Friendly accredited hospital, breastfeeding is encouraged, supported and promoted.

Women and babies are kept skin to skin after birth even if they are born in operating theatres. Babies are not given formula, dummies or teats unless medically indicated or it is the mother’s choice. A mother’s informed choice of feeding is encouraged and respected and mothers who decide to artificially feed their babies are given individual support to correctly prepare the formula and safely feed their babies.

It is challenging to achieve and maintain this accreditation and requires commitment from all levels of clinical care and management, with a whole of facility approach needed to be successful. Emergency, paediatrics, operating theatres and recovery are all involved in providing a mother and baby friendly environment.

There is a focus on education and training of all staff according to their level of interaction with mothers and their babies. This includes medical, midwifery, nursing, allied health staff, porters, domestic and clerical staff.

In this way anyone who comes in contact with mothers and babies has increased level of knowledge of infant feeding, greater skills and commitment to support breastfeeding. Breastfeeding women who access the service with an unrelated health issue are also supported to continue to breastfeed.
The past year has been a remarkable time of growth and development for Sydney Local Health District.

We have enhanced the way we provide care and services by opening extraordinary new buildings, but also by developing innovative new systems which fundamentally change the way we do business.

One of these is HealthPathways, which helps clinicians guide patients through local primary, community and secondary health care systems.

This and many other achievements were showcased at the second annual Sydney Innovation and Research Symposium, where more than 500 delegates came to hear from 50 of the finest innovation and research speakers.

To encourage and nurture the next generation of innovations, we launched The Pitch event series this year, which challenges staff members to submit their ideas to improve the way we operate, with $50,000 worth of funding on offer.

The strength of our partnership with the University of Sydney was realised in the opening of the new Charles Perkins Centre, where some of the District’s finest clinicians will work closely with researchers.

The expansion of our Hospital in the Home service and relaunch of Sydney District Nursing provides specific types of acute care without hospital admission for more patients.

I am incredibly proud of everything we have achieved this year, as each and every one of our District staff, board members and volunteers should be. May you all have a very merry Christmas.

Here we are at the end of another year. And what a year it has been.

Sydney Local Health District is the best performing health district in NSW again this year – that’s the third year running.

In the past few months we have refreshed the District’s Strategic Plan – with input from staff and the board. It has been very satisfying to have achieved our goals ahead of time and to be able to sit down and identify further strategies to improve our health service and patient outcomes. We also produced strategic plans for research, education and training, community participation and sexual health.

We have launched our patient centre care programs throughout our hospitals and services, and held our inaugural consumer conference to ensure our services are meeting the community’s ever evolving needs.

We’ve had a very busy year in our capital works program with the completion of the $67 million Professor Marie Bashir Centre at RPA. The new 73-bed centre is unlike any mental health centre in the world and we should all be very proud to be part of such a magnificent project.

We also finished the beautiful Concord Centre for Palliative Care, the Survivorship Centre and the high volume short stay unit at Canterbury.

Finally, I would like to say thank you. Thank you to each and every person who has made this District the leader it is. I wish you a wonderful Christmas and New Year with those you love.
Sydney Dental Hospital’s Dr Russell Lain has a job that is rewarding yet challenging.

As a forensic odontologist, he has helped recover long lost soldiers, convict dangerous criminals, unravel historic mysteries and provide precious solace to thousands of grief stricken families.

He has been deployed to scenes of mass destruction and despair including the aftermath of the Bali bombings and the 2004 tsunami, and helped the identification operation after flight MH17 was shot down over Ukraine.

Dr Lain was drawn to this specialty at the age of 40, largely because there was no profit motive and it presented opportunities to volunteer services that only dentists could provide.

At the same time, he joined the Royal Australian Navy Reserve, which led to his long association with the Unrecovered War Casualties – Army group.

He helped recover an unknown sailor, whose remains washed ashore on Christmas Island after HMAS Sydney was sunk by a German auxiliary cruiser in 1941, and his most recent mission took him to a deserted island off Arnhem Land in search a sailor whose ship was sunk during the Japanese attack on Darwin in 1943.

“Unfortunately all we found was crocodile trails, turtles and fishing gear, so it was very disappointing, principally for the family of the missing sailor” he said.

While he finds the work rewarding, he acknowledges it isn’t for everyone.

“It’s a great contribution to society, both to families of missing persons and the criminal justice system, so that feels good,” he said. “I’m sure the work has had a toll on my personal life. There’s no doubt about that. If I never have to see another deceased person in my life, I’d be quite comfortable with that.”

Dr Lain is one of just 25 specialist Forensic Odontologists in Australia but insists that he is “just a dentist”. “All we do is generate and compare the ante-mortem dental chart with the post mortem record. It’s not rocket science but it is very important. It has been said that the measure of a society is the way they treat their dead, so identification needs to happen with care and respect.”
New control centre

Sydney Local Health District has strengthened its reputation as a research powerhouse with the launch of the Sydney Local Health District Clinical Research Centre.

The Director of Research, Professor Warwick Britton, said the new centre would strengthen and support the District’s vast network of hospital-based, community or primary care researchers.

“Sydney Local Health District has more than 79 departments involved in research, with over 300 clinical trials underway, publishing more than 600 journals annually. Last year alone the Ethics Offices at Concord and RPA received over 1000 applications,” Professor Britton said.

“The new centre will provide support for the business aspects of research, biostatistical and data management advice, training in clinical research methods, research mentoring, grant administration, and improved access to facilities and infrastructure for research.”

Professor Britton said the importance of operational research in improving health outcomes is widely recognised and the CRC will contribute to this in a practical way in SLHD.

