

REPORT TO COMMUNITY

MAY 2017



Gold Coast Primary Health Network

'Building one world class health system for the Gold Coast.'

phn
GOLD COAST

An Australian Government Initiative

‘BUILDING 1 WORLD CLASS HEALTH SYSTEM FOR THE GOLD COAST.’



CEO REPORT

Matt Carrodus



Welcome to our first Report to the Community.

The establishment of the Gold Coast Primary Health Network (GCPHN) has provided an important opportunity to address the challenges of the health system and improve the health outcomes for Gold Coast residents. This is largely done through engaging and supporting General Practice and other stakeholders to facilitate improvements in our local health system. An effective primary care system is the first point of contact with the health system for most people. It is centred around General Practice, involves a great many other services and is vital to the health and wellbeing of our community.

Our governing Board is accountable for our outcomes and is assisted by a Clinical Advisory Council and a Community Advisory Council. Collectively they have developed our strategic intent of 'building one world class health system.' This is represented on the inside cover of this publication for you to review and consider. This reflects the importance of building an integrated healthcare system needed to successfully address many of our health challenges. We must work across our local health system to achieve this, including working with state funded services, non government organisations, health practitioners and the community.

Primary Health Networks represent a new model of addressing our health needs, where regionally based organisations are responsible for improving health outcomes. Most recently we have undertaken a significant exercise to improve Gold Coast mental health and drug and alcohol treatment services. It has achieved this by:

- Understanding the needs of our community through extensive community engagement and consultations with health practitioners, and data analysis.
- Planning with community members, organisations and health services and practitioners to analyse and consider service options and to design new services that will meet community needs.
- Establishing additional mental health and drug and alcohol treatment services.

We are particularly pleased with the results of this initial activity, and are grateful to community members, health services, service users, carers and families that contributed to this. Over 500 people were involved in consultations to design services from over 200 different organisations. We will communicate to the community bi-annually, our activities that contribute to better health outcomes for our community. Our activities profiled herein are represented under each of our strategic goals. I hope you find this Report to the Community informative.

