Ruby Russell taking part in Charleville’s Blue Tree Project.
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SOUTH WEST SPIRIT AWARD

ROMA HOSPITAL BUILD UPDATE
We would like to pay our respects to the traditional owners of the lands across the South West. We would also like to pay our respects to the current and future Elders who will inherit the responsibility of keeping Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture alive, and creating a better life for the generations to follow. We believe the future happiness and wellbeing of all Australians and their future generations will be enhanced by valuing and taking pride in Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples – the oldest living culture of humanity.

SOUTH WEST QUEENSLAND TRADITIONAL OWNERS:

Augathella – Bidjara (Bid-jara)
Bollon – Kooma (Coo-ma)
Charleville – Bidjara (Bid-jara)
Cunnamulla – Kunya (Koun-yah) with other interests
Dirranbandi – Kooma (Coo-ma)
Injune – Kongabula (Kong-ga-bull-a)
Mitchell – Gunggari (Gon-gari)
Morven – Bidjara (Bid-jara)
Mungindi – Kamilari (Car-milla-roy)
Quilpie – Bunthamarra (Bun-tha-mar-ra) and Wangkumara (Wong-ka-mara)
Roma – Mandandanji (Mand-an-dand-gee)
St George – Kooma (Coo-ma) with Kamilaroi,
Mandandanji, Bigambul and Gungarri interests
Surat – Mandandanji (Mand-an-dand-gee)
Thargomindah – Kullila (Coo-lee-lar)
Wallumbilla – Mandandanji (Mand-an-dand-gee)

OUR VALUES

QUALITY  COMPASSION  ACCOUNTABILITY  ENGAGEMENT  ADAPTABILITY

This newsletter is produced by the South West Hospital and Health Service (South West HHS).
All feedback and contributions are welcome to SWHHSCommuniasions@health.qld.gov.au.
All published material has been approved by the Health Service Chief Executive.
The natural healing force each one of us has is the greatest force in getting well.

- The “Father of Medicine”, Hippocrates (460 BC to 370 BC).

The best six doctors and no one can deny it are sunshine, water, rest, air, exercise and diet.

- Wayne Fields (1952 to 2020), author of “What the River Knows”.

When “i” is replaced by “we”, even “illness” becomes “wellness”.

- Malcolm X (1925 until assassinated in 1965), US Civil Rights leader.
Well, what an interesting start to the year!
Dorothea McKellar’s, “My Country” (first published in 1908) stills defines Australia.

“I love a sunburnt country
A land of sweeping plains
Of ragged mountain ranges
Of drought and flooding rains.”

More rain this year than the previous two or three years’ totals!! Rivers and creeks are flowing, dams are replenished. It’s green as far as the eye can see but the real change has been in the faces of the people. We can see that spirits have lifted; that confidence has been restored. However, the pathway back for many of the people in the South West will continue to challenge. One month of good and importantly widespread rain, does not wipe the ledger created by the seven or eight years of severe drought.

Having just got through all that and the rampaging fires in many parts of Australia, wack, along comes the threat of a pandemic.

Like the other hospital and health services (HHSs), our health service will be called upon to provide leadership in the containment of the “coronavirus” (or COVID-19). This will require good preparation, excellent communication and strong partnerships with other HHSs, local government, other agencies and other health providers. While it is unlikely that the South West Hospital and Health Service (SWHHS) will be the frontline of the response, we will be expected to do what we can. We need to be prepared but should not overreact. We need to listen to advice of the experts. Our messaging will be important.

A very important issue which Linda and I have agreed needs more emphasis is the role of the HHS in providing opportunities for traineeships. Everyone knows how important it is to try and keep young people in the area. Every economic force seems to be working to pull kids away. That’s not good for the future economic and social impact of our communities. The SWHHS is the largest employer in all the communities in the South West. We offer the widest range of roles from clinical, to administrative, to operational roles. School-based and post school traineeships are a relatively low-cost method of providing opportunities for young people. The skills that people gain can make them productive members of the staff. They may help to “grow our own”, providing future stability for our workforce and importantly local jobs with a commensurate benefit to local economies. We have an obligation as a good citizen in the communities which support us. Linda and I will talk more about this in the coming months.

