



Health Promotion Action

Year in Review
2024-25



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Central Coast Health Promotion Service

Level 10, 77A Holden Street

Central Coast Clinical School and Research Institute

Gosford NSW 2250

 02 4320 9700

 CCLHD-HealthPromotion@health.nsw.gov.au

 www.healthpromotion.com.au

 www.facebook.com/CentralCoastHealthPromotion

 www.youtube.com/CCHHealthPromotion

To help navigate through the document please note:

When you click a **chapter title** in Contents page it will jump straight to that section

Navigate back to Contents page by clicking **contents** on bottom left of page

Contents

Director's Report	6
Highlights of the Year	8
Central Coast Snapshot	10

Project Showcase	Short & Sharp
Health Promotion Service	Health Promotion Service..... 50
<i>Healthy Eating Active Living</i>	Gandu Connections
Munch & Move	Get Active San Remo and Blue Haven
12	Healthy Built Environments
Move like a Mariner	Website analytics
14	Aboriginal Health
Live Life Well @ School.....	Healthy Jarjums, Healthy Future
16	HIV & Related Programs
Thirsty? Choose Water!.....	Tackling syphilis transmission
18	Nutrition Services
Healthy School Canteens.....	PICNIC Project
20	Nutrition in the childcare setting
Go4Fun	Kamira Project
22	Nutrition for older people
Healthy High Schools	Nutrition on a budget
24	<hr/>
Healthy Food and Drink Framework.....	Health Promotion Team
26	54
Get Healthy Information and Coaching Service.....	<hr/>
28	
Healthy Bites.....	
30	
Healthy Active Ageing.....	
32	
<i>Alcohol</i>	
Liquor licencing.....	
34	
<i>Tobacco & Vaping</i>	
Break the STIGma.....	
36	
Smoke-and Vape-Free Hospital Grounds.....	
38	
HIV & Related Programs	
Identifying and eliminating hepatitis C among rough	
sleepers.....	
40	
The TEMPO Study.....	
42	
Mental Health	
Mental health promotion	
44	
Public Health Unit	
Public health.....	
46	
Women, Children and Families – Priority Populations	
Out-of-Home Care Health Pathway Program	
48	

Acknowledgement of Country

We acknowledge the Darkinung people who are the Traditional Custodians that have walked and cared for these lands for many generations before us; the lands on which we work and live.

We acknowledge and recognise all First Nations people who have come from their own country and now call this country their home.

We acknowledge our Aboriginal Elders who are our knowledge holders, teachers and pioneers, and our youth who are our emerging leaders in this community.

Image: Bouddi National Park on the NSW Central Coast of Australia

Director's Report



Hello, dear reader. I'm so glad you're here. Welcome to the Health Promotion Action: 2024–25 Year in Review. This year has been about strengthening the ties that connect us as a community and ensuring that every initiative we deliver reflects the needs and voices of the people we serve.

If you're new to our Health Promotion Service, I'd firstly like to tell you about who we are and what we do. Our work is guided by the [Ottawa Charter for Health Promotion](#) and perhaps the biggest take away from this is the belief that good health begins well beyond the hospital walls.

Our work is grounded in the belief that health is shaped by the environments we live in, the relationships we build, and the opportunities we create to support one another.

Health Promotion is a mindset shift from health care as treating illness to

health care as ensuring the conditions are in place to prevent disease. We work to create environments where people can thrive physically, mentally, and socially. Investing in this type of care is not only cost-effective by reducing the burden of disease but also allows us to focus our efforts on prevention centred on fairness, opportunity, and adapting to meet the changing needs of our community.

It's important here that I acknowledge the long-standing inequalities experienced by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, particularly when it comes to health. This is always front of mind for our service. We're committing to embedding Aboriginal leadership, cultural governance and co-design in our work, and this year we've strengthened partnerships with Aboriginal organisations, guided by their priorities, and have created new

connections that have been deeply enriching. These partnerships have taught us so much, and we're excited to continue building on this foundation to create lasting, meaningful change together.

In our publication this year, we have focused on how our work helps to reduce social isolation and foster connectedness by bringing people together, whether that's families learning healthy habits, older adults finding new ways to stay active and engaged, or schools creating safe and healthy spaces for young people. These connections are powerful. They not only improve wellbeing today, but they also build resilience for the future.

I do hope you enjoy reading about our work, all of which aligns closely with [Central Coast Local Health District's Strategic Priorities](#), such as *Enabling people to live healthy and fulfilling lives,*

Enhancing care in our community, and Building trust and improving care with Aboriginal people, just to name a few. It's not just the work that shares this alignment – it's our people too. Despite being a small team, the breadth of knowledge, collaboration, unwavering commitment and thoughtful exploration of community need is something quite remarkable to watch. Throughout the year I've seen in action our team's commonly shared belief that by listening to our community and working together, we can create healthier places that have true and meaningful impacts on the wellbeing of our community.

Highlights from this year include Get Healthy in Pregnancy ([page 28](#)), which exceeded referral targets to help expectant parents achieve healthy goals, and Move like a Mariner ([page 14](#)), which reached thousands of preschool children with fun, active

learning experiences aimed at building life-long healthy habits. Gandu Connections ([page 50](#)) is a community-led project to improve access to healthy food and support services for parents and carers of Aboriginal primary school children. For young people, our co-designed Break the STIGma initiative ([page 36](#)) is tackling vaping and nicotine dependence in schools, creating safe spaces and tailored support for students. For older adults, programs like Healthy Active Ageing and Stepping On ([pages 32–33](#)) have strengthened social connection while reducing falls risk, which is critical for maintaining independence and quality of life.

It is a true honour to do this work on Darkinjung Country. The enduring legacy of Aboriginal culture, wisdom, and knowledge remains deeply embedded in Country today and we

are forever thankful to the ancestors who have cared for, walked upon, and safeguarded these lands for countless generations.

Finally, thank you – our community members, community partners, colleagues and executive supporters, who have walked alongside us this year to help shape the work we do. It has been a privilege to work with you, learn from you and be part of shaping a healthier, more connected Central Coast.

Nicole Kajons
Director, Health Promotion and
Population Health Improvement

I:HIP:HD:CI:522

Highlights of the Year

2024-25



3,423

children aged 3–5 years developed their **fundamental movement skills** by participating in **Move like a Mariner**.



2,829

students across NSW given access to clean, chilled water through the **Thirsty? Choose Water!** primary school pilot program.



81

children aged 7–13 enrolled on the **Go4Fun** program across three terms, exceeding the four-term yearly target of 60 enrolments set by NSW Health.



83%

Central Coast Department of Education schools meeting the **NSW Healthy School Canteen Strategy** to increase healthy food options for students.



1,600+

Central Coast secondary school students engaged in the **Physical Activity 4 Everyone** initiative to improve health and wellbeing among adolescents.



6

Healthy Food and Drink Framework practices met by **100%** of our **hospital retailers**, with Central Coast Local Health District (CCLHD) above the state average in 10 out of the 13 practices.



5,873

children from **63** early childhood education and care services and **60** primary schools supported with **transition-to-school resources** to give them, and their families, a **healthy start to school** life on the Central Coast.



135

members have joined the **Central Coast Seniors Interagency**, representing approximately **60 organisations across 20 different sub-sectors** to address the unique and changing needs of older people.



636

pregnant women referred to the **Get Healthy in Pregnancy** service to help them **reach their health goals**, exceeding the target of **586** set by NSW Health.



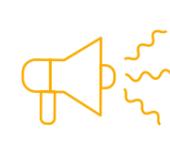
20

new Healthy Bites episodes produced, airing more than 200 times on local radio **to support older adults** with bite-sized, practical health advice.



4

high-risk liquor licences either not granted or withdrawn following responses submitted, resulting in **significant alcohol-related harm reduction**.



NEW public address announcements

trialled, resulting in a downward trend in **smoking and vaping at hospital sites**.



Break the STIGma

magazine and **Cravings Crusher kits** developed through a co-design process to **support students who vape**.



Population Health and Prevention Governance Committee

established to monitor, oversee and make decisions on behalf of Central Coast Local Health District (CCLHD) to achieve population outcomes under its Strategic Plan 2024–2027.

Central Coast Snapshot



Two thirds (66%) of people aged **over 65** have **at least one long-term health condition**



One in five (19.7%) **adults** report **high or very high levels of psychological distress**



There were **14,770** notifications of **communicable diseases** among Central Coast residents in 2024-25

Source: Notifiable Conditions Records for Epidemiology and Surveillance, NSW Ministry of Health



More than a third (37.4%) of **adults** are **insufficiently active**



Less than one in six (14.7%) children aged **5-15 years** achieve **adequate levels of physical activity**



There were 3,565 **alcohol-related hospitalisations** in 2022-23 at a rate of 1,219.6 per 100,000 population – the highest in the state



There were 4,187 **fall-related injury hospitalisations** in 2021-22 at a rate of 840.1 per 100,000 population – the highest in the state



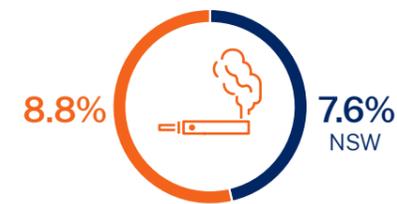
6% of **people over 16** consume the **recommended daily intake of vegetables**



More than two thirds (68.7%) of **adults** are **living with overweight or obesity**



Just 4.6% of **children aged 2-15 years** consume the **recommended daily intake of vegetables**



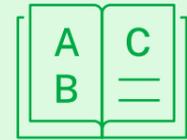
Around one in 11 (8.8%) people **aged 16 or over** **currently vape**



Around one in 10 (10.8%) people **aged 16 or over** **currently smoke**



There were 72.7 **smoking-attributable deaths** per 100,000 of the population in 2021



2,088

children across
63 Central Coast Early
Childhood Education and
Care (ECEC) services
supported with
**transition-to-
school** resources

Munch & Move

Introducing healthy habits in early childhood

What is it?

[Munch & Move](#) is a NSW Health initiative that promotes the healthy growth and development of children from birth to five years attending Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) services with a focus on healthy eating, physical activity and reducing small screen use.

The initiative is built on the shared commitment of healthcare professionals, early childhood educators and families, working together to promote healthy habits for life for young children.

What did we do?

The Central Coast Munch & Move program focuses on providing comprehensive and co-ordinated support to the 155 ECEC services

across the Central Coast. This is offered through face-to-face visits, professional development workshops, and locally adapted online resources that support services to implement and embed the Munch & Move program at their service.

In 2024–25, we continued collaboration and partnerships within our District, across other local health districts, and with educators to encourage healthy eating and active living behaviours in services. For example:

- CCLHD Nutrition Services continue to support ECEC services to meet the NSW Health nutrition guidelines as set by NSW Health. This support included providing professional development to cooks, hosting the quarterly Cook's Network meeting, offering

subscription to the Menu Matters newsletter and providing 38 menus submitted for review.

- Our Building Blocks Workshop for Babies and Toddlers (aged zero to two) in June 2025 was led by a CCLHD paediatric physiotherapist who covered developmental milestones, practical strategies to support physical activity and red flags.
- Munch & Move e-news is delivered each term and includes information and resources for educators and families shared by multiple services, including early childhood clinic dates from Nunyara Aboriginal Health and Ngiyang Aboriginal Pregnancy, Child & Family Health Service; advice, updates and local alerts from the

Public Health Unit; and Good Bite @ Home from the Public Health Nutrition Team.