OUR VALUES



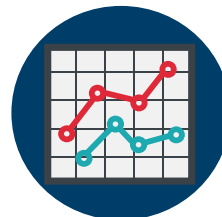
SUSTAINABLE

*Efficient, Effective,
Viable*



INNOVATIVE

*Flexible,
Pioneering,
Evolutionary*



EVIDENCE-BASED

*Research,
Documenting,
Transparent*



COLLABORATIVE

*Partnerships,
Integrated,
Engaged*



INFLUENTIAL

*Visible, Valued,
Courageous*



ACCOUNTABLE

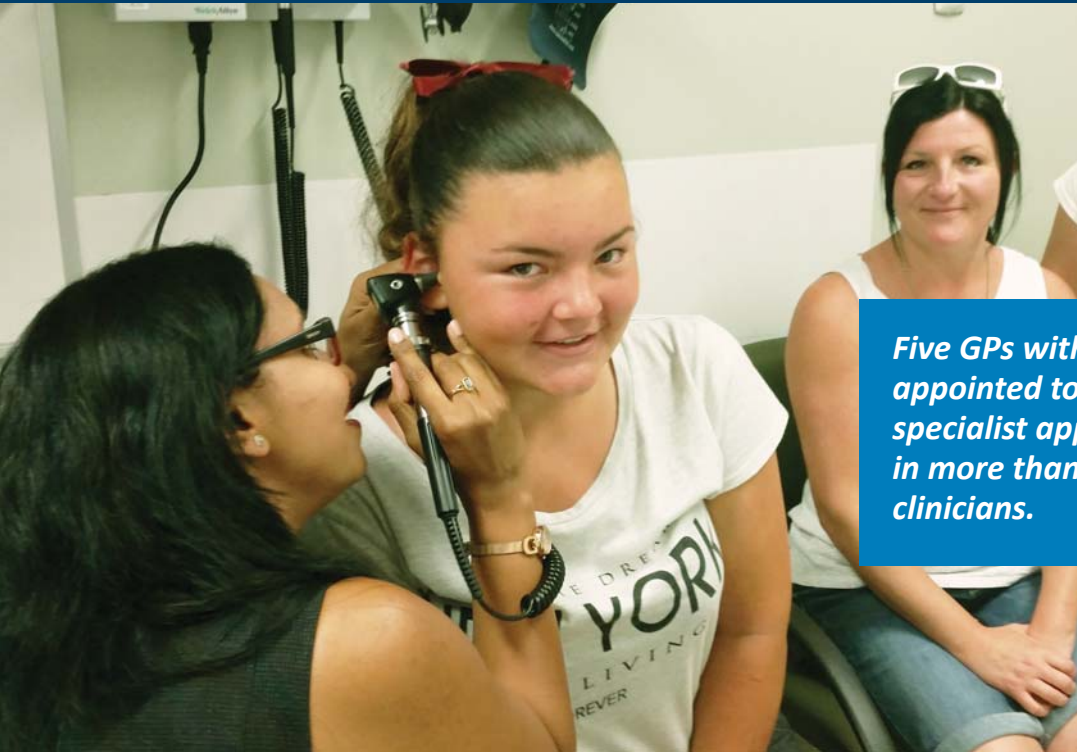
*Respect,
Responsible,
Outcomes*

SNAPSHOT OF OUR SUCCESS

July 2016 - May 2017

- **Over 500 individuals and 200 organisations were consulted as part of the most comprehensive needs analysis ever completed on the Gold Coast** into mental health and alcohol and other drug (AOD) services, resulting in three new AOD services for mainstream and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, commissioned in January 2017.
- The mental health initiative, **Partners in Recovery has helped change the lives of more than 750 people**, well above target, since establishment three years ago, and is now implementing a National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) transition plan.
- With extensive community, service users and sector involvement, GCPHN has commissioned **new programs for suicide prevention, low intensity, hard-to-reach and severe and complex mental health conditions**, commencing on July 1 2017.
- **The GCPHN Practice Support tiered system to improve patient care and quality initiatives with GPs, is attracting national interest from other Primary Health Networks**, and was showcased on the national stage at the Australian Primary Health Care Nurses Association (APNA) National Conference in May 2017.
- In partnership with Gold Coast Health, **GCPHN helped develop and upload over 500 referral templates for Gold Coast Health Specialist Outpatient Services** incorporating new Gold Coast Health Clinical Prioritisation Criteria (CPC). This was **viewed by GPs almost 1000 times in just a two week period** and is part of a significant strategy to reduce patient wait times.
- As at May 2017, **service directory listings for Gold Coast health and wellbeing services have grown to their highest ever**, with 2320 listings on the GCPHN HealthyGC website. This makes it the most comprehensive local directory available for health professionals and local residents.
- **A record 13 500 page views were recorded on the GCPHN website for just one month** (March 2017) as this site continues to grow in usage and reputation, as an important resource for Gold Coast health professionals and the public.
- **HPV immunisation rates on the Gold Coast are at their highest ever** among secondary students and in the last 12 months alone, there was an increase of six per cent for all Year 7 and 8 students who have had all three doses on the HPV vaccine.
- Supported the training of the future medical workforce, organising **503 medical and 109 nursing placements for students in general practices**. (2016 calendar year figures).
- **Supported 152 Gold Coast general practices in registering for digital health** with a record number (64.7 per cent) uploading My Health records for their patients.
- **Implemented a five year Maturity Plan 2016-2021** to transition GCPHN into a world class commissioning organisation and **revised the GCPHN Strategic Plan 2017-2022 to identify future priorities**.
- Working with Gold Coast Health to implement the End of Life Care Strategy, **piloting a project in residential aged care facilities** to help aged care residents have more involvement in their future care.
- **Held 80 education and training events, attended by 1078 healthcare professionals**.

STRATEGIC GOAL 1: Improve **COORDINATION** of care to ensure patients receive the right care at the **RIGHT PLACE AT THE RIGHT TIME BY THE RIGHT PERSON.**



Five GPs with a special interest have been appointed to help treat patients waiting for specialist appointments, which has resulted in more than one thousand patients seeing clinicians.

One of the first appointed GPs with Special Interests, Dr Teesha Arora, is a local GP with extensive experience and post graduate qualifications in Ear Nose Throat (ENT) who has already seen many patients that were on the long wait list.

Improving patient care through the General Practice Liaison Unit

Establishment of the General Practice Liaison Unit is one of the most critical strategies in improving patient care on the Gold Coast, and in just a few months, has made considerable inroads to ensure that patients receive the right care, at the right place and time by the right person.

Based at the Gold Coast University Hospital, the unit was established in July 2016 which we jointly support with Gold Coast Health, to strengthen integration between hospitals and primary care providers.

General Practice Liaison Officer Dr Carl de Wet says this has included the development of the S6 project - six strategies to reduce the number of patients waiting for a specialist appointment to improve the quality, triage and management of referrals into the future, strengthen links between GPs and specialists and accelerate referral decision making and ultimately patient care.

“We’re working with the Gold Coast Primary Health Network and general practices to ensure patients receive treatment in clinically recommended times. Together we’ve implemented six major strategies to effectively improve waiting times and streamline the GP referral process for patients wanting to see a public specialist.” Dr de Wet said.

Some of these strategies have included recruiting GPs to assess long wait referrals, with more than 1000 long wait patients being reviewed, piloting specialist clinics in the community and improving communication mechanisms between the hospital, GPs and their patients. Five GPs with a special interest have been appointed to treat patients waiting for specialist appointments, and from late September 2016 to mid May 2017, 1148 patients have been able to see a clinician more quickly.

