



North Coast **Allied Health Association**

March 2026

We show respect for the traditional owners across all the nations of the North Coast New South Wales and their custodianship and connection to country. NCAHA acknowledges the important role Aboriginal people have played in the health and well-being of these communities.

**** CPD ALERT ****

The Pain Game: Tackling Chronic Challenges with Clinical Confidence – A forum for AHPs
28 March, Coffs Harbour (more information below) [Register Here](#)



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News Update

I wake up most mornings with my ear to the radio news. All I can say is that I'm a fortunate person to be living in Australia, and in particular I am so lucky to be a resident on the north coast, NSW.

This March newsletter will introduce a section on news from IAHA (Indigenous Allied Health Australia). IAHA is the national peak body for Indigenous allied health professionals, and its mission is to boost the numbers of Indigenous AHPs around the country in order to improve service provision for Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander communities. NCAHA fully supports the work of IAHA, particularly so since we have a high per capita number of Indigenous people living on the North Coast, and in acknowledgement of the relatively challenging picture of Indigenous health. We clearly need more AHP service provision to Aboriginal communities and more Indigenous people working as AHPs in our region. We hope this this new section on IAHA news will be of use to members.

It's not just Aboriginal communities, however, who need greater access to services of allied health professionals. There are shortfalls of allied health workforce in a number of areas of health care, and many North Coast residents still find great challenges in accessing the allied health care they require. For this reason, the NCAHA Chairperson, Alira Bayndrian, appears later in this newsletter calling for more practitioners to join our Association. The more members we have at NCAHA, the greater will be our influence and the stronger our capacity to argue for improved services and more supports for AHPs. Read what Alira has to say, and please encourage your colleagues in the field to join the Association.

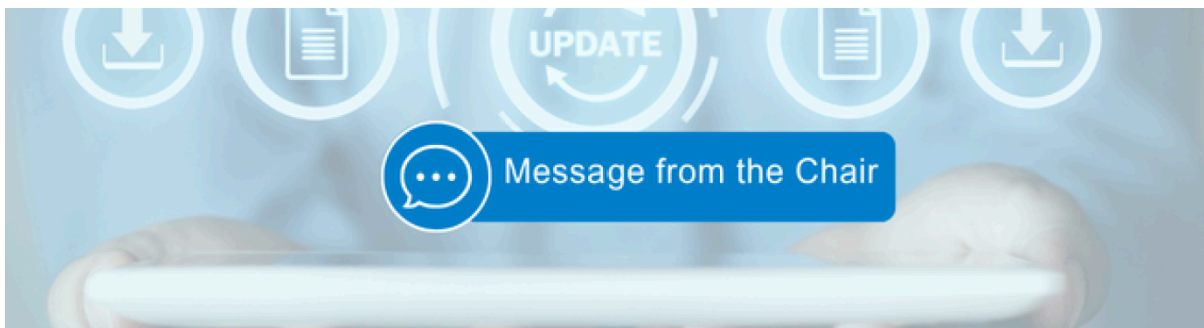
Thank you,
Rob Curry – Executive Officer, NCAHA



NCAHA CPD Events

- **The Pain Game: Tackling Chronic Challenges with Clinical Confidence – A forum for AHPs.** 28 March, Coffs Harbour (more info and tickets [HERE](#))
- **Webinar on Mental Health for Under 12s:** Tue 5 May - more info to be released soon

For further details, call Rob on P: 0429 999 005 or NCAHAExecutive@hotmail.com.



Growing Our Voice Across the North Coast

At the **North Coast Allied Health Association (NCAHA)**, we work to be a collective voice for allied health across our region. Over the past year, we've continued building connections, supporting professional development, and advocating for improved access to allied health services in our communities.



To truly become a *key advocacy organisation* we need strength in numbers. The more members we represent, the stronger our voice becomes when engaging with Local Health Districts, Primary Health Networks, government bodies, and other key stakeholders. Greater membership means:

- Increased credibility and influence
- Stronger representation across disciplines
- Broader regional insight into workforce challenges
- More opportunity to advocate effectively for funding, service access, and professional recognition

Simply put - when we speak on behalf of more allied health professionals, decision-makers listen more closely.

Why Join NCAHA?

Membership is free and open to allied health professionals and allies across the North Coast. By joining, members gain:

- Access to quality professional development opportunities
- Networking and collaboration across disciplines
- The opportunity to contribute to regional advocacy initiatives
- Updates on local workforce, policy and service developments
- A platform to have your voice heard and represented
- Collaborating with motivated and amazing human beings who value allied health and want the best allied health services for our community

NCAHA is governed by a committed Board of Directors and is focused on addressing service gaps, strengthening our workforce, and improving access to allied health services across our footprint.

We invite you to help us grow. If you value having a strong, unified voice for allied health on the North Coast, please consider inviting a colleague to join. Every additional member strengthens our collective impact. Together, we can ensure allied health is visible, influential, and meaningfully represented across our region.

