

# NCAHA NEWS

Your monthly communication from the North Coast Allied Health Association



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## Message from the Board

The NCAHA Board is committed to ensuring its members and stakeholders are kept informed about the direction and activities of the Association. So, from now on, key messages from the Board will be detailed in every edition of NCAHA News that follows a Board meeting. I trust you find this informative.

### Strategic Plan 2014-2017

Our Strategic Plan has been published. It can be accessed on the [NCAHA website](#).

### NCAHA Operational Plan

Our first Operational Plan (2014-15) was endorsed, with planning for 2015-16 well under way.

### Lismore NCAHA Breakfast

The Lismore NCAHA breakfast was held on 23 April 2015 and was well attended by enthusiastic Allied health professionals, keen to be involved and become members. Particular matters identified included the need for more support around mental health in ageing and interdisciplinary approaches to support this.

The next NCAHA breakfast will be held in Grafton on 27 May 2015. The Clarence Valley breakfast completes our first round of engagement across the region. We are now committed to providing further networking opportunities as requested. More to come soon.

### HealthPathways

NCAHA supports the development and implementation of HealthPathways across the North Coast as it helps to standardise evidence-based primary care. This is an ideal opportunity for Allied Health engagement and involvement in a more locally integrated approach to health care.

*Refer to page 3 for more on HealthPathways.*

### New members and Directors

We continue to welcome new members from a range of disciplines. As we grow, we recognise the need for additional Directors to join the Board.

*Refer to page 6 for more on joining the NCAHA Board.*

I can tell you that it is very rewarding and exciting to work on this valuable initiative.



Professor Susan Nancarrow,  
Chair, North Coast Allied Health Association

# Lismore Allied Health Breakfast

It was Lismore's turn to host an Allied Health breakfast on Thursday 23 April 2015. NCAHA's Chair, Susan Nancarrow and North Coast Medicare Local's Chris Clark addressed the audience. Susan spoke about the benefits and goals of NCAHA while Chris gave an update on the status of the Primary Health Networks.

Susan also sought opinions on the key issues facing Allied Health professionals and potential solutions. Feedback included:

- Need for service delivery and training in older peoples' mental health. This could include integrated / interdisciplinary models of training for health professionals in our region.
- Need to improve communication between allied health professionals and other professions and particularly to help understand/clarify their role in the referral pathway.
- More advocacy and lobbying at a political level. Allied Health professionals are having to 'work' the system to get patient-centred care, rather than working in a streamlined system that works in the best interests of the patient.
- Desire for networking events to improve relationships and knowledge of roles and responsibilities.
- Need for information that is relevant to the professions and the region, such as educational opportunities, case reviews and inter-service activities.

Congratulations to all who organised and those who attended our first round of breakfasts at Murwillumbah, Coffs Harbour, Port Macquarie, Lismore and Grafton. It has been a wonderful chance to announce the establishment of NCAHA with many participants signing up for membership, and it has been particularly inspiring to hear your thoughts and confirm the need for our organisation.



# HealthPathways

North Coast Medicare Local, in partnership with Mid North Coast and Northern NSW Local Health Districts, is developing HealthPathways on the North Coast.

HealthPathways is based on an initiative created by Canterbury District Health Board in Christchurch, New Zealand. It has resulted in significant improvements in getting the right person to the right service at the right time.

Each HealthPathway starts with a particular health problem and defines a pathway for its management that reflects evidence-based best practice in the context of locally available resources and facilities. The process of developing a locally-defined HealthPathway may lead to new solutions as clinicians work across the hospital-community interface.

The HealthPathways program provides an opportunity to link general practitioners, hospital clinicians, allied health professionals and private medical specialists into the reform process. Representatives from all health sectors are able to be involved in the development of relevant HealthPathways, with their services identified in the published web-based product.

HealthPathways is designed to be an efficient, simple tool available at the point of care. GPs and health professionals access the portal using a login and password.