“They typically work in local GP surgeries and dedicate one or more sessions a week to hepatology, ear, nose and throat, paediatrics, gynaecology and gastroenterology,” Dr de Wet said.

Another significant strategy has been the development of more than 500 new referral templates incorporating Queensland Health’s Clinical Prioritisation Criteria, which will standardise referrals from GPs and better prioritise patients on the outpatient waiting list to ensure they are seen on time. Adoption of these templates by GPs has been significant, with the templates viewed almost 1000 times in the first two weeks it was uploaded to our GCPHN HealthyGC website.

“We are committed to ensuring that our hospital outpatient services are more effective and efficient in the future and our combined efforts will increase our capacity to offer patient appointments sooner,” Dr de Wet said.

STRATEGIC GOAL 1: Improve **COORDINATION** of care to ensure patients receive the right care at the **RIGHT PLACE AT THE RIGHT TIME BY THE RIGHT PERSON.**



- On the Gold Coast, 1.3 per cent of people identified with being Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander compared to 3.5 per cent of the population across Queensland. This equates to a population of 6,350 local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. These numbers are likely to be an under-representation due to many people not self-identifying.
- Over the last three years, 56 people from General Practice and allied health professionals representing over 32 organisations across the Gold Coast have completed our cultural safety training. Of the total of 178 general practices on the Gold Coast, 83 (65 per cent) are recorded as Closing the Gap registered.

Indigenous Outreach Worker Tracy Smith with Trevor Lambert, who she helps transport to medical appointments.

Improving the health of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people

When you hear about the difference Tracy Smith is making to improve healthcare for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people on the Gold Coast, you can understand why she is so appreciated by the people who use her services.

Tracy, an Indigenous Outreach Worker, is part of Integrated Team Care (ITC), which we commission and is coordinated by Kalwun Health Service. The program aims to improve access to mainstream primary healthcare services for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. ITC is part of the Close the Gap program; to close the health and life expectancy gap between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and non-Indigenous Australians within a generation.

Tracy provides transport to take people to their medical appointments and supports them to access additional services if required. Demand is growing with a record 56 patients requiring medical support in the last three months.

"I love it. A lot of the patients are quite shy and don't like to ask for help. The patients are so grateful for this service. One patient who was diagnosed with cancer, who I assisted for the first time to an appointment, was told he had six months to live. Four years on, he is still with us, and he said to me, I would not be here today, without your ongoing support."

One of Tracy's newest clients is Trevor Lambert.

"I have a lot of medical appointments with a lot of chronic illnesses, as I have had an accident and have multiple specialist appointments and I can't drive. Without Tracy, I'd have a problem attending all my medical appointments," Trevor said.

Trevor was first referred to Tracy through Gold Coast hospital services, as are most Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who require assistance to access their medical care.

Tracy also visits people at home, organises their medications, connects them to other services if needed such as food relief, housing or Centrelink and helps them to be registered with the Close the Gap incentive to access free or cheaper medications.

While patients are a focus, so are the doctors who treat them.

ITC staff play a key educational and information role for GPs, providing support and advice and encouraging uptake of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health assessments, for early detection, diagnosis and intervention for common and treatable conditions that could cause morbidity and early mortality.

From July 2016 – March 2017, ITC staff conducted 44 visits to general practices and provided cultural safety training to 35 primary care providers including GPs and medical students, to ensure their care with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people is culturally appropriate.

STRATEGIC GOAL 1: Improve **COORDINATION** of care to ensure patients receive the right care at the **RIGHT PLACE AT THE RIGHT TIME BY THE RIGHT PERSON.**



- In 2012 the Gold Coast HPV immunisation rate for girls turning 15 was 60 per cent compared with the national average at 70 per cent. For 2016 this had increased to 72.5 per cent.
- Most people (over 80 per cent) have experienced a HPV infection some time in their lives. The National HPV Vaccination Program began in 2007 for females, and was extended to include males in 2013.
- Since 2007, the National HPV Vaccination Program has been credited with dramatically reducing the incidence of the HPV virus in Australia.

A public awareness campaign has helped raise HPV immunisation rates to record levels on the Gold Coast.

Record immunisation rates for the Gold Coast

HPV immunisation rates for adolescents on the Gold Coast are their highest ever recorded, following an intensive campaign we conducted with Gold Coast Public Health Unit (GCPHU) to increase rates, which were some of the lowest in Australia.

One of our key priorities is improving the health of the community and preventing disease through increased immunisation rates, through early childhood, school and community immunisation programs.

On the Gold Coast, the latest data shows that in the last 12 months alone, there has been an increase of more than six per cent for all Year 7 and 8 students.

It's a significant result, and shows that the hard work is paying off. This has included working with local schools and parents to promote the importance of the vaccine for boys and girls, intensive follow-ups with schools to ensure students receive all three doses and an educational awareness campaign. Parents were also reminded about catch up programs at GP clinics if students missed a dose, and GPs were also consulted.

