

# Annual Report 2021-22

[hnc.org.au](http://hnc.org.au)

**HEALTHY**  
NORTH COAST

**phn**  
NORTH COAST  
An Australian Government Initiative



**Front Cover:**

(L-R) Bellingen Riverwatch Program Manager  
Amy Denshire, Bellingen Riverwatch Coordinator  
Sam Daykin and Bellingen Shire Council  
Riverwatch Partner Justine Elder.

Bellingen Riverwatch is part of the Oz Green  
Global Rivers Environmental Education Network,  
and received a Healthy North Coast Community  
Wellbeing and Resilience grant. The grant  
program is funded by Healthy North Coast  
through the Australian Government's Supporting  
Communities in Bushfire Recovery package  
2021 -23.

## Acknowledgement of Country

Healthy North Coast acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the lands across our region, which includes the Githabul, Bundjalung, Yaegl, Gumbayngirr, Dunghutti and Birpai nations. We pay respect to the Elders past, present and emerging. We recognise these lands were never ceded and acknowledge the continuation of culture and connection to land, sky and sea. We acknowledge Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as Australia's First Peoples and honour the rich diversity of the world's oldest living culture.

# Contents

- 04 Our Vision and Mission
- 05 Message from the Chair
- 07 Message from the CEO
- 09 Year in Review
- 10 Our Region
- 12 Our Organisation
- 17 In-depth 2022
- 26 Strategic Goal 1
- 37 Strategic Goal 2
- 45 Strategic Goal 3
- 52 Strategic Goal 4
- 56 Financial Reports

As part of our response to the February and March 2022 flood events, Healthy North Coast coordinated and worked closely with ResqMed primary care paramedics to deliver medical supplies to Coraki's flood-impacted communities.



# Our Vision

Healthy people in

North Coast communities

## Our mission

To build a person-centred health system in which each member of the North Coast community, especially those with the greatest need, receives care that is integrated, high quality and easy to access. Our commitment to closing the gap and reducing health inequity for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities, is paramount to each of our objectives and outcomes.





# Message from the Chair

**Dr Adrian Gilliland**  
Chair  
Healthy North Coast

In 2021-22, Healthy North Coast's strong partnerships with our primary health workforce, service providers and community organisations were critical in supporting our region through some of its most significant challenges in recent times.

## Primary health support through crisis

Although it seems a long time ago now, COVID-19 was still a considerable threat in July 2021, with much of the country in lockdown and vaccines still to arrive in our region. Healthy North Coast's extensive coordination, liaison and support role for the North Coast distribution and vaccination program, helped our community to achieve an outstanding vaccination rate of more than 95% in a traditionally difficult to vaccinate population. As the months went by, this stood us in good stead through the summer months as lockdowns lifted, border controls were relaxed and residents and visitors started to move through our region again.

Late February and March 2022, however, brought the most devastating floods on record to Northern NSW, disrupting the lives and livelihoods of many thousands of people. Healthy North Coast was at the frontline in evacuation centres, working with primary care providers and emergency services, as part of the crisis care response. Our already established GP telehealth service saw a

dramatic increase in calls over the immediate flood emergency and recovery period. Within weeks, with support from the Australian Government, we established the Lismore Health Precinct to give displaced primary care providers a home and ensure continuity of care to local residents. We also established the Lismore Head to Health Hub to deliver mental health support so vital to the ongoing recovery and wellbeing of the Northern Rivers community.

Many other support initiatives developed in response to the COVID-19 pandemic and flood recovery are detailed in our *2021-22 In-depth review*.

## Renewing our leadership capability

During the 2021-22 year, Healthy North Coast's leadership capability was renewed and enhanced by the changes in Board composition and the establishment of new advisory bodies.

On behalf of the Board, I would like to extend my thanks to Dr John Moran AM, Dr Joanna Sutherland and Warren Grimshaw AM for their many years of service to the Healthy North Coast Board during which they guided and supported considerable change and upscaling of our operations.

We also welcomed three new Board members.

**Dr Jenny Beange** brings her passion for system reform and health equity to her Board role, as well as extensive experience in health service governance, developed through board and executive positions in other primary health networks and organisations supporting general practice.

**Anne Bryce** has a background in social welfare and community services and has held numerous executive, CEO and Board roles during her more than 40 years in the for-purpose community sector. Anne is a recipient of the Telstra 2016 NSW For Purpose & Social Enterprise Award; The Not-For-Profit Executive of the Year, The CEO Magazine; and recipient of the Centre For Disability Studies Excellence Award for her Community Contribution.

**Dr Matthew West** is a proud Wiradjuri man and has held board positions with Darkinjung Local Aboriginal Land Council and Indigenous Allied Health Australia (IAHA). Managing Director of West Health Services, Dr West advocates for high quality care for the most vulnerable communities.

With a more strategic whole-of-region Joint Clinical Council and newly established Community Advisory Council and Aboriginal Advisory Council, the Board expanded the organisation's strategic capability to respond to primary care workforce and community health needs. 2021-22 was the first full year of implementation for our Reconciliation Action Plan, with a Reconciliation Action Plan Committee established and reporting directly to the Board.



## Thank you

On behalf of the Board, I extend my deep gratitude to Julie Sturgess and the Executive team for their leadership throughout 2021-22, one of the most difficult and traumatic years in our Healthy North Coast family. I extend my best wishes to Julie in her new role as Chief Executive Officer with Central Queensland, Wide Bay, Sunshine Coast PHN, commencing September 2022. I'm sure she will bring the same energy, drive and commitment to partnerships that was the hallmark of her time with Healthy North Coast.

The Board recognises the incredible dedication and commitment of all Healthy North Coast staff throughout this challenging year, while many of them had to deal with disruption in their own lives and communities with the ongoing effects of COVID-19 and devastating flood events.

Thank you also to our GPs, general practice staff, pharmacists, Aboriginal service providers, allied health and mental health providers who formed the backbone of the response to so many challenges this year. We look forward to continuing to strengthen our partnership with you into the future.

## Advocating for a strong primary and preventive health sector

With an ageing population across the North Coast, issues with equity of access to primary care and continuing fiscal constraints, collaboration with our health partners and the community is essential to make the most of limited health resources and optimise the health of our communities.

Healthy North Coast's approach to systems dynamic modelling recognises the complexity of the health system and takes account of the range of variables that influence community health outcomes. The 2021 Health Needs Assessment undertaken in 2021-22 informs this process, with data analysis, and stakeholder and community consultation helping us to identify priority areas that will guide planning and commissioning through to 2025.

Our ongoing commitment to building capacity and skills across the primary care workforce continued through our education and events program, including regular educational meetings of our eight regional-based clinical societies and numerous online seminars. We recognise the role that whole-of-person and preventive health care plays in reducing the burden on primary care and hospital services, and set aside funding in 2021-22 for Healthy North Coast's inaugural Back to Health conference, which was delivered in late 2022 with more than 100 health professionals in attendance.

We acknowledge the extensive support of the Australian Government in providing funding for a range of flood recovery initiatives, both short- and long-term, and continue to advocate for increased investment in primary care and preventive health, and programs that attract primary care professionals to our region.



# Message from the CEO

**Julie Sturgess**  
Chief Executive Officer  
Healthy North Coast

The critical role of primary care in supporting safe and healthy communities has been firmly in the spotlight following successive crises of fire, flood and pandemic over recent years. In 2021-22, during the initial emergency response and right through to the ongoing recovery, our dual role of supporting the North Coast's dedicated primary care workforce and commissioning responsive and effective health services has never been more important.

## Partnering and advocating for stronger health system responses

Our health system is strongest when all parts work together and most tested during disasters and emergencies. In 2021-22, partnership and collaboration was critical to rapid mobilisation of resources to protect our community against COVID-19 and then ensuring continuity of primary care during and after the devastating 2022 Northern Rivers floods.

The In-depth review section sets out these largely operational activities in detail, though for me, our strategic advocacy role behind the scenes is just as vital. Early in the 2021-22 financial year, we took a bi-partisan approach and broadly engaged with all local MPs to ensure the NSW Premier was cautious

in lifting lockdowns across the state. The NSW Government's redirection of vaccine supply to the Greater Sydney area had delayed arrival of vaccines to our own region, leaving us vulnerable to visitors. Ultimately, travel restrictions remained in place long enough for us to receive and distribute precious vaccine supply, build immunity in our population and ultimately save lives.

Partnership and collaboration also underpins how we design and deliver fit-for-purpose primary health services, working closely with traditional primary care partners GPs, pharmacies, Aboriginal medical services and allied health professionals; and also with local health districts, hospitals, councils, state and federal agencies, universities, health consumers and the broader community.

Sometimes this collaboration can be over 18 months, as in the case of our Primary Care Access Project which undertook consultation and co-design with health consumers and practitioners in 2021-22 to develop an innovative model to streamline access to primary care, particularly for those populations currently experiencing barriers. Following a tender process in early 2022, Healthy North Coast contracted Amplar Health to deliver the service, with leading medical research centre, The George Institute,

selected to evaluate outcomes. North Coast Health Connect will launch in early December 2022 offering a nurse-led triage service, phone and webchat connections and bookings with GPs and pharmacies.

Sometimes, we are driven to pull people and resources together in a matter of weeks, such as the establishment of the Lismore Health Precinct in March 2022 to support displaced primary care providers following the Northern Rivers floods or the Lismore Health to Health hub and four Safe Haven support and wellbeing hubs, providing vital mental health services to a community still reeling.

In 2021-22, to ensure an holistic approach to service design and commission, we worked to expand our perspective through the establishment of new or revamped Board Advisory Committees and continued our applied systems dynamic modelling (SDM) approach to identify areas of need and allocate resources. It was pleasing to see the complex and dynamic systems modelling developed on the North Coast in partnership with the Sydney Mind and Brain Institute in The World Economic Forum's September 2021 list of the Top 10 Innovations in Mental Health.

We also are breaking ground in mental health support for young people through our partnership with NSW Education and the North Coast Collective to develop

## Lismore HEAD TO HEALTH



and implement the Resilient Kids initiative. Funded through a \$10 million grant from the National Emergency Management Agency and being delivered by Healthy North Coast from 2022-2024, Resilient Kids will implement school-based mental health supports for primary and secondary school-aged children in the flood-impacted Northern Rivers region. Already, in October 2022, 6,358 children responded to the Resilient Kids survey which will inform the specific supports to roll out in 2023.

We conducted our triennial Health Needs Assessment, supported by our extensive “SpeakUp” digital marketing and community consultation exercise, to synthesise health data and trends for the North Coast region. Besides informing our own service decision-making, many health practitioners in the region also rely on this information to guide their own operations.

### Advancing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health

Healthy North Coast’s reconciliation vision is to work towards a better future with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Communities, consisting of historical truth telling, trusting and reciprocal relationships and equitable outcomes.

In 2021-22, our staff celebrated the launch of our 2021-23 Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) and commenced work to deliver on the 84 individual actions in the RAP.

In June 2022, we commissioned a \$3 million consortium partnership titled “Stronger Communities” with three Aboriginal medical service providers to implement social and emotional wellbeing programs in flood-affected Aboriginal communities. Our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health portfolio was also redesigned in June 2022 to ensure a whole-of-organisation approach, which is being implemented in the 2022-23 financial year.

### Thank you

This is a bittersweet moment for me, as it will be the last time I formally extend my thanks and gratitude in a Healthy North Coast Annual Report to all who contribute to better health outcomes for our North Coast community. Since September 2022, I have taken up a new role as CEO of the Central Queensland, Wide Bay, Sunshine Coast PHN, to be closer to family.

My sincere appreciation to our primary care workforce who show up day after day to ensure continuity of care throughout the pandemic and at the frontline of the health sector response to natural disasters.

I acknowledge and thank the Australian Government and NSW Government for their funding of ongoing recovery initiatives across flood-affected regions. Though it has been an enormous logistics exercise to design services, coordinate tenders and allocate funding, Healthy North Coast is working hard to ensure support is on the ground as soon as possible, with many of these projects already commenced.

My heartfelt thanks also to the North Coast community for achieving an outstanding COVID-19 vaccination rate, keeping our vulnerable residents safe, and for pulling together to look after each through the 2022 flood events.

Thank you to the Board members for their guidance and support throughout 2021-22 and to the committed and passionate staff who form the Healthy North Coast family. Your can-do attitude and continually stepping up each time something was asked of you made all the difference in times of crisis. The challenges we faced in 2021-22 have given us new knowledge and operational capabilities and many of the partnerships forged during crisis response and recovery are enduring.

I am incredibly proud of all we have achieved this year and over the past four years at Healthy North Coast. I look forward to seeing this remarkable organisation continue to make a difference in the lives of all who live on the North Coast.

# Our Year in Review

The many achievements of Healthy North Coast during 2021-22 contributed to our vision of building a person-centred health system where everyone receives care that is coordinated, high-quality and easy to access.

Our efforts to improve health outcomes for people living on the North Coast are particularly directed to the most disadvantaged and vulnerable in our community.



