



Health Promotion Action 2021-22 Year in Review



Central Coast
Local Health District

Health Promotion Action 2021-22 Year in Review

Central Coast Health Promotion Service

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Acknowledgement of Country

We wish to acknowledge the Darkinyung (Darkinjung) people as traditional custodians of the land on which we live and work, and pay our respects to Elders past, present and future.

To navigate through the document please note:

Use < arrows > or click page numbers to move forward or back a page

Click on chapter title on Contents page to jump straight to section

Navigate back to Contents page by clicking > on bottom right of page

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Director's Report

Thank you for taking the time to read about the work of Central Coast Health Promotion Service over the past 12 months.

Along with the rest of the world, the Central Coast is coming to terms with the "new normal" of living with COVID-19. And as we move from a period of constantly responding and adapting to the challenges of the pandemic into one of – hopefully – a bit more stability and certainty, we have spent some time as a service recalibrating our priorities.

The theme at our annual team day in May was *Reflect. Reconnect. Reimagine*. We reflected on what we have learnt and achieved over what has been a tumultuous couple of years. We explored how we might reconnect with our communities, stakeholders and partners as we emerge from lockdowns into opening back up, and also reconnect with colleagues who have spent much of the past 24 months working from home. And we reimaged how we want the future to look in terms of our work and the support we provide our communities.

We've also spent some time defining our 'why' and expressing that in an overarching statement, which you will find on [page 6](#) of this document. Dovetailing with this has been the introduction of the emerging discipline of values-based messaging throughout much of our communications.

This is all important because our partners, stakeholders and the community are in different place than they were pre-COVID-19. Their priorities and circumstances have changed and we have to respond to that.

The pandemic has underlined the value of social connectedness, and through the engagement we carry out as part of our substantive health promotion work, along with the COVID-19 support we provided our Public Health Unit over the

past couple of years – which included contact tracing and daily welfare checks with cases in the community – we have emerged with a deeper understanding of what our community are going through both physically and mentally.

Although much has changed, what remains consistent are the principles of good health promotion practice, and I'm pleased to share many examples of that in this year's report. Practises like understanding a community's health needs from the outset ([page 30](#)), working with partners and adopting a coordinated community approach ([page 18](#)), researching, testing and piloting new initiatives ([page 26](#)), and routinely assessing and evaluating our work ([page 40](#)).

What the stories and numbers highlight is consistent with the vast body of evidence showing that incremental changes at a population level have a powerful impact on the health of our community and are highly cost-effective. While investment in secondary prevention measures is important, primary and secondary prevention cannot and should not be an either-or decision. Diverting significant resources from primary to secondary prevention is a risk that could, in the long run, put more pressure on our health system.

As has now become customary, this report also features health promotion activity delivered by other services across Central Coast Local Health District (CCLHD). Following its introduction last year, the interactive digital version is back too.

I hope you enjoy looking back on our work throughout 2021–22 as much as I do. As you will gather from reading on, working in partnership is an important part of what we do. Our team recently became part of a new Community Wellbeing and Allied Health directorate within Central Coast Local Health District, and so we look forward to working even closer with colleagues to provide an environment that keeps people on the Coast happy and healthy.

Nicole Kajons

Director

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Health Promotion Service

2021-2022

We aim to create a Central Coast where everyone can enjoy better health and wellbeing.

We do this by creating supportive environments for our communities that promote good health across life's journey.

Through working together we provide information, programs and resources, and we advocate for healthy policy to ensure the foundations for good health.

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Alcohol

Highlights

2021-2022

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Re-launched the Move like a Mariner program in partnership with Central Coast Mariners, with 28 early childcare services taking part, resulting in **1,650** children



improving their fundamental movement skills.



127 primary schools and early childcare centres ordered our transition-to-school resources to support families with children about to start “big school”.



7,500+ views of our Magic Lunchbox animated story and 4,969 visits to the webpage in 12 months.



88% of public schools on the Central Coast meeting the NSW Healthy School Canteen Strategy.



85 Aboriginal families in San Remo and Blue Haven engaged with community support services as a result of our Lunchbox Connection food relief program.



613 responses from San Remo and Blue Haven residents following engagement on a local park, leading to action from Central Coast Council to install new signage, remove graffiti and begin discussions on road safety measures.



652 people referred to the Get Healthy program – with 580 the result of a health professional referral, beating our target of 530.



6,844 visits to the dedicated Say No to Vaping campaign webpage in 12 months.



162 older adults recruited to the Healthy and Active for Life Online program.



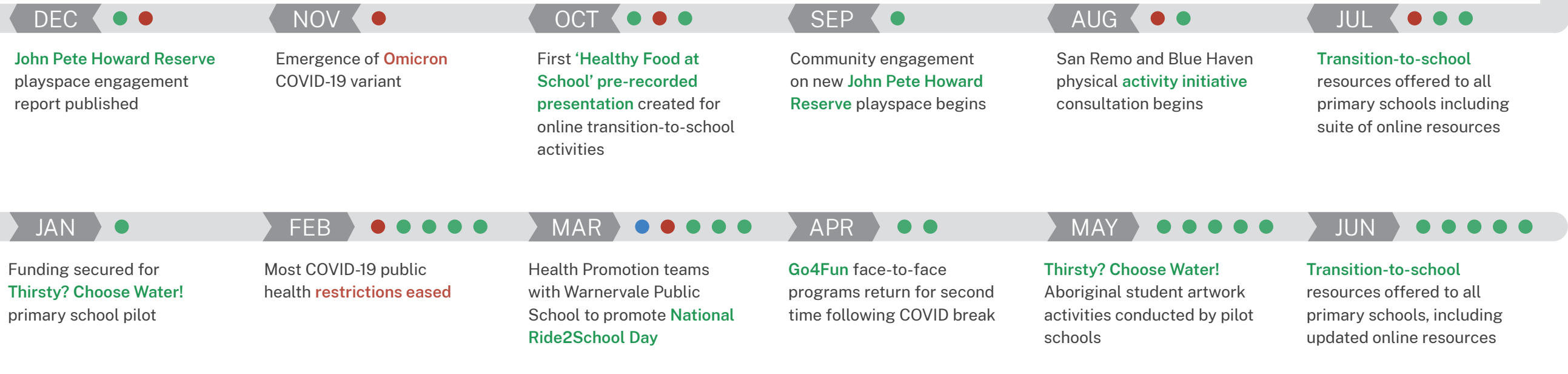
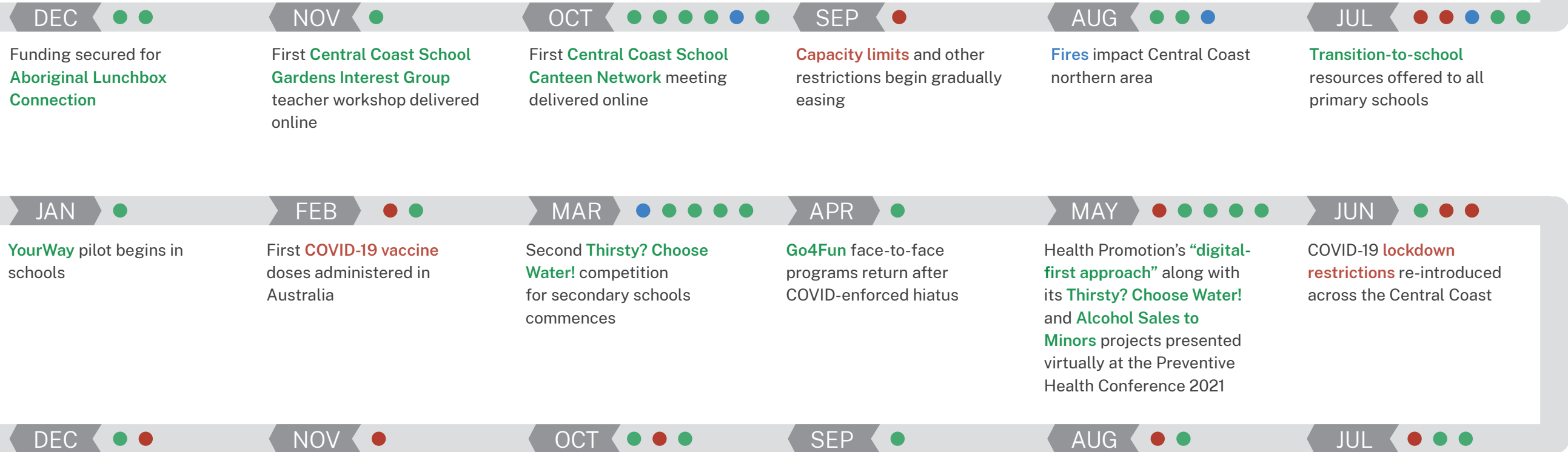
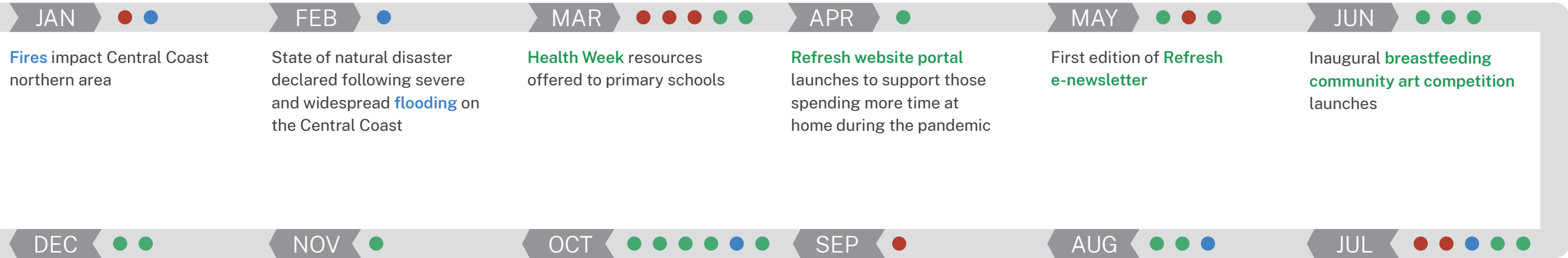
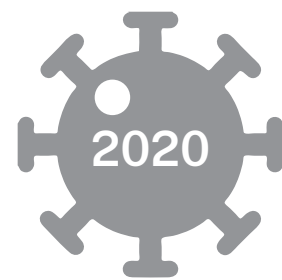
Partnered with Meals on Wheels Central Coast to provide regular health resources to its **750** clients.



2,000 falls prevention packs distributed to older adults across the Central Coast via our health professionals.

A timeline through COVID-19

on the Central Coast



● COVID-19 ● Natural disasters ● Health Promotion programs and projects

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Munch & Move

Introducing healthy habits at an early age

56% of early childhood services on the Central Coast meeting at least 80% of recommended Munch & Move practices ...

%

8%

... which is 8% above the NSW average



Why are we doing this?

We all want our children to get the best start in life; to be healthy and develop habits from an early age that set them on the right path as they grow older.

However, thanks to unhealthy environments, many children are above a healthy weight before they even start school. In addition to high intakes of unhealthy foods, many children do not meet minimum requirements for physical activity and exceed screen time guidelines.

Evidence shows that unhealthy weight gain starts early in life and continues to grow, and that interventions and preventative strategies are needed in the early years to combat significant health issues later in life. Specifically, the first 2,000 days of life has been identified as a critical point in time to take targeted preventive action and establish healthy behaviours.

In 2021, there were approximately 600,000 children aged between 0–5 years in NSW. Two thirds of these children attended early childhood services. Given the significant amount of time that children spend in these services, they are an ideal setting in which to promote healthy eating and physical activity.

How did we do it?

Munch & Move is a NSW Health initiative that supports the healthy development of children from birth to five years by promoting physical activity, healthy eating and reduced small screen time within the early childcare setting. The program offers support, training and resources to educators working

within services to meet 16 key practices relating to children's health, development and wellbeing. The program aims to help staff and educators to implement a fun, play-based approach to supporting healthy eating and physical activity habits in young children across NSW.

This year after the interruptions of COVID-19, our main focus in Munch & Move was re-engagement with childhood services and adapting to the needs of the rapidly evolving early childcare sector. This involved:

- Providing continued support to 147 services across the Central Coast using an adapted virtual support model. Follow-ups with centres were offered via phone, virtual meeting or email.
- Reviewing and providing feedback on 19 services' menus to ensure they meet NSW Health nutritional guidelines as part of our Central Coast Healthy Menu Award scheme.
- Creating and sharing of new digital resources such as the Jack's FUNtastic Day storybook reading.
- Producing and distributing a quarterly Munch & Move newsletter focusing on key issues such as coping with lockdowns, food shortages, games to play indoors or in COVID-safe environments, and much more.
- Distributing transition-to-school resources including a healthy lunchbox jigsaw and a get active fridge magnet to support children, and their families, about to start "big school".
- 25 Central Coast centres participated in Veggie Month in March 2022, facilitated by Northern NSW Local Health District.

- With support from nutrition students, distributing two surveys to centres to understand the best methods for re-engagement, communications and service priorities. This information and research aims to form the basis for the type of support, training and resources centres we will provide in future and to improve efficiency in doing so. The first survey focused on general priorities and areas of interest for centres and was completed by 25 services. The second survey focused on communications and was completed by 28 services.

Achievements

- 56% of Central Coast early childhood education and care services are meeting at least 80% of the recommended Munch & Move practices. This is 8% above the NSW state average.
- 12 services achieved 5-star menu reviews and were awarded with a Healthy Menu Award.
- 79 services received transition-to-school resources.
- 45 new educators completed the Munch & Move e-learning training.

Partners

CCLHD Nutrition Services
Central Coast Early Childhood Educators' Network
Centre for Population Health
Department of Education
Family day care providers

Look out for ...

- Local healthy menu planning workshops.
- Return to more face-to-face visits, workshops and events.

Move like a Mariner

Partnering with the Central Coast Mariners to promote fundamental movement skills to children attending early education and care services



1,650 children

aged 3–5 participating in the Move like a Mariner program

“ Kincumber Preschool Kindergarten have absolutely loved being a part of this awesome program. Our teachers and children have loved learning so many new games, ideas and activities! ”
Tracy Scott, educator, Kincumber Preschool Kindergarten



Why are we doing this?

Participating in sport and physical activity throughout our lives is important for maintaining good health. However, it's important we put the building blocks in place from an early age. Fundamental movement skills are those building blocks. They involve movement of the head, trunk, arms, hands, legs and feet and are essential in providing a platform for being active as we grow older.

Move like a Mariner is a joint initiative between Central Coast Health Promotion Service and A-League football team the [Central Coast Mariners](#) to teach fundamental movement skills to children aged 3–5 years old.

