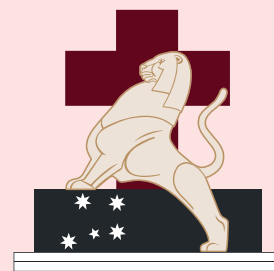


Concord Connection

The official newsletter of Concord Hospital



The sense of community and the collaborative atmosphere at Concord Hospital have been two of the great joys of Dr Nicola Clayton's career.

The clinical specialist speech pathologist was named the 2023 Pride of Concord Medal winner at a ceremony late last month.

Dr Clayton said she loved her work at Concord Hospital and her "multiple families" in the Speech Pathology, Burns Unit, Respiratory Medicine and Critical Care teams.

"I'm such a fan of multidisciplinary collaborative teamwork," she said.

"And when you're involved in such an amazing team, as in all of these different teams, it makes coming to work not only a pleasure, but also worthwhile."

Dr Clayton has worked at Concord Hospital for more than 23 years and is recognised internationally for her clinical expertise and research into the assessment and treatment of complex swallowing disorders, respiratory disease and severe burns injury.

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Sydney
Local Health District





She is also known for her willingness to share her knowledge with her colleagues to help their development and ensure the best possible outcomes for patients.

Dr Clayton said she had a passion for mentoring others through both her clinical expertise and her research.

"Keeping all the information to myself is not really going to help. I want to share it with not only my patients, but also my team members, not only locally, but also further beyond that as well," she said.

In presenting the peer-nominated medal, Sydney Local Health District Chief Executive Dr Teresa Anderson, AM, said she was excited to name Dr Clayton the 2023 winner.

"The Pride of Concord Award is well-deserved recognition for the outstanding contribution Nicola has made, not only to Concord Hospital and Sydney Local

Health District, but across NSW and Australia," Dr Anderson said.

After the presentation Acting General Manager Joseph Jewitt said celebrating the hospital's highest award was always a special day and described Dr Clayton as "an incredibly deserving winner".

"It was inspiring to hear from Nicola about what drives her to continue her research, education and mentoring and how she strives to continue to improve outcomes for patients," Mr Jewitt said.

Alongside the framed Pride of Concord Medal, Dr Clayton received a Concord gold lion crest badge, a cheque for \$5000 to contribute to professional development and a dinner voucher.



When you're involved
in such an amazing team...
it makes coming to work
not only a pleasure,
but also worthwhile



Front page: Pride of Concord Medal 2023 winner Dr Nicola Clayton with Concord Hospital acting General Manager Joseph Jewitt at the medal presentation.

Top: Dr Clayton with Sydney Local Health District Chief Executive Dr Teresa Anderson, AM.

Above: Dr Clayton with Director of Speech Pathology Helen Ryan and the Concord Speech Pathology team.

Left: Dr Clayton with Professor Peter Maitz and Concord Hospital's Multidisciplinary Burns Team.

Message from the General Manager

Welcome to the Summer issue of Concord Connection.

It has been a great start to 2024 at Concord. We began the year with a special ceremony to award the Pride of Concord Medal to Dr Nicola Clayton, Clinical Specialist Speech Pathologist.



The Award is our hospital's highest honour, recognising extraordinary staff who make an outstanding contribution to our patients, our community and importantly to the hospital's rich legacy.

It was inspiring to hear from Nicola about what drives her to continue her research, education and mentoring and how she strives to continue to improve outcomes for patients.

Over the past month we've been meeting our Junior Medical staff and new graduate Nurses and Allied Health staff during orientation for their new roles here at Concord Hospital. I would like to take this opportunity to extend a warm welcome to all of our new Concord Hospital staff.

Our capital works program continues, it is exciting to see progress on the installation of our third CT scanner in the Emergency Department, which is on track to be completed during April, before further refurbishment work in the surrounding areas. I would like to thank all the staff in these areas for your understanding and the way you are working while we make these improvements.

This issue of Concord Connection is full of stories that showcase healthcare excellence at Concord and the remarkable people who work here.

I look forward to keeping you updated throughout the year.



