



2010-11

Year in Review

A Message from the Chairman - Hilton Brown

NSW Central West Division of General Practice (CWDGP) was established in 1993 and aims to work with general practice to support improved health outcomes in our communities through high quality primary health care. This Community Outcomes publication is produced annually to showcase the diversity of programs and achievements that the CWDGP staff and members achieve each year. It is evidence of the expertise and commitment of this organisation to improving health outcomes in our community and why we believe the CWDGP is well-qualified to take the next step and embrace the broader scope and functions expected by the Commonwealth Government of Medicare Locals.

The Federal Government announced the establishment of Medicare Locals as part of a national health reform in April 2010. These primary health care organisations are designed to improve coordination and integration of primary health care in local communities, address service gaps, and make it easier for patients to navigate the local health care system.

The NSW Central West Division of General Practice and Dubbo Plains Division of General Practice have committed to working with one another to establish the Western (NSW) Medicare Local with roles and responsibilities responsive to the directions of the National Health Reform agenda and the needs of local communities.

As you read this year's CWDGP Community Outcomes publication, I encourage you to consider that this is just a snapshot of what has been achieved by the CWDGP in some of the Commonwealth's key priority areas including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health, mental primary health, aged care and population/preventative health over the last 12 months. As we embark on national health reform in the year ahead, it is exciting to think that all of this and much more is set to be delivered in our region if CWDGP is given the opportunity to transition into the Medicare Local for the Western NSW region.



The image on the cover of the 2010 Community Outcomes brochure is a reproduction of a painting by Talbragar-Wiradjuri artist, Lewis Burns.

Throughout the painting, people are represented by different symbols, including those with red crosses on them which represent GPs. The dots around these symbols represent the life force or Spirit of the person. The symbols are painted four different colours - Red, Yellow, Black & White, to represent the different people or Skin Groups from around the world. Every symbol for a person has red oxide inside it, which communicates that 'we all bleed the same and we can all suffer the same health problems'.

Kangaroo (Bundar) tracks can be seen on the right side of the painting, and Emu (Gulbry) tracks up the left. These, along with the Goanna (Googar) in the top centre, represent the Totems of many of the Wiradjuri communities. These also represent the natural food sources of the same communities, providing that it was not their tribe's Totem. The footprints cover the paths that we all travel to see a GP. The paths in this painting show that people have come from the four corners of the Earth to live in this area. Even though we travel different paths to see a Doctor, we all walk the same path out.

Hands in the background represent The Wiradjuri Peoples' Ancestors and how they are in our presence, in our minds and in our hearts. These hands are in the four different colours, as they also represent Reconciliation. The dark section in the centre at the top signifies the gap between the Aboriginal health status and non-Aboriginal health status. As the people move towards the Doctors sitting at the bottom of the painting, you can see the gap narrows. This signifies closing the gap between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal health status through reconciliation.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people experience a burden of disease two-and-a-half times that of other Australians. A large part of the burden of disease is due to chronic diseases such as cardiovascular disease, diabetes, cancer, chronic respiratory disease and chronic kidney disease. This can be reduced by earlier identification, and management of risk factors and the disease itself.

An important part of the Australian Government's response to closing the gap in Indigenous health outcomes is the Closing the Gap - Indigenous Chronic Disease Package (ICDP), which is currently being delivered by CWDGP in the central west of NSW. The objectives of the ICDP are to:

- Close the gap in life expectancy between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians by 2031
- Halve the gap in mortality rates for Indigenous children under five by 2018

CWDGP has commenced rolling out Closing the Gap (CTG) in central western NSW. Three staff have been employed through the ICDP, including the Aboriginal Health Program Coordinator in Bathurst; the Indigenous Outreach Worker in Parkes; and the Chronic Disease Care Coordinator in Bathurst and Orange.

All General Practices, Allied Health Services and Aboriginal Medical Services within the region have received information on the CTG program and GPs have been provided with a Closing the Gap resource folder produced by CWDGP. A commitment has been made to provide regular updates, support and assistance around the ICDP.

The CTG Coordinator and the Indigenous Outreach Worker have engaged with Aboriginal Community Groups and Aboriginal Organisations to promote CTG to local Aboriginal people. For example, information days for community organisations across the Division region; and a 30 second television advertisement was developed in partnership with Dubbo Plains Division of General Practice, featuring high-profile NRL player, Preston Campbell, encouraging Aboriginal people to have a health check. CWDGP has also sponsored three Bathurst NRL teams who will play in the Aboriginal Rugby League Knockout to be staged in Bathurst over the October long weekend.

