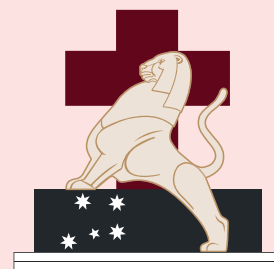


# Concord Connection

The official newsletter of Concord Hospital



Veterans, community members and Concord Hospital staff gathered on Friday 10 November for the hospital's annual Remembrance Day service.

In a welcoming address, Anglican chaplain the Reverend David Anthonisz said the Centenary Garden tangibly recalled "our hospital's proud military tradition" of caring for veterans and their families. An act of remembrance should also bring a commitment to peace, he said.

"As we have gathered here in remembrance, we remind ourselves that it is our duty today, more than ever, to use every effort to promote peace, love and harmony – both here in our own country and throughout the world," said Rev. Anthonisz, who was joined by Catholic chaplain Father Graeme Malone.

"Let us remember with thanksgiving but also with a renewed determination that we indeed may prove worthy of their sacrifice."

The ceremony marked the 105th anniversary of the 1918 Armistice that ended World War I and honoured all Australians who have died in the service of their country in times of war.

## Spring 2023 issue

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Sydney  
Local Health District







Let us remember with  
thanksgiving but also with a  
renewed determination that  
we indeed may prove worthy  
of their sacrifice.



After representatives  
of Sydney Local Health  
District and Concord  
Hospital laid wreaths  
honouring the fallen,  
Bronte Pollard –

ex-serviceman and the RSL NSW liaison officer to the  
National Centre for Veterans' Healthcare – recited the  
Ode of Remembrance and lowered the flag to half-mast  
at the playing of The Last Post.

Community members  
were later invited to  
place tribute poppies  
around the Tri-Star  
Badge Memorial in the  
memory of comrades  
or loved ones.



*Left: Ex-serviceman Bronte Pollard lowers the flag to half-mast  
during the Remembrance Day service.*

*From top: Father Graeme Malone leads part of the service; Sydney  
Local Health District Board Chair Hon. John Ajaka and board member  
Ron Furolo lay a wreath; and tributes on the Tri-Star Badge Memorial.*

## Message from the General Manager

Welcome to the first issue of the new-look  
Concord Connection. We will publish this  
newsletter four times  
a year to let people  
know about what is  
happening at Concord  
Hospital and share  
upcoming events.



I would encourage  
anyone who would  
like to contribute to  
the newsletter, to  
email

[SLHD-ConcordConnection@health.nsw.gov.au](mailto:SLHD-ConcordConnection@health.nsw.gov.au).

We would love to hear suggestions for stories,  
notice of upcoming events and welcome  
contributions to the staff photo section.

The newsletter's re-launch comes at a busy  
time. I'm pleased to announce the completed  
works to replace the second CT scanner in  
radiology. Work is also well under way on a third  
CT scanner, in the Emergency Department,  
and the business case has been approved for a  
second MRI scanner. This investment in our  
medical imaging capacity ensures we continue  
to provide state-of-the-art care to our patients.

Given the substantial works in imaging and the  
ED, I would like to thank staff in both  
departments for their patience.

There are significant works now in the ACE  
(Ambulatory Care and Endoscopy) unit that will  
improve working conditions for staff and  
improve the patient experience.

Plans have also been developed for the  
installation of a surgical skills lab as part of the  
Concord Institute of Academic Surgery. This will  
be an exciting addition to our surgical  
training program.

I'm also excited that Carols at Yaralla returns on  
Thursday 7 December. It will be great to  
welcome families back to this wonderful  
community event.

On that festive note, I would like to thank  
everyone at Concord for your commitment to  
providing high quality care to our patients as we  
head towards Christmas and the new year.  
I hope you all get a chance to have a break and  
spend time with family and friends.





## Hip team takes gold



Concord Hospital's orthogeriatric team has won the Australian and New Zealand Hip Fracture Registry's 2023 Golden Hip award for the best performing hip fracture management service in Australia.

The award was accepted by geriatrician Dr Nargis Shaheen, Concord's Orthogeriatric Service Co-Lead, a role she shares with Dr Paul Della Torre.

"We are really happy to have received this award. It does further encourage others to improve patient care," Dr Shaheen said. "It's a team effort, I don't think we could have done it without the team."

In 2022, 150 patients with hip fractures were assessed by a geriatrician and almost all underwent surgery within 48 hours.