Public Health Staff Specialist Professor Paul Van Buynder said it was exciting to see the improved coverage. "We need to work on catching up third doses and get more males vaccinated but the data shows a gratifying increase," he said.

Childhood immunisation

Childhood immunisation rates on the Gold Coast remains at one of the highest levels ever. Recent statistics (January – March 2017) show 92 per cent of infants up to 12 months had received their vaccinations, with 90.8 per cent at 24 months at 93.5 per cent at 60 months fully immunised.

Educational opportunities and engagement

To reinforce best practice principles, GCPHU supported us to run education and training for GPs, practice nurses and residential aged care staff. Since July 2016, a total of 171 health professionals have attended workshops and forums, with many of these sessions booked out well in advance.

And to raise important community awareness, staff have attended a number of community events since July 2016, including NAIDOC Week and Homeless Connect to educate the public about the importance of immunisation. At the Kids Expo in April 2017, GCPHU provided 260 immunisations for influenza and whooping cough.

STRATEGIC GOAL 2: Increase **EFFICIENCY AND EFFECTIVENESS** of health services for patients particularly those at risk of poor outcomes.



The official launch of the new services in January this year: Gold Coast Primary Health Network CEO Matt Carrodus (second from right) and representatives from QuIHN, Lives Lived Well, Kalwun, Krurungal and the AOD Working Group.

- During the needs assessment consultation process, local AOD services on the Gold Coast highlighted the challenge to meet client demand and were consistently at capacity with wait lists for services.
- It's estimated that approximately 200,000 people receive AOD treatment in any one year in Australia.
- At the same time, modelled projections of unmet demand for AOD treatment are conservatively estimated to be between 200,000 and 500,000 people over and above those in treatment in any one year.

Saving lives through new alcohol and other drug services

"This client personally thanked us for saving her life."

There can be no more significant impact to show the importance of the new alcohol and other drug (AOD) services that we commissioned this year, than through the feedback of clients. In this case, it was an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander woman, being supported by Krurungal Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Corporation.

In January 2017, we launched early and post treatment support services for the growing northern Gold Coast corridor and services for the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community. And even though they have only been operating for five months, they are certainly making a difference to the Gold Coast, with almost 200 individuals accessing information and referrals or involved in treatment programs for a range of alcohol and drug addictions including ice.

The services have been developed in response to local demand with one of the most comprehensive needs analysis ever completed on the Gold Coast into mental health and alcohol and other drug services. Over 500 individuals and 200 organisations were consulted, and many were involved in designing what the new services would look like to ensure people receive the right care at the right time.

Krurungal Alcohol and Other Drug Services Officer, Kylie Miller, says they've hit the ground running, developing great partnerships with service providers and establishing great relationships with the clients.

"We continue to network and promote our service, as well as educate the Aboriginal community, in turn creating change and making positive lifestyle choices for our mob," Kylie said.

Geoff Manu, CEO from service provider QuIHN, said since January, they have supported over 100 individuals to address their substance use concerns, maintain healthier choices and commence their journey in reaching their treatment goals.

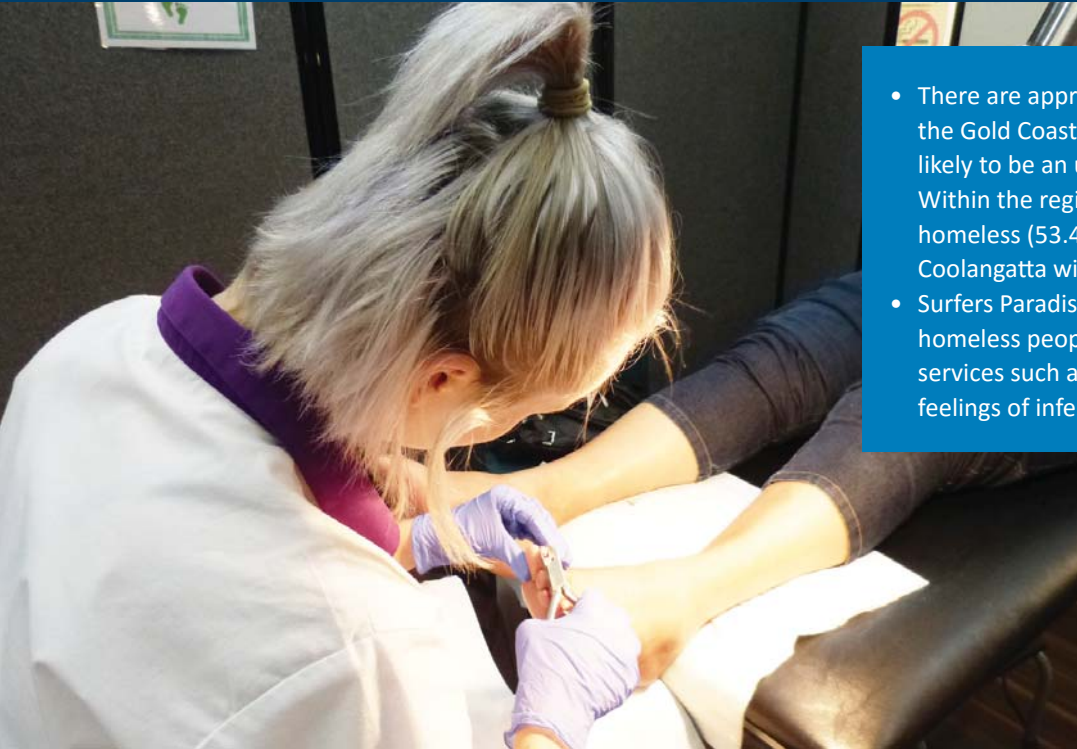
"We believe these much-needed services will assist the local community to reduce the burden attributable to alcohol and other drugs misuse and improve overall health functioning and social well-being of individuals. In turn, assisting communities towards healthier outcomes," Geoff said.