The portal is not designed for use by patients or community members, however there are resources available on the portal that GPs and health professionals can provide to patients.

## HealthPathways Successes

- There are now over 100 published pathways reflecting local models of care and referral information.
- 28% of these pathways are related to Chronic Disease. The top 5 potentially preventable diseases on the Mid North Coast have all had pathways localised.
- There are a further 58 pathways in various stages of development. Workgroups are developing a wide range of pathways within Paediatrics, Pain, Cardiology, Antenatal, Gynaecology, 'Hospital in the Home', Musculoskeletal, Mental Health, Cancer, Respiratory and Lifestyle & Preventive Care.
- There are 14 workgroups with 85 multidisciplinary members comprising of specialists (26%), GPs (48%), Allied Health (12%), Nursing and Other (24%).
- A handy desktop icon can be installed on your PC for quick and easy access. The icon can be found under the 'HealthPathways Features' section on the home page. Check it out!

For more information, please contact:

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<http://manc.healthpathways.org.au>

**Username: manchealth**

**Password: conn3ct3d**





# Have you heard of ‘Commissioning’?

The concept of commissioning is focused on local collective design and delivery of services. It is a collaborative process led by clinicians and providers, informed by users and the community. These stakeholders shape the priority-setting, design and procurement of services and their ongoing monitoring and improvement.

The commissioning concept was first implemented in the UK during the Blair Government years. At the time, Primary Care Trusts (PCTs) were established as the commissioning organisations. The subsequent change in Government changed the PCTs to Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs). These Groups are now considered the cornerstone of the new health system. There are about 211 CCGs in England, each caring for an average of about 220,000 people, and they are responsible for commissioning the vast majority of services, including emergency care, hospital care, maternity care and community and mental health services.

In Australia, the Commonwealth’s agenda for Primary Health Networks (PHNs) is that they will become the commissioning organisations for out of hospital care. This process will give a voice to clinicians and community, and is much better than what we have had in the past. NCAHA is excited by this opportunity and will be keen for its members to get involved in relevant processes to ensure you and your clients’ perspectives are represented.

Planning and working together provides the best opportunity for reducing fragmentation of services across the health system and improving integration. Change will not be achieved by working alone; it will be achieved by working ‘as one’.



North Coast Medicare Local’s ‘Commissioning Wheel’ outlines the phases of the commissioning process.

# Inexpensive doesn't necessarily mean CHEAP

It seems that conferences in major cities, with their multi-page programs and multi-figure registration fees, have the allure of being really worthwhile CPD opportunities. I attended a few of these events when I resided in metro areas and always came away with good contacts, some useful knowledge and lots of free pens and writing pads. But living in regional NSW now, the cost of attending these larger conferences is practically and financially out of the question most of the time.

In the months since becoming an NCAHA Director, I have grown more aware of the local CPD opportunities that are available. These have really blown my mind in terms of their relevancy, professionalism and practicality to my clinical practice and our clinical community of clients.

Last November, I attended a Wound Care Clinical Update facilitated by Wendy White. This was a three-hour CPD session, only \$25 and then subsidised, costing attendees nothing. Wound care is a particular interest of mine, especially with my lymphoedema background. Not having done a great deal of this recently, I felt I needed to update my knowledge and refresh some skills. This session provided me exactly with what I was after, and also showcased the emerging evidence for improved treatments, care regimes and outcomes. The audience was a multidisciplinary bunch, so knowledge and input from nurses, OTs, student ENs and aged care facility managers was brought together and enhanced our learning.

More recently, the North Coast Cancer Conference in March 2015 at Coffs Harbour, was an opportunity to explore local cancer care. I attended this out of interest (\$60 well spent this time). Presenters from up and down the coast showcased new treatments, their outcomes and the impacts on the morbidity and mortality of cancer sufferers. A fantastic presentation on Palliative Care by Dr. Daniel Curley had the room completely engaged, plus Allied Health had a small but important presentation. Big city hospitals with a lot of resources aren't the only ones doing amazing things.

