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North Coast  
**Allied Health Association**

## November Newsletter 2021

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### Welcome to all NCAHA members

Somehow, amazingly, we've popped out in November. It's spring time with warmer days and lots of flora in glorious bud and flower. And it looks like we might be through the worst of the Pandemic now. Can we finally start to relax and be our normal selves again?

As hopeful as this is, there's no avoiding the reality that COVID requirements and lockdowns have taken a toll on many of us. Our mental health and wellbeing have been challenged. For this reason, we have included a piece on mental health in the Member Rap section - Beth Fuller is a NCAHA member and physiotherapist living in Kempsey, and she is concerned that allied health professionals are fully cognizant of mental health issues in their practice with clients. I can't help but agree with Beth's position.

On this topic, we are pleased to note a new national scholarship initiative, the Mental Health Nursing & Allied Health Scholarship Program (see details below).

I also note the recent NDIS Interim Workforce Report (see SARRAH Update for more details). This Report recommends greater consideration of allied health workforce maldistribution and shortages in rural Australia, and the development of strategies to improve access to allied health services in rural areas. So, this Report now sits beside the *National Rural Health Commissioner's Report (2020)* on rural allied health, some key recommendations from the

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national focus on rural allied health workforce deficiencies and concerted and strategic action to improve access for rural and remote communities. Surely with these voices in play the Commonwealth will eventually accept its responsibility to lead solutions to the historic and ongoing market failure for our services.

Please note the upcoming NCAHA 2021 Annual General Meeting on Tuesday, 16 November (see details below)

Rob Curry – NCAHA Executive Officer

## WHAT'S HAPPENING AT NCAHA

### Professional Development

#### [NCAHA Annual General Meeting](#)

**Date:** Tuesday, 16 November

**Time:** 6.00 – 6.30 pm

**Mode:** Via Zoom (details to be forwarded to members)

#### [The Indigenous Allied Health Assistants Academy and Culturally Response Practice](#)

**Mode:** Via Zoom

**Date:** Early December (to be finalised)

The Indigenous Allied Health Assistants Academy is being established on the North Coast to draw Indigenous students into the allied health field. This project and other matters associated with improving cultural responsiveness of AHP practice will be presented and explored. With a significant Aboriginal population on the North Coast, this event will have high relevance for all AHPs and NCAHA members in this region.

Event flyer coming soon

would be gratefully received at [rob.curry1@outlook.com](mailto:rob.curry1@outlook.com) or [NCAHAExecutive@hotmail.com](mailto:NCAHAExecutive@hotmail.com)

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## MEMBER'S RAP

### Dr Beth Fuller on Mental Health



Beth is a physiotherapist living at Kempsey on the Mid North Coast. She has worked across the North Coast and in the Hunter and Sydney metropolitan settings, largely in the public health system. As well as physiotherapy positions (generalist, disability & aged care sectors) she has held positions in public health and behavioral medicine. She has an eclectic mix of qualifications (PhD, MPH, Grad Dip Phys & BSc) that have given her a framework for research and teaching.

Beth is now interested in transfer of knowledge, particularly regarding the issues of well-being, resilience and connection to community.

*"I enjoy collaborating with others and prefer a strengths-based approach that builds resilience and helps people navigate through the various systems in which they live and work."*

Beth is currently on the Australian Physiotherapy Association's National Mental Health Group, and chairs the APA NSW's Mental Health Group.

*“The pandemic our world is struggling through has brought with it an interesting change in how Mental Health is described and regarded. Pre-pandemic ‘mental health’ was largely the remit of health services, with resources consumed for the most part by services geared to mental illness. Eighteen months in, ‘mental health and wellbeing’ is central at press conferences, in WHO guidelines and is appearing in mainstream advertising.”*

Here are Beth’s **4 steps for promoting mental health** in our clients (and indeed in our colleagues):

1. ***RUOK?*** – select the approach that best works for you: *So how are you going? What’s been happening for you? Would you like to talk to me about it?*
2. ***Listen without judgement*** – taking seriously anything shared
3. ***Encourage action*** – develop action plans that commit people to completing something and reporting in next session on how that went
4. ***Check in*** – following up with people to see how things are going. Extend that check in to people you might be seeing in the clinic, colleagues you share the urgency of workloads and deadlines and with yourself. *RUOK?*

Beth suggests that, as allied health professionals, we have the opportunity to shift assessment sessions and treatments from a position where services are delivered TO people to one that engages people, working WITH people on the parts of their living that matter. This encourages people to engage on what is important for both their physical and mental health.

Beth Fuller can be contacted at: [bethfuller49@gmail.com](mailto:bethfuller49@gmail.com)

As a follow on from Beth’s thoughts, we are pleased to see the Commonwealth Government announcement of a new [Mental Health Nursing and Allied Health Scholarship Program](#). The Program will provide 278 scholarships to support mental health nurses and allied health practitioners including psychologists to enter the mental health workforce, in addition to upskilling existing health practitioners in the mental health sector. The Program will also focus on rural and remote locations with priority given to health care workers who live and/or work in rural areas ([MM 3-7](#)). Individuals can express their interest in applying for a place from November 2021 through the Australian College of Nursing. The scholarships will be supported from Semester 1, 2022.