- We promote and share professional development opportunities for early childhood educators offered by other local health districts. These included Small Bites for Big Steps by Northern Sydney Local Health District and healthy eating learning activities for services through Vegie Month by Northern NSW Local Health District.
- The Central Coast Early Childhood Educators Network offers valuable industry feedback on our locally developed resources and shares the resources with educators. We support the quarterly meetings they co-ordinate, which also offer an opportunity to provide Munch & Move updates.
- 36 local services registered for Vegie Month, reaching 2,706 children across the Central Coast.
- 238 subscribers to the Munch & Move e-newsletter.
- Five TAFE presentations delivered to a total of 65 Cert III students studying Early Childhood Education and Care.
- Health Promotion was invited to appear on the Learn Play Thrive podcast to share tips on how to inject more movement and wellbeing into the early childhood setting. The episode [Building Healthy Habits: The Munch & Move Way](#) was released in April 2025.
- 41 educators attended the Building Blocks Workshop for Babies and Toddlers, representing 23 ECEC services. Feedback was overwhelmingly positive:

What did we achieve?

- 63 local ECEC services requested transition-to-school resources for 2,088 children getting ready to start primary school.
- 86% rated the workbook and presentation as 'extremely useful'
- 83% found the practical activities 'extremely useful'

- 92% of participants expressed interest in future workshops.

Look out for...

- Spotlight on Munch & Move, an online professional development series for ECEC services to include Munch & Move in team meetings.
- PICNIC in Early Education – an extension of the PICNIC program for families ([see page 52](#)) that will offer nutrition and feeding professional development to educators.

Partners

- Nutrition Services (CCLHD)
- Central Coast Early Childhood Educators Network
- Centre for Population Health
- Nunyara Aboriginal Health Unit (CCLHD)
- Health Promotion project officers from other NSW local health districts
- TAFE NSW Ourimbah Children's Services



13,300

from 120 Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) services have taken part in **Move like a Mariner**

Move like a Mariner

Partnering with Central Coast Mariners to teach fundamental movement skills to pre-school children

What is it?

The [Move like a Mariner program](#) is a partnership between CCLHD and A-League football team Central Coast Mariners. It promotes the daily teaching of fundamental movement skills to children aged three to five years old attending Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) services and is delivered in parallel with the NSW Health Munch & Move initiative ([see page 12](#)).

The program unites the community of health professionals, early childhood educators, families and children through a shared six-week sporting activity, supported by one of the Coast's famous teams.

What did we do?

Move like a Mariner 2024 kicked off with the educators training night in July to introduce services to the program and provide guidance on how to implement it. Educators heard about teaching fundamental movement skills and participated in the activities and games they would be playing over the course of the program, with Mariners players and Health Promotion staff on hand to help demonstrate.

Following the workshop, ECEC services were provided with a range of resources including a full equipment kit and educator guide to complete the program and resources to share with families.

Participating ECEC services were invited to join a private Facebook group that provided daily updates and resource links from Health Promotion and the Mariners to assist with program delivery. It also gave ECEC services an opportunity to share experiences throughout the program.

Services were also given access to a password-protected webpage housing digital program resources and other relevant resources that might support them in delivering Move like a Mariner.

To further support program delivery, Health Promotion worked with the Mariners to produce six videos featuring players demonstrating fundamental movement skills, and a further six revealing what their

favourite fruit or vegetable is and why. Another three videos were produced featuring Mariners players reminding children why it's important to drink water regularly. Videos were posted in the Facebook group and made available on the private webpage.

Upon completion of the program, every child who participated received a certificate and was invited by the Mariners to attend a 'matchday experience' with their family that included a walk on the pitch and tickets to an A-League game.

All ECEC services who participated went into a draw to win a Mariners full-team visit to their service or a two-player visit and new equipment kit, which were won by The Beach Early Learning Centre in Kincumber and Tuggerah respectively. At the visits, Mariners players engaged in fun games and activities that children had practised during the program and signed posters for them to take home.

What did we achieve?

- 3,423 children aged three to five years developed their fundamental

movement skills by participating in the Move like a Mariner program in 2024, taking the total number of children who have benefitted from the program over its five years to around 13,000.

- 61 early childhood ECEC services, including 12 new services, took part in the program in 2024 – the most ever. This has extended our reach to more than 90% of services on the Central Coast.

- Since 2018, Move like a Mariner program has run five times and has provided sporting equipment and teaching resources to 120 early childhood services on the Central Coast.

- 51 educators from 26 different ECEC services attended the educator workshop to receive professional development in teaching fundamental movement skills, with 84% of survey respondents saying it 'significantly' met their expectations.

- The private Facebook group grew to 101 active members (up from 61

in 2023) and generated over 122 posts from participating ECEC services.

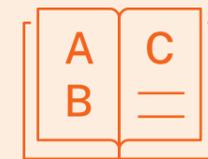
- 321 tickets redeemed for the A-League matchday experience.
- Winner in the Keeping People Healthy category at the 2024 CCLHD Caring for the Coast Awards.
- Widespread media coverage on ABC Central Coast, Coast FM, Star 104.5 and NBN News for the launch of the program. The program was also covered on NBN again during its coverage of the Caring for the Coast Awards.

Look out for . . .

A new-look online program in 2025 providing access all year round to all ECEC services across the Central Coast and made available to all NSW local health districts.

Partners

Central Coast Mariners



15,073

transition-to-school resources

delivered to 60 Central Coast primary schools to give 3,785 children and their families

a **healthy start to school life**

Live Life Well @ School

A whole-of-school approach to promoting healthy eating and physical activity in primary schools

What is it?

[Live Life Well @ School](#) is a collaborative initiative between the NSW Department of Education and NSW Ministry of Health. It supports primary schools to develop whole-of-school strategies that embed healthy eating and physical activity into everyday routines, creating a healthy environment for students.

What did we do?

Central Coast Health Promotion Service supports local primary schools to align with the Live Life Well @ School framework. Strategies include facilitating strong community partnerships, providing free resources and programs that support regular movement, fruit and vegetable consumption, and water as the preferred drink, and professional

development opportunities for staff, making wellbeing a shared, sustainable part of school life.

In 2024–25, activities included:

- Implementing the Thirsty? Choose Water! primary school pilot in two Central Coast primary schools. We provided classroom resources and activities with a focus on the health benefits of choosing water over sugar-sweetened beverages to teachers, while cultural activities were completed promoting water as a drink of choice. Murals with the Thirsty? Choose Water! message, designed by students in consultation with Aboriginal community members, were installed close to the chilled water stations, making them an inviting place to refill bottles and creating a connection to country for students

and staff. We also collaborated with four other NSW local health districts to aid implementation across the state. See [page 18](#) for full details.

- Delivering in-school workshops on Fundamental Movement Skills and Thinking While Moving. Designed in consultation with NSW Department of Education School Sport Unit, these workshops support schools to achieve the recommended 150-minute weekly target for moderate physical activity through the delivery of inclusive, engaging and enjoyable movement-based learning, and a focus on the development of key fundamental movement skills, proven to enhance a lifelong love of physical activity.

- Providing a range of transition-to-school resources designed to promote key health messages to families as they begin their transition into primary school. Resources included Make Their Meals Count nutrition flyers and recipe videos, height charts with general health messaging, healthy lunchbox SWAP IT booklets, as well as a variety of short online videos.
- Supporting the delivery of Healthy Jarjums, Healthy Future, attended by 120 people across four locations over four days, providing free health screening, smoothies, lunchboxes and flyers to 55 children. See [page 51](#) for full details.
- Issuing termly e-newsletters offering regular health information, workshops and support to our schools.
- Hosting two School Garden Interest Group meetings, allowing school garden enthusiasts to meet, learn, network and collaborate on all things gardening, growing, nutrition and sustainability.

What did we achieve?

- Fundamental Movement Skills and Thinking While Moving workshops

presented to 10 schools and 77 teachers. These workshops brought a sense of teamwork, camaraderie and collaboration, helping to enhance the focus on fundamental movement skills and activities delivered through physical activity across the school day.

- 15,073 transition-to-school resources delivered to 60 Central Coast primary schools to give 3,785 children and their families a healthy start to school life.
- 21 attendees from 14 primary schools came together at our School Garden Interest Group meetings to collaborate, plan and share topics relating to sustainability, garden production, intergenerational learning and more.
- Thirsty? Choose Water! pilot completed, successfully testing the adaptability of the secondary school program into primary schools.

Look out for . . .

- More hands-on workshops for teachers and updated classroom resources designed to support the new NSW curriculum.

- Disability and Inclusion event focusing on collaborative learning and partnerships between schools and providers of inclusive sporting programs on the Central Coast.
- Innovative approaches to improve access to fruits and vegetables for primary school students, developed in partnership with local schools.
- Re-launch of Health Week resources in line with the forthcoming new PDHPE curriculum and evidence-based health learning updates.

Partners

NSW Department of Education
Catholic Diocese of Broken Bay
Association of Independent Schools
Rumbalara Environmental Education Centre
Centre of Population Health
Nunyarra Aboriginal Health Unit (CCLHD)
Nutrition Services (CCLHD)Education)



“It was a great project for our school. The program was well received by staff, students and the community. We are very grateful we were given the opportunity to participate. It has increased our student water consumption across the school.”

-Relieving Assistant Principal, Frederickton Public School

The program enhanced the connection of students with the key health messages and an understanding of Aboriginal culture. Teachers reported the cultural co-design artwork component was a highlight of the program with culturally significant murals installed alongside the chilled water stations that reinforce the Thirsty? Choose Water! messaging and support students to choose water. The student involvement in the design of the artwork gave a sense of ownership and cultural pride, making the water station a welcoming place to refill water bottles throughout the school day.



2,829 students across NSW given access to clean, chilled water through installation of water stations

Thirsty? Choose Water!

Supporting primary school students to choose water over sugary drinks

What is it?

Sugar-sweetened beverage consumption remains a public health nutrition concern for children and adolescents. As children age, daily sugar-sweetened beverage consumption in Australia more than doubles from 4.7% among four- to eight-year-old children to 12.4% of 14- to 17-year-olds.

The Thirsty? Choose Water! primary school pilot aimed to translate the whole-of-school approach of the successful, evidence-based secondary school Thirsty program into the primary school setting.

The primary school approach focused on promoting water as a drink of choice, integrated age-appropriate nutrition teaching concepts and included a co-design process, led by Aboriginal staff and students.

What did we do?

The Thirsty? Choose Water! primary school approach was created and piloted locally with the help of five local primary schools between 2021–23. Once the approach was developed, an opportunistic collaboration commenced across five local health districts, led by the Central Coast alongside Mid North Coast, Illawarra Shoalhaven, Sydney and South Eastern Sydney.

Initially, a survey was conducted to understand the needs of primary schools when promoting water as a drink of choice and addressing sugar-sweetened beverage consumption. Schools completing the survey were invited to be involved in the Thirsty primary school approach and then selected for involvement based on their school's ICSEA score and percentage of Aboriginal student enrolments.

The primary school approach included:

- installation of chilled water stations in 11 primary schools across NSW.
- locally developed stage 2 classroom lessons and resources, delivered with a focus on age-appropriate nutrition messages including understanding the role of water in the body and 'Top tips to look after teeth', as well as a vegetable and fruit tasting activity, and opportunities to include Aboriginal cultural teaching.
- a teacher guide and narrated presentation describing the resources and the evidence base for the approach.
- strong community connections made through the cultural component of the pilot through the sharing of Aboriginal history, dreamtime stories, and

collaboration between Aboriginal artists and students.