The February Board meeting was an interesting one in many ways. Originally scheduled for Wallumbilla, we had to demonstrate some resilience as most roads in and out of Roma were cut.

Half of the Board members had to participate by teleconference. That seemed to work OK.

At that Board meeting in February, we were privileged to have a visit from Associate Professor Robyn Littlewood, who was appointed as initial chair of Health and Wellbeing Queensland late last year. Robyn spoke with passion and enthusiasm about their work, which is focussed on practical and effective ways to improve the health outcomes for Queenslanders. There is no magic wand or silver bullet. As well as addressing the Board, Robyn worked with local staff to advance both our wellness agendas.

Robyn understands that locally led initiatives are much more likely to be sustainable. Those values sit really well with our objective to shift the focus more towards strategies to promote health lifestyles in our communities. We are very different from the big metros and regional HHSs, whose main interests lie in the acute care area. We cover the field from primary and community care to acute care to aged care. The health outcomes for our communities are inferior to those on the coast. We can and must do better!!

Professor Littlewood has agreed to present at our Community Advisory Network (CAN) Forum in October in Charleville. This will be an exciting opportunity to explore how we can work in partnership with our volunteers, local government, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health services and other health services in the South West to improve the health and wellbeing of the residents of the South West.

Jim McGowan AM
As I write this article for February, we have been inundated by rain across the South West! Absolutely lovely to see everything so green and the country bounce back so quickly now that the concern for everyone’s wellbeing can start to subside.

I really do acknowledge the lengths our people have gone to, to ensure our communities were safe and prepared for the events that resulted due to rivers rising and storms hitting. Everyone has done so exceptionally well, and the spirit of the South West was alive and kicking, which you will see in our photos shared in the Pulse this month. Thank you for your dedication, compassion, and thoughtfulness toward one another and those we serve.

This is a perfect time now to review our systems and plans for emergency preparedness and business continuity – as much is always learned each time we activate them.

Similarly, you will have all been discussing the COVID-19 preparedness needs across our services. The risks for the global impact of COVID-19 are very high due to the increase in international spread of cases; large clusters of cases now reported outside of China; the limitations of some countries to test and contain; and potential medical supply shortages. It is an evolving situation that is requiring daily updates and links into the Statewide Health Emergency Coordination Centre. We have activated our Pandemic Plan to ensure our preparedness, and we continue to meet several times a week to progress strengthening our readiness, and planning for all case scenarios.

It’s normal and understandable to feel a little anxious with some of the reporting, but please continue to seek official sources of information (through the Queensland Government website), ensure good hand hygiene through hand washing, and stay home if unwell.

We will continue to keep all staff updated every week or more frequently as information comes to hand.

Between these events, and the earlier bushfires in other parts of our beautiful country, it does make you appreciate a quiet day when you can stop and think and plan.

As caregivers, you are always thinking about others first, so please take some time to recharge and care for yourselves, and each other. Our values are part of who we are at work but also in our lives. Being accountable and compassionate also means knowing when to lean on a colleague, ask for help, or take a break; as it does for looking for the signs in others and helping make their need for help an easy thing to do.

We have new resources profiled on our intranet which are designed to support you to manage your wellbeing – across your physical, mental, social, workplace and financial health – and also manage safely in your decision making in the workplace. They are located under the People and Culture section, ‘Health Safety and Wellbeing’ tab. They are worth a look if you get a moment.

Yours in service

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We had many correct answers this month for the January Pulse ‘where’s Linda been’ – perhaps it was because Linda hasn’t stopped talking about it since her return? Linda was in New York and LA (Venice Beach) ... just to name a few places! The first correct answer received was from Deb Alick, Project Officer, Charleville.

Guess where Linda was in February?
The South West Hospital and Health Service will roll out new Occupational Violence Prevention (OVP) training to all staff over the next few months.

Two of our staff, Jeff Potter and Lawrie Usher, recently returned from an intensive two-week program with Maybo – the newly appointed external provider for OVP training – and will be visiting South West facilities to deliver the one-day training for groups of up to 12 people at a time.