The six-week program encourages early childhood education and care services to teach these skills through a series of fun games. In taking part, services address some of the Munch & Move (see [page 12](#)) physical activity practices.

The program was first introduced in 2018 and, due to its popularity, ran again the following year. It has since been on hiatus because of COVID-19.

How did we do it?

The program kicked off with an educator training night held in June 2022 at Mingara in Tumby Umpi and marked the first face-to-face Munch & Move workshop of the year. Forty-six educators, along with players from the Central Coast Mariners and Health Promotion staff, attended the training night to learn how to implement the program in their centres. Educators were taught about fundamental movement skills and played the games they would be doing with the children over the course of the program.

Following the workshop, centres signed a pledge to teach fundamental movement skills every day for six weeks, joined

a private Facebook group to stay connected, and received a physical activity kit to help facilitate active play.

To further support program delivery, Health Promotion worked with the Mariners to produce six videos featuring [players demonstrating some of the games](#). These were posted weekly on the Facebook group.

The program ran until the end of July 2022, after which services completed an evaluation to go into the draw to win a visit from the entire Mariners team. [Kooloora Preschool –Toukley Public School were the lucky winners](#).

Achievements

- 28 services and 1,650 children aged 3–5 years are improving their fundamental movement skills by participating in the Move like a Mariner program.

Partners

Central Coast Mariners

- The educator training night marked a return to face-to-face workshops following COVID-19.
- Within the first week of the Move like a Mariner program, the private Facebook group had 81 active members, 35 posts from centres sharing photos, videos and experiences, 229 reactions to posts, and 27 comments.
- Re-establishing a partnership with the Central Coast Mariners has already led to discussions around ongoing collaboration and development of programs together.

Look out for . . .

Move like a Mariner 2.0.

Live Life Well @ School

Using a whole-school approach to promote healthy eating and physical activity in primary schools



2,800+ children

in kindergarten and their families supported through transition-to-school resources



Why are we doing this?

Children need access to healthy food and opportunities to be active and play if they're to grow up in good health.

However, according to the NSW Schools Physical Activity and Nutrition Survey, just 5% of children aged 5–12 eat the recommended serves of vegetables and two thirds eat the recommended serves of fruit. Conversely, around half consume an unhealthy snack daily and more than a third regularly drink sweetened drinks. Furthermore, less than a quarter meet the recommended daily physical activity level and only around a half meet the recommended limits on screen time.

Children spend so much of their developing years in school, making it a prime setting to embed healthy habits. That's why we work together with our 81 primary schools on the Coast to give its near 30,000 students the best chance of leading a healthy life.

How did we do it?

Over the past year, schools have experienced challenging circumstances with disruptions associated with COVID-19. Throughout this period, Health Promotion has continued to offer a range of resources, online workshops and programs to support ongoing promotion of healthy eating and physical activity within the school setting, and at home for families.

This included a number of items and activities for Health Week –an initiative offering a series of locally developed health-promoting curriculum activities in term 2– such as:

- [Vege Adventure](#) to promote fruit and vegetables during Crunch and Sip break for kindergarten, year 1 and year 2 students.

- [Q4:H2O](#) to promote water as a drink to year 3 and 4 students.
- [How RU travelling?](#) to encourage physical activity, healthy food and active travel to school to year 5 and 6 students.

Additional transition-to-school resources were developed and distributed to schools to support students and their families starting primary school. These included a jigsaw puzzle with healthy lunchbox tips and an active game incorporating health promotion messages and the [Make Their Meals Count pictorial resource](#). To support schools delivering online transition-to-school parent sessions, we developed a narrated presentation titled 'Healthy Food at School' in collaboration with CCLHD Nutrition Services. Additional online resources such as [Make Their Meals Count recipe videos](#) and animated storybook readings of [Jack's FUNtastic Day](#) and [The Magic Lunchbox](#) were available for schools.

Primary schools were also offered playground stencils that can be painted onto hard surfaces to encourage literacy and numeracy through active play. Ten schools requested their use, however weather conditions and COVID-19 have disrupted installation.

The variety of online professional learning for teachers was increased by offering two additional online workshops delivered by South Eastern Sydney Local Health District, including an Indigenous games workshop attended by five teachers and a literacy and numeracy workshop attended by nine teachers.

Whole-of-school health promotion activities were offered to support events like Fruit and Veg Month and initiatives like our SWAP IT program that promotes swapping 'sometimes' foods for 'everyday' foods in school lunchboxes.

Regular healthy eating and physical activity information was provided to schools via Refresh e-newsletter and Health Promotion School Updates e-mailers.

Media relations activity also helped promote healthy messages more broadly to the community. This included providing expert opinion on the rise of fast food outlets on the Central Coast and how to pack a healthy lunchbox for the new school year, resulting in coverage on the Daily Telegraph online and in Coast Community Chronicle newspaper.

Achievements

- Around half (49%) of primary schools ordered Health Week resources, with more than 50% of these ordering resources for at least two stages.
- Well over half (59%) of schools ordered transition-to-school resources, supporting more than 2,800 kindergarten students and their families starting primary school.
- More than a quarter (26%) of schools participated in the Healthy Kids Association Fruit and Veg Month.
- 19% of schools participated in the 2022 Healthy Kids Association Big Veggie Crunch.
- Four schools registered to participate in the SWAP IT Healthy Lunchbox program.

Partners

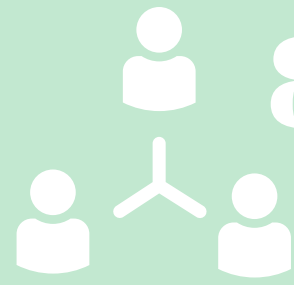
Association of Independent Schools
Catholic Diocese of Broken Bay
CCLHD Nutrition Services
Central Coast primary schools
Healthy Kids Association
NSW Department of Education
NSW School Link
LHD Live Life Well @ School project officers

Look out for . . .

- A return to face-to-face professional learning workshops, including a reinvigoration of the PDHPE Network for primary and high schools.
- Updated resources for Health Week.

Lunchbox Connection

Helping students to access healthy lunches and connecting their families to community services



85 Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander families

engaged with San Remo Neighbourhood Centre as a result of Lunchbox Connection



“Lunchbox Connection was a great way to encourage a sense of community in my kids and I was very impressed with how eager my kids were to try new foods simply because it was from the hamper.”
Family member

Why are we doing this?

i Food security is a fundamental human right. However, the Australian Institute of Family studies reports food insecurity affects 4–13% of the Australian population and 22–33% of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population. This risk is higher for populations experiencing disadvantage and vulnerability and where the social and economic impacts of natural disasters and pandemics are felt.

The population impacted by food insecurity is also changing,

Foodbank Hunger Report 2021

The report also said that 28% of Australian adults are categorised as food insecure and 1.2 million children are living in food insecure households. It reported that 28% of Australian adults are categorised as food insecure and 1.2 million children are living in food insecure households.

A coordinated community approach has since been developed, aiming to increase access to healthy food and drink and support services for families attending Northlakes and Blue Haven public schools, and help address the underlying drivers of food insecurity. This approach, driven by the Lunchbox Connection Working Group, complemented food relief and support services already existing within the local communities. The NSW Aboriginal Environmental Health Unit (AEHU) funded the SRNC to provide additional community support and resources for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families, who represent 11.2% and 9.7% of the population in San Remo and Blue Haven respectively.

How did we do it?

The Lunchbox Connection initiative is a coordinated community approach underpinned by:

- School strategies including the provision of lunchbox packs to families, nutritious foods at school via the student pantry and an assisted referral process to support families to access services at SRNC.
- SRNC staff support through individual appointments, referrals to services and emergency relief.

The AEHU funding facilitated additional support for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families, including individual support provided by the Aboriginal Community Liaison Officer (ACLO), healthy food hampers, and cooking sessions focused on healthy lunchbox foods. The primary focus for the Working Group in 2021 was Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families.

We conducted surveys with staff from each primary school, SRNC, the Working Group and Aboriginal families participating in the initiative. This provided key insights into the impact of the initiative and guided its progression.

In 2022, support for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families continued with the addition of healthy food hampers offered to Aboriginal families newly enrolled at each school. Healthy cooking workshops were also delivered, while the ACLO continued to provide individual support to families.

The Health Promotion Service supported the initiative with project management, resource development, dietitian expertise and funding.

The Working Group's activities have extended beyond Lunchbox Connection to helping deliver a new kindergarten health screening event, [Healthy Jarjums](#).

Achievements

- 85 Aboriginal families engaged with SRNC through the project from July 2021 to June 2022.
- 96 referrals made in 12 months by SRNC, linking Aboriginal families to support services from parenting and housing assistance, to financial, legal and personal counselling.
- 100% of participating Aboriginal families would recommend the initiative to other families.
- Of Working Group school staff:
 - 100% agreed the initiative resulted in healthier foods provided to students without lunch
 - 100% agreed it increased the support they could provide families experiencing food insecurity
 - 83% agreed it reduced stigma for families in accessing support.
- 100% of staff at SRNC, Blue Haven and Northlakes public schools, and Schools as Community Centres reported the initiative had built trust and strengthened their relationships with families.
- SRNC reported the initiative had added to existing services it provided because it assisted families to access healthy food and drink and “brought new knowledge across the organisation.”
- The ACLO reported increased knowledge of healthy foods and confidence in providing healthy eating information to clients.
- Letter of thanks sent to families by both schools recognising their commitment to community by engaging with the project and outlining the services delivered as a result.

Partners

- Aboriginal Education Consultative Group
- Blue Haven Public School
- Northlakes Public School
- NSW Department of Education
- NSW Environmental Health Unit
- Nunyara Aboriginal Health Unit
- San Remo Neighbourhood Centre
- Schools as Community Centres

- Funding secured from the AEHU to pilot Thirsty? Choose Water! in both public schools to improve access to, and promote water as, a drink of choice.
- Aboriginal Lunchbox Connection presented at the Preventive Health Conference 2022.

Look out for . . .

- ‘Tucker our kids love’ cookbook – a collection of recipes from the San Remo and Blue Haven communities
- ‘How to Lunchbox’ toolkit for schools and community/neighbourhood centres.

Healthy School Canteens

Supporting primary and secondary schools to increase the availability of healthy food and drink options in their canteens

88% of Central Coast public schools



%

meeting the NSW Healthy School Canteen Strategy

Why are we doing this?

One of the best ways we can support children and adolescents to lead a healthy life is by providing them with nutritious food in an environment they spent a lot of their formative years – school.

There are currently 49,776 children attending primary or secondary school on the Central Coast. Evidence published in 2021 confirmed that school-based intervention approaches addressing the food environment can have a positive effect on some dietary intake outcomes. The school canteen therefore remains a major opportunity to promote healthier everyday food and drink options for school students, and is part of a coordinated health promotion strategy aiming to encourage healthy eating within the school setting.

That's why CCLHD's Health Promotion Service and Nutrition Services support school canteens to provide healthier menus. For more than 25 years we have provided localised support to complement state-wide healthy canteen strategies.

Such strategies now include the current NSW Healthy School Canteen Strategy, which supports student health and wellbeing by promoting and increasing the availability of healthy food and drinks in school canteens. The strategy's food and drink criteria includes the following:

- Sugar-sweetened drinks are not allowed for sale
- 'Everyday' foods must make up at least 75% of the menu
- Portion limits apply to some 'everyday' foods and all 'occasional' foods
- A Health Star Rating of 3.5 stars or above is required on all packaged 'occasional' foods and drinks (except diet drinks)
- Promotion of 'occasional' foods is not allowed.

In 2021 the NSW Healthy School Canteen Strategy entered a maintenance phase. To maintain localised support and

encourage continued engagement with the state-wide strategy, we reviewed the Central Coast Healthy School Canteen Award in consultation with canteen managers.

How did we do it?

The Healthy Canteens team continued to support local primary and secondary school canteens to complete their menu checks via individualised support, workshops, a closed Facebook group, case studies showcasing canteens on the Coast, and the Apple Cart termly newsletter.

The Central Coast Healthy School Canteen Award was reviewed with assistance from two Sydney University Masters of Nutrition and Dietetics students. It had three key aims:

1. Evaluate the efficiency of the current award scheme.
2. Understand the needs of Central Coast canteen managers for localised support in implementing the NSW Healthy School Canteen Strategy.
3. Update the award scheme, in consultation with key stakeholders, to complement the new maintenance model and provide recognition for schools achieving the strategy.

Canteen managers completed an online survey (39% response rate including 82% primary schools) reviewing the value of supports and incentives, as well as the feasibility of requirements of the current award scheme. The majority of managers agreed or strongly agreed that the scheme motivated them to meet the strategy (68%), is valued by their school community (85%), influenced the foods selected for the menu (68%) and has provided the canteen with positive recognition within their school (74%).

The responses from the survey guided the development of an updated Central Coast Healthy School Canteen Award and included an invitation to participate in qualitative interviews regarding the proposed new scheme. The proposed award included two key criteria:

- Current attainment of the NSW Healthy School Canteen Strategy menu check (every three years).
- Provide evidence of healthy food and drink promotions conducted at least once every school term.

Seven primary school canteen managers participated in the interviews, 100% of whom stated they would continue to apply for the award. It is important to note that whilst the second criteria is an additional requirement for canteen managers, 71% of those interviewed stated they ran healthy eating promotions prior to COVID-19.

We also delivered two workshops in 2022; the first to launch the updated Central Coast Healthy School Canteen Award and the second to demonstrate how to create healthy everyday promotional material using a free online design tool. Each session was recorded and published on the closed Facebook group.

Achievements

- 66 Central Coast schools (49 primary schools and 17 secondary schools) across all education sectors (public, independent and Catholic) currently meeting the NSW Healthy School Canteen Strategy.
- Of Department of Education schools, 86.5% of primary schools and 89% of secondary schools continue to meet the strategy.
- 24 Central Coast schools have registered to participate in the Central Coast Healthy School Canteen Award in 2022.



“ I really appreciate everything our local health promotion officers do for us. They are a great resource and I just love the network meetings – such a great chance for the canteen managers to come together and get new information and discuss common issues. ”

*Lyn Loveland, canteen manager
Terrigal Public School*

Partners

Association of Independent Schools
Catholic Diocese of Broken Bay
CCLHD Nutrition Services
Healthy Kids Association
NSW Department of Education

- More than three quarters (78%) of primary schools and over two thirds (69%) of secondary schools across all school sectors are members of the Central Coast Canteen Managers closed Facebook group.

Look out for . . .

- The outcomes of the 2022 Central Coast Healthy School Canteen Award.
- Consultation with Central Coast secondary schools regarding the Central Coast Healthy School Canteen Award.