This approach was evaluated by student surveys, teacher surveys and a school key contact survey to understand the feasibility and acceptability of the approach, and the impact on student knowledge and behaviour. Semi-structured yarns were held at the conclusion of the program with Aboriginal teaching staff and artwork co-ordinators to discuss the cultural outcomes for students and school staff.

What did we achieve?

- Strong local health district collaboration, leading to the pilot and evaluation of a primary school Thirsty? Choose Water! approach with input across diverse NSW school communities.
- 1,102 students on the Central Coast and 2,829 students across NSW given access to clean, chilled water through installation of water stations, promoting water as a drink of choice. Staff reported a positive response to the chilled water stations with long line ups of students refilling water bottles after breaks.

- Survey results show students have a more holistic understanding of oral health strategies after completing the classroom lessons; that is, demonstrating awareness of cleaning their teeth morning and night, eating fruits and vegetables and choosing water as a drink.
- 19% increase in students drinking water at school.
- 94% teachers found the lesson activities to be 'useful' to 'extremely useful' in engaging their students.
- 100% of respondents stated the development and installation of the Aboriginal artwork mural was 'moderately' to 'extremely' beneficial in creating a culturally supportive environment at school.

Look out for . . .

- Launch of 2026 Health Week Resources, including Thirsty? Choose Water! available to all Central Coast primary schools.
- Thirsty? Choose Water! primary school case studies from across NSW.
- An opportunity to borrow the waterdrop costume for your next school event.

Partners

- Health promotion services from local health districts including Illawarra Shoalhaven, Mid North Coast, South Eastern Sydney and Sydney
- CCLHD services – Nunyara Aboriginal Health Unit, Nutrition, Oral Health
- NSW Department of Education – Aboriginal Education Teaching Quality and Impact Directorate
- Regional Aboriginal education consultative groups
- NSW Schools Infrastructure Unit
- Aboriginal Environmental Health Unit
- Participating schools on the Central Coast:
- 2024 – Berkeley Vale Public School, Kincumber Public School
 - 2023 – Mannering Park Public School, Toukley Public School, The Entrance Public School
 - 2021 – Blue Haven Public School, Northlakes Public School (Aboriginal Environmental Health Unit funded)
- Participating schools from Illawarra Shoalhaven, Mid North Coast, South Eastern Sydney and Sydney



“So wonderful to connect with likeminded ladies. Appreciate all the networking and advice.”

-Canteen Network workshop participant

“I love the healthy promotion suggestions and ideas in the Apple Cart newsletter.”

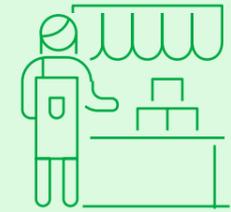
-Tricia Franklin, Canteen Manager, Wamberal Primary School



Efforts to improve access to healthier food and drink options reflect

the strong social connection among school staff, canteen managers, parents, carers and the broader community. The unified commitment supports the provision of more nutritious menus to more than 34,000 students, fostering a culture of care where children’s nutrition is embraced as a shared responsibility. Establishing balanced eating habits early in life supports lifelong health and wellbeing, enhancing quality of life and lowering the risk of chronic conditions.

(Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, 2024).



Department of Education primary and secondary schools meeting

NSW Healthy School Canteen Strategy

83%

Healthy School Canteens

Supporting primary and secondary school canteens to increase their availability of healthy food and drink options

What is it?

The [Healthy School Canteens](#) initiative, jointly led by Health Promotion and Nutrition Services, supports canteen managers to implement the NSW Healthy School Canteen Strategy. This strategy focuses on modelling what students are taught in the classroom about balanced nutrition and supports a whole-school community approach to better health.

What did we do?

In 2024–25, primary and secondary school canteens received various forms of support and opportunities to

enhance the availability of healthy food and drink options at school.

Specifically, this included:

Apple Cart newsletter and Apple Cart healthy promotions

Throughout 2024, canteen managers were encouraged to promote ‘everyday’ healthy food and drink options, demonstrating their commitment to creating consistent, nutritious choices in schools. Their contributions were formally acknowledged in the termly [Apple Cart newsletter](#), which served to reinforce connections within the canteen community and highlight the collective commitment to fostering

healthier, more supportive school environments –reinforcing a whole-school community approach to better health.

2025 Healthy School Canteen Award

To achieve this award, school canteens are required to have a current Healthy Menu Check and conduct ‘everyday’ healthy food or drink promotions during 2025.

Term 2 2025 Canteen Network meeting

Attendees received key updates on the canteen strategy, heard an

engaging presentation from Rumbalara Environmental Education Centre, and enjoyed valuable contributions from the Brisbane, Ourimbah and Wamberal primary school canteen managers. The day centred on promoting healthy food and drink options, sharing new recipe ideas, reducing waste, improving record keeping, and encouraging lively discussion and the sharing of fresh ideas.

Private Canteen Network Facebook page

Our private Facebook networking page is a valuable platform among school canteen managers across the Central Coast. By strengthening peer support and collaboration, this space helps build a strong connected canteen community.

What did we achieve?

- 83% of Central Coast Department of Education schools (82% primary and 94% secondary) are meeting the NSW Healthy School Canteen Strategy.

- 14 schools passed a Healthy Menu Check in 2024 (11 primary schools and three secondary schools).
- 15 schools actively participated in the Apple Cart healthy promotions initiative, submitting more than 30 healthy food and drink promotions.
- 100% of participants at the term 2 network meeting rated it as ‘extremely’ or ‘very useful’ when asked if it met their expectations.
- 85% of participants rated all sessions at the term 2 network meeting as ‘extremely useful’ or ‘very useful’.
- 104 subscribers to Apple Cart newsletter, representing around three quarters (74%) of local school canteens.
- 75% average open rate for Apple Cart newsletter, almost double the government/defence sector average of 44%, and a 40% average click-through rate, eight times the government/defence sector average of 4.5%.

- Two thirds (67%) of Central Coast schools have a representative on the private Facebook page.

Look out for...

- The canteens who achieve the 2025 Central Coast Healthy School Canteen Award.
- A showcase of the healthy food and drink promotions from the 2025 Healthy School Canteen Award recipients.

Partners

- Nutrition Services (CCLHD)
- Association of Independent Schools
- Catholic Diocese of Broken Bay
- Central Coast primary and secondary schools
- Centre for Population Health
- Live Life Well at School project officers from other NSW local health districts
- NSW Department of Education
- Rumbalara Environmental Education Centre



“Everything is positive in the way they [children] learn throughout the program. In a positive and fun environment, they really take it in.”

-Kulwinder Kaur, mother of Go4Fun participant



93% of families would recommend **Go4Fun**, with the majority noting significant improvements in their children’s eating habits since participating in the program.

Go4Fun

Supporting children and their families to be active, build confidence and create healthy habits for life

What is it?

[Go4Fun](#) is a free program for children aged seven to 13 and their families, promoting healthy habits through physical activity and nutrition education. The program is available as a face-to-face afterschool program every term, or Go4Fun Online can be completed on-demand at home, anytime.

What did we do?

Three main areas of focus in 2024–25:

- Building upon our established venues

- Increasing program availability
- Community engagement and feedback

Building upon our established venues

We continued delivering Go4Fun at Lake Haven Recreation Centre and Gosford Olympic Pool, maintaining a consistent presence that supported strong community engagement and sustained promotion. These familiar venues helped build trust and encouraged ongoing word-of-mouth referrals, contributing to a steady stream of enrolments each term. It

also allowed for sustained promotion, with Gosford Olympic Pool advertising programs on a large digital screen visible from a busy road.

Increasing program availability

For the first time in several years, we expanded to three programs per term, covering the northern, central and southern regions of the Coast. This increase was supported by improved recruitment strategies and broader eligibility criteria, allowing more families to access a program closer to home.

Community engagement and feedback

In term 1 2025, we actively consulted with families and community partners to better understand current needs. This included surveys with participating families and conversations and consultation with organisations such as Nunyara Aboriginal Health Unit, Bungree Aboriginal Association, and the organisations that attend the Early Years and Families Interagency. These insights are guiding the future direction of Go4Fun, helping us adapt and improve the program to better support families.

In addition to these areas of focus, throughout the year, families who were enrolled in the program came together to build healthier lifestyle habits while forming strong connections with other families in their local community. A standout example took place at The Entrance, where three newly arrived migrant families joined the program.

The benefits extended well beyond the enrolled children, with families noting the positive impact it had on their younger siblings. Through shared experiences and mutual support, these families formed lasting friendships and provided a supportive group that strengthened their commitment to healthier living. Their inspiring journey resonated with the wider community and was featured in print, broadcast and online media, including in Coast Community News and on Star 104.5.

What did we achieve?

- 81 enrolments across three terms, exceeding the four-term yearly target of 60 enrolments set by NSW Health.
- 89% program completion rate, exceeding NSW Health’s target of 85%.
- Approximately 200,000 opportunities to see or hear about the program through media coverage.

Look out for . . .

A new and improved Aboriginal Go4Fun program featuring more hands-on activities, practical learning and tailored family support. The new program will make it easier than ever for families to embrace healthy lifestyle habits together.

Partners

- Bungree Aboriginal Association
- Better Health Company
- Centre for Population Health
- Nunyara Aboriginal Health Unit (CCLHD)



“Chelsea’s support has enriched our school’s wellbeing initiatives by fostering strong connections across students, staff, families, and the broader community. Her contributions have deepened our shared understanding of prevention as a vital pathway to lifelong health.”

–Evan Neate, Head Teacher PDHPE, Narara Valley High School

A strategic collaboration between Central Coast Health Promotion Service and Central Coast Council has connected local secondary schools with the Girls in the Game initiative to address the sharp decline in adolescent physical activity. This prevention-focused, community-driven approach highlights how social connectedness can act as a powerful driver of long-term wellbeing and effective health promotion outcomes.

Opportunities for girls to participate in Girls Get Active Days have fostered meaningful social connections between schools, local sport and recreation providers, and community role models. These events have enhanced physical activity levels while nurturing resilience and a strong sense of belonging among participants.



1,600+
secondary
school students
engaged in **PA4E1**

Healthy High Schools

Supporting secondary schools with healthy initiatives for young people

What is it?

Healthy High Schools promotes good health and wellbeing among young people aged 12 to 18 and staff in local secondary schools. This involves using a whole-of-school approach to encourage healthy eating, adequate hydration and physical activity, and providing support to avoid unhealthy behaviours such as vaping.

What did we do?

In 2024–25, we provided support to secondary schools via a range of resources and programs to foster the ongoing promotion of healthy eating, water consumption and physical activity.

Specifically, this included:

Physical Activity 4 Everyone (PA4E1)

PA4E1 is an evidence-based, whole-school physical activity initiative led by Hunter New England Local Health District and supported by CCLHD, and is designed to increase students’ physical activity levels and improve overall health outcomes for adolescents.

Research conducted by Hunter New England Local Health District found, on average, participating students engaged in 49 additional minutes of moderate to vigorous physical activity per week. The program has also shown positive impacts on mental wellbeing, academic achievement and social development, while helping to counteract the common decline in physical activity during adolescence.

Central Coast schools who opted in have received multi-component implementation support including:

- two full-day professional development workshops
- ongoing support and mentoring from health promotion officers
- equipment packs worth more than \$750 to facilitate the [Resistance Training for Teens program](#)
- free teaching resources aligned with the NSW PDHPE curriculum
- access to the PA4E1 portal which includes additional professional learning modules, classroom resources, parent and carer communications, and much more
- funding support for additional equipment

- opportunities for female students to participate in targeted Girls Get Active Days as part of the [Girls in the Game](#) initiative led by Central Coast Council.