The CRC has conducted five training courses in the first six months attended by over 300 people and several more courses are planned for 2015.

“The appointment of a business manager, biostatistician and a data manager and a dedicated clinical trials project officer will ensure that all researchers across the District have the assistance they need to progress our vision to be the leading research precinct in NSW, Australia and the world,” Professor Britton said.

For more information please contact the CRC at slhd.research@sswahs.nsw.gov.au or http://www.slhd.nsw.gov.au/research/

Cutting edge research online

The launch of the Clinical Research Centre coincided with the launch of a new Sydney Local Health District Research website.

Designed with the local and wider community in mind, the site is a comprehensive site filled with insightful information. Its purpose is to promote and display the District’s research and researchers, but also to provide a one stop shop for researchers to access support.

Features include researcher profiles, a database of clinical trial studies, links to our ethics offices and publications, training opportunities and a booking system for the biostatistician and data Manager.
District Highlights

DECEMBER 2014–FEBRUARY 2015

World-class centre opens

The first patients have moved into our spectacular new 73-bed mental health centre at Royal Prince Alfred Hospital, providing a unique opportunity to bring together the world’s best mental health practice and cutting-edge research to benefit the people of NSW.

Named The Professor Marie Bashir Centre, the $67 million building is a joint initiative of the NSW Government, Sydney Local Health District and the University of Sydney.

The six-storey centre was officially opened by the Premier, Mike Baird, NSW Minister for Health Jillian Skinner, NSW Minister for Mental Health Jai Rowell, and former governor and patron, Dame Marie Bashir.

The centre features a six-bed short stay unit, an assessment unit, physical therapies suite, acute adult inpatient services, with capacity to manage mothers and babies in a defined pod, and a high dependency unit. It also houses the state’s eating disorder services under the one roof for the first time, and provides seven University of Sydney beds dedicated to translational research.

Purpose built to provide a contemporary, warm environment featuring wall murals, sensory displays, a roof top garden, barbecue and break out areas “it is a mental health facility like no other”, Sydney Local Health District’s Director of Mental Health Services Associate Professor Victor Storm said.

The building has been named in honour of one of the District’s most significant champions for mental health, and a much loved member of the RPA and University of Sydney families.

One home for eating disorders

The Professor Marie Bashir Centre will also play host to new centre for excellence in eating disorder treatment, training and research, with services coming under the same roof for the first time.

The new building will provide a new home for the Peter Beaumont Eating Disorder Tertiary Unit comprising a nine-bed specialist ward for patients from across NSW suffering from severe eating disorders; an intensive eating disorder day program with eight places providing ongoing high-level care for patients transitioning from hospital or requiring more than community based treatment; and a specialist assessment and treatment outpatient clinic.

In addition, the NSW peak policy, training, development body, the Centre for Eating and Dieting Disorders (www.cedd.org.au) will also take up residence alongside the tertiary service.

The NSW Eating Disorder Coordinator and Director of the Centre for Eating and Dieting Disorders, Dr Sarah Maguire, said the building represented the first material home for eating disorders in NSW.

“It represents the leadership and commitment to this illness group by Sydney Local Health District, who are first in responding to the new policy landscape for eating disorders which places them within the core business of the health system in NSW.

“This new home will bring together the previously dispersed services for people with eating disorders, expand those services, and provide clinical excellence, outreach and training across the state,” she said.

“What the synergies provided by having all services, research staff, and the Centre for Eating and Dieting Disorders housed in the one facility will lead to new collaborations, better services for clients and exciting new research agendas.”

Dame Marie Bashir cutting the ribbon to open the new centre.
**UPDATE**

**Aboriginal Health**

The goal of the Aboriginal Tobacco Control Project is to reduce smoking rates in the Aboriginal community by five per cent by 2015. A Quit smoking group commenced at AMS Redfern on 30 October and is facilitated by health promotion staff. Currently the project is in the final stages and evaluation process has commenced. This includes focus group and in-depth interviews with key stakeholders and community surveys to assess recall of the campaign messages and smoking levels.

The project won two awards at the NSW Aboriginal Health Awards 2014 held in November in ‘Building trust through partnerships’ category and the ‘Minister for Health’ Award. Representatives from each partner agency accepted the awards.

A state-wide funded Quit for New Life program aims to reduce smoking in Aboriginal pregnant women by two per cent. An Aboriginal Cessation Advisor is employed by Health Promotion to assist pregnant women and household members to quit smoking.

**Centre for Education and Workforce Development**

Last month the Centre for Education and Workforce Development conducted a graduation ceremony for clinical coding staff working across NSW Health.

This was the culmination of two years of work implemented as a statewide initiative to grow and develop the clinical coding workforce. The importance of this initiative is critically linked to Activity Based Funding. Accurately coded clinical data mean more funding for our hospitals and community.

The Certificate III in Health Administration program has been particularly successful with 32 trainees (97 per cent of enrolled participants) expected to qualify by 6 November. At least 65 per cent of them have already been employed in permanent jobs, much earlier than the end of their formal traineeship in April 2015.

The Certificate IV in Health Administration program for existing clinical coders attracted 101 enrolments. Sixty two of them will qualify by 6 November. The remaining participants will have the opportunity to complete their training by the end of December.

**District shines in staff survey**

**Sydney Local Health District has shone in the recent People Matters Employee Survey with an overwhelming percentage of respondents feeling they have fair access to success within the organisation.**

The survey also showed a strong agreement that staff members always treat members of the public with respect.

The District was rated significantly higher than the NSW average for staff feeling informed, heard and supported with access to learning and development.

Staff were also significantly more confident than their statewide counterparts that the District is committed to developing its employees.

