

#17 Spring 2022

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South Western
Sydney Local
Health District



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**South Western Sydney Local Health District
Strategic Communications and Media Unit**

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CE message

Healthcare in south western Sydney is undergoing a transformation.

New technology is revolutionising medical care, providing us with improved diagnostics, precision surgery and treatment, new ways of connecting and access to information.

Rich data gives us insights to improve care, identify needs and design services that meet our diverse community's unique health challenges.

Our research focus fast-tracks the translation of science into practice, attracting leading clinicians to our hospitals and creating new and improved models of care.

The NSW Government's \$3 billion investment into the redevelopment of hospitals across south western Sydney brings world-class facilities to our community.

Providing continuous, high-quality care requires us to constantly examine and evolve the way we do things.

From researchers to clinicians, corporate staff to general services, our teams are dedicated to delivering the highest level of care. They combine evidence-based practice with patient feedback to drive innovation that transforms the patient experience.

At the heart of all these projects has been a passion for innovation and progress for the benefit of our community.

We're on the cutting edge of health research and medical technology and are in a fantastic position to offer high-quality, personalised, patient-centred healthcare.

Amanda Larkin
Chief Executive
South Western Sydney Local Health District



Manoshi Wickramasinghe
with Ayaan Dissanayaka,
now 15 months

App of love

Premature baby Ayaan Dissanayaka arrived into the world three months early, weighing just 1kg.

His proud mum Manoshi Wickramasinghe felt empowered and supported to care for her first-born child thanks to a new mobile app.

Called Neonatal Care and Me, the free resource complements the high-quality care, help and support that parents and carers receive from trained staff in hospital Neonatal Intensive Care Units and Special Care Nurseries.

"I really liked the discharge information because it explains what to do when you take your baby home for the first time, how to bath and cuddle him and position him when he's sleeping," Mrs Wickramasinghe, who was one of the first parents to use the app, said.

"I also liked the 'tummy time' activities to build his strength and the singing and reading sections which focus on his development. This app makes a big impact on parents because having a premature baby can feel overwhelming at times."

The helpful tool can be used by parents and carers during and after their hospital stay. It shares real-life content to help people to care for their early bundle of joy including taking baby's temperature, tube feeding and changing an oxygen probe.

The free app was designed by South Western Sydney Local Health District nursing and allied health clinicians to give parents the additional skills and peace of mind at their fingertips so they can learn at their own pace and support their baby.

Professor Josephine Chow, Director Strategy and Partnerships, said the app was developed by the District's Clinical Innovation and Business Unit part of its innovative Accelerate Projects and Implementation Program. It formed a partnership with TATA Consultancy Services, a global IT services, consulting and business solutions organisation, which created the structure for the app.

Neonatal Care and Me can be downloaded from the App Stores for both Android and iOS devices.

A new era for Campbelltown Hospital

Integration and innovation is at the heart of the \$632 million stage two redevelopment of Campbelltown Hospital. The new state-of-the-art clinical services building opened in June 2022, providing additional equipment, enhanced facilities and new ways of working that are set to transform healthcare in the Macarthur region.

The modern, expanded spaces of the building now house a new main entrance and Emergency Department (ED), women's health services including birthing suites and a maternity unit, dedicated children's units, operating theatres and intensive care unit, along with integrated mental health units. Public spaces and retail outlets will also feature in the main thoroughfare connecting the new building to existing hospital buildings.

All-in-one theatre

At the frontline of innovation is the new hybrid operating theatre. Seamlessly integrating angiography, computed tomography (CT) and ultrasound imaging in one suite, the two-room space will harness the full power of medical imaging to guide surgery. Images and scans taken during the operation are displayed on large screens in the theatre, helping inform medical decisions and diagnosis. This major advancement provides opportunities to develop and perform innovative and minimally-invasive procedures.

World-class research

The new Lang Walker AO Medical Research Building will be home to the Ingham Institute for Applied Medical Research – Macarthur. It is a partnership between Western Sydney University, South Western Sydney Local Health District, Walker Corporation and the University of New South Wales. Due to open in 2024, the \$47.5 million building will be a world-class medical education and research facility enabling local clinicians and researchers to understand and address the region's unique health challenges.

Integrated mental health

The integration of mental health services will improve connectedness, safety and access to other health services. Built across multiple levels, the light-filled spaces provide a therapeutic environment in facilities. The new units are designed to ensure individuals feel safe, relaxed and welcome, and harness the healing power of nature and art to improve consumer outcomes.

Streamlining emergency care

The new ED features a satellite imaging department including a CT scanner. With more than 70 percent of the hospital's demand for CT scans coming from the ED alone, co-locating the two departments will fast-track diagnosis and improve the patient journey.

Driving improvement

In a calm corner of Bankstown-Lidcombe Hospital, 36-weeks pregnant Michelle Antoniou sits as her baby is monitored in the Day Assessment Unit.

"I've been coming here twice a week. It's good to monitor the baby and know it's ok. It's a lot quieter and more relaxed and all the midwives are great," Michelle said.

