

Rural Local Health District Quality Awards / ACI Innovation Award Winners 2017

ACI Innovation Awards are established at the rural Local Health District Quality Awards to recognise and reward innovation and capture models of care which have potential for broader implementation across other health sectors. Selection Criteria include:

Selection Criteria	Description
Improved patient outcome and experience for hard to reach population groups	Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander populations, geographically isolated, low socioeconomic, culturally or linguistically diverse (CALD)
Resourcefulness and creativity utilising existing resources	Telehealth, small facility / MPS; including workforce or service delivery models
Inclusive partnerships which increase access to services	Links between: Primary Health Care / Acute Facility, rural / metropolitan, public / private, hospital avoidance
Transferability or system-wide potential	Scalability across other health departments / sectors

The Rural Health Network Executive Committee convene adjudication panels to review entries per LHD against weighted scoring criteria, and the winners are presented with a framed certificate or trophy as part of the LHD Quality Awards celebrations. Winning projects are loaded onto the ACI Innovation Exchange <http://www.aci.health.nsw.gov.au/ie> and opportunities are sourced for authors to present their work on a state-wide platform eg Rural Innovations Changing Healthcare (RICH) Forum, or the NSW Rural Health and Research Congress. To date there are more than 300 projects showcased on the Innovation Exchange; 100 of them rural.

The projects summarised below are the winners of the ACI Innovation Awards 2017.

Far Western NSW LHD

Winner: Redesigning Mental Health Care - Broken Hill



This year the winner goes to a project which used very simple but robust strategies over an 18 month period to streamline admission and discharge efficiencies and improve the patient journey. Little things like enabling all staff to use Outlook Calendar and using email communication to streamline meetings saved almost 1FTE in time lost to meetings and increased availability for the senior clinician to support junior staff in care planning and treatment. Simple modifications enabled considerable patient, staff and systems improvement.

Contact and Photo: Vanessa Smith, Counselling Service, Community Mental Health Team

Mid North Coast LHD

Winner: The Palevator (Lifting Palliative Care Practice) project – Wauchope.



By tapping into an existing resource (the National Palliative Care Outcomes Collaboration), Wauchope Palliative Care Unit have improved quality of care across all 8 symptom domains placing them in the top 6 Palliative Care services nationally. They have used simple proactive approaches; such as adapting care plans to include triggers for reassessment, review huddles and common language to increase involvement of patients and empower them to be in control of decision making about their care.

Contact: Mary Trotter, NUM, Wauchope District memorial Hospital Palliative Care Unit

Photo Left to Right: Pat Frances ACI Rural Health Network Consumer Co-Chair, Deb White Nurse Practitioner, Louise Coles RN, Raj Verma ACI Director Clinical Program Design, NUM Mary Trotter and PCVMO Graham Carey.

Southern NSW LHD

Winner: The Silent 12 – Eurobodalla Health Service / Ambulance Services NSW

This year the ACI Innovation Award goes to a project where the Innovation lay in its simplicity. Eurobodalla identified that the top twelve at risk patients accounted for 61% of readmissions, and using a multidisciplinary team approach a key health worker was allocated to each patient and individualised care plans developed addressing medical and psycho-social issues. Although the numbers are small, Eurobodalla have targeted high acuity and decreased their readmission rate by 63%.



Contact: Andrea White, Acting Deputy Director of Nursing and Midwifery

Photo Left to Right: Sharon Howell NUM Critical Care, Lynn Wilson After hours Nurse Manager,

Andrea White Acting Deputy DoNM SNSW LHD, James Dunne Implementation Manager ACI,

Murrumbidgee LHD

Winner: Predictive Risk Stratification Assessment Tool – reducing admissions. Wagga Wagga.

This year the ACI Rural Innovation Award goes to a project where the Innovation lies in its uniqueness! The MLHD Integrated Care and Partnerships Unit have worked with CSU to develop a web-based tool which analyses data we already collect to ‘predict’ the level of risk of readmission for patients to either community or hospital services This has enabled early clinical decisions regarding care plan co-ordination across the continuum (from GP/Primary Care to inpatient services). Whilst data mining exists in USA, UK, Canada and Spain – this is the first time in Aust – and being web based it can be accessed or replicated anywhere there is Internet. It is now being embedded into the Community Care Intake process across MLHD.