A short message you can share with colleagues:

I'm a member of the North Coast Allied Health Association (NCAHA), a collective voice for allied health professionals across our region. Membership is free and provides access to professional development, networking opportunities, and regional advocacy initiatives. The more members we have, the stronger our voice with decision-makers. If you're an allied health professional on the North Coast, I'd encourage you to join: www.ncaha.org.au

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[Kerry Hardey: Physiotherapist, Ocean Shores Speaking on 'the Intergenerational Project'](#)

Kerry Hardey lives on the Northern Rivers and has over 20 years' experience as a physiotherapist across acute care, paediatrics, occupational health, and rural aged care. She currently delivers home-based physiotherapy, manual handling training, and pre-employment assessments. Kerry is passionate about improving quality of life for older adults at home. As a Director of the North Coast Allied Health Association, she advocates for workforce development, professional support for new graduates, and integrated, multidisciplinary care across the region. She has also recently co-founded *The Intergenerational Project*, creating programs that connect older adults and children to build social engagement, understanding of ageing, and reduce ageism.

Building Connection Across Generations: The Intergenerational Project

In a region known for strong community spirit, Kerry Hardey, co-founder of *The Intergenerational Project*, is



helping redefine what connection looks like across the lifespan. As an experienced physiotherapist in community aged care, Kerry has long witnessed the quiet impact of loneliness and social isolation on older adults. Her clinical work repeatedly highlighted a simple truth: meaningful relationships are as vital to health as mobility and strength.

“Over the years, I’ve seen how quickly someone’s physical health can decline when their social world shrinks. Connection isn’t a ‘nice extra’, it’s fundamental to wellbeing.”

Co-founded in the Northern Rivers, **The Intergenerational Project** brings older adults (‘Grand Friends’) and young children together in shared, purposeful experiences, including play, storytelling, music, art, gardening and movement. The initiative partners with early learning services and community settings to create structured, safe opportunities for generations to learn with and from one another.

Kerry’s dual perspective in allied health and early childhood education has shaped the program’s practical, evidence-informed design. She is currently undertaking further study in ageing and health, alongside training in early childhood education, to ensure the project bridges both sectors with credibility and care. She has also been elected to the board of the Australian Institute of Intergenerational Practice (AIIP).

Kerry encourages allied health professionals to engage with intergenerational practice:

“If you want to know more about how intergenerational work can improve wellbeing for both older adults and children, AIIP is a great place to start. As allied health professionals, we often focus on rehabilitation and maintenance, but prevention matters just as much. When older adults feel valued, seen and included, we see improvements in mood, mobility and engagement in life, including therapy.”

For children, the benefits are equally powerful. Interacting with older adults fosters empathy, patience, communication skills and a broader understanding of diversity across the lifespan.

The Intergenerational Project is in the process of developing a practical toolkit to support early learning services to implement sustainable intergenerational programs. The goal is not one-off visits, but embedded, relationship-based practice. As Kerry explains:

“Our vision is simple. We want older adults to remain visible, valued members of their community, and for children to grow up seeing ageing as a natural, connected part of life. I believe that if we can strengthen connection, we strengthen health. It can be that simple, and that powerful.”

Here’s the link to the AIIP website: <https://aiip.net.au/>



[IAHA Media Release: Healing Requires Action - and a Workforce to Delivery it](#)

On the anniversary of the National Apology, Indigenous Allied Health Australia (IAHA) stands with Stolen Generations survivors, their families, and communities. We recognise that healing is ongoing, requiring more sustainable supports, investment, and workforce development, to ensure culturally safe and responsive healing spaces with high quality, trauma aware and healing informed care and services are provided to meet

survivors and their family's needs and priorities.

18 years on from the Apology, IAHA supports the Healing Foundation's call for immediate, tangible action to finally implement the Bringing Them Home recommendations, with only 5 of 83 recommendations fully implemented to date.

[Read Media Release](#)

IAHA National Conference: Boorloo (Perth): 30 Nov – 2 December



\$144 million upgrade for Indigenous health clinics

Indigenous health services across Australia will receive upgrades under a new round of federal investment, with the Prime Minister using his annual Closing the Gap address to argue that improving outcomes for First Nations people remains a national priority. [Read more here](#)



[The Pain Game: Tackline Chronic Challenges with Clinical Confidence - A forum for AHPs](#)

When: Saturday 28 March, 9.00am - 3.00pm

Where: Southern Cross University, Coffs Harbour campus

Convenor: North Coast Allied Health Association

Cost: Members: \$100; Non-members: \$120; Students: \$30

This workshop brings together a wide range of expertise on the topic of chronic pain, all with high relevance for AHPs working in the multi-disciplinary response to this challenging field. Hear about recent research initiatives into chronic pain and gain insights into GP management of pain. The forum will also consider mechanisms at work in chronic pain, cognitive interventions, and the use of manual therapies and exercise to interrupt the negative neural loops that can be a feature of chronic pain conditions. Then join with your colleagues in an exercise with case studies and clinical reasoning. Get this important event into your diaries - [Register Here](#)

SARRAH National Rural & Remote Allied Health Conference (Coffs Harbour) - Call for Abstracts

The SARRAH 2026 Conference Scientific Committee is thrilled to invite submissions of Abstracts for the SARRAH 2026 Conference scheduled for October 2026 in Coffs Harbour. Abstracts should address the below conference theme and subthemes.

