



North Coast **Allied Health Association**

July 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.



[Current Issues](#)

- Profiling Primary Care Impact Grants (Healthy North Coast) projects

[What's Happening at NCAHA](#)

- NCAHA membership drive
- CPD Events

[Message from the Chair](#)

- Alira Bayndrian

[From the Field](#)

- Supporting People Living with Persistent Pain: A Biopsychosocial Approach in Regional Practice. A Primary Care Impact Grant (PCIG) project.

[News from IAHA \(Indigenous Allied Health Australia\)](#)

- Pathways to Practice

[CPD Alert](#)

- The Pain Game: Tackling Chronic Challenges with Clinical Confidence – A forum for AHPs
- PACE MSK Webinar
- Hypertension Management and Outcomes in Vascular and Brain Health
- 2026 National Indigenous Healthcare Forum
- SARRAH National Rural & Remote Allied Health Conference – Coffs Harbour, 9 – 11 Nov
- IAHA National Conference: Perth Nov 30 – Dec 2
- Health Workforce Scholarship Program

[Additional Resources](#)

- New Health Pathways



Primary Care Impact Grants (Healthy North Coast)

Over the past 18 months Healthy North Coast has been offering Primary Care Impact Grants (PCIGs) to support the engagement of allied health professionals in the primary care response to chronic conditions. The grants have been offered in two streams

- **Chronic Disease Prevention Program Grant:** Grants of \$20 – 50K to support projects aimed at preventing future burden of chronic disease and improving quality of life.
- **Multidisciplinary Team Care Program Grant:** One-off grants of \$50 – 70K for projects based on multidisciplinary team care in small/solo practices or Aboriginal health services.

Many AHPs and practices on the North Coast have successfully applied for these grants, and NCAHA is now keen to profile some of these projects and their achievements to our members in the field. One such project is presented in this Newsletter (see From the Field section) and others will be described in future Newsletter editions.

This Grant program is providing great opportunities for AHPs in our region to explore ways to improve quality and integration of practice for people with chronic conditions. **Julian White, Manager Primary Care Advancement at Healthy North Coast**, advises that he and the team are currently awarding a round of grants, but a new round will be promoted for early next year. He explains that the grants are seeking development of sustainable models of care, utilising MBS items where possible to minimise the cost to patients and increase accessibility.

“There can be barriers to the effective engagement of AHPs working with chronic disease clients, and the grants will seek to address these, and boost AHPs involvement in best practice care. Improvements in team care will also lead to more preventive capacity in the system to limit the onset and development of chronic conditions, an area where AHPs are currently underutilised.”

In the meantime, NCAHA will keep you advised of availability and timeframes for PCI Grant applications. For more information on these grants and to apply, visit the [Primary Care Impact grants webpage](#).

Thank you,
Rob Curry – Executive Officer, NCAHA



What's Happening at NCAHA

NCAHA Membership Drive

NCAHA is seeking to expand its membership base and influence in healthcare on the North Coast with the launch of a membership drive for 2026-27.

See the article from Alira Bayndrian at 'Message from the Chair'

NCAHA CPD Events

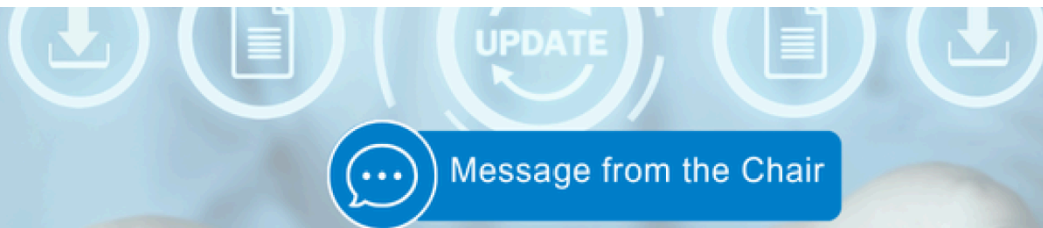
- **The Pain Game: Tackling Chronic Challenges with Clinical Confidence – A forum for AHPs**

When: Saturday 15th August; Where: UCRH, Lismore

See CPD Alert section for more details and registration

For further details on any of the above, call Rob on P: 0429 999005 or email:

NCAHAExecutive@hotmail.com.



Alira Bayndrian: NCAHA Chair, Clinical Psychologist, Coffs Harbour

Growing Our Voice: NCAHA Membership Drive 2026–2027

For over a decade, the North Coast Allied Health Association (NCAHA) has worked to strengthen the allied health professional sector across the North Coast of NSW. Established in 2015, NCAHA was created to address the lack of coordinated representation for AHPs and to advocate for better access to services for our communities.



