

HealthMatters

Sydney – it's *your* local health district

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Another success story



Four days after opening the doors on the NSW Health Vaccination Centre at Sydney Olympic Park, we vaccinated our 10,000th patient.

And on day seven, we logged more than 5,400 patients in one day.

It's been an incredible ride since we took on the lease at 1 Figtree Drive, fitting out the commercial shell with about 90 vaccination stations, a pharmacy, medical rooms and staff areas.

For our 10,000th patient Bee Lim, the celebration was a pleasant surprise.

"I definitely wasn't expecting this today."

But she's now open to any offers of flowers and champagne when she returns for her second dose on 4 June.

Since its opening, the centre has been visited three times by the Premier



Gladys Berejiklian and Health Minister Brad Hazzard, who have been impressed with the efficiency of the process and the extraordinarily positive feedback from patients.



Message from the Chief Executive



Dr Teresa Anderson AM
*Chief Executive,
Sydney Local Health District*

We have just opened the state's first mass vaccination centre at Homebush and I'd like to sincerely thank everyone involved for their efforts in pulling this together.

When we took on the lease of 1 Figtree Drive, Homebush, the building was little more than an empty shell. Hundreds of staff have been working tirelessly to fit it out so we can vaccinate up to 30,000 people a week. This has included staff from engineering to ICT, pharmacy, security, workforce, communications, nursing, medicine, allied health, and education and many more.

We still have much work ahead of us as we start vaccinating thousands of people but the mass vaccination centre has been another extraordinary achievement in an

extraordinary year. It will be staffed by more than 300 Sydney Local Health District staff and I look forward to the months ahead.

In other news, this month we are celebrating International Nurses and Midwives Day, and I'd like to thank the thousands of nurses and midwives we have across Sydney Local Health District. During the pandemic, many of you have gone over and above, stepping up for duty in our COVID-19 wards, COVID-19 intensive care units, testing clinics, vaccination hubs, airport screening and the Special Health Accommodation. Others have taken on more responsibility to fill the gaps. You have shown how innovative, resilient and compassionate you are, and I hope everyone takes some time this month to say thank you.

Until next time, stay healthy.

Message from the Acting Chair, District Board



Victoria Weekes
*Acting Chair,
Sydney Local Health
District Board*

It is impressive to see the mass vaccination centre at Homebush up and running, and an honour to see that we are again leading the way in NSW.

The board is immensely proud of the work conducted by this District since the pandemic arrived 15 months ago. It has been an incredible effort and I would like to say thank you for continuing efforts in keeping our community safe.

Concord's redevelopment is getting close to completion and it will be fantastic to have this new space open for our staff and patients by the end of the year. It is also great to see work progressing

on RPA's redevelopment with key consultations already underway, plus work happening on schematic designs. RPA has a world-class reputation and I know we are all very much looking forward to this exciting and much needed \$750 million redevelopment.

At the end of June, we are bidding farewell to five board members, including myself, as there is a 10-year limit on board appointments. Joining me in departing will be Paul Torzillo, Fran O'Brien, David McLean and Thomas Karplus. It has been an absolute pleasure serving this District and we wish our successors all the very best. I know you will give them your continued support.



New unit taking form

Construction on the state's first public Parent and Baby Unit at RPA is fast progressing, with foundation concrete poured recently.

The one-storey Parent and Baby Unit located behind the King George V building on Missenden Road at Camperdown will care for new parents with severe mental illness when it opens later this year.

Each of the eight bedrooms will be accommodate a parent, up to two infants under 12-months of age and a partner or family member.

The unit will also feature space and equipment for antenatal care, a 24-hour respite nursery, a mothercraft room, a play area, a retreat room and communal areas to accommodate multiple families with children.



Parent and Baby Units are part of the NSW Government's \$700 million statewide Mental Health Infrastructure Program and provide

acute in-patient care and treatment to parents experiencing psychiatric illness in the perinatal period, together with their infant.

Remembering a man of vision

Arthur Stephenson was a man of many talents.

At school in Melbourne, he shone as an outstanding athlete.

At work, he climbed quickly from apprentice builder to apprentice architect in New Guinea and Western Australia, before serving in France during the First World War.

Again, he excelled and was awarded the Military Cross for gallantry.