*Above: Dr Nargis Shaheen holds the Golden Hip trophy with members of the orthogeriatric team (from left) Dr Alice Chang, Wai Ki Tsui, Professor John Cullen, Associate Professor Louise Waite, Melinda Pestana, Dr Paul Della Torre and Belan.*

*Left: Chief Executive Dr Teresa Anderson, AM, and Concord Hospital acting General Manager Joseph Jewitt congratulate the Orthogeriatric team's Dr Nargis Shaheen and Dr Paul Della Torre.*



In 2022, 150 patients with hip fractures were assessed by a geriatrician and almost all underwent surgery within 48 hours.

Dr Shaheen recognised efforts by colleagues from across the hospital, including the excellent pain management by the emergency department, endocrinology specialists, the anaesthetic department, and orthopaedic surgeons who make operations possible within the predicted 48 hours.

Suffering a hip fracture can be debilitating for the often-vulnerable patients cared for by Concord's Orthogeriatric Service. The service is designed to provide a positive experience of care, improved recovery and better outcomes for these patients.

## Occupational Therapists celebrate

Concord occupational therapists Maria Fuller and Penny Ashman (pictured) were among the OTs across the District who celebrated Occupational Therapy Week on 23-29 October.

The pair are community occupational therapists in the Home-Based Therapy service, part of Aged Health, Chronic Care and Rehabilitation.

Home-Based Therapy provides community-based allied health services to clients over the age of 65 living in their own homes.

It is complemented by the Transition Aged Care Program, in which community OTs and other allied health and support staff help aged care clients over the age of 65 regain their independence following a stay at hospital.



The theme of this year's Occupational Therapy Week was Unity Through Community.

Community OTs work with clients and their carers and families to empower clients to live safely and independently in their own homes, with access to their communities.

Both Maria and Penny have worked in the service for 20 years and love what they do. "Seeing our clients thrive and achieve their goals in their own homes is a real privilege," they said.



## Staff photo

The teams from Procurement, Contracts & Supply Service and Accounts Payable Department embraced the idea of wearing yellow for R U OK? Day.





# Imaging upgrade gathers pace



Work is now well under way on the project to upgrade scanning equipment across Concord Hospital. This ongoing investment will provide improved access to state-of-the-art medical imaging for our patients.

The project began on 2 September 2023, with the start of work to replace one of the two computed tomography (CT) scanners in the Radiology Department. This first installation was completed recently, with the new scanner commissioned in late October.

Work on the project’s second stage – installation of a second new CT scanner in the Emergency Department –



This ongoing investment will provide improved access to state-of-the-art medical imaging for our patients

began on 4 October after the scanner arrived from overseas. This will greatly improve the prompt provision of scans for our emergency patients.

An additional new MRI scanner will also be installed soon.

This project is the culmination of a significant amount of planning and preparation over two years by the District Radiology team, Capital Infrastructure and Engineering, Concord Hospital staff and other staff across the District.

Above: CT Senior Medical Radiation Scientist Jehan Loke prepares a patient for examination in the new CT scanner.

Left: Welcoming the installation of the new scanner were (from left) Radiology registrar Thomas Estephan, Chief Medical Radiation Scientist Joseph Turner, CT Senior Medical Radiation Scientist Jehan Loke and Radiology cleaner Georgina Vamiadakis.

## Veterans focus on mental health

Australian Defence Force veterans attended an education session on mental wellbeing at the National Centre for Veterans’ Healthcare (NCVH) in October.

The group heard from the NCVH’s diversional therapist, social worker and psychiatry registrar, with presentations focused on pathways to mental wellbeing.

The event was funded by the Federal Government’s Department of Veterans’ Affairs and supported by Kirribilli RSL Sub-Branch.

“Promoting better mental health is a priority at the centre, so we want our veterans to be aware of the supports that are available to them,” said Rebecca McFarlane, Case Manager at the NCVH.



The centre is an outpatient service of Concord Hospital and provides care to serving Australian Defence Force members and ex-service personnel to help achieve optimal mental and physical wellbeing.

The session was held during Veterans’ Health Week, which this year had the theme ‘Mental Wellness Matters’.

Veterans at the Veterans’ Health Week education session.



## Concord compliments

### STRONG work earns high praise

A patient has written to the Centre for STRONG Medicine to thank the team for their work and support during her time in the program.

Julie Lulham, 77, said the STRONG clinic had given her “a key element in the roadmap for healthy ageing”.

“The program has equipped me with the knowledge and confidence to judge the right amount of strength resistance, manage the gym equipment, and to be aware of the need for rests during exercise repetitions,” she said.