The Copernican Inversion Series, facilitated by North Coast Medicare Local, was a breakfast meeting where three local presenters spoke about innovative projects on Central Auditory Processing Disorder, New Access (a BeyondBlue program that I have since been promoting to my clients) and Dental Care in Children. These projects are meeting health service gaps in our local community and have the scope to be expanded once they demonstrate their effectiveness - fantastic! Plus, this was a free event.

I really encourage you all to support our local CPD events. Yes, they are sometimes out of hours (before or after work), but they are often given by passionate clinicians in their own time simply to raise awareness, showcase their work and spread the word about effective interventions that could impact the lives of the communities in which we live and work. The food and networking is often great, too!



Luisa Eckhardt, Company Secretary  
North Coast Allied Health  
Association Board of Directors

# Wanted: New Directors

NCAHA is seeking to appoint two new Directors to its Board.

NCAHA is a public company, limited by guarantee and is focused on improving patient care and the health status of people living on the North Coast of NSW.

The NCAHA Board is responsible for the strategic direction of the company and its effective governance structures. NCAHA is inviting applications from those interested in becoming a member of the Board. Directors will be expected to actively contribute to the effective governance of the organisation and strive to achieve the objects of the company, as set out in the constitution.

NCAHA aims to have a skilled and diverse Board and is seeking applications for Directors from people with a variety of professional backgrounds, not exclusively allied health professionals.

The background to NCAHA, as well as the terms and conditions governing prospective Directors, is summarised in the '*Information for North Coast Allied Health Association Directors and Officeholders*' document available at <http://ow.ly/NaoXP>.

Applications will be assessed by a panel to ensure suitability of skills and experience. Successful applicants will join the initial Directors to make up the NCAHA Board.

To apply, complete the *Directorship Membership Application Form* available at <http://ow.ly/NaoXP>. Email the form to [enquiries@ncaha.org.au](mailto:enquiries@ncaha.org.au) with an up-to-date resume or curriculum vitae by 5pm, Monday 29 June 2015.

Please contact Ms Shay Atai on 66185429 if you require further information.

# Allied Health Conferences

## 2015 National Allied Health Conference: Submissions invited

This year's National Allied Health Conference will be held at the Crown Convention Centre in Melbourne from 9 to 11 November 2015.

The conference theme is 'Allied Health Front and Centre', exploring allied health's place in the health continuum, both now and into the future, and showcasing significant allied health research and projects.

The organising committee is inviting practitioners to submit an abstract summarising interesting and topical research, quality or other initiatives within any of the conference themes listed below. Submissions are sought for **oral** and **ePoster** presentations. Accepted oral presentations will range from 15- 30 minutes (including questions), with successful delegates advised of their presentation length following the abstract evaluation

process. All abstract submissions not accepted for oral presentation will be considered for ePoster display.

Abstracts must be structured providing an outline of the aims and content of the presentation, and **must** be no more than 300 words long. Abstracts detailing research or quality projects should include at least preliminary results. All abstracts must be submitted online through the Online Presentation Portal.

The deadline for abstract submissions is midnight, Sunday 28 June 2015, Australian Eastern Standard Time (AEST).

More information at <http://ow.ly/MVCOF>.

## National Indigenous Allied Health Award nominations

The 2015 Indigenous Allied Health Awards will be held on Tuesday 1 December 2015 at the Pullman Cairns International in Cairns during the IAHA 2015 National Conference, where winners will be announced at a gala dinner. Nominations open on 1 May 2015 and close on 19 September 2015.

The Indigenous Allied Health Awards showcase the outstanding achievements in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander allied health and provides identifiable allied health role models to inspire all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to consider and pursue a career in allied health.

Find out more at <http://ow.ly/MVCKX>.

# Free Online Professional Development

NCAHA reminds local Allied Health professionals that they have free access to online professional development through TAFE.