AOD counsellor from Lives Lived Well, Courtney Freeman, also had positive feedback.

"The Nerang Hub has received a significant number of referrals for people who 'didn't quite fit' into other service models, and for the clients who 'fall through the gaps'. It's great to be able to provide a service to people who really want the help. Being able to provide a supported pathway into rehab has also really made the process easier for everyone."

The needs analysis has also assisted in determining what mental health services are required locally and from July 2017, we are commissioning new programs for suicide prevention, low intensity, hard-to-reach and severe and complex mental health conditions.

STRATEGIC GOAL 2: Increase **EFFICIENCY AND EFFECTIVENESS** of health services for patients particularly those at risk of poor outcomes.



- There are approximately 1,426 homeless people on the Gold Coast and service providers report that this is likely to be an under-representation of the true numbers. Within the region, Southport had the highest rate of homeless (53.4 persons per 10,000 persons) followed by Coolangatta with a rate of 43.4.
- Surfers Paradise Anglican Crisis Centre reports that homeless people are unlikely to access mainstream health services such as General Practice due to stigma and feelings of inferiority.

Podiatry and social work services are changing the lives of both homeless clients and students.

Helping people who are homeless

For many people who are homeless on the Gold Coast, St John's Crisis Centre (SJCC) provides a safe haven where they can have a hot meal, hot shower, wash and dry their clothing and access various organisations for help.

Some of those services include podiatry and social work that we fund through SJCC, Griffith and Southern Cross universities. It's a program that is changing lives - and not just for the people that use the service.

Social work and podiatry students under supervision, as part of their training, see more than one hundred clients at month, who are at risk of or who are experiencing homelessness. General Manager Reverend Jon Brook said the social work service was invaluable to both students and clients.

"The students are meeting people at their lowest, people who are really in desperate need, and have no-where else to go and they can get supported. They can help them get passports, transport, referrals to services, GPs, employment, training and case management. This gives them hope – there is a light at the end of the tunnel."

One social work student said: "I've worked in other areas of social work and community services, and the homeless service has been one of the most rewarding experiences, working with people who are in need of our services. We help to strengthen their support

networks and foster resilience for them to be able to move forward and reduce their risk of homelessness."

And there are many more positive stories as one podiatry student explains.

"There have been many patients who would have ended up in hospital, or worse, if they hadn't had the opportunity to see us. These patients included terrible ulcers that could have easily led to amputation and tracking infection. These experiences make our service very valuable to the clients but also for us as students to be exposed to these situations and have insight and understanding and to improve our clinic skills."

Podiatry services are provided by Southern Cross University. One client who has used the podiatry service for the first time, said she was very pleased with the service and the staff. "I'm doing walking in the morning and afternoon and these nails have been a bit of a problem. The ladies have been very nice."

Said supervisor Dr Paul Butterworth: "The podiatry team at Southern Cross University offer members of the community the opportunity to seek advice, diagnosis and management for their foot problems. Patients will be seen by experienced podiatric clinicians and students who have access to the latest technology in treating lower limb and foot problems."

STRATEGIC GOAL 2: Increase **EFFICIENCY AND EFFECTIVENESS** of health services for patients particularly those at risk of poor outcomes.



- A Griffith University study has found this program reduced hospitalisations by Gold Coast pain sufferers by 20 per cent, from one hospitalisation a week to one hospitalisation a month.
- Demand for this program is growing significantly. In its first year 50 people were involved. In the last year, this has grown to almost 400 participants.
- It is estimated that one in five of the Australian population live with persistent pain.
- Estimated chronic pain costs \$12.6 billion per year. (2015) in lost productivity and healthcare costs with a projection to increase to \$20.5 billion in 2030.

Persistent pain sufferer June Steinweiss says she has found our persistent pain program "a Godsend."

Helping people manage their pain

"This program is a Godsend."