Healthy High Schools webpage

We launched a [Healthy High Schools webpage](#), a hub of free resources and programs designed to improve the health and wellbeing of secondary school students and their families.

This might be through support for teachers looking to encourage physical activity in the classroom, parents seeking nutritious lunchbox ideas, or students searching for fun, free or low-cost activities that boost mental health.

Healthy High Schools e-update

These [updates](#) forge strong connections between local schools and health partners, building bridges that support community-wide prevention efforts. Each update places the health and wellbeing of students, staff and the broader community at its heart, sharing local initiatives, curriculum resources, professional learning, and fresh ideas to inspire a more resilient and connected school environment.

Break the STIGma

Break the STIGma is a whole-of-school initiative aimed at addressing student nicotine dependence. Developed through a partnership between schools, health promotion and youth health services, the initiative offers a practical toolkit that helps students manage cravings at school and facilitates tailored referrals to professional support services. See [page 36](#) for full details.

What did we achieve?

- Three secondary schools engaged in PA4E1, benefiting more than 1,600 students.
- 104 teachers and youth service workers subscribed to Healthy High Schools e-updates, representing 28 schools and 15 services respectively.
- 88% average open rate for Healthy High Schools e-updates, double the government/defence sector average of 44%, and a 56% average click-through rate, 12 times the government/defence sector average of 4.5%.
- More than 400 reusable water bottles were ordered by over half

(58%) of secondary schools on the Central Coast.

- 40 resource packs, including materials on nutrition, physical activity and vaping prevention distributed to young parents and their children during the Young Parents Day Out event.

Look out for . . .

- PA4E1 case studies.
- Portable water station hire—a partnership between Health Promotion and Central Coast Council.
- Updated Thirsty? Choose Water! resources.
- Break the STIGma toolkit—a resource for schools to address vaping.

Partners

Central Coast Council
Central Coast secondary schools
Hunter New England Local Health District
NSW School Link Coordinator
Nutrition Services (CCLHD)
University of Newcastle



Food and drink helps bring people together. The public and staff cafés and many indoor and outdoor eating areas at CCLHD facilities provide opportunity for staff and visitors to connect with each other while they enjoy a bite to eat and something to drink. It is therefore critical that we make these places as healthy as possible, namely by increasing the number of healthy food and drink options available. For staff who spend much of their working days and lives in health facilities, having access to healthy choices is key to good health.



for **10** out of **13**
food and drink practices Central Coast hospitals performed **above the state average**

Healthy Food and Drink Framework

Providing healthy food and drink options for staff and visitors to our health facilities

What is it?

The Healthy Food and Drink in NSW Health Facilities for Staff and Visitors Framework (the Framework) provides best practice guidelines to help NSW Health facilities work towards offering healthy food and drink in their retail outlets.

The Framework and its accompanying toolkit support our staff in working with our food and drink providers to increase the number of healthy options for our staff and visitors.

What did we do?

A statewide audit of NSW health facility food and drink outlets is conducted each year during February and March. At CCLHD, the audit is carried out by staff from Health Promotion and Nutrition Services. The audit involves physically monitoring cafeterias/cafés, convenience stores, kiosks and vending machines against a set of best-practice guidelines.

Staff conducting the audits are provided with access to the Framework

Network of Practice, training, information resources, tablet devices and the Population Health Inventory Management System (PHIMS), which is the IT system used statewide for monitoring and reporting.

Prior to the annual audit period, pre-audits are conducted to check and confirm or correct the inventory of food and drink outlets within PHIMS. Food and drink outlet managers are made aware of the official audit period, but not the actual day they will be audited.

Tablet devices are then used to complete the audit, with further support available from the Healthy Food Information Service and Healthy Food Finder. Audits are checked within PHIMS by audit staff. Reports with detailed audit results are generated by NSW Health and sent to local health district chief executives.

Health Promotion and Nutrition Services staff provide feedback to outlet managers and offer ongoing support. In addition, the CCLHD Contracts and Leasing team communicate with outlet managers and provide support regarding contractual obligations if needed.

What did we achieve?

From CCLHD's Healthy Food and Drink in NSW Health Facilities for Staff and Visitors Framework 2025 Annual Audit Report Card, the following results were highlights:

- Excellent success in six practices, where 100% of outlets met the requirements. These included:

- Practice 1: Packaged drinks for sale are free from added sugar
- Practice 5: Muesli bars have a Health Star Rating of 3.5 or above
- Practice 6: Packaged flavoured milks are the healthiest option (that is have 3.5 Health Star Rating or more)
- Practice 9: Packaged salty snacks meet the portion size limit of 50g
- Practice 10: Foods and drinks placed at tills are Everyday foods and drinks only
- Practice 13: Package deals are for Everyday foods and drinks only

- Improvement on three practices in 2025 compared with 2024.
- CCLHD performed above the statewide average in 10 of the 13 applicable practices.

Look out for...

Further improvement in the provision of healthy food and drink options for staff and visitors in CCLHD facilities in 2025–26.

Partners

NSW Ministry of Health – Food Policy Unit

Nutrition Services (CCLHD)

Contracts and Leasing (CCLHD)

Food and drink outlet managers and volunteers



Becoming more active, healthier and feeling good can help boost self-esteem and provide the confidence needed to get out and about, fostering social connection, which further strengthens individual and community health.



Get Healthy in Pregnancy referral target



Get Healthy Information and Coaching Service

Supporting people to set and achieve personal healthy lifestyle goals

What is it?

The [Get Healthy Service](#) offers free phone and online coaching to help people make lifestyle changes to improve their health. Delivered by NSW Health, the service is available to people over 16 years of age living in NSW. University-qualified health coaches support participants to set and achieve their health goals, which can include eating well and being active, reaching and staying a healthy weight,

improving wellbeing, managing health while living with type 2 diabetes or cancer, drinking less alcohol and more. The tailored program is designed to fit in with people's lives, with coaching being available at times that work for participants. Further to the standard coaching program, Get Healthy offers Get Healthy in Pregnancy, which helps pregnant women stay healthy during their journey through pregnancy and beyond. Get Healthy is supported by

Aboriginal health coaches and is also available in languages other than English.

What did we do?

Becoming more active, healthier and feeling good can help boost self-esteem and provide the confidence needed to get out and about, fostering social connection, which further strengthens individual and community health.

We aimed to raise awareness of the Get Healthy Service and Get Healthy in Pregnancy programs among Central Coast health professionals and the community, and to facilitate referrals and enrolments.

Our main strategy was working with CCLHD services to inform them about Get Healthy, help them embed referral into routine clinical care pathways, and to facilitate the ordering and use of Get Healthy resources.

A collaboration with CCLHD's Women, Children and Families Service, which included quarterly meetings and regular communication, provided a platform for information sharing and working towards the District's Get Healthy in Pregnancy referral key performance indicator, set by NSW Health.

We also worked with Nunyara Aboriginal Health Service to promote and facilitate referral to Get Healthy during health screening days in June as part of NAIDOC Week 2025 activities.

To engage and support health professionals, we developed a new [Get Healthy 2025 Health Goals campaign and promotional toolkit](#), which was launched in February and included: key messages, newsletter copy, website copy, newsletter and website images, social media copy and tiles, posters, e-signatures, digital signage, lock screens and more.

We also used the Health Promotion website, social media, newsletters, events, meetings and other opportunities to raise awareness of the service.

What did we achieve?

- 861 Central Coast residents were referred to Get Healthy programs – up on the 760 the previous financial year.
- 88% of referrals (759) came from health professionals.
- 636 pregnant women were referred to Get Healthy in

Pregnancy, exceeding the target of 586 (108.5%) set by NSW Health.

- 266 people enrolled into Get Healthy programs.

Look out for...

Data-informed engagement following launch of the Get Healthy Service Local Health District Dashboard in August 2025.

Partners

- Centre for Population Health
- Diabetes Australia
- Nunyara Aboriginal Health Service (CCLHD)
- Women, Children and Families (CCLHD)



“Being involved in the Healthy Bites episodes earlier this year was a fantastic experience. Creating and recording the scripts offered a great opportunity to share important oral health messages with our target audience in a compact, accessible, and engaging way. Recording in the studio was genuinely enjoyable, and the team made the whole process easy and comfortable. I felt it was a valuable way to deliver meaningful health information to the community, and I’d gladly take part again in the future.”

–Sharika-Marrie Howard, Oral Health Therapist



20

new Healthy Bites episodes

produced, taking the total number to **62**

Healthy Bites

Bite-sized health advice for adults aged 50 plus

What is it?

A radio series for adults aged 50 plus, Healthy Bites provides bite-sized advice on a range of topics related to healthy ageing. The practical tips from health professionals can be used in daily life and are presented in 60- to 90-second-long episodes. Episodes air weekdays on community radio station Easy FM and the content is also available online.

Using a local radio station to air health messages created by professionals offers a cost-effective, accessible way to reach older adults. This sustainable

approach leverages existing infrastructure, and ensures consistent messaging, helping CCLHD maintain long-term public health outreach with minimal ongoing resource investment.

What did we do?

Central Coast Health Promotion Service has continued to work with Easy FM following formation of a partnership last year, with the series becoming an important part of the station’s schedule following its rebrand from Radio Five-0 Plus in late 2024.

The radio series provides all CCLHD health services an opportunity to provide content that form episodes on topical issues pertinent to improving the health and wellbeing of their consumer base.

This helps equip people with the skills they need to stay as healthy as possible as they age, maintaining their independence while also reducing pressure on clinical services.

Sixty-two episodes have now been scripted, recorded and edited. Topics this year have included the importance

of immunisation, oral health, physical activity, supportive health behaviour change and falls prevention.

Content is also uploaded on a [Healthy Bites webpage](#) on the Health Promotion website, with audio and text versions of each episode available. Episodes are also available on a [YouTube playlist](#). In addition, content is utilised as part of our broader healthy ageing communications strategy ([see page 32](#)) in the form of print and digital newsletter and magazine articles.

What did we achieve?

- 20 new Healthy Bites episodes produced, taking the total number of episodes to 62.
- More than 200 episodes aired over 12 months, each one going out to the station’s 150,000 listenership.
- More than 1,300 total episode views on YouTube.
- 377 views of the Healthy Bites webpage.

Look out for...

New episodes of Healthy Bites online and weekdays on Easy FM.

Partners

Easy FM

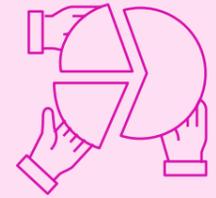
Participating CCLHD and community services



“I am much more confident with my body now and I know what exercises I need to do to stay independent.”

–Stepping On participant

In Australia, around one in four people aged 65 and over report experiencing feelings of loneliness, and regular physical activity such as group exercise classes or walking groups can significantly reduce this by fostering social connection. This not only helps reduce social isolation but also improves mental wellbeing and lowers the risk and/or impact of chronic diseases such as heart disease, arthritis, chronic pain, diabetes and neurodegenerative conditions.



135
members from **60**
organisations have
joined the **Central Coast**
Seniors Interagency

Healthy Active Ageing

Working in partnership to improve the quality of lives of older people

What is it?

While most older Australians are living longer and healthier lives than previous generations, many are not living in full health often due to chronic conditions. Unfortunately, the higher the number of conditions people have, the greater the impact on a person’s quality of life.

We aim to facilitate ease of access to information, resources, services and programs that foster healthy ageing through physical activity, nutrition and social connection. By doing this, we can support older people to live independently in our community, reduce their risk and symptoms of chronic disease, and ultimately improve their quality of life.