Pioneer burns surgeon Peter Haertsch honoured



Colleagues, staff, patients and family members of Peter Haertsch gathered in February to celebrate the recently retired surgeon's lifetime of achievements and service to Concord Hospital.

As one of the nation's leading specialist reconstructive plastic surgeons, Associate Professor Haertsch was an integral part of Concord Hospital's surgical staff and Burns Unit for more than five decades.

Speaking at the farewell dinner, Sydney Local Health District Chief Executive Dr Teresa Anderson reflected on how the surgeon's vision led to the establishment of the first dedicated burns unit at Concord.

"It was his dedication and passion for burns and reconstructive surgery which saw the initiation

Above: Associate Professor Peter Haertsch and his wife Carol with (from left) Concord Hospital acting General Manager Joseph Jewitt, Sydney Local Health District Chief Executive Dr Teresa Anderson and District Executive Director Operations Genevieve Wallace.

Left: Associate Professor Haertsch said he was very grateful to have so many former colleagues attend his farewell.



It is with very mixed emotions that I farewell my beloved Concord, as I've referred to it over so many decades

of the Concord Hospital Burns Centre and the NSW Severe Burns Injury Service," Dr Anderson said.

The establishment of integrated services across three hospitals (at Concord, Royal North Shore and Westmead Children's Hospital) transformed the treatment of burn injuries in NSW.

"We honour an amazing lifetime of achievements and service, not only to Concord Hospital but to the thousands of patients whose stories he shaped for the better," Dr Anderson said.

"His contributions to research in his field and to future plastic surgeons have helped shape the future for

reconstructive surgery, not only in Australia but internationally."

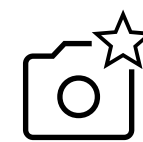
In 2003, Associate Professor Haertsch was awarded the Medal of the Order of Australia (OAM) for his work treating Bali bombing victims. In 2018 he was named a Member in the General Division (AM) for significant services to medicine in the field of plastic and reconstructive surgery, as a clinician, administrator, and to the advancement of medical education.

Professor Peter Maitz, head of the Burns Unit, reflected on the contribution of his "mentor, clerk, and friend" in establishing the Concord facility.

"I hope you accept our gratitude for all these years of relentless energy, engagement and drive to foster and further surgery, people and patients," Professor Maitz said.

Associate Professor Haertsch was presented with a Concord Repatriation General Hospital service medallion for 55 years' service by Dr Anderson and the hospital's acting general manager, Joseph Jewitt.

"It is with very mixed emotions that I farewell my beloved Concord, as I've referred to it over so many decades," he said.



Staff photo

The Concord Christmas Decoration competition returned in December.

The winning team was the Social Worker Department. In second place was Theatres (Operating), while Yaralla Estate was third.



Surgeon awarded Fulbright scholarship



Concord Hospital surgeon Sireesha Koneru has been awarded a prestigious Fulbright Future Scholarship. Dr Koneru, the colorectal research fellow at the Concord Institute of Academic Surgery, will travel to the Mayo Clinic in Rochester, Minnesota, in August to continue her research into functional outcomes in colorectal cancer treatment.

It’s a way to develop more clinically meaningful research that’s going to better impact patient care

Concord Institute co-chair Associate Professor Sarah Aitken said Dr Koneru’s scholarship was a great accomplishment.

"This is an amazing achievement for a very skilled academic surgeon, and she is a fantastic role model for our young women pursuing surgical careers," Associate Professor Aitken said.

Dr Koneru said she counted herself very lucky to have been awarded the scholarship.

"It’s an incredible opportunity," she said. "I’m really excited ... not just in the work that I’ll do as part of this scholarship but for the future collaborative opportunities for research and building those ties, which is really what Fulbright is all about."

Dr Koneru said her research supervisors – including Concord’s Dr Kheng-Seong Ng and Associate Professor Anil Keshava – had instilled in her the importance of collaboration.

"If we build those collaborative research pathways, it’s a way to improve what we do," she said.

"And it’s a way to develop more clinically meaningful research that’s going to better impact patient care."