These five words sum up just how our Turning Pain into Gain Program has helped June Steinweiss, who joined the program when it first began in 2013. She had suffered from chronic pain from her back and knees for many years, and joined the program looking for ways to better understand and manage her pain.

She found the support by the specialised healthcare team including a pharmacist, GP, physiotherapist, dietitian, pain educator, counsellor and psychologist enlightening, and they helped her to understand her pain and alternative options to medications and surgery.

And when she was diagnosed with non-Hodgkin lymphoma in 2015 in the same year her son Trevor passed away from oesophageal cancer, June found the PHN program was a lifesaver and assisted her greatly through if not the most difficult time in her life.

"If I hadn't had this group I don't know where I would be. It helped me understand things from a mental health perspective and it helped ease that horrible journey," June said.

And many of the 872 participants who have been involved in this program since 2013, share the same view with 80 per cent of people who completed the most recent program evaluation, indicating they felt more confident to manage their pain. Says participant Sharon Fraser: "Things like the workshops are brilliant. They teach you coping skills, new ways to deal with your pain, no-one judges you, and accessibility – you can ring up and talk to people. I don't think I could survive without it."

Suzanna Wallace expressed the same sentiments. "I've met a few people that have become lifelong friends. We can compare doctors, pass on information, find someone who can help."

Coordinator Joyce McSwan says there are many other stories where the program has changed lives, using evidence based information and current research on how to live well with persistent pain.

"People tell us it helps keep them out of hospital, helps get them back to work and being productive again, makes them better partners and parents and really improves their quality of life. Most of all our participants have appreciated being validated, believed that their pain is real and they have learnt to come to understand their pain better and they are now back in the control seat again. The social support among like-minded pain sufferers has also been a very powerful element of the program." Joyce said.

STRATEGIC GOAL 3: Engage and **SUPPORT GENERAL PRACTICE AND OTHER STAKEHOLDERS** to facilitate improvements in our local health system.



Some of our up-and-coming doctors of the future – taking part in placements with Gold Coast general practices.

Training the next generation of GPs and practice nurses

According to a recent Australian Institute of Health and Welfare report 2014-2015, the average number of GP attendances per person by Gold Coast residents, were some of the highest rates in Australia. This indicates that local residents have one of the best opportunities to see a GP quickly – many other areas have longer wait times and particularly in rural areas, GPs can be in short supply.

And while most of us often take seeing a GP for granted, we need to ensure that doctors and nurses are trained for the future workforce, given the critical role that general practices play as the first point of contact for most people in the healthcare system. And this doesn't just happen by chance. It happens through extensive planning and training, which is where we step in.

Working with Griffith and Bond universities, in the 2016 calendar year, we assisted with a record 612 placements of nursing and medical students, in general practices.

Dr Simone Wright is a former student and now a Gold Coast GP. "To see how a general practice can be run successfully and feel part of the team that makes it do so, has given me the passion for General Practice that makes me inspired to go to work," she said.

Dr Andrew Weissenberger, current GP supervisor says: "By instilling a positive role model for General Practice, our students can be encouraged to consider General Practice as a rewarding career choice, and if you are lucky as we have been, your students can return as GP registrars and then post fellowship."

Students can receive active learning experiences for the whole spectrum of General Practice and learn to deal with patients one-to-one, under supervision, according to Associate Professor and Head of General Practice at Bond University, Jane Smith. "These medical students will be the next generation of medical practitioners or GPs and this program may be the start of a long and fruitful career in General Practice."

Dr Carl de Wet, Head of General Practice at Griffith University agrees: "Providing our students with world class medical education is only possible because of strong, local partnerships. We receive overwhelmingly positive feedback from students and general practices about the quality of their learning and teaching experiences on the Gold Coast."

And there's a lot of work that goes on behind the scenes, as our team run training and education sessions for the GP and nurse supervisors, and are constantly recruiting new practices to become involved and work closely with Bond and Griffith to ensure each placement is well managed and rewarding for both students and their supervisors.

Engaging with our community to improve health services



GCPHN Community Advisory Council members are helping to shape the planning and design of the local health system.

OUR PARTNERS AND STAKEHOLDERS INCLUDE:

- GPs, practice nurses, practice managers, practice staff
- Gold Coast Health
- Private hospital services
- The Gold Coast community
- Federal and state government agencies
- City of Gold Coast and Scenic Rim Regional Council
- Non-government and private community care agencies
- Allied health and other health professionals
- Griffith, Bond and Southern Cross universities
- Karulbo (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnership)
- Kalwun Development Corporation
- Krurungal Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Corporation
- Residential aged care facilities
- Health Consumers Queensland
- Queensland Primary Health Networks

To create one world class health system for the Gold Coast, we bring together the people that shape, influence, support and use local healthcare services, to collaborate, co-design and communicate, to ensure that current and planned health services will provide the right care, at the right time and by the right person.