Central Coast School Garden Interest Group

A network to share expertise and ideas for the school kitchen garden



3 in 4 teachers who had previously attended a gardens workshop said they had used activities or information presented with their students



Why are we doing this?

If students have the knowledge and confidence to grow, prepare, cook and eat a diverse range of healthy foods, it makes it much easier for them to lead a healthy lifestyle.

School gardens are a great way to instil this knowledge and confidence. The latest NSW School Physical Activity and Nutrition Survey reveals approximately 40% of schools have a school garden. For some schools, the garden contributes to curriculum activities, cooking classes, school sustainability commitments, focused student wellbeing activities and produce for healthy fundraising and the school canteen.

That's why it's important we offer local schools a range of resources and training opportunities so they may promote healthy eating in a way that suits their school community and environment.

How did we do it?

The Central Coast School Garden Interest Group continued to actively support schools via an online workshop and the Harvest for Health Grant.

In term 3 2021, 21% of schools participated in an online workshop focused on Bush Tucker, including:

- A presentation from Rumbalara Environmental Education Centre, Aboriginal staff and teachers from Brisbania Public School on the process of setting up a Bush Tucker garden. A key focus was cultural consultation with the Aboriginal Education Consultative Group and practical considerations.

- The 'Chop and Chat' session delivered by Health Promotion focused on the science of flavour and delicious alternatives to added sugar, fat and salt.
- Our 'Around the Garden' segment, featuring contributions from Tuggerah, Northlakes, Empire Bay and Gorokan Public Schools.

A Harvest for Health Grant was offered in term 1 2022, in partnership with Rumbalara Environmental Education Centre. Five \$1,000 grants have been awarded to support the creation of supportive school environments for healthy eating, physical activity and environmental sustainability via school produce gardens and/or kitchens.

Applications received were of a high standard, including innovative and varied ways to promote healthy eating and environmental sustainability, via their school garden programs, for their students and community. The winning initiatives will reach more than 1,500 students across five schools: Empire Bay Public School, Gorokan Public School, Green Point Christian School, Jiliby Public School and Somersby Public School.

Achievements

- 75% of teachers who had previously attended a gardens workshop said they had used activities or information presented with their students.
- 100% of teachers indicated they would attend future online workshops.
- Continued partnership with Rumbalara Environmental Education Centre has enabled Health Promotion to

“Today's session was extremely helpful and informative for my role on our school's sustainability team. Outlining the process, potential issues, budgeting, etc. was particularly useful, as well as inspiring to see the progress made by other schools.”

Teacher workshop participant

collaboratively offer the Harvest for Health Grants, as well as comprehensive professional learning for school staff.

Look out for . . .

- Upcoming case studies showcasing the activities completed by the Harvest for Health Grant winners.
- Recommencing face-to-face Central Coast School Garden Interest Group workshops in 2022.

Partners

Rumbalara Environmental Education Centre
 Association of Independent Schools
 Catholic schools – Diocese of Broken Bay
 Central Coast primary schools
 NSW Department of Education

Go4Fun

Improving the self-esteem, eating habits and physical activity levels of children above a healthy weight



77% of Central Coast children

%

aged 5–15 years do not get adequate amounts of physical activity

Why are we doing this?

Children should enjoy endless opportunities to be physically active – to play, develop healthy habits and build their self-esteem through social interaction.

Yet statistics show around one in five children aged 5–16 in NSW are above a healthy weight. Not eating enough fruit and vegetables plays a big part in this (see statistics). In addition, on the Central Coast more than three quarters of children aged 5–15 years do not get adequate amounts of physical activity, while the behaviour of around three in five (59.2%) is considered sedentary, which is significantly above the state average of 51.8%.

Go4Fun, a free 10-week program for children aged 7–13 who are above a healthy weight and their families, provides the platform to reverse some of these trends. Run by trained health professionals, children enjoy game-based activities and learn about healthy eating habits, while parents and carers learn about creating healthy home environments.

How did we do it?

In 2021–22, we continued our efforts to provide greater flexibility and adaptability of the program, particularly through online engagement. However, as our community opens up and adapts to a global pandemic, our team has shifted focus back to implementing our face-to-face programs. This has involved a concerted effort towards community engagement and promotion through building relationships with staff, partners, schools, clinical practices, local business and sports clubs.

Relationship building remains fundamental to the longer-term sustainability of the Go4Fun program. There have been a number of methods used to maintain community engagement with stakeholders and partners, including:

- Working in close consultation with Bungree Aboriginal Association to be able to promote and deliver future Aboriginal Go4Fun programs in a culturally respectful environment.
- Continuing to develop passionate and dedicated program leaders who came together to support COVID-safe delivery of programs and embrace professional development.
- Continuing to offer Go4Fun Online as an alternative to face-to-face programs for Central Coast families during COVID-19.
- Creating COVID-safe plans and procedures to ensure safety of all our staff and program participants, while maintaining a fun learning environment.
- Checking in with family participants throughout the program to maintain rapport and gain feedback.
- Re-engaging 35 local public schools and multiple clinical practices to assist in promoting the Go4Fun program.

Achievements

- Re-engaged and maintained successful relationships with all existing partners and stakeholders, while developing new partnerships with the likes of PCYC Bateau Bay and Lake Haven Recreation Centre.



Partners

Better Health Company
Bungree Aboriginal Association
Centre for Population Health
San Remo Neighbourhood Centre

- Successfully reintroduced face-to-face programs following a long hiatus due to COVID-19, with 10-week programs, including a pool program, running during term 2, 2022.
- Delivered online Go4Fun programs for 17 families.
- Worked closely with Bungree Aboriginal Association to put the foundations in place for future delivery of Aboriginal Go4Fun programs to our Aboriginal community on the Central Coast.
- Recruited and trained four new passionate leadership staff to deliver the program in coming terms. This involved moving to a Service Agreement model with staff to assist in recruitment efficiency.

Look out for . . .

- Aboriginal Go4Fun run jointly with Bungree Aboriginal Association in coming terms.
- Establishing permanent programs with well-regarded sporting venues to market the Go4Fun brand.
- Further development of a fantastic leadership team that are experienced, passionate and committed.

YourWay

Engaging and empowering students to develop sustainable solutions for health issues in their school



Why are we doing this?

We want secondary schools and students to be involved in identifying the specific health issues they face in their school environment and driving ideas to help tackle them. A literature review conducted by our team revealed there are a limited number of sustainable health interventions that target the health priorities of young people in secondary schools. The review also found support for the view that including young people in decision making that concerns them will yield better engagement, participation and ownership, thus increasing success.

This is where YourWay comes in.

YourWay is a student-led approach to health promotion that combines the principles of the World Health Organization's Health Promoting Schools Framework and the creative power of human-centred design.

It focuses on developing small, achievable initiatives to respond to the health priorities of young people, such as healthy eating, physical activity, risky behaviour and mental wellbeing.

YourWay engages students in these health priorities through a series of short workshops and encourages them to work collaboratively in a supportive environment to explore, co-design and implement ideas within their school.

How did we do it?

After an initial YourWay pilot in 2021 and with ongoing COVID-19 implications that restricted access to schools, YourWay entered a review phase. This resulted in changes being made to its delivery model to increase flexibility for schools.

YourWay is now delivered through six one-hour workshops, known as 'design jams', each with a different objective to build the capacity of students and schools to co-design health promoting initiatives.

The six design jam sessions are:

Explore – Students explore empathy in human-centred design, the importance of data collection and how these can influence decision making. Students also collaboratively create a data

collection tool to inform their project.

Investigate – Students analyse their collected data and identify a priority area from which they can co-design a healthy initiative and create a design brief defining goals and objectives for their project.

Brainstorm – Students use their design brief to collaboratively brainstorm ideas for their project and as a group decide which ideas to further develop.

Pitch – Students work together to plan and prepare a pitch presentation for their ideas and seek feedback from their peers who vote for the best idea(s) to implement.

Launch – Students discuss and develop an action plan and create a timeline of what needs to be achieved for their project to be successful. Students then launch their project.

Reflect – Students look back on their project's journey and seek feedback to evaluate and report on its success.

Sessions can either be delivered as part of existing student-led school initiatives (e.g. Student Representative Council, leadership groups and wellbeing classes) or through entirely new student-led working groups.

Achievements

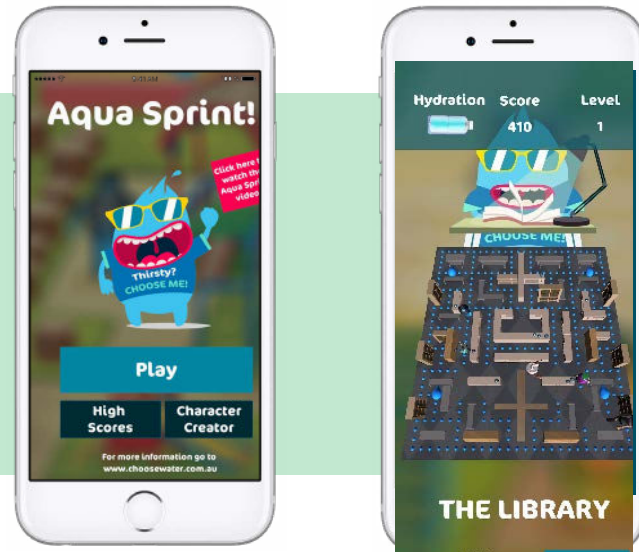
- Working with Henry Kendal High School students to brainstorm and develop ideas for its 'Kenchella' wellbeing day, aimed at promoting positive wellbeing and reconnecting students after the COVID-19 break.
- Working with students from Brisbane Water Secondary College –Woy Woy Campus to develop cards and stickers promoting positive wellbeing messages that were handed out to students returning to school following COVID-19.
- YourWay accepted for presentation at the CCLHD Research Symposium, initially scheduled for March 2022 but postponed until later this year.

Look out for...

YourWay delivered in more schools across the Central Coast with continued review and refinement.

Thirsty? Choose Water!

Supporting students to choose water over sugar-sweetened beverages



Why are we doing this?

Choosing water as a drink has loads of benefits, it's ideal for quenching thirst, is readily available, and can help protect and strengthen teeth.

However, sugar-sweetened beverages are still consumed regularly, with adolescents in Australia consuming more than any other age group. Indeed, the most recent National Health Survey shows 58% of children aged 12–13 years consume sugar-sweetened beverages at least once a week.

Sugar-sweetened beverages provide little or no nutritional value and are associated with increased energy intake, weight gain, weight status above a healthy weight and dental caries. They contain large amounts of free sugars, with a 375ml can of soft drink containing around 10 teaspoons of sugar. What's more, children and adolescents exceeding the World Health Organization recommendations for free sugar are less likely to meet their nutrient needs for optimum growth and development.

By providing educational resources in the classroom, access to chilled water in the playground, and information for families at home, we can help adolescents choose water over sugar-sweetened beverages.

How did we do it?

Thirsty? Choose Water! is a whole-of-school health promotion strategy encouraging water as the main drink of choice and discouraging sugar-sweetened beverages for secondary school students.

The program stemmed from two randomised controlled trials involving 85 secondary schools from five local health districts across NSW. The results demonstrated positive outcomes for drink selection among adolescents and a high level of acceptability of the intervention by schools.

The program continues to be offered to schools who took part in the study and others across the state who wish to participate. Support for schools involves:

- PDHPE lessons plans
- school-wide promotional materials
- opportunities for Central Coast schools to win a fully installed chilled water station on school grounds.

Resources to implement the program continue to be freely available on the [Thirsty? Choose Water! website](http://www.thirstychoosewater.com.au).

In 2021–22, we offered Central Coast secondary schools the opportunity to enter a competition to win a chilled water station. Schools described how they would promote water in their school, using the program resources and developing school specific strategies. The applications were creative, including promotions via innovative technology, student leadership group activities and the development of resources incorporating environmental and cultural messaging.

In addition to engagement with schools, we have begun working on a pilot for the Ministry of Health's Centre for Oral Health Strategy to look at health promotion solutions for young children in dental clinic waiting rooms. Building on the success of our Aqua Sprint behaviour change app developed as part of our Thirsty? Choose Water! translational materials, we are looking to develop a new oral health behaviour change game.

“Students now understand the importance of drinking water. Having ready access to clean, chilled water means that the vast majority of students are using the refill station and choosing to drink water. This is great for not only student health but also the health of the planet!”
Michael Gentle, PDHPE teacher, St Edwards College

Partners

Association of Independent Schools
Catholic schools
Hunter New England Local Health District
Mid North Coast Local Health District
NSW Department of Education
Regional Health Partners

This would see both the new game and Aqua Sprint installed on tablets made available in waiting rooms.

Achievements

- Students from Wadalba Community School, St Edward's College and Tuggerah Lakes Secondary College Berkeley Vale now have greater access to water after winning our competition to win a chilled water station.
- Publication of the results of Thirsty? Choose Water! in the Health Promotion Journal of Australia, demonstrating that the installation of a chilled water station, combined

with education and promotional messages, had the greatest effect on reducing sugar-sweetened beverage consumption among adolescents.

- Early findings incorporated in evidence review conducted by the Centre for Population Health to inform development of high school programs.

Look out for . . .

- Development of Thirsty? Choose Water! primary school resources.
- Aqua Sprint in dental clinic waiting rooms.

Activate Your Space

A place-based approach to increasing the health, wellbeing and social connectedness of suburbs with poorer health

613 engagement responses



from San Remo and Blue Haven residents

Why are we doing this?

People should be able to enjoy a healthy life full of opportunities for physical activity, social connection and good access to healthy food, no matter where they live.

However, some areas face health inequalities through no fault of their own. Both San Remo and Blue Haven have low Socio-Economic Indicator for Areas (SEIFA) indexes of 932.1 and 943.1 respectively compared to the NSW average of 1,001.0.

Over the past 12 months these communities have been impacted by COVID-19, fires and flooding, and the financial stress of rising house and petrol prices, making the social determinants of health an increasing priority for people's health and wellbeing. Without action, the gap could widen for communities with the greatest inequities.

Activate Your Space takes a place-based approach and builds on community strengths to improve the physical and social environment for residents of San Remo, Blue Haven and surrounding suburbs. It looks at ways people can be supported to use their local outdoor spaces more for recreation, connect with each other, and identify ways in which local health and wellbeing services can be improved.

By co-creating community-led activities that are sustainable

and blend the expertise of the community with the expertise of government and non-government agencies through the

“Place-based approaches” target the specific circumstances of an area and engage local people as active participants in development and implementation of appropriate strategies, requiring shared decision-making between stakeholders.

Committee of Healthy Eating Active Living (COHEAL), we can level the playing field for health and wellbeing for the local community.

How did we do it?

Through our engagement with the community, two areas of opportunity were identified to improve the health and wellbeing of local people: food security and social connection through physical activity.