The Day Assessment Unit is the result of an Improvement Science project – a methodology launched in South Western Sydney Local Health District last year to build a culture of continuous improvement.

"The approach helped us look at the project from different angles to create a calmer atmosphere and spend quality time with our patients, which helps prevent them having to be admitted to hospital," Clinical Midwife Consultant Aleisha Heys said.

District Clinical Governance Director Brenda Gillard said the project was among the first undertaken through the Improvement Science Pathway.

"There will never be a time where we can look around and say 'we're finished – this is perfect'," Ms Gillard said.

"By striving for improvement in everything we do, we ensure our community receives contemporary, best-practice care.

"Through the Pathway, we empower our staff with the tools they need to look around their work environment and see what we can do better.

"Our services are based on the latest clinical evidence and reflect the needs of the people we care for."

Michelle Antoniou and Clinical Midwife Consultant Aleisha Heys



Breakthrough in COVID care

A new technique developed by Liverpool Hospital's Intensive Care Unit (ICU) during the first wave of COVID-19 has changed ICUs across the country.

When patients were first admitted with severe adult respiratory distress syndrome (ARDS) from COVID-19, the proning technique, where patients are positioned to lay face down, was recommended to enhance ventilation.

However, this technique increases the likelihood of pressure injuries, which were being reported in 80 per cent of COVID-19 ICU patients.

After researching alternative positions, the ICU team discovered evidence in favour of using a "swimmers' position" with regular repositioning of the face and arms.

To support adoption of this new technique and better limit the risk of pressure injuries to the corners of the mouth and lips, the hospital team created pre-made proning packs with protective dressings and foam tape. Staff undertook simulated training and new resources were developed.

"This innovative initiative delivered astounding results for patients in our District and beyond," said Hospital General Manager Karen McMenamin.

"We experienced a reduction in proning-associated injuries from 80 per cent to 10 per cent between the first and second waves of COVID-19. We've since been able to share our approach across health services and it's now been adopted by other ICU units in NSW, Queensland and Victoria."





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Professor
Christophe Berney



Rosa Cuellar Ortiz and her husband
Michael Bousfield

Life-changing surgery

“This surgery has made a huge difference to my life, I can’t believe how much improvement I’ve seen in only a few months.”

In 2012, Rosa Cuellar Ortiz was diagnosed with Parkinson’s disease (PD) at the age of 52. Her diagnosis came after almost two years’ experiencing symptoms including involuntary movements, tremors and poor balance.

Rosa was first prescribed a tablet medication for several years before moving to a liquid medication to manage her symptoms, but they only continued to increase in severity.

“My tremors and movements really got worse in the last few years. Most nights I was cramping in my lower body for more than six hours. Chronic daily nausea was a constant and I had pain from my head to my toes. I wouldn’t eat and couldn’t sleep properly. It was terrible.”

The next option was trialling another medication, Duodopa gel, administered via a nasal tube directly to her intestine. While Rosa did experience less pain, the nasal tube was not a long-term solution.

After speaking with her Parkinson’s nurse, Rosa was informed about a potential surgical technique

involving Duodopa infusion, where a tiny opening is made in the abdominal wall and a thin catheter is inserted initially via the oesophagus and stomach. The catheter is then subsequently placed to sit in the small intestine where precise micro doses of the gel are delivered via a pump, which sits outside the body.

Bankstown-Lidcombe Hospital’s Professor Christophe Berney conducted Rosa’s surgery in July 2022, the first time the procedure was undertaken at the hospital.

“After meeting Rosa and her husband Michael and hearing about their difficult journey, I knew we had to help find a better, long-term solution,” Professor Berney said.

“Many people are still discovering what options are available, and sometimes they find out too late or when they’ve already experienced so much pain. Our focus is on speaking to patients as early as possible, and we’re already discussing the surgery as an option for some.”

Looking back, Rosa encourages anyone experiencing the same situation to consider every option.

“I know the idea of surgery can be scary, but it can be truly life changing. I now only have cramps for 30 minutes at most, and am sleeping and eating much better. I can’t thank Professor Berney and his team enough.”