The Chief Executive, Dr Teresa Anderson, said she was pleased but not at all surprised by these positive insights.

“At Sydney Local Health District, we know that our people, their skill, dedication and ingenuity, are our greatest resources,” Dr Anderson said. “Fostering the growth and development of our staff members is not only the right thing to do, but it is a crucial investment for the continued success of the District.”

Compared to colleagues working throughout NSW Health, District employees showed a far greater sense of job security and confidence that senior managers provide clear direction for the future of the organisation.

Since the 2012 People Matters Survey, the District has achieved marked improvement in staff satisfaction regarding the benefits they receive, practical employment arrangements to help employees achieve a work-life balance, and with the public sector’s level of innovation generally.
Midwife with the mostest

Royal Prince Alfred Hospital’s Aboriginal Liaison Midwife, Skye Parsons, who delivers culturally appropriate care to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women, was last month honoured at the NSW Awards for Excellence in Nursing and Midwifery.

Skye received the award for Excellence in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Care at a ceremony at Parliament House.

The NSW Minister for Health, Jillian Skinner, said it was an honour to present the 11 awards for a second year, with more than 150 nominations received from across the state.

“There are few professions more highly valued by the community than nursing and midwifery,” Mrs Skinner said.

Skye said she was touched by the nomination from her colleagues.

“It’s an incredible honour to receive this award. I’m very lucky to come into work every day and do something I’m passionate about, and know I’m making a difference to the local indigenous community by helping close the gap,” she said.

Skye also manages the successful Sister Alison Bush Scholarship program, which hopes to double its commitment this year by offering placements at RPA to two indigenous nurses or midwives in training.

Skye’s story received more than 11,000 views on the District’s Facebook page and more than 250 congratulatory comments. Her story was also shared by NITV’s Facebook page.

Partnership to host Aboriginal health forum

The Sydney Local Metropolitan Aboriginal Health Partnership will host a health forum next year to focus on the conditions in which we are born, grow, live, work and age.

The Aboriginal Social Determinants of Health forum, to be held on February 19, will look at closing the gap in life expectancy, child mortality and other aspects of health inequity between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Australians.

The Director Aboriginal Health for Sydney Local Health District, George Long, said the forum would draw important links in the planning of tailored services in metropolitan Sydney for Aboriginal people.

The event will feature keynote speakers including Professor Paul Torzillo, Professor Alex Brown and Professor John McDonald as well as in-depth workshops on eight social determinants of health such as early childhood, education, employment and housing.

The Sydney Local Metropolitan Aboriginal Health Partnership Agreement between Aboriginal Medical Service Redfern, Sydney Local Health District, Northern Sydney Local Health District, and South Eastern Sydney Local Health District was signed on 14 November 2011. The agreement was re-signed on 7 July 2014, to include St Vincent’s Hospital Sydney and The Sydney Children’s Hospital Network.

UPDATE

Drug Health

Concord Drug Health Services has recently completed a 12-month clinical redesign project through the Agency for Clinical Innovation. Staged implementation of the new program is planned to start before Christmas.

The goal is to offer flexible, accessible, integrated care for patients with complex physical, social or mental comorbidities related to substance use.

The reconfigured service will offer withdrawal management and post-withdrawal stabilisation. It is anticipated the new program will reduce unplanned hospital readmissions.

The capacity of the unit will increase, which will reduce the wait list for admission. Improved discharge planning and strengthened relationships with residential rehabilitation and community service providers will facilitate longer term treatment.

Drug Health Services coordinated an Aboriginal Drug and Alcohol Forum in partnership with the Aboriginal Medical Service in Redfern last month.

The day provides information from a range of speakers and used stories to explore current issues and identify strategies to address problems relating to drug and alcohol use in the Redfern and Waterloo area.

Mental Health

The SLHD Mental Health Service co-located general practitioner clinics at Marrickville and Redfern health centres continue to assess, screen and treat mental health consumers who do not currently have a GP. More than 130 mental health consumers were seen over the last year at these clinics. A previously run clinic at Croydon Health Centre is re-opening shortly. GP clinics run on a weekly basis and expressions of interest for further clinics at Camperdown and Canterbury community health centres are in circulation.

Given that mental health consumers with a significant and enduring mental illness have a life expectancy of 15 to 30 years less than the general population from physical health problems, linkage with a GP is a crucial factor in preventing early mortality.

In addition to the co-located clinics, the SLHD Mental Health Service is running a project to increase and improve collaborative care between the service and GPs.

For more information about referring to the GP co-located clinics, please contact Laura Garcelon (GP and Medicare Local Clinical Partnerships Coordinator) on 9378 1226.
Community Health

More than 100 participants attended the SLHD Women’s Health Forum on 24 November. The forum focussed on best practice responses to domestic violence and the needs of sub-populations affected by domestic violence (young people, Aboriginal people and people from culturally diverse backgrounds). One woman shared her story of the personal impact of domestic and family violence and the SLHD Domestic and Family Violence Health Pathways was launched at the event – supporting GP referral to services available.

World AIDS Awareness week was commemorated with a range of events in the Inner West. SLHD launched its new HIV Testing Policy and Procedures last month. This policy emphasises the importance of testing for HIV in all relevant service settings including hospital emergency departments, mental health and Drug Health Services. The policy will be supported by staff education and capacity building. A woman living with HIV shared her personal story at the launch.

Allied Health

In 2007 the Australian and New Zealand Burn Association Allied Health Forum released the guidelines Burn Survivor Rehabilitation: Principles and Guidelines for the Allied Health Professional. Following the success of these guidelines, the ANZBA Allied Health Group have been faced with the challenge of updating this resource and developing a document that will be user-friendly for clinicians working in the area of burn injury.