Theme: **A sense of place: Embracing Local Knowledge**

Subthemes:

- Cultural Responsiveness and Sustainability
- Local Wisdom in Action
- Improving Access to Care

The 2026 theme **A sense of place: Embracing Local Knowledge** marks the 16th National Conference for Rural and Remote Allied Health. SARRAH 2026, to be held in Coffs Harbour, NSW, In November, will bring together health leaders with a shared vision of growing a fit-for-purpose rural and remote health workforce committed to caring for rural and remote Australians, so that they have access to the healthcare they need to stay whole, healthy, and fully participating in society.

We encourage you to join in the conversation - be a part of the movement to nurture sustainable and resilient rural and remote communities!

Submit your Abstract by downloading the **Call for Abstracts** document [Here](#)

The Cervical Spine & Shoulder (Wauchope)

When: Saturday and Sunday, March 21-22, 9.00am – 5.00pm each day

Where: Wauchope Physio & Sports Rehabilitation Centre, 107A, Cameron St, Wauchope,

Cost: \$799

Convenor: Wauchope Physiotherapy & Sports Rehabilitation Centre

Pre-learning available 2-3 weeks prior to course.

Course content:

- Epidemiology and facts and myths of the neck
- Red flags
- Pain science and biopsychosocial practice
- Predictive processing: exploring perception and action
- Common sense model to illness perception
- Facts and myths of the shoulder
- Practical communication skills
- Exercise and activity prescription

This course is accredited for 15 ESSA CPD points or 16 hours of equivalent CPD. This course has the British Journal of Sports Medicine (BJSM) international tick of approval. [Join us in Wauchope for the course](#)

Professor Stephen Lee Lecture in Ethics

When: Thursday 26th March, 1.00 – 4.00

Where: UCRH, Lismore

Convenors: Sydney Health Ethics and UCRH

An afternoon discussing ethical insights and practice in rural health.

The program honours the legacy of Professor Stephen Lee, whose guiding principle for 50 years was 'Patients First', and extends to a panel discussion on ethics and equity in rural health, followed by networking.

UCRH is delighted that the Lecture will be given by **Professor Jenny May AM**, Australia's National Rural

Health Commissioner. Professor May's portfolio focuses on strengthening rural health policy, workforce pathways and equitable access to safe, quality health care.

Following the Lecture, a panel discussion will consider the topic Ethics in Place - health equity in rural communities. Joining us for this panel discussion will be:

- Associate Professor Claire Hooker (SHE)
- Dr Rebecca McNaught (UCRH) and
- Associate Professor Emma Walke (UCRH)

You are invited to join the lecture [in person](#) or [online](#).

Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Social & Emotional Wellbeing

Resources: Connection. Strength. Resilience

The Strength and Resilience Portal provides a set of resources aimed at supporting resilience and reducing social and emotional harms to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. The wellbeing resources and tools are freely available and have been developed with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to support our mob, our communities and our workforce to help keep you safe and well. [See Resource](#)



[Mid and North Coast Health Pathways](#)

HealthPathways is an online portal which aims to guide best-practice assessment, management of common medical conditions and local referral pathways. [Mid and North Coast HealthPathways](#) Username: manchealth - Password: conn3ct3d

[New Pathways](#)

Myotonic Dystrophy
Paediatric Advice

[Reviewed and Updated HealthPathways](#)

[Clinical](#)

Clinical Antenatal Care - Initial Visits
Behavioural Concerns in Children
Chronic Pelvic Pain
Combined Hormonal Contraceptives (CHCs)
COVID-19 Vaccination
Diabetes in Pregnancy
Electronic Referrals (e-Referrals)
Hereditary Haemochromatosis Hoarse Voice (Dysphonia)
Hypertension and Pre-eclampsia in Pregnancy
Inflammatory Bowel Disease (IBD)
Influenza Immunisation

[Referral](#)

Adult Audiometry Assessment
Defence and Veteran Family Support
Neuropsychology Assessment
Non-acute Cardiothoracic Surgery Assessment
Mental Health / Alcohol and Other Drugs
Non-acute Endocrinology Assessment

Intrauterine Devices
Lung Cancer
Neck Lumps in Adults
Post-discharge Services for Older Adults
Prostatitis
Rhinosinusitis
Vulvovaginal Candidiasis

If you want to know more about NCAHA, please contact us at rob.curry1@outlook.com
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