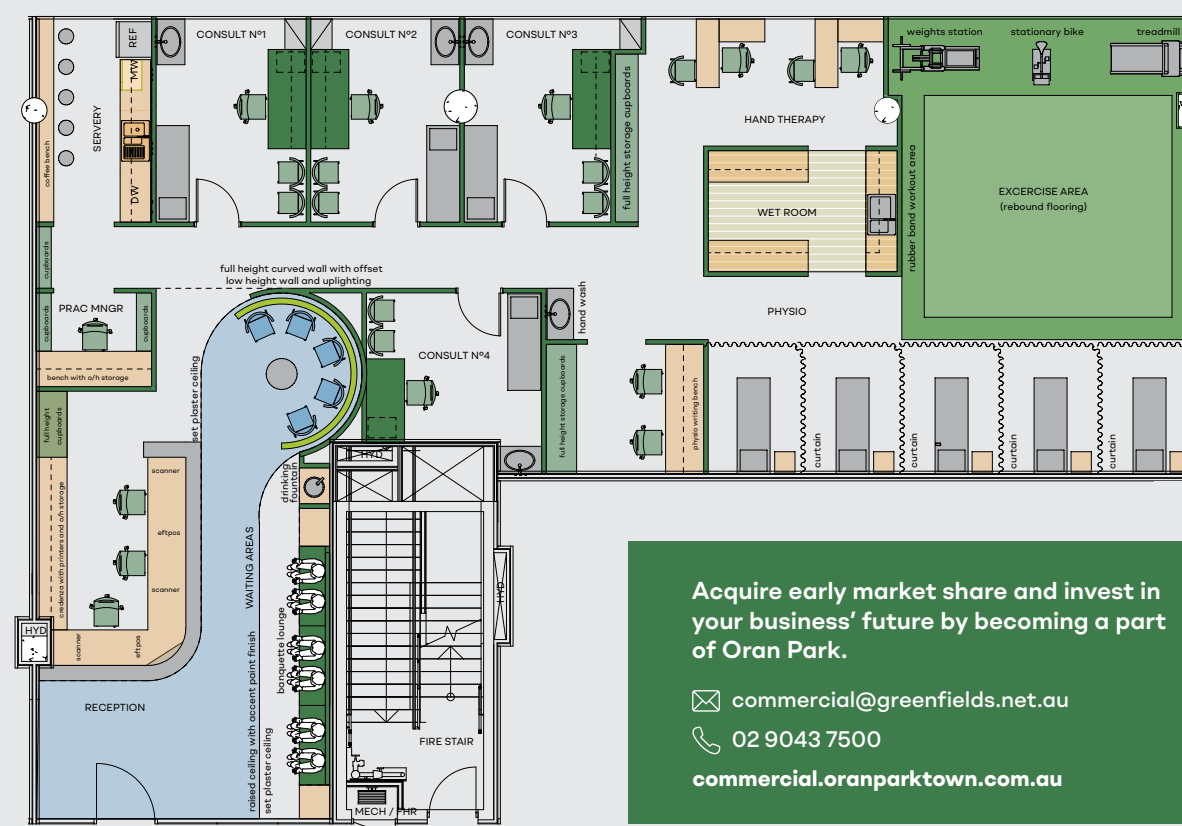
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Indicative plan

Creating a Safe Haven

When peer worker Neil Fraser reflects on his teenage years, he can't help but think how beneficial it would have been to turn to people who had been through similar experiences.

"Growing up and discovering my own identity, especially as a member of the LGBTQI+ community, there were definitely moments where I needed some support and guidance," he said.

"For a lot of people, it's easy to forget when they are experiencing it that feelings of distress or suicidal thoughts are often situational. They are moments in time to work through, not a permanent state."

It's something Campbelltown Safe Haven's team is working to address as part of the state-wide Safe Haven initiative.

As one of 20 facilities across the state, Campbelltown Safe Haven is located near Campbelltown Hospital and offers people a calm, culturally-sensitive and personal alternative to hospital Emergency Departments (EDs).

After being co-designed with people with lived experience of suicide, Campbelltown Safe Haven opened in May 2021. It is led by a team of peer support workers like Neil who have and share a lived experience.

Guests can come in and speak to the peer worker of their choice for support. They can sit down and talk through their situation, take a break in the sensory room or play video games to let off some steam.

"People sometimes go to the ED because that's all the support they think is available to them. But for many of our guests, they actually need more one-on-one, personalised support. That's where we come in," Neil said.

**Senior Peer Worker
Neil Fraser**



“By drawing on my own experiences, I can connect with guests in ways others may not and help them get to a place where they're not feeling as distressed or having suicidal thoughts.”

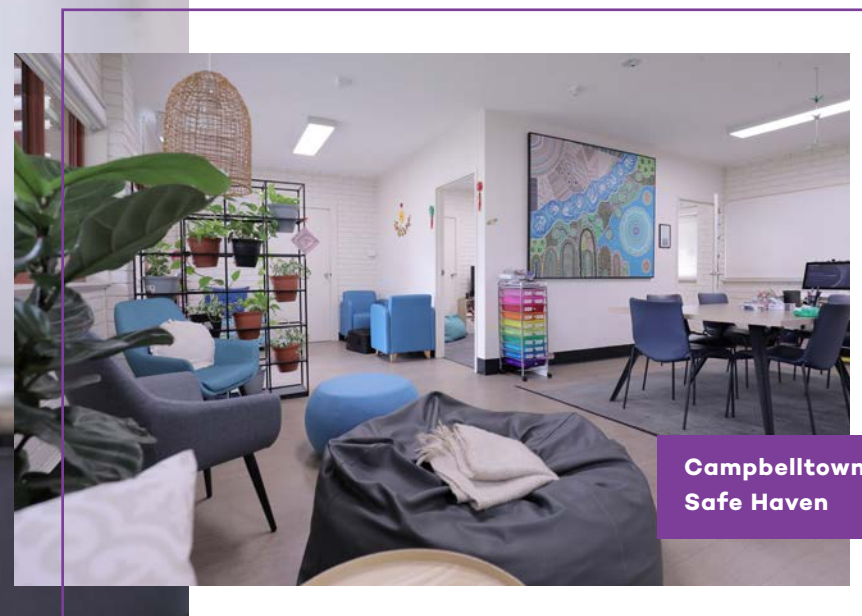
"And if they do need further medical assistance, we're close enough to the hospital that we can get them care quickly. We can even support them in communicating their needs to ED staff and ease some of the stress that can arise in those situations."