Linda Patat, Health Service Chief Executive, said “equipping our staff with all techniques possible to support safe environments is a key priority for us. This specialised training includes conflict management and physical intervention that would allow clinically related challenging behaviour to be managed in a flexible and safe manner, based on patient need”.

“Maybo will ensure that a best practice approach is taken at all times and will ensure consistency across all Queensland facilities,” she said.

Jeff Potter found the training to be some of the best in his career, sharing “They have extensive demonstrated experience in the delivery of conflict resolution and assault avoidance training in the health care sector both in Australia, and around the world.

“It has a layered and blended approach. They provide a comprehensive training program to meet the needs of staff in different service areas, all are based on a human rights approach with a person-centred focus.

“Both Lawrie and I are looking forward to bringing the new training to the South West.”

Please keep an eye out for when Jeff and Lawrie will be scheduling visits for OVP training at your facility.
With Harmony Week coming up we would like to invite all of our facilities and teams to jump on board and celebrate our cultural diversity together by sharing a plate to discover a story.

Australia is one of the most culturally diverse countries in the world, however, many minority groups experience discrimination in their daily lives.

Nearly 1 in 4 Australians report having recently experienced some form of major discrimination.

In the South West, our workplaces naturally reflect our cultural diversity, and the evidence for promoting inclusive workplaces and workplace behaviours is strong: higher levels of innovation; reduced absenteeism; a healthier and more inclusive work environment; and even a better bottom line.

This year, in celebration of Harmony Day, we would like to invite all teams to celebrate your own workplace’s cultural diversity through our “Share a Plate. Discover a Story” event. Choose a day, and bring along a plate of food – and share your history and your story with others.

A culturally diverse workforce and workplaces are mission critical to the South West attracting and retaining the best talent, fostering innovation, and remaining relevant to our clients and communities.

Please register your activity by email to SWHHS_Communications@health.qld.gov.au so we can profile your stories during Harmony Week and remember – Share a plate. Discover a story!
A group of 30 students from five South West high schools will come together in June for HOPE’s sixth annual Deadly Recruits Program.

HOPE’s Sue Eustace-Earle met with members of the Australian Defence Force (ADF) Recruiting team in early February to discuss plans for this year’s event, which will once again be held at Tinnenburra, a remote property outside of Cunnamulla from 21 to 26 June.

Deadly Recruits will see the HOPE team take the students to Tinnenburra for five nights to simulate army life in the outback.

“It is a great way to introduce students to the defence force. If they do enjoy it and want to make it their career they can be supported to pursue further from being at Deadly Recruits,” Sue said.

“During the program they will hike, jog, put up tents and basically learn how to survive in the bush. It gives them great insight into what it would be like being in the army.
At the time the South West Hospital and Health Board was established in 2012 the Board was committed to building strong local relationships and meaningful consumer and community engagement that would influence and shape the design and delivery of health services. As the South West has a large geographical area it was decided to establish the Consumer and Community Advisory Network (CAN) across all facilities in the South West HHS, including Multipurpose Health Services (MPHSs), hospitals and community clinics as it was important to listen and understand issues and needs across very unique communities.

The 15 local CANs are the South West Hospital and Health Service’s (SWHHS) principle mechanism for consumer and community engagement. The CANs are our key stakeholders and have proven invaluable to the SWHHS as they provide meaningful input and feedback. The CANs through their local knowledge and understanding of issues raise matters that are important to their communities and offer recommendations and solutions that will work for them. They make a valuable contribution to the health system and strengthen links between health services and their local communities and are the experts who are able to bring each community’s perspective forward to achieve better health outcomes.

As a Health Service and a community, we continually seek improvement to understand what is working and where and how we can engage more effectively. Complementing our CANs, our aged care residential facilities in the South West, Westhaven in Roma and Waroona in Charleville, have Aged Care Consumer and Families Advisory Committees. These committees are integral in ensuring the needs of our consumers are met and to enhance the safety, health, wellbeing and quality of life of the consumers who are in residential aged care.