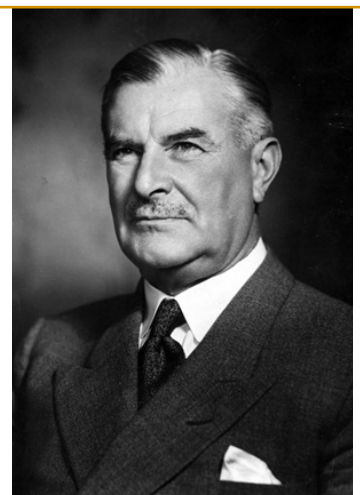
At the end of the war, Arthur wasted no time in completing his architecture studies in London before returning to Australia to set up his first business with a borrowed desk in 1921.

Within the first few years, he knew his passion lay with designing hospitals and he prided himself on "listening

with sympathy and acute intelligence" to the men and women who would work in his buildings.

In partnership with visionaries Percy Meldrum and Donald Turner, Arthur was responsible for the design of hundreds of hospitals across Australia and the world – including our own Concord Hospital, Sydney Dental Hospital, the King George V Memorial Hospital for Mothers and Babies, and Gloucester House at RPA.

At the height of his success, he had offices in Singapore, New Zealand, Taiwan and Hong Kong, employing up to 400 people.



But the "blue-eyed, mild-mannered" Arthur was not one for the spotlight and was rarely seen outside his own circle of friends.

This month, Arthur would have turned 131. And we continue to be grateful for his iconic buildings on our campuses.





Heart Bank treasured resource

When Sean Lal was 10, his dad developed acute heart failure from a viral infection.

A heart transplant, performed by renowned cardiac surgeon Dr Victor Chang gave his dad a few more years, but it wasn't enough to save him.

Today, Dr Lal is a consultant cardiologist at Royal Prince Alfred Hospital and the director of acute heart failure services.

In his research, he's looking beyond the usual causes of heart failure, such as a heart attack, high blood pressure or diabetes, to find more fundamental drivers. The most common cause of heart failure is blocked arteries which creates a particular problem for women.

Only one in three women has the classic heart attack chest pain. Most experience shortness of breath, nausea, and pain in one or both arms. This means women are often misdiagnosed, with a recent Sydney study finding they are twice as likely not to receive the most appropriate treatment. This could delay their heart failure diagnosis. The condition is incurable, with death a definite possibility.

If you were diagnosed with heart failure in the 1970s, your chance of surviving beyond five years was 30 per cent. Today, with new treatments and faster diagnosis, the five-year survival rate is about 60 per cent for the 30 million people worldwide, including half a million Australians, who currently have heart failure.

"We urgently need new treatments. I hate seeing families go through what my family went through," says Dr Lal.

Fortunately, Dr Lal's team has access to an extraordinary resource – the largest bank of heart tissue in the world.

Located at the Charles Perkins Centre, it has helped give new insights into why heart failure occurs and how it differs in men and women.

The hearts have been donated by St Vincent's Hospital heart failure patients who required transplants. Now, for the first time, heart failure samples are also being collected from patients undergoing all forms of heart surgery at Royal Prince Alfred Hospital.

The Heart Bank was created in 1989 by Emeritus Professor Cristobal dos Remedios and Dr Victor Chang. Their



visionary idea was to snap freeze hearts at -196°C using liquid nitrogen, preserving the DNA, proteins and enzymes within the heart tissue for future analysis, when advancing technology might make more possible, as it has.

Today, the Sydney Heart Bank shares tissue samples and data to some of the best heart researchers in the world, including those at Harvard, Oxford, Imperial College London and Johns Hopkins.

Dr Lal's team recently analysed what makes the heart tick at the molecular level. They found changes in many important processes in the heart, including mechanisms that generate energy for the heart, pathways that deal with injury, clotting mechanisms, and processes that maintain structural integrity.

App pilot for dental patients

Artificial intelligence is set to revolutionise orthodontic care at Sydney Dental Hospital, with researchers successfully piloting a smart phone app which remotely monitors patients' treatment, cutting travel and wait times.



The Monitoring, Assessing Dental pilot study explored whether the use of an app that incorporates AI would result in orthodontists being able to supervise care, enabling patients to receive treatment in a more convenient and timely way.

