MEDIA RELEASE

6 November 2020

Sydney North Health Network's 2019/20 Annual Report presented at its November Annual General Meeting

A year of supporting our northside community and primary health care practitioners dealing with the impact of bushfires and the COVID-19 pandemic

During a year when health has been at the forefront of everyone's minds, Sydney North Health Network (SNHN) spent its fifth operating year continuing to effectively make a difference to the lives of Northern Sydney's primary health professionals, and our 1 million residents. The 2019/20 Annual Report celebrates the work done to ensure better health and better care continues across the Northern Sydney region.

"It has been a privilege this year to support both primary health professionals and the community as they dealt with the impact of bushfires over summer followed immediately by the pandemic," said Lynelle Hales, CEO of Sydney North Health Network. "The emergency response has significantly impacted on our work, and the SNHN team stepped up to face this new challenge and proved once again our agility, drive and passion shine through any crisis."

Early in the COVID-19 pandemic, SNHN quickly mobilised to help set up three Australian Government-funded respiratory clinics in the northern region, as well as distributing masks and other personal protection equipment to primary healthcare providers (over 319,500 masks distributed as of 30 June 2020). The organisation also worked with the region's health care teams and commissioned services to continue providing services to the public in the pandemic environment.

"Another key focus for SNHN during 2019-2020 has been to assist our members and commissioned services to rapidly adapt their service delivery to meet the challenges of a rapidly changing health landscape," noted Kate Loxton, Chair of the Sydney North Health Network. "The measures taken have been essential to ensure our community, particularly those most vulnerable, continue to receive the services they need."

Throughout the year, SNHN continued providing essential education to the region's health care professionals by swiftly moving to remote learning whilst improving local systems of regional care.

Below is a selection of SNHN's 2019-20 operating achievements:

- Partnering with the Northern Sydney Local Health District (NSLHD), we established the collaborative commissioning project (funded by the NSW Ministry of Health) to improve the management and prevention of frailty
- Education sessions delivered to over 4000 GPs and other health professionals

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NORTHERN SYDNEY

An Australian Government Initiative

- Our hospital discharge follow-up services assisted 350 people (double the amount from the previous year) to remain independent at home. These services helped contribute towards the low rate of unplanned hospital admissions, which averaged less than 4% for the year.
- Some 65% of general practices in our region participated in Quality Improvement initiatives, helping them better manage those people with chronic disease
- 1,693 patients enrolled in WellNet Care Coordination; a GP-led chronic disease management program aimed at improving how a patient's healthcare professionals work together to provide better care
- Mental health services provided to 6,599 clients, a 31% increase from the previous year
- Increased Residential Aged Care Facility (RACF) program support, including connecting 99 of 119 RACFs with telehealth enabling access to NSLHD rapid response services. Additionally, education needs assessments completed by 130 RACF staff to support the development and coordination of local education program. Joint LHD / PHN regional RACF forums established to provide targeted support, especially through COVID-19.

The 2019-20 report also highlights the shift over time of our region's general practices to employ registered nurses and move to a greater level of digitised health. Nearly 100% of all our region's general practices are now utilising digitised systems, along with 170 practices employing registered nurses.

To read **SNHN Annual Report 2019/20** in full **CLICK HERE**

2019-20   SNHN Strategic Focus:

- **Ends -**

ABOUT: Sydney North Health Network https://sydneynorthhealthnetwork.org.au/
The Northern Sydney Primary Health Network, operated by the Sydney North Health Network – a not-for-profit organisation – is one of 31 Primary Health Networks (PHNs) established by the Australian Government to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of medical services for the community. Our focus is on patients who are at risk of poor health outcomes. We work to improve the coordination of their care, so they receive the right care, in the right place, at the right time.

MEDIA ENQUIRIES
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