Dr Koneru said she was bracing herself for an extremely cold Minnesota winter but was sure she would gain valuable lessons from her work at the Mayo Clinic.

Above: Fulbright Future scholar Dr Sireesha Koneru will continue her research into functional outcomes in colorectal cancer treatment at the Mayo Clinic later this year.

District celebrates Concord achievers

The achievements of several Concord Hospital staff were honoured with Innovation and Excellence Awards at the Sydney Local Health District annual general meeting late last year.

The awards, presented at the December 6 ceremony, aim to recognise, celebrate and encourage healthcare innovation and excellence in line with the District’s values, strategic focus and vision to achieve "Excellence in health and healthcare for all".

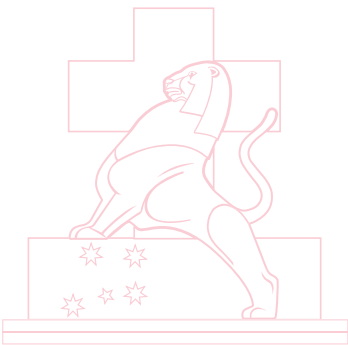
The ANZAC Research Institute won the award for Health Research and Innovation for its groundbreaking work on needle-free insulin.



Concord’s Orthogeriatric Service won the award for Service of the Year, sharing the honour with Capital Infrastructure and Engineering.

Diane McPhail was named the District’s Volunteer of the Year. And Shreebina Bheleshrestha was named Cleaner of the Year for Concord Hospital.

The Anzac Research Institute’s Professor Victoria Cogger and Dr Nicholas Hunt (centre) with Dr Andrew Hallahan, the District’s Executive Director Clinical Governance, Risk and Medical Services.



Concord compliments

Burns unit saves face after explosion

David Roger has nothing but praise for Concord Hospital staff, whose innovative techniques in treating burns injuries helped save his face from significant scarring.

Mr Roger, 79, was injured while using a small butane gas bottle to power a blow torch. Within 24 hours he was in surgery, where he had something quite extraordinary put on his face.

"We cleaned up his face, I would say quite aggressively, and we put an artificial skin under which his face healed without visible scarring and hopefully without painful memories," Professor Peter Maitz, Head of the Burns Unit, told The Daily Telegraph.



Professor Peter Maitz examines David Rogers face to check on how it is healing after his accident.

They are amazing people, all of them, I can’t thank them enough for what they have done for me

The artificial skin is a nylon product made partly of pig tendons’ proteins. Once fitted onto the affected area, it tricks the body into thinking everything is normal and there is no burn, thus reducing the excruciating pain that comes with this degree of burn.

The skin was removed ten days after it was applied, and the results were incredible - not a sign of scarring.

Mr Roger was effusive in his praise for Concord staff.

"They are amazing people, all of them," he said. "I can’t thank them enough for what they have done for me."

Sydney Cancer Survivorship Centre celebrates 10 years



They are very professional but with a high degree of empathy; you feel that they really care about you

The life-changing work of the Sydney Cancer Survivorship Centre was celebrated in December, when survivors, carers and staff gathered to mark the centre's 10th anniversary.

The Tuesday 19 December morning tea was also attended by members of the District's executive leadership team, District staff, volunteers and supporters of the clinic.

The centre has supported almost 1000 cancer patients and its multidisciplinary, research-led model of care has set a standard for similar clinics across the country.

Medical oncologist Dr Janette Vardy helped establish the clinic and is its director.

"Our vision is to help cancer survivors live the lives they want in the best health possible after that life-changing diagnosis," she said.

Sydney Local Health District Chief Executive Dr Teresa Anderson paid tribute to all who had contributed to the success of the Survivorship Centre.

"Cancer survivorship isn't always a straight road but I know that with your blend of expertise and empathy, survivors feel empowered to get back to themselves and the lives they want to lead," she said.

Self-described fitness fanatic Stephanie Parker found it difficult to slow down as she tried to recover from her treatment after her diagnosis with a rare form of uterine cancer in early 2021.