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## SARRAH UPDATE

### SARRAH Stakeholder Engagement Survey

SARRAH, as the nationally recognised peak body representing rural and remote allied health professionals, has access to significant expertise. We have built our capacity to share that knowledge base through our communications and online learning and webinar programs.

Our vision is that rural and remote communities have allied health services that support equitable and sustainable health and well-being.

We invite you to support this developing work through completing a short online survey about how SARRAH engages with members and the profession, and whether you would like to contribute your expertise.

Your feedback is vital in shaping how SARRAH engages with you and with the profession.

The survey should take no longer than 10 minutes – please click on the link below to have your say – and feel free to send on to your colleagues: [SARRAH Stakeholder Engagement Survey 2021](#)

The survey will close on Friday 3rd December.

### ***SARRAH: Making a difference – together!***

Any questions about this survey can be directed to Dr Melodie Bat, Education Program Manager at [melodie@sarah.org.au](mailto:melodie@sarah.org.au)

### NDIS Workforce Report

Earlier this month the Australian Government tabled its [response](#) to the [National Disability Insurance Scheme Workforce Interim Report](#). Of note to SARRAH members is the in-principle support given to recommendation 11, that

and remote Australia, and develop strategies for enabling workforce distribution, sustainability and growth".

In relation to the NDIS Workforce Report SARRAH CEO, Cath Maloney, notes: "..... *there is a significant and growing rural workforce supply issue impacting allied health services across all settings. This might be seen as an "acute-on-chronic" issue exacerbated by the incremental introduction of the NDIS since 2013 and compounded by sudden and/or prolonged border closures due to the COVID-19 pandemic impacting workforce mobility.*"

SARRAH's long standing position has been that a coordinated, consistent and sustained approach to allied health workforce development is required in order to address entrenched maldistribution and obvious rural workforce shortages compromising the health of rural communities.

Last week SARRAH officers made representations on these matters to a Joint Standing Committee of Parliament in Canberra, and will continue to push the case for Commonwealth policy action to improve access for rural Australians to allied health services and expertise.

### **[Inquiry into NDIS Implementation and Forecasting](#)**

As part of its role to inquire into the implementation, performance and governance of the NDIS, the Joint Standing Committee (JSC) on the NDIS is conducting a **new inquiry into Scheme implementation and forecasting for the NDIS**.

The [terms of reference](#) for the inquiry cover key strategic issues and are wide-reaching - with a particular focus on:

- What supports are or should be available for people with disability in addition to the NDIS
- Funding for the NDIS, including current and future funding sources
- Financial and actuarial modelling and forecasting used to inform NDIS decision-making
- Ongoing measures to reform the Scheme.

*The JSC is particularly interested in hearing from people with disability, families and carers, **allied health professionals**, and representative organisations. It will consider issues such as why there are variations in Plans, access, utilisation and more by location, as well as the impacts and assumptions made*

to be an important inquiry.

SARRAH has been invited to contribute to the inquiry, but encourages all interested parties and individuals contribute via SARRAH (contact [allan@sarah.org.au](mailto:allan@sarah.org.au)) or provide a submission directly.

Closing date for submissions is **28 February 2022**.

Written submissions in electronic form submitted [online](#) or sent by email to [ndis.sen@aph.gov.au](mailto:ndis.sen@aph.gov.au) as an attached Adobe PDF or MS Word document.

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## CPD ALERT

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### [Health Manager/Administrator Stream of Rural Health Month RH21](#)

The NSW Rural Doctors Network (RDN) and Rural Health Pro invite you to attend the Health Manager/Administrator Stream of the Rural Health Month (RH21).

RH21 is a month of online events and activities for rural health professionals happening in November

The Health Manager/Administrator Stream is free to attend and includes a series of tailored on-demand webinars as well as a range of other multi-disciplinary events. Webinar topics include:-

- Health service and workforce model innovation
- Rural services management
- Board and governance
- Cultural responsiveness in corporate strategy
- Clinician to health manager

The Health Manager/Administrator Stream is free to attend and includes a series of tailored on-demand webinars as well as a range of other multi-disciplinary events. Webinar topics include:-

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- Board and governance
- Cultural responsiveness in corporate strategy
- Clinician to health manager
- Clinical services management

You will also have access to other RH21 events like the Rural Communities at the Centre Conference, the first night of the Rural GPs Conference (with international keynote presenter and inspirational speakers.

Register now to learn, connect and celebrate the strength and positivity that underpin rural life.

[Register here](#)

## **CPR and Basic Life Support Courses**

There are many great providers of CPR and basic life support (BLS) for health practitioners across the North Coast. Healthy North Coast has compiled a list of local training organisations with links to their websites. These providers offer a range of courses and can provide CPR and BLS training for individuals and organisations.