**\$48 million**

in funding for local programs and services



**\$4 million**

in Federal funding for COVID-19 initiatives



**700**

face-to-face and virtual general practice support visits



**1,015**

users of the Mid and North Coast HealthPathways website each month



**135,730**

visitors to Healthy North Coast website



**338**

local service contracts being managed



**75**

health workforce learning and development initiatives held



**551,816**

people reached through Facebook campaigns



**378,601**

web page views

Responding to the devastating floods experienced in Northern NSW, we facilitated:

**1,500 GP telehealth consultations in March and 1,056 consultations during April**

**1,395 Connect to Wellbeing helpline calls from 28 February to 4 May**

**710 hours of frontline counselling with Healthy Minds practitioners.**

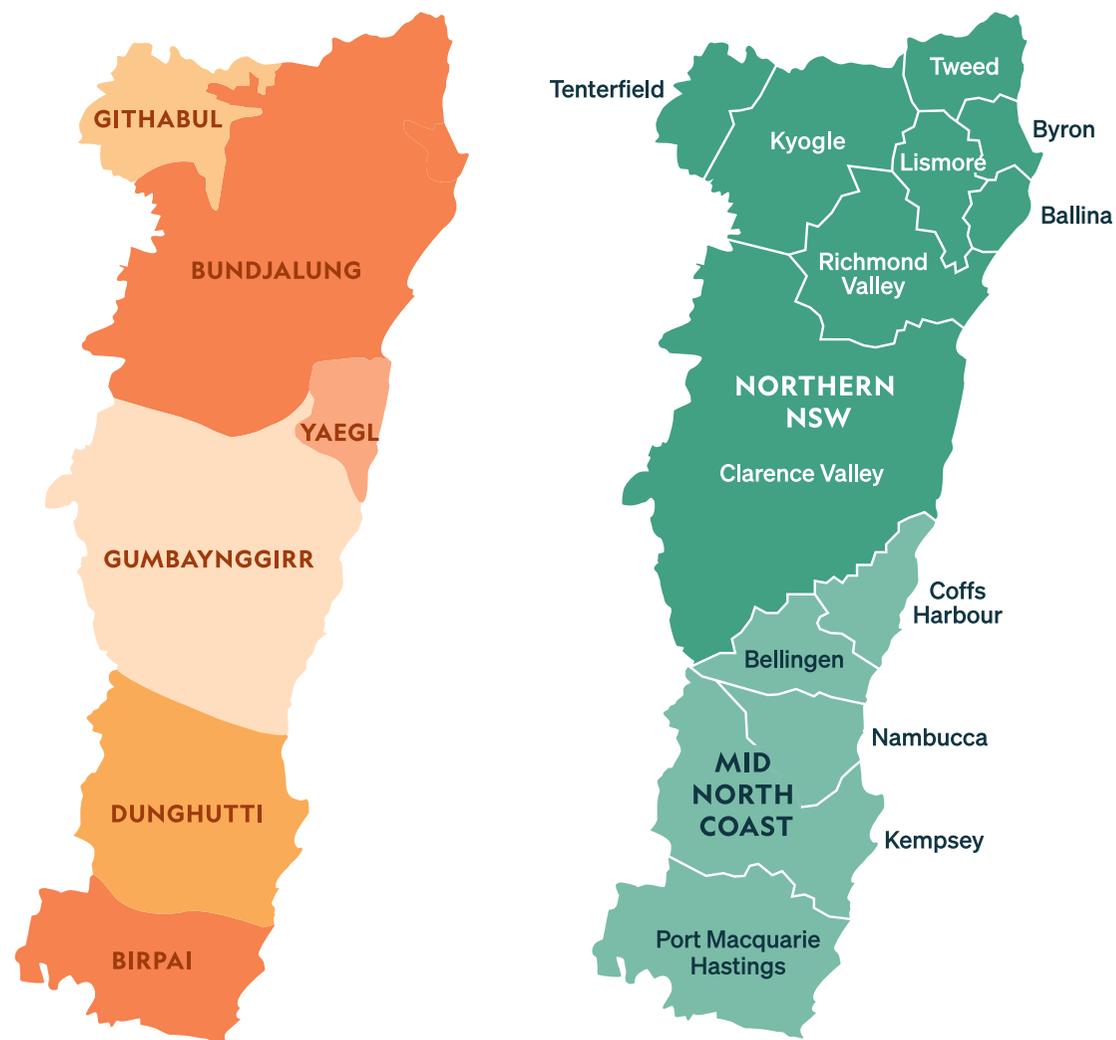
As part of our flood recovery response, Healthy North Coast established the Lismore Health Precinct, giving flood-impacted primary care providers a new home and Lismore residents access to urgently needed primary health services.

# Our Region

We are proud to be living and working in this beautiful and diverse region of New South Wales and are honoured to support our community's health and wellbeing.

The North Coast spans an area of approximately 33,000 square kilometres, extending from the Queensland border in the north to the Camden Haven region beyond Port Macquarie in the south. Along its eastern boundary is the coast, and to the west is the New England Tableland escarpment.

Our region comprises 12 local government areas (LGAs), 4 federal and 7 state electoral divisions, 6 Aboriginal nations and 13 local Aboriginal land councils (LALCs). It aligns with 2 local health districts — the Northern NSW Local Health District and the Mid North Coast Local Health District.



**32,767**  
Square  
kilometres

**541,520**  
People

**6**  
Aboriginal  
Nations

**12**  
LGAs

**2**  
Local Health  
Districts

With more than 541,000 residents, the North Coast region is rapidly growing, though many of our communities face considerable challenges due to social disadvantage, ageing, geographic isolation and cultural background.

More than a quarter of our residents are over 65 years, while nearly 32,000 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people call this region home.



**17%**  
population aged  
under 15 years



**26%**  
population aged  
65 years and over



**20%**  
born overseas  
(NSW 34.5%)



**6%**  
identify as Aboriginal and/  
or Torres Strait Islander  
(NSW 3.4%)



**7%**  
need assistance with self-care, mobility  
and communication (NSW 5.4%)

We work with and deliver programs through our incredible network of dedicated primary health care professionals, who also live and work in the region, serving and supporting their community.

**178 general practices**  
**846 general practitioners**  
**6 Aboriginal medical services**

**253 nurses in general practice**  
**1,182 primary care nurses and midwives**  
**3,520 allied health professionals.**



# Our Organisation

Healthy North Coast is fortunate to employ people who contribute both to the vision and goals of the organisation, as well as making a positive impact on our internal culture through a commitment to our organisational values.

Our organisational culture is founded upon our region's stunning natural beauty, enviable lifestyle and active and vibrant community spirit. Our staff bring passion, commitment, integrity and expertise to their roles, with a strong core of health care professionals in our ranks.



**81**

people employed  
as of 30 June 2022



**42**

full-time  
employees



**28**

part-time  
employees

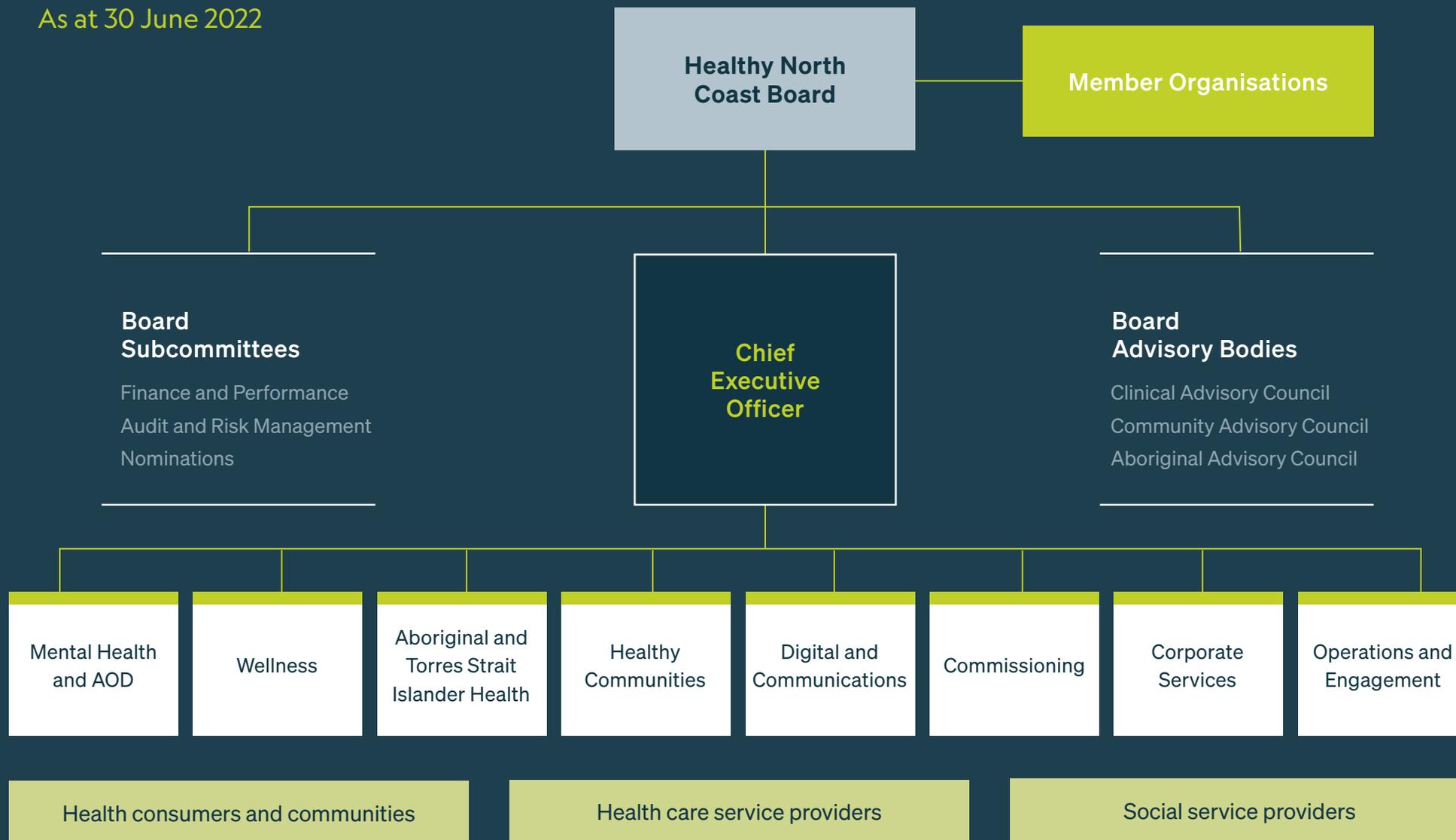


**11**

casual  
employees

# Our Governance

As at 30 June 2022



# Who we are

## Healthy North Coast Board

**Dr Adrian Gilliland**  
Chair

**Kerry Stubbs**  
Deputy Chair

**Dr Jenny Beange**  
(from 8 Feb 2022)

**Rebecca Bell**

**Anne Bryce**  
(from 12 Dec 2021)

**Sam Hardjono**

**Dr Caroline Hong**

**Graeme Innes**

**Dr Matthew West**  
(from 12 Dec 2021)

**Dr Jo Sutherland**  
(to 12 Dec 2021)

**Warren Grimshaw**  
(to 12 Dec 2021)

**Dr John Moran**  
(to 12 Dec 2021)

## Member organisations

**Mid North Coast Division of General Practice**

**North Coast Allied Health Association**

**Northern Rivers General Practice Network trading as Nordocs**

**University Centre for Rural Health**

## Executives

**Julie Sturgess**  
Chief Executive Officer

**Monika Wheeler**  
Executive Director, Wellness

**Tony Hendry**  
Director, Corporate Services

**Luke Elias**  
Director, Operations and Engagement

**Samara Finlayson**  
Director, Digital and Communications

**Glen James**  
Executive Director, Mental Health and AOD (to 6 Aug 2021)

**Hamza Vayani**  
Director, Mental Health and AOD (to 22 Jun 2022)

**Sarah Ford**  
Director, Healthy Communities

**Claudine Tule**  
Director, Commissioning (to 19 May 2022)

**Marni Tuala**  
Deputy Director, Aboriginal Health

Healthy North Coast has eight directorates that contribute to delivering our strategic objectives. Our directorates are guided by the Office of the Chief Executive, which drives and oversees the strategic objectives of the organisation and ensures delivery of our operational plans.

### Mental Health, Alcohol and Other Drugs

Delivering on a shared vision, purpose and action for significant reform in mental health and services planning by working with key partners and developing effective relationships and networks and subject matter expertise.

### Wellness

Works to improve health outcomes across the region through strategic commissioning and health improvement in key areas such as Aboriginal health, chronic disease, healthy living and ageing and population health amongst others.

### Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health

Leading Healthy North Coast's Aboriginal health priorities and fostering culturally safe engagement with services and communities to work towards equitable health outcomes on the North Coast. Investing in developing and supporting the Aboriginal workforce through a recruitment and retention strategy.

### Operations and Engagement

Delivering comprehensive stakeholder engagement and implementation support to ensure local context, needs and opportunities are integrated to improve health outcomes.

### Healthy Communities

Connecting communities in the region through place-based and community development programs, disaster management and climate adaptation.

Working alongside the Community Advisory Council and collaborating with all levels of government, industry, non-government and community organisations to improve community outcomes.

### Commissioning

Streamlining and connecting commissioning in procurement, contracts, planning, project management, data analytics and workforce development across the region to develop and implement health services to meet community needs.



### Corporate Services

Providing high-level quality support service to enable Healthy North Coast to deliver on strategic and operational objectives. A key focus is on automating and simplifying processes to support roles.

### Digital and Communications

Providing in-house cross-functional services across communications, public relations, digital health and information technology to promote the organisation's brand, work and services to the wider community, health care professionals and stakeholders.

## Our Values



Respect



Integrity



Collaboration



Innovation



Results Driven



Have Fun

## Delivering the PHN program

### on the North Coast

Healthy North Coast is one of 31 local, independent primary health networks (PHNs) across Australia, designed to benefit the health of local communities and provide them with better access to improved primary health care services.

PHNs are funded by the Australian Government and use a commissioning approach to procure medical and health care services based on local needs and priorities.

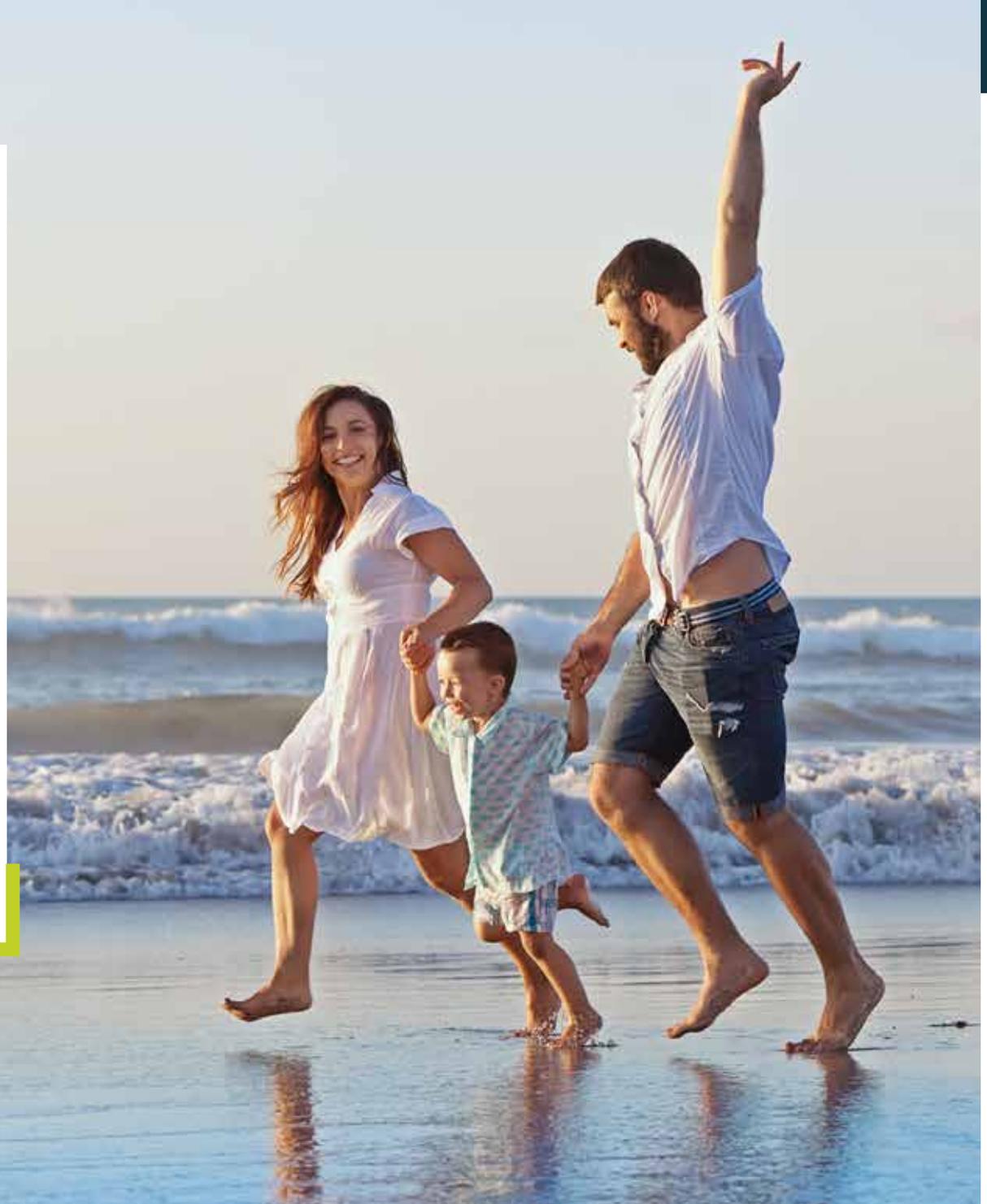
Our key objectives include:

**Access and outcomes** – improving health outcomes and addressing health inequities

**Quality** – improving the quality of primary health care

**Integration** – improving patient experience and outcomes

**Value** – delivering better value through operational capacity efficiencies and striving for excellence through strong governance.