Allied Health staff from the Concord Burns Unit are pleased to announce the upcoming release of the book Burn Trauma Rehabilitation: Allied Health Practice Guidelines. Senior Allied Health staff from the Concord Burns Unit–Nicola Clayton (speech pathologist) Frank Li (physiotherapist) and Caroline Nicholls (dietitian) were key authors involved in the development and production of this multidisciplinary resource that has been published by Lippincott-Williams Wilkins in collaboration with the Joanna Briggs Institute and the Australian and New Zealand Burns Association.

The book provides burn, trauma unit and other allied healthcare providers with a resource to facilitate rehabilitation.

Aboriginal health awards for District

The Health Promotion Service at Sydney Local Health District has been recognised for its partnership program, The Aboriginal Tobacco Control Project, with two awards at the 2014 NSW Aboriginal Health Awards.

The project, known in the community as the “I Quit Because” project, was awarded the Building Trust Through Partnerships Award as well as receiving the Minister of Health Award.

A partnership between the Aboriginal Medical Service Redfern, Tharawal Aboriginal Corporation, Babana Men's Group, Sydney Local Health District and South Western Sydney Local Health District, it aims to reduce smoking among Aboriginal people in the two districts by 5 per cent in 2015.

According to Karen Bedford, Program Manager at the Sydney Local Health District Health Promotion Service, working in partnership has been key to success.

“The project has been overseen at all levels by the partner agencies and has been directed and developed from feedback provided throughout various stages of the project by the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community,” said Program Manager Karen Bedford.

The District also won an award for supporting the Illawarra Aboriginal Medical Service in setting up an alcohol home detox program. The service, known as the A-clinic, was established after community consultation and is based on cultural appropriateness, best evidence and clinical experience, with a goal to improve access to quality and safe healthcare.
One defiant little pub

It’s hard to imagine now but there was a time when fathers were forced to wait elsewhere while their wives gave birth, often on a bar stool in the nearest pub.

Those who were lucky enough to welcome their newborn into the world at Royal Prince Alfred Hospital, however, never had far to go, thanks to one very stubborn publican.

In 1936, RPA’s board planned a new maternity hospital on Missenden Road opposite the main RPA building.

By 1939, funding had been secured, and the existing buildings on the site were purchased and ready for demolition.

All except one: The Prince Alfred Hotel. Its owners initially refused to sell before putting “such an exorbitant price on it that it was ridiculous”, according to the hospital’s matron at the time.

The battle moved to the courts where it was decreed the pub could stay “so long as it was decently run and not a public nuisance”.

That decision forced the builders to design and construct the new hospital, known as the King George V Memorial Hospital for Mothers and Babies, around the hotel, which could explain the building’s unusual design and curved corners.

The hotel stayed on site until 1959, and rumour has it a note in a bucket attached to a rope would be lowered into the pub from the delivery ward, heralding each new arrival to fathers anxiously clutching schooners at the bar.

It has since been demolished and now operates as The Alfred further down Missenden Road. A much loved feature of the street, the hospital has no plans to purchase and demolish it.

For more of RPA’s rich history, visit the RPA Museum on level 8 of the KGV building. It’s open to the public on Mondays, Tuesdays and Wednesdays from 10am to 2pm.

For details see: www.slhd.nsw.gov.au/rpa/museum/
Community and Consumer Participation

The Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Healthcare recently released a statement reiterating the important role consumers play in improving safety and quality in health care. Everyone should be able to give, receive, understand and act on information such as treatment plans and options.

Only about 40 per cent of adults in Australia have individual health literacy levels required for the complex demands of everyday life. This means that 60 per cent are unable to comprehend the safety of a product and are less likely to make good choices due to their poor understanding.

We are passionate about asking consumers, patients and clients to review written information for patient use. Get in touch if you need help. Make health literacy your priority in 2015.

Performance and Monitoring

The SLHD Performance Unit was invited to contribute to the collaborative Google/PwC report titled Deciding with data - How data-driven innovation is fuelling Australia’s economic growth. This is a huge privilege for the District to be considered and included in such a wide-reaching national and international publication.

The report investigates the profound impact of data on our understanding of how the world works and more so how the use of data has positively changed the life of every Australian; from improving the quality of the products we consume to the health care we receive. According to the report, there is still an approximate $48 billion of value the country could attain with stronger and innovative use of data.

Minister for Communications, Malcolm Turnbull MP, launched the report and spoke about the Commonwealth’s commitment to data, both from an accessibility and usability perspective, as well as his plans to support innovation in this area to maximise opportunity.

Our STARS tool was profiled in this report highlighting how SLHD is using data to create new or improved services and drive cost effectiveness, but also showcasing our work as a leader in data-driven innovation in the NSW health sector.

Our STARS case study can be found by following this link - www.pwc.com.au/consulting/assets/publications/Data-drive-innovation-Sep14.pdf.

Patients give new packaging the thumbs up

Concord Hospital played host to the Minister for Health, Jillian Skinner, recently as part of her announcement that new and improved food packaging will soon be introduced across NSW hospitals.

Patients Geraldine Morelly, 80, and Beatrice Devine, 93, both admitted to the aged care wards, were the first to meet the Minister and give their approval on the changes.

“There was no way I could open some of the old packaging by myself so it’s much easier now,” Ms Morelly said. “I think they’ve done a very good job.”

The Member for Drummoyne, John Sidoti, and Member for Strathfield, Charles Casuscelli, joined Minister Skinner in praising the new packaging, which was the result of a successful partnership between HealthShare NSW and Arthritis Australia.