But her path to survivorship was transformed when she was referred to the Cancer Survivorship Centre. She worked with a team of clinicians, including a dietitian, an exercise physiologist and a psychologist.

"They really listened to my concerns and took a holistic approach," she said.

"I can't praise them highly enough. They are very professional but with a high degree of empathy; you feel that they really care about you."

Above: Sydney Cancer Survivorship Centre director Janette Vardy and cancer survivor Stephanie Parker cut a cake at the celebration of the centre's 10th anniversary.

New nursing scholarships program launched

Three Concord Hospital nurses have been awarded \$10,000 professional development scholarships under a new program sponsored by Sydney Local Health District.

Concord Hospital acting General Manager Joseph Jewitt and Director of Nursing Helen Goldsack presented Ian Whiteley, Jackie Laurens and So Young Lim with their scholarships at a morning tea on Monday 13 November.

The scholarships are designed to acknowledge and celebrate the extraordinary talent and dedication of Concord's nurses and provide professional development opportunities across three categories.

Mr Whitely, Nurse Practitioner Stomal Therapy, was awarded the scholarship for nursing research or a quality improvement project directly connected to enhancing patient care.

Ms Laurens, Nurse Manager Health Informatics, received the scholarship for staff wellness initiatives including supportive education such as coaching or mentorship training.

And Ms Lim, Diabetes Nurse Educator (Transitional Nurse Practitioner), was awarded the scholarship for leadership and management training.



Above: Concord Hospital acting General Manager Joseph Jewitt and Director of Nursing Helen Goldsack present Ian Whiteley with one of the new nursing scholarships.

Carols return to Yaralla

Hundreds of families flocked to the Yaralla Estate in December for the long-awaited return of Carols at Yaralla.



Above and below: The Carols at Yaralla band included members of The Cockroaches and former Wiggles Murray and Jeff; while Santa was also a big hit with younger members of the crowd.

The popular festive event was back after a three-year absence, with original Wiggles Jeff and Murray returning to join members of The Cockroaches to provide the music for the celebration.

Face painting proved very popular with younger members of the audience but the highlight was a visit from Santa, who handed out some early Christmas gifts.

Concord Hospital acting general manager Joseph Jewitt said he was delighted to welcome families back to a wonderful festive season celebration.



Staff stars

Genius idea secures Pitch funding



A new model of care for inflammatory bowel disease patients at Concord Hospital was awarded \$35,000 of funding in the final round of The Pitch for 2023.

Dr Aviv Pudipeddi, a gastroenterologist in the Department of Gastroenterology and Liver Services,

received his grant at a ceremony held at Concord Hospital on December 13.

Dr Pudipeddi's "gen-IUS idea" to use intestinal ultrasound as a detection test is an emerging approach in detecting and treating the illness.

He said using an intestinal ultrasound would avoid the need for invasive colonoscopies and reduce wait times.

He said some patients would be spared from needing to undergo 15 to 20 colonoscopies in their lifetime.

The awarded funds will go towards buying a dedicated intestinal ultrasound machine, which costs \$100,000.

Registrar's presentation earns praise in US

Radiology registrar Dr Mishaal Patel has been honoured by the



Radiological Society of North America (RSNA) with a certificate of merit.

Dr Patel received the certificate for a digital presentation made for the RSNA's Scientific Assembly and Annual Meeting in Chicago in November.

The certificate put his presentation – Respiratory Complications from Burns Injury: A Pictorial Review – among the top 15 per cent of exhibits at the world's biggest radiology conference.

"We thought it would have a significant contribution to the literature from a radiology point of view," Dr Patel said.

"We were relieved that it got accepted ... and, yeah, it was an unexpected surprise to receive that certificate of merit."

Concord Hospital acting General Manager Joseph Jewitt offered "huge congratulations" to the radiologist on this achievement.

Endocrine Society honours advanced trainee



Endocrinology Advanced Trainee Dr Ruby Chang has been honoured by the Endocrine Society of Australia for a case presentation to the society's annual

clinical weekend.

