

NCAHA NEWS

Your monthly communication from the North Coast Allied Health Association



Inside this edition

- Frontline Physiotherapy p.2
- NCAHA Forum Committee p.3
- My Therapist p.4
- Events p.5

Message from the Board

I recently attended the Sprout Summit, a gathering of successful and emerging directors and leaders from within the not-for-profit and for profit sectors. It was a fantastic opportunity to gather feedback on how boards work, why they should work a certain way, what makes a successful board member, and the benefits of sitting on a board.

By and large, it reinforced to me the success so far of the North Coast Allied Health Association. This board came together with the backing of North Coast Medicare Local, now North Coast Primary Health Network, who saw an opportunity to demonstrate leadership and change within the health care system. We are a dedicated team of Allied Health professionals with a passion for clinical improvement and Allied Health awareness, not just locally but in strategic political circles. We are doing this because

we believe in making a difference to the community.

This is a big job, and, while we are passionate and dedicated, three people alone cannot conquer the health world. Crowd sourcing is a concept I heard bandied around at the summit. I was blissfully unaware of this term until returning home to Google it, and finally the penny dropped! Please look up the term and locate its true meaning, as I am employing my 'holistic' flair and giving my definition: 'crowd sourcing' refers to a movement of people, brought together for change persuasion in any realm.

In the case of NCAHA, we need Allied Health professionals who believe in what they do, who have an idea (big, small or niggling) to improve the way they work and the level of service they provide to clients. We need passionate Allied Health

professionals from all North Coast areas and clinical backgrounds, from recent graduates to those with many years' experience who have retired from their profession and still have a burning passion for making positive changes to the community and the health system. We need people who can see a better way to access health care within our communities, who can speak up to the power brokers and decision makers in terms of funding allocations, recruitment and succession planning, equity of service providers and users. We need people who can make our health system the best it can be. You all have the ideas, but what good is an idea if it isn't explored?

If the paperwork you have received from any of our gatherings is still sitting on your pile to be completed, or, if you know other Allied Health professionals who really care and want to funnel their passion somewhere, please join NCAHA.

We want you, your ideas and your passion.



Luisa Eckhardt,
Company Secretary,
NCAHA Board of Directors

Extended Scope of Practice in the Emergency Department

An innovative and exciting new model of care will soon be initiated in The Tweed Hospital Emergency Department.

The Northern NSW Local Health District Board and Chief Executive have recently approved the establishment of an Extended Scope of Practice Physiotherapy position.

Whilst Emergency Department demand is increasing, patients presenting with minor musculoskeletal injuries such as uncomplicated fractures, joint sprains or low back pain often face long waiting times, as patients with time-critical illnesses are prioritised. The National Emergency Access Targets (NEAT) emphasise increasingly stringent benchmarks for timely and appropriate care for all Emergency Department patients.

Traditional roles of healthcare professionals are changing, driven by the requirements of a flexible workforce which can address the needs of the community. Extended Scope of Practice Physiotherapists in the Emergency Department are able to work as standalone practitioners, accepting appropriate patients directly from triage and avoiding unnecessary delays in waiting for initial assessment by a doctor.

Extended scope privileges will include the ability to order and interpret X-rays, apply plasters, administer basic medications and provide sick leave certification. Musculoskeletal patient journeys through the Emergency Department will be streamlined, with comprehensive care provided by a single expert practitioner.

Evidence from a recent Health Workforce Australia project demonstrates that this model of care reduces workloads for busy doctors, reduces waiting times and lengths of stay for patients without adverse events, improves clinical outcomes for patients and achieves high levels of patient and staff satisfaction.

Recognising great potential for change and best practice, Northern NSW Local Health District (NNSWLHD) will soon be implementing an Extended Scope of Practice Physiotherapy position in the Tweed Hospital Emergency Department. The proposed service model will be tailored to best meet local service needs, including weekend and early evening shifts which match peak attendances of musculoskeletal patients to the Emergency Department.