“Hard-to-open food packaging is not just a source of frustration for patients but a barrier to nutrition,” Minister Skinner said.

“It is vital that the elderly and those with conditions affecting fine motor skills, such as arthritis, can open or easily access food.”

NSW Health is the first health system in the world to make easy to open food packaging part of the tender process for suppliers.

HealthShare NSW’s Food Packaging Improvement Project team collaborated with Arthritis Australia, Georgia Tech Research Institute in the United States and Nestlé to test products and recommend improvements.

Design features have been adopted on food packaging in NSW hospitals include:

- serrated edges to reduce the force required to tear open a bag;
- large “tear here” label supported by a line of arrows;
- 4mm to 5mm pre-made tears.

While difficulty opening food packaging can be a barrier to the consumption of meals by inpatients, it is not a problem restricted to hospitals,” Mrs Skinner said.

“Many older people and those with limited dexterity present to our hospitals with compromised nutrition. The only way to ‘fix’ packaging for NSW public hospitals has been to improve it for the whole community.”
Inner West Sydney Medicare Local

The three Medicare Locals of Eastern Sydney, Inner West Sydney and South Eastern Sydney have welcomed the Department of Health’s announcement of 32 new Primary Health Networks across Australia, including the new Central and Eastern Sydney Primary Health Network that will cover both the Sydney and South Eastern Sydney LHD regions.

The three Medicare Locals, having worked collaboratively in the past, are now very pleased to be able to work together to establish the Central and Eastern Sydney PHN. The new PHN will be supporting and strengthening general practice and primary health care services for the more than 1.4 million people, across the 15 local government areas that form the Central and Eastern Sydney PHN region.

The Commonwealth Department of Health will release a tender to operate the new Primary Health Networks in November. The three Medicare Locals will submit a joint tender for the new Central and Eastern Sydney PHN.

Redfern, Croydon, Marrickville Health Centres

Croydon, Marrickville and Redfern Health Centres have been trialling the use of hand sanitisers in client based areas in order to promote good hand-hygiene practices and effective infection control, not only among our staff but also the community.

The Health Centres are also reviewing their business continuity plans. The previous Critical Operations Standing Operating Procedures developed for the Health Centres are being revised to incorporate detailed contingency operating plans for critical business functions and their support services, in response to any localised incident or disaster, as a result of a resource failure or malfunction.

The co-located GP Clinic at Marrickville Health Centre is the finalist in the 2014 NSW Quality and Innovation Awards under the category of Integrated Health Care and Innovation.

Research has shown that people with long-term mental illness often have poor physical health, higher rates of mortality, reduced life expectancy and decreased access to health services.

The development of a co-located GP Clinic has enabled more than 100 consumers, who had not seen a GP in the last 12 to 18 months, to receive GP care and earlier intervention for physical health care.

RPA Sexual Health created an “Ending HIV Mural” to commemorate HIV Awareness Week 2014 last month.

The mural was produced in collaboration with Newtown Neighbourhood Centre to help raise awareness about HIV and the important role safe sex plays in preventing transmission.

More than 400 gerberas were given to passing community members to generate interest and start conversations about safe sex in advance of World AIDS Day on Monday 1 December.

The manager of the SLHD HARP Health Promotion Team, Brooke Dailey, said the symbolism of the mural and flowers helped spread the message about HIV awareness.

“The connection of bright red gerberas being carried around Newtown with the mural design helped start a number of important conversations in the community about HIV and sexual health,” Ms Dailey said.

The main theme for this year’s HIV Awareness Week was EASY, focusing on the greatly improved access and convenience of HIV testing.

Rapid HIV testing offers results in less than 30 minutes, there are longer and more convenient opening hours of sexual health clinics, and community and health sector partnerships have enabled testing to be more accessible.

The Director of the Sexual Health Service, Associate Professor Catherine O’Connor, said testing was faster and easier and strictly confidential.

“The earlier you know your HIV status, the quicker you see a doctor to maintain your healthy life,” Associate Professor O’Connor said.

UPDATE

Chalking up success

The Ending HIV Mural in progress.
Royal Prince Alfred Hospital has launched a new nursing model which increases patient care while reducing nursing workload.

Currently being trialled on wards 8W1, 8W2 and 7W2, Intentional Rounding requires nurses to systematically and proactively visit each patient every hour.

During each visit nurses must check for the ‘Five Ps’:

• Pain – is the patient in pain?
• Position – is the patient comfortable?
• Pan – does the patient require assistance to use the bathroom or pan?
• Possessions – does the patient have everything they need within reach?
• Is everything plugged in – PCAs, pumps, mattresses, phone chargers etc.

The Acting Director of Nursing and Midwifery Services, Claire Harris, said the new model would reduce patient falls and skin breakdown, and increase staff and patient satisfaction.

“Intentional Rounding will significantly reduce the number of times patients use buzzers to call nurses and we estimate that each nurse will walk about two kilometres less per shift,” Ms Harris said.

Tiffany Yew has been an RPA nurse for more than seven years and said she looked forward to the new model of care.

“I think it will definitely improve the patient’s experience because we will see them more and they will know that we will be back to see them again very soon,” Ms Yew said.

A study in the United States found that this model reduced buzzer calls for the bathroom by 40 per cent, positioning by 29 per cent, pain by 35 per cent and reduced IV pump alarms by 40 per cent.

Ms Harris said nurses would also record a patient’s position for each visit, assuring visitors that their loved ones were being monitored and cared for regularly.

Sydney Local Health District’s BreastScreen NSW Service Director, Dr Genevieve Wallace, thanked Ms Steedman for sharing her story, as all women from 50 to 74 years old should receive screening mammograms every two years.

