

# NCAHA NEWS

Your monthly communication from the North Coast Allied Health Association



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## Message from the Board

Welcome to the July edition of NCAHA News.

With the Federal Election now behind us and the result known, it is a good time to focus on Liberal National Party policies on health. One of the key areas of debate during this election was the funding and governance of the Medicare Benefit Scheme (MBS). Allied Health professionals work in a variety of MBS-funded service delivery roles across primary health, mental health, veterans’ affairs and chronic disease management.

Concerns exist in relation to accessibility and affordability of Medicare-funded health services. All Allied Health practitioners are encouraged to raise any issues they encounter. NCAHA urges Allied Health practitioners to take an active interest in health policy direction, especially in the key areas of Health

Service Integration, NDIS, Primary Health, Aged Care and Mental Health.

NCAHA welcomes the announcement that the Turnbull Government will appoint a National Rural Health Commissioner. The Rural Health Commissioner will be appointed to lead the development of a National Rural Generalist Pathway to address rural health’s biggest issue: lack of medical professionals in rural, regional and remote areas. The Minister said the Commissioner will also look to utilise and support Australia’s Allied Health workforce.

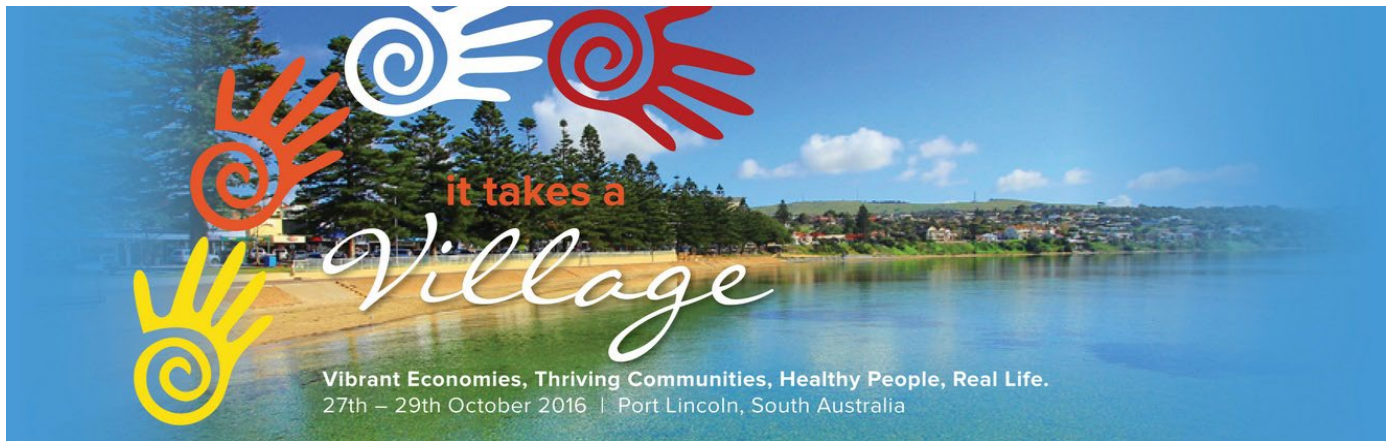
Through its involvement in Clinical Councils and regular contact with the Primary Health Network, the NCAHA is continuing in its efforts to become a strong voice for Allied Health. One way to strengthen Allied Health’s position in the health care system is to provide

quality professional development opportunities. To this end, NCAHA is supporting the development of a Telehealth CPD event later on this year.

I hope you enjoy this month’s newsletter.



**Nick Neville,**  
**Director NCAHA**



The 2016 SARRAH Conference theme is *"It takes a village to raise a child"*.

What if our "child" is rural and remote health outcomes and thriving communities?

In rural and remote life and work, our "village" has never been more important than it is today. We live in a rapidly evolving environment and we are faced with a myriad of challenges and opportunities each day. Navigating these changes can be daunting – collaboration, innovation, partnerships and supports are necessary to prepare our communities for a vibrant, sustainable future.

A village approach implies that there is shared responsibility and that people work together and contribute in ways that are consistent with their strengths, skills and abilities.

It takes a village to have necessary tough conversations, to disagree and to problem solve in ways that are inclusive.

Key topics of discussion will include:

- NDIS
- Allied Health Professional research and evidence base
- Innovative rural Allied Health programs
- e-Health initiatives

Delegates will have the opportunity to explore how this village approach can be applied to rural and remote health outcomes.

Come and participate, share information, meet great people, expand your network and add your voice for better rural Allied Health services.

Register at [www.sarrahconference.com](http://www.sarrahconference.com). Early registrations close 27 July 2016.



### New to HealthPathways - July 2016

Take a look at the latest HealthPathways.