Established Emergency Department staff including doctors and nurses are welcoming news of the role and local physiotherapy staff are excited to be exploring this opportunity. Key performance indicators will include waiting times and length of stay for musculoskeletal patients, NEAT benchmarks and patient and staff satisfaction with the service.

A similar role is expected to be established when the new Emergency Department opens at Lismore Base Hospital in 2016.

For more information, please contact Vicki Rose, Executive Director Allied Health Chronic and Primary Care, NNSWLHD, by emailing Vicki.Rose@ncahs.health.nsw.gov.au.

Advertorial

Are you an early career social worker (with less than 3 years experience) or the manager or supervisor of an early career social worker?

Curtin University's School of Occupational Therapy and Social Work is interested in hearing about the experiences of early career social workers and the views of managers and supervisors supporting them in the workplace. Their online questionnaire will take about 15 minutes to complete. Following this you can choose whether to take part in phase two, the interview.

Visit <http://ow.ly/Qg5sr> for further information and to complete the questionnaire relevant to your social work role.

If you have any trouble accessing the website and questionnaires, please contact Catherine Stewart at catherine.stewart@postgrad.curtin.edu.au.



Mid North Coast Clinical Council

**by Luisa Eckhardt,
Company Secretary,
NCAHA Board of Directors**

Wednesday 12 August saw the first meeting of the Mid North Coast Clinical Council. The Council was established to provide the Executive and Board of North Coast Primary Health Network with advice and input regarding local health care needs, service gaps and the implementation of pathways to improve health outcomes. The Council strongly encourages innovative thinking and planning in response to ideas and programs. This Council is the mechanism for identification and recommendation on investment strategies. I have been appointed membership.

There was a strong GP presence (as it is essentially a GP-led council) and I was pleased to see an almost equally strong Allied Health presence from fields such as psychology, pharmacy, neuropsychology, diabetes education/dietitian and occupational therapy. This is a fantastic mix of health care providers across our footprint.

The first meeting contained a lot of robust discussion around key clinical priorities across the Mid North Coast that require immediate attention. While these are yet to be finalised, it is important to acknowledge that connectedness of services is one significant issue that looks to be improved upon. This aligns greatly with our views within the NCAHA.

Strategically, this Clinical Council is a huge ally for the NCAHA. This enables me, as our representative, to approach GPs and specialists and seek their advice, input and support in facilitating the relationship development amongst health practitioners, raising and providing the evidence of significant gaps as identified by our Association and putting forward our ideas and innovative plans to address gaps and enhance service provision across the Mid North Coast.

I walked away from the meeting feeling a real sense of belonging as an Allied Health professional on the Mid North Coast, and there truly isn't a better time to make a difference. I will correspond with you after each meeting. Please feel free to raise your ideas for me to take forward. Hopefully, once the key clinical areas are prioritised, your thoughts will be flowing.

NCAHA Forum Committee

The North Coast Allied Health Association is excitedly preparing for its inaugural forum to be held on the North Coast in March 2016.

To assist with the organisation of the forum, the NCAHA Board is establishing a Forum Committee to be comprised of the Board of Directors and several members. NCAHA is seeking expressions of interest from members who wish to serve on the committee.

The committee will be required to meet at least once a month and assist with tasks such as:

- Contributing to the development of the forum agenda
- Reviewing presentation abstracts
- Seeking sponsorship
- Marketing the forum
- Handling participant registrations
- Providing logistical support at the forum

If you would like to serve on this committee, please indicate your interest by emailing your name and contact details to enquires@ncaha.org.au by Wednesday 19 August 2015.

My Therapist

by James Hay, owner, My Therapist

When I first moved to the Coffs area around two years ago, I found it hard to know where to find health practitioners and services. I now know how many fantastic therapists there are in the area, but there didn't seem to be an easy way to connect with practitioners outside of word of mouth and general internet searching. Through my work in family law, I often referred parents/families for some extra support and found the same challenges with locating practitioners for my clients. Feedback provided by my clients also indicated that they had the same experience.