What did we do?

During 2024–25, we focused our efforts on establishing partnerships that could amplify the reach of healthy ageing information and resources, and build the capacity of others to support older people to live healthy and fulfilling lives.

Specifically, this included:

- Co-facilitating the [Central Coast Seniors Interagency](#) in partnership with Central Coast Council and Central Coast Community Council. The interagency fosters a collaborative approach across services and community organisations who are dedicated to addressing the unique and changing needs of the rapidly growing seniors population on the Coast. It focuses on areas critical to providing a supportive local environment that promotes a holistic and positive approach to ageing, including physical activity, nutrition, mental health, social engagement and isolation, and digital literacy. The interagency encourages membership from any service or community organisation that supports positive ageing, aiming to build a broad and inclusive network dedicated to the wellbeing of older adults living on the Central Coast.
- Supporting community, service, residential and health partners as part of a broad distribution chain that feeds direct to the Central Coast community. We do this via in-services, newsletters, print and social media content, as well as our [website](#). A key part of this work has been focused on promotion of [activeandhealthy.nsw.gov.au](#) – the premier NSW Health website providing healthy ageing information such as the [Healthy Ageing Online Learning](#) platform and the [Find an Exercise Program](#) feature to older Australians, health professionals and exercise program providers. It has also involved targeted media relations activity that focuses not only on local publications such as Coast Community News, but also age-specific publications such as GOALL (Growing Older and Loving Life), Meals on Wheels newsletter and On the Coast Over 55s.
- Delivering workshops to community groups in partnership

with Mission Australia, Garawa Aboriginal Corporation, Coast & Country Primary Care and Mingaletta Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Corporation for the [Aunty Jean program](#).

- Continuing our partnership with the Combined Pensioners & Superannuants Association to provide healthy ageing presentations across the Central Coast. These presentations not only provide health information on a wide range of contemporary health topics, supported by healthy ageing resources such as falls prevention, but also complement the wide range of social groups the Central Coast has to offer.
- Working with partners to support the Stepping On program, a seven-week falls prevention program for adults aged 65 years and over and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander adults aged 45 years and over. Using gentle group exercise and educational talks from experts, the program helps to teach people how to reduce their risk of falling and how to maintain independence.
- Developing an April Falls Month promotional toolkit to support health professionals and the wider community to raise awareness of reducing falls risk to their communities.

- Attending a wide range of community events focused on carers, dementia, and general health and wellbeing including the Central Coast Seniors Expos and NAIDOC Community Day. These events provided opportunities to engage with community as well as make connections with service providers and other organisations who support our seniors.

What did we achieve?

- 135 members have joined the Central Coast Seniors Interagency, representing approximately 60 organisations across 20 different sub-sectors that serve the seniors of the Central Coast.
- More than 150 community, service, residential and health partners supported through in-services and/or development of content on healthy ageing.
- Approximately 20,000 visits to exercise provider listings on the NSW Active and Healthy website, with the number of available community exercise offerings increasing by 44% from 68 to 98 listings.
- Regular print and broadcast media coverage achieved, including on ABC Central Coast and in Coast Community News and GOALL, with additional coverage online.

- 18 presentations delivered by peer speakers across the Central Coast, reaching more than 300 people living in our community.
- 166 people participated in the Stepping On programs across nine different locations on the Central Coast.
- 30 organisations including retirement villages, senior citizens centres, libraries and CCLHD community health facilities shared the April Falls toolkit during April Falls Month.

Partners

- Bolton Clarke Home and Community Support
- Catholic Healthcare
- Central Coast Community Council
- Central Coast Council
- Coast & Country Primary Care
- Combined Pensioners & Superannuants Association
- Garawa Aboriginal Corporation
- Meals on Wheels Central Coast
- Mingaletta Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Corporation
- Mission Australia



“I believe this program will significantly benefit Community Drug Action Teams (CDATs) in Gosford and beyond, helping to reduce alcohol-related harm and improve community wellbeing. Thank you for your ongoing commitment to supporting community-driven solutions to these critical issues.”

–Gail Easton, Manager, CDAT Program

Research shows that when communities come together to influence local alcohol policies, alcohol-related harm can be meaningfully reduced. By fostering greater social participation and empowering people to engage with liquor licensing processes, we can build a more resilient and informed community and protect and promote wellbeing for all people.



4

liquor licences

were either not granted or withdrawn based on formal submissions from Health Promotion opposing the applications, resulting in **significant harm reduction**

Liquor licencing

Reducing alcohol-related harm through community engagement

What is it?

The Central Coast continues to experience significant rates of alcohol-related harm, including interpersonal violence, crime, and injury, and records the highest rate of alcohol-related hospitalisations in NSW.

CCLHD also ranks second in NSW for adults exceeding the alcohol consumption guidelines with 37.5% of our adult population drinking at levels that increase their risk of harm.

The greater the level of alcohol availability, the higher the level of consumption and the greater the

harm in our community. Central Coast Health Promotion Service actively partners with our community to support engagement in alcohol harm reduction, including reviewing liquor licence applications submitted to Liquor & Gaming NSW and advocating for evidence-based public policies. Through consultation, collaboration and connection, we aim to create a safer and more vibrant Central Coast where everyone has the opportunity to thrive.

What did we do?

In 2024–25, Health Promotion collaborated with local Community Drug Action Teams (CDATs), community

not-for profit organisations, Tuggerah Lakes and Brisbane Water police, and Central Coast Council to continue to support and advocate for a reduction in alcohol harm on the Central Coast.

Additionally, we responded to six high-risk liquor and gaming licence applications through Liquor & Gaming NSW, outlining the potential increase in alcohol and gambling-related harm if they were granted. We also responded to two development applications through Central Coast Council that could lead to increased harm to the community, which are currently being assessed.

To build the capacity of CDATs to respond to local liquor licence matters themselves, we began a research project with the NSW CDAT program to identify barriers to responding for community organisations. This led to the development of a community toolkit that provides evidence-based context for the local community, and local-level data and statistics to support community recommendations on liquor licencing decisions. This resource was launched at a statewide CDAT meeting in January, and a training webinar on the toolkit was conducted for CDATs in the Central Region in February.

We also collaborated with Central Coast Council on many locally significant community activations, events and festivals to reduce the risk of alcohol-related harm and promote safe and engaging community events.

Health Promotion submitted responses on behalf of CCLHD for public consultations on the NSW Office of the 24-Hour Commissioner’s

consultation into Special Entertainment Precincts (SEP) and Central Coast Council’s Community Strategic Plan. Our submission for SEPs included recommendations for strategies to identify and minimise alcohol-related harm and included facilitating collaborative action by local councils, police and local health districts within working groups to address relevant risk of harm to local communities.

Health Promotion is supporting the update of the Alcohol-Related Harms Costing Model to continue to enable NSW Health staff to compare costs borne by a particular community with the purported economic benefits proposed by new liquor licences.

What did we achieve?

- Of the six liquor licences we responded to, only two were granted, with the remaining four either being withdrawn by the applicant following the submission period or being refused by the

Independent Liquor & Gaming Authority.

- The updated SEP Handbook for local governments now includes the consideration of key health data, including alcohol-related hospitalisation and emergency department presentations to inform planning, and to ensure specific alcohol harm–reduction strategies are being considered where the data from the local health district considers it necessary.
- The SEP Guidelines now include a mandatory requirement for councils to collaborate with local health districts in developing a precinct management plan and addressing emerging or ongoing issues.

Look out for...

Evaluation of the CDATs toolkit.

Partners

NSW CDAT Program



“So many valuable things! I loved the resources that Renee mentioned, and I also loved how I learned about the caffeine story and the effects nicotine has on caffeine and other drugs – very useful when I work with young people who use medications!”

–Participant, Professor Renee Bittoun training

“A massive thank you to all the young people who shared their honest insights and experiences throughout the development of these resources – your voices helped us create tools that truly reflect what young people need and value. We couldn’t have done it without you.”

–Leanne Andrew, Health Promotion Officer, CCLHD

By connecting health and community services with school communities and students, this co-designed project creates safe, judgement-free spaces where students feel heard, supported and empowered to take control of their wellbeing



93%
of school staff ‘agreed’ or ‘strongly agreed’ that the training was relevant to their work practice

Break the STIGma

Supporting students to stay vape free at high school

What is it?

The uptake of vaping has increased rapidly across NSW over the past four years. Central Coast daily vaping rates increased from 3.6% (NSW 2%) in 2019–20 to 8.8% in 2024 (compared to NSW 7.6%). Young people (16 to 24 years) in NSW have the highest rate of current vaping (19%) of any age group.

Break the STIGma is a whole-of-school initiative aimed at addressing student nicotine dependence in a vape-free school environment. Developed through a partnership between schools, health promotion and youth services, the initiative offers a practical toolkit to help students manage cravings at school, professional training for teachers and Youth Health staff, and tailored referrals to professional support services.

While evidence-based campaigns and stronger legislation and enforcement of nicotine and tobacco products are making progress in preventing the uptake of vaping among young people, support to help students who vape manage nicotine dependence and remain engaged in school is underexplored. This project hopes to fill this gap.

What did we do?

Health Promotion’s Tobacco and Healthy High Schools team worked closely with Narara Valley High School, CCLHD Youth Health, headspace, Salvation Army and other local health district health promotion teams to co-design resources, training and referral pathways that support students who are vaping to manage their nicotine dependence at school, remain engaged and reduce vaping-related incidents.

Training

We facilitated capacity-building workshops for educators and youth service professionals.

All Narara Valley High School staff received training delivered by Health Promotion and the Wellbeing and Health In-reach Nurse to enhance their understanding of vaping among young people and to garner support for Break the STIGma.

Central Coast youth-related clinical services were invited to attend a clinical professional development webinar, delivered by nicotine treatment specialist Professor Renee Bittoun, focusing on nicotine dependence management, cessation support and nicotine replacement therapy prescription for young people.

Student support resources

We offered a suite of support options for students to avoid vaping at school and to help manage their nicotine cravings, including:

- one-on-one support from the Wellbeing team and/or Wellbeing and Health In-reach Nurse.
- Break the STIGma magazine, a resource for students containing tips for handling cravings at school, young people’s stories of going vape free, ways to stay stress free without vaping, nicotine replacement therapy and much more.
- Cravings Crusher kit containing a fidget spinner, mints, water bottle and stress putty.
- parent information pack including how to identify signs of addiction, triggers and cravings, how to start a conversation about vaping with a young person and how to support them to quit, as well as details on the PAVE vaping cessation app.

Referral pathways

- We partnered with local youth services such as Youth Health,

headspace, Salvation Army and Youth Drug & Alcohol Service to accept referrals from schools for students with nicotine addiction. We consulted with Hunter New England and Central Coast Primary Health Network to promote the trial project to local GPs.

What did we achieve?

- Co-design of student support resources – Break the STIGma magazine and Cravings Crusher kits with students who vape.
- The school’s Wellbeing team received additional bespoke training to support them to add components of Break the STIGma to their current practices in managing student vaping based on NSW Health’s guidelines – Managing Nicotine Dependence Guide and Guide to Support Young People to Quit E-Cigarettes.
- 93% of Narara Valley High School staff ‘agreed’ or ‘strongly agreed’ when asked if the training was relevant to their work practice.
- 25 attendees from nine CCLHD services and three external youth-

focused organisations attended the training by Professor Bittoun.

Look out for...

Trialling the Break the STIGma initiative with other interested Central Coast secondary schools and Mid North Coast Local Health District in 2026.