Our activities have therefore included:

Food security: Implementation of Lunchbox Connection, a pilot food security program providing emergency food relief and linking people to support services. See [page 18](#) for full details.

Physical activity: Two specific opportunities have been identified to engage the local community in physical activity.

- John Pete Howard Reserve park upgrade, involving:
 - Engagement with the community to ask them what they thought of the upgrade and for their ideas on how to encourage others to use this area more often. This involved an online survey, including paid Facebook promotion, which ran for four weeks and was shared through local community Facebook pages. Engagement results were publicised through a social media advertising campaign.
 - Monitoring the use of the new park and the existing shared pathway through the use of laser counters and observational studies each season.
 - Working with local schools and the neighbourhood centre to enhance the park through local Aboriginal artwork. This has been delayed due to COVID-19 but will forge ahead later in 2022.



“ I like that [the park] was updated to invite more people to use it. It brings a good initiative to San Remo. ”

“ Love the park. The space has been very well thought out. ”

“ I love what this has brought to our community. ”

Engagement responses from community members

Partners

- Central Coast Council
- Committee of Healthy Eating and Active Living (COHEAL)
- Office of Sport
- San Remo Neighbourhood Centre
- Northlakes High School
- Physical Activity Nutrition and Obesity Research Group (PANORG)

- We are working in partnership with the Office of Sport, Central Coast Council and San Remo Neighbourhood Centre to develop a 12-week program of activities for people in the San Remo and Blue Haven suburbs to increase awareness of opportunities and encourage participation in sports and active recreation.

We are also working with the Physical Activity Nutrition and Obesity Research Group (PANORG) to evaluate the place-based approach and develop a model that can inform work in other neighbourhoods across the Central Coast.

Achievements

Engagement with the community on the John Pete Howard reserve resulted in:

- 613 survey responses, with 453 completed in full.
- The survey found:
 - 85% of people use the park more often since the playspace upgrade
 - people use the pathway on average 3–4 times a week
 - people spent one hour at the park on at least one occasion a week
- A paid Facebook campaign to inform the community of the results of the survey reached 8,969 people, with 16,636 impressions generating 514 engagements.

- The **final reports** have been shared with the community, local organisations and Central Coast Council. This has already led to action:
 - new toilet way-finding signage has been installed near the park by Central Coast Council
 - graffiti has been removed by San Remo Neighbourhood Centre, with continual monitoring taking place
 - discussions have begun regarding road safety near the park crossing to the local shops
- Results have been shared with the Office of Sport to help inform its physical activity participation project.

Look out for . . .

- A place-based evaluation framework to help inform work with other communities.
- More activation opportunities for the San Remo and Blue Haven communities with the Office of Sport, Central Coast Council and Health Promotion.
- Aboriginal Artwork painted by Aboriginal students from Northlakes High School, to be installed at John Pete Howard Reserve.

Healthy Built Environments

Advocating for built environments that protect and promote community health and wellbeing



179,564 adults

on the Central Coast estimated to be overweight or obese



Photo credit: Central Coast Council - Canton Beach

Why are we doing this?

The built environments in which we live can have a major impact on our health. That's why every person in our community deserves the chance to move around their city, town and neighbourhood with ease and to access affordable, healthy food.

But this isn't possible if our streets are designed for cars, there are limited opportunities to exercise, and more and more unhealthy food and drink options keep popping up. What's more, unhealthy environments like this lead to more chronic disease in our community.

On the Central Coast, 62.6% of adults are overweight or obese, which is significantly higher than the NSW average of 56.8%. Based on current population estimates, this would mean 177,542 people in our region are at greater risk of chronic diseases like heart disease, type 2 diabetes and cancer.

To address this, we need our neighbourhoods to be designed to give us opportunities for physical activity through things like footpaths and bike lanes; provide us with easy access to healthy food; and offer shared spaces that encourage social and community interaction. By doing so, we create healthier places and healthier people.

How did we do it?

Using strong and ever-emerging evidence, Central Coast Health Promotion Service advocates for the planning, design, development and management of healthy places, which support people to lead physically active, well-nourished and socially connected lives.

During 2021–22, we worked with key CCLHD departments such as Health Service Planning and the Public Health Unit to:

- Lodge written submissions advocating for environments to support the health and wellbeing of the Central Coast community.
- Engage with partners and key stakeholders, including local and state government planning and transport departments and non-government organisations.
- Actively participate in the NSW Healthy Built Environments LHD Network to collaborate on state-wide healthy built environment issues.

Achievements

- Submissions lodged regarding Central Coast-based plans:
 - Central Coast Regional Plan (Bronze draft)
 - Central Coast Council Delivery Program 2022–25.
- Submissions lodged regarding Gosford City Centre-based state and regionally significant development proposals:
 - Central Coast Quarter, Northern Tower, draft Secretary's Environmental Assessment Requirements (SEARs)
 - New Regional Library, Gosford
 - Peat Island and Mooney Mooney Planning Proposal
 - Residential Flat Building – Donnison Street, West Gosford, Statement of Environmental Effects (SEE)
 - Residential rezoning – Coleridge Road, Bateau Bay Planning Proposal, Social Impact Assessment (SIA).
- Consultation regarding Central Coast plans:
 - Central Coast Council's Central Coast Street Design Manual – State Government Project Working Group
 - Through our role on the CCLHD Environmental Sustainability Committee, we raised the issue of e-bike salary packaging for CCLHD and NSW Health staff and coincidentally or otherwise, the feasibility of this is now being investigated by the NSW Ministry of Health.

Partners

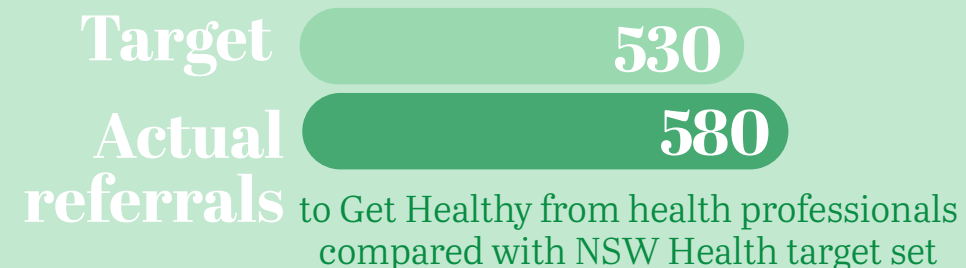
CCLHD Health Planning
CCLHD Public Health Unit
Centre for Population Health

Look out for...

A sustained and strengthened healthy built environment advocacy effort for a growing Central Coast population and fast-developing Gosford City.

Get Healthy Information and Coaching Service

Supporting people to set and achieve personal healthy lifestyle goals



Why are we doing this?

Our vision is for adults on the Central Coast to be healthy enough to enjoy doing the things they love to do; so they can play with their kids, catch up with their mates or travel without their health being a concern.

In order to achieve this, we must tackle some trends, such as the high number of adults who are above a healthy weight (see page 32) and who don't get the recommended amount of physical activity per week (see page 36).

The [Get Healthy Information and Coaching Service](#) is a telephone-based coaching service designed to help people make positive lifestyle changes. The service is overseen by NSW Health and sees participants receive access to their own personal health coach. Coaches work with individuals to set personalised healthy lifestyle goals on:

- healthy eating
- becoming more active
- reaching and maintaining a healthy weight
- reducing your risk of developing type 2 diabetes
- achieving a healthy weight gain in pregnancy
- reducing alcohol intake

The service is open to anyone aged 16 or over and offers Aboriginal and Chinese-specific programs.

By supporting adults to make positive lifestyle changes with advice that takes into account their unique predicaments, such as their motivations and barriers, we can give them the best opportunity to lead a healthier and happier life.

How did we do it?

In 2021–22, we continued to drive local enrolments through partnerships. We provided around 10,000 Get Healthy prescription covers promoting Get Healthy to pharmacists and their customers, as well as delivering brochures containing information about the service as part of a cross-promotional pharmacist education campaign.

Referrals to the service from health professionals, particularly midwives, are a key performance target for our LHD, and so work continued to raise awareness of Get Healthy within CCLHD departments and among general practitioners. This involved providing information, data, resources and training support to ensure health professionals were armed with everything they needed to maximise referrals and enrolments.

We raised broader awareness of the service through activity on social media and through regular updates in our Refresh community newsletter, linking Get Healthy to key calendar dates such as Dry July and Men's Health Week.

In addition, we worked with the Central Coast Research Institute to feature Forrester's Beach Retirement Village in a video highlighting its vision for the Coast, providing some of its residents with Get Healthy promotional items, as well as a healthy recipe book.



Achievements

- 652 Central Coast residents referred to Get Healthy programs, of which 580 were referrals from health professionals – beating the goal of 530 set by the Centre for Population Health.
- 404 women were referred to the Get Healthy in Pregnancy program, with by far the largest proportion of referrals coming from NSW Health's key referral target group of midwives.
- 372 people enrolled into Get Healthy programs, of which 311 were a result of a health professional referral – beating the Centre for Population Health target of 292.

Look out for...

- More collaboration with health professionals in the Central Coast region who work to keep residents as healthy and active as possible.
- Phased roll out of a Get Healthy cancer program, with physical activity being the primary focus for participants.

“My coach is fantastic! He is compassionate and encouraging. Anyone wanting to lose weight and get healthy needs a coach on their side. The whole system is fantastic.”
Evelyn, 67, Central Coast, Standard Coaching Program participant

Partners

CCLHD health professionals and services
Centre for Population Health
Hunter New England and Central Coast
Primary Health Network

Go Active 2 Work and Active Travel to School

Encouraging the community to walk, cycle or take public transport to work, school and around the place



377 members

of the Go Active 2 Work community

Why are we doing this?

Active transport – walking, cycling or taking public transport – provides people with a great opportunity to accumulate some, if not all, of the physical activity required to maintain and improve their health and wellbeing.

However, on the Central Coast 40.3% of adults are insufficiently active. This means an estimated 115,598 Central Coast residents do not get the recommended minimum 150 minutes of moderate or vigorous physical activity a week.

Through our Go Active 2 Work (GA2W) program and engagement with local schools, we aim to get more Coasties using active transport as a means to get around.

By getting more Central Coast adults and children active, we can reduce their risk of being above a healthy weight, or developing cardiovascular diseases, diabetes, colon and breast cancer, as well as reduce their risk of depression.

How did we do it?

Community and CCLHD staff were encouraged to register to become a member of our GA2W community via a [dedicated webpage](#) on the Health Promotion website. New members received a GA2W welcome pack and our monthly GA2W e-news, which goes to our 377 community members.

This year we adapted our e-news communications by providing a comprehensive quarterly GA2W e-newsletter, with briefer GA2W e-newsflashes sent out in the months in between. Updates included active transport events and initiatives, and opportunities to provide feedback on consultations impacting active transport provision.

Such initiatives included our Central Coast Go Active 2 Work Day, which we facilitated on the third Wednesday of every month. The GA2W Days provided Coasties with a regular nudge and opportunity to join in a cycle, walk or public transport trip to work. When not restricted by COVID-19, Gosford-based workers had the opportunity to join like-minded active transporters for an early morning ‘cuppa’ and chat before heading off to work happier and healthier for the experience.

To further highlight the benefits of cycling, we profiled long-time GA2W community member and CCLHD Parkinson’s nurse, Greg Harris. Recognising Greg – who was about to hang up his scrubs to do volunteer work in Nepal – had an interesting story to tell, we drafted a media release on his journey, as well as offering journalists the opportunity to interview him. As a result, Greg was interviewed on ABC Central Coast’s breakfast show and on NBN television, while print coverage was secured locally in Coast Community News and nationally in The Senior magazine.

In addition, we promoted major events such as National Ride2Work Day, World Bicycle Day and Diabetes Australia Walk to Work Day through our GA2W e-news and social media, as well as through internal CCLHD communications channels.

This year we also promoted National Walk Safely to School Day and National Ride2School Day to local primary and secondary schools to raise awareness of walking and cycling as safe, healthy and environmentally-friendly transport options for students. This involved linking up with Warnervale and Blue Haven public schools to highlight how they were getting involved in such initiatives by featuring them in our media releases and in social media posts.



Partners

- Bicycle Network
- Bicycle NSW
- Central Coast Bicycle User Group
- Central Coast Council
- Pedestrian Council of Australia
- Transport for NSW, Roads and Maritime Services



To get more local business and workplaces physically active, we continued to cross-promote NSW Health’s Get Healthy at Work program, particularly its Active Travel focus area, as well as its September and Biketober events.

In our own workplace, we continue to help deliver the Gosford Hospital Workplace Travel Plan and the Wyong Hospital Green/Workplace Travel Plan and advocate for bicycle parking and end-of-trip facilities (change, shower and locker facilities).

Achievements

- 377 members of the GA2W community receiving regular active transport updates.
- More than 360,000 opportunities to see positive messages about active transport from print media coverage alone, excluding broadcast and online coverage achieved.

- Successfully advocated for CCLHD staff access to new secure staff bicycle parking (bike cage) facility at Gosford Hospital.
- Successfully advocated for CCLHD staff access to ventilated lockers in the Central Coast Clinical School and Research Institute building within Gosford Hospital Health & Wellbeing Precinct.
- New bicycle parking and end-of-trip facilities provided in the new Block H at Wyong Hospital.

Look out for...

- New secure staff bicycle parking (bike cage) at Wyong Hospital.
- Updated site maps for Gosford and Wyong hospitals to show new bike parking.
- More work with schools.

Healthy and Active for Life Online

Increasing older adults' knowledge, skills and confidence to lead healthy and active lives



162 participants

over four quarterly programs

Why are we doing this?

Older adults deserve an environment that supports them to live independently and participate in the communities in which they live.

Helping them to achieve this has never been more important. A review of the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic found older adults reported greater loneliness because of pandemic-related social isolation.

Being at home more also meant they were particularly at risk of deconditioning. Studies reported a decrease in physical activity leading loss of muscle mass and strength and an increased risk of falls, as well as a change in healthy eating habits and poorer overall health. Older adults who were physically active during this time were more likely to have higher resilience, a positive outlook and less depressive symptoms.

On the Central Coast, 88,887 people are aged 60 years or older. That's more than a quarter (27%) of our population, and significantly more than the 2016 census figure of 22% for NSW. By 2036, the number of residents over 60 on the Central Coast is expected to increase by 38% to 122,730 people.

Healthy and Active for Life Online provides our growing older adult population the opportunity to stay connected with their community and keep their independence through good health and wellbeing.

How did we do it?

The free Healthy and Active for Life Online program has provided a means for connection in addition to ensuring people feel supported, keep healthy and strong both in body and mind.