- **Cardiology Investigations**
- **Diabetic Foot Screening**
- **Toe Injuries**
- **Red Eye**
- **Perthes Disease**

<https://manc.healthpathways.org.au/25013.htm>

**Username:** manchealth

**Password:** conn3ct3d

### We need your feedback!

Your feedback is encouraged and helps us to maintain an accurate and user-friendly website. If your Allied Health service is not listed in any referral sections for new pathways, please let us know if you would like to be added. You can forward your feedback by selecting the 'send feedback' button, which is located on the top right-hand corner of the pathway or homepage.

For further information about HealthPathways please contact:

Fiona Ryan  
(02) 6583 3600  
[fryan@ncphn.org.au](mailto:fryan@ncphn.org.au)  
(Mid North Coast)

Kerrie Keyte  
(07) 5523 5507  
[kkeyte@ncphn.org.au](mailto:kkeyte@ncphn.org.au)  
(Northern NSW)

## Health Care Home Project

North Coast Primary Health Network is excited to announce a new quality-improvement initiative, the Health Care Home Project. The project aims to position North Coast practitioners as key contributors to the development of this model in Australia.

### What is a Health Care Home?

A Health Care Home is a model for general practice that addresses the coordination of a person's ongoing, comprehensive and whole of person medical care. A Health Care Home coordinates care delivered by all members of a person's care team. Internationally, this model has been successfully demonstrated to provide effective, efficient and economical outcomes for both practitioners and patients. A Health Care Home is one component which supports a larger integrated health system.

Visit [www.medicalhome.org.au](http://www.medicalhome.org.au) to learn more.

### What is the focus of this project?

1. Producing the Australian Handbook for transitioning to a Patient Centred Health Care Home.

2. Establishing a local network of practitioners and practices focused on implementing Health Care Homes.
3. Conducting a local trial and adaptation of the handbook tools.

### Importance of Allied Health Professionals being involved

The creation of Health Care Homes provides the opportunity for better coordination of care by a range of health care providers. Your involvement in the project can ensure the implementation of Health Care Homes is well informed from the perspective of Allied Health professionals.

### Want to get involved?

Join the North Coast Health Care Home Network to receive project updates and news about Patient Centred Health Care Homes. Please email Senior Project Officer Safa Rahbar at [srahbar@ncphn.org.au](mailto:srahbar@ncphn.org.au) with any questions by 15 August 2016.

## Allied Health News

### After OA diagnosis, women favour Allied Health

After a diagnosis of osteoarthritis (OA), women tend to reduce doctor visits in favour of Allied Health professionals, according to an Australian analysis.

University of South Australia Senior Research Fellow, Dr Gillian Caughey, part of a team of researchers, examined the impact of osteoarthritis on health services use by 'baby boomer' Australian women to provide insight into the changes in health care use after a diagnosis of OA.

"There is no cure for OA, so treatment focuses on pain management and maintenance of joint mobility, function and wellbeing; so in an environment of constrained government spending, it is important for policymakers to understand the factors that enable people with OA to remain active and independent in the community with optimal functional capacity," said Dr Caughey.

The research team found that after the onset of OA, women reduce their doctor visits while increasing their use of Allied Health services, relative to the rates observed in those without a diagnosis.

The report was published in the *Australian and New Zealand Journal of Public Health* on May 16 2016.

### New degrees offered in Coffs Harbour

Southern Cross University has welcomed the announcement of a \$12 million investment from the Federal Government for stage one of a new Allied Health building at the Coffs Harbour campus.

Vice Chancellor Professor Peter Lee said it was fantastic news for Coffs Harbour.

"This is an exciting day for the University and the Coffs Harbour community. This investment would enable us to proceed with stage one of our Allied Health building, paving the way for new courses and facilities for students and the community," Professor Lee said.

"We will introduce degrees in speech pathology and occupational therapy and establish the SCU Health Clinic, an innovative model of providing community care and professional experience for our students," he said.

## Lymphoedema and Remedial Therapies Clinic

The Lymphoedema and Remedial Therapies Clinic is a new private service available to patients located in the Mid North Coast of NSW, specialising in Oncology Massage and Lymphoedema Management.

Heidi Hughes is an experienced Lymphoedema and Remedial Massage Therapist with a background of more than 20 years as a Registered Nurse with 15 years in Oncology. She has a specialised skill set in Lymphoedema Management and has gained valuable experience establishing and managing the Lymphoedema Clinic at the Mid North Coast Cancer Institute (MNCCI) in Port Macquarie.

Heidi has gained both Level 1 (Limbs) and Level 2 (Head & Neck, Genital, Trunkal & Breast) Lymphoedema training accreditation in both Primary & Secondary Lymphoedema Management.