“One in nine women in NSW will develop breast cancer in their lifetime and nine out of 10 do not have a family history of breast cancer,” Dr Wallace said.

Appointments at BreastScreen are available every 15 minutes and a doctor’s referral is not required.

To make an appointment call 13 20 50.
Eyes and ears of RPA

With more than 100 cameras positioned around Royal Prince Alfred Hospital and 17 guards patrolling around the clock, there isn’t much that happens on the campus that security doesn’t know about.

General Services Manager Rowena Morgan said security staff provided an incredibly important service which had recently been supported with new infrastructure enhancements.

“Many people who visit our hospital do so during the most difficult days of their lives so it is crucial that they feel secure and welcome and are treated with compassion,” Ms Morgan said.

“Recent enhancements include a new control room, 20 new cameras at the Professor Marie Bashir Centre, a poster series and a service desk in RPA’s main foyer, which provides better access for staff and members of the public. A new intranet site is being developed and will go live early next year.”

Ms Morgan said the service desk had created a visible and approachable point of contact to improve access for District staff and members of the public.

RPA security staff receive between 400 and 420 calls for assistance every month including emergencies, fire alarms, calls for lost property and duress alarms.

Honours for dietitian

Royal Prince Alfred Hospital’s Senior Oncology Dietitian, Ms Merran Findlay, has been awarded a prestigious National Health and Medical Research Council Translating Research Into Practice (TRIP) Fellowship.

An Advanced Accredited Practising Dietitian, Ms Findlay’s expertise in nutrition support of patients with head and neck cancer has been recognised internationally through her award-winning, innovative work in online evidence-based guideline development for this complex patient group.

“We know malnutrition is prevalent in people with head and neck cancer and there is strong evidence that access to specialist dietetic services before, during and after treatment is required in order to optimise patient outcomes,” Ms Findlay said.

“However, translating the best available research evidence into clinical practice can often be challenging in the real world.”

The highly competitive TRIP Fellowship Scheme is intended to build capacity in research translation by providing support for health care professionals to undertake projects focused on translating evidence into practice to improve health care and public health.

One of only 10 TRIP Fellowship grant recipients nationally, Ms Findlay was awarded $172,911 over two years to support an implementation project entitled Best evidence to best practice: Implementing an innovative model of care for nutritional management of patients with head and neck cancer to be undertaken in partnership between Sydney Local Health District and The Chris O’Brien Lifehouse.

UPDATE

Chris O’Brien Lifehouse

We recently celebrated one year since opening our doors to provide integrated cancer care through outpatient clinics for a range of cancers, radiation therapy, chemotherapy, allied health services, complementary therapies through our integrative medicine centre – the LivingRoom, research and clinical trials.

With our Day Surgery Unit now operational for cancer-related procedures, we are now full steam ahead preparing for the opening of inpatient services early next year.

Along with the expansion of our clinical care and treatment, the LivingRoom services have expanded and included a series of new workshops for patients and carers.

The workshops include massage and reflexology, talking with kids about cancer, managing fatigue, exercise: moving during and after treatment and an introduction to complementary therapies. Check out the schedule at: http://www.mylifehouse.org.au/What_is_the_Livingroom/

Tresillian

Tresillian Live Advice has changed hours and will now operate from 5pm to 11pm, Monday to Friday and, for the first time, the service will expand to include New Zealand residents.

The change came about from research showing that parents need assistance during the evening hours when baby can often be unsettled. Johnson’s Baby, the main sponsor of Tresillian Live Advice launched the new Night Light hub at the QT boutique Hotel in Market Street, Sydney in September.

The Night Light concept, developed by Johnson’s Baby, incorporates three different elements to help parents during the critical evening period. It includes a chat room where mums can connect with other mums; a reading room that features a collection of stories and tips relating to baby and support from a Tresillian Nurse from 5pm to 11pm using Facebook messenger.

Journalists attending the launch came from a range of parenting publications and ‘mummy bloggers’. Tresillian’s Public Relations Manager, Ann Paton and Judy Tripodi (Parent’s Help Line) made presentations to the group on the benefits for parents of Tresillian’s Live Advice service. This resulted in some excellent media coverage for Tresillian including Practical Parenting Magazine and the websites, www.essentialbaby.com and www.babyology.com.au
Seeking a better life

Sydney Local Health District works in partnership with dozens of non-government organisations committed to improving the health of our local community.

One of these groups, The Asylum Seekers Centre in Newtown, serves more than 1,400 asylum seekers including 134 children, from over 52 countries.

Sydney Local Health District provides funding for a full time Refugee Health Nurse at the centre, which offers comprehensive health checks, treatment and referrals to all clients.

The CEO of the centre, Melinda Noden, said this was incredibly important as many clients were survivors of torture and trauma, 75 per cent were homeless and hungry, 35 per cent had no access to Medicare, and over 70 per cent had serious mental health issues.

“Asylum seekers are among the most vulnerable people in Australia and may suffer from diseases and conditions rarely seen in Australia,” Ms Noden said. “They may have nutritional problems and untreated health conditions and injuries exacerbated through poor living conditions and lack of access to treatment.”

Ms Noden said health care was a basic human right and addressing the immediate health needs of survivors of torture and trauma were critical first steps to help rebuild their lives in Australia.

In addition to the on-site medical services, the centre’s nurses also advocate for pro-bono medical support for clients and help train health professionals about the specific needs of asylum seekers.

In the past 12 months, the centre conducted more than 3,000 health consultations, paid for more than 480 prescriptions.