We continue to support this NSW Health initiative by reaching Central Coast adults aged 60 years and older and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people aged 45 years and older to have access to:

- Online exercise videos
- Tips on healthy eating, goal setting and more
- Weekly phone calls by a qualified phone coach to support each person's journey.

We continue to develop the skills of our experienced and dedicated team of phone coaches to mentor and support people through their 10-week journey.

To promote the program and recruit participants, activity in 2021-22 included:

- Utilising Facebook's artificial intelligence to execute dynamic creative advertisement campaigns, testing messages and images to see what resonated best with audiences, and refining future campaigns as a result
- Strategic targeting of local media platforms, with advertising on Radio Five-O-Plus, a dedicated radio station for older adults on the Central Coast
- Showcasing experiences of past participants in publications such as Coast Council's GOALL (Growing Older and Loving Life) magazine and by sharing with retirement villages and health professionals in order to discuss with their clients and encourage referrals to the program.



“ My mobility and posture were not good before I started the program. Now I am getting out of the car more easily without the help of steps or other aides. You don't join this program to become a runner, you join to be able to live independently and be mobile. It doesn't matter what your size, you can do it! ”

Maree Jenner, program participant who has dwarfism

Partners

Centre for Population Health

“ It is such a joy to hear how the journey of 10 weeks can really make a difference in someone's life. Seeing someone go from a sedentary lifestyle to regular exercise is so very rewarding. I love that I get to help people to unlock their motivation and provide the support for them to be successful. ”

Lisa Buechel, program phone coach

Achievements

- 162 participants registered over four quarterly programs, maintaining high uptake at a time when registrations across the state were lower.
- 63% of participants completed at least seven of the 10 online modules.
- Across four Facebook advertising campaigns:
 - 25,745 people reached
 - 57,468 impressions
 - 1,776 link clicks at an average click-through rate of 3.1%, significantly beating the Facebook healthcare sector average of 0.83%
 - A cost per link click of just \$0.23, again beating the Facebook healthcare sector average of \$1.93 handsomely
 - Around three quarters of our registrations stem from Facebook advertising



Alcohol and our community

Addressing alcohol harm across our community



874 emergency department presentations on the Central Coast in 2021–22 due to alcohol-related harm

Why are we doing this?

We want the Central Coast to be a place that promotes and protects our health. We want our children and our families to live long and healthy lives. However, the availability of alcohol in our communities is damaging our health.

Alcohol fuels violence, accidents, injury and illnesses in our community. The stress and isolation caused by COVID-19 has moved alcohol into the home and increased rates of domestic violence. An influx of businesses offering home-delivered alcohol is not helping by making alcohol easily accessible. On top of this, increased social media use to connect with friends and family has only meant more opportunities for alcohol suppliers to bombard us with advertising.

This perfect storm has led to some alarming statistics for the Central Coast. Despite stringent requirements for classifying incidents as 'alcohol related', in 2018–19 there were 112 alcohol-related deaths in our region, while 2020–21 saw:

- 874 alcohol-related emergency department presentations
- 419 alcohol-related domestic assaults reported to police
- 167 alcohol-related non-domestic assaults reported to police
- 56% increase in delivery-only liquor licences

In addition, in 2020–21, one in four Australians exceeded the alcohol guidelines. Extrapolating this to the Central Coast, 71,763 people would be exceeding the guidelines.

Addressing alcohol access in our community and tackling harmful, targeted advertising helps us protect the community from alcohol-related harm and puts health before the profits of alcohol companies.

How did we do it?

COVID-19 gave the Central Coast Health Promotion team an opportunity to reflect on the way we work and how we can have the biggest impact. This involved broadening our scope by working with more organisations that seek to reduce alcohol-related harm.

Securing an opportunity to meet with the NSW Independent Liquor & Gaming Authority to voice our concerns around the liquor licence application process with leaders from across CCLHD, we advocated for increased transparency and more consideration to be given to social impacts.

We liaised with and submitted a formal response to the Alcohol Beverages Advertising Code Management Committee in response to its request for feedback on the code. In doing so, we advocated for stricter rules around alcohol advertisements in sport and on social media.

We also responded to the Central Coast Council's request for feedback on its Draft Delivery Program 2022-23, advocating for health to be considered in event planning and outdoor advertising.

At the same time, we have increased our focus on data and economic evaluations. This resulted in further analysis of our Alcohol Sales to Minors project to test the effect of site visits from a health promotion officer and Liquor & Gaming NSW compliance officer on the rates of ID checking at local bottle shops. We looked at factors such as the effect of time of day, chain outlets, outlet density and age of the staff.

We are working with the Prevention Centre, Deakin University, Northern Sydney Local Health District and the Centre for Alcohol and Other Drugs on an economic evaluation of the



Partners

Centre for Alcohol and Other Drugs, NSW Ministry of Health
Community Drug Action Teams
Deakin University
Hunter Medical Research Institute
Independent Liquor & Gaming Authority
Liquor & Gaming NSW
Northern Sydney Local Health District
The Australian Prevention Partnership Centre

impact of liquor licences on health. This work is expected to support better decision making around liquor licences in our community. We are also working with the Hunter Medical Research Institute on a cost benefit analysis on different strategies to address alcohol sales to minors. The purpose of this work is to inform strategies to protect young people from alcohol-related harm.

Achievements

Journal article accepted for publication in Health Promotion Journal of Australia on the effect of a site visit intervention on the rates of ID checks by liquor retailers.

Look out for...

- Publication of the journal article.
- The cost benefit analysis of methods to reduce alcohol sales to minors.
- Outcomes on the economic evaluation on the impact of liquor licences on health.
- Further work in protecting young people from alcohol advertising.

Say No to Vaping

Highlighting the health risks of using e-cigarettes to young people



2 in 3 high school principals surveyed said they had used or shared Say No to Vaping campaign materials

Why are we doing this?

Young people should be free to go to school and sports clubs without risk of being offered or pressured into trying harmful electronic cigarettes (e-cigarettes). And for parents, sending their kids to school shouldn't mean exposing them to environments where illegal e-cigarettes are being sold and passed from student to student.

But unfortunately the rate of e-cigarette use among young people in Australia continues to grow. In 2020–21, of people aged 16–24, 11% reported being a current user of e-cigarettes – more than double the percentage in 2019–20.

The issue has courted much mainstream media attention and has been cited as an “extreme concern” by NSW Health Chief Health Officer, Dr Kerry Chant. Indeed, since January 2022, NSW Health has seized over a million dollars' worth of illegal vaping stock following raids on tobacconists throughout the state. This brings the total to more than three million dollars since July 2020.

A global systematic review released this year, the first of its kind to provide the most comprehensive review of vaping-related health impacts, concluded e-cigarettes “carry significant harm”.

Launched in May 2021, Say No to Vaping (SNTV) is an ever-evolving project aiming to raise awareness of the health risks young people of the Central Coast are exposing themselves to by using e-cigarettes. The project grew out of community demand from educators and parents for reputable resources that help address the issue of e-cigarette use by young people on the Central Coast. It saw SNTV lead the way as the first campaign and set of resources in NSW to tackle the problem.

How did we do it?

With the Health Promotion team unable to visit schools, youth groups and other organisations throughout much of 2020–21 due to stay-at-home orders, the SNTV project team adapted by offering online presentations.

The presentations provided facts on e-cigarettes and messages about the harm they can cause young people, and included quizzes to help keep students engaged. The team has also started development of a pre-recorded presentation for schools to ensure presentation requests can always be fulfilled.

We continue to engage and seek feedback from local educators. An online survey was developed and sent to secondary school principals to respond to anonymously. Distributed on a termly basis, the survey aims to assess and evaluate the use of e-cigarettes among young people on the Central Coast. Data from the term 4 survey, once collated and analysed, will be used to further progress the SNTV project.

We also used the hook of World No Tobacco Day (31 May) to further raise awareness of our SNTV campaign messaging in the media. With the World Health Organization adopting the theme ‘Tobacco is killing us and our planet’, we partnered with local environmental not-for-profit organisation Take 3 for the Sea to highlight the dual threat e-cigarettes (and cigarettes) pose to both our health and the environment. This involved issuing a media release, setting up television and radio interviews and social media activity to highlight how discarded e-cigarette devices and their batteries are creating plastic, toxic and electronic waste that's polluting the parks and beaches we love on the Coast, as well as underlining the health risks involved with vaping.



#SayNoToVaping



Achievements

- In a survey of Central Coast secondary school principals, around two thirds of respondents said they had used or shared SNTV campaign materials from the promotional toolkit.
- Presented SNTV in online format to the Preventive Health Conference 2022, the largest health promotion conference in Australia and organised by the Public Health Association of Australia. SNTV was also accepted to the CCLHD Research Symposium, which was scheduled to be held March 2022 but has been postponed until later this year.
- World No Tobacco Day activity resulted in broadcast media coverage on NBN News and ABC Central Coast, as well as print and online coverage in Coast Community News and Coast Community Chronicle, with more than 100,000 opportunities to see the print coverage alone.
- [The SNTV web page](#) continues to be the most viewed on the Health Promotion website, with 6,844 visits over the past 12 months.

“ Central Coast Local Health District was well ahead of the rest of the nation when it comes to the public health issue of illegal vaping devices being marketed at and sold to school children. Working in concert with the local media, NSW Health and NSW Department of Education, the Central Coast helped to shape legislation in NSW to combat this insidious trade. It was an absolute pleasure to work with CCLHD on this important public health story. ”
Scott Levi, ABC Breakfast presenter

Partners

- Brisbane Water and Tuggerah Lakes Police District
- Central Coast secondary schools – principals, head teachers wellbeing, head teachers PDHPE
- Cancer Council NSW
- NSW Ministry of Health
- Youth Health

Look out for...

- In response to consumer and community feedback that e-cigarette use is now becoming prevalent among children as young as those in primary school, we are developing a set of resources specifically aimed at a younger audience.
- We are currently testing materials with key stakeholders that include teachers and primary school children themselves, before finalising and distributing resources across the Central Coast.
- The team will also work with other local health districts throughout the state, combining resources and ideas to collaboratively address this health issue.

Active ageing and falls prevention

Reducing falls by supporting older adults to be active, healthy and live independently



2,000 falls packs

distributed to patients



Why are we doing this?

Getting older shouldn't mean living longer in poorer health. Our growing older population (see statistics on [page 38](#)) on the Central Coast should experience the joys of living longer, remaining independent and socially connected for as long as they so wish.

Falls prevent a risk to an independent lifestyle. They are the leading cause of hospitalised injuries and injury-related deaths among older Australians, making up 77% of all injury hospitalisations and 71% of injury deaths for people aged 65 or over in Australia. In 2019-20 falls accounted for 133,000 hospitalisations and more than 5,000 deaths for older adults Australia-wide.

The good news is that many falls are preventable. That's why we must support older adults by providing practical advice and support on keeping our muscles and minds active, and reducing slip, trip and fall hazards.

On the Central Coast, up to half of the population aged 65 or over – which equates to nearly 39,000 people – utilise home care and home support in some capacity, meaning it's essential we work in partnership with local independent living service providers.

Through this collective effort, we can help ensure people grow old with dignity, with the ability to engage and participate in social activities and community life, and live independently in their own home for the longest time possible.

How did we do it?

We compiled and distributed resource packs containing factsheets on important yet simple things like exercises to do

in the home to improve strength and balance, how to identify and make the home safe from fall and trip hazards, how to complete a falls checklist to identify and reduce risk factors, as well as games for the brain like 'spot the falls hazard' and a word search.

Through our growing partnerships, the packs were distributed to Allied Health departments at Gosford, Wyong and Woy Woy hospitals to provide to patients on discharge. They were also sent to general practice nurses to assist educating clients when carrying out routine health assessments.

We also delivered presentations to arm current and future aged sector workforce with the knowledge, ability and confidence to reduce falls for older people. Presentations were delivered to:

- aged care provider and assisted living group staff
- students at TAFE Gosford and two private training organisations studying for the Certificate 111 in Individual Support (Ageing, Disability or Home and Community) and the Certificate 111 in Individual Support (Ageing) respectively.

Over the past 12 months, we have developed new relationships with service providers across the Central Coast provider network to enable, empower and support residents to age in place healthily and actively. This included a partnership with Meals on Wheels Central Coast to provide our falls resources to its residential and National Disability Insurance Scheme clients. The partnership generated local media coverage, as well as national coverage in *The Senior* magazine.

We also worked alongside CCLHD's geriatric department to help prevent de-conditioning and ultimately falls in older patients stuck at home due to the COVID-19 restrictions. This involved production of a 30-second radio advert broadcast

on Radio Five-0 Plus and drafting a media release with advice from geriatrician Dr Tomiko Barrett that featured in Coast Community Chronicle and securing an editorial piece in Central Coast Council's Growing Older and Loving Life (GOALL) magazine. In addition to a brief educational grab, the campaign encouraged and invited older adults to get in touch to receive free falls packs that were then distributed by CCLHD geriatrics department.

Using the hook of April Falls Month, we also devised and executed a digital marketing and media campaign to further highlight the importance of falls prevention and risk minimisation, and to link people to our support resources. We delivered a month-long Facebook advertising campaign, coupled with an editorial article in *On the Coast Over 55s* magazine.

Further media relations activity saw us draft and secure further coverage in GOALL magazine on simple steps to maintain and improve balance.

Achievements

- Approximately 2,000 falls prevention packs distributed to patients with the support of other CCLHD departments.
- A further 40 falls packs sent direct to homes as a result of our COVID-19 deconditioning prevention campaign.
- 750 Meals on Wheels Central Coast clients now receiving falls prevention and active ageing resources and advice with their meals.

Partners

Aged care service providers and workforce trainers
CCLHD services – Allied Health, geriatric, rehabilitation, community and chronic health management
Seniors social and lifestyle groups

- Six falls presentations delivered to aged care organisations, training providers and students, reaching approximately 200 people.
- More than 400,000 opportunities to see print media coverage on our active ageing advice and local support, excluding broadcast and online coverage achieved.
- Our April Falls Facebook campaign resulted in:
 - 6,408 people reached
 - 18,397 impressions
 - 499 people clicking on our falls prevention resources page, at a click-through rate of 2.7%, significantly beating the Facebook healthcare sector average of 0.83%
 - A cost per link click of just \$0.30, beating the Facebook healthcare sector average of \$1.93

Look out for...

Further partnership working with organisations that bring older people together and support positive ageing in place.

Healthy Jarjums Healthy Future

Identifying and addressing early health issues in Aboriginal kindergarten kids



Why are we doing this?

Everyone deserves a right to good health, no matter what their cultural background. However, Indigenous Australians have a shorter life expectancy – around eight to nine years – than non-Indigenous Australians, with higher rates of chronic disease and psychological distress.