Heidi is a long term member of the Australasian Lymphology Association (ALA), which is the peak professional organisation responsible for developing research, training and policies on lymphoedema and has attended their biannual conferences for several years to further enhance her professional development. Heidi is also an accredited member of the Australian Traditional Medicines Society (ATMS), which keeps her finger on the pulse of recent innovations and treatments in remedial therapies, which she often incorporates into her Manual Lymphatic Drainage treatments.

As a Clinical Nurse Specialist at the MNCCI, Heidi has advanced clinical knowledge and highly developed assessment skills. Her role is diverse and ranges from diagnosing lymphoedema in its early stages to addressing more advanced lymphoedema, directing the management and long-term care of this chronic condition, including educating those at risk.

As a remedial therapist, Heidi combines her techniques to address post-surgical body function plus/minus lymph drainage if required. She liaises closely with other Allied Health team members to provide a holistic approach to her clients' care and encourages her clients to remain in close contact with their GP and oncologists when appropriate. Her focus is a rehabilitation

model of care and she encourages clients to live and work within their capabilities as normally as possible with their condition.

Services provided at the clinic are varied to include lymphoedema treatments such as assessment, manual lymphatic drainage massage, compression bandaging, complex lymphatic therapy, prescription, ordering and fitting of compression garments; remedial therapies such as massage, taping, prescription of exercises and stretches to improve range of motion in joints and soft tissues.

Heidi developed and facilitates the Mid North Coast Lymphoedema Support Group (MNCLSG), which had its inaugural meeting in 2013. This is an open group for both primary and secondary lymphoedema sufferers, their carers and also those that are at risk of the condition. The group's main objective is to provide education and support about lymphoedema in a friendly community environment. Regular guest speakers come to these bi-monthly meetings to inform and support members. Meetings are held at the UNSW Rural Medical School, Highfields Circuit on Monday afternoons between 3-5pm. The next meeting will be held on July 25.

Another passion Heidi is pursuing includes lymphoedema awareness in collaboration with the ALA. Very little is understood about the condition in the general community, and it also surprisingly lacks understanding in the health professional fraternity. It is imperative that clients get an early diagnosis and intervention to receive the best outcomes. She is spearheading a Lymphoedema Awareness Campaign with the MNCLSG to increase awareness within these two groups in our local communities.

Heidi would love to hear from any therapists who may wish to join her in the practice on a part-time basis. For any information on the above offer, services or meetings please contact Heidi on 0407 916 666.

The Lymphoedema and Remedial Therapies Clinic is located at the Work Life Centre, 82 Hill Street, Port Macquarie, NSW, 2444.

## Health Change Training

Would you like to increase patient engagement and conduct more effective, time efficient consultations to improve patient health outcomes?

NCPHN and NNSWLHD Integrated Care are partnering to provide free training for clinicians to build skills in providing self-management support and behaviour change interventions for patients.

A two-day workshop will be held in Ballina on 29-30 July 2016.

Don't miss this exciting opportunity for free Health Change Methodology Training. Open to Allied Health professionals working in general practice and chronic disease management.

Visit <http://ow.ly/d9vx302nvTI> to learn more.

## Position Available, Coffs Harbour

The University of Newcastle's Department of Rural Health is seeking an Associate Lecturer/Lecturer in Occupational Therapy.

The role will oversee and support occupational therapy student placements in the Coffs Harbour and surrounding districts. They will liaise with placement supervisors and students in the region, coordinate timetabling for occupational therapy students, provide sessional face-to-face teaching and collaborate with other academic and professional staff to develop and implement inter-professional education and research opportunities.

This position is based in Coffs Harbour.

Visit <http://ow.ly/liK9302bVJU> for further information.

## Upcoming Events

Click the event titles to learn more.

### 25 July

Inter-professional Workshop for Clinical Educators, Lismore

### 28 July

Health Innovation Awards and Expo, Coffs Harbour

### 29-30 July

HealthChange Core Training for Clinicians, Ballina

### 1-5 August

Eating Disorders Essentials, Coffs Harbour

### 4 August

Webinar: Working collaboratively to manage comorbid mental health and methamphetamine use

### 6 August

Advanced anatomy and function of the peripheral nervous system (Upper Limb), Gold Coast

### 21-24 August

ANZSOM Annual Scientific Meeting 2016, Newcastle

### 22-23 August

Living Well with Dementia Conference, Sydney

### 27-29 October

2016 SARRAH National Conference, Port Lincoln

### 9-11 November

2016 NSW Rural Health and Research Congress, Tweed Heads

*If you are aware of health events or activities happening on the NSW North Coast, you can add them to the Healthy North Coast calendar yourself.*

Visit <http://healthynorthcoast.org.au/dashboard/signup/>.

## More Events

Visit [www.healthynorthcoast.org.au/events](http://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](mailto:enquiries@ncaha.org.au)

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