Our Advisory Groups

We have two key advisory groups providing insight directly to the Board from both the clinical and community perspectives.

Clinical Advisory Council: The Clinical Advisory Council brings together experienced health professionals including specialists, GPs, allied health professionals, hospital and health services and service providers. Each member brings their own clinical perspective, and together, the group provides invaluable advice to the GCPHN Board about local healthcare needs, current and future services, future priorities and strategic planning to ultimately improve healthcare for Gold Coast residents.

As council member Dr Nick Buckmaster says: “The Clinical Council and the GCPHN/Gold Coast Health Lead Clinician Group have been critical in advising the GCPHN Board on strategies for reducing barriers for patients in their transitions between primary care and the public hospitals. As a result there have been changes to referral processes from GPs to the specialist outpatients, and an ongoing focus on better discharge information being returned from the hospitals to GPs. These committees are crucial in breaking down the silos which so often obstructs what we are all trying to achieve: the best possible outcomes for our patients.”

Community Advisory Council: “Having the insight of consumers guide us, ensures the decisions we make will result in a system that works for the community as well as clinicians.” - GCPHN Board Chair, Dr David Rowlands.

It can never be underestimated just how important users of the health system are, to bring their experiences and insights onto the table. The voice of consumers is essential to our work and their insights cannot be gained through any other source.

The Community Advisory Council (CAC) includes wide representation and diverse experience from the Gold Coast community. The 20 members play a significant role in providing comment and feedback about healthcare issues and services on the Gold Coast. They have provided valued advice on a range of topics such as chronic disease, mental health, after hours, advanced care planning, health promotion and cancer screening. Their feedback and direction has also assisted our needs assessment, planning and service development processes as well as feeding into national health consultation processes.

Says one CAC member: “Unlike feedback forms or writing complaints/suggestions to institutions, when part of a CAC, one’s voice is amplified as you speak in unison with others in a forum where people actually want to hear what you have to say, especially about how you felt and what you observed.” And another member: “Can reassure others that change is coming.”

STRATEGIC GOAL 3: Engage and **SUPPORT GENERAL PRACTICE AND OTHER STAKEHOLDERS** to facilitate improvements in our local health system.

OUR NETWORKS AND ADVISORY GROUPS INCLUDE:

- GCPHN Clinical Advisory Council
- GCPHN Community Advisory Council
- Gold Coast Health/GCPHN Lead Clinician Group
- Primary Health Care Improvement Committee
- Gold Coast Primary Care Partnership Council
- Heads up (mental health and alcohol and other drugs)
- CNAP panels for people with complex mental health needs
- End of Life Care Strategy Committee
- Palliative Care Steering Committee
- Community Aged Care Network
- Planning and Engagement Stakeholders Group
- Multicultural Services Network
- The Homelessness Network
- Mental Health and Alcohol and other Drugs
- Multi-Disciplinary Advisory Group
- Mental Health NGO Network
- Seniors Round-table
- Workforce Education Steering Committee
- Gold Coast Immunisation Steering Committee



The Women's Health in Partnership event we organised with Gold Coast Health, was attended by 120 GPs and practice staff, with presentations by medical specialists, GPs, allied health, midwifery and nursing staff.

Education

Given the changing and evolving nature of healthcare, continuous clinical education is critical to develop a highly skilled workforce. We provide education and training opportunities to targeted stakeholders where there is a need, to ensure they keep up-to-date with changes in primary care. Most activities are accredited with continuing professional development points.

From July 2016 to May 2017, in general practices alone, primary health care training and education was provided to 610 GPs, practice nurses and practice managers. A diverse range of topics were covered including wound care, chronic disease management, women's health, cultural safety training, immunisation, alcohol and other drugs, mental health, spirometry, nurse preceptor, nutrition support, influenza, aural health care, quality improvement, foot assessment, Zostavax, dementia, digital health and asthma to name a few.

"I cannot thank the team enough – practical aspects of this topic are dealt with least at medical school." - Participant at the Wound Management Active Learning event, May 2017.

Communication and information

During the recent severe weather events, we assisted Gold Coast Health in disseminating important messages to almost 4000 stakeholders, including GPs and other health professionals, through the record number of subscriptions to GCPHN publications. Seventy per cent of Gold Coast GPs are now subscribed to the online GP Bulletin, providing them with timely alerts, key information and advice and almost 3000 stakeholders, including health professionals, providers and the public are subscribed to the monthly online publication, Your Local News. More than 1000 copies of the Generally Speaking magazine is also distributed to GPs and practices every month.

Our website, www.healthygc.com.au, is a significant resource and received 555,000 visits from July 2016 until May 2017. On average, 2000 people visit the site each month. The website provides important information for health professionals including referral templates, resources and event opportunities, and houses the Gold Coast's most comprehensive online health and wellbeing service directory. This currently has 2320 listings from local GPs, specialists, pharmacies and allied health providers.