“I am confident I can maintain my strength and fitness and survive, as a 77-year-old woman, in a more commercial, soulless gym.”



Health Minister Ryan Park talks to a patient at the launch of the Centre for STRONG Medicine.

They were so consistently positive in their encouragement, friendly in their outlook, yet entirely respectful in a most professional manner.

Julie said she was impressed by the teamwork of exercise physiologists, Kate, Tess and Ella.

“They managed to make the exercise program challenging but achievable and fun along the way,” she said.

“They were so consistently positive in their encouragement, friendly in their outlook, yet entirely respectful in a most professional manner.”



# RESEARCH

## Ruthven Blackburn Medal

Professor David Le Couteur AO, a Concord senior staff specialist physician in geriatric medicine, received the 2023 Ruthven Blackburn Medal for Distinguished Contribution to Clinical Research in a presentation at the Medical Education Centre on 11 October.

Professor Le Couteur – a joint recipient of the 2023 honour with Professor Carol Pollock AO, of the Northern Clinical School – leads research into ageing as a professor of geriatric medicine at Sydney University and is recognised as an exceptional clinician, researcher and mentor. He has supervised 32 post-graduate research students.

Professor Le Couteur has consistently demonstrated a passion and dedication to cultivating future research and clinical leaders and is renowned for his generosity

His considerable contributions and achievements span epidemiology, pharmacology, therapeutics and clinical research. He has published more than 450 research works, which have garnered more than 31,000 citations.



Professor David Le Couteur (centre) with Professor Cheryl Jones, Sydney University Medical School Dean, and Professor Mark Cooper, head of the Concord Clinical School.

## ANZAC Research Institute team awarded Vanguard Grant



A team at the ANZAC Research Institute has been awarded a Heart Foundation Vanguard Grant to develop new therapies to more safely prevent blood clots that can cause strokes and heart attacks in the elderly.

The \$73,000 grant will fund research into new platelet inhibitors with a lower risk of bleeding than conventional blood thinners.

Professor Len Kritharides, the institute's Group Leader Atherosclerosis and Vascular Biology Laboratory,

said the research could more safely prevent recurrent cardiovascular disease (CVD) in the elderly.

"Conventional inhibitors of platelets increase the risk of bleeding, especially in the elderly. New therapies are needed," said Professor Kritharides.

The team – which includes Dr Sonali Gnanenthiran, Associate Professor Vivien Chen and Dr Gabrielle Pennings – has undertaken research that recently found healthy, community-dwelling older people have distinct changes in platelet function that make them uniquely suited to new treatments to safely prevent CVD.

"The project will allow us to undertake clinical trials with new classes of pharmaceuticals to safely inhibit platelet function in the elderly. If our study is successful, we may find many new drug targets that could replace more potent blood thinners that have higher bleeding risks."

## CIAS offers ultrasound training

The Concord Institute of Academic Surgery held a Point of Care/Hands-On Ultrasound workshop in October.

The workshop was designed to provide further training for Surgical Unaccredited Trainees and Surgical Senior Residential Medical Officers, with Renal Advanced Trainees also invited to attend.

The technique is used to reduce the number of access attempts and can reduce other complications

The session was hosted by urologist Professor Lewis Chan and vascular surgeon Associate Professor Sarah Aitken and focused on ultrasound-guided access, where ultrasound is used to guide the placement of venous catheters. The technique is used to reduce the number of access attempts and can reduce other complications for patients. The session followed an August workshop, that looked at general principles of ultrasound – urology and vascular.

Professor Lewis Chan (left) leads ultrasound training with junior medical officers Dr Sudarshan Arvind, Dr Peter Galloway and Dr Jeff Zhou.





# Staff stars

## Resident named Junior Medical Officer of Year

Dr Alec Pham (pictured), a postgraduate resident at Concord Hospital, has received the 2023 Junior Medical Officer of the Year Award by the Health Education and Training Institute.

The prestigious award honours the work of a junior medical officer (JMO) who has substantially contributed to the education and support of pre-vocational trainees.



In his two years at Concord, Alec has demonstrated outstanding commitment to his clinical work, further education and collegiality with his peers.

He has conducted audits and clinical research and contributed to hospital education forums and student teaching. He draws on his passion for JMO wellbeing and education to voluntarily lead several projects, including the Tastebuds lunch club for interns, the Fruit 4 Thought

drive and the preparation and delivery of an educational module on sleep hygiene.

## Pharmacist awarded Churchill Fellowship

Concord Hospital pharmacist Julianne Chong (pictured), has been named a Churchill Fellow in the Winston Churchill Trust's 2023 awards for her remarkable contribution to her research field.