# In-depth 2021-2022

## Flood response and recovery

Parts of our beautiful North Coast region were hit by extreme weather and devastating floods impacting thousands of people in late February 2022 and again in March.

Our communities faced severe disruption to critical primary care services during these challenging times. Healthy North Coast worked hand in hand with our region's primary care workforce and health system partners to respond to this unprecedented situation.



## Coordination of primary care crisis response

### Support on the ground in evacuation centres

During the immediate flood response period, Healthy North Coast met daily with the Northern NSW Local Health District (NNSWLHD) and Department of Communities and Justice to understand the health and mental health needs at evacuation centres and ensure these were met.

At one stage, during the height of the flood response, 23 centres were operationalised with health provision and support provided by Healthy North Coast and in partnership with the NNSWLHD.

Together with NNSWLHD, Healthy North Coast coordinated clinical service coverage, incorporating daily rostering of medical staff to evacuation centres in Ballina, Tweed and Lismore LGAs. Other sites were supported as needed.

From 4 March and in partnership with the NNSWLHD, Healthy North Coast deployed 23 Healthy Minds providers across 10 evacuation and recovery centres for up to seven days a week,

to deliver brief intervention, support and referral. Healthy North Coast commissioned 34 mental health practitioners to provide brief interventions at eight recovery centres from 9 March to 3 June 2022.

### Residential aged care facility support

During the flood emergency event, Healthy North Coast coordinated and linked residential aged care facilities (RACFs) that needed to evacuate residents, helping to quickly locate empty beds in alternative facilities.

We also assisted in linking RACFs with emergency casual staffing supplied by Southern Cross University student nurses and TAFE AIN students; and with Australian Defence Force support.

### Digital health at the disaster frontline

With access to normal GP and primary care services disrupted, the Healthy North Coast-funded GP Telehealth service, established during the March 2021 Mid North Coast flood response, offered immediate

support for the health needs of people in the worst-affected communities. It included free 24/7 GP consultations, prescriptions, and medical certificates.

With more than more than 75% of Lismore general practices impacted by the 28 February flood, demand for Healthy North Coast's GP Telehealth service leapt from a previous monthly average of about 300 consultations to more than 1,500 consultations in March. Following the 30 March flood, there were 1,056 telehealth consultations during April.

### Crisis communication and information

Healthy North Coast worked hard during the immediate emergency and the following recovery period to communicate with our primary health care providers and the community through digital marketing platforms, distribution of printed collateral and mainstream media.

### Mobilising primary care volunteers

Healthy North Coast quickly established a volunteer database to coordinate general practice and mental health volunteers, who generously gave their time to support the community. Nearly 100 clinical volunteers registered interest to support flood-impacted communities. Over 1,000 hours of support was delivered during this period and 304 referrals were made to extreme climatic events services, with 1,928 service contacts delivered between 1 March and 30 June 2022.

**100**  
clinical volunteers  
registered interest

**1,000+**  
hours of support  
was delivered

**1,928**  
contacts delivered

**304**  
referrals made



## Mobile medical centre on the move

The not-for-profit Street Side Medics partnered with Healthy North Coast to bring a mobile medical vehicle to Northern NSW to support the flood-impacted Northern Rivers community. Fully stocked with critical medical supplies and equipment, the Street Side Medics vehicle travelled to several different locations during its three-week operation in Northern NSW, helping to improve access to GP services in the areas of greatest need.

“ I am very thankful for this van service. Sam and Karensa both made me feel very comfortable with the way I was treated. Thanks to both of them I’m a lot happier now. This is a much loved and needed service. Thank heavens it was here.

XOX

## Supporting our primary care workforce

Healthy North Coast established several key initiatives to support primary care providers who were extending their normal operations to help communities in need, or whose operations were disrupted by the flood emergency.

These included:

### Establishment of Lismore Health Precinct

Within weeks of the flood crisis, Healthy North Coast established the Lismore Health Precinct (LHP) at Southern Cross University Lismore Campus, giving flood-impacted primary care providers a new home. Otherwise displaced primary health services are operating from the free clinic spaces at the LHP, including general practice, pharmacy, pathology, mental health and other allied health services.

### Keen St Clinic temporary operations from Southern Cross University

Due to flood impacts, Keen St Clinic was unable to operate from their normal premises.

With Healthy North Coast's support, Keen St Clinic established rapid temporary operations at the Southern Cross University Lismore campus, providing vital GP support at the emergency evacuation centre on site.

### Community information about primary care service arrangements

Healthy North Coast also launched a new online directory of onsite primary care services at the Lismore Health Precinct so that community members could access provider information and make appointments directly. In addition, we established a separate online resource to update the community about operational arrangements for other primary care providers not at the LHP, but displaced or facing changed services due to flood impacts. Many providers took up the offer to post their arrangements on our website.

### We Are Open

Under the We Are Open initiative, Healthy North Coast offered financial support to general practices, Aboriginal medical services and

pharmacies that opened outside regular business hours in flood-affected areas at short notice.

### Extension of Healthy North Coast's employee assistance program

We extended our employee assistance program, AccessEAP, to all of the local primary health workforce impacted by the floods, offering quick access to professional counselling for clinicians or practice staff.

### Identifying primary care workforce needs and preferred supports

Healthy North Coast is working closely with primary health care providers impacted by the 2022 flooding to understand the effect on their operations, how they responded and their preferences for future supports in disasters and emergencies. We conducted a survey to identify preferred workforce surge and wellbeing supports for primary care services in flood-impacted regions.

Identifying the needs of our primary care workforce

**96%**  
of responding practices reported being impacted by the floods

**83%**  
of services were concerned about staff wellbeing, burnout and fatigue

**67%**  
were concerned about the ability of health professionals to have a rest



Healthy North Coast staff at the Lismore Health Precinct at Southern Cross University, opened March 2022.

# Supporting community mental health

## Mental health support to a community in crisis

The Healthy North Coast-funded mental health service, Connect to Wellbeing, extended its helpline opening hours from 13 March into the evenings and on weekends, becoming operational Monday to Friday from 8:30am to 9pm and Saturdays and Sundays from 9am to 5pm as part of the immediate response to the floods.

Connect to Wellbeing saw a 70% increase in calls in March following the 28 February flood and a 50% increase in referrals processed. In total, from 28 February to 4 May, the Connect to Wellbeing line received 1,395 calls. The top presentation themes were around distress, grief around loss of belongings and homes, bereavement, health conditions, PTSD, sleeplessness, anxiety, trauma, panic, suicidal ideation, stress related to accommodation concerns, acute trauma and panic attack.

Healthy Minds practitioners delivered a combined total of 710 hours of frontline counselling to flood-affected communities in the Northern Rivers in Ballina, Casino, Chinderah, Evans Head, Grafton, Kyogle, Lismore, Maclean, Mullumbimby and Murwillumbah.

## Establishment of Head to Health Hub

The Lismore Head to Health Hub commenced operations on 28 March 2022 at the Lismore Primary Health Precinct, Southern Cross University,

just four weeks after floods first devastated the region. The Hub is designed as a welcoming entry point for engagement, assessment and treatment for people experiencing distress or crisis. It has delivered 378 occasions of service to 196 clients.

## Local mental health coordinators for flood-affected LGAs

Healthy North Coast worked closely with the NNSWLHD to recruit 10 Health and Wellbeing Flood Recovery Navigators. The roles work across designated local government areas and provide direct place-based mental health and wellbeing linkages to existing clinical and non-clinical supports.

## Commissioning for culturally-appropriate flood responses

Healthy North Coast joined with Bullinah Aboriginal Health Service, Bulgarr Ngaru Medical Aboriginal Corporation and Rekindling the Spirit to invite proposals from suitably qualified and experienced organisations to deliver the Northern NSW Strong Community Program. Eligible activities include provision of services; trauma-based programs; social and emotional wellbeing programs; education and early intervention, and connection to health and social supports.

## Building community resilience from the ground up

Healthy North Coast was tasked with delivering the three-year, \$5 million Community Wellbeing and Resilience Flood Recovery Grants program, funded by the NSW Government as part of the Northern NSW flood recovery package.

Ten providers were selected to deliver programs focussing on young people, older people and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in the NSW local government areas of Lismore, Richmond Valley, Tweed, Ballina, Byron, Kyogle and Clarence Valley.



### Safe Havens for mental health support

Healthy North Coast worked with the NSW Government to establish four Safe Haven community wellbeing and support hubs, offering free support, connection and counselling without referral or bookings. The Safe Havens are located at Lismore, Woodburn, Mullumbimby and Murwillumbah, with services being delivered by The Buttery.

*“ Safe Haven has been an easily accessible and useful service. Safe Haven has offered support and advice in mental health, housing and homelessness.*

*The staff are friendly and easy to talk to and have been available and willing to provide support when others have not.*

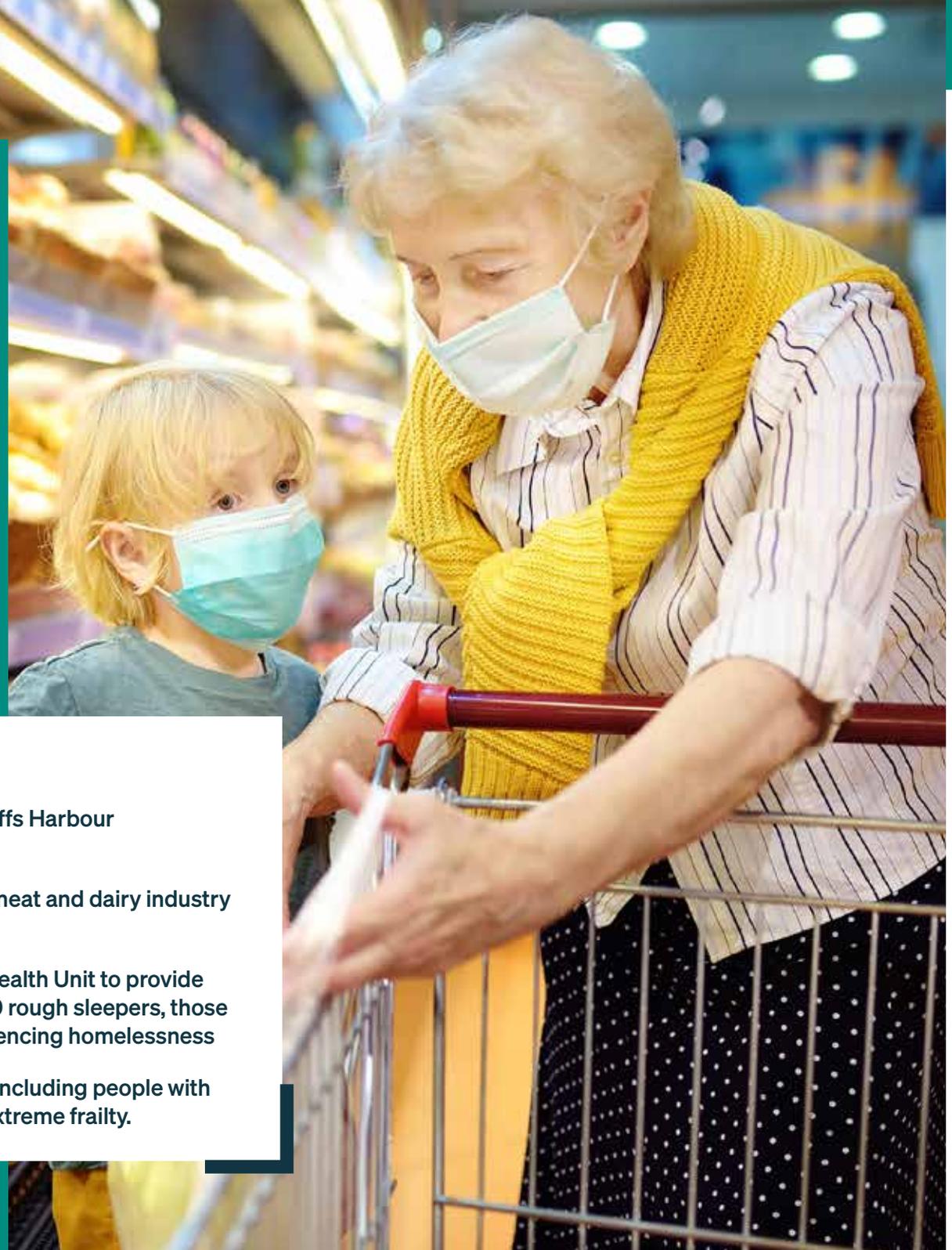
*Thank you, Safe Haven.*

*Safe Haven participant*

## Protecting our community against COVID-19

During 2021-22, Healthy North Coast continued its role in supporting the rollout of COVID-19 vaccines to protect our community from the worst of the virus.