The District's Director of Community Mental Health and Partnerships Patrick Parker said the Safe Haven initiative is an important step in removing the stigma surrounding mental health and ensuring people receive the right support for them.

"With a community as diverse as south western Sydney, we need to be providing diverse support," Mr Parker said.

"I'm incredibly proud of the work the Campbelltown Safe Haven team has achieved and the difference they've been able to make in so many people's lives in only one year.

"Looking ahead, our focus is to continue building on that great work and finding new ways to connect with people and support them as best we can."



**Campbelltown
Safe Haven**



Director Nursing, Midwifery and Performance Sonia Marshall (left), Associate Professor Steve Frost and Professor Josephine Chow

Rising stars

Nurses and midwives in south western Sydney have more opportunities to explore new research skills and models of care thanks to a new innovative partnership.

The South Western Sydney Nursing and Midwifery Research Alliance (SWS NMRA) is an exciting collaboration between South Western Sydney Local Health District and the Ingham Institute for Applied Medical Research, with the support of a number of universities.

Professor of Nursing and Midwifery of SWS NMRA Josephine Chow said the partnership promoted and generated research pathways for nurses and midwives and provided scholarship and mentoring opportunities to assist their professional development.

More than 80 research projects are already underway through the SWS NMRA with five nurses starting PhD studies this year.

District Nursing, Midwifery and Performance Director Sonia Marshall said the SWS NMRA aimed to enhance the wellbeing of patients through discovery, education and collaboration.

"Education, professional development, research and translation of evidence into nursing practice are the foundations of the alliance," Ms Marshall said.

Care at fingertips

Patients at Campbelltown Hospital will soon be able to access their streaming service, discuss medical information such as scans with doctors and call for a nurse using a single bedside device.

Already installed in wards located in Campbelltown Hospital's new clinical services building, the new Patient Experience System (PES) will soon be introduced across the rest of the facility.

Campbelltown Hospital Corporate Services Director Rod O'Donnell said the touchscreen device, suspended on an articulating arm above each bed, would transform the hospital experience for patients and staff.

"Patients will access information about the hospital, podcasts, movies and digital TV," he said.

"Clinicians will also be able to use the system to update electronic medical records at the patient bedside. They can even bring up scans and test results to discuss with patients and their carers."

PES will also enable patients to access digital meal ordering, virtual care consults via telehealth, patient surveys and education videos.

The new system will remove the need for the computers on wheels that clinicians currently roll about the wards, freeing up space in our hospital," Mr O'Donnell said

"The systems will also allow us to conduct My Experience Matters surveys with patients and get feedback on their experience in real time."

The system is now being considered for additional hospitals in south western Sydney.



**Corporate Services
Director Rod O'Donnell
and patient Neil Miller**

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Mobile sensors

Campbelltown Hospital's diabetes team has taken a new approach to support patients in person and remotely.

"The COVID-19 pandemic has created and exposed a range of challenges for people with and at risk of diabetes," said Professor David Simmons, Head of Endocrinology at Campbelltown Hospital.

"We've found many people who were coming in for COVID-19 treatment also had diabetes and were completely unaware, or they were already receiving treatment but needed to move to steroids to manage their condition."

In response, the diabetes team obtained glucose sensors to improve not only the discharge process, but treatment between GP appointments.

Placed under the skin of a patient's upper arm, the sensors include a transmitter and track glucose levels, which patients can monitor in real time using their smartphone. The same data is then sent to the Campbelltown diabetes team to monitor.

"The technology has been pivotal to ensuring safety post-discharge for a number of patients. It allows more individualised care to be developed through a partnership between the endocrinologist, GP and patient," Professor Simmons said.

"Our team has been able to monitor patients remotely and contact them if they've identified an issue and support them from home. It's been vital in ensuring patients continue to receive the supports they need wherever they may be."

Glucose sensor

Hope for the future

Murmur Sayed Ahmed describes the moment she found out she was expecting her second baby as "bittersweet".

Her pregnancy was confirmed on the anniversary of her first baby Hadeel's death and she recalls the emotions of the day were both deep sadness and great joy.

Murmur lost Hadeel in 2016 after suffering complications from preeclampsia. Preeclampsia is the most common serious medical disorder of pregnancy. It can cause high blood pressure, thinning of the blood, protein in the urine and liver dysfunction.

Murmur, now a busy mother-of-two, said she wanted to do everything she could to raise awareness of preeclampsia and help other women avoid the tragedy and loss her family endured.