Today, our region continues to face significant workforce shortages and barriers to accessing allied health care. These challenges affect individuals, families, and communities across the North Coast. As the peak regional voice for allied health, NCAHA remains committed to advocating for improved service access, workforce support, and promoting the vital role of allied health in healthcare delivery.

Why Membership Matters

NCAHA membership has now grown to more than 250 AHPs and allied health supporters representing a diverse range of disciplines, sectors, and work settings across the North Coast. Every new member strengthens our collective voice and enhances our ability to advocate for the allied health workforce, influence policy and service planning,

and improve health outcomes for our communities. As we look ahead, NCAHA is implementing a targeted membership growth plan to further expand our reach and strengthen representation across the region. By continuing to grow our membership, we will increase our collective influence and ensure allied health perspectives are heard and represented in local, regional, and state decision-making.

Benefits of NCAHA Membership

Membership offers a range of professional and practical benefits, including:

- Access to high-quality CPD opportunities and events
- Updates on funding opportunities, workforce initiatives, and emerging issues
- Opportunities to network with AHPs across disciplines, sectors, and geographical locations
- A platform for advocacy for improved access to allied health services across the North Coast
- Opportunities to develop leadership skills through representation on regional initiatives and working groups.
- Access to information about relevant research, projects, and professional opportunities
- Being part of a strong collective voice advocating for integrated, multidisciplinary healthcare

Most importantly, membership provides an opportunity to contribute to meaningful change for both the allied health workforce and the communities we serve.

How You Can Help

Our membership drive will be most successful when current members help spread the word. We invite all members to support this initiative in any way they can.

Please help us promote membership by:

- Sharing our membership flyer with colleagues, students, and professional networks
- Forwarding the membership link to allied health colleagues who may be interested in joining
- Displaying or distributing the flyer within your workplace or organisation.

Social media is a powerful way to increase awareness of NCAHA. You can help by:

- Sharing NCAHA membership posts on your personal or organisational social media accounts
- Encouraging colleagues and contacts to follow NCAHA and learn more about our work
- Posting about NCAHA events, CPD opportunities, and advocacy activities

We would also appreciate your assistance in identifying opportunities to engage with potential members.

Please let us know if you can:

- Arrange for NCAHA representatives to speak at staff meetings, professional forums, or community events
- Introduce us to organisations, services, universities, or student groups that may be interested in hearing about NCAHA
- Suggest conferences, forums, or events where NCAHA could promote membership
- Identify other opportunities to raise awareness of our work and recruit new members

Thank you for your ongoing support of NCAHA. We will circulate the membership promotional flyer to you early next week and we encourage you to share this flyer, invite a colleague to join, and help us grow a stronger, more connected allied health community.



From the Field

Supporting People Living with Persistent Pain: A Biopsychosocial Approach in Regional Practice

The Physio Movement (TPM) Woolgoolga multi-disciplinary practice recently won Healthy North Coast funding under the Primary Care Impact Grants program Multi-disciplinary Team stream to develop a biopsychosocial program approach to managing persistent pain in their clients.

Meet the Physio Movement (TPM) Pain Program Team:

Apurva Shirgoakar is a Physiotherapist who completed her studies in Adelaide and is passionate about helping people regain confidence in movement and improve their quality of life. She takes an evidence-based, compassionate approach to managing persistent pain, working collaboratively with each individual to develop practical strategies that support long-term recovery.



Anna Miley is an Accredited Exercise Physiologist with a special interest in chronic pain. She is passionate about empowering people to understand their pain, rebuild strength and function, and return to the activities that matter most to them. Anna combines exercise therapy with education to help clients take control of their pain and improve their overall wellbeing.



Together, Apurva and Anna deliver TPM's Mid North Coast Pain Program, providing a collaborative, multidisciplinary approach that helps people move beyond pain and back to living well.

The Program

Persistent pain remains one of the most complex conditions managed by AHPs. With multiple factors impacting a person's experience of pain, it can be challenging for practitioners to provide the holistic approach required to adequately address persistent pain within the confines of traditional community-based allied health care.

With this in mind, and in response to the increasing need for accessible pain education and self-management support in our region, the TPM multidisciplinary team developed a six-week Persistent Pain Management Program. The program was made possible with funding from Healthy North Coast which aimed to reduce cost and other accessibility factors to community members in need.