The Indigenous Outreach Worker based in Parkes assists Aboriginal patients to attend health services appointments in

the area. In addition, the worker sources programs and services that provide for women's and children and also men's health, and arranges referrals to those services and programs.

Finally, a key role of all three CTG workers is to actively engage with all community-based organizations, allied health services and General Practices in providing them with information and support and to encourage collaboration and integration amongst these services to improve health outcomes for local Aboriginal people. The case study featured demonstrates the CWDGP's role in facilitating this coordinated approach to identifying and implementing community-based solutions to local health needs, and is a model that will continue to be rolled out through the Western (NSW) Medicare Local in the future.



GEO of CWDGP, Sandra Christensen (right) receives a Windradyne Warriors Aboriginal Rugby League jersey, recognising CWDGP's support.

A Case Study of Closing The Gap in Action

CWDGP has been a key partner in the establishment of a clinical centre in Cowra as an extension to the Yalbillunga Boori Day Care centre, to improve access to primary care services for local indigenous people. Due to the challenges the Yalbillunga Centre found in attracting medical and allied health services for its clients, CWDGP recognised the need to implement innovative solutions to link Aboriginal people to mainstream medical and allied health services. The CWDGP Close the Gap (CTG) Coordinator and the Indigenous Outreach Worker facilitated a meeting involving key stakeholders: Cowra Shire Council, the Local Hospital Network, Kendal Street Medical Services, Yalbillunga, and Aboriginal community members, which resulted in the development of a Community Agreement to find a solution. To ensure community input into the strategy, the CTG Coordinator and the Indigenous Outreach Worker also assisted to organise a community barbecue event, which attracted some 30 services and individuals.

As a result of the community agreement the following has been achieved:

- The local GP practice agreed to conduct a half day GP clinic each week, staffed by two GP's
- Yalbillunga provided the use of the childcare bus to facilitate patient transport to and from the clinics and to other health facilities such as headspace, pharmacies, hospital and pathology. CWDGP funds the running costs and driver wages through the Rural Primary Health Service (RPHS) program
- FAHCSIA has funded a receptionist at Yalbillunga who coordinates clinic bookings for the clinic and communicates these to the GP practice and the transport driver
- The Western NSW Local Health District now delivers a range of allied health and primary care services from the Yalbillunga centre, including a women's health clinic that has delivered diverse services ranging from immunization, to hearing and eye tests, and breast screening. They have also provided an Aboriginal Health Worker to provide a coordination role for patients at the local GP practice during clinics
- CWDGP has organised a speech pathologist to deliver services from the Yalbillunga centre through Rural Primary Health Service funds, who will provide early intervention services to children at the collocated Yalbillunga Boori Day Care centre.

Preventative Health

A key element of the Commonwealth government's national health reform is early intervention and prevention to reduce pressure on other parts of the health system. The Commonwealth aims to tackle lifestyle-related issues that cause chronic disease, including the rising burden of obesity, tobacco and alcohol consumption. Over the past 12 months, the CWDGP has implemented a range of programs designed to support people to adopt healthier lifestyles and educate local communities about the risks of chronic disease.

The Lifestyle Modification Program

Each Lifestyle Modification Program (LMP) runs over 6 months and consists of a series of group motivational and educational sessions supporting lifestyle and behavioral changes and encouraging the adoption of healthy lifestyle choices. The LMP sessions cover topics such as:

- The risks of diabetes and their relationship to lifestyle risk factors
- The importance of regular diabetes screening
- Nutrition advice and education
- Physical activity advice and education
- Behavioural strategies to support the adoption and maintenance of healthy lifestyle changes
- Smoking cessation and alcohol reduction advice and information about community resources to provide support in maintaining lifestyle change.

The LMP has had a total of 40 local residents enrolled in the program over the past 18 months.

Go 4 Fun

Go 4 Fun is an adaptation of the Mind, Exercise, Nutrition... Do it! (MEND) program, funded by NSW Health to support children aged 7-13 who are outside their healthy weight range. Go 4 Fun aims to encourage children and their parents/carers to adopt healthy attitudes to food and eating, along with motivational strategies for families to exercise on a regular basis. Go 4 Fun endeavours to empower children and their parents/carers to make more informed food choices. The program then shows participants how to Do it! in a fun, easy and sustainable way.



CWDGP has successfully conducted three Go 4 Fun programs in Bathurst and Blayney, with a total of 34 participants enrolled in the three programs.