Since their inception, the CAN’s have consolidated their role as the peak community and consumer advisory committee to the Board and have undertaken important discussions with their networks and local communities about various issues concerning health services in our region. Our CANs provide a unique community and consumer perspective to all aspects of our health service’s operation and healthcare delivery.

Our engagement aims to:

- Empower our consumers and community members to shape the future of the South West Hospital and Health Service
- Embrace and cultivate a person-centred culture in all that we do
- Share our performance, enhancements, ideas, decisions and innovation openly and transparently with our consumers and community
- Enhance our partnerships and relationships with key stakeholders to ensure a coordinated approach to health care throughout the region and beyond
- Strengthen the health literacy of our consumers and community, enabling ownership of their own health care

If you know of anyone who would like to be a part of one of our CANs across the South West please email SWHHS_Board@health.qld.gov.au
The adoption of what is known as Safety Briefings has been internationally recognised to enhance safety and improve quality improvement in many organisations, and across industries.

South West HHS continues to push the envelope with a continuing focus on ongoing daily improvement, searching for ways to always ensure we remain focused on safety, and organisational learning.

Following successful implementation of the ‘agile way of working’, adding to the mix is a quick stand up meeting three times every week, where every service and support area from across the health service joins into a teleconference to ‘check-in’ about safety and key safety messages.

It is a supportive framework that promotes responsive action, shared support and focus on core goals. The stand-up briefings bring together Directors of Nursing and Service Directors with wider representation across workplace health and safety, infection control, building, engineering and maintenance, operational services and information and communications technology (ICT).

With a three-part agenda, focussing on four fundamental topics, each huddle has a dedicated leader and participants, with sessions running at strictly scheduled times (8:45 to 9am) every Monday, Wednesday and Friday.

Each session reviews the following core topics based on the previous 24 to 48 hours, what is predicted for the next 24 to 48 hours and finally any emergent risks and/or other issues that need resolution:

- Patient care including incidents involving harm or potential harm and access issues
- Service delivery – resource management
- Environmental factors – eg equipment failures
- Staff safety and risk
- Organisation-wide key messages and safety announcements

Overseen by key Executive Leads, the process does not replace or change required reporting through standard systems and escalation pathways, but rather supplements standard business.

Following an early review of the go-live phase, a more formal review is also scheduled during week eight of implementation which will allow participants to further refine our tri-weekly processes to further ensure best fit with our operational requirements.
As part of encouraging children to learn how to look after their teeth the Minion Tooth Fairies visited Morven State School last week.

South West’s Ashleigh Hotschilt (Dental Assistant) and Lisa Rippon (Senior Oral Health Therapist) dressed up as the fairies and delighted the children in a fun way about oral hygiene.

“To start, we read the children a story about “Doug the Sugarbug” and how if you leave him on your teeth he can make holes by squirting acid on them. The kids thought ‘Doug’ wasn’t very nice! Cause no one wants holes in their teeth,” Lisa said.

“Then we showed the kids how to get rid of ‘Doug’ from their teeth by brushing in big circles on the outside of their teeth, then scrubbing the chewing parts and finally flicking on the insides (near your tongue).

“We reminded them that we need to brush ‘Doug’ off our teeth twice a day (morning and night) but most importantly not to rinse the toothpaste out of our mouths after we have brushed.”

Lisa said they also took their “Minion Plaque Cave” where they put an ultra violet dye on the teeth and then got the children to go into the cave to see if ‘Doug’ was still on their teeth.

“So wow to our surprise all the kids at Morven State School had been cleaning ‘Doug’ off their teeth really well. It was great work on the kids behalf.”

Over the coming weeks the Minion Tooth Fairies will be visiting Augathella State School and Wyandra State School to see how well the kids are brushing and looking after their teeth.

MINION TOOTH FAIRIES VISIT MORVEN STATE SCHOOL

FEBFAST A HIT ACROSS THE SOUTH WEST

South West residents used February to help kick start healthy habits for 2020 as part of a new national initiative called Febfast.

“You may not have made a New Year’s resolution but it’s never too late to start working on a healthier you,” South West’s Community Prevention Officer Michael Reddan said.