Partners

All young people who shared their honest insights and experiences throughout the development of the resources

Narara Valley High School
Youth Health Service (CCLHD)
headspace

Salvation Army Central Coast
Bungree Aboriginal Association

Health promotion services at local health districts in Illawarra Shoalhaven, Mid North Coast and Northern Sydney

Hunter New England and Central Coast Primary Health Network



“I hope when people hear the message they will think, ‘I’ll stop smoking and vaping because it is making people sick and unhealthy!’”

–Norah, aged 8, smoke- and vape-free messages campaign voice artist

Although smoking rates have reduced on the Central Coast over the past 20 years, they remain higher than the state average and smoking accounts for significant hospitalisation and deaths that are preventable. At the same time, we are seeing a new generation hooked on nicotine through vaping.



Tobacco use is the **leading cause of preventable death** and the second highest contributor to the burden of disease in Australia

Source: AIHW, 2024

Smoke- and Vape-Free Hospital Grounds

Keeping the air around our facilities clean for the health of staff, patients and visitors

What is it?

Thousands of people enter local hospitals each day, including pregnant women, newborns and critically ill patients. Health Promotion convenes the CCLHD Smoke-free Health Care Working Group to lead the implementation of its Smoke-free Workplace Policy and by-law, which states that smoking or vaping on hospital grounds is not permitted.

This activity helps to create healthier spaces across our hospitals and facilities, cutting down the risks linked

to tobacco and e-cigarette use and protecting everyone from second-hand smoke and vape aerosol. It’s a win for public health and personal wellbeing.

What did we do?

In 2024–25, we focused on the governance and actions of the CCLHD Smoke-free Health Care Working Group, led by new executive sponsor, Adam Cruickshank, District Director, Community, Wellbeing and Allied Health.

Quarterly smoking counts continue to monitor compliance with the Smoke-

free Workplace Policy and by-law to identify trends in smoking and use of e-cigarettes to assess and evaluate strategies.

In addition, we developed and tested public address announcements near Gosford Hospital level 4 carpark entrance and Wyong Hospital main entrance to inform patients, staff and visitors that hospitals are smoke and vape free and offer support options such as nicotine replacement therapy and Quitline.

[Messages feature the voices of staff, volunteers and community](#), including children, older adults and Aboriginal people. The project has brought together different voices to record positive messages that resonate with the values of our visitors – by the people, for the people.

The trial has drawn inspiration from successful strategies implemented in hospitals across England and, more recently, Victoria, and saw messages developed with input from local people, including individuals who smoke or vape, as well as those who have quit.

Finally, we raised awareness of monthly clinical smoking and vaping cessation support training webinars through staff newsletter articles and intranet listings. The webinars are presented by the State-Wide Smoking Cessation team at St Vincent’s Hospital and provide training to health professionals to support people to quit.

What did we achieve?

- A Shared Responsibilities Framework has been developed by the CCLHD Smoke-free Health Care Working Group, forming the basis of future strategic and priority actions and generating relevant membership as needed.
- The first time-limited working group to improve processes for smoke and vape-free signage is underway.
- Early results from the public address announcements indicate a downward trend in smoking and vaping at the trial sites, demonstrating the benefits of these messages for informing patients, staff and visitors and in increasing passive surveillance in areas with high rates of smoking/vaping.

Look out for...

More:

- clinical training webinars on cessation support
- time-limited working groups to improve processes and clinical care for patients, visitors and staff who smoke or vape
- trials of public address announcements at Gosford and Wyong Emergency entrances.

Partners

CCLHD Smoke-free Health Care Working Group – Gosford and Wyong site management, Fire Safety Services, Pharmacy, Public Health Unit, Security Services, Staff Health

Staff, volunteers and community members who shared feedback on proposed smoke- and vape-free messages and who lent their voices to the project



“HIV & Related Programs and the Needle & Syringe Program have been coming to Mary Mac’s Place on Tuesdays to connect with our community and provide support. The work they have been doing has meant that people that would normally slip through the cracks are being seen and supported. Alejandro and Alyssa are both amazing at their role and I am so pleased to have them here supporting our most vulnerable.”

Sally Baker, Support Worker, Mary Mac’s Place – CatholicCare



37

rough sleepers **tested for hepatitis C**, with 3 testing positive and now being **supported to complete treatment**

Source: www.aihw.gov.au/reports/children-youth/health-of-young-people

Identifying and eliminating hepatitis C among rough sleepers

Partnering with homeless services to help vulnerable people access care

What is it?

Hepatitis C remains a significant health concern in NSW, particularly among vulnerable populations such as people experiencing homelessness. According to Central Coast Council, there were [6,600 people on the Central Coast estimated to be homeless](#) at the end of 2024, with Homelessness NSW

identifying the Coast as one of its top 10 homeless hotspots. The issue is worsening, with local homelessness organisations estimating that homelessness rates have gone up 60% in the past year on the Central Coast.

The [NSW Hepatitis C Strategy 2022-2025](#) identifies homeless people as a priority population due to their

increased risk of infection and barriers to accessing healthcare.

CCLHD’s Harm Minimisation Team, made up of staff from its HIV & Related Programs Health Promotion team and the Needle & Syringe Program, is reaching out to this priority population through the two main homelessness services in Central Coast. In doing so, it

is changing the standard model of care that sees patients needing to attend a clinic and, instead, taking support directly to them.

What did we do?

The Harm Minimisation Team has been attending Mary Mac’s Place in Woy Woy weekly and Coast Shelter Gosford fortnightly since April 2025.

This has enabled the team to test people who sleep rough for hepatitis C using dried blood spot testing. Those who tested positive have then been supported to complete hepatitis c treatment.

In addition to testing, the team has provided care navigation support and health advice, as well as referrals to other appropriate health services. Rough sleepers have also been supported with health literacy, enabling them to better understand health information so they can make more informed decisions about the care they receive and their overall wellbeing.

This program is about more than finding and treating people with hepatitis C. It is about breaking down barriers, building trust and re-establishing this vulnerable group’s connection to health services by reaching out, listening to them, facilitating referrals, and showing an interest in their health and wellbeing.

What did we achieve?

- Strong partnerships built between CCLHD and leading homelessness services.
- Respectful and empowering interactions have seen trust and goodwill generated with an often stigmatised and marginalised community.
- Improved health literacy of clients and awareness of where to obtain help in other areas of their wellbeing, which is a lifelong benefit.
- 134 rough sleepers engaged, with assistance with care navigation

provided to 32 people and 35 more provided with health advice.

- 37 rough sleepers tested for hepatitis C, with three testing positive and now being supported to complete treatment.

Look out for...

Monitoring of the community services sector to identify any emerging opportunities.

Partners

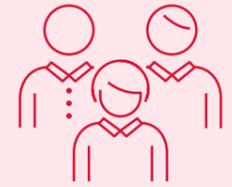
Coast Shelter Gosford
Mary Mac’s Place Woy Woy – CatholicCare



Bringing hepatitis C testing into the NSP allows people to be tested without presenting to a doctor, addressing issues of stigma and discrimination, which are barriers to accessing not only testing services but treatment and prevention services. Those tested get to know their status and, if negative, receive information about reducing their risk of infection. If they are positive, they can be treated and cured within an accessible treatment model.

“A huge thank you to the wonderful team at Gosford NSP (Amanda and Sharon) on all their efforts on the TEMPO Study. The team at Gosford had the highest enrolment rate of any site – a whopping 14 participants enrolled for one month! Gosford NSP’s positive and welcoming attitude to hep C testing meant that word spread beyond their immediate area – clients came not just locally, but from further afield, drawn by the trust and care provided by the team.”

– Jessica Payne, Clinical Project Coordinator, Viral Hepatitis Clinical Research Program, Kirby Institute



134
participants
enrolled in
the study

The TEMPO Study

A study to increase uptake of hepatitis C treatment among people who inject drugs

What is it?

This research project from the Kirby Institute, based at University of New South Wales Sydney, aims to improve treatment uptake for people with hepatitis C who recently injected drugs. It compares point-of-care testing, dried blood spot testing and standard of care to see which method leads to the highest rates of treatment uptake for this vulnerable community.

This is crucial because treatment cures infection in up to 98% of cases, while also preventing or slowing down liver

disease progression and preventing the transmission of the virus within this vulnerable population of people who inject drugs.

What did we do?

Over an 18-month period, people who inject drugs were asked to participate in the TEMPO Study whenever they accessed sterile injecting equipment from Gosford Needle & Syringe Program (NSP). Those who agreed to participate were offered a hepatitis C test, which was delivered via a dried blood spot or fingerpick test.

Clients were incentivised to participate in the study with a \$50 grocery voucher. Incentives have been shown to improve testing and treatment rates in vulnerable communities, helping remove barriers like stigma and competing priorities. This also helped increase awareness through word of mouth, enabling the team to reach people who may not be accessing the service, but would come in for a test after hearing about the incentive.

People who tested positive for hepatitis C were then followed up and

supported to access treatment with the NSP nurse and via remote consultation with our prescriber.

Bringing hepatitis C testing into the NSP allows people to be tested without presenting to a doctor, addressing issues of stigma and discrimination, which are barriers to accessing not only testing services but treatment and prevention services. Those tested get to know their status and, if negative, receive information about reducing their risk of infection. If they are positive, they can be treated and cured within an accessible treatment model.

What did we achieve?

134 participants enrolled in the study, with CCLHD’s Needle & Syringe Program named top recruiting site for August 2024.

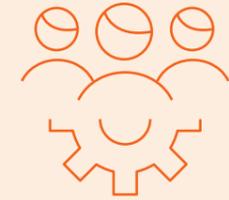
13 people living with hepatitis C were identified, offered and/or provided with treatment for their infection as a result.

Partners

Kirby Institute – University of New South Wales



Social connection is a protective factor for mental health and suicide prevention. Our activities and strategies foster environments that encourage open conversations, reduce stigma and build supportive communities. These efforts create opportunities for people to connect with each other, local services and support networks.



117 professional and community members in attendance at the inaugural Central Coast Mental Health Symposium, receiving a **4.4** out of **5** overall satisfaction rating from 56 attendee survey responses

Mental health promotion

Events, awareness campaigns and partnerships that connect communities and support good mental health

What is it?

Mental health and wellbeing are fundamental to how we connect with ourselves, others and our community. Promoting positive mental health, reducing stigma and encouraging open conversations help people access support early and build resilience. We promote early help-seeking behaviours by embedding mental health messaging into community events, awareness campaigns and partnerships. Sharing practical information and resources, and fostering social connection are key to empowering individuals to maintain their mental wellness.

What did we do?

In 2024–25, the Central Coast Mental Health Service continued to strengthen community connection and awareness through targeted initiatives and meaningful engagement with priority populations and local service providers. Our team worked collaboratively with internal services and external partners to coordinate or contribute to more than 20 activations across the financial year, using each opportunity to reduce stigma, encourage early help-seeking behaviours, and connect people with local supports.

We increased the visibility of newly established services like the Wyong Safe Haven by integrating education about the service into local outreach, community events and sector forums. Dedicated open days, partnership in-services and co-designed activations provided welcoming entry points into the first Aboriginal-led Safe Haven in NSW at Wyong Hospital.

Our contributions extended across major awareness campaigns including RUOK? Day, World Suicide Prevention Day and Mental Health Month, with tailored information stalls and oversight over activities across Gosford, Wyong and community sites.

March saw the team host the inaugural Central Coast Mental Health Symposium, which featured presentations on lived experience, culturally safe practice and service innovation, sparking valuable discussions on the future of mental healthcare locally.