Local Exercise and Nutrition (LEAN)

The LEAN (Local Exercise and Nutrition) Project has been coordinated by the CWDGP through funding from the Australian Government Department of Health and Ageing. The LEAN project aims to assist rural families to improve their health and wellbeing through awareness raising and promotion of good nutrition and healthy physical activity.

Initial funding (2010-2013) has allowed the program to be rolled out in the rural communities of Hill End, Glen Alice and Oberon. Steering committees in each of these towns are working with the LEAN Project Officer to identify local health issues and set goals and objectives. To date the project has introduced:

- Yoga, Zumba, Thai Chi and Gymparoo in the communities of Glen Alice and Hill End
- Assisted in the resurfacing of the Glen Alice Tennis Court, forming partnerships with the local community, Tennis Australia and the Active After School Program. Social tennis competitions have now started in Glen Alice
- Supported the delivery of first aid courses in Glen Alice
- The donation of healthy lifestyle resources to the Bathurst Library for the Hill End LEAN Collection
- Partnered with Galloping Gumnut Mobile Children's Service to provide resources to assist the staff to promote good nutrition and healthy physical activity
- The LEAN Package is a highlight of the LEAN Project with the development of a resource kit for use by community and parent-run play groups. The LEAN package provides resources and equipment for parents to extend their children's learning environments, while promoting good nutrition and healthy physical activity.



(Above) Capertree Valley Community Tennis Day – just one of the achievements of the LEAN project over the past 12 months.

(Below) The LEAN program aims to encourage good nutrition and healthy physical activity in local communities.



Aged Care

Positive Connections 4 Kids

Positive Connections 4 Kids (PC4K) is an eighteen month project running from July 2010 to December 2011 through funding from Greater Western Area Health Service – Communities NSW Better Futures initiative. The project provides opportunities for young people aged 9-14 and their families to engage in a variety of creative, sports and cultural activities which:

- promote social inclusion and development of wider community connections
- build resilience by providing opportunities for young people to develop skills (e.g. in communication, problem solving, decision making, conflict resolution)
- encourage young people to identify and build upon individual strengths and interests
- promote increased confidence and self esteem by encouraging young people to engage in new situations (try new activities, meet new people, work in groups)
- encourage young people and their families to engage with local services in a familiar environment, promoting service awareness and help seeking behaviour.

An additional program goal is to improve collaboration between Cowra's youth and family services, many of which are staffed by outreach or solo workers, through the development of stronger partnerships and a local youth network group.

A regular schedule of free or low cost activities has been held throughout the year in partnership with local schools, council, PCYC and other community groups, including:

- Regular school holiday workshops held in partnership with Cowra Shire Council, Cowra Youth Council, OCTEC Youth Connections and Central West Libraries, including beading and jewellery making; skate park activities; creative dance; hip hop; magic tricks & illusion; juggling and circus skills; acting games; painting on canvas; and claymation
- A series of after school circus and performance workshops in partnership with Cowra PCYC (May – June 2010)
- A series of Friday night workshops run in partnership with Cowra PCYC and OCTEC targeted at indigenous youth (July–December 2010; March – April 2011 & July – Dec 2011). Workshops included a mixture of sports, art, craft, circus & performance skills, hip hop, cooking / healthy eating, with activities selected in collaboration with participants and in response to identified interests
- Delivery of Lifeline Peer Skills workshops to sixteen peer leaders from Cowra High School (2 day training course and follow up visits in school). Peer skills trains peer helpers in support skills, help seeking, communication and problem solving, boundaries of peer helpers and when and how to seek adult help. Peer helpers worked with year seven students as part of transition to high school program
- Delivery of PASS (Promoting Access & Support Seeking in Young People) Workshops to 123 year 9 students
- A 'Surviving Adolescents' workshop for parents in partnership with Relationships Australia
- Formation of a local Youth Network Group involving schools and key youth services.

The Australian Government will be responsible for a national aged care system aimed at providing better access and information on aged care including, delivering a nationally consistent aged care system; and providing more aged care places and beds to ensure older people are cared for in the most appropriate way, and not in hospitals when it is not necessary.

Age Care Access Services

The Aged Care Access Initiative team provided over 1300 Occasions of Service in 2010 to improve access to primary care for residents in Bathurst, Canowindra, Condobolin, Forbes, Molong and Parkes aged care facilities. Residents accessed service either as individuals, such as one-on-one such as dietician advice or occupational therapy; or in group sessions, including exercise and falls prevention programs conducted by a physiotherapist. Overall the program has doubled the number of services provided since the same time last year through strong relationships between residential aged care facilities and allied health providers.