"When I had the opportunity to take part in a clinical trial involving the use of aspirin for women experiencing high-risk preeclampsia during their pregnancy, I wanted to be involved," the multi-media artist said.

"I felt I could do something to help other women and families. I also felt reassured and comforted knowing I had a clinical team looking after me, which involved regular check-ups including weight and blood pressure monitoring.

"The results have been very positive with the aspirin showing good outcomes."

The clinical trial was conducted through the District's Women's Health Initiative Translational Unit (WHITU), which is leading research on understanding and preventing preeclampsia.

Professor Angela Makris, WHITU Co-Director, said the unit comprised clinicians, midwives, scientists and allied health professionals who shared a

Murmur Sayed Ahmed with her youngest child Osman, 12 months



common goal to improve women's health through medical research.

"Our researchers are working on understanding and preventing preeclampsia and leading a variety of clinical trials including how to address iron deficiency in pregnancy," Professor Makris said.

"The unit is also testing whether a new mobile phone application can help women identify risks very early on in their pregnancy, so they can start preventative measures as soon as possible and seek earlier referral to antenatal services.

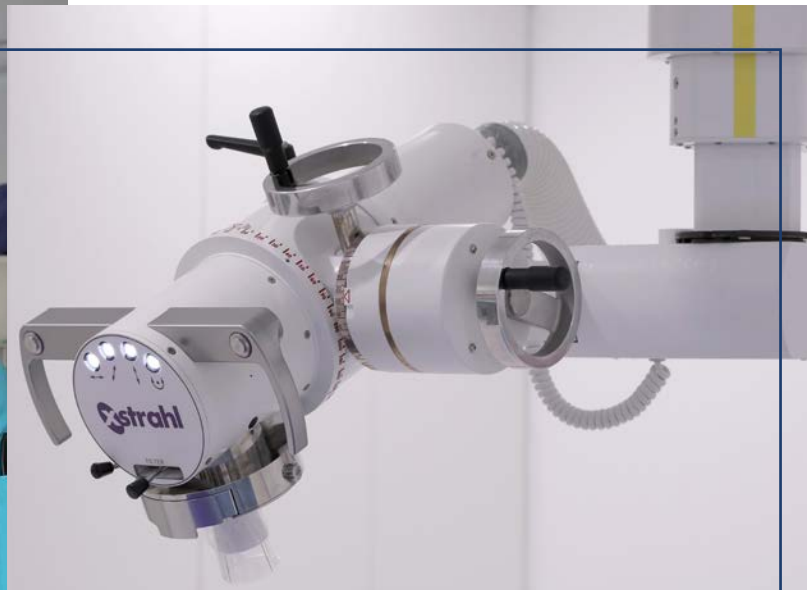
"We thank women like Murmur who are playing such a vital part in our research through our clinical trials and are helping to shape our care into the future."



Professor Angela Makris



The radiation oncology team treating a patient using the new LINAC



MCTC's new Orthovoltage machine

One cancer service, multiple sites

Innovative new equipment ensures the Cancer Services team can provide patients with quality care closer to home.

"Our priority is ensuring patients across south western Sydney have access to the same high level of cancer care, no matter where they live or where they have their treatment," Director of Cancer Services, Professor Stephen Della-Fiorentina said.

"In the coming months, we're really focusing on enhancing our current cancer services and delivering our vision of 'One Service, Multiple Sites'," Professor Della-Fiorentina said.

The introduction of a new linear accelerator (LINAC) at the Macarthur Cancer Therapy Centre (MCTC) brought the District one step closer to reaching this vision.

LINACs provide radiation treatment for various cancers by aiming high-quality X-rays or

electrons at a tumour to destroy cancer cells. The new LINAC is the latest in radiation beam technology and the first of its kind in a NSW public hospital.

It features the ExacTrac Dynamic System, a software program that uses a combination of surface, thermal and X-ray technology to position, monitor and track radiation treatment at sub-millimetre accuracy.

Director of Radiation Oncology Dr Viet Do



"We can now conduct treatments with greater accuracy, delivering higher levels of radiation precisely to the cancer. This decreases treatment time and reduces injury to surrounding healthy tissue," Director of Radiation Oncology Dr Viet Do said.

"I'm thrilled to have such innovative equipment available in our facility for our patients."

Liverpool Hospital also has three LINACs, which are beam-matched with the MCTC LINACs. This means treatment can continue at the same pace should patients need to move their treatments to Liverpool Hospital.

Another addition to the MCTC is the new Orthovoltage machine which uses low-energy ionising radiation to treat cancer and other conditions that occur either on or close to the skin's surface.

With the same machine also available at Liverpool Hospital, Professor Della-Fiorentina said the team is one step closer to ensuring the same high-quality care is available across the District.

"I'm incredibly proud of the team's work thus far with these two new machines. We've already made some great steps towards increasing capability across our sites and I'm excited to continue building on the great work for our community."

Cultural focus

The Early Phase Clinical Trials team is bringing innovative cancer medicine to the people of south western Sydney.