“We promoted Febfast across the South West in the hope of people participating in the national initiative where individuals call time out on alcohol, sugar or another unhealthy vice of their choice – such as too much coffee, chocolate, hot chips, hamburgers and other fatty food – anything they choose.

“It’s the perfect way to kick-start the year with some good health behaviours. It’s also a good way of helping disadvantaged young people because if you take part in Febfast and raise some money doing so, it will all go to a good cause.”

South West’s Community Nutritionist Rohan Ballon – who supported Febfast – said the Health of Queenslanders 2018 report showed that although the rate of smoking in the South West had fallen to 17 per cent from 22 per cent in 2016, it was still higher than the state average.

“The number of people self-reporting as having an unhealthy weight – 32 per cent – remained unchanged between 2016 and 2018 but, just like the smoking rate, it was significantly higher than the state average,” he said.

Rohan encouraged staff and community members to visit the State Government’s Healthier. Happier. campaign to help them perform an honest assessment of their diet and lifestyle and find ways to improve their health in the hope of making changes that stick!
Communities across the South West are getting behind the Blue Tree Project, with Charleville being the most recent to paint a tree blue on 13 February.

HOPE’s Community Program Officer, Jenny Peacock got the community involved in the Charleville event to help raise awareness around mental wellbeing. “The Blue Tree Project is helping spark difficult conversations all over Australia and encourage people to speak up when battling mental health concerns,” Jenny said.

“By spreading the paint and spreading the message that “it’s OK to not be OK”, we can help break down the stigma that’s still largely attached to mental health.”

Jenny got together members of the Charleville community including Lifeline, the Murweh Shire Council, the Royal Flying Doctors and the Charleville Neighbourhood Centre to help paint the tree blue.

It’s OK not to be OK

“It was wonderful to have organisations to put their hands up to help. It was a real community event and we believe there will be many more towns jumping on board and supporting this wonderful initiative,” she said.

Cunnamulla have already committed to joining this movement and we hope many more communities will follow suit and paint a tree blue in their town to raise awareness of mental wellbeing across the South West.

A trial program at Mitchell showed residents how to prepare and cook healthy and nutritious meals on a budget with locally purchased groceries.

South West’s Community Nutritionist Rohan Ballon said the health service had partnered with Foodworks Mitchell to host the two cooking demonstrations in February.

Rohan said it was entirely possible for rural and regional residents to make healthy eating choices.

“With some thought and planning, you can produce meals for yourself and your family that are both healthy and budget conscious,” he said.

“Our goal with the cooking demonstrations at Mitchell was to show you can prepare a meal for a family of four for under $20 with groceries purchased entirely locally.

Mr Ballon said the Mitchell demonstration had been organised by Griffith University nutrition and dietetics students Georgia Volz and Dylan Tapp, who were currently doing work placements under supervision in the South West.

“We’re hoping this cooking and nutrition education demonstration can now be used as a template for similar programs in other communities,” he said.

“And it won’t be just cooking and preparing meals, we will also be providing advice and education on good nutrition and healthy eating habits.”

Mr Ballon thanked Foodworks Mitchell for its involvement in the program.

“It’s a great example of local businesses and organisations partnering with our health service to help spread important health messaging throughout the community,” he said.

The Mitchell cooking demonstration and nutrition education program was part of the South West’s ongoing Healthy Communities initiative.

“Our Healthy Communities initiative is designed to help South West residents eat well, be more active and create environments that support and encourage healthy lifestyle behaviours, especially these days when a significant proportion of people lead a more sedentary lifestyle and are not active every day,” he said.

He said the Healthy Communities initiative was a key priority of the South West HHS Strategic Plan.

“What we want to achieve is to keep people healthy and avoid them having to come to hospital in the first place,” he said.

“As part of our strategic plan over the next four years, we are focusing on a range of ‘healthy communities’ initiatives designed to reduce the burden of chronic disease in our region and the rate of avoidable hospital admissions.”
Health and Wellbeing Queensland (HWQld) visited the South West at the end of February to discuss health and wellbeing priorities with the community and to gain a first-hand look at how the South West HHS Healthy Communities initiative is supporting locals to make positive changes to their lifestyles.