Designed and facilitated by Anna Miley (EP) and Apurva Shirgoakar (physio), from the TPM practice, the program integrates contemporary pain neuroscience education, alongside exercise, relaxation techniques, mindset coaching, goal setting, flare-up planning, and communication strategies.

The program aims to improve participants' understanding of pain, increase self-efficacy, reduce fear and avoidance behaviours, and support engagement in meaningful activities. Participants are encouraged to adopt a curious and compassionate approach to their pain experience while developing practical skills that can be applied in everyday life. The program is unique in its delivery, providing both in-person and digital education and resources in both group and individual sessions.

One participant reflected on the impact of the program:

"The Persistent Pain Management program really helped me to understand how the mind and body work together to experience and respond to pain. I gained excellent tools and approaches for dealing with pain flare-ups and addressing unhelpful thoughts when I respond to pain. As a result of this Program, I feel so much more capable of dealing with the daily challenges of experiencing persistent pain." Wendy

Importantly, the Project is also applying standardised outcome measures of program efficacy for patients: the Pain Self-Efficacy Questionnaire (PSEQ), Brief Pain Inventory (BPI) and Depression, Anxiety and Stress Scale (DASS-21). These three measures align well with a biopsychosocial approach to persistent pain management. Together, these measures track changes in physical function, pain impact and psychological wellbeing, providing a comprehensive evaluation of outcomes across key domains affected by persistent pain. The results so far have been both promising and interesting. Although reductions in pain severity have not yet been achieved, pain interference has decreased at the group level, indicating that participants experienced less disruption to daily functioning, despite ongoing pain. Participants appeared to be living better with pain, even when pain itself did not reduce—an outcome strongly aligned with best-practice pain management goals.

Program Clinical Lead, Anna Miley, commented on the value of combining evidence-based education with movement, behavioural strategies and peer support within the group-setting.

"While persistent pain is rarely resolved through a single intervention, we certainly observed participants building their confidence to create meaningful improvements in function, participation, and quality of life."



Pathways to Practice

Applications for the Pathways to Practice scholarship are now open. The scholarship is designed for the specific purpose of supporting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander tertiary students to attend professional health conferences. This scholarship offers Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health students a unique opportunity to:

- **Build professional networks** with health sector leaders, researchers, and practitioners who can provide mentorship and career guidance.
- **Access cutting-edge knowledge** in evidence-based practices, innovations, and emerging trends directly relevant to Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander health.
- **Gain competitive advantage** through exposure to latest developments in Aboriginal health, chronic disease management, and primary care that will enhance their career prospects.
- **Connect with potential employers** and learn about career pathways from professionals already working in the sector.
- **Develop as a sector leader** by bringing valuable knowledge back to Community and contributing to the broader sector's capacity.
- **Receive financial support** covering conference registration, travel, accommodation, and meals—removing barriers that often prevent students from accessing these career-defining opportunities.

Eligible students must be currently enrolled in health or health-related programs.

To assist with completing your application, please ensure you have:

- Your Current Academic Transcript
- Current Enrolment Verification
- Confirmation of Aboriginality
- Conference Details (PDF of Program or Brochure)

[Enrol Here](#)

Indigenous Allied Health Australia Conference: Boorloo (Perth): 30 Nov – 2 December

click on the image to register



Health Workforce Scholarship Program

Attention all AHPs working in private practice, the NGO sector or in Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Services. These important scholarships can assist your post-grad training and/or your attendance at relevant conferences and workshops. The upcoming SARRAH and IAHA conferences spring to mind, as well as the Health North Conference at Kingscliff in late May.

The Program is an initiative of the Australian Government Department of Health, Disability and Ageing, administered in New South Wales by Rural Doctors Network (RDN).

A new round for scholarship applications is open from 1/4/2026 – 13/5/2026

Workforce Scholarship Program (HWSP) provides scholarships and bursaries to help health professionals in rural and remote Australia retain and enhance their skills, capacity and scope of practice.

The HWSP is available to medical, nursing, midwifery, allied health, dental and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health professionals providing primary health care in the Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Services sector, non-government organisations and private practice.