This included supporting vulnerable and priority populations; communicating and engaging with participating practices around vaccine availability; program updates and ATAGI guidelines; and working with vaccine providers to resolve challenges.



### Highlights of the rollout included facilitating:

**500-plus vaccinations for refugee health clients in the Coffs Harbour and Woolgoolga areas**

**1500-plus onsite vaccinations for seasonal, agricultural, meat and dairy industry staff, via mobile clinics**

**joint programs with local health districts and the Public Health Unit to provide roaming and fixed vaccination services for more than 800 rough sleepers, those in temporary or crisis accommodation and people experiencing homelessness**

**100-plus in-home vaccinations for complex populations, including people with high care needs, intellectual and physical disability and extreme frailty.**

## COVID-safe workshops help Coffs Harbour community's most vulnerable

A collaboration between local service providers helped vulnerable members of the Coffs Harbour community better understand how to stay COVID-safe.

The series of COVID-safe workshops were the result of a partnership between Healthy North Coast, Anglicare, Mission Australia and NSW Health.

Aimed primarily at refugees, migrants, homeless people and members of the Aboriginal community, the workshops were held in Coffs Harbour in December 2021 and February 2022.

They featured guest presenters who advised on preventative health measures, COVID-19 symptoms, testing, isolating, where to get help and more.

Interpreters were available to help people from a non-English speaking background. At one of the workshops, the majority of participants were Kurmanji-speaking Yazidi refugees.

Several tech-savvy young people from Youngsters.co gave participants a rundown on accessing vaccination certificates on mobile devices, explained how QR codes work and answered questions on all things IT.

## Collaboration a shot in the arm for high-risk business

Healthy North Coast partnered with Regional NSW, Business NSW, Regional Development Australia and the North Coast Public Health Unit to support vaccination in high-risk business and industry where continuity of operations was vital.

In September and October 2021, more than 1,500 vaccinations were provided to North Coast workers in the Coffs Harbour, Clarence Valley, Richmond Valley, Lismore and Byron local government areas.

### Supported businesses included:

**NORCO in Lismore and Raleigh, where 700 workers were offered vaccinations**

**the Casino Food Co-Op, with 300 workers vaccinated through onsite clinics and vaccination also offered to family and friends of staff**

**Mountain Blue Farms – vaccination for 550 staff, including 150 migrant workers other agricultural sector employees across the region**

**several public and independent schools as well as TAFE students and staff.**



Seasonal agricultural workers receiving their COVID-19 vaccinations

## COVID Care in the Community - a commissioned home visit service

As the effects of COVID-19 continued in 2021-22, Healthy North Coast made available a 24/7 GP telehealth service to enable patients to continue isolating safely at home.

Healthy North Coast was also involved in the commissioning and establishment of the COVID Care Home Visit Service, which has provided an average of more than 100 occasions of face-to-face and in-home care per month for COVID-19 patients since commencing in 2022.

Expressions of interest were sought from general practices with capacity to undertake home visits to support home-based management of COVID-19, reducing the need for hospital presentation and inpatient care.

Healthy North Coast supported practices to buy assistive technology and mobile clinical measuring equipment. This included items such as blood pressure monitors, spirometry equipment, temperature and oxygen saturation probes and other respiratory assessment devices.

The program extended to in-home winter care for at-risk individuals in the post-acute COVID phase, enabling comprehensive in-home assessment, monitoring and evaluation for long COVID management.

The services were also able to provide COVID care in the region's residential aged care facilities, and to flood-impacted residents, including people living in temporary accommodation.



## COVID-19 Aboriginal Medical Service Community Support Program

Healthy North Coast worked with the local health districts to assist the region's Aboriginal medical services (AMSs), which had reported challenges in supporting the community to manage COVID-19 at home and isolate safely, due to the increasing number of COVID-positive cases in the community.

Healthy North Coast provided funding to support activities and needs identified by the AMSs, including:

supporting 24/7 medical coverage to help with the management of COVID-positive patients

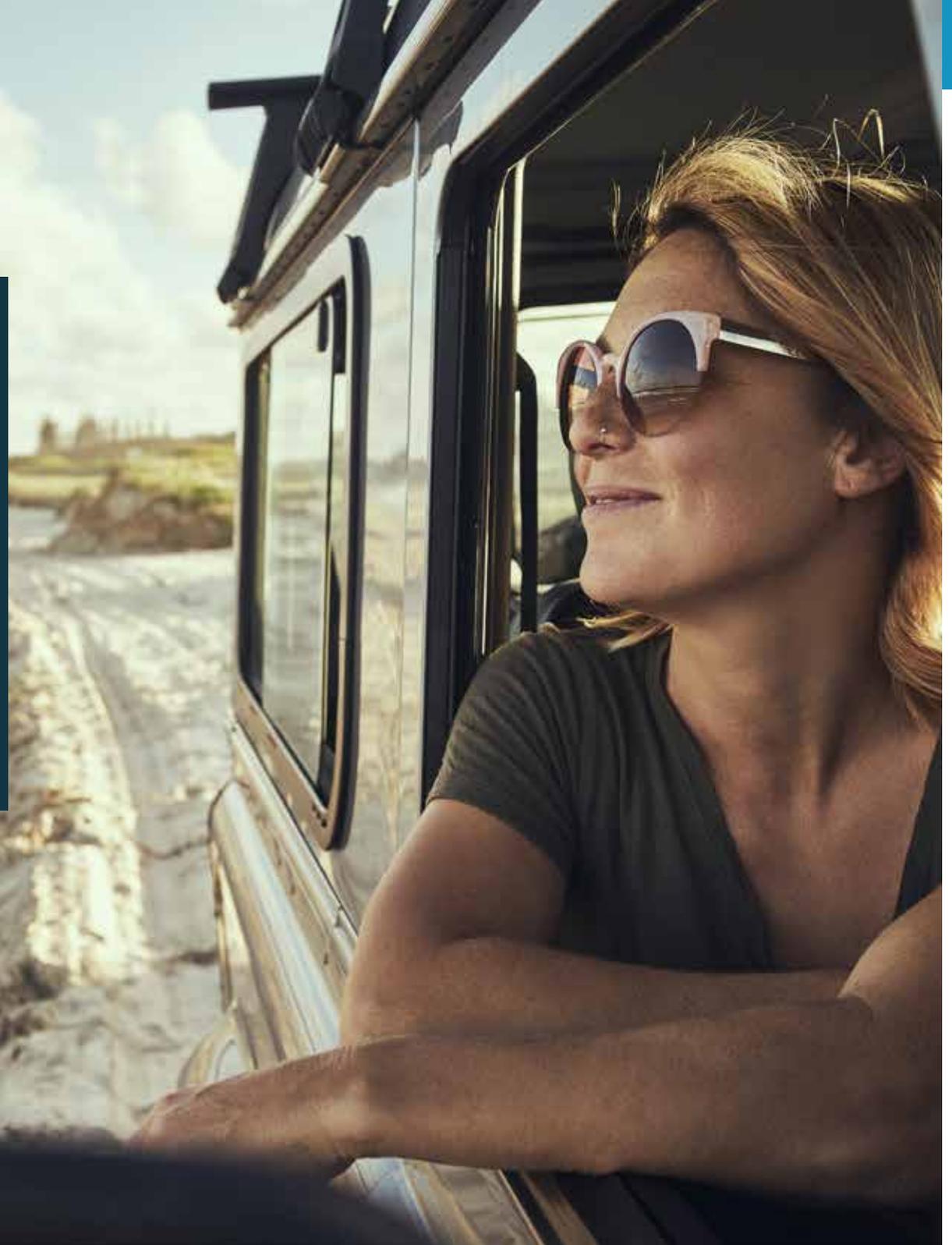
offering social and care coordination packages

providing pulse oximeter and PPE supplies.

# Strategic Goal 1

**Deliver better health  
outcomes through leadership  
and collaboration**

Acknowledging the importance of leadership and collaboration, we aim to deliver better health outcomes and champion social connection and healthier communities. Working with health and social services across the region, we are increasing the efficiency and effectiveness of our local services.



## Supporting and engaging with primary care



### General practice

Healthy North Coast conducted more than 700 virtual and face to face visits with general practices across the 2021-22 financial year.

We provided support and assistance to practices in key areas to help them to continue to improve the quality of primary care services provided to their patients. There were 200 individual 'improvement' interactions recorded across general practices, with the most popular topics relating to:

- digital health readiness
- managing the risk of exposure to COVID-19 in general practice
- improving the recording of smoking status in general practice documentation
- improving the coding and recording of key data sets
- increasing and maintaining skills in advanced life support.

In addition to a central list of more than 50 Primary Care Impact quality improvement initiatives, our Primary Health Coordinators partnered with general practices to support 20 customised improvement projects throughout the year.

We gave weekly communication and critical information updates to North Coast practices offering COVID-19 vaccination services as part of the national vaccination rollout strategy. More than 130 general practices were kept up to date with the many changes and developments over

the year, including to eligibility criteria, availability of new vaccine types for adults and children, advice on booster vaccines, and vaccine storage. Healthy North Coast hosted regular vaccine provider support forums. Many practices shared stories of what was working well and what could be improved.

More than 5,000 doses of vaccine with short expiry dates were successfully transferred between practices, ensuring minimal wastage and maximising vaccine availability when deliveries were disrupted due to flooding. The frequent and regular engagement with vaccinating practices played an integral role in the success of the vaccine rollout across our region.

### Allied health

Healthy North Coast demonstrated growing engagement with allied health services, seen through the increasing participation and attendance at clinical society events and through the reformed Clinical Advisory Council.

One-third of the Healthy North Coast Clinical Advisory Council members are allied health professionals, with representation from physiotherapy, psychology and pharmacy disciplines.

Allied health clinicians have featured more extensively in co-design and consultation processes. They have participated in or worked on:

- aspects of the Primary Care Access program
- the Healthy Ageing strategy
- mental health reform projects
- social prescribing.

## Aboriginal medical services

Throughout the different waves of COVID-19, there was a significant increase in the number of COVID-positive Aboriginal patients needing support in the community from Aboriginal medical services (AMSs).

The AMSs reported challenges in being able to support the community to manage COVID-19 at home and isolate safely as the number of COVID-positive cases in the community increased.

Difficulties included staff being furloughed, the supply of PPE and pulse oximeters, and having available resources to support social care and coordination.

Healthy North Coast helped to co-design a flexible support package with each AMS to manage COVID-positive Aboriginal patients in the community in a culturally safe way.

Support and assistance were made available to ensure each AMS could look after Aboriginal community members during periods of high demand.

Healthy North Coast met with each AMS to better understand their needs. We assisted with:

- 24/7 medical coverage via telehealth services**
- social and care coordination packages**
- oxygen monitoring devices and PPE, supplying as requested**
- medical coverage via locum and on-call resources.**

## Pharmacy

There has been increasing engagement with pharmacy through several key programs. The Primary Care Access Program has seen broad pharmacy stakeholder engagement and consultation to incorporate pharmacy services into the program's delivery. This will help to improve the options for our community to access appropriate primary health care.

Healthy North Coast has pharmacy representation on our Clinical Council and participants across most clinical societies. There have also been several combined COVID-19 vaccination service coordination programs, including on the weekend and after-hours.

Coordinated efforts to transfer vaccines between pharmacy and general practice to minimise wastage of vaccines nearing expiry proved a success, particularly when vaccine delivery to some areas was hampered by flooding.

## Nurses

Throughout 2021-22, engagement of our nursing cohort across the North Coast and their support and collaboration has been critical to the success of quality improvement initiatives and projects across primary care. Nursing partnerships within general practice and pharmacy has been central to the success of the COVID19 vaccination rollout strategy, the management of COVID care in the community and the implementation of many initiatives to support the management of chronic disease. Exciting new opportunities for nurse led services in areas of wound management and digital health triage are being co-designed and supported to help our community access appropriate and timely clinical care.

## Specialists

During the year, we boosted our work with specialists, including by having specialist clinician representation on the Healthy North Coast Clinical Advisory Council.

We commenced specialist practice managers forum meetings, to identify common challenges, opportunities and areas of interest around providing specialist out-patient services.

Through contracted work with the Australian Digital Health Agency (ADHA), we:

- held a digitally enabled specialists webinar, with follow-up communications sent to participants**
- identified three cohorts of specialists with conformant software: specialists registered and/or using My Health Record (MHR); specialists with little or no use of MHR; and specialists not registered for MHR**
- offered training and support in registering and connecting to MHR**
- provided follow-up and ongoing support for practices wanting to register for MHR and Provider Digital Access**
- developed and provided training to our primary health coordinators to enable them to help with the MHR registration process**
- discussed with specialists the ADHA Specialists Toolkit and other ADHA resources**
- researched and mapped specialists' practices in the Healthy North Coast footprint.**

## Healthy North Coast Reconciliation Action Plan

Healthy North Coast's Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) was endorsed by Reconciliation Australia in August 2021, expressing our commitment to working with Aboriginal Elders, leaders and community members across the Githabul, Bundjalung, Yaegl, Gumbayngirr, Dughutti and Birpai nations in our footprint.

One of the key deliverables in the RAP was the establishment of a Healthy North Coast Reconciliation Working Group comprising elders and Aboriginals from the local community, academics and Healthy North Coast staff. This nine-member group comprises five Healthy North Coast staff, two individuals who also sit on our Aboriginal Advisory Council and two external members. The Reconciliation Working Group meets quarterly to actively monitor implementation of RAP actions, tracking progress and reporting.

With the implementation of the RAP, we hope to build upon our established relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations and communities and understand health through the lens of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures.

RAP commitments met in 2021-22 include:

RAP integrated into staff induction

Aboriginal custodians will provide Welcome to Country at significant external events and meetings

internally, staff will conduct an Acknowledgment of Country

Sorry Business included as compassionate leave in workplace policy

HR policies and procedures reviewed to identify existing anti-discrimination provisions and identify future needs

anti-discrimination policy implemented.



## Welcome to RAP Working Group member, Gulwanyang Moran



### Gulwanyang Moran

Gulwanyang is a proud Birrbay and Dhanggati Woman of the Gathang-speaking language group, coming from Makurr (Australian bass) and Guula (koala) bloodlines. Gulwanyang runs a local language governance group in her community and is passionate about revitalising language through teaching and ceremony. She also works in the NSW Education Department as a research assistant and supports the delivery of Aboriginal languages into early childhood education.

## First 2000 Days Program supporting the most vulnerable

A partnership between Tresillian, Northern NSW Local Health District, Bulgarr Ngaru Medical Aboriginal Corporation and Healthy North Coast.