As a result of a partnership with North Coast Medicare Local, local professionals can access short courses that take about an hour to complete and are worth one Continuing Professional Development point per hour.

Users will have free and unlimited access to:

1. Allied Health course topics for Allied Health professionals
2. Healnet course topics for nurses and other similar health professionals
3. Generic short course topics for small businesses and self interest

All topics are peer reviewed by industry professionals and endorsed by nationally recognised industry associations. Regular topic reviews are also conducted

to ensure they incorporate current policies, legislation and Australia-wide guidelines.

Local health professionals can find out how to enrol and start undertaking free online courses by visiting:

[www.ncaha.org.au/online-training](http://www.ncaha.org.au/online-training)

# Become a Member

Benefits of joining the NCAHA:

- Improved profile of Allied Health in the community and referral sources, such as GPs
- Opportunities to connect with best practice, evidence-based practice and other clinicians
- Access to local clinical professional development
- Access to Clinicians of Excellence
- A united, local voice for Allied Health on regional, state and national levels

Visit [www.ncaha.org.au/membership](http://www.ncaha.org.au/membership) for more information.

# Events

*Click the event title for more details.*

## **20 May 2015**

Webinar: Diagnosis and Management of Fibromyalgia

## **21-22 May 2015**

Dying to Know, Dubbo

## **22 May 2015**

Improving Health Literacy Workshop, Melbourne

## **24-27 May 2015**

National Rural Health Conference, Darwin

## **25 May 2015**

Wound Care Workshop for GPs, Nurses, Pharmacists & Allied Health Professionals, Tweed Heads

## **26 May 2015**

Wound Care Clinical Update for health professionals, Lismore

## **26-27 May 2015**

Youth Mental Health First Aid, Ballina

## **27 May 2015**

Wound Care Clinical Update for health professionals, Grafton

## **27 May 2015**

Quality Improvement Meeting for Pharmacists, Tweed Heads

## **27 May 2015**

Clarence Valley Allied Health Professionals Breakfast, Grafton

## **28 May 2015**

Addressing Non Melancholic Depression in the Anxious Worrier and Perfectionist, Coffs Harbour

## **29 May 2015**

Palliative Care Breakfast Meeting, Kempsey

## **30 May 2015**

Depression Dilemmas – Mental Health Skills Training, Port Macquarie

## **1-4 June 2015**

Resolving Vilification Workshop, Brisbane

## **2-3 June 2015**

Co-occurring Mental Health and Alcohol and Other Drug Disorders, Coffs Harbour

## **3 June 2015**

Quality Improvement Meeting for Pharmacists, Tweed Heads

## **16 June 2015**

Working with Young People – Self Harm / Self Injury Behaviours, Ballina

## **16 June 2015**

Quitting Cannabis – Clinical Intervention, Port Macquarie

## **17 June 2015**

Webinar: Managing Back Pain in Primary Care – Incorporating New Research Findings into Clinical Practice

## **17-18 June 2015**

Mental Health First Aid, Goonellabah

## **19 June 2015**

Building Resilience to Mood Disorders: Risk reduction, relapse prevention & maintenance strategies, Tweed Heads

## **19 June 2015**

Explain Pain, Port Macquarie

## **20 June 2015**

Suicide Risk & Substance Use, Coffs Harbour

## **13-14 July 2015**

The Body Remembers: Integrating Body and Mind for Trauma Recovery, Brisbane

## **20 July 2015**

Webinar: Sleeping Better – Understanding Common Sleep Problems and Strategies to Assist People to Sleep Better

## **31 July 2015**

Pedorthic Footwear Modifications, Gold Coast

## **1-4 September 2015**

Australian Palliative Care Conference, Melbourne

## **9-11 November 2015**

National Allied Health Conference, Melbourne

## More Events

View more practitioner events at:  
<http://healthynorthcoast.org.au/upcoming-events/>

## Contact NCAHA

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North Coast  
**Allied Health Association**