Dr Chang's presentation, A Multigenerational Tale of Reduced Virilisation, was named runner-up at the weekend, held late last year.

Competition was intense, with more than 40 entries from across Australia and New Zealand and only 12 finalists selected to present.

Dr Chang said she found delivering her presentation at the weekend a challenging but rewarding experience, with the runner-up placing "a very nice surprise".

"It was a very, very good experience but I was also very happy to have it finished."

Dr Chang paid tribute to her supervisor, Professor David Handelsman, and Concord Hospital's Andrology Department, which helped with the case study.



Team of the quarter October-December

Orthogeriatric Service

The Orthogeriatric Service was named the team of the quarter for October, November and December. The multidisciplinary team is well known for the quality of its work, designed to provide a positive experience of care and improved recovery. The team also received the Australian and New Zealand Hip Fracture Registry's 2023 Golden Hip award last year.

Above: Chief Executive Dr Teresa Anderson, AM, and Concord Hospital acting General Manager Joseph Jewitt present the team of the quarter award to the Orthogeriatric team's Dr Nargis Shaheen and Dr Paul Della Torre.

From top left: Dr Aviv Pudipeddi with his Pitch cheque for \$35,000; Dr Mishaal Patel at work at Concord; and Dr Ruby Chang with her supervisor Professor David Handelsman at the Endocrine Society of Australia's annual clinical weekend.

Employees of the month

October



Lulu Kerslake, Acting Operations Manager Patient Services & Information Department (PSID)

Lulu is a dedicated and talented individual and demonstrates budding leadership skills. She is a highly

valued member of the team and her work ethic and demeanour are instrumental to the improved functioning of the Patient Services and Information Department.

November

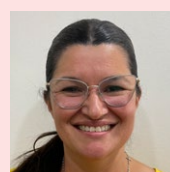


Kiranjeet Kaur, Cleaner Environmental Services

Kiranjeet is a wonderful team member who is approachable and easy to get along with. She takes

pride in the ward she looks after and has immensely improved the results in her short time there. Kiranjeet is admired for her willingness to help and complete tasks when asked.

December



Anuncia Di Cara, Accommodation Officer, Corporate Services

Anuncia is a consummate professional in all her endeavours and goes above and beyond expectations to support the team,

patients and visitors. She is collaborative, thorough, respectful and efficient with regard to both workload, interactions and clear communication with all the people she encounters.

REDEVELOPMENT

Multistorey car park takes shape



Work will soon begin on the concrete pour of the third floor of the new multi-storey car park at Concord Hospital, with formwork for this level now being put in place.

The \$32.4 million car park project is part of the hospital's redevelopment that has also included construction of the on-grade P3 staff car park and the \$341 million Rusty Priest Building.

Staff from contractor Lipman completed the concrete pour of level 2 in late January and recently completed the pour

of the vertical structures that will support level 3.

Major electrical works are expected to begin from April after the car park's substation was delivered recently.

The multi-storey car park will add an additional 550 new spaces, taking parking capacity for Concord Hospital to more than 2300 spaces, improving access to healthcare services for the whole community.

It will include 10 accessible spaces, lift access and provision for potential future addition of electric vehicle

charging stations. Security measures will include CCTV coverage and duress points on each level.

The project is expected to be completed towards the end of this year.



Main tender for forensic mental health unit expected in April

The awarding of the main tender for construction of the new Concord Forensic Mental Health Unit is expected to be announced by mid-April, after tenders closed on 15 December.

The purpose-built facility – to be called Burudyara, which is a local Aboriginal word for butterfly – 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 Infrastructure Program.

Construction is expected to begin soon after the tender is awarded in April and the project is expected to be completed towards the end of 2025.

Left: Workers pour concrete onto the formwork for level 2 of the new car park in January.

Above: An artist's impression of the new Concord Forensic Mental Health Unit.

Volunteers in focus

Working as part of a team and keeping fit have been just two of the many rewards Bernadette Gallagher says she has enjoyed during her almost 30 years volunteering at Concord Hospital.