Highlights from 2021-22 included:

**85** attendees average per school term joined the Play-n-Yarn playgroup

**90** attendees per term participated in the Getting to Know You/Bubs in the Hub support and familiarisation group for parents with babies 12 weeks and under

**50** attendees average per school term went to the infant support circle

**104** attendees joined over the eight sessions of the Circle of Security Parenting Program which ran a series of facilitated workshops for families

While the First 2000 Days initiative is a state-wide, multi-faceted program, Healthy North Coast's involvement focuses on providing operational support to the Child and Family Wellbeing Hub in Grafton.

The Hub delivers face-to-face and community-based programs, with a focus on the Aboriginal community. It also collaborates with the Bulgarr Ngaru Medical Aboriginal Corporation, Tresillian Family Care Centres, the Northern NSW Local Health District and Healthy North Coast.

Overall, the First 2000 Days Program aims to:

provide targeted health services for vulnerable families and actively connect them to additional support services

work with partner agencies to better care for those at risk of domestic violence, sexual assault or child abuse and neglect

identify risk early in pregnancy/parenthood and address factors that may impair parenting capacity or healthy development of child

engage earlier with parents with mental health and/or drug and alcohol issues to better support parent-child relationships

identify and act early to link children experiencing developmental, behavioural and social problems to appropriate supports.

## Building the mental health literacy of our communities

Healthy North Coast is working alongside a Mental Health Literacy Lived Experience Panel to develop and co-design local tools and resources that will build the mental health literacy of our communities.

This Mental Health Literacy Project is funded by the Australian Government and led by the Mental Health Commission of NSW.

The project aims to make it easier for people to get clear and simple information about their health, and to access mental health services that are right for them.

The Mental Health Literacy Lived Experience Panel is made up of community members from across the region who have a lived experience of accessing mental health supports in the community, such as general practitioners, psychologists, mental health or counselling services.

The project will continue in the 2022-23 financial year with co-design workshops asking people to share their experience of recognising mental health challenges in themselves or others. Healthy North Coast will seek information from participants as to how people can be supported to identify challenges early, ask for help, and find information about available services. The next step will be to use these insights to co-design specific tools or resources with members of the Lived Experience Panel that can be used by people in the community.



### Decision-support tools — smarter investment, better health outcomes

Healthy North Coast collaborated with the Sax Institute in 2021 to develop a system dynamics model (SDM) to support our Healthy Ageing Strategy (p35). Predictive simulation models, like SDMs, enable a better understanding of the complex ecosystems that support health service delivery. The models use a wide range of health data, best-practice health service data, and expert forecasts to project health service demand over time.

The models simulate how different health and social determinants and potential health programs interact with the rest of the system to produce health outcomes. In this way, the models are designed to be used as decision-support tools for PHNs, like Healthy North Coast, and local health districts. SDMs guide investment into health and social care services to maximise health outcomes and return on investment.

# North Coast Suicide Prevention Trial concludes

The six-year National Suicide Prevention Trial, of which the North Coast was one of 12 regional participants, concluded on 30 June 2022.

Healthy North Coast was the lead agency for the North Coast Suicide Prevention Trial, with sites at Lismore, Tweed/Byron, Clarence Valley, Bellingen and Kempsey.

The aim of the trial was to develop and implement a systems-based approach to suicide prevention at a local level for at-risk populations. The trial sought to:

**better integrate and connect the suicide prevention system at the local level**

**develop local solutions to reduce suicides in regions with higher-than-average rates**

**improve the evidence base to help develop future responses to suicide prevention in Australia.**

Healthy North Coast used the support and resources of Black Dog Institute's suicide prevention team, commissioned by the Australian Government Department of Health nationally, to provide guidance on an evidence-based systems approach to suicide prevention.

The most successful strategy was found to be the 'gatekeeper and frontline training'. A range of training was offered throughout the sites, with targeted approaches to upskill people who work or live with at-risk groups in the community. Community engagement campaigns were also successful, enhancing participation in activities and events, and assisting us to learn from the community about what matters most.

The North Coast trial found that to assist with future investment in community-based suicide prevention activity, the following should be considered:

**Suicide prevention activities should be coordinated and collaborative**

**Suicide prevention should be guided by data that:**

- > reliably identifies which groups are at particular risk in a community and what factors play a role in suicidal behaviour
- > includes SA2 level information for rural and remote communities within a local government area
- > identifies local risk and protective factors a program or strategy should focus on to reduce suicides.

**Investment in training or community-based activities should be flexible**

**A consistent evaluation methodology for future suicide prevention activity should be adopted**

**Community engagement should be included in future suicide prevention activities**

**Men and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples are among the at-risk population groups on the North Coast**

**Future investment in suicide prevention activities should be either led by the priority groups, or future co-design should include representatives of these groups at all stages, from planning through to implementation.**



## Webinars examine the cultural determinants of health

The Centre for Healthcare Knowledge and Innovation partnered with Karabena Consulting to deliver three webinars in 2021-22, which were part of a six-part series that centred on the cultural determinants of health. The themes for the webinars were:

Connection to Spirituality and Ancestors  
(July 2021)

Connection to Family, Kinship and Community  
(August 2021)

Connection to Mind and Body  
(September 2021).

Artwork for the series logo was created by mother and daughter duo Charmaine Davis and Chenaya Bancroft-Davis, descendants of the Gumbaynggirr and Bundjalung Nations.



**3 webinars**  
on cultural links  
with health

**1,114**  
people  
attended live

**2,700+**  
people registered  
for the series

**819**  
video views

“Every speaker shared so much in the way of valuable insights. I feel so much more informed every time I engage with Indigenous knowledge. I feel enriched and a better human being for thinking more deeply and morally.”

Registered nurse, Nambucca

Everything about the series was very special. It was from the heart. An awe-inspiring range of speakers and the informal nature in which it was delivered meant open yarning and genuine sharing.

Aboriginal health worker, Port Macquarie.

# Digital Health

## National Authentication Service For Health (NASH) certificate renewals

During 2021-22, Healthy North Coast supported general practice, pharmacy and medical specialists in renewing and upgrading their National Authentication Service for Health (NASH) certificates from SHA-1 to SHA-2.

This included individual phone calls to all providers notifying them of their renewal. Step-by-step guides were prepared and shared, and one-on-one support was given where necessary.

We made 572 phone calls and sent 358 emails as part of NASH renewal certificate stakeholder engagement.

## My Health Record support

Healthy North Coast supported private specialists to register for My Health Record and encouraged existing registered practices to increase their use.

We also engaged directly with 80% of private specialists across the region to boost their use and adoption of My Health Record, backing Australia's digital health strategy.

## SafeScripts NSW

During the year we engaged general practitioners, pharmacists and private specialists to raise awareness and register for SafeScripts NSW.

This included publishing three articles in our Practitioner Newsletter, co-hosting an education webinar and speaking directly to practices during monthly visits.

E-Health NSW developed a statewide solution to support medicine safety – embedding the system in clinical and dispensing software to enhance safety in prescribing and cross-checking between prescribers and dispensers. This was another pillar of Australia's digital health strategy.

## HealthPathways

Regular updates were made to HealthPathways to support the implementation of eReferrals, telehealth, NSW Safe Scripts and other digital health initiatives.

## Building ICT and digital health capability

Healthy North Coast helped to establish the Thunggutti Ngalayn Guuyati Aboriginal Community Virtual Hub during the year.

We supplied iHealth remote patient monitoring devices to support telehealth consultations and partnered with the Mid North Coast Local Health District, Thungutti Land Council, and local Aboriginal medical services to guide implementation.

Healthy North Coast also supplied additional ICT equipment and provided consultation to support project partners.

## Lismore Health Precinct and Safe Havens

Following the floods of 2022, Healthy North Coast worked to establish a secure network for displaced services operating out of the Lismore Health Precinct, and four new Safe Havens.

At the Lismore Health Precinct we established new network infrastructure at the multi-complex sites to ensure industry standard security protocols were met.

At the Safe Havens, we provided networks for each site that met their individual requirements, as well as offering ongoing support.

# Healthy Living and Ageing

Healthy North Coast's Healthy Living and Ageing Team had a busy 2021-22, responding to COVID-19 outbreaks in aged care homes and supporting the aged care sector during floods.

During the height of the COVID-19 outbreaks between January and March 2022, the team worked closely with the local health districts and Public Health Unit. This was especially so in the areas experiencing simultaneous outbreaks and flooding. As part of their work, members of the team were a conduit for local information into and out of local residential aged care facilities (RACFs).

With their local knowledge, skills and experience, they were able to:

- advise Australian Defence Force personnel during their assignments to support RACFs experiencing worker fatigue immediately post floods**
- pass on relevant local information to the Department of Health state emergency team**
- work with the local health districts to provide access to key RACF staff**
- link evacuation centres to community aged care providers.**



## Healthy Living and Ageing Strategy

Work on the Healthy Living and Ageing Strategy continued during 2021-22, but was hampered to a degree by the COVID-19 outbreaks and flood disaster management activities.

Systems dynamic modelling was completed. The Sax Institute developed models around rural practice, chronic disease, accommodation needs and positive ageing promotional campaigns. Key themes that emerged included health literacy, planning to age, and accommodation. These will be used to help optimise program investment.

Under the Strategy, social research with more than 50 people of different generations was carried out. Participants reinforced the need for social and community connections. Those in the general population expressed need for information about ageing and better access to health practitioners.

The work already undertaken, along with current aged care reform projects, will help to inform our future-looking strategy and its strong focus on the consumer's voice.

Positive healthy living and ageing outcomes due to Australian Government aged care reforms, include:

- video conferencing and after hours plans in RACFs**
- early intervention initiatives for older people living in the community**
- dementia pathways**
- local implementation of the Care Finder program.**

# National General Practice data shows how North Coast measures up

The 2021-22 Australian Institute of Health and Welfare national report brings together de-identified data collated by primary health networks from general practices across 10 Quality Improvement Measures (QIMs).

	DATA CATEGORY/SOURCE	QIMS	NATIONAL	NORTH COAST	
Diabetes Status	1. Proportion of regular clients with diabetes with an HbA1c result recorded in their GP record within the previous 12 months, all ages	Type 1	56.9	63.3	▲
		Type 2	71.0	73.9	▲
		Undefined	63.2	67.1	▲
Smoking Status	2. Proportion of regular clients with a smoking status record and result in their GP record, 15 years age and over	Recorded	64.2	71.0	▲
		Current smoker	14.2	15.2	▲
		Ex smoker	22.4	31.6	▲
		Never smoked	63.4	53.2	▼
Height, Weight and BMI	3. Proportion of regular clients with height and weight recorded in their GP record and a derived BMI result, 15 years age and over	Height and weight	21.1	25.4	▲
		BMI underweight	2.1	2.5	▲
		BMI healthy	25.3	26.1	▲
		BMI overweight	32.2	33.0	▲
		BMI obese	40.4	38.5	▼
Influenza Immunisation Status	4. Proportion of regular clients with height and weight recorded in their GP record and a derived BMI result, 15 years age and over	65 years and over	59.9	60.3	▲
		With diabetes	54.0	59.6	▲
		With COPD	63.8	63.9	▲
Alcohol Consumption	7. Proportion of regular clients with an alcohol consumption status recorded in their GP record, 15 years age and over	Consumption recorded	57.1	65.3	▲
CVD Risk Factors	8. Proportion of regular clients with a record of the necessary risk factors in their GP record for CVD risk assessment, 45-74 years age	Risk factors recorded	49.8	56.9	▲
Cervical Screening	9. Proportion of regular female clients with an up-to-date cervical screening test record in their GP record within the previous 5 years, 25-74 years age	Current result recorded	38.2	44.7	▲
Blood Pressure Monitored	10. Proportion of regular clients with diabetes with blood pressure recorded in their GP record within the previous 6 months, all ages	In patients with diabetes	54.7	60.2	▲

# Strategic Goal 2

Commission for health

equity using evidence and

innovation

Responsible for delivering the North Coast PHN program, Healthy North Coast's core function is to commission local health services that will result in better health outcomes for the region. Through truly understanding the population's health needs, we work to plan services that will meet those needs, resulting in a seamless approach to regional commissioning.

## Program aims to transform access to primary care

Healthy North Coast's \$7 million, five-year Primary Care Access project commenced in July 2021. It aims to improve current and future generations' access to primary health care.

The North Coast continues to face the simultaneous pressures on health system resources of an ageing demographic, the rise in incidence and burden from multiple chronic diseases, COVID-19 and climatic events, problematic alcohol and other drug use and community mental health issues.

Australian Government funding was allocated for the codesign and implementation of one or more solutions to develop a new model of care aimed at improving access to local and virtual health supports, particularly for young people.

New contracts were awarded to Amplar Health and The George Institute for Global Health as part of the effort to support local clinicians and communities

to make better use of existing services and empower consumers to get the right care, at the right time, from the right place.

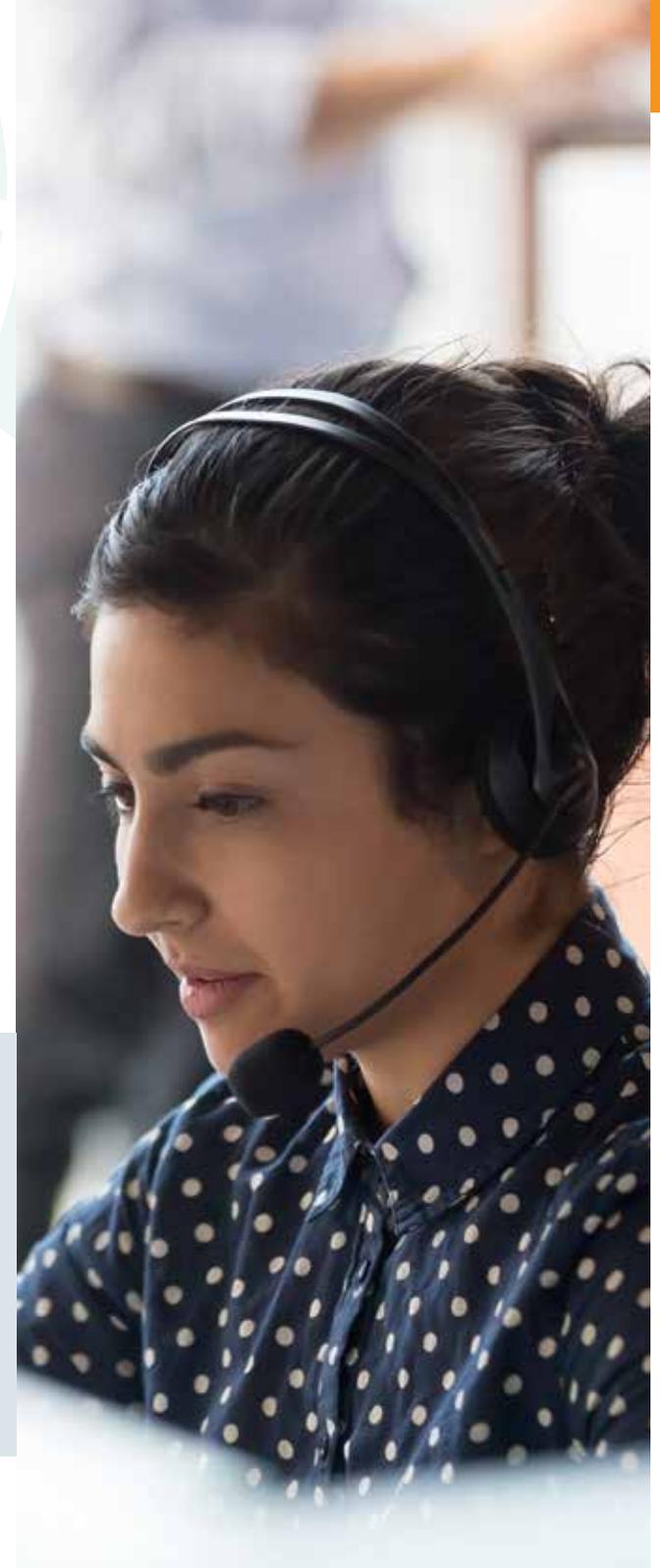
A series of co-design workshops were held in late 2021 and early 2022 involving consumers, clinicians and service providers to find out firsthand what a more successful health system might look like. One of the strongest messages, especially from younger residents, was that they want to be able to find and receive health care over the phone and online.