Aboriginal kids are a vulnerable group in which, if health conditions are not caught early, can suffer poor education and health outcomes when they grow older. On the Central Coast specifically, there are a number of Aboriginal kids starting kindergarten in the northern area that require support for health and physical needs that have not yet been diagnosed, while support for their families also needs to be identified.

The Healthy Jarjums Healthy Future initiative seeks to address this by detecting health, including physical, issues in Aboriginal kindergarten kids, allowing for early intervention strategies to be put in place.

In doing so, we will allow our kids to have a good start in their school life and help to close the health gap that exists between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians.

How did we do it?

The Healthy Jarjums Healthy Future initiative is the first of its kind on the Central Coast.

It was developed by CCLHD services, including Nunyara Aboriginal Health Unit, Allied Health, Health Promotion and Ngiyang child and family health service, in partnership with the NSW Aboriginal Education Consultative Group, Bungree Aboriginal Association and San Remo Neighbourhood Centre.

The initiative saw the partners organise an all-day event in May 2022 at San Remo Neighbourhood where Aboriginal kids in kindergarten were screened for early stage health issues. Screening stations were set up for audiology, physiotherapy, speech pathology, occupational therapy, child and family health, social services and nutrition. This allowed for kids

to have direct access and referral into treatment for early intervention.

The team handed out lunchboxes and jigsaws illustrating how to pack a healthy lunchbox, while parents were also provided with information on services such as [Get Healthy](#). Kids also had the opportunity to make themselves a tasty and nutritious smoothie by peddling a blender bike.

Trust is the key enabler for Aboriginal people to access health services. By working in partnership to establish relationship-building activities, the initiative has built trust between CCLHD services, San Remo Neighbourhood Centre and local Aboriginal families. It is the first time such an initiative has been facilitated on the Central Coast.

Achievements

As a direct result of the event, CCLHD paediatric team will run two sessions a week for six weeks in term 3 to work with the kids and families who were screened as needing additional capacity building and skills for school.

The sessions will run at Wyong Hospital's paediatric gym and Ngiyang, with Ngiyang staff on hand at the first and last sessions to welcome the families and support them.

Of the 35 kids the Wyong paediatric gym team screened, 17 were identified as requiring additional support, with 15 of those families already committing to participating in the term 3 program.

In addition, there were:

- Four new referrals to Ngiyang
- Four new referrals to speech pathology
- Three new referrals to physiotherapy
- Three kids requiring follow-up with audiology



Partners

Bungree Aboriginal Association

CCLHD services –

Nunyara Aboriginal Health Unit; Allied Health; Health Promotion; Ngiyang

NSW Aboriginal Education Consultative Group

San Remo Neighbourhood Centre

- 11 new families registering to receive support from San Remo Neighbourhood Centre

Look out for..

The success of the initiative now allows for:

- Possible facilitation within different areas on the Central Coast.
- Further evaluation to look at improvements to processes.
- Investigation into whether other partners might come on board.

Project SONIC

Improving access to hepatitis C education, testing and treatment



83 people
engaged with SONIC

Why are we doing this?

A vibrant and healthy Central Coast not only means keeping people free from chronic disease, but stopping the spread of blood-borne viral infections too.

Hepatitis C is a blood-borne virus that affects the liver. Left untreated, hepatitis C can cause cirrhosis and liver cancer. Since 2016, new and easy treatments are available and most people can now be cured. However, stigma and discrimination associated with hepatitis C and injecting drug use continues to create barriers to accessing prevention, testing and treatment.

Indeed, it is estimated that approximately 3,600 people on the Central Coast are living with hepatitis C. For Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, rates of hepatitis C are 11 times higher than non-Aboriginal people in NSW. The CCLHD Needle and Syringe Program (NSP) identified incentives and clinic pathways for dried blood spot (DBS) testing as a way to help meet state and local health aims to eliminate hepatitis C as a public health concern by 2028.

Thanks to a small grant from NSW Ministry of Health's Blood-Borne Virus and Sexually Transmitted Infections Unit, Project SONIC (Service Optimisation in NSPs using Incentives and Clinical Pathways) was born.

Project SONIC aims to make hepatitis C education, testing and treatment more accessible to the community, including our Aboriginal community, so more people on the Coast can live life to the fullest, free from hepatitis C-related illnesses.

How did we do it?

Planning for Project SONIC included identifying sites, times and staffing for activations to take place, as well as the incentives used to encourage people to attend. We had to ensure that our care was appropriate and dynamic to adapt to our client's needs when they returned a positive hepatitis C result and wanted to access treatment, as well as making sure our team members were appropriately trained with DBS testing.

Despite COVID-19 preventing activations during some months, the team ran 14 activations across NSP services and associated alcohol and drug services on the Central Coast in 2021-22. This included at two Aboriginal community settings as part of pre-NAIDOC Week health screenings conducted by Nunyara Aboriginal Health Unit.

Project SONIC activations saw team members and peer workers register clients, take them through education and complete DBS finger prick testing. The sessions also provided an opportunity to incentivise hepatitis C treatment by offering attendees take-home naloxone, a lifesaving medication that reverses opioid overdose. Clients were informed of their DBS test results shortly after the activation either by text if negative, or face to face or telephone if positive.

The activations were run in the evening in summer and during the day in the cooler months. This enabled the NSP service to run outside of usual hours and target a different demographic of clients who normally access sterile-injecting equipment via vending machines.



As part of the project, the team also commissioned four artworks by proud Gamilaroi Bidjara woman Bianca Meiklejohn that represented accessing health care and talking about health without shame. These artworks were used on banners and posters displayed at NSP sites to promote the activations and incentives to attend. They also now feature on new staff uniforms.

Achievements

- 83 clients engaged with SONIC, including 24 who identified as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander.
- 69 people were tested for hepatitis C.
- 10 people tested positive for hepatitis C with one client completing treatment.
- 59 people completed education and a patient experience survey. Of those who completed the survey:
 - 80% said NSP workers explained things in a way they could understand all or most of the time
 - 87% said they feel supported by NSP workers all or most of the time
 - 93% said they are treated with respect and dignity by NSP workers all or most of the time

Partners

CCLHD Drug and Alcohol Services
CCLHD Nunyara Aboriginal Health Unit
Hepatitis NSW
Hepatitis Programs Unit, Centre for Population Health
Sexual Health Infolink

- 90% said they would recommend NSP services
- Commission of artwork by Bianca Meiklejohn and development of branding and NSP-specific resources.

Look out for...

An ongoing peer partnership with Hepatitis NSW peer workers and ability to provide incentives to help people engage with hepatitis C treatment.

Student health workshops

Improving students' knowledge and confidence in relationships and sexual health



155 students

attended the sessions across the two schools



Why are we doing this?

We all want future generations to lead a healthy lifestyle full of positive relationships that enable individuals to reach their full potential in life. However, this is only possible if there are the education programs in place to support them.

In 2018–19, the Central Coast had the second highest number of domestic violence apprehended violence orders of all the local government areas in NSW.

Another area of concern for adolescents is sexual health. In 2020, there were 203 gonorrhoea notifications and 956 chlamydia notifications on the Central Coast. More than half of chlamydia notifications in NSW are from young people aged 15–24 years old. As a result, it could be expected that chlamydia affected approximately 478 young people on the Central Coast in 2020.

That's why providing education to young people is essential if we are to increase their safe sex practice and ensure they have the tools and strategies to keep themselves safe and identify unhealthy relationships in life.

How did we do it?

Youth Health ran several evidence-based workshops to improve the health of local students, whose learning had been disrupted by COVID-19, by increasing their knowledge and confidence in the areas of healthy relationships and sexual health.

Healthy relationship education was provided to year 11 students at Narara Valley High School in June 2022 by a social worker and two occupational therapist students from Youth Health Services.

The team delivered four practical and interactive workshops. Each workshop lasted 35 minutes and was delivered to small groups of approximately 25 students, who were separated according to their gender.

The workshops focused on:

- What are healthy and unhealthy relationships
- How to keep yourself safe in relationships
- Where to go for help: services and support available.

Youth Health also partnered with headspace and Out of Home Care Health Pathways to deliver an evidence-based sexual health program to year 11 and 12 students at Kariong Mountains High School in April 2022. A team of five staff ran two concurrent sessions, each with 30 students who were again split according to their gender.

The program looked at consent, sexually transmitted infection (STI) transmission, treatment and contraception. A harm-minimisation and sex-positivity framework was applied in order to:

- Increase young people's capacity to make informed choices
- Increase young people's health literacy in regards to consent, STIs and testing processes
- Normalise condom use and sexual health checks.
- Debunk myths
- Facilitate positive discussions around these topics

Teachers were present in all sessions at both schools in order to build their capacity to offer follow-up support to students.

Achievements

- Across the two schools, 155 students attended the sessions.

“Our students were lucky enough to have the team from Central Coast Youth Health Service visit our school and deliver a relevant, yet relaxed, educational experience. The students felt motivated and comfortable to ask questions and add their thoughts and opinions during discussions. The time and care taken to give students a face-to-face delivery of those ‘hard-to-address’ topics was excellent and we all left feeling confident and well equipped with the knowledge we gained.”

Kariong Mountains High School

- All participants were asked to complete a pre-and post-session evaluation of their knowledge, with a 93% completion rate for both pre-and post-session surveys amongst healthy relationships attendees and a 55% completion rate for pre-and post-session surveys amongst sexual health attendees.
- The evaluation of the healthy relationships workshops showed a:
 - 24% increase in students feeling confident knowing what a healthy relationship looks like
 - 19% increase in students feeling confident they know where to go for help
 - 10% increase in students feeling confident they know what an unhealthy relationship looks like
- The evaluation of the sexual workshops showed a:
 - 61% increase in students feeling confident knowing how to practice safer sex
 - 28% increase in students who showed improved knowledge of how an STI screen is completed

Partners

CCLHD headspace
CCLHD Out of Home Care Health Pathways
Kariong Mountains High School
Narara Valley High School

- 44% increase in students who showed improved knowledge of how frequent an STI screen should be completed
- Strong partnerships formed between CCLHD services and local high schools, while the sexual health program was a first in seeing Youth Health partner with headspace and Out of Home Care Health Pathways.

Look out for...

Youth Health delivering more education sessions in high schools.

Short & Sharp

Health Promotion Service

Smoke-free Grounds

Health Promotion aims to support CCLHD reduce smoking at our sites and support patients, staff and visitors to comply with the Smoke-free Environment Act 2000. Since the introduction of the law and a smoke-free by-law in 2013, it is illegal to smoke on CCLHD grounds and fines can be issued for breaching this Act.

We continue to monitor smoking at both Gosford and Wyong hospitals through seasonal counts carried out in high-profile areas. With a new hospital building at Wyong and the new Central Coast Clinical School and Research Institute at Gosford, over the past 12 months our work has involved ensuring these new sites are smoke free.

The counts help us assess the effectiveness of wider strategies such as policy communication, signage, penalties for breaches and the availability of nicotine replacement therapy, which patients can purchase at both Gosford and Wyong hospitals.

Since the by-law's introduction, smoking in high-profile areas has significantly reduced at both hospitals. Between July 2021 and June 2022, we conducted 12 smoking counts at four high-profile locations, observing a compliance rate in excess of 93% at both Gosford and Wyong.

Another way we are encouraging our patients to be smoke free, and assist with delivering best practice care, is through the Smoking Cessation eMR Project. Both Central Coast and Northern Sydney local health districts are pilot sites for the project. It sees clinicians across all emergency, inpatient and community settings now able to access standardised smoking and e-cigarette data fields in screening and assessment forms, while being able to make electronic referral to Quitline through the Smoking Cessation Management Pathway. The pilot launched in June 2022, with positive feedback from all staff involved so far.

Digital advertising

Over the past couple of years, the Health Promotion Service has increased its use of social media in order to drive recruitment into healthy lifestyle programs and raise awareness of health promotion messages. This has involved running a

number of paid advertising campaigns on Facebook, Google display and search ads, and Spotify.

Building on initial success, in order to make the campaigns even more targeted and effective, in 2021 the service began utilising Facebook and Google's artificial intelligence to serve people its ads. This involves testing multiple messages and images to determine what resonates best with the local community.

After each campaign, the results are analysed and help inform the next campaign. This vital intelligence helps the service devise even more efficient campaigns in the future that resonate with the public and, crucially, drive them to take action.

The service regularly beats healthcare sector averages, with cost per result rates as low as \$0.23 compared to the sector average of \$1.93 and click-through rates as high as 3.2% compared to the sector average of 0.83%. Despite it being the cheapest form of advertising, around three quarters of our registrations for Healthy and Active for Life stem from social media advertising.

The service's digital advertising success has seen CCLHD present at conferences such as the Preventive Health Conference 2021 and informally approached to offer guidance to other teams across the state.

Stepping On

Stepping On is a friendly, seven-week community-based program to help older adults build knowledge, strength and confidence to reduce falls. The Health Promotion Service on the Central Coast supports the program by promoting where local programs are taking place across a variety of communications channels.

Two virtual Stepping On groups took place in the second half of 2021, before we saw a return to face-to-face programs in March 2022, with programs running in Gosford and Toukley. A further three programs ran from May and June at locations in Gosford, Woy Woy and Kanwal.

The programs supported 54 Central Coast residents to stay active and independent, as well as connect with others in their community.