We also worked collaboratively on the Central Coast Housing and Mental Health Forum, Perinatal Mental Health Expo and Homelessness Connect days, and engaged in a large range of workforce development initiatives.

Engagement with priority populations, local students, older adults, mental health carers, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander, and LGBTQI+ communities also formed a key part of our work. We held presence at local Pride Expos, NAIDOC events, Coastal Twist Festival, Seniors Expo and University Orientation days to ensure inclusive mental health messaging was embedded throughout the year.

Our communications via internal and external newsletters continued to grow their audience and engagement, enabling us to maintain meaningful touchpoints with staff, partners and community members between events.

What did we achieve?

- Participated in 24 individual activations and community events alongside other CCLHD teams, fostering strong stakeholder collaboration across the Central Coast.
- Gained 132 new subscribers to the Good Mental Health Newsletter, expanding ongoing connection with staff, partners and community. To subscribe, email CCLHD-MentalHealth-eNewsletter@health.nsw.gov.au.
- Hosted the inaugural Central Coast Mental Health Symposium, which was attended by 117 professionals and community members. Survey feedback (56 responses) rated the

symposium 4.4 out of 5 stars for overall satisfaction. Participants especially valued lived experience speakers, networking opportunities and insight into strategic directions.

Look out for...

- New campaigns and resources implemented across the region to further promote access into our mental health services, the Head to Health Kids Hub and our local Safe Haven services.
- The 2026 Central Coast Mental Health Symposium.

Partners

We've collaborated with a wide range of partners across health, community, local government, Aboriginal organisations, youth services, homelessness and housing sectors. This includes community members, CCLHD teams, community-managed organisations and government agencies.



1,220

vaccines provided to 816 individuals as part of the **Ward Off Winter!** program



“We were both blown away by the service. You are protecting everyone here in dialysis as well as helping us and those we come in contact with from contracting the flu and COVID.”

–Dialysis patient and participant in the Ward Off Winter! opportunistic vaccination program

Public health

Protecting the health of the public from diseases, environmental health threats

What is it?

The role of the Central Coast Public Health Unit is to protect the health of the public from communicable diseases and environmental health threats, and to promote the health of the public. Our team provides expert advice, education and public health responses to keep everyone safe and thriving.

What did we do?

The Central Coast Public Health Unit takes a collaborative approach to health protection, which is delivered in close partnership with many internal and external stakeholders, including the community. The unit has five main areas of focus:

- Communicable disease control
- Environmental health
- Immunisation
- Epidemiology and surveillance
- Research

Communicable disease control

- Responded to the first case of measles on the Central Coast in six years, resulting in 100 contacts being followed up within 48 hours and offered postexposure prophylaxis as appropriate.
- Responded to 81 acute respiratory illness outbreaks and 13 gastroenteritis outbreaks in residential aged care facilities, and 111 gastroenteritis outbreaks

in childcare centres to provide regular and timely protection to vulnerable people.

- Facilitated timely preventive treatment for 31 people after potential exposure to rabies or Australian bat lyssavirus.
- Established a new pathway for the provision of rabies postexposure prophylaxis (PEP) to connect patients with timely PEP administration and avoid presentations to hospital emergency departments.

Environmental health

- Inspected all 129 cooling towers located on 53 premises across the Central Coast, working collaboratively with system

operators to proactively manage the risk of Legionnaires’ disease and ensure compliance with relevant legislation.

- Worked with Central Coast Council and Health Protection NSW (Environmental Health Branch Water Unit) to ensure safe drinking water, including assisting Council with a boil water alert, issued in relation to a potential contamination of the drinking water supply.
- Supported approximately 30 private water suppliers in developing quality assurance programs for their drinking water supplies.
- Attended NAIDOC Community Day at Wyong Racecourse and had many valuable conversations with community members about environmental health issues such as mosquito avoidance, mould and scabies, handing out more than 600 units of insect repellent and 300 fly screen patches.

Immunisation

- Conducted audits of vaccine cold chain management for 23 vaccine providers (12 GPs and 11 pharmacies) around the Coast.
- Provided 1,220 vaccines to 816 individuals across 17 inpatient wards, 17 outpatient clinics and 17 community outreach events as part of the Ward Off Winter! program. 94 staff were also opportunistically vaccinated while visiting patient settings.
- Supported Ngiyang to re-establish regular childhood and antenatal vaccination clinics for the Aboriginal community.

Epidemiology and surveillance

- Created a Population Health Profile for the Central Coast, which will be used to engage with external partners and inform the forthcoming Population Health Strategic Framework.
- Provided weekly Situation Reports (SitRep) throughout the winter

months, summarising disease trends, vaccination coverage and facility activity for key stakeholders across CCLHD.

Research

- Conducted a study showing that offering vaccinations during hospital stays and outpatient clinic visits is a simple and effective way to protect people at higher risk.
- Commenced evaluation of our local childhood immunisation clinics to better understand how they support families in getting their children vaccinated.
- Helped translate previous research from a project that allowed hospital patients to receive visits from their own pets. This project is now being adopted as a regular part of care, recognising the importance of emotional support and connection during hospital stays.
- Commenced a new two-year project through the University of Newcastle to look at how clinicians could improve ways they support people to quit smoking.
- Shared research findings at local health forums and national conferences to help improve care across the system.
- Provided support to the planning of a new Equity Program, which aims to ensure that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children on the Central Coast are born healthy and remain strong, nurtured by strong families to thrive in their early years.

Other activities

- In collaboration with Drug & Alcohol, Sexual Health and Related Programs, convened a multidisciplinary taskforce to tackle hepatitis C across CCLHD.
- In collaboration with Respiratory and Sleep Medicine, reinstated the Central Coast Tuberculosis Advisory Committee.
- In collaboration with Health Promotion and the CCLHD Executive Leadership Team,

established a new Population Health and Prevention Governance Committee to lead and drive population health initiatives under strategic priority ‘Enable people to live healthy and fulfilling lives’.

What did we achieve?

Rapid and comprehensive response to prevent the spread of communicable diseases, with particular focus on vulnerable populations.

Significant expansion of the highly successful Ward Off Winter! program.

Study on offering vaccinations during hospital stays and outpatient clinic visits published in the Journal of Public Health.

Established key partnerships with internal and external stakeholders to provide a joined-up approach to protecting the health of the local population.

Selected as one of five local health districts to participate in the Priority Populations Immunisation Program from March 2025 to June 2028 to increase adult vaccination rates in under-vaccinated communities across the state.

Partners

CCLHD services – Carer Support Unit; Chest Clinic; Clinical Safety, Quality and Governance; Community, Chronic and Complex Care; Drug & Alcohol; Health Promotion; Infectious Diseases and Microbiology Department; Ngiyang Aboriginal Pregnancy, Child & Family Health Service; Nunyara Aboriginal Health Unit; Pharmacy; Respiratory and Sleep Medicine; Sexual Health; Staff Health; Women, Children and Families

Central Coast Council

Environment Protection Authority

Health Protection NSW

Healthcare professionals including GPs, pharmacists and practice nurses

Hunter New England and Central Coast Primary Health Network

NSW Department of Climate Change, the Environment, Energy and Water



“The intensive and collaborative approach has brought about a reduction in HbA1c from 9.8% to 7.8%, which is a significant achievement in the management of type 1 diabetes.”

–Leah Snape, Clinical Nurse Consultant, Diabetes, CCLHD

“We had a young lady who went from 12 presentations in February 2025 alone down to zero in August 2025. Her care team are now able to better manage her at home without calling emergency services and presenting to ED. For others, the outcomes were more about linking them with other CCLHD services like Diabetes, and their health has improved and engagement and communication now happens without any support from my team.”

–Jacqueline Kelman, Manager, Out-of-Home Care Health Pathway Program



779 children and young people on the Central Coast in **statutory Out-of-Home Care**

Out-of-Home Care Health Pathway Program

Supporting young people through coordination of multidisciplinary teams

What is it?

Out-of-Home care provides alternative accommodation for children and young people who are unable to live with their families due to statutory orders from The Children’s Court or Family Law Court. These children and young people can have complex physical, developmental and mental health needs, often requiring multiple services, public and private. The Out-of-Home Care Health Pathway Program works

on behalf of caseworkers and carers to bring individual stakeholders together and ensure a collaborative, preventative approach when responding to children and young people’s health needs.

What did we do?

We identified young people on the Out-of-Home Care Pathway Program with chronic and complex health needs presenting to emergency departments via Emergency Services weekly, sometimes daily or multiple times each

day. We were also called into urgent meetings for young people with known health problems where each service had different priorities and goals for that young person. This meant they were not producing outcomes that changed the young person’s experience.

We reached out to key stakeholders within CCLHD and the community, offering to coordinate regular meetings whereby the current strengths and

concerns could be shared with each service, with tasks clearly noted for action. This reduced the number of people involved, allowed for clarification of roles and responsibilities between services, shared knowledge and experience, and provided accountability of progress.

Convening regular stakeholder meetings creates connection and collaboration between service providers to address current and future health needs across all children and young people in out-of-home care. This preventative approach ensures support systems, roles and responsibilities are clearly in place prior to crises occurring, reducing interactions with Emergency Services and the Emergency Department, while serving as a crisis response.

Over time, as crisis issues are resolved and actions progressed towards longer-term goals, we transition the coordination of these meetings to another member of the team to take

forward, while being available for consultation as needed.

What did we achieve?

- Reduction in presentations to the Emergency Department via ambulance.
- Progress in diagnosis, treatment, support planning and therapeutic intervention for young people.
- Reduction in urgent meetings and time spent by non-key staff.
- Collaboration and sharing of information between CCLHD and community services to benefit other children with similar needs.

Partners

CCLHD services –Diabetes; Emergency Department; Mental Health; PACER (Police, Ambulance and Clinician Early Response) team; Social Work; VAN (Violence, Abuse and Neglect) Child Wellbeing
Elver Program (NSW Department of

Communities and Justice and NSW Health)

- NSW Ambulance
- NSW Department of Education
- National Disability Insurance Scheme – Behaviour Support Coordinators
- Police Youth Liaison Coordinator
- Youth Action Meeting Coordinator

Short & Sharp

Health Promotion Service



Gandu Connections

Building on the success of Aboriginal Lunchbox Connection, a project that worked to address food insecurity, Health Promotion was successful in securing funding from NSW Health's Translational Research Grant Scheme to further develop this work. The new project will create and test a co-design process that communities can use to improve access to healthy food and support services addressing food insecurity, designed for parents and carers of primary school-aged children, focusing on Aboriginal families.

An Aboriginal Advisory Group has been established to provide project governance, cultural guidance, and oversee the development, implementation and evaluation of the project. Ethics approvals have been secured from Aboriginal Health & Medical Research Council, NSW State Education Research Applications Process, and Human Research Ethics Committee.

Spanning two local health districts, the project is named to reflect local lands and language: Gandu

Connections (Darkinyung for "full bellies") on the Central Coast, and Gukuyi Connections (Dunghutti for "well fed") on the Mid North Coast.

To ensure the work is community led and co-designed, an expression of interest process identified a community partner in each local health district. These partners will collaborate with their respective district and local primary schools to deliver co-designed activities over four school terms, supporting families experiencing food insecurity.



Get Active San Remo and Blue Haven

Get Active San Remo and Blue Haven is a partnership between Central Coast Health Promotion Service, Office of Sport and Central Coast Council. The initiative promotes opportunities for local people to find a new sport or recreation that will help them be more physically active, foster social connection, and build a stronger and healthier community.