Key elements will include free 24/7 service access, nurse assessment and triage through webchat and over the phone, referral to participating general practices and pharmacies for in-person consultations, and telehealth where available, as well as culturally informed services and care pathways. Initial services are expected to commence in late 2022.

**“** *This process was invaluable and will ultimately result in a better outcome for the community.*

*'It was collaborative and involved all stakeholders. I liked that consumers were honest in their assessment and feedback to the various providers and provided different perspectives on how they prefer to access and receive care.'*

**Workshop consultation feedback**



## What's up, or down, with health in your town?

In August 2021 Healthy North Coast asked communities across our footprint 'what's up, or down, with health in your town?' We wanted to find out as it's essential we have a strong community voice at the centre of our planning and decision making.

We asked communities across the region to share – through our detailed three-yearly 'SpeakUp' health survey - what they thought was working well and what could be improved. This included practitioners' thoughts about health and health services on the North Coast.

The development of the 2021 Health Needs Assessment was led by a project team and comprised Healthy North Coast employees and contractors involved in service planning, data management, epidemiology, community and stakeholder engagement, and campaign management.

We found the COVID-19 pandemic and resulting regional lockdowns had a significant impact on planned community consultation. For example, face to face engagement was not possible in the lead up to and throughout the SpeakUp 2021 campaign period, which reduced opportunities to engage with the community in general and with priority populations in particular.

In addition to this, community members were not out and about and active in the community, reducing exposure to traditional community marketing activities. Consequently, Speak Up was only available via a digital platform in 2021 and via paper surveys for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities who had limited access to the internet or digital devices.

Survey findings were combined with other health data sources to produce a comprehensive Health Needs Assessment for our region.

**SpeakUp 2021  
yielded:**

**2,786**  
health survey  
responses

**1,894**  
completed  
responses

**68%**  
completion  
rate

Based on the information gathered, Healthy North Coast recognises several key focus areas for the region as we look to the future:

**chronic disease prevention and management, including care navigation**

**mental health and suicide prevention**

**Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander social and emotional wellbeing**

**impact of COVID-19**

**health service access, including culturally safe services**

**alcohol and other drugs, particularly illicit drug use**

**an ageing population within the PHN catchment placing pressure on access to health services to support healthy ageing and provide adequate services for those with complex needs**

**strengthening partnerships with Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations to ensure services are based on self-determination and meet the needs of local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities**

**potentially preventable hospitalisations, which remain high across the catchment.**

The critical factors or enablers that will help Healthy North Coast address these focus areas are:

**systems integration and collaboration, including co-design and co-production of health services and resources**

**workforce development**

**leadership and governance including clinical governance**

**digital technology.**



Students at Mackillop College, Port Macquarie, taking part in the Aboriginal Cultural Program, an initiative supported by a Healthy North Coast Community and Wellbeing Resilience grant.

## Service provider reporting transitions to online portal

In 2021-22, planning was completed for the rollout of a new commissioned service provider reporting functionality in contract management software Folio.

## 338 contracts were active during 2021-22

**122**

Healthy Minds

**59**

Bushfire, flood and COVID-19 grants

**17**

Integrated team care and Aboriginal COVID program

**17**

Aboriginal mental health, alcohol and other drugs

**6**

Psychosocial

**18**

Consultancy evaluation/ research

**3**

Healthy Towns

**5**

Aged care - psychology and COVID-19 outbreak

**12**

Rural health outreach

**6**

Alcohol and other drugs - mainstream and outreach

**9**

Suicide prevention

**18**

Mental health nurses

**19**

Youth mental health

**12**

Population health/ wellness

**15**

Other mental health services

The Online Provider Reporting Project transitions reporting to an online portal - streamlining the reporting process and improving data security and analytic capabilities.

The next stage of the rollout involves a pilot group consisting of selected commissioned services who are delivering youth mental health, psychosocial, mental health in residential aged care, and alcohol and other drugs activities. Implementation of the new system will lead to a more efficient provider reporting process.

# Community Wellbeing and Resilience grants

Healthy North Coast's Community Wellbeing and Resilience Program supports communities to recover from the impacts of natural disaster and build their capacity to face future challenges.

The \$1.8 million program, funded by the Australian Government Department of Health through its Supporting Communities in Bushfire Recovery package 2021–23, backs initiatives that address the impacts of trauma and improve social and emotional wellbeing.

Ten community-led resilience projects are being delivered through this program across the North Coast.

## MacKillop College

The MacKillop College Aboriginal Cultural Program aims to strengthen the cultural identity of Aboriginal students at MacKillop College, Port Macquarie, and to build a strong and resilient, interconnected Aboriginal community.

The program provides Aboriginal cultural programs and activities to Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal students and incorporates outings to significant Aboriginal sites, Aboriginal community events, and visiting schools to engage with other Aboriginal students.

The successful applicants were:

**Mudyala Aboriginal Corporation**

**Advocacy Law Alliance**

**Ngunya Jarjum Aboriginal Corporation**

**MacKillop College**

**Kyogle Together Inc**

**MacKillop Family Services**

**Neighbourhood Care Network Inc**

**Oz Green Global Rivers Environmental Education Network Inc**

**Woolgoolga Neighbourhood Centre Inc**



## Oz Green Resilient Communities

In collaboration with local disaster management services, Resilient Communities enables local residents to identify community-driven solutions to build personal, community and environmental resilience to deal with the impacts of natural disasters.

Through the Resilient Communities program, local residents engaged in the Bellingen Riverwatch initiative which improves health and wellbeing through nature-based activities and environmental stewardship.

One of these activities involved monitoring the variety of waterbugs in the Bellingen River to support the recovery of the critically endangered Bellingen River snapping turtle. The waterbugs are the turtle's main dietary source and are crucial for their recovery.

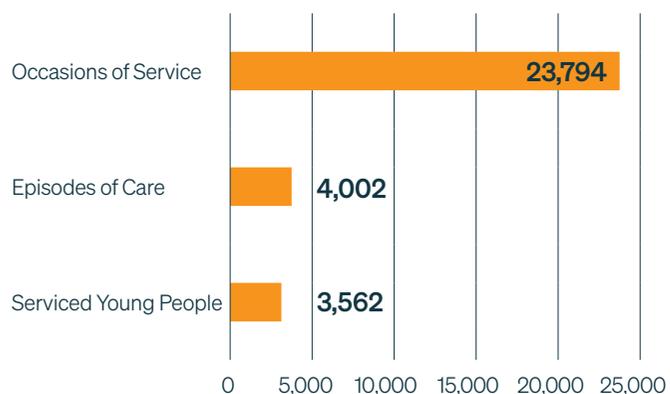
# Headspace - supporting our young people

Headspace provides mental health support services to young people aged 12 to 25 years who are experiencing, or at risk of, mental ill-health.

The four core streams – mental health, physical (including sexual) health, alcohol and other drug services, and work and study support, offer young people ‘wrap-around’ services ensuring any young person seeking support from headspace can have their needs met in a safe and supportive environment.

Healthy North Coast has six headspace centres in the region - at Tweed Heads, Lismore, Grafton, Coffs Harbour, Port Macquarie, and our new addition, Kempsey, which commenced service delivery in May 2022.

## Healthy North Coast Headspace Centres



### Headspace Kempsey opens doors to better youth mental health

During the year, Healthy North Coast and the Samaritans were delighted to open the doors on a dedicated headspace Kempsey offering free or low-cost, holistic and youth-friendly health care and advice.

Located on the traditional homelands of the Dunghutti nation, the new headspace Kempsey service is a dedicated centre purpose-built to meet the needs of young people.

The past few years have been uncertain times for all, with COVID-19, bushfires and floods. headspace Kempsey provides high-quality, early intervention youth services that empower young people to overcome challenges and engage with their community to find their purpose and flourish.

headspace services are co-designed with young people to ensure they are relevant, accessible and highly effective, including input from the Samaritans' Youth Representative Group (YRG).

### Boosting headspace services for young people in Grafton

In 2021-22, Healthy North Coast provided nearly \$250,000 through its PHN Program to help boost services at headspace Grafton.

The funding was allocated to the headspace Demand Management and Enhancement Program, which is designed to help reduce wait times through staff training and development, as well as provide upgrades to headspace Grafton's IT equipment and systems.

GenHealth operates headspace Grafton, which also received an additional \$1.054 million boost for its Individual Placement and Support Program, which was extended until 2024.

Former Healthy North Coast CEO Julie Sturgess said there was high demand for local services for young people, and the PHN funding would help headspace Grafton to expand services and improve access to youth-friendly mental health support.

Celebrating the opening of headspace Kempsey (above).

## Free confidential support for anxiety, stress and low mood

Healthy North Coast, in partnership with Remedy Healthcare, launched two new support services during 2021-22 for people living with mild mental illness on the North Coast.

MindStepR and Healing Minds telephone and online services are designed to support people over 16. Both are free, easily accessible, and do not require a referral by a GP or health care professional. Since the services commenced in September 2021, 138 clients have been referred and 409 occasions of service have been delivered.

MindStepR is an evidence-based, low-intensity, guided self-help service and is designed to run alongside any existing psychological care. Healing Minds is a culturally sensitive adaptation of MindStep specifically for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people over 16.

The confidential services, delivered by trained mental health coaches, aim to reduce psychological distress and improve quality of life by helping people self-manage their mental health and wellbeing.



### Aged care residents explore life journeys

Healthy North Coast funded EACH One Matters to deliver counselling and mental health therapy services in residential aged care facilities on the Mid North Coast. A group of residents from South West Rocks Calvary The Mariner Facility, engaged in a four-week group workshop, entitled *The Tree of Life*.

EACH provided residents with individual sessions focused on their needs, access to group sessions for existing and new residents, as well as psychoeducation sessions for staff. The Tree was used as a metaphor to represent the different life journeys the residents had experienced. The aim was to build a sense of belonging and connectedness within a residential setting.

# Psychosocial support program helps recovery in the community

The Commonwealth Psychosocial Support Program aims to strengthen the capacity of people living with severe and complex mental ill health issues through non-clinical supports.

The program offers a range of services to help people manage daily activities, rebuild and maintain connections, build social skills and participate in education and employment.

Healthy North Coast commissions four providers across the region - The Buttery, Mission Australia, CHESS Connect, and Momentum Collective to provide recovery-focussed psychosocial support services. The program is also designed to assist those needing more intensive support to test access to the NDIS.

## Case Study

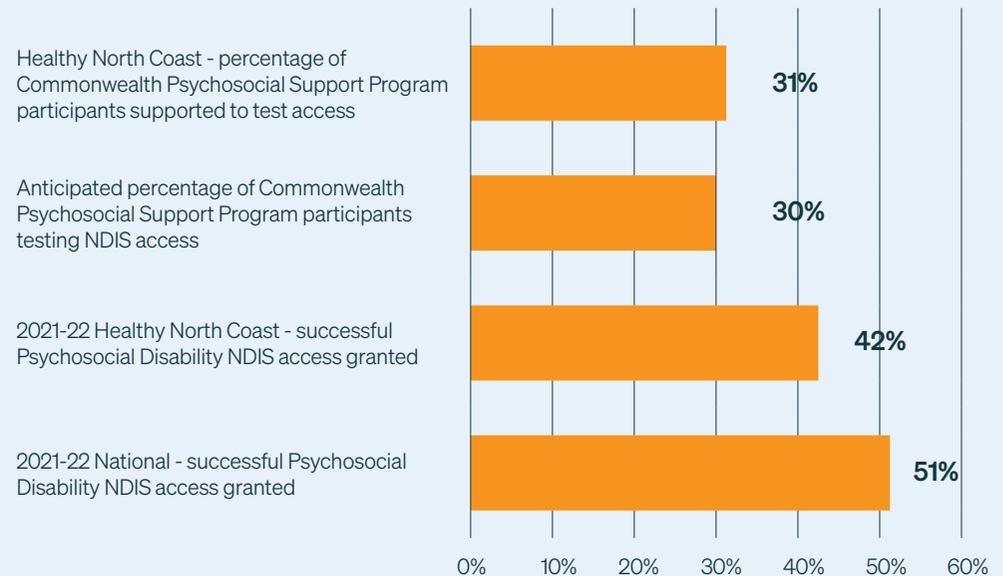
**Fred, an older male, was referred to the Commonwealth Psychosocial Support Program after presenting with problematic alcohol use and psychosis.**

He was unable to walk to the bathroom, struggled with hygiene and spent most of the time isolated in his lounge chair. Fred was at high risk of losing his tenancy, with an NSW Civil and Administrative Tribunal action in place.