Photo credit: Leanne Andrew

**No vaping.
No smoking.**

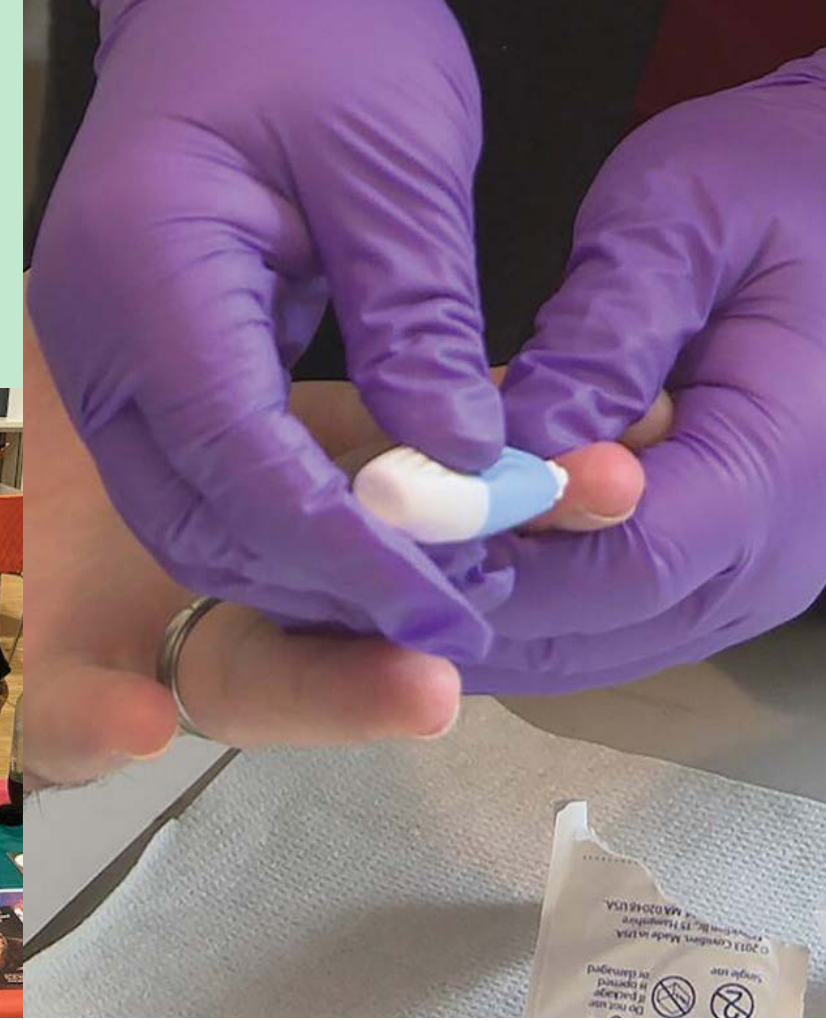
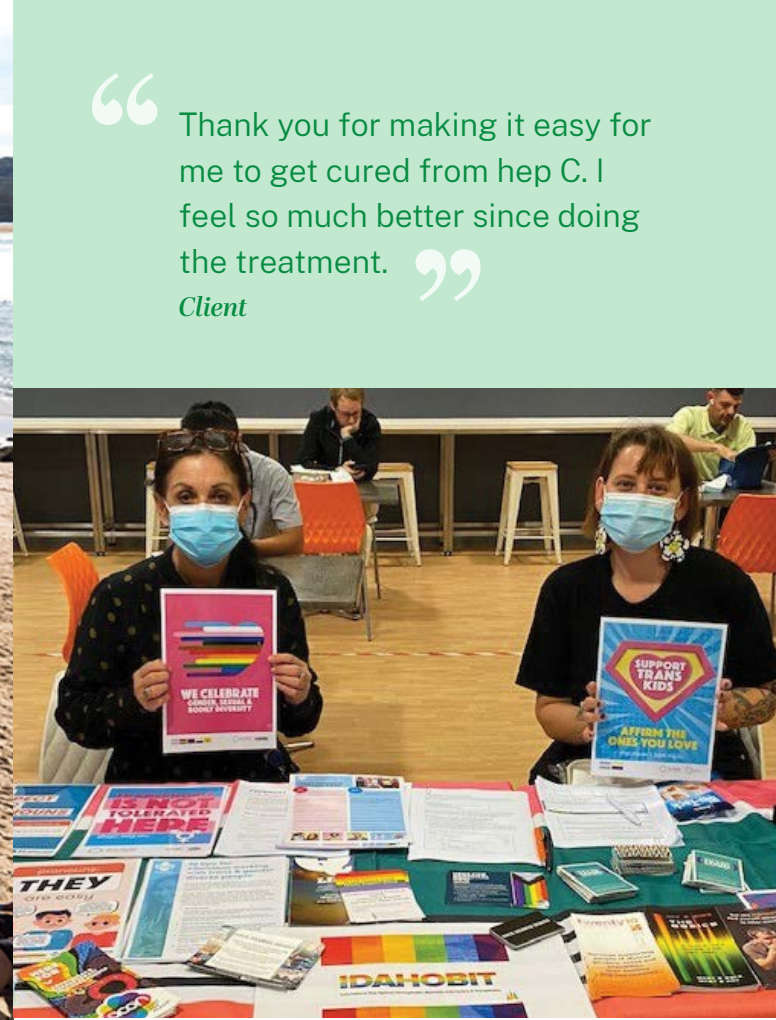
It's the law.



Smoke Free Environment Act 2000.
Penalties may apply.



Central Coast
Local Health District



“ Thank you for making it easy for me to get cured from hep C. I feel so much better since doing the treatment. ”
Client

HIV & Related Programs

5 Lands Walk

After a COVID-19-enforced hiatus, the 5 Lands Walk returned for the first time in three years in June 2022.

The 5 Lands Walk is a weekend of celebrations, with the centrepiece being a free day-long festival that takes place along 10 kilometres of breathtaking coastline. The walk passes through the five traditional lands of the Darkinjung people, with different cultural experiences, entertainment and activities offered at MacMasters Beach, Copacabana, Avoca Beach, North Avoca and Terrigal. The weekend also features beachside markets, art exhibitions, live music and other multicultural performances.

To mark the event's return, CCLHD partnered with the Cancer Council to run a stall promoting sexual health 'Play Safe' programs as well as LHD information on healthy eating, being active, and alcohol and drug use. There was strong engagement from parents and people who work with young people wanting information around how to talk to young people about their sexual health.

Diversity days

Calendar dates such as Trans Day of Visibility (31 March) and International Day Against Homophobia, Biphobia, Intersexism and Transphobia (May 17) offer opportunities for CCLHD to communicate a clear and loud commitment to diversity and inclusion for the local community.

These awareness days serve as milestones in the longer strategy of breaking down barriers to healthcare, reducing stigma and discrimination, and addressing myths and misconceptions. They also provide an opportunity to demonstrate our support for our gender and sexuality diverse community.

A consortium made up of staff from HIV & Related Programs, Youth Health and Holden Street Sexual Health Clinic, along with CCLHD's Diversity & Inclusion Manager, used a variety of activities to elevate the topic of diversity and inclusion both internally and to the wider community. This included promotion via community stalls at various locations on CCLHD sites, on social media, and in relevant Central Coast forums such as the Youth Interagency, Multicultural

Interagency and Rainbow Inclusion Network. This helped to elevate the topic of diversity and inclusion both within the Health District and within the region.

Such has been the impressive development in CCLHD's work in this area, staff have been recognised with Pride in Health+Wellbeing awards. A hallmark of the approach has been collaboration between services both within CCLHD and with other key non-government organisations like ACON & Community Council.

Dried Blood Spot testing

Dried Blood Spot (DBS) testing is a new technology that allows people to test more easily for HIV and hepatitis C without having to go to the doctor or a clinic. The test only takes a few drops of blood.

The CCLHD Needle and Syringe program (NSP) wanted to be able to offer more convenient hepatitis C testing to its clients and to establish care pathways for them to access treatment to get cured when using the NSP.

In late 2021, CCLHD HIV & Related Programs (HARP) services became accredited to participate in the state-wide DBS study, which is led by St Vincent's Hospital Research Office and delivered in partnership with local health districts and the NSW

Sexual Health Infolink. This meant trained NSP team members, including non-clinical staff such as health education officers and peer workers, were able to offer and conduct DBS testing in CCLHD services.

Allowing people access to treatment through NSP services and non-clinical settings has helped remove the barriers of clients needing to see a doctor and having a full venous blood draw—which can sometimes be more difficult for clients who inject drugs—and allows access treatment through the NSP. The DBS test is offered on an opportunistic basis and also as part of hepatitis C 'blitz sessions' conducted in partnership with Hepatitis NSW peer workers.

Recognising some people don't want to, or are not able to start hepatitis C treatment immediately, the NSP manager and blood-borne virus health promotion officer not only administer DBS tests, but also follow up with clients who return a positive result to encourage them to start treatment. They also facilitate treatment starts for those people wanting to be treated.

Between November 2021, when DBS testing began in the CCLHD NSP setting, and June 2022, 75 clients have been tested. Of those, 10 returned positive results for hepatitis C, with nine either being followed up or indicating they wish to start treatment, and one client already treated and cured.



HIV awareness

CCLHD's HIV & Related Programs team is committed to ending HIV transmission among people on the Central Coast. A continuing focus remains on providing education to the community regarding the prevention, testing and treatment for HIV. Messages are focused on:

- HIV testing is easy and confidential
- Early diagnosis means a long and healthy life
- People on effective HIV treatment can't transmit HIV to other people
- Regular testing and early treatment can help end HIV

In an effort to end HIV transmission, decrease stigma and discrimination, and embrace diversity and inclusion, clinicians are encouraged to make HIV testing part of their routine practice and the community is encouraged to ask their health professional for a test or to access testing via dried blood spot testing.

Recognition of World AIDS Day (and HIV Awareness Week) every December and NSW HIV Testing Week every June are key opportunities to promote such messages. To mark these dates, staff provide presentations and resources at key forums such as the Central Coast Multicultural Interagency and Rainbow

Inclusion Network Central Coast, run community stalls on CCLHD sites and promote awareness through social media.

In addition, this year a representative of the Australian Federation of AIDS Organisations was invited to speak to the Rainbow Inclusion Network Central Coast – a group facilitated by HIV & Related Programs and made up of government and non-government services with aim of reducing stigma and discrimination, providing more inclusive services. CCLHD staff also supported peak state HIV/AIDS body ACON at the Woy Woy Bayview Hotel Drag Trivia evening in November 2021.

Play Safe programs

NSW Play Safe programs are a collective impact-style state-wide approach to reducing the stigma and myths around condom use and sexually transmitted infections (STIs) with young people. It includes a coalition of government and non-government bodies working together on projects such as access to condoms, normalizing STI screening, youth-friendly primary care services and peer education models among others.

Health promotion staff from HIV & Related Programs (HARP) and Youth Health partnered with peak NSW youth homelessness service, Yfoundations, to run workshops, called 'Sticky Stuff', for youth sector workers engaged with young people who want to improve their skills in talking about sexual health with young people.

In April 2022, 28 workers from across a variety of services attended a three-hour online workshop. Following the workshop, all attendees reported improvements in both competence and confidence in engaging young people and talking about sexual health.

In addition, an online learning module, 'Because You Care', developed for carers in the out-of-home sector, was promoted through presentations at various forums. This training uses

“As a high school, it is important to have the resources and information to provide students around sexual health.”
Workshop attendee

a trauma-informed lens and supports carers in talking with their young people about sexual behaviours and safety. An abstract for this training has been accepted for a presentation at the 2022 Joint Australasian HIV & AIDS + Sexual Health Conferences. Central Coast and Illawarra HARP health promotion have partnered with the Ministry of Health's STI Programs Unit and Yfoundations to develop this unique product.



Nutrition Services

Breastfeeding art competition

Following the success of the 2020 World Breastfeeding Week (WBW) Community Art Competition, the Central Coast Breastfeeding and Infant Feeding Reference Group organised and promoted another art competition to highlight the 2021 WBW theme of 'Protect Breastfeeding: A Shared Responsibility'. Due to COVID-19 restrictions in 2021, the competition was postponed until 2022.

Eleven artworks using the medium of painting, drawing, photography or mixed media were submitted. These artworks were displayed in the main exhibition corridor of Gosford Hospital throughout June 2022. The community was engaged via the People's Choice Award, which attracted 346 votes. The Judges' Choice and People's Choice winners were announced in a virtual gallery released during WBW, 1-7 August 2022.

The creation of art to promote important health messages is not a new concept. However, the WBW community art competitions held in 2020 and 2022 are the first time art has been used on the Central Coast to raise awareness of the positive health messages about breastfeeding for mothers and their infants. The competition has provided a special way to raise awareness about breastfeeding that can make a greater and longer lasting impact.

Nutritional support for the Aboriginal community

Despite COVID-19 restrictions in the past 12 months impacting local plans to provide nutrition education and resource implementation support to Aboriginal organisations on the Central Coast, Nutrition Services was able to offer support to the Aboriginal community through:

- A display, resources and education on eating more vegetables at the [Healthy Jarjums Healthy Future](#) event for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Families with kids starting kindergarten in 2022.
- Healthy Eating on a Budget education to men at The Glen. Furthermore, Quick Meals for Kooris resources continued to be provided for free online on the [Central Coast Health Promotion Service website](#). The page attracted 582 visitors over the past 12 months, while a series of cooking videos attracted 549 views.

In the past 12 months, organisations from outside the Central Coast have also requested permission to use the Quick Meals for Kooris resources, including Nalderun Education Aboriginal Corporation in Victoria and Wellington Aboriginal Corporation Health Service. In addition, seven recipes from the Quick Meals for Kooris at Home resource have been included in the Healthy Recipes section of the Ministry of Health's Healthy Living website.

Yhunger

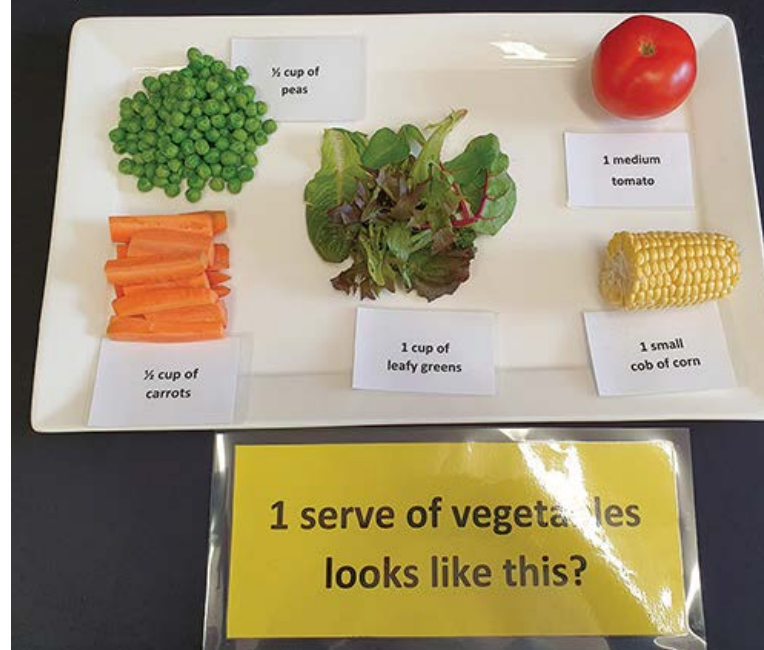
Early in 2021, CCLHD's Youth Health Service approached Nutrition Services for advice and support on how to initiate and develop conversations with young people about food and nutrition-related issues such as food related living skills and food access issues.

The two services teamed up with Youthblock Youth Health Service in Sydney Local Health District to provide CCLHD Youth Health staff training on healthy eating and physical activity, including the Yhunger resources. The training supported Youth Health staff to integrate Yhunger youth-friendly food and physical activity resources – which includes cookbooks, games, fact sheets and checklists – into their service. Youth Health staff now have increased confidence in identifying healthy eating and physical activity opportunities and implementing Yhunger strategies with young people.