Contact: Summa Stephens, Community Care Manager, MLHD

Photo Left to Right: Assoc Prof Zahid Islam CSU, Summa Stephens MLHD, Thomas Granville Manager ABF & Clinical Analytics MLHD, Prof Mark Morrison Assoc Dean Research CSU

Hunter New England LHD

Winner: Participatory Action Research to Guide Aboriginal Health Resources – Tamworth.

Following on from the development of Stroke Resources for Aboriginal people in 2016, stage two has evaluated how Aboriginal people were engaged in co-design over the space of 2 years, and identified the success factors which others can now use (action cycles, reflection, Yarning Circles and collective decision making). The Award acknowledges the co-design process developed, which over time has successfully engaged and embedded culturally appropriate health knowledge in the aboriginal community, and is readily transferable.



Contact: Rachel Peake, Rural Stroke Care Co-Ordinator TRRH

Photo Left to Right: Aunty Pam Smith, Karen Baker, Mary-Anne Deickmann, Gamilaraay / Gomeroi people

Northern NSW LHD

Winner: Transforming patient care: connecting hospitals and GPs with instant, automated Admission and Discharge Notifications (ADNs) – Lismore.

The aim was to provide instant automated notifications to GPs whenever identified at-risk patients had an unplanned admission to hospital. Using existing infrastructure and messages generated by the LHD’s Cerner Patient Administration System (PAS) and Electronic Medical Record (eMR) a custom service was built to deliver messages to GPs. One single new field was added to PAS to flag unplanned admission patients and construct messages to GPs’ in accordance with privacy and security legislation. Almost 500 patients have been activated for ADNs, with GP feedback reporting ADNs enhance patient care by making GPs aware when at-risk patients admit to hospital.



Contact: Tim Marsh, Project Manager Integrated Care, Lismore Base Hospital

Photo Left to Right: Jenny Preece ACI and Tim Marsh NNSW LHD

Western NSW LHD

Winner: More than just flow: Ensuring optimal patient care closer to home



So much of the health experience is reliant on how and where people get to see the right person at the right place in the right time. This project demonstrates innovation and creativity in the utilisation of existing technology at both strategic and operational level (CC Cameras and Wallie Telehealth units). Partnerships are strong and transferability to other LHDs is significant. Outcomes to date have held transport costs static despite call volume increasing, and the focus on “care closer to home” is achieving substantial patient benefits including decreased length of stay and decreased costs associated with transfer of care.

Contact: Anne Taylor, District Manager, Patient Flow Transport Unit

Photo: Left to Right: Amanda Hunter Critical Care Advisory Manager / Co-Ordinator PFTU, Jade Obrien Nurse Co-Ordinator PFTU, Anne Taylor District Manager PFTU, Dr Shannon Nott Registrar PFTU

Illawarra Shoalhaven LHD

Winner: Responding to After-Hours Domestic Violence Presentations at Shoalhaven ED - Ambulatory and Primary Health Care, Southern Illawarra Shoalhaven



The VAN Team implemented an on-call psychosocial after-hours combined domestic violence and sexual assault service by developing strong partnerships with Police Shoalhaven Local Area Command, and crisis refuge accommodation and domestic violence case management services and building staff capability to include standardised risk assessment and safety planning for ED Presentations after hours. There has been a 74% increase in SDMH ED staff confidence to recognise and respond to these presentations and 100% of after-hours domestic violence presentations now receive appropriate psychosocial support, with 67% referred to the after-hours on-call service.

Contact: Pia Riley, Violence Prevention Project, Violence Abuse and Neglect team (VAN)

Photo: Left to right: Kylie Strong, Pippa Rendel, Pia Riley, Shayne Fletcher, Peter Orr.

The theme generated from the 2017 ACI Innovation Awards across the 8 Local Health Districts shows a distinct trend towards reducing unplanned admission or readmission, and early identification of patients at risk of readmission with SNSWLHD, NSW LHD and Murrumbidgee LHD all approaching this from different angles; either automated messaging from eMR, web based data analysis or via multidisciplinary team intervention.

Congratulations to all the rural ACI Innovation Award teams 2017.

For further information please contact Jenny Preece, Rural Health Network Manager

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