Julianne co-leads Sydney Local Health District's multidisciplinary Venous Thromboembolism/Anticoagulation Stewardship team, which implements safeguards for the use of high-risk anticoagulant medicines. As co-chair of the Thrombosis Haemostasis Australia/New Zealand Anticoagulation Stewardship network, Julianne said she is looking forward to learning from colleagues overseas.

"Anticoagulants are a leading cause of medication error in hospital and a leading contributor to medication-related hospitalisations," she said.

"Being able to learn from the pioneering Anticoagulation Stewardship sites in the USA, Canada and the UK will help to improve our practice and encourage the



establishment of more sites across Australia."

Julianne was awarded a Sydney Research Health Informatics Scholarship in 2019 and a Sydney Local Health District Innovation and

Excellence Award for Health Research in 2020.

## Team of the quarter July-September



### Emergency Department

The ED is one very large and very effective team of medical, nursing, allied health, corporate

and clinical staff as well as agency staff. This is a resilient and responsive team where every member sees dedication to patient care as their duty.



## Staff movements



### Peter Haertsch (retiring)

Associate Professor Peter Haertsch AM has retired from his role at Concord Hospital. His career at Concord spanned more than half a century after he began as a junior general surgeon, a role in which he established the emergency department. His interest in

soft tissue reconstruction led him to the UK's prestigious East Grinstead Hospital, where he trained to be a plastic and reconstructive surgeon. He returned to establish, with Professor Peter Kennedy, the Concord Burns Unit, which in 2002 treated repatriated victims of the Bali bombing. He went on to establish the Severe Burn Injury Service for NSW.

Peter has fulfilled many roles at Concord, including Director of Surgery, Director of Operating Theatres,

Peter's endless energy, his enthusiasm and surgical contributions will be greatly missed and we thank him for his enormous contribution to Concord Hospital.

*Professor Peter Maitz, Burns Unit Director*

Head of Department of Plastic Surgery and Director of Burns Surgery. In 2004 he was awarded a Medal of the Order of Australia for his work saving Bali victims. He was later made a Member of the Order of Australia for his more than 50 individual outreach trips to neighbouring developing countries with the non-profit Interplast.

## Employees of the month

### July



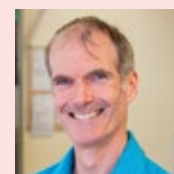
#### Michael Gilfillan, Clinical Nurse Consultant, ICU

Michael encompasses all aspects of the District's CORE (Collaboration, Openness, Respect, Empowerment) values. He is respectful, collaborates and shares his knowledge with all staff. He is a strong leader in the ICU and empowers the team to make informed, evidence-based clinical decisions. Michael is humble and never asks to be recognised for the work he does.

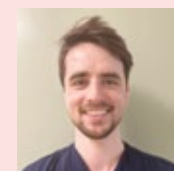
### August

#### David Roberts, Head of Department, Physiotherapy

David is an exceptional leader and manager. He is collaborative and professional in all aspects of his



### September



work. He is always willing to help others and provide advice and support to his staff and other colleagues. David is someone who displays integrity, collegial spirit and the CORE values.

#### Lachlan Randall, Nursing Unit Manager, 4 North and Dialysis

Lachlan has been acting NUM since early this year, having worked at Concord since 2014. Lachlan's modest personality belies his

abilities. He has been able to step up and demonstrate leadership, professionalism and calmness and support the team in challenging situations.



#### Zahid Ghous, Director Clinical Governance and Risk

Welcome to Zahid Ghous, who has begun in the role of Director Clinical Governance and Risk in the Concord Hospital Executive. Zahid joins us from

South Western Sydney Local Health District where he has a number of years of experience working in clinical governance and quality roles in both Bankstown Hospital and Liverpool Hospital.



#### Cynthia Mann, Patient and Family Experience Officer

Congratulations to Cynthia Mann who was successfully appointed to the role of Patient and Family Experience Officer at Concord Hospital.

Cynthia previously worked at Concord as a nuclear medicine scientist and takes over the Patient and Family Experience Officer role from Dale Davis who has returned to the Health Care Complaints Commission.



# REDEVELOPMENT

## Car park construction



Concord Hospital has celebrated more milestones in the hospital redevelopment, including the beginning of



works on the \$34 million multi-storey car park and completion of the on-grade P3 staff car park.

When complete, the new multi-storey

car park will provide more than 550 new spaces for hospital patients, staff and visitors.