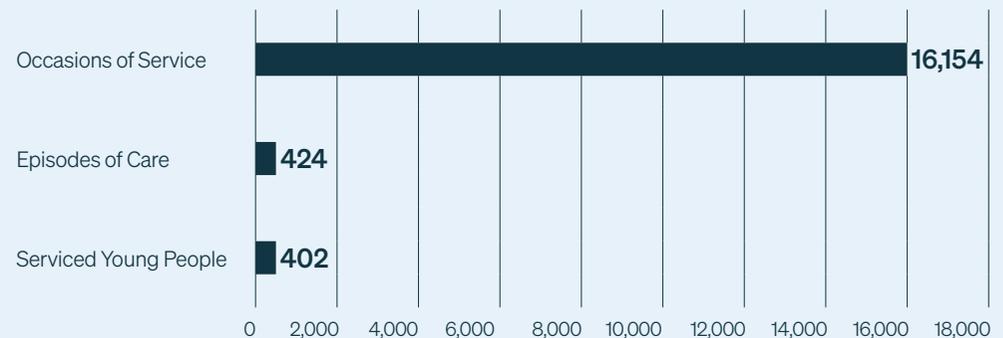
He decided he would like to do something about his daily drinking and received support to access alcohol and other drug services with the local health district. He went on to complete a four-month rehabilitation program.

Fred is now back in his home and has been relocated to a ground floor unit. He was successful in gaining assistance through the National Disability Insurance Scheme.

### Commonwealth Psychosocial Supports NDIS Results



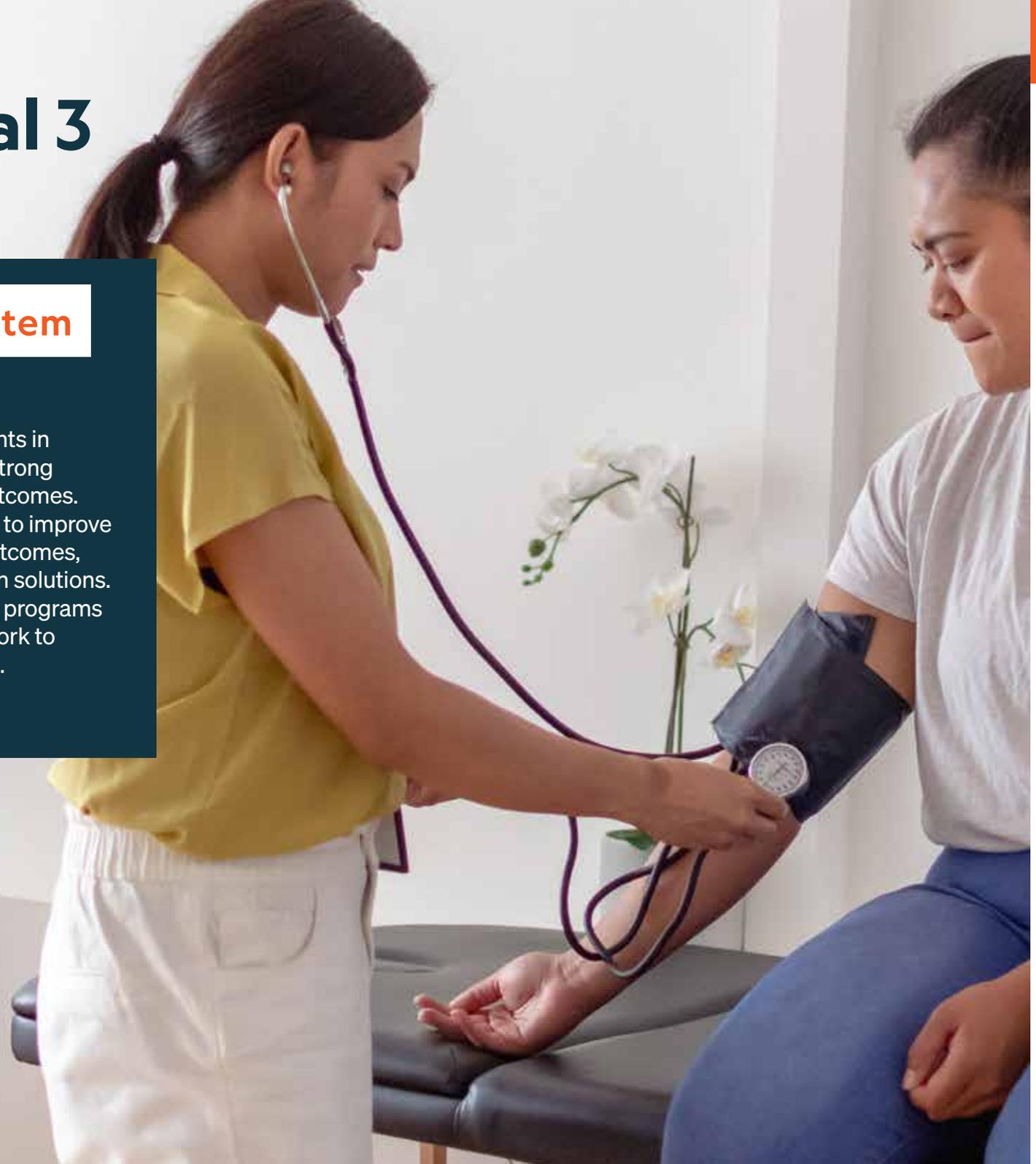
### Healthy North Coast Commonwealth Psychosocial Supports Programs



# Strategic Goal 3

## Strengthen the primary care health system

Healthy North Coast delivers improvements in the primary care health system through strong relationships focused on better health outcomes. We are researching and finding new ways to improve access, patient satisfaction and health outcomes, and working with local providers to design solutions. We are committed to developing support programs that deliver the Quadruple Aim, a framework to optimise healthcare system performance.



## Supporting professional development for the North Coast health workforce

Despite the impacts of COVID-19 and the flood events on the region, the Healthy North Coast Education team continued to provide well-subscribed and highly evaluated events, with 46 held face-to-face and 29 virtual events held. The new Advanced Life Support course proved very popular, with 67 GPs and 15 nurses participating in courses held over the year.

In 2021-22, 75 events were held, a marked increase from the 49 events in the previous year. More than 2,500 registrations were received with 95% of attendees saying they had their learning needs met. Additionally, 95% of attendees shared that they had a positive or neutral experience.

### Advanced Life Support training

In 2021, Healthy North Coast developed a unique Advanced Life Support offering for general practitioners and practice nurses to be delivered in their practices.

The training was delivered to 17 practices to upskill their advanced life support skills. The participants learned the theory of advanced life support and undertook practical skills components of advanced life support, including airway and breathing, assessment of 'Danger, Response, Send, Airway, Breathing, CPR, Defibrillation' in cases, and compressions and defibrillation using automated external defibrillators.

### Clinical societies

Healthy North Coast's clinical societies are a great opportunity for primary health care professionals to come together to talk through clinical topics relevant to the local region. In 2021-22, there was a total of 1,463 total clinical society subscribers – 714 on the Mid North Coast and 749 in Northern NSW.



## Education and Event team highlights 2021-22

Other Education and Event team highlights in 2021-22 included:

- creation of Education webpage on Healthy North Coast website
- online calendar development for external use
- scoping of external learning management system
- quarterly Education reports
- quarterly Education Advisory Group meetings
- ongoing internal and external educational needs assessment, formalised in annual report
- adoption of SMS reminders for education and events in addition to email reminders
- events procedure review
- Australian General Practice Training grant proposal as part of NSW/ACT symposium
- planning and scoping of the October 2022 'Back to Health' conference.



Attendees at a Northern Rivers Immunisation Update seminar

## Immunisation Updates

The Education team worked with the Population Health team at Healthy North Coast to deliver six face-to-face Immunisation Updates in Northern NSW and the Mid North Coast, covering information on shingles, the new shingles vaccine and the 2022 influenza vaccination guidelines.

Delivered by Carolyn Lloyd, Immunisation Coordinator and Clinical Nurse Consultant for North Coast Public Health, these sessions also provided an opportunity for local health professionals to network and socialise.

# HealthPathways

## Highlights included:

the HealthPathways Disaster Management pathways supporting health professionals during the flood emergency

an independent evaluation of HealthPathways and preparation of the HealthPathways Strategic Plan 2022-25

working collaboratively with the North Coast Cancer Institute and Mid North Coast Cancer Institute on a referral process to cancer services and undertaking scheduled reviews of cancer pathways

communication and engagement in May 2022 to support the roll-out of the SafeScript NSW pathway and the SafeScript clinical support pathways for general practitioners and pharmacists

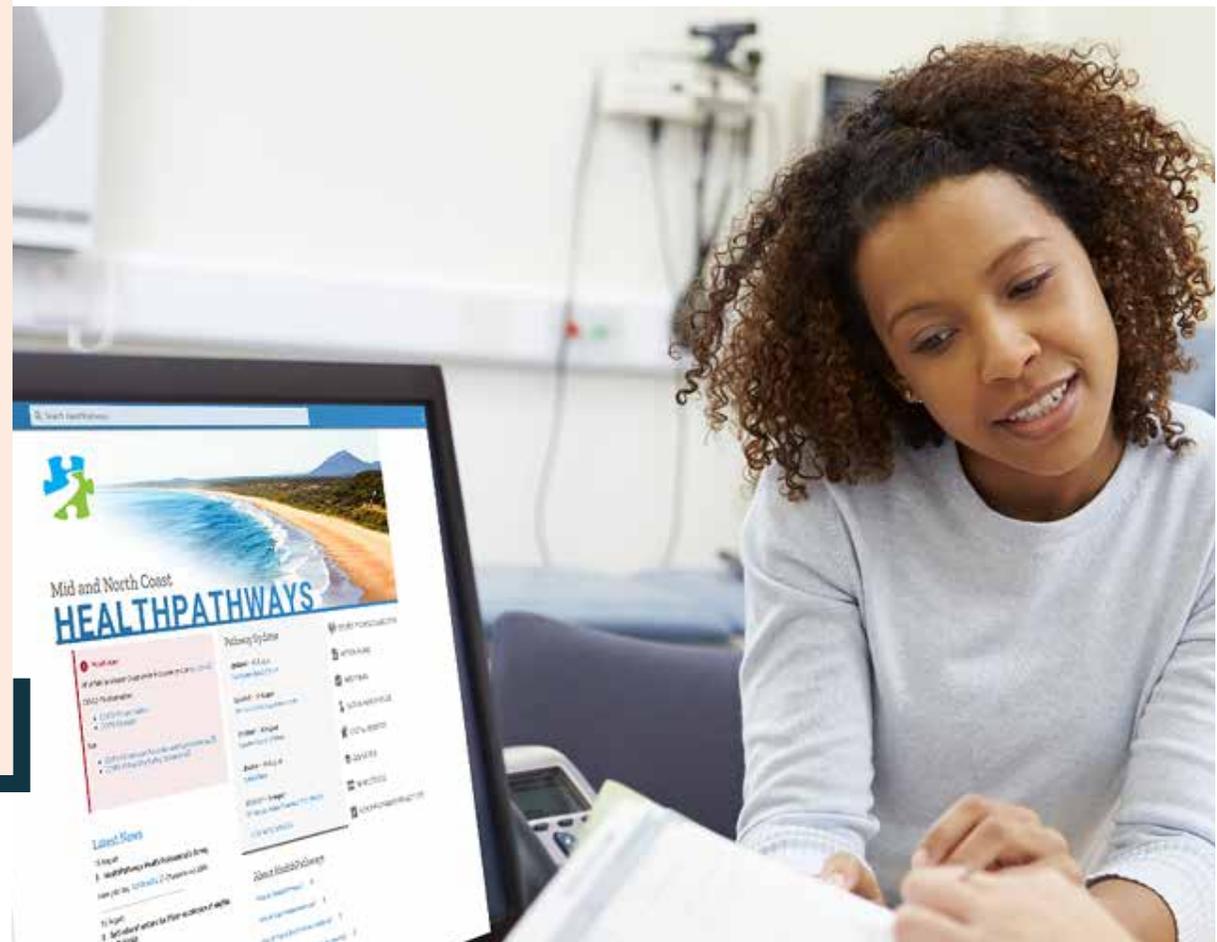
successful submission of the Medical Practitioner Mental Wellbeing pathway, which became a lead region available for adoption across NSW/ACT

development of a two-minute HealthPathways promotional and educational video

guidance and information for local health district subject matter experts and a continuing professional development certificate to encourage them to assist with pathway development and reviews.

The Mid and North Coast HealthPathways website enables all members of a health care team, whether they work in a hospital or the community, to be on the same page when looking after a particular person. Pathways are designed to be used at the point of care, primarily for general practitioners but also for hospital specialists, nurses, allied health professionals and others.

In 2021-22, the HealthPathways team continued to support health professionals, developing 25 new pathways in response to major events, including COVID-19 and regional floods. All COVID-19 pathways were regularly reviewed, recording 256 pathway updates. Following review, 618 pathways were available in 2021-22 to support health care teams.



## Launch of new online Mental Health Practitioner Directory

Healthy North Coast launched a new online Mid and North Coast Mental Health Practitioner Directory in October 2021, as a useful resource for GPs, specialists and allied health workers seeking localised referral pathways for patients with mental health support needs.

Covering an area from Tweed Heads to Port Macquarie, the directory features more than 150 mental health service providers and is invaluable to local councils, community organisations, the broader health workforce and health consumers.

Local mental health care providers register in the directory, uploading details of their specialties

and their appointment waiting times, one of the most important aspects of the new directory.

GPs can now quickly see which mental health specialists are taking new clients and wait times for appointments, enabling them to quickly source a suitable mental health clinician for their patient.

“Our healthcare system tends to be quite “siloes”, with healthcare and mental health care practitioners in their own practice and specialty areas, and perhaps not as aware as they would like to be of available local services.

*The new mental health directory offers a great mechanism for doctors to be able to find the right connections with locally accessible mental health care providers for their clients.’*

Dr Basia Radlinska,  
Clinical Psychologist and Clinical Supervisor  
Headspace, Coffs Harbour



# Health Literacy Program working towards greater understanding

## Highlights during the year included:

**80 health information resources reviewed**

**140 health professionals attending training (despite COVID-19 restrictions and redeployment)**

**mental health literacy contract now includes health literacy KPIs**

**presentation to Western Sydney Health Literacy Hub on organisational health literacy.**

The Health Literacy Program - jointly funded by Healthy North Coast and the Northern NSW Local Health District - aims to enable people, their families and carers to obtain, understand, interpret and have confidence in the use of health information. Work in the health literacy area continued in 2021-22, with health literacy officers reviewing locally developed resources to make sure their information was easy to read and understand.

Officers worked with consumers, patients, carers and clinicians to hear from them what is important and work together on the content, design and display of information. This included resources for vulnerable communities and priority populations. One area of focus was around the increasing use of technology and telehealth to deliver care, necessitated by the COVID-19 pandemic.



## Specialist outreach clinics see more than 6,000 patients

In 2021-22, more than 6,000 patients attended Specialist Outreach Clinic appointments offered through the Healthy North Coast Rural Health Outreach Fund Program. Around 3,000 hours of specialist consultation care time was provided in clinics in Coffs Harbour, Port Macquarie, Kempsey and Grafton, with the majority of services delivered in the Coffs Harbour area.