As a result, Yhunger resources are now used with young people at Youth Booth, conversations with young people about access to food and healthy eating have increased, and the Youth Health Service now has some basic food items such as oats, soup and water available to provide to young people if they have not had a meal.

Youth Health staff also completed a virtual training session to support the development of a service-specific nutrition and physical activity policy soon to be introduced.

“The Quick Meals for Kooris at Home resource was inspirational. The kids found the recipes easy to follow and simple to cook, which was fantastic.”
Daniele Glover, Nalderun Education Aboriginal Corporation





“ Using a harm-minimisation approach and incorporating art at the end of the session allowed the young people to express themselves free of judgement and to have open conversations about how to take care of themselves and each other. ”

Stephanie de Vries, Blood-borne Virus Health Promotion Officer and workshop co-facilitator

Youth Health Service

Drug and alcohol education

The 2019 National Drug Strategy Household Survey indicates the average age Australians aged 12–24 first try alcohol is 16.2 years old. The survey also indicates younger people are more likely than any other age group to consume more than four standard drinks on a single occasion, which exceeds the single occasion risk guidelines. In addition, around a third had recently used an illicit drug, which if extrapolated to the Central Coast would equate to approximately 33,684 young people.

Youth Health Services, CCLHD HIV & Related Programs and Coast Community Connections partnered to form a Community Drug Action Team (CDAT) in the Kariong and Peninsula area.

Representatives from Youth Health, Drug & Alcohol and Coast Community Connections delivered a 45-minute drug and alcohol education session to 15 students at Ngaruki Gulgul Central School. Two teachers were present to increase their capacity to provide follow-up support to students.

The CDAT members delivered an evidence-based program which addressed the following:

- Understanding the difference between depressants, hallucinogens, stimulants and impacts that alcohol and drugs can have on an individual
- What does an overdose look and like and what to do
- How to keep yourself and your friends safe
- Where to go for help

By utilising a harm-minimisation framework, CDAT was able to facilitate positive discussions around young people and their drug and alcohol experience.

At the end of the session, attendees were invited to create an artwork with key takeaway messages from what they had learnt. These artworks were entered into a competition, with plans to have the artwork displayed in local shopping centres and on magnets to be disseminated within the community.

Post-workshop surveys were conducted with participants and found:

- 80% of participants said if someone overdosed they would ring an ambulance and inform them what substances the person has taken.
- 60% of participants said they felt confident to support a friend who asks for help regarding their drug use.
- 53% of participants correctly identified safer ways to use alcohol and drugs.
- 17% of participants reported that they would use the information that they had learnt.

In addition to increasing the awareness of drug and alcohol support available to a group of vulnerable young people, strong partnerships were formed between CDAT members who will continue to work on interventions within the Kariong and Peninsula communities.

Youth Booth

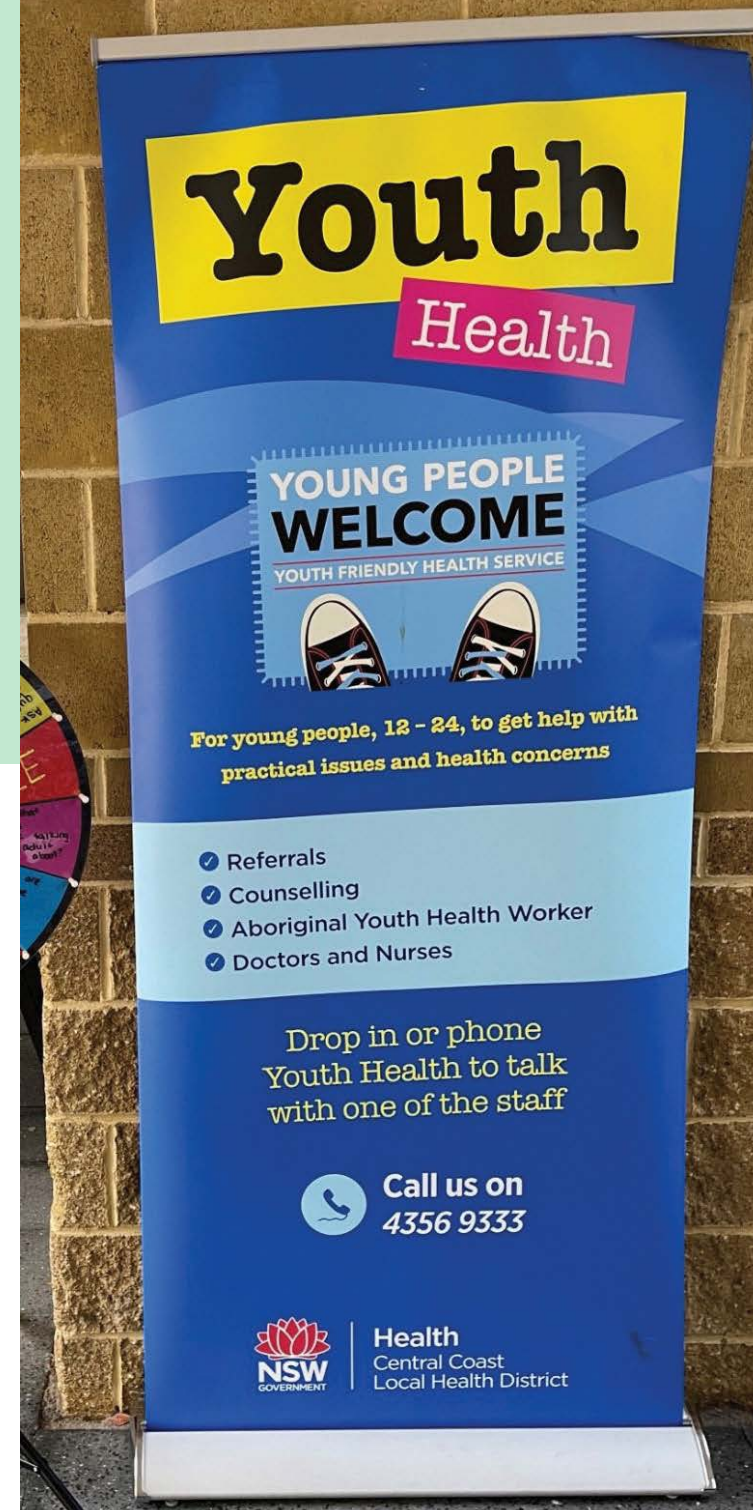
Youth Booth is a mobile outreach service that enables young people 14–24 years old to access health services from a community location. Young people are provided with information on oral health, drug and alcohol, immunisations, healthy relationships, mental health and sexual health.

Statistics show approximately a third of adolescents experience some type of violence from an intimate partner, with an estimated 12% experiencing physical violence. In 2019, 14.6% of 18-24-year-olds in Australia consumed more than 11 standard drinks on one occasion at least monthly. Based on current population estimates, if extrapolated to the Central Coast this would equate to approximately 15,867 young people binge drinking regularly. Youth Booth is a unique intervention that provides young people with information to increase their health literacy and help tackle these numbers.

Three Youth Booths were held in 2022 – with three cancelled due to COVID-19 – making it the 16th year running that Youth Booths were held on the Central Coast. Youth Booth hosts in 2022 were Coast Shelter, Youth off the Streets and TLK Youth College.

Over the three Youth Booths, the results were:

- 35 young people seen, with around a quarter (23%) identifying as Aboriginal.
- 40 vaccinations provided, including flu and catch-up immunisations.



- Seven sexually transmitted infection samples taken for chlamydia and gonorrhoea, with one positive result.
- 39 referrals made to other services.

Youth Health has continued strengthening partnerships with other CCLHD services such as HIV & Related Programs; headspace; Holden Street Clinic; Sexual Health; Out of Home Care Health Pathways; Public Health Unit; and Youth Drug and Alcohol.

Youth Health plans to hold six Youth booths next year and strengthen partnerships with Aboriginal services Yerin and Ngiyang.



Major Committees & Networks

Aboriginal Lunchbox Connection Working Group

Meets fortnightly to review and advise on the program. It is facilitated by the Health Promotion Service and has representation from the Blue Haven and Northlakes public schools, San Remo Neighbourhood Centre, Department of Education, Nunyara Aboriginal Health Unit (CCLHD), Aboriginal Education Consultative Group, Schools as Community Centres and the Aboriginal Environmental Health Unit.

CCLHD Breastfeeding and Infant Feeding Reference Group

Supports the implementation of a comprehensive and integrated plan for breastfeeding on the Central Coast.

CCLHD Environmental Sustainability Committee

Established in 2021 to oversee the development and implementation of the District's Environmental Sustainability Plan, including monitoring of its effectiveness and reporting

of outcomes against the plan. Core membership includes executive, management and other key positions/roles from across CCLHD.

CCLHD Health Literacy Committee

Ensures information developed across the CCLHD for patients, clients, consumers and carers is clear and can be understood so that people can make effective decisions about their health and care. This includes reviewing and providing feedback on written information and audio-visual material.

CCLHD Immunisation Taskforce

Supports healthcare providers and the community by disseminating information and developing immunisation strategies with the aim of protecting the community from vaccine-preventable diseases. As well as CCLHD service representatives, membership also includes Hunter New England Central Coast Primary Health Network and Yerin.

Central Coast Canteen Network

Provides support and professional development for Central Coast canteen managers and their support staff/volunteers.

Central Coast Health Eating and Active Living (COHEAL) Sub-Committee

Chaired by the Health Promotion Service, the committee includes representatives from a range of Central Coast government agencies who work together to reduce the prevalence of overweight and obesity in the community.

Central Coast Youth Interagency

A forum convened by Central Coast Community Council that brings together all the organisations on the Central Coast engaged with young people, whether they are health, community, justice, accommodation, drug and alcohol, employment and education services.

Community Drug Action Teams

Groups of local community members, staff from local health districts and representatives from other government and non-government agencies come together to strengthen their communities by organising primary prevention activities and developing resources aimed at reducing the harms associated with use of alcohol and other drugs.

CONNECT NOW

A networking interagency to facilitate the exchange of information and ideas between agencies working in the northern communities on the Central Coast.

Excellence in Smoking Cessation Training, Education and Resources (ESTER) Advisory Committee

Led by Cancer Institute NSW, the group seeks to embed smoking cessation training within NSW Health services, including leadership and governance, and the development of training.

Get Healthy Service Local Health District Network

State health-led group that includes representation from each LHD within NSW. The network updates, shares and disseminates information related to the Get Health Service.

Healthy Ageing Group

Network of all local health districts running state-wide programs for older adults. Convened by Centre for Population Health.

Healthy Built Environments Local Health District Network

Informal network for collaboration on, and collective resolution of, built environment issues across NSW LHDs. The network also facilitates information exchange about local and state-wide healthy built environment initiatives and built environment-related issues of interest and relevance to LHDs both nationally and internationally.

Local Health Districts' Healthy School Canteen Strategy Network

Facilitated by the Centre for Population Health, this network supports and shares canteen-related issues for primary and secondary schools among all key LHD contacts working with school canteens across NSW.

Live Life Well @ School Key Contacts Group

Guides and supports the implementation of the state-wide Live Life Well @ School program in primary schools.

Munch & Move Key Contacts Group

Guides and supports the implementation of the state-wide Munch & Move program in early childhood education and care services. Includes representation from the Centre for Population Health and local health districts across NSW.

NSW Health Promotion Communications Network

Made up of communications professionals in health promotion teams across the state, as well as Ministry of Health representatives. Shares experiences and resources to support best-practice communications.

NSW Health Promotion Leadership Group

Provides an opportunity for effective strategic and practical collaboration between the Centre for Population Health and health promotion teams from local health districts throughout NSW. This includes identifying strategic priorities for health promotion in NSW, working collaboratively on major programs and initiatives, advocating for health promotion in NSW, as well as providing leadership, mentoring and oversight of professional networks and other endorsed activities.

NSW Network of Practice

State-wide local health district representatives and Ministry of Health representatives meet to plan and help shape the Healthy Food and Drink in NSW Health Facilities for Staff and Visitors Framework.

Prevention Research Collaboration (PRC) Strategic Advisory Board

CCLHD representative on the Board, which has the purpose of advising the PRC on how best to fulfil its mission and on the dissemination, application and utilisation of prevention research.

Rainbow Inclusion Network Central Coast

Established to adopt a collaborative approach to reducing stigma and discrimination, providing more inclusive services, and improving health outcomes for the region's sexuality and gender identity-diverse populations. The Network was devised and is maintained by representatives from CCLHD's HIV & Related Programs team in partnership with ACON, and was established with support from Central Coast Community Council. It has 100 subscribers from over 40 services.

SONIC Grant Working Party

Ministry of Health and representatives from local health districts participating in SONIC (Service Optimisation in Needle and Syringe Program using Incentives and Clinical Pathways) meet to support the implementation of projects, provide updates regarding successes and challenges and monitor key performance indicators.

Smoking Cessation eMR Project -Pilot Site Steering Committee

The Smoking Cessation eMR Project aims to increase the delivery and documentation of smoking cessation interventions across NSW Health clinical services and increase referrals to NSW Quitline. Enhancements include standardised data fields and functionality, including an electronic referral mechanism to Quitline. The project was launched in June 2022 in Central Coast and Northern Sydney local health districts as part of a pilot prior to state-wide rollout.

Smoke-free Healthcare Working Group

Develops and implements strategies to support CCLHD grounds being smoke-free and consults with services who may be impacted by smoke-free by-law expansion.

Tobacco Control Network

A forum for tobacco control staff from local health districts, Cancer Institute and NSW Ministry of Health to share information about projects, ideas and challenges in tobacco control and the implementation of the NSW Tobacco Strategy.

Tuggerah Lakes and Brisbane Waters liquor accords

Aim to improve safety and reduce alcohol-related anti-social behaviour, offences and violence. The Accords are made up of local liquor retailers including pubs, clubs, and packaged liquor outlets, NSW Liquor & Gaming, police, Central Coast Council, CCLHD and among others.

Major Presentations & Publications

Central Coast Canteen Network (February 2022)

Healthy School Canteen Award launch presentation to canteen managers

Preventive Health Conference (May 2022)

Evaluating E-cigarette Use by Young People on the Central Coast: Say No to Vaping

Strengthening connections with Aboriginal families, via the lunchbox, a pilot

National Centre of Implementation Science 'Scaling Up' webinar (May 2022)

A case study of the scale up of Thirsty? Choose Water! across five NSW local health districts and 85 schools

Health Promotion Journal of Australia

Batchelor S, David M, Gowland-Ella J, Kajons N, Lewis P, (May 2022). *The Outcomes of Thirsty? Choose Water! Determining the effects of a behavioural and an environmental intervention on water and sugar sweetened beverage consumption in adolescents: A randomised controlled trial*