International scholarship

It’s not every day you brush shoulders with Australia’s Foreign Affairs Minister, Julie Bishop, but Sydney Local Health District’s Charlee Law did exactly that recently when she was awarded an international scholarship to study in Singapore.

Charlee, an Aboriginal Trainee Environmental Health Officer, is jointly employed by Sydney Local Health District and City of Canada Bay, and was presented with her award at a ceremony in Canberra.

RPA doctor honoured

An RPA doctor has been awarded one of Australia’s most prestigious scholarships which recognise leadership capability, academic excellence, and potential contribution to Australia.

Cancer researcher Brent O’Carrigan was a 2015 recipient of the John Monash Scholarships, which provide financial assistance of $60,000 a year, as well as an international return trip via Singapore Airlines, to undertake post graduate studies at the world’s leading universities.

The scholarships honour Sir John Monash, regarded as Australia’s finest military and civic leader. A civil engineer and lawyer, Sir John was the most successful and admired general on the Western Front in World War One; led the electrification of Victoria in the 1920s; was Vice Chancellor of the University of Melbourne; and helped found both the CSIRO and the Shrine of Remembrance.

The chair of the foundation, Jillian Segal AM, said 300 applications had been received with applicants coming from 38 Australian universities and seeking places at nearly 100 higher education institutions overseas.

More than 100 expert panelists across Australia reviewed the applications.

“The continuing high level of interest is testament to both the prestige of the scholarships, and to the growing pool of exceptionally talented young Australians who are interested in furthering their studies globally and in contributing to their country,” she said.
Meet Zamual, a little fellow who had a very lucky break

The 13-year-old poodle cross was left homeless after the death of his owner, a client in Royal Prince Alfred’s respiratory chronic care service.

Zamual was a dearly loved and spoilt pooch who had become housebound like his owner. His toenails had grown long from lack of exercise, he was visually impaired, hard of hearing, deconditioned, and had been mostly hand-fed.

But our staff are well known for having big hearts and they banded together to find Zamual a new home.

Thanks to Liz Myers and her husband Geoff Holben and their two daughters Connie and Zara, Zamual was given a new home and a thorough pampering at the beauty salon. His toe nails were clipped, ears syringed, and coat shampooed. He was taught to go walkies on a lead and became stronger and better conditioned, eating from a bowl, sleeping in the garden and learnt new non-verbal commands.

Thanks to our wonderful staff and Zamual’s new family, he had a quality year before recently passing away.

The final word goes to RPA’s respiratory’s chronic care service team: “To avoid uncertainty regarding your pet’s future after you die, please make sure your intentions are known and/or recorded”.

Lest we forget

Kokoda veterans Reg Chard and Ray Gentles, formerly of the 55th and 53rd Battalion respectively, re-enacted the flag raising at the Kokoda Track Memorial Walkway last month to mark Kokoda Day.

The commemorative address was delivered by The Hon Charlie Lynn MLC, Parliamentary Secretary for Veterans’ Affairs. Mr Bill Harrigan, RSL State Councillor recited the ode. The NSW Corrective Services Band provided the accompaniment and Mr Kent Maddock sang two solos.

Remembrance Day, held in the Concord Hospital 113th AGH Chapel on 11th November marked the 96th anniversary of the armistice which ended World War 1. Rev. John Sanderson, Chaplain, Australian Regular Army delivered the commemorative address.

The service was led by Rev. Paul Weaver and Fr Graeme Malone, chaplains at Concord Hospital.
SLHD wins Minister’s award for mental health care

Sydney Local Health District has been recognised for its outstanding provision of mental health care at the annual NSW Health awards.

The District was awarded the Minister for Mental Health Award for Excellence in the Provision of Mental Health Services and the People’s Choice award for its Mental Health Co-Located GP Service model, implemented at Marrickville and Redfern Health Centres (and soon to be recommencing at Croydon Health Centre).

The model ensures community mental health services work collaboratively with GPs to improve the health status of mental health clients by providing seamless and continuous care.

It uses preventative health strategies such as treating physical health problems, preventing and implementing early intervention activities, tailoring medication use and reducing misdiagnosis, or non-diagnosis.

The NSW Minister for Mental Health, Jai Rowell, said SLHD had “managed to deliver vital health care services to many people living with mental illness who may otherwise have not have come into contact with treatment for a range of other health problems”.

“Across NSW, there are a huge range of innovative mental health initiatives being developed that will improve the lives of those touched by mental illness,” he said.

“I am constantly impressed by the level of commitment from our mental health care professionals right across the state in pioneering new models of care, and always looking at ways to better serve the needs of those living with mental illness.

“Sydney Local Health District’s project, Holistic Health for Mental Health Patients, is an outstanding example of an innovative partnership that provides patients with holistic care and greater access to GPs, psychiatrists, clinical psychologists and other allied mental health professionals for mental health care.

“It showcases the power of how working together can result in earlier detection and intervention of physical health problems, improved care co-ordination and increased access to a wider range of services,” Mr Rowell said.

“I congratulate the dedicated health care professionals who have developed this model of care and who continue to strengthen the care available for those seeking treatment for mental illness.”

The General Manager of Redfern, Marrickville and Croydon Health Centres, Jason Cheng, said the awards were well deserved.

“These awards recognise our centre staff’s commitment and innovation in providing holistic health to our mental health clients, and I’d like to congratulate all staff involved. I’m also tremendously proud that our model of care is really changing lives in our community,” Mr Cheng said.

Mental health training

Inner West Medicare Local held two education sessions in September in partnership with beyondblue. The topic was ‘Understanding Depression and Anxiety’ and the sessions were specifically tailored to staff working in aged care facilities.