Associate Professor Robyn Littlewood, CEO HWQld said she was exploring how HWQld could support communities across Queensland to develop, expand and lead their own health and wellbeing efforts.

The South West was one of her first stops. As the CEO she said she wanted to talk to locals about what they need to feel supported and empowered to adopt healthy lifestyle changes.

“It’s important that we can support people on all fronts – in the workplace, in the home and in the community. It’s all about creating healthy places and systems to make it easy for people to move and eat healthier. This is about making everyone’s life better,” she said.

“Eating more fruit and vegetables, and incorporating plenty of physical activity into our everyday, are ways that we can all improve our health and reduce our risk of chronic disease.

“It sounds so simple, but we understand that it’s actually so complex. Changes to our society including reduced exercise, poor diets high in sugar, fat and salt, and time spent in front of screens is contributing to weight gain and obesity on a population level.”

During her visit Associate Professor Littlewood took part in one of the ‘toolbox talk’ sessions where they measured what she ate and drank over a 24 hour period.

South West HHS Community Nutritionist Rohan Ballon coordinated the demonstration and said the same concept had been rolled out in a local workplace as part of a ‘toolbox talk’ session.

“It’s taking the concept of a healthy eating talk and turning it into a really interactive session that is more engaging for people,” he said.

“The Healthy Communities team actually codeveloped this idea with Roma-based welding business Fleming’s Welding Service, as part of a suite of wellness activities for their workplace.

“Robyn got really into it and was impressed by what we are achieving here in the South West for our communities.”

For more information about the South West’s Healthier Communities initiative:

Email: SWHHS-Healthy-Communities@health.qld.gov.au
Or visit: https://www.southwest.health.qld.gov.au/hc/
Also visit Health and Wellbeing Queensland: https://hw.qld.gov.au/
Visit www.healthier.qld.gov.au to find out more about nutrition and exercise tips, videos and a range of recipes.
Regional Community Forum Promises to Drive Growth in the South West

Digital connectivity, educational tourism, drought and water security, mental health services, access to skilling and training, and the attraction and retention of skilled workers were all hot topics discussed at the second Palaszczuk Government Regional Community Forum for the Darling Downs South West Queensland region at Roma on 2 March, 2020.

The forum, one of seven held across regional Queensland recently, brought local community members together with government representatives to discuss opportunities to drive future jobs and growth in the region.

The Darling Downs South West Forum was chaired by Member for Ipswich and Assistant Minister for Veterans Affairs and Assistant Minister of State Jennifer Howard MP, and was joined by Ministers Mark Bailey MP and Stirling Hinchliffe MP.

The Government continues to support regional Queenslanders to boost the economy and create jobs, and these forums ensure the community has a strong voice to talk about local strengths, challenges and priorities.

Queensland is a vast, unique State and no two regions are the same, but it was apparent from the first round of forums last October that there were consistent themes being raised locally, which we’ve now made strategic priorities for discussion.

Discussions centred on skills and training, drought and water security, support for small business, emerging industries, tourism including Indigenous tourism and access to government services.

The Government’s commitment to regional Queensland remains an absolute priority and it is empowering local people to find local solutions to support new jobs & industries.

“Darling Downs South West Forum members will work with the Queensland Government’s Office for Rural and Regional Queensland to consider what outcomes are most important to the local community and to develop local action plans,” she said.

The forum also visited the new Roma Hospital redevelopment site to hear the latest on the health services in South West Queensland.

To find out more about the Regional Community Forums visit www.qld.gov.au/aqregions.
A total of 27 new nursing and midwifery graduates started their careers with the South West on 10 February.

“This is one of the largest single intakes of nursing and midwifery graduates we have accepted in our health service,” South West HHS Executive Director of Nursing and Midwifery Services Chris Small said.

“It is a great chance for aspiring nurses all over the state to go straight from finishing their degrees to kickstarting their careers and these extra nurses will learn on the job and translate the skills they’ve learnt at Uni into better outcomes for patients across the South West.”