Specialist services offered included rheumatology, endocrinology, psychiatry, dermatology and neurology, along with a specialised Parkinson's disease clinic.

2021-22 was a particularly complex year, often with specialists having to travel from Sydney during lockdown periods. Many clinics took extra precautions to ensure the safety of staff and patients, with doctors carrying out regular PCR and rapid antigen testing before travel and shift commencements.

**6,094**  
patients  
seen

**1,494**  
new patients

**2,991**  
total hours of  
consultation

**158**  
Aboriginal and  
Torres Strait  
Islander patients

## Quality improvement activities making an impact on primary care

Healthy North Coast's quality improvement program had a positive 2021-22 despite the ongoing impact of the COVID-19 vaccine rollout and the natural disasters the region experienced.

There were around 200 interactions with the Healthy North Coast Primary Care Impact website, with more than 70 practices accessing quality improvement activities and one-off projects and service developments.

Activities such as 'Managing the risk of exposure to COVID-19 in general practice' and 'Preparing and managing staff shortages and workload capacity during COVID-19' were the most accessed, along with activities to improve cold chain management of vaccines. Quality improvement to support practices' data quality on the PIP QI 10 measures proved popular. For the large part, practices maintained the quality of data collection on these measures, where the North Coast rates were consistently higher than the national average on every score.

Medicoach provided around 30 hours of in-house practice facilitation, focused primarily on chronic disease management and care planning. Feedback on the sessions was consistently positive, with participants leaving the sessions feeling more confident and competent in their role.



Staff from Seascope Medical Centre in South West Rocks who signed up to the Primary Care Impact activity to 'Improve recording of influenza immunisation for patients with COPD, diabetes and 65+'.

# Strategic Goal 4

**Grow high-performing teams**

**focused on quality**

Understanding that a strong staff profile focused on organisational culture and quality outcomes is key to delivering our vision, Healthy North Coast has continued to focus on growing high-performing teams. This mindset ensures the ability to adapt to emerging priorities and a rapidly evolving health environment while delivering our vision of better health for people living on the North Coast.



## Improved health outcomes the aim for new Board advisory structure

Healthy North Coast implemented changes to its advisory structure during 2021-22, increasing engagement, communication and collaboration with local communities. Board Chair Dr Adrian Gilliland said the new structure, which followed a review, would lead to better health outcomes for North Coast residents.

### Key changes included:

**the formation of an Aboriginal Health Council to provide the Board with advice regarding cultural governance, cultural leadership and strategic Aboriginal health issues**

**consolidation of the region's three clinical councils into one diverse and skills-based group offering strategic advice on health policies, programs and services**

**the establishment of an independent Community Advisory Council providing input and advice.**

An important characteristic of the new Clinical Council is the inclusion of diversity of gender, cultural background and profession as one of the components of the council's composition, moving beyond traditional skills and profession-based models. Eight clinical societies throughout the region will be represented in the new Clinical Council membership.

The new Community Advisory Council will ensure consumers, community members and people with lived experience, contribute to Healthy North Coast's activities and objectives.

**“** *The inclusion of an Aboriginal Health Council is an innovative approach to improving access and facilitating Aboriginal-led health service planning, design and commissioning through strategic advice to the Board.*

**Dr Adrian Gilliland, Healthy North Coast Board Chair**

## Committed to continuous quality improvement

Healthy North Coast has an active culture of continuous improvement founded on strong leadership, planning, support, operation and performance evaluation.

### Over the 2021-22 financial year, Healthy North Coast has focused on:

**supporting our local communities and health workforce throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, and flood crisis and recovery**

**automating processes to achieve efficiencies wherever possible**

**streamlining systems and processes across the organisation in line with best practice and compliance obligations.**

We are also an ISO 9001:2015 quality-certified organisation that has successfully undergone annual surveillance audits to ensure we continue to meet the ISO 9001 quality standard requirements. Our quality management system drives continual improvement in meeting our strategic goals, ensuring our communities are at the centre of our work.



## New Learning Portal

The Healthy North Coast Learning Portal was installed in 2021-22 and provides an extensive, built-in library of training courses available to all staff. The program handles all aspects of the learning process and can track each learner's progress.

Healthy North Coast now has a customised New Employee Induction Program hosted on the Learning Portal, improving employees' on-boarding by centralising all elements of the process, including mandatory training.

We also developed a Casual and Temporary Employee Induction Program, and Performance Review Training Package for staff and managers, to support the annual online performance reviews.

## Staff reward and recognition

To support our Wellbeing Framework, Healthy North Coast implemented a new program – Perkbox - to motivate and inspire individuals and teams.

Perkbox offers personalised recognition and employee rewards. It was chosen as its hubs have a variety of benefits for individual employees to use as they wish.

Perkbox incorporates a Wellness hub, with short videos for mental and physical wellbeing, and a Celebration hub where employees can recognise each other's achievements, strengthening relationships across the business.

## New leave policies to support wellbeing and balance

Life Leave days were introduced in February 2022 in recognition that a balanced lifestyle with time for rest and recovery is essential for maintaining a person's health, wellbeing and family connections.

Employees are encouraged to utilise up to five paid personal days per employment year, as life leave when they may be otherwise fit and well.

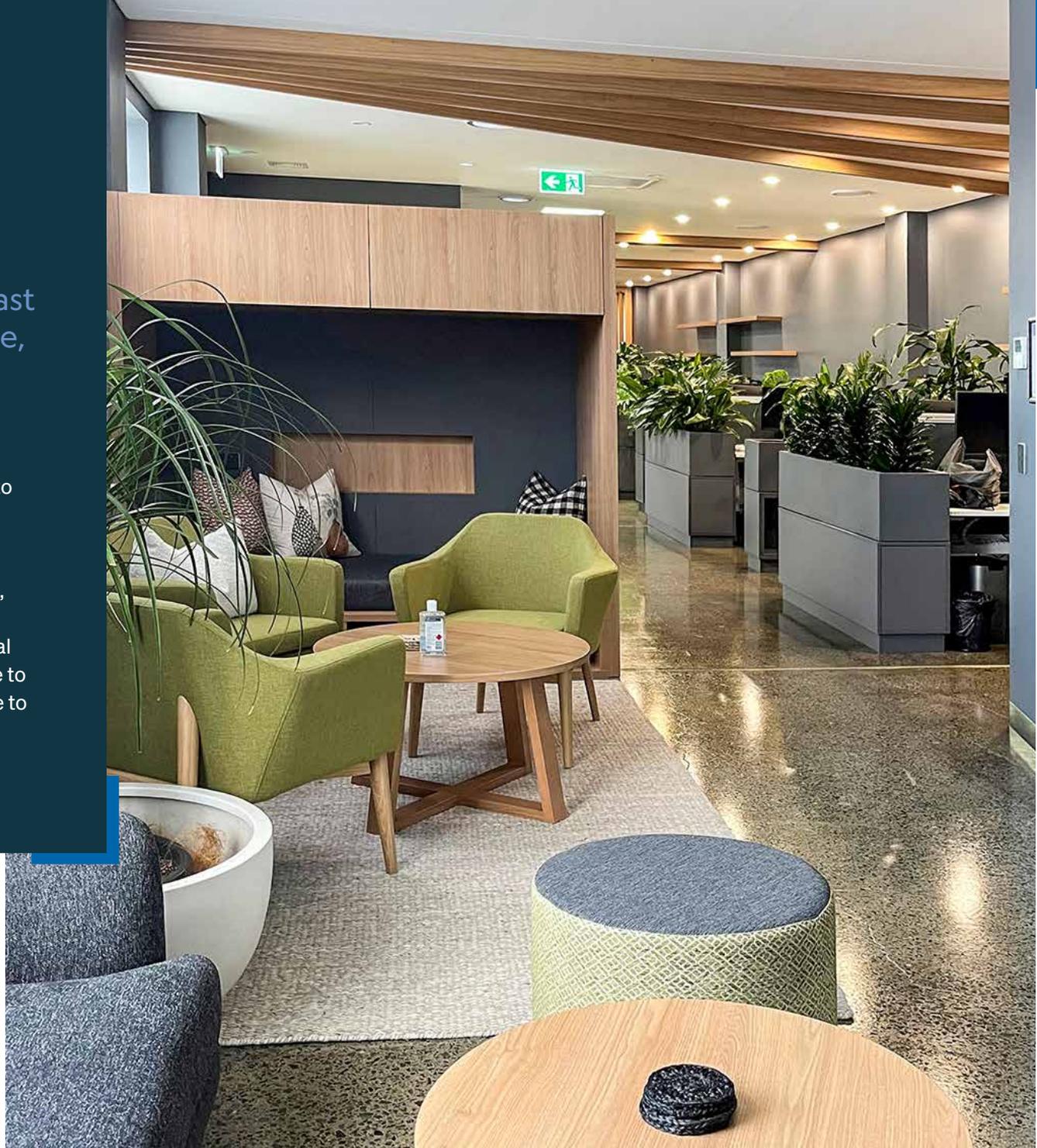
Healthy North Coast also introduced Community Engagement (volunteering) Leave. This two-day paid leave is available to staff who would like to contribute to the community by volunteering with a registered charitable group and not-for-profit organisation.

## New Tweed Heads office to support collaborative working

In January 2022, Healthy North Coast opened its new Tweed Heads office, located at 4/71 Wharf Street.

With 10 workstations, a reception desk and three offices, the new location offers ample space designed to encourage worker collaboration and flexibility.

Fitted out with a purpose-built boardroom, work pod with space for around four people, and a meeting room, the Tweed office can accommodate regular staff get-togethers and events, negating the need to hire external venues. Sections of the new premises are also available to the community, with lockable areas to enable the space to be used during and outside regular office hours.



# Financial Reports

For the year

ended 30 June 2022



## Statement of Profit and Loss

	NOTE	JUN 2022 (\$)	JUN 2021 (\$)
Revenue			
From Continuing Operations	4	48,085,008	37,645,092
Interest and Distribution Income		301,952	232,641
Net Fair Value movement of investments		(681,739)	375,382
Expenses			
Commissioned Services		(27,254,222)	(20,683,329)
Employee Benefits Expense		(8,500,177)	(8,292,041)
Client Support Services		(5,021,353)	(4,084,912)
IT and Telecommunications		(1,227,888)	(1,191,871)
Depreciation and Amortisation Expense		(1,104,563)	(654,968)
Conference Attendance and Hosting		(109,317)	(146,932)
Insurances		(163,417)	(149,933)
Printing, Postage and Stationery		(94,530)	(76,446)
Property Expenses		(300,178)	(226,774)
Consultancy Expenses		(224,301)	(174,812)
Agency/Advisory expense		(997,925)	(671,211)
Minor Works		(508,870)	-
Interest Expense on Lease Liability		(84,260)	(69,983)
Other Expenses		(1,544,186)	(1,243,811)
Profit Before Income Tax		570,034	586,092
Income Tax Expense		-	-
Profit for the Year		570,034	586,092
Other Comprehensive Income		-	-
Total Comprehensive Income for the Year		570,034	586,092

### Notes

The full set of Healthy North Coast's certified financial statements, including notes, can be located at [hnc.org.au/financial-statements](http://hnc.org.au/financial-statements)



## Statement of Financial Position

		NOTE	JUN 2022 (\$)	JUN 2021 (\$)	
Assets	Current Assets				
		Cash and Cash Equivalents	6	43,386,474	29,581,783
		Trade and Other Receivables	7	58,630	274,556
		Other Financial Assets	8	4,585,077	5,684,391
		Other Assets	11	9,248	54,774
		<b>Total Current Assets</b>		<b>48,039,429</b>	<b>35,595,504</b>
	Non-Current Assets				
		Trade and Other Receivables	7	75,698	68,549
		Property, Plant and Equipment	9	784,945	437,551
		Intangible Assets	10	163,141	85,454
	Right-of-use Assets	12(a)	3,091,262	2,249,293	
	<b>Total Non-Current Assets</b>		<b>4,115,046</b>	<b>2,840,847</b>	
	<b>Total Assets</b>		<b>52,154,475</b>	<b>38,436,351</b>	
Liabilities	Current Liabilities				
		Trade and Other Payables	13	8,561,522	8,520,785
		Lease Liabilities	12(b)	825,870	660,589
		Contract Liabilities	14	32,986,156	20,730,129
		Provisions	15	5,000	5,000
		Employee Benefits	16	638,798	612,242
		<b>Total Current Liabilities</b>		<b>43,017,346</b>	<b>30,528,745</b>
	Non-Current Liabilities				
		Lease Liabilities	12(b)	2,329,565	1,690,608
		Employee Benefits	16	195,509	174,977
	<b>Total Non-Current Liabilities</b>		<b>2,525,074</b>	<b>1,865,585</b>	
	<b>Total Liabilities</b>		<b>45,542,420</b>	<b>32,394,330</b>	
	<b>Net Assets</b>		<b>6,612,055</b>	<b>6,042,021</b>	
Equity	Retained Earnings		6,612,055	6,042,021	
	<b>Total Equity</b>		<b>6,612,055</b>	<b>6,042,021</b>	

# Independent Auditor's Report

## Report on the audit of the financial report

### To the Members of Healthy North Coast

#### Opinion

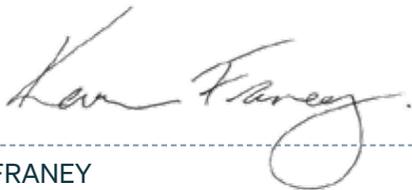
We have audited the financial report of Healthy North Coast ("the Entity") which comprises the statement of financial position as at 30 June 2022, the statement of profit or loss and other comprehensive income, the statement of changes in equity and the statement of cash flows for the year then ended, and notes to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies, and the directors' declaration.

In our opinion, the accompanying financial report of the Entity is in accordance with Division 60 of the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012*, including:

- a) giving a true and fair view of the Entity's financial position as at 30 June 2022 and of its financial performance for the year then ended; and
- b) complying with Australian Accounting Standards – Simplified Disclosure and Division 60 of the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Regulation 2013*.

#### THOMAS NOBLE & RUSSELL CHARTERED ACCOUNTANTS

Per:



K R FRANEY

(Partner)

Dated at Lismore this 27th day of September 2022





Young participants in a bird language community bushwalk at Bundagen land sharing co-operative and wildlife sanctuary on the Mid North Coast. The community event was held to thank and show appreciation to Bellingen Riverwatch volunteers, whose activities are funded by Healthy North Coast through a Community Wellbeing and Resilience grant, made possible by support from the Australian Government's Supporting Communities in Bushfire Recovery package 2021-23.