"Early phase cancer clinical trials represent the pinnacle of modern cancer care and often represent an excellent therapeutic option for patients with advanced cancer who have exhausted standard treatment," Dr Abhijit Pal, Director of Early Phase Clinical Trials, said.

"Some patients can live better and longer on these trials by accessing experimental and innovative anti-cancer therapies delivered in a safe and careful manner.

"However, research shows that patients from culturally and linguistically diverse communities, such as those in south western Sydney, often have trouble joining these highly specialised trials for a range of reasons including travel time, health literacy and English proficiency."

The Early Phase Clinical Trials team is working to change that, closely evaluating potential trial opportunities against the District's demographic and its needs.

They look at a range of factors including patient and clinician interest, safety, efficacy and innovation to decide which trials to bring forward so patients can access them close to home.

Currently, the team has seven active immunotherapy trials and three active targeted therapy (oral medicine) trials, with six more trials being set to open in the coming months.

Dr Abhijit Pal (centre) with the early phase clinical trials team





Head of Radiology Dr Glen Schlaphoff (centre) and the Interventional Radiology team with the new Corindus Vascular Robot

Pinpoint precision

Novel medical equipment is opening new doors for Liverpool Hospital's Interventional Radiology (IR) team.

"Interventional radiology is a great alternative to many traditional and invasive surgeries," said Dr Glen Schlaphoff, Head of Radiology at Liverpool Hospital.

"Our team uses precise medical imaging equipment to diagnose and treat injury and disease through minimally-invasive procedures."

As part of the Liverpool Health and Academic Precinct (LHAP) redevelopment project, the Interventional Radiology department will be refurbished and expanded to develop an

integrated operating/interventional radiology suite. Ahead of this, the team has received two new, specialised surgical technologies.

The new Corindus Vascular Robot is a first in the state's public hospitals. Controlled by clinicians from outside the operating theatre, the robot manages the use of catheters during procedures such as clot retrieval for stroke patients, offering more precise positioning and insertion.

"Training is currently underway for our clinicians to use this exciting, innovative new equipment," Dr Schlaphoff said.

"This will ensure pinpoint accuracy translating to faster, more efficient procedures with as minimal disruption as possible to patients."

The team has also received a new mobile ultrasound machine that uses artificial intelligence-powered technology, and combines magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) or computed tomography (CT) images to facilitate diagnosis and treatments, reduce unnecessary radiation exposure and enable faster and more accurate detectability of diseases.

"This revolutionary equipment marks an exciting moment in the hospital's history," Hospital General Manager Karen McMenamin said.

"With such cutting-edge technology, we can guarantee more effective and efficient procedures for our patients and deliver quality health services to the community."

Construction works for the IR expansion project are expected to commence mid-2023. Once complete, it will include a multimodality IR theatre incorporating the seamless delivery of ultrasound, angiography, CT and MRI for complex cases, offering modality fusion technology to enhance patient care via a centralised space.

The Corindus Cardiac Robot



Centre of innovation

The Ingham Centre for Robotics, Medical Devices and Health Technology Research is set to move into a new purpose-built space at the Ingham Institute for Applied Medical Research.

The centre will house multidisciplinary teams of clinicians and researchers who are undertaking research projects including the development and assessment of automated devices, robotics and advanced health technologies.

"This is an incredibly exciting milestone for South Western Sydney Local Health District and the Ingham Institute," Professor Les Bokey, Director of Research for the District and the Ingham Institute, said.

"We'll now have a dedicated space for our teams to work together on exciting ideas and identify important projects which will change the landscape of health."

The centre will provide unique opportunities for advanced interventional and therapeutic radiology and the development of robotics for the treatment of cardiac disease and stroke.

The recent purchase of the cardiac robot was made possible through donations to the Ingham Institute and the District at the Inglis Sunday Lunch where almost \$1.2 million was raised, including a donation from the Perich Family of \$500,000. This makes the District the first to have both a stroke and cardiac robot.

Collaboration and education between local and international partners will be a key focus. A new business unit will also support med-tech startups to foster innovation and partnerships.



**Dr Anthony Hull,
sustainability champion**

Green champion

Through his role as a sustainability champion, Dr Anthony Hull is helping improve the sustainability of the health system.

As an anaesthetist, he is investigating ways to reduce greenhouse gases from his work, with a view to sharing his findings across the profession.

“My role is to look at points within our system that can be changed and tackle ways to make improvements,” he said.

“We use a lot of volatile gases in anaesthetics, so my role will explore opportunities for change to reduce our net anaesthetic emissions.

“The project will involve education, collaboration and coordination. It’s great to have an opportunity to be part of this.”

Dr Hull is one of 10 sustainability champions across NSW Health in different disciplines including intensive care, surgical and emergency medicine.

“The 10 champions have been spread through different areas of practice,” Dr Hull said.

“The idea is that through our cumulative efforts, we can make an effective difference.”

South Western Sydney Local Health District Sustainability Manager Wendy Hird said the District was making exciting strides towards its sustainability goals.

“In the past four years we have seen a 17 per cent decrease in megajoules per occupied bed day,” she said.