Principal contractor Lipman began ground works in July and site remediation, bulk excavation, piling and the ground floor concrete pour have been completed.

The multi-storey car park will include 10 accessible spaces, lift access and provision for future EV charging stations. Security features will include CCTV and duress points on each level.



Above: The ground floor concrete pour has been completed on the multi-storey car park site. Right: The new staff car park opened in July.

When the project is complete, there will be more than 2300 car spaces available on the hospital campus.

Concord Hospital's new P3 staff car park, which provides 300 car spaces opened in July 2023 and was celebrated with a staff barbecue. The P3 car park supports staff to access parking while the multi-storey car park is constructed.

The multi-storey car park project is expected to be completed by late 2024.

The Concord Hospital Redevelopment is a partnership between Health Infrastructure and Sydney Local Health District.

Stage one of the Concord Hospital redevelopment, a \$341 million project, included the new Rusty Priest building, allowing the enhancement and expansion of a range of clinical services.



## Volunteers in focus

A desire to make a difference and some time on his hands while on long service leave led Neil Winter to volunteer at Concord Hospital.



"COVID was coming towards the end and I decided to go on long service leave," Neil said.

"I was at home for a couple of months and I thought, 'I can't just sit at home and do nothing, I've got to do something.' I just looked it up and put my paperwork in, and it was probably a month or so after that they started the volunteers up again. I was one of the first back on deck."

Neil describes himself as an all-rounder volunteer, having driven patients around the hospital on the golf cart, prepared packs of equipment for dialysis patients, handed out sandwiches and even sewn gloves for the Burns Unit.

"I've done about 300-plus gloves for the burns unit," he said. "And there are more on my dining room table."

Neil said he found the chance to give back satisfying and both staff and patients were grateful for the support.

"The staff are just amazing, everywhere the volunteers go, the staff are just so grateful for any help that we can give them," he said.



# New forensic mental health unit announced



A purpose-built forensic mental health facility will be built as an expansion of the Concord Centre of Mental Health and its services, on the grounds of Concord Hospital. The project is part of the NSW Government’s \$700 million investment in the Statewide Mental Health



The facility will be named ‘Burudyara’... which is a local Aboriginal word meaning ‘butterfly’

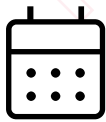
Infrastructure Program. Construction is expected to begin early in 2024. Complementing existing forensic mental health services at Concord Hospital, the new facility will provide low and medium secure mental health beds.

Artist’s impressions of the built and landscaped environments at Burudyara.

## Get in touch

We would love to hear from you. To provide feedback, suggest stories or submit a staff photo, please contact our Concord Connection working group [SLHD-ConcordConnection@health.nsw.gov.au](mailto:SLHD-ConcordConnection@health.nsw.gov.au)

The facility will be named ‘Burudyara’ (pronounced BOO-ruhd-YA-ruh), which is a local Aboriginal word meaning ‘butterfly’, in line with NSW Health’s approach to building stronger connections between our facilities and the lands on which they are built. Burudyara will improve the capacity of Mental Health Services to provide appropriate mental health care to people with mental illness who are, or who have been, in contact with the criminal justice system. The facility is due to be completed by late 2025.



## Community events

**7 December**  
5.30pm Carols at Yaralla

## Concord Hospital staff events

**29 November**  
Celebrating 10 years of the Living Well, Living Longer program.

**11 December**  
Judging begins for the Christmas decoration competition. Winners will be announced at the staff Christmas barbecue.

**15 December**  
12-1pm Announcement and presentation of the 2023 Pride of Concord Award

## A look back in time

Nursing staff form a guard of honour to farewell a young Queen Elizabeth II and Prince Philip after their visit to the then-Repatriation General Hospital, Concord, on Friday 5 February 1954. On Wednesday 27 January 1954, The Sydney Morning Herald reported the hospital’s usual visiting hours – 2.30pm to 4pm – would be cancelled on 5 February to allow for the royal guests.

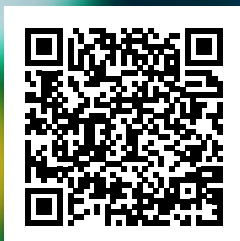
Find out more about Sydney Local Health District’s community events at: [slhd.health.nsw.gov.au/sydneyconnect/events](https://slhd.health.nsw.gov.au/sydneyconnect/events)



**FREE  
CONCERT**

# CAROLS *at* YARALLA

Thursday 7 December 2023  
Yaralla Estate, Concord West  
5.30pm – 7.30pm



Sydney  
Local Health District

231861NOV23