[View the Health Workforce Scholarship Program Fact Sheet 2024 here.](#)

More Scholarship details can be found here: <https://www.ruraldoctors.org/site/hwsp>



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

When: SATURDAY 15 AUGUST, 2026, 9AM-3PM
Where: University Centre for Rural Health, Lismore Campus, Uralba St Lismore
Convenor: NCAHA
Cost: Members = \$100; Non-members = \$120; Students = \$30
Excellent speakers and great venue. For more information and to register: [Click Here](#)

[Promoting MSK Health Through the 5Ms – PACE Rural Webinar series](#)

When: Wednesday 29th July, 6.00 – 7.30
Cost: Free webinar
Speaker: Assoc. Professor Katie de Luca

Katie de Luca is Chiropractor from South West Rocks and is an Associate Professor at Central Queensland University. Katie's research interests focus on the epidemiology and management of musculoskeletal conditions, with expertise in older adults.

[Zoom link: To join, click here](#) Or contact the research team at pace.study@sydney.edu.au

[Hypertension Management and Outcomes in Vascular and Brain Health – Healthy North Coast Clinical Society](#)

A recent report from the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare estimates that nearly 40% of adults aged over 18 have high blood pressure. Of these, only around 40% have their condition under control.

Uncontrolled hypertension remains a significant contributor to poor vascular health.

In these Clinical Society sessions we'll explore who should be screened and how to address inertia – both in clinical practice and among patients – when it comes to managing this prevalent condition. Designed specifically for all primary healthcare clinicians from GPs to Allied Health Professionals.

The focus will be on multidisciplinary management, with a case study that offers practical insights into how the multidisciplinary team can work together with lifestyle, exercise and pharmacological approaches that support blood pressure control and improved vascular and brain health outcomes.

Dates & Locations 📍

- 5 August: [Coffs Harbour Bellingen Clinical Society](#)
- 6 August: [Kempsey Macleay Clinical Society](#)
- 12 August: [Port Macquarie Hastings Clinical Society](#)
- 13 August: [Nambucca Macksville Clinical Society](#)
- 19 August: [Clarence Valley Clinical Society](#)
- 20 August: [Lismore, Casino & Kyogle Clinical Society](#)
- 25 August: [Tweed Valley Clinical Society](#)
- 26 August: [Ballina Byron Clinical Society](#)

Learning objectives

- Understand the regional burden and trends of vascular disease
- Increase awareness of local services supporting vascular risk reduction
- Identify under screened populations for vascular risk
- Evaluate and address challenges in reducing blood pressure

Who should attend?

GPs, GP Registrars, Practice Nurses, Physiotherapists, Exercise Physiologists, Dieticians, Pharmacists and all other Primary Healthcare and Allied Health Professionals who are involved in day-to-day management of patients and clients will find benefit in this session.

A certificate of attendance will be provided for self-reporting for their 2 hours of education.

Register [now](#) to secure your spot. Speakers to be announced shortly!

[2026 National Indigenous Healthcare Forum](#)

This Forum brings together Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander leaders, ACCHOs, practitioners, frontline workers, and government from across the country to share knowledge and drive culturally grounded, First Nations-led healthcare solutions.

5-6 August 2026, Sydney. [Find out more HERE](#)

SARRAH National Rural & Remote Allied Health Conference (Coffs Harbour) - Theme: A sense of place: Embracing Local Knowledge

Subthemes:

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

When: 9 – 11 November, 2026

Where: Pacific Bay Resort, Coffs Harbour

Convenor: SARRAH (Services for Rural & Remote Allied Health)

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.

A sense of place: Embracing Local Knowledge marks the 16th National Conference for Rural and Remote Allied Health. The Conference 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. [Register for the Conference Here](#)



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 HealthPathways

[Fitness to Drive and Licensing Assessment](#)

[Genetic and Genomic Testing in General Practice](#)

[Peripheral Neuropathy](#)

Reviewed and Updated HealthPathways

Clinical

[Anticipatory Prescribing for End of Life Care](#)

[Carer Stress and Support](#)

[Falls Risk Assessment and Management](#)

Referral

[Childhood Early Intervention](#)

[Child Speech Pathology Assessment](#)

[Non-acute Cardiology Assessment](#)

[Emergency Department and Urgent Care](#)

[Referrals](#)

[Fertility Assessment](#)

[Medical Imaging Referrals](#)

[Acute Nephrology Assessment](#)

[Non-acute Respiratory Assessment](#)

[Genital Warts](#)
[Knee Osteoarthritis \(OA\)](#)
[Motor Neurone Disease](#)
[Palliative Care Resources](#)
[Suicide Prevention in Adults](#)
[Telehealth](#)

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



Copyright © 2026 North Coast Allied Health Association, All rights reserved.

Want to change how you receive these emails?
You can update your preferences or unsubscribe from this list.