### **Mid North Coast**

#### **[First Aid Courses Coffs Harbour](#)**

RTO: 45193

- HLTAID011 – Provide First Aid
- HLTAID009 – Provide cardiopulmonary resuscitation

#### **[First Aid Training Mid North Coast](#)**

RTO: 90909 (third party provider of Allens Training Pty Ltd)

- HLTAID011 – Provide First Aid
- HLTAID009 – Provide cardiopulmonary resuscitation
- HLTAID012 – Provide First Aid in an education and care setting



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### [Hastings First Aid Consultants](#)

RTO: 91222 (third party provider of Healthcorp)

HLTAID001 – Provide cardiopulmonary resuscitation

Available in Port Macquarie and Kempsey.

### [John Henry Institute](#)

RTO: 7054

HLTAID011 – Provide First Aid

HLTAID009 – Provide cardiopulmonary resuscitation

HLTAID012 – Provide First Aid in an education and care setting

Based in Port Macquarie.

### **Northern NSW**

### [International Paramedic College](#)

HLTAID001 – Provide cardiopulmonary resuscitation

RTO: 45284

- Ballina
- Lismore
- Grafton
- Byron Bay
- Yamba
- Iluka
- Maclean
- Mullumbimby

### [Coolangatta First Aid](#)

RTO: 40684

HLTAID001 – Provide cardiopulmonary resuscitation

## **OTHER RESOURCES**

The new online Mid and North Coast Mental Health Practitioner Directory is launching on Monday 25 October 2021.

The directory will be a useful resource for GPs, specialists and allied health workers seeking localised referral pathways for patients with mental health support needs.

The directory will also be invaluable to local councils, community organisations and the broader health workforce – as well as members of the public.

Covering an area from Tweed Heads to Port Macquarie, the directory already features about 150 mental health service providers, with more joining daily.

Joining the directory is easy. If you are a psychologist, psychiatrist, social worker or mental health worker, you are invited to jump online and [list your services](#).

HealthPathways Clinical Editor Dr Hilton Koppe welcomed the new directory, saying it would make it much easier for GPs to access up-to-date information when referring patients to mental health practitioners.

'I have been keen for something like this for many years,' Dr Koppe said. 'It's great to see it come to fruition.'

If you have any further questions about the Mid and North Coast Mental Health Practitioner Directory, please contact Hamza Vayani:

[hvayani@hnc.org.au](mailto:hvayani@hnc.org.au)

[0437 435 459](tel:0437435459)

### **Primary Care Access project co-design**

Healthy North Coast is looking for positive and creative thinkers from across our region to join the Primary Care Access project co-design.

The co-design will bring together a group of local stakeholders to discuss the challenges and solutions to improve access to primary care.

Data across our health system strongly indicates some concerning trends in primary care usage and demand. The data highlights that while the ageing population is increasingly creating strong demand in primary care, younger generations are turning to emergency departments for low-urgency care at

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Please visit the [Primary Care Access webpage](#) for project details and data. If you are passionate about the case for change and wish to apply your local knowledge and experience, we'd love to hear from you. We're looking for individuals who can help represent and participate in deep dive discussions on (but not limited to):

- Aboriginal people's access to primary care
- young people's access to primary care
- primary care access in the North Coast SA3 areas of concern – Kempsey, Clarence Valley, Richmond Valley and Port Macquarie Hastings
- the potential for digital primary care in our region.

The co-design process will take place via a number of videoconference sessions during business hours from **19 November to 9 December 2021**. As the co-design will be taking place via videoconference, places are limited. Successful applicants will need to make themselves available for these sessions. Remuneration will be made available for individuals not salaried or whose positions will not remunerate for attendance.

**Applications close at 5:00 pm on 2 November 2021.**

[Click here to register.](#)

If you have any questions or would like further information, please email:

**Beth Menger**

Senior Manager, Operations & Engagement NSW [bmenger@hnc.org.au](mailto:bmenger@hnc.org.au)

**Kash Reddy**

Senior Manager, Operations & Engagement MNC [kreddy@hnc.org.au](mailto:kreddy@hnc.org.au)

**Noell Burgess**

Aboriginal Health Coordinator [nburgess@hnc.org.au](mailto:nburgess@hnc.org.au)

### **Changes to the MBS – Allied Health and Case Conferencing**

As announced in the 2021-22 Budget in May, AHPs who “participate in case conferences to manage the care of certain patients” will soon be eligible to receive payment under the MBS.

The new arrangement is due to commence on 1 November 2021.

The measure covers “three items for patients with a chronic or terminal disease

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pervasive developmental disorder; or · an eligible disability.”

The allied health practitioner can attend in person or remotely. The case conference must be organised by the medical practitioner and involve at least two other persons providing different kinds of care to the patient. Further detail is available [here](#).

## MORE INFORMATION

If you want to

- know more about NCAHA
- be on our newsletter mailing list or
- offer some suggestions

Contact us at [rob.curry1@outlook.com](mailto:rob.curry1@outlook.com) or [NCAHAExecutive@hotmail.com](mailto:NCAHAExecutive@hotmail.com)

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**NCAHA Executive Officer:** Rob Curry

**Email:** [NCAHAExecutive@hotmail.com](mailto:NCAHAExecutive@hotmail.com)



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