Professor Ali Darendeliler, the head of the hospital's

Orthodontics Department, is leading the pilot study with support from Hui Theng Chong, Mary Hatem, Geetika Sachdeva, Dr Shilpi Ajwani and Dr Oyku Dalci (*pictured*).

They selected 30 patients under 18 who are awaiting treatment to correct a poorly aligned jaw and/or

crooked teeth. Two dentists took photographs, radiographs and 3D scans of each patient's mouth and teeth and an orthodontist used the records to devise a treatment plan. The 3D intraoral scans were used to get customised plastic sequential aligners made for each patient.

The patients regularly took photographs on their own smart phones using a special scan box, and uploaded them to the app which used AI to analyse them.

"The AI detects tooth movements as small as 0.1mm, which is not visible to the human eye. So, it tells us if the aligner has worked and if the patient can progress to the next stage in their treatment," Dr Dalci said.



Health services for Zetland



Here are the concept designs for our new health service in Zetland.

Known as RPA HealthOne, it will provide a range of services focused on population health, early intervention, health promotion and prevention, and services that would traditionally be provided in a hospital setting at RPA, such as clinics for diabetes, cardiology, gastro and liver issues, child and family health, and mental health.

It is part of a \$100 million NSW Government investment in out-of-hospital care.

Sydney Local Health District Chief Executive of Sydney Local Health District Dr Teresa Anderson said the concept designs were a significant step towards boosting health care for the rapidly growing local population.

"The District will partner with community, primary care, and education and training institutes to enable RPA HealthOne to support the existing medical and health neighbourhood and improve patient care outside of the hospital system," Dr Anderson said.

In addition, a major focus of RPA HealthOne is the formation of an Academic Primary Care Unit which will partner with primary practitioners in the area, such as GPs, nurse practitioners, pharmacists and allied health professionals.

"By working with our university partners and the Central and Eastern Sydney Primary Health Network, RPA HealthOne can play a unique role in



supporting primary health practitioners in the local area to translate and adopt the latest clinical research findings to support the best outcomes for patients," Dr Anderson said.

RPA HealthOne will be located at 944 Bourke Street, Zetland, close to the Green Square train station.

The two-storey building will feature eight consultation rooms, six treatment rooms, meeting rooms, a gymnasium for patient therapy and parking for cars and bicycles, plus a drop-off area.

Green Square is the largest urban renewal site in Australia and is growing rapidly.

It's projected to be home to more than 61,000 people by 2031, and with many thousands of people also working in the area daily, it will become one of the most densely populated areas in Australia.

Sydney Local Health District is partnering with Health Infrastructure to deliver the RPA HealthOne.

Early works are nearing completion and a Development Application has been lodged to the City of Sydney. The project is estimated to be completed in late next year.

High scores for RPA pair

Hard work has paid off for RPA obstetric and gynecological registrars Lauren Ferris (right) and Sara Ooi who have jointly achieved the highest score for the national Fellow of the Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists Objective Structured Clinical Exams.

The exam requires a gruelling preparation schedule of at least 20 to 30 hours a week, on top of a specialty with many emergencies.

"This is my sixth year and Sara's fifth at RPA and the hospital has been very supportive," says Lauren.

"A lot of fellows and consultants provided us with advice throughout and helped us achieve the scores we did. We are very lucky to have such a supportive department and would recommend training at RPA."

Now that the hurdle is out of the way, the rising stars are looking forward to spending more time with their loved ones.

"My husband and I got married between my oral and OSCE exams," says Lauren. "And I'm looking forward to spending more time with him – and our puppy."





Zooming from home

When runner Laura Kent fractured her foot after tripping over a kerb, she could have faced multiple hospital visits in a moon boot for check-ups.

Instead, after her initial treatment in RPA's emergency department, she was monitored at home via Zoom thanks to a new service which is making life easier for patients with minor fractures.

Since October last year, the Virtual Fracture Clinic, which is run out of Sydney Local Health District's virtual hospital, rpavirtual, has seen more than 100 patients, cared for by our team of doctors, nurses and physiotherapists without having to leave home.

For Laura, a mother of young children, the service meant she could avoid putting additional stress on her injured foot.

"It was particularly great to be able to stay home for the first follow up because I had only injured my foot 24 hours earlier and was in a lot of pain. I was glad not to make the trek in to a physical clinic."