In 2024, local sport and active recreation providers were contacted

to update their details and listings on the [Get Active webpage](#), housed on the Sport Central Coast website. The page includes an A-to-Z listing of all activity opportunities in the local and surrounding areas. Activities ranged from AFL to swimming, and community gardening to walking, covering all ages, abilities and interests.

Promotion was focused around using October as a month for the community to take up a new sport or activity

to 'get active'. The three partner organisations promoted activities via their newsletters, website updates and social media activity.

An updated Promotional Toolkit was also developed with social media tiles, editable posters, email banners, website and newsletter copy. This was sent to providers to support them in promoting their activities and the initiative in general.



Healthy Built Environments

There is strong evidence demonstrating the links between chronic disease and lifestyles characterised by car-dominated transport, reduced opportunities for exercise, increased availability of fast food and lack of social connection. The built environment, therefore, has a key role to play in keeping us healthy.

A healthy built environment with green and open spaces can also foster a sense of community through enabling day-to-day interaction with people

and nature in safe and accessible environments.

In 2024–25, we continued to advocate for healthy built environments on the Central Coast by working in partnership with the CCLHD Public Health Unit to review, and respond where necessary, to state significant development applications and plans.

We worked to increase physical activity levels among CCLHD staff and the local community by supporting and encouraging use of active and

sustainable transport. This included: membership of Central Coast Council's Pedestrian Access and Mobility (Active Transport) Advisory Committee; helping staff seeking access to bike parking and end-of-trip facilities; and promoting active transport-related events such as World Bicycle Day, National Walk to Work Day, National Ride2Work Day, National Walk Safely to School Day and National Ride2School Day, involving internal and external communications that resulted in front page coverage in Coast Community News.



Website analytics

In February 2024, Health Promotion launched a [new-look website](#), adding new features such as a Resource Library, an intuitive search function that makes it easier for audiences to find the right information for them, and much simpler navigation to improve the user experience. The new website helped launch a drive in sharing digital content.

To ensure the content and layout meets the needs of visitors, in 2025 sophisticated new mechanisms have been put in place using Google Looker

Studio and Microsoft Clarity platforms. This not only allows the team to track statistics such as visitor and new visitor numbers, engagement time and bounce rates by page, but also visitor locations and referral sources. In addition, the team can now view heatmaps to determine 'hot' and 'cold' content, as well as view screen captures to monitor user journeys through the site.

To support the team, a Website Statistics and Analysis Template (WebSTAT) Form has been developed with support from CCLHD's

Performance, Analytics and Reporting team. The WebSTAT Form enables the team to track their page stats, which are then automatically populated into charts, as well as log any notable peaks and troughs and record what health promotion activity led to a noticeable impact on numbers.

The mechanisms support Health Promotion's commitment to ongoing evaluation and analysis of activity and use of digital channels in a bid for continuous improvement across the service.

Aboriginal Health



Healthy Jarjums, Healthy Future

Healthy Jarjums, Healthy Future is a first-of-its-kind initiative on the Central Coast, developed by CCLHD services including Nunyara Aboriginal Health Unit; Ngiyang Aboriginal Pregnancy, Child & Family Health Service; Allied Health; and Health Promotion in partnership with NSW Aboriginal Education Consultative Group; Bungree Aboriginal Association; and Young, Black and Ready for School.

The program targets Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children starting

kindergarten the following year and provides health screenings for speech, physio, dental, hearing, immunisation and occupational therapy. Families are also provided with information on Aboriginal health services, nutrition, healthy lunchboxes, social work and community services, while a blender bike is on hand for children to make their own healthy smoothies. Children who finish the screening receive a free backpack, pencil case and lunchbox, and transport is provided for families who need it.

The program was run at four public primary schools over the Central Coast in November 2024 – Bateau Bay; Gorokan; Ourimbah; and Young, Black and Ready for School, Woy Woy South.

The events saw 47 children screened resulting in 101 referrals to our allied health teams. Of those referred, 40% required referral to speech pathology and 34% to audiology. As a result, a priority pathway has been developed for Aboriginal kids that require therapy blocks.

HIV & Related Programs



Tackling syphilis transmission

Syphilis is a treatable sexually transmitted infection (STI) – no-one needs to live with syphilis. However, if left undetected and untreated, it can cause serious short and long-term health issues. In 2022, notifications of infectious syphilis in Australia more than doubled from recorded rates in 2015.

The HIV & Related Programs Blood-borne Virus & STI Health Promotion team promoted the Australian Government 'Don't Fool Around with

Syphilis' initiative using resources from the [campaign website](#). Further resources from [Play Safe](#), the NSW Health website on sexual health for young people, were promoted. Some resources were translated into multiple languages to reach non-English speaking community members.

The team used strategic engagement opportunities such as local interagency and network meetings to promote safe behaviours, regular testing, and accessing treatment to stakeholders

who work with young people and sexuality and gender identity-diverse populations. Advice was also delivered directly to the public at activation stalls such as at Gosford Hospital for National Condom Day, which coincides with Valentine's Day on 14 February.

This work brought together stakeholders including CCLHD's Holden Street Clinic, the AIDS Council of NSW (ACON), and the Sex Worker Outreach Project to promote sexual health messages.

Nutrition Services



PICNIC

“I attended the online workshop – listening to other people, other parents asking questions, knowing you’re in the same position as other parents as well. That was helpful.”

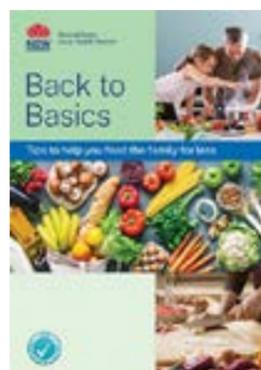
PICNIC Project Central Coast workshop participant

PICNIC is a dietitian-led program for parents and carers of children aged zero to six years. Developed on the NSW Mid North Coast in collaboration with local parents, PICNIC provides evidence-based nutrition and child feeding information from starting solids through to the toddler years. Parents attend an initial online workshop with the PICNIC dietitian and have ongoing access to information and support through the PICNIC website, regular

social media posts and online drop-in sessions. Content is designed to be easily shared across the broader community, in person or online.

Facilitated by the Public Health Nutrition Team, PICNIC Central Coast continues to grow, with ongoing support from the program founders, and local health providers and community members who refer new members. In 2024–25, 58 participants attended our Central Coast workshops.

Following our first birthday in early 2025, PICNIC Central Coast has invited past workshop participants to provide feedback on their experience to investigate program impact within our local population. We have received valuable feedback from the many participants who have participated in the telephone survey. Results will be collated in coming months to help us improve the program for our local community.



Nutrition in childcare settings

“I have found [Cooks Network meetings] to be very resourceful.”

Director, local Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) service

Over the past year, our work has focused on reinforcing the importance of nutrition in early childhood as a preventative health strategy by laying foundations for lifelong healthy eating. Introducing healthy foods from an early age supports the development of a positive relationship with food which can help reduce the risk of chronic diseases later in life.

One of the goals of this strategy is social connection. Our quarterly

Cooks Network meetings have provided invaluable opportunities for cooks from Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) services to come together, share knowledge and celebrate food culture. These gatherings foster a sense of belonging and peer learning, with this year’s topics spanning cultural food inclusion and allergen management in ECEC services.

Our [Menu Matters e-newsletter](#) continues to champion healthy eating. With practical tips, nutritious

recipes and inspiring stories, it aims to empower cooks and chefs across ECEC services to improve menu quality, helping nurture children’s health.

The Cook of the Year Award recognises outstanding contributions in creating a menu full of a variety of healthy foods and dishes that encourage children to expand their food choices.

Combined, these initiatives promote not just healthier meals, but stronger networks and smarter prevention.

Kamira Project

[Kamira Alcohol and Other Drug Treatment Services Inc](#) provides residential treatment options for women, pregnant women and women with children from across NSW who are experiencing problematic alcohol and/or other drug use. Residents of drug and alcohol programs are likely to have [poor nutritional status because of chronic drug or alcohol use](#). Food security is also of concern in this group and is likely to impact nutritional status.

In August 2024, two fourth-year Nutrition and Dietetics students from the University of Newcastle, under the supervision of the Public Health Nutrition Team, developed nutrition education modules for inclusion in the residential program run by Kamira staff. The two face-to-face modules addressed eating healthy and its importance during recovery.

During April to June 2025, a further three nutrition modules were developed by the Public Health Nutrition Team. These new modules focused on meal planning, label reading and feeding young children.

The content was developed in collaboration with Kamira staff and took into consideration residents’ recovery journeys, along with social determinants of health such as financial resources, level of food security, food literacy and early childhood development.

The team provided training and resources for Kamira staff to run the nutrition modules, which will help residents enhance their understanding of food and nutrition.



Nutrition on a budget

“I am going to email the links [to the Back to Basics book] to my entire caseload. It’s a wonderful resource for families on a budget.”

Local service provider

In 2024–25, Nutrition Services built on its range of budget friendly nutrition resources with a modern update to an old favourite and a new snack resource for young children.

Now in full colour, the 15th edition of [Back to Basics – tips to help you feed the family for less](#) was released in August 2024. This cookbook has been providing evidence-based tips on how to eat well on a tight budget for more than 25 years. Consumer feedback

helped inform the update, which has a fresh look and modern design, updated content, and some new resources and recipes to try.

[Good Value Snacks for Kids aged 3 to 5 years](#) was released in June 2025. Many families face budget constraints, limited time and knowledge when it comes to healthy, affordable snack ideas for children. This practical guide offers simple, budget-friendly snack ideas from the five food groups. The

double-sided resource includes recipes and QR codes linking to additional healthy food ideas. This child-focused guide was adapted from the original [Good Value Snacks](#) resource created for the general public. It was developed in response to feedback from local service providers, with input from health professionals, early childhood educators, parents, carers and the CCLHD Health Literacy Committee.

Nutrition for older people

Good nutrition helps to maintain weight, muscle and bone strength, and independence in older years. Since 2010, the book [Eating Well: A Nutrition Resource for Older People and their Carers](#) has provided practical nutrition information and tips to help older people and their carers be informed about nutrition for healthy ageing. The current edition has been widely utilised by services and community groups across the Central Coast and Australia.

During the first half of 2025, the Public Health Nutrition Team invited feedback from community members and service providers, to ensure the book continues to meet the needs of our local community. This has included paper and online surveys and in-person discussions at Gosford Seniors Expo, Wyong Seniors Expo and through local networks.

A broad range of feedback has been received, and the team look forward

to using the information to inform review and update of this resource. Our thanks to the numerous service providers and community members who have provided feedback. The team will incorporate the feedback and continue the review of this popular resource over the next 12 months.

View more resources for older people on CCLHD’s [nutrition for older people webpage](#).

Health Promotion Team 2024-25



Alcohol
Erin Braund



Tobacco & Vaping
Leanne Andrew



Healthy Places
Nigel Tebb



Early Childhood
Michele Munday
Liesl Greenwood



Office Manager
Manami Brisebois



Go4Fun
Georgina Crowe



Primary Schools
Michelle Syddall
Nina Douglass



Admin Support
Georgina Coster



**Secondary Schools
& Young People**
Chelsea Drew



Healthy Active Ageing
Samantha Hingerty



Manager
**Tobacco, Alcohol &
Administration and
Research & Evaluation**
Samantha Batchelor



**Communications
& Design**
Monique Wilding



Team Leader
**Healthy Eating
Active Living**
Justine Gowland-Ella



**Communications
Coordinator**
Mitchell Gadd



Director
**Health Promotion and
Population Health
Improvement**
Nicole Kajons



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

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

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