“That’s a significant decrease. We are sharpening our focus on our goals and looking closely at our energy use, our waste and our supply chain for improvements.

“We are working within our District to develop a new Environmental Sustainability Plan, aligning with the District’s Strategic Plan, and coordinating our response with the Ministry of Health through the Carbon Net Zero Group.”

Care close to home

With views of the garden and a warm and welcoming new space, patients are delighted with Bowral & District Hospital’s newly opened renal dialysis unit.

“The expanded unit is fantastic and means myself and other patients can access this important treatment close to home,” patient David Sullivan said.

“We no longer have to travel outside the community for renal dialysis.”

The opening of the new and expanded unit follows a successful collaboration between the Southern Highlands Renal Appeal and the hospital. The Renal Appeal raised \$770,000 for the unit, which was completed as part of the \$55 million stage two redevelopment of the hospital.

Hospital General Manager Bradley Warner said the new unit had significantly enhanced patients’ experience.

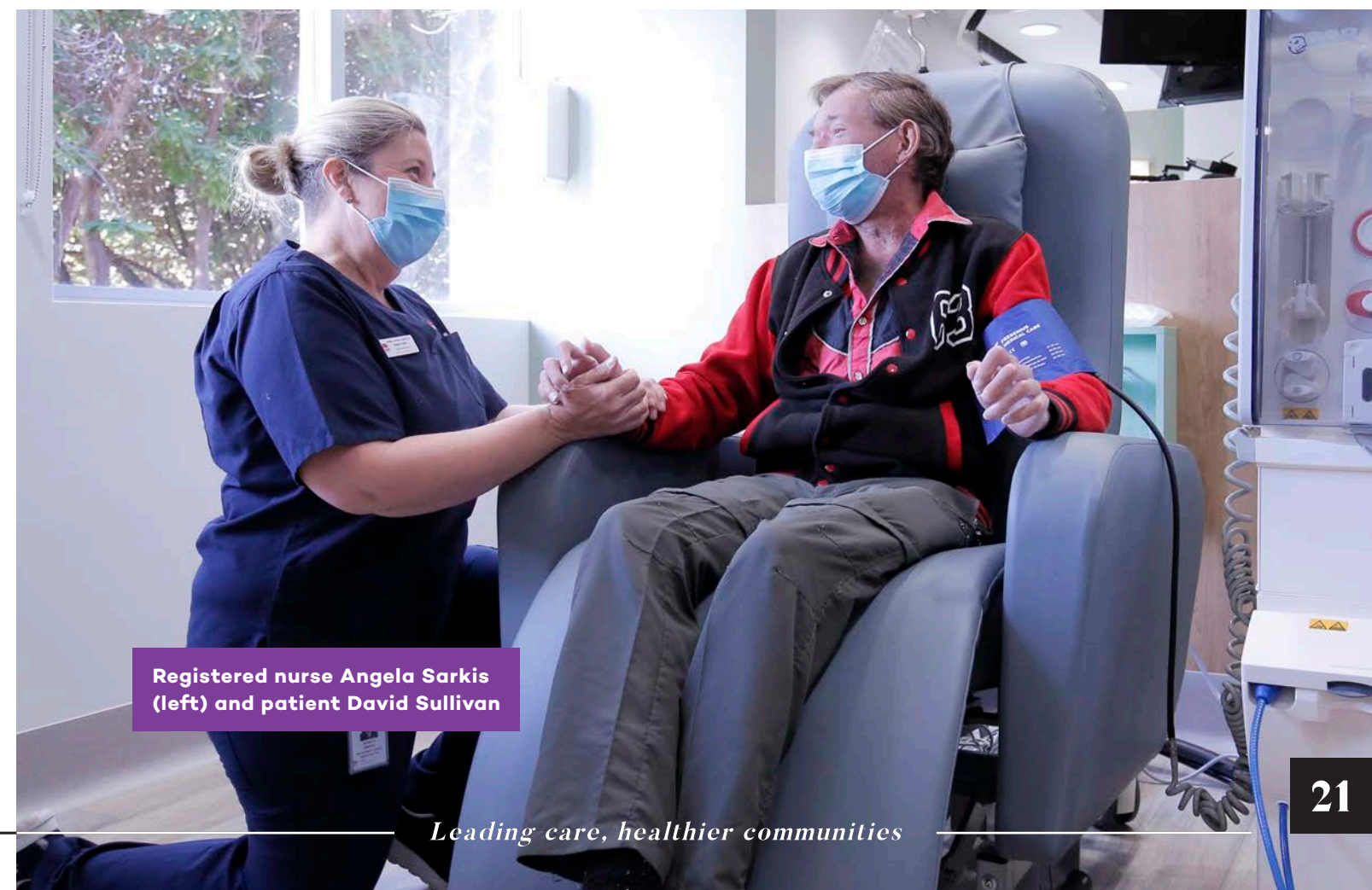
The unit provides six renal chairs with planning underway for the staged opening of additional chairs in line with future demand.