In a recent survey, 100 per cent of our Virtual Fracture Clinic patients said the care provided was excellent and 96.7 per cent said they would recommend virtual care to their family and friends.

"I loved the service and was very impressed by the quality of care," said Laura. "The technology was easy to use. I was able to show the staff my foot via video which helped them answer my questions."

And as an added bonus, we estimate it has saved our patients about 2700km in travel and reduced their carbon emissions by 0.5 tonnes.



Farewell, Vivienne

Concord Hospital's Director of Corporate and Clinical Support Services Vivienne Bush has retired after more than 30 years of dedicated service.

Vivienne started her career at Concord as a nuclear medicine technologist in 1989 and was soon appointed chief medical radiation scientist.

She went on to become the environmental risk manager before being appointed the Director of Corporate and Clinical Support Services, a position she held for more than 12 years.

Her dedication made her a worthy recipient of the 2018 Pride of Concord medal, awarded annually to a staff member who has made an outstanding contribution to the hospital.

"Concord has been a wonderful place to work throughout my 30 plus years," she says.

"There is something intangible, but special, about the place and the people that I will always value."

The hospital's acting general manager Kiel Harvey acknowledged Vivienne's contributions, presenting her with



Kiel Harvey and Vivienne Bush

a framed Simon Fieldhouse ink and watercolour drawing of the hospital.

"Her tireless commitment to the hospital's staff, patients and visitors is the reason she is so well respected and valued across the hospital, the community, and the District," he said.

Grace Scott, who was the District's acting Operations Manager Workforce and Corporate Operations, has been appointed to the position.



Driving change

A new therapy car is set to help rehabilitation patients at Concord Hospital master a key challenge before going home – safely getting in and out of a vehicle.

Some rehabilitation patients may have suffered from a stroke, a serious injury or a brain tumour, and everyday tasks can become quite difficult.

But, under the guidance of occupational therapists and physiotherapists, patients will be able to use a new two-door smart fortwo hatchback to learn and practise essential car safety techniques.

“Patients will be able to practise and improve their ability to get in and get out of the driver and passenger sides of a car safely. The therapy car will assist them in planning for day leave or discharge,” said Michael Berbari, Sydney Local Health District’s Director of Occupational Therapy.

The therapy car will be located in an outdoor terrace on the lower ground level of a Rehabilitation and Aged Care Centre in the new Clinical Services Building which is being constructed during Stage One of the Concord Hospital redevelopment.



The Rehabilitation and Aged Care centre will also include ambulatory clinics, assessment and therapy areas, rehab gyms and psychogeriatric medicine and is expected to open when Stage One of the hospital redevelopment is completed at the end this year.

New supports for families

Anneliese Zanchetta, pictured second from left, developed an eating disorder at the age of 10.

Two years later, she was hospitalised at The Children’s Hospital at Westmead, where she undertook Maudsley Family Based Therapy, an intensive form of outpatient treatment involving parents and siblings in the recovery process.

“My family is the reason I survived. Eating disorders impact everyone around you. During the height of the illness, I was a tough person to handle. I think my Dad felt it the most. He had to quit his job to eat breakfast, lunch and dinner with me. He’d even park outside my school so we could share meals together.

“My parents were very hands-on; we were able to fight the eating disorder together and I am grateful for that,” she said.

Annelise recovered by age 15, but stresses the importance of an ongoing support network.

“Even today my mum checks in on me. You really need a support network, because it’s those people around you who catch you out and normalise healthy eating.”

Now, the InsideOut Institute for Eating Disorders, a collaboration between Sydney Local Health District and the University of Sydney, has launched a new online program, SupportED, to ease the burden on carers and improve treatment outcomes.

Over five modules, SupportED provides users with information on available resources and treatment options, plus practical skills, such as how to provide support around mealtimes, strategies for avoiding and responding to conflict, and how to care for your own physical and mental health needs.

Psychologist and InsideOut Institute senior project manager Rachel Simeone says targeted educational and practical skills-



based workshops for carers have been noted to reduce carer distress and burden.

“The role of carers can be all-consuming, demanding and unrelenting. Carers often experience feelings of isolation, lack of education and support, and their own mental health concerns, but the research tells us specific training programs targeting families and carers have been found to be very effective.”