Ms Gallagher has been a palliative care volunteer since she started volunteering at the hospital and has worked in wayfinding since it was established about 12 years ago.

"I just love being part of a team," she said. "You know, it's comradeship. And I get a lot out of it. It's kept me fit because I'm 80 now ... That's why I enjoy doing it. It kept me pretty fit, particularly Wayfinding because I'm on the go all the time."

After the death of her husband when she was a young mother, Ms Gallagher began volunteering at the palliative care department of the former Eversleigh Hospital in Petersham before seeing a notice calling for volunteers at Concord.

She felt her own experience with her husband's time in palliative care meant she could offer support to other families.

"I wanted to put back into the system, what they were giving me," she said.

"I felt I could be useful though, because I'd been through it, especially with family who had lost spouses and they had young children, I was able to talk to them, you know."

Ms Gallagher said she felt volunteers were highly valued at Concord and encouraged people to consider joining the volunteer ranks.

How proper handling can help you



A moment's thought can save a lifetime of pain, says Manual Handling and Work Health and Safety officer Niamh Riznyczok.

Ms Riznyczok said it's important hospital staff consider their manual handling safety to ensure they can continue to provide the best possible care for patients.

"I think we prioritise patients, sometimes at the deficit of our own needs," she said.

"And that's the nature of healthcare workers. Also, we're always time pressed. So sometimes manual handling is forgotten. It takes an extra couple of seconds but it could save you from a lifetime of pain."

Ms Riznyczok, who began working with Work Health and Safety manager Nathan Droguett in January, said staff can undertake manual handling assessments at Concord Hospital market days. She also said every department needs a manual handling trainer and encouraged staff to attend one of the monthly Manual Handling Train the Trainer courses.

It takes an extra couple of seconds but it could save you from a lifetime of pain

Ms Riznyczok said having "manual handling advocates" ensured best practice was followed in each ward and continuing training allowed the advocates to stay up to date with technical advances.

"It also would give you an opportunity to talk about your problems and unique situations that might be happening in your ward. The same techniques are taught to everyone but it's still a place where we can collaborate and refine the manual handling process, based on District policies and best practices."

The next Manual Handling Train the Trainer course will be held at Concord on Monday 11 March.

A decade of Living Well, Living Longer

Concord Hospital hosted a symposium in November celebrating the 10th anniversary of Sydney Local Health District's Living Well, Living Longer mental health program.

Living Well, Living Longer is designed to improve the health and wellbeing of people living with severe mental illness, who have a reduced life expectancy.

The program aims to guide mental health patients through the four stages of screening, detection, treatment initiation and ongoing management for coexisting conditions such as cardiovascular diseases and cancer.

Sydney Local Health Districts Dr Teresa Anderson, the District's Chief Executive, said the program came from the recognition the needs of mental health patients extended beyond what traditional healthcare services could provide.



A look back in time

The Multi building at the then-113th Australian General Hospital soon after construction finished in 1942, a year after the hospital first opened. At the time, the Multi building was one of the tallest buildings in Sydney. Four years later, the architects Stephenson and Turner would be awarded the Sir John Sulman Medal for Public Architecture for their work designing the hospital. The Concord facility would soon become the biggest hospital in the southern hemisphere.



Events

1 March, 12-1pm

Concord Hospital Staff Forum
Venue: Robert Lusby Auditorium in the Medical Education Centre

8 March, 7-9:30am

Foundation for a Bloody Great Cause's International Women's Day breakfast
Aqua Luna, 461 Henley Marine Drive, Drummoyne

8 March, 5:30-7:30pm

Anaesthetics, Surgery and Perioperative Care Research Symposium
Venue: Susan Wakil Health Building, University of Sydney, Camperdown

14 March, 6-8:30pm

International Women's Day Meet and Mingle
Venue: Medical Education Centre

Find out more about Sydney Local Health District's community events at:
slhd.health.nsw.gov.au/sydneyconnect/events

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

Concord Market Day

9am–2pm on The Green,
Concord Hospital one Thursday
each month.

For dates and details visit
slhd.health.nsw.gov.au/concord/market-day