"I find PHN Gold Coast is amazing, I look forward to participate in education activities, therefore I keep looking in the web site." – feedback from a website user.

STRATEGIC GOAL 3: Engage and **SUPPORT GENERAL PRACTICE AND OTHER STAKEHOLDERS** to facilitate improvements in our local health system.



- Our practice support tiered system of engagement with general practices has been so successful other Primary Health Networks are considering using the same concept.
- In just three months (from January – March 2017) practice support staff sent 498 emails, had 206 face-to-face visits and made 118 phone calls to practices.
- From July 2016 to May 2017 the number of people attending practice events were 166 GPs, 316 practice nurses and 128 practice managers and other practice staff.

GCPHN Senior Project Officer Chris Ash assisting Martine Wilcox from Robina Town Medical Centre.

The importance of supporting General Practice

General practices are recognised as the cornerstone of primary healthcare, as they are the first point of contact for most people, into the health system. Their role is critical in disease prevention and detection, keeping people well and out of hospital and referring patients to specialists and support services. Traditionally GPs have been seen as managing people who are unwell, but their task in primary and preventative healthcare to help people stay well and prevent them developing disease, is becoming a pivotal role.

Our dedicated practice support team support all general practices on the Gold Coast to improve patient care and facilitate improvements to the health system. Seventy-six per cent (125 in total) of all local practices are also participating in our innovative tiered practice support program, with a dedicated practice support officer, who assists with quality initiatives, data collection and education.

Chris Ash who used to work in General Practice as a registered nurse, is now on the other side of the table – bringing her wealth of experience as a Senior Project Officer in the Practice Support Team. Her fellow team members include other experienced nurses, practice managers and administrative staff with previous backgrounds in General Practice.

"We provide feedback to practices on how the health of their patient population compares to the rest of Gold Coast and work with practices to improve systems around capturing patients at risk of developing a chronic disease who would benefit from preventive health support. We also support practices to target patients at risk of poor outcomes such as those living with chronic diseases," Chris said.

"We also assist practices with accreditation, immunisation, training in clinical auditing tools, providing useful resources and health information and host education events to keep staff up-skilled."

Robina GP Lisa Beecham said visits to each practice by our practice support team were very useful as they were tailor made.

"Often this is the first time doctors get to see their own data and get a demonstration on how they can 'mine' their data to target at risk patients and better manage their patients. Tips and resources are also demonstrated," Dr Beecham said.

Practice support staff also play an important role in assisting practices with digital health. At the end of March 2017, a record 151 general practices and 102,668 Gold Coast consumers were registered to participate in a My Health Record.

STRATEGIC GOAL 4: Be a **HIGH PERFORMING, EFFICIENT AND ACCOUNTABLE** organisation.



"After only 18 months of operation, we commissioned new mental health, alcohol and other drug services to address unmet demand and complement existing services."

Members of our advisory councils, Board and key stakeholders receiving a strategic update.

Becoming a world class commissioning organisation

We have set ourselves a challenging five-year goal to develop as a world class commissioning organisation that is a leader in building a world class health system for the Gold Coast. We have been gaining international expertise and developing a world class commissioning framework, to ensure the right systems, right skills and structures are in place to be a high performing and efficient organisation.

Underpinning the success of achieving this ambitious target, is high level strategic planning to drive a systematic and proactive approach that will ultimately improve patient care for Gold Coast residents.

The GCPHN Strategic Plan 2017 - 2022

The GCPHN Strategic Plan 2017-2022 is helping to shape future direction and priorities and sets out how we aim to progress these through current services and program or through commissioning of new and redesigned services. It helps demonstrate strategic outcomes, and how measuring progress and success.

This plan is underpinned by a comprehensive needs analysis and population health profile of the Gold Coast community, to identify local demographics, the current healthcare situation and priorities for improvement.

The 2016-2021 GCPHN Five Year Commissioning Maturity Plan

To build on previous and ongoing business development activities, we have developed a five-year maturity plan - an overarching framework that reflects all organisational development activities aimed at improving capacity, capability, systems and culture. The plan is designed to support the achievement of the strategic goals outlined in the GCPHN Strategic Plan.

We believe it is also important to develop our people, systems and infrastructure to meet our Strategic Intent, investing in a new performance and leadership framework, annual people survey and process mapping initiatives, to ensure they add value to our stakeholders.

Our early success

After only 18 months of operation, we commissioned new mental health, alcohol and other drug services to address unmet demand and complement existing services.

Gold Coast Primary Health Network

"Building one world class health system for the Gold Coast."

Primary Care Gold Coast (ABN 47152953092), trading as the Gold Coast Primary Health Network.

Level 1, 14 Edgewater Court, Robina 4226 | PO Box 3576 Robina Town Centre QLD 4230

P: 07 5635 2455 | F: 07 5635 2466 | E: info@gcphn.com.au | www.healthygc.com.au

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