Dietician, Sharon Luciano (back) provides advice and support to residents at St Catherine's Aged Care Facility in Bathurst.



CWDGP has implemented a range of programs designed to support people to adopt healthier lifestyles and educate local communities about the risks of chronic disease

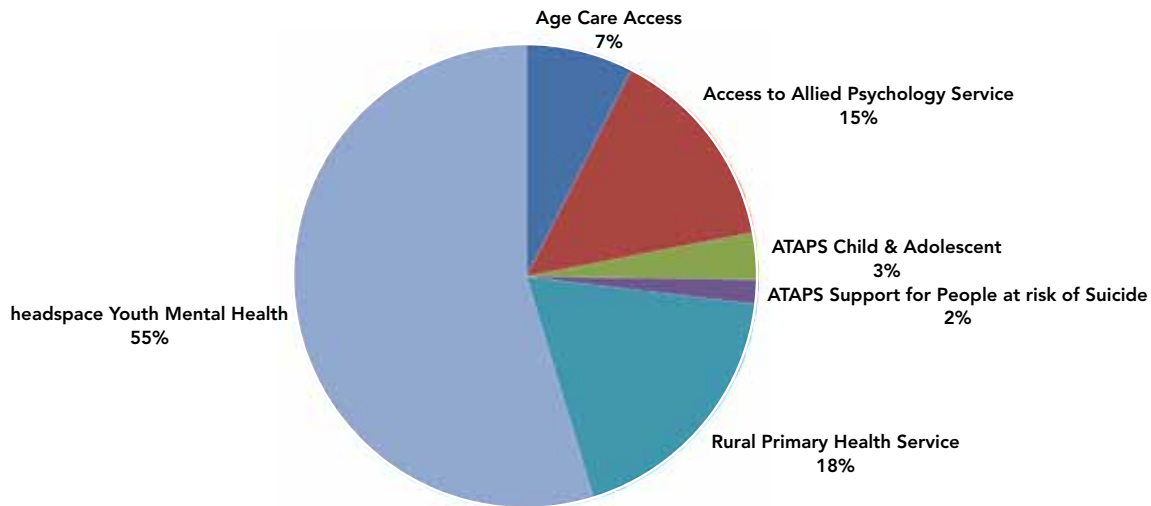


Mental Health

The Commonwealth Government is committed to improving the mental health system to ensure people with mental illness, their families and carers have access to the services they need. The establishment of Medicare Locals will improve local integration of Commonwealth and other mental health services in primary care. Medicare Locals will work with Local Hospital Networks to improve clinical pathways for people with mental health needs and headspace sites to ensure strong referral pathways and care coordination.

As outlined in the chart below, CWDGP is already implementing many of these initiatives to improve services for people in our community experiencing mental ill-health, and builds a strong foundation for enhanced improvements as reform of the mental health sector continues in the year ahead.

Community Services January to December 2010



Access to Allied Psychological Services

The CWDGP ATAPS program targets individuals requiring primary mental health care who are unlikely to have their needs met through Medicare-based mental health services, due to factors including geography and affordability. In particular, the program targets youth; Healthcare Card, Pensioner or Seniors Card holders; Indigenous Australians; and people from Culturally and Linguistically Diverse backgrounds. Almost 2,500 occasions of service were provided to the communities in the central west, including Bathurst, Blayney, Canowindra, Condobolin, Eugowra, Forbes, Kandos, Lithgow, Molong, Oberon, Orange, Rylstone and Trundle.

Supplementary ATAPS funding also targets groups considered a priority by the Commonwealth government through innovative and flexible means of delivery, including:

- women with perinatal depression, by aiming to improve the prevention and early detection of antenatal and postnatal depression, and to provide better care, support and treatment for expectant and new mothers experiencing perinatal depression
- children, with 595 occasions of service provided as individual or family interventions in Orange, Bathurst and Cowra in the six months to June 30, 2010
- individuals who have attempted suicide or are at high risk of suicide, through support for GPs managing young people aged 12-25 by providing a responsive psychological service within 24-72 hours of a GP referral or provisional referral from a hospital emergency department. Delivered through the **headspace** centre in Bathurst, more than 300 occasions of service were provided, with each young person supported for up to two months before being linked to ongoing care or referred to specialist care, when required.