“Patients can spend more than 15 hours a week receiving treatment, and this bright and modern unit is welcoming and comfortable. Our staff and patients are delighted with the new space,” Mr Warner said.

It also features a new state-of-the-art blanket warming unit, the only one of its kind in the region, which enhances the comfort of patients undergoing dialysis.

“We thank the Southern Highlands Renal Appeal for their vision and dedication to this new unit. It is a wonderful asset to our hospital and community,” Mr Warner said.

Main works for the hospital’s stage two redevelopment are expected to start before March 2023 and will include refurbishment of the existing hospital buildings.



**Registered nurse Angela Sarkis
(left) and patient David Sullivan**



Child and Family Health Nurse
Corinne McPhail (far right) with
Matt, Chase and Katie Gorman

Transition to parenthood

“Being a first-time parent is both an exciting and somewhat overwhelming feeling. You can’t wait to meet your new baby but you’re also thinking about how you’re going to give them the best life, when you’ve never had to be in charge of one before.”

It’s a feeling many new parents experience, and Katie and Matt Gorman were no exception. But after speaking to their doctor they discovered they didn’t have to figure it all out on their own.

First time parents to eight-month-old Chase, Katie and Matt have been receiving tailored at-home support as part of the Targeted Home Visiting (THV) program. The program connects healthcare professionals to vulnerable families for up to two years, supporting them to identify potential challenges and develop goals to address them.

Parents can enter the program in their baby’s first six weeks. Doctors and hospitals refer suitable parents to local THV teams for assessment ahead of their baby’s birth. Child and Family Health Nurses can also connect

families to the program if they identify a need during health and wellbeing checks once families have returned home.

Once the family enters the program, THV teams develop and implement tailored support plans.

Child and Family Health Nurse Corinne McPhail has been working with Katie and Matt for more than six months as they adjust to life with Chase.

“There were a lot of nerves coming into being a new mum. Having Corinne there to support me at home has been absolutely amazing,” Katie said.

Nurses work closely with families to support secure attachment parenting and heavily focus on the child’s developmental milestones. Corinne said plans can also include support at home and in the community, and connecting clients to other support networks such as community groups or psychologists.

“Some of our clients have a history of anxiety, depression, domestic violence or drug and alcohol issues,” Corinne said.

“Sometimes we’re working through sleep and settling tactics or play sessions, other times we’re talking to them about how their past experiences affect their parenting and ultimately their newborn’s life both in the short and long-term.”

At first, Corinne would visit Katie and Chase weekly, before moving to fortnightly and then monthly visits.

“I first thought she’d mainly teach me about sleep and nursing techniques for Chase, but it’s been much more than that. It wasn’t just about childcare, it was about my care too,” Katie said.

She’s helped me to connect to other support networks, referred educational resources and helped me build my confidence as a mother.”

Now, Katie is finishing the program and is excited to return to work and start the next chapter.

“I can’t believe it’s already time to get back to work but I’m definitely ready. I didn’t think I’d feel this confident about it but after all the great support Corinne has provided, I know that it’s the right time for our family.”



Get to know our staff...

Name: Kathleen Brennan

Position: Intensive Care Nurse Practitioner
– Critical Care Services,
Bankstown-Lidcombe Hospital

Why did you choose nursing as your career?

I started as a nursing assistant in an aged care facility while studying for my music degree and discovered that I absolutely love the nature of the work. From my early exposure, I found nursing to be a rewarding, science-based career with good opportunities for advancement. I have stayed in the profession for over 35 years because I always wanted to work in a caring, meaningful position that makes a difference to people's lives.

Why is your role important?

I provide highly specialised consultation services for complex clinical care. My current role also coordinates and leads the elective central venous access device (CVAD) line insertion service. This is important to safeguard standardised evidence-based practice, while supporting other clinicians to develop the skills and knowledge to provide safe, quality critical care.

Tell us about the research projects you are involved in:

They are mostly clinically based, collaborative and translational research within the District and multiple clinical trials in ICU at Bankstown-Lidcombe Hospital. The focus has been on exploring nurse-led interventions including reducing delirium in ICU patients.

What is a normal day like for you?

My day usually starts by meeting my multidisciplinary team colleagues and patients to identify any clinical issues. I then review the

patients, prioritise requests and supervise/train others to perform procedures. This is followed by taking referrals to conduct the review of patients with complex clinical issues who are external to the ICU, such as in ward settings or outpatient services.

Greatest career achievement?

Successfully becoming one of the first in NSW to obtain a Nurse Practitioner Master's degree and Authorisation in the intensive care environment.

Really get to know our staff...

Interests or hobbies: Music in all forms, opera, live theatre and anything creative or entertaining.

Who inspires you: Personally, my mother is the most inspirational person I know as she always encouraged me to be kind and courageous, affirming throughout my life that I could achieve anything.

Tell us something about you that would surprise people: I also have a Bachelor degree and post graduate Diploma in Creative Arts majoring in Music and Operatic Arts.

What did you want to be when you grew up: A famous opera singer.

Favourite quote: "It only seems impossible until it's done."
– Nelson Mandela