Through our website, **My Therapist**, health and beauty therapists can create a profile and list their services, which people can then find and book. Payments are made through us but there are no fees to the person booking. We receive a small commission from what the therapist receives. So, basically, it is free for users or clients. Therapists then only have to pay when they are making money.

This all means that therapists can spend less time on marketing and more time helping people. It creates another

avenue for therapists to connect with people. And the result is a one-stop shop where people can easily find and book therapists.

At the recently-held Telstra Stores Digital Innovation Challenge, **My Therapist** took first prize. It was a fantastic experience to have a group of experts analyse the business. This really tested our model to make sure we were developing something that was needed.

With mentoring support, we have just released our first version of the software! Our software was also built in conjunction with feedback from initial users and therapists. We feel it is so important to work with the therapists and people that we are trying to connect. If we had just built what we thought best without any consultation, it would be very different to what it is now and definitely not as useful. According to local therapist Pam Millican, partner at the Coffs Health Hub:

"My Therapist is a brilliant idea from a passionate young man whose sole intention is to help bring awareness to everyone with respect to the smorgasbord of alternative health therapies, to introduce and actively

promote the therapists and ensure everyone succeeds. Thank you, James...I highly commend your passion, vision and drive to help others."

A number of therapists have already listed their services, but any other therapists are welcome to also join for free and list their services with us to connect with more clients. Plus, we are always welcoming feedback and ideas to keep improving the software to connect as many great therapists to people as possible.

To list your health or beauty services, or even search for those services, sign up for free at search.mytherapist.co or email us at hello@mytherapist.co.



myTherapist



Healthy North Coast Practitioner Events

Healthy North Coast is the central hub for all health professionals to access information on learning and development events on the North Coast.

You can search for a particular event, or register and upload your own event for free.

Visit www.healthynorthcoast.org.au/practitioner-events

Healthy North Coast....It's all about health



Upcoming Events

Click the event titles to learn more.

19 August

Webinar: Conquering fragmented rural mental health and other specialist medical services

19 August

Palliative Care Breakfast Meeting for General Practitioners, Port Macquarie

20 August

Anaphylaxis Recognition and Treatment Simulation Workshop, Lismore

20 August

A Clinician's Guide: Caring for people with gastrostomy tubes and devices, Coffs Harbour

20 August

Child and Family Forum, Murwillumbah

20 August

Spirometry Education Update for Practice Nurses and Health Practitioners, Port Macquarie

22 August

Perinatal in Practice for GPs, psychologists, midwives and early childhood nurses, Brisbane

25-28 August

2015 TheMHS Conference, Canberra

26 August

Smart Technologies Bootcamp, Tweed Heads

26 August

Tweed Valley Clinical Society- Diabetes and Eye Disease

27 August

Richmond Valley Clinical Society, Lismore

1-4 September

Australian Palliative Care Conference, Melbourne

2 September

Unique challenges for sufferers of family and domestic violence, Murwillumbah

3-5 September

Australian Wound Management Association 2015 Conference, Brisbane

8 September

Working Therapeutically with Aberrant & Offending Sexual Behaviours, Coffs Harbour

8 September

Ageing, Homelessness and Dementia Seminar, Tweed Heads

10 September

Musculoskeletal Symposium, Coffs Harbour

10-11 September

ADMA 2015 Annual Conference, Brisbane

11 September

Pedorthic Plantar Pressure Redistribution workshop, Gold Coast

14 September

Working with Young People - Self Harm/Self Injury Behaviours, Lismore

16-18 September

Australasian HIV & AIDS Conference, Brisbane

17-19 September

Pharmacy Business Network 2015, Melbourne

8 October

Falls Prevention Forum, Lismore

9-11 November

National Allied Health Conference, Melbourne

More Events

Visit www.healthynorthcoast.org.au/events to view the Healthy North Coast Practitioner Events Calendar.

Contact NCAHA

Suite 6, 85 Tamar Street, BALLINA NSW AUSTRALIA 2478
Postal: PO BOX 957, BALLINA NSW AUSTRALIA 2478
Phone: 02 6618 5400
Fax: 02 6618 5499
Email: enquiries@ncaha.org.au

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