Medical Specialist Outreach Assistance Program (MSOAP)

MSOAP aims to improve access to specialist services in communities where they would otherwise be unavailable, and at the same time enhance the link between these visiting specialists and local service providers, including GPs. Integrated and coordinated services are essential to ensure the highest standards of care and, consequently, MSOAP patients are managed under shared care arrangements between the visiting specialists and referring local practitioners.

MSOAP specialists provided over 1169 occasions of service to the Central West community in 2010, with a particular highlight being the reestablishment of psychiatry services through the program. Services included Psychiatry – Blayney; Rheumatology and Dermatology – Orange; and Endocrinology, Nephrology and Psychiatry – Parkes.

As an extension to the MSOAP program, CWDGP in partnership with NSW Rural Doctors Network is undertaking a short-term Psychiatry Telemedicine Initiative trial to explore ways to improve rural and remote community access to specialist services. The trial is not designed to substitute face-to-face psychiatry consultations, but to supplement already established outreach services or to introduce a service where it is unlikely to be possible due to extreme remoteness and very small populations. The technology utilized is the latest in high-resolution image transmission and is very simple to use.



Integrated and coordinated services are essential to ensure the highest standards of care

NSW Central West headspace

NSW Central West **headspace** is one of 30 centres around Australia funded by the Australian Government under the Promoting Better Mental Health - Youth Mental Health Initiative. It has been established as a 'one-stop-shop' for young people aged 12-25 years delivering free services including primary care (GP's), mental health, drug and alcohol, and social and vocational assistance. The demand for services has remained strong. The Bathurst centre has received 489 new referrals in the last 12 months, and our smaller satellite centre in Cowra has recorded 110 new referrals. There have been 11,415 occasions of service delivered to young people at the two centres in this time.

In January 2011, the Bathurst centre moved to larger premises at 130 Havannah Street, providing the opportunity to expand the Medicare-funded services offered. The move coincided with a community open day which was attended by a large number of local community members and other local services. The positive response by services to the opening of the new centre reflected the strong partnerships and links built within the local community over the past three years, including the annual nab B2B bike Cyclo Sportif Challenge, organised by the Rotary Club of Bathurst Daybreak, along with other community events such as the inaugural 'Codes for a Cause' and the Spring Spectacular, all of which delivered valuable financial support to **headspace**.

Over the last 12 months, **headspace** has also hosted a number of education sessions, including the Pride and Prejudice program, an evidence based education package addressing the needs of GLBT youth; a workshop on Managing Challenging Behaviours, including aggression and suicidal behaviours; and **headspace** staff have continued to deliver the Promoting Access and Support Seeking program within local high schools, encouraging young people to access health services such as **headspace**.



NSW Central West **headspace** Manager, Narelle Stocks and Rotary Club of Bathurst Daybreak member, Doug Kinlyside with Gaby Goldsmith, a participant in the nab B2B Family Fun Challenge. The nab B2B is one of the major community fundraisers for **headspace**, raising \$20,000 for the service in 2010 and encourages bike riders of all abilities to participate in cycling to improve health and wellbeing.

Mental Health/Drug and Alcohol Shared Care Project

This 12 month pilot project was funded by NSW Health through GPNSW and aimed at providing clinical services in an integrated model of care for clients with co-morbid mental health and drug and alcohol issues. Delivered from the Bathurst and Cowra **headspace** centres, the service has worked with 12-25 year old clients who have experienced significant clinical issues and have needs that are beyond the scope of MBS-funded services. Delivering the service within **headspace** has enabled access to youth with emerging mental health concerns and in the earlier stages of developing substance use disorders, with 47% of clients aged between 12 and 19.

Another significant outcome of the project is the collaborative relationships that have been formed between Western Local Health Network Mental Health, Drug and Alcohol and Health Promotion and Prevention units; local NGO's and GP practices. Through the establishment of a reference group, issues around referral pathways, professional development and case conferencing have been identified and steps taken to address these.



NSW Central West **headspace** is the first **headspace** centre in NSW to attain accreditation by the Australian General Practice Accreditation Limited, recognizing the high standards and quality service provided to local young people.



CWDGP received funding through the Aurora Group to bring the 'Pride and Prejudice' training program to the Central West. Delivered by the programs creator, Daniel Witthaus, the training was hosted by headspace and educated health and education professionals on how to challenge homophobia and affirm sexual diversity in the community.

Photo courtesy of The Western Advocate.



www.cwdgp.org.au

265 Durham Street
PO Box 742
Bathurst NSW 2795
Phone: 02 6332 6646
Fax: 02 6332 6648