Free, three-month access is available for those who sign up to an evaluation study of the program. NSW Health has partnered with InsideOut to ensure free places are provided to all carers in NSW once the study is completed.

For more information, please visit insideoutinstitute.org.au



ECGs to Beirut



It's been almost eight months since massive explosions rocked Beirut, injuring up to 7,500 people and destroying more than half of the city's major hospitals and medical clinics.

Since then, the country has had to deal with a surge in COVID-19

cases and a significant increase in other respiratory illnesses caused by toxic fumes from the explosion with hospitals overwhelmed with sick patients.

In north Lebanon, charities supported financially by Lebanese Australians have been working to establish high dependency units and intensive care units in regional hospitals to help carry the load.

"They have built the ICU units, but they have needed medical equipment to be able to run them, which is very expensive," says Canterbury cardiologist Dr Ghassan Charbel.

But this month, our biomedical engineering team sent 19 ECG machines to Lebanon. The machines work as standalone units, but do not "talk" to our technologically advanced electronic medical record system, so cannot be used across Sydney Local Health District.

Going global



Sydney Local Health District has joined the Global Green and Healthy Hospitals Network as a sign of its commitment to sustainability in healthcare.

The network is a global organisation whose members are dedicated to reducing the environmental impact of the

healthcare sector. There are 1,450 members in 72 countries.

Every member has to commit to at least two of the network's 10 goals which are designed to deliver environmentally sustainable healthcare.

The District's Sustainability Committee has identified six key goals.

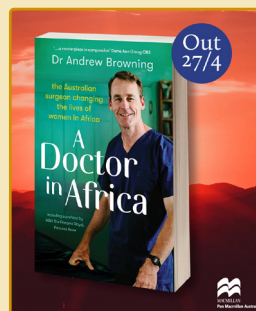
"One of our latest projects has been to replace 1,400 fluorescent lights with energy efficient LEDs in two buildings at Concord Hospital," says Troy McIntyre, the District's Energy Manager.

"It's calculated to save more than 250 tonnes in carbon dioxide emissions every year. It'll also cut our electricity bill by close to \$60,000 annually," Mr McIntyre said.

The District is also turning to solar power with a 600kw Solar PV system at Canterbury Hospital the latest to be installed.

It's estimated to save more than 600 tonnes of carbon dioxide emissions annually and will also save about \$130,000 in electricity costs.

Angel in the desert



The pandemic and border closures have not been enough to slow RPA's Dr Andrew Browning in his mission to change the lives of women in Sub-Sahara Africa.

Dr Browning, an obstetrician and gynaecologist, travels to Africa multiple times a year as a part of his life-long commitment to improving maternity services.

As part of his latest work in South Sudan, he operated on 35 women, in addition to the more than 7,000 women who he had already helped, to repair their obstetric fistulae, a debilitating complication that leaves mothers incontinent of urine and faeces.

But his work could not be achieved without the support of our very generous staff from Sydney and South Western Sydney local health districts through our Workplace Giving Program.

Established in 2008, the program supports the Barbara May Foundation, and has helped fund three hospitals across Ethiopia and Tanzania – the Barbara May Maternity Hospital, the Vision Maternity Care Hospital and the Kivulini Hospital Maternity Africa.

For more information, visit slhd.nsw.gov.au/pdfs/WorkplaceGiving.pdf

This month Dr Browning launched his new book *A Doctor in Africa* which chronicles his decades of work.

Closing the gap with a jab



Kalkadoon/Kuku Yalanji woman Dee McNamara was among the first of Sydney Local Health District's frontline healthcare workers to get a COVID-19 vaccination.

As an Aboriginal Immunisation Liaison Health Worker, she's focused on helping to keep the District's

mob healthy – a very important task given we have one of the biggest urban Aboriginal populations in NSW.

So this year's National Close the Gap Day, an advocacy campaign that aims to achieve Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health equality, had a timely theme – "leadership and Legacy through crises: keeping our mob safe."

"We've worked with our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities to protect them from COVID-19 since the pandemic began," says Dee.

"The vaccine is safe and effective. And, while you can choose if you want to get vaccinated, getting the jab is one way we can protect ourselves, our family and our community from a serious illness."