The sessions provided staff with information on identifying depression and anxiety in the elderly, the best screening tools to use, strategies for working with residents and effective management of residents with depression and anxiety.

They also gave staff the opportunity to network, and discuss their own ideas and strategies. The two sessions were well attended and further sessions will be held soon.
Humanitarian medal for tsunami service

ICU clinical nurse consultant Elaine McGloin had just finished a long shift at RPA when the District’s late Disaster Manager, Gaye Mackey Hudson, informed her that a 9.3 magnitude earthquake had devastated 14 countries with waves up to 30 metres high.

The following morning, Ms McGloin boarded a Royal Australian Air Force Hercules bound for Samoa with Ms Hudson, Dr Tim McCulloch, Dr Fergal McCourt and many more medical volunteers.

“It was very confronting seeing people with such horrific trauma and seeing how frightened everyone was,” she said. “At one stage the tsunami alarms went off again so everyone started rushing for the hills and away from the coast.”

Thankfully this was a false alarm and Ms McGloin and her team were able to help countless injured and traumatised survivors during their deployment. She recently received a Human Overseas Service Medal from the Australian Government for her contribution to the international response effort.

“One survivor who stands out for me was a young woman in her late teens who had lost about nine or 10 people including her immediate family and many of her extended family,” she said. “The look on her face seemed to be beyond despair. She was completely disengaged with everyone and everything going on around her because she was just so devastated.”

Ms McGloin said she would never see coverage of natural disasters the same way again after her experience and would definitely volunteer again.

“It’s strange, but it was in some ways a positive experience,” she said. “To see how well the response was organised and to see how many people from different countries were willing to help, it was humbling.”

We all know the result now, but in grand final week Sydney Local Health District was awash with football fever, passionate supporters of both teams and staff who went to great lengths to decorate their work spaces in blue, white, red and green.

Canterbury Hospital was fortunate to play host to three generations of the legendary Mortimer family – former halfback Steve, who played a Canterbury-Bankstown Bulldogs club record 272 first grade games between 1976 and 1988, his son Andrew, and Andrew’s two bulldog pups, Lachlan, 2, and Harrison, 3 weeks.

Joumana took along her nephews Matthew Gomes, 12, Joshua, 9 and Isaac, 10, as well as colleague Diane Molia’s children Natasha, 12, Angelina, 8, Tara, 9, and Noah, 3, to meet their heroes.

Not to be outdone, over at Redfern Health Centre our staff showed they were equally as passionate, wearing their green and red with pride in their office in Bunnies heartland on Redfern Street. Heading the cheer squad were Cecilia O’Neill, Marilyn Richardson, Ann White, Petrina Rimmer, Natalie Barnes, Devaki Sritharan and Fayyaz Laghari.

In the end, as we know, the Bunnies were victorious, but congratulations to all our staff for their community spirit.
Staff Spotlight
DECEMBER 2014–FEBRUARY 2015

Danielle Osborn
Adult Congenital Heart Disease Case Manager

The best thing about my job is... Establishing patient relationships that continue for much longer periods of time and are closer than is customary then when nursing on a ward.

A typical day at work for me involves... Organizing and scheduling patient appointments and care. Patient and family education, coordinating and planning outpatient Clinics. Collaborative communication with Professor Celermajer and other colleagues regarding patient case management.

A little-known fact about me is... I love the ibis that live and forage around the hospital grounds.

When I was a child I wanted to be... a horse.

The last book I read was... Crossing to Safety by Wallace Stegner.

Midwife leads world first study

When RPA's Hala Phipps began her career as a midwife she didn’t realise it would lead to a world first research project that could improve global infant mortality rates.

Quickly achieving her qualification as a nurse, Ms Phipps then took on a Master of Public Health, which included a research component.

"Once you start in research you either get the bug or you don’t and I am very happy that I did,” Ms Phipps said.

“I’ve done a few studies here and I’ve been fortunate to be supported by RPA Women and Babies. I always said that if there was a question that needed to be answered I would do a PhD.”

The question that needed answering turned out to be the effectiveness of manual rotation for babies in the posterior position prior to birth.

The technique was pioneered in the late 1800s and is still performed by some older doctors.

Ms Phipps received a scholarship from the Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists and the Dr Albert McKern Research Scholarship for three and a half years funding for her PhD.

Ms Phipps’ research and pilot trial confirmed that a larger trial would be possible and has now won a National Health and Medical Research Council grant to make it happen.

“It is very hard to get an NHMRC grant but the trial will be the first trial ever in the world looking at this procedure so the importance was clear,” Hala said.

“It is amazing and exciting because the potential impact of this trial is huge, especially in the developing world where you don’t get follow-up after caesareans.”

“The most important thing for me is to alleviate pain and discomfort for mothers and babies, because that is my passion as a midwife.”

My top three movies are... Cabaret, Spirited Away, Silver Linings Playbook.

If I had to describe myself in three words or less they would be... Loyal, enthusiastic, persistent.

My colleagues would describe me as... Fun, honest, entertaining (I did ask them).

If I won the lottery I would... do a celebratory dance.

When I’m not at work, I like to... cajole/coerce my family into trips to museums, musicals and art galleries.

I’d love to learn... how to swim.

It’s not fashionable but I love... collecting my children’s baby teeth.

The best advice I’ve ever been given is... “get on with it”.

My guilty pleasure is... Watching Guardians of the Galaxy four times in one weekend with my 10 year old.

I’m at my happiest when... At noisy gatherings surrounded by friends, family and food.

HealthMatters is all about you. We would love to hear your stories. Simply email sydneymedia@sswahs.nsw.gov.au