Chris said over the past few years, the South West HHS had been experiencing a strong level of interest from new nursing and midwifery graduates in joining the health service and he believes this is reflective of the fact the South West is being viewed as an increasingly attractive area in which to pursue their careers.

“In addition, since March 2017, our 12-month graduate transition program has been endorsed by the University of Southern Queensland for two credit points towards any future course of study the graduates might want to embark upon as their careers progress.”

Chris said this year’s new graduates included existing current South West HHS employees Anita Badgery and sisters-in-law Annabel and Jody Tully.

“Anita previously was an Assistant in Nursing at Westhaven Aged Care Facility in Roma, while Annabel and Jody were Assistants in Nursing at Quilpie, with Jody now working at Augathella,” he said.

“I would like to commend all three on the success of their studies and the dedication and commitment they showed in pursuing their goals while continuing to work at Westhaven, Quilpie and Augathella throughout their studies.”

The new graduates spent a week at Roma Hospital for orientation before dispersing to their various designated locations for their 12-month graduate program.

“They have chosen an excellent time to start their careers, given that 2020 has been designated worldwide as the Year of the Nurse and Midwife, and we are very excited to welcome them,” he said.

Once their orientation is complete, the new graduates will be assigned to the health facilities at Injune (2), Mungindi (2), Mitchell (2), Surat (2), Augathella (2), St George (2), Cunnamulla (2), Dirranbandi (2), Quilpie (2), Roma (3), Charleville (4), Waroona (1) and Westhaven (1).

“These include two midwifery graduates who have been allocated to Charleville and Roma and one dual degree registered nurse/paramedic graduate who has been allocated to Augathella,” Chris said.
As in previous years, the South West will welcome a second, smaller intake of graduate nurses and midwives in August.

Strong governance processes, alignment with policy and procedures and good care being provided were three consistent messages the accreditors relayed back to staff after the South West HHS’s 2020 accreditation last month.

In fact, their exact words were that we ‘walk the talk’.

In particular, they shared our stand out areas as being:

- Village Connect
- Compassionate Care Bundle
- Person-Centred Road Map
- Our staff and consumer engagement strategies
- The maturity of partnering with consumers
- Our extensive commitment and work undertaken in relation to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health and cultural capability
- Quality Boards and the transparency and partnership with performance information with staff and communities.

The assessors commented that in rural facilities communities were part of our family and vice versa. The stark difference between our sites and bigger cities in relation to this was rewarding to hear.

Unfortunately, we received one ‘not met’ area for Communicating for Safety (Standard 6) in relation to clinical handover not being consistently attended at all sites, and particularly the application of three points of identification and compliance with patient identification band inclusions.

We have commenced rectification work to ensure we meet this standard.

We also received important insights in relation to areas for improvement across the standards and action plans will be produced and shared over the coming weeks.

South West HHS Chief Executive Linda Patat said during talks with staff she consistently heard the intention to maintain our level of performance (particularly with mandatory training, documentation and closing the loop with patient and consumer evaluation) to avoid additional work in the future.

She said this commitment aligned with our philosophy of being ‘accreditation-ready every day’ and bolstered us to move forward from a well-prepared base position.

She extended her thanks and appreciation, on behalf of the SWHHS Board and the Executive Team, to the South West family for “your ongoing dedication and commitment to providing the highest degree of confidence to our community that their health services are – and remain - of the highest quality”.

South West HHS Directors of Nursing, business managers and other key staff across our facilities, including the oral health and mental health portfolio, participated in the quarterly performance and accountability discussions held at the end of January and early February.

These stocktake meetings are held directly with the Executive Team to review ongoing performance against a range of activity as well as being opportunities for colleagues to share operational concerns or other barriers to their effective work, in addition to celebrating key achievements.

“Having recently joined the Executive Team, these sessions really gave me a fantastic insight into the dedication and hard work of colleagues across the service,” Ms Sweeney said.

“It was also great to hear firsthand about local initiatives to support communities, and with respective meetings held jointly in some places, to also observe the very close and collegiate relationships between our hospital and GP teams.”

Key areas of focus for this round of meetings - which include standard monitoring of key activity, workforce and financial data – were individual action plans in response to the Working for Queensland survey 2019 and a review of local mandatory training rates.

Consistent feedback received from colleagues included the welcome introduction of the #myPathway leadership landscape to initiate supportive conversations, as well as being able to draw direct lines between people’s roles and responsibilities and the wider objectives of the business.
When Ally Campbell moved to the South West as a graduate nurse in 2017 she had no idea just how fortunate she was and how many opportunities would come her way.

And this includes being one of the South West’s most successful preceptor program nurse graduates after recently being appointed the Clinical Nurse at Cunnamulla.

Originally from Brisbane, Ally decided to take up a graduate nurse position in Cunnamulla to be closer to her husband’s family property.

“He moved back here before finishing my degree, so the opportunity to work in the South West close to him really drew me in,” Ally said.

“When I first started out here it was a really hard adjustment. I’d left everything I knew and everyone I loved to live on a sheep and cattle station and start my nursing career in a small rural hospital where there wasn’t a preceptor position at the time.

“Lucky for me everyone out here was so welcoming. Before long I discovered a great group of friends and with the support I received from my fellow new graduate who started in Cunnamulla at the same time as me, the amazing support from the Cunnamulla Hospital staff and the South West HHS educators, I fell in love with the South West.”

She said the educators in the South West were a great asset to feeling welcomed and part of the team and she was so proud that she was a part of the new preceptor program that had been introduced.

“The new preceptor program is an amazing step forward in new graduate transitioning. It is so important to nurture and support new graduates to help them grow into the nurses they firstly want to be and secondly need here in the South West,” Ally said.

“I’m very passionate about getting rid of the stigma that nurses have for the new graduates. For me, I think we can all learn from one another and I think it’s necessary to have preceptors available to those new faces in nursing who, will one day possibly nurse someone we know and love.”

Ally is an advocate for every nurse needing to experience rural and remote nursing as she believes you do get to experience so much more in the bush.

“I love rural nursing, it is very much the saying “jack of all trades” however I strongly believe we do master our own rural nursing skills,” she said.

“I love the learning opportunities and the things you get to experience out here in the South West. I take any learning opportunity I can or offered from nursing conferences, workshops, hospital exchanges and even overseas volunteer nursing.

“We are so supported in the South West to continually learn and up-skill which is so important in our chosen career.”

For more information on the preceptor program please email SWHHS_LOL@health.qld.gov.au
SIGNALLING OUR COMMITMENT TO RECONCILIATION: NEW FLAG POLES FOR OUR FACILITIES

Across the South West HHS new flag poles will be installed at every facility as part of its commitment to acknowledging the healing and reconciliation for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

South West HHS Senior Project Officer, Infrastructure and Maintenance Scott Wassman said having prominent flag poles at each of our facilities not only made them more welcoming for visitors and patients, but they also provided a sense of community.

“It was identified that even some of our residents made mention of facilities that didn’t have them so we made it a priority to ensure we could put them up at each facility across the South West,” Scott said.

“It is an upgrade that shows respect and recognition of our first nations. It shows community partnership and reconciliation plus a real sense of community.

“All three flags will be raised and illuminated once the poles are installed and already some of the facilities are completed, with the goal of having most of our major sites completed by Anzac Day.”
The introduction of the disposable bronchoscope has been a welcome addition to emergent situations across the South West hub sites.

Dr Adam Coltzau said the implementation of the disposable bronchoscopes was part of the South West HHS emergency standards.

“The disposable video bronchoscopes, which are compatible with our video laryngoscopes, are flexible cameras on sticks which make it easier to identify problems in difficult intubations,” he said.

“This new equipment will be used for our emergency airway trolleys and will be available at each of our hub sites.

“They will give an extra margin of safety during anaesthetics as well as emergency airway situations.”

The new equipment should be arriving in March.

CHECK OUT OUR NEW HEALTH, SAFETY AND WELLBEING UPDATES ON QHEPS!

The Safety and Wellbeing section on our website has been overhauled and now has some easy to use tools and new information for all staff.

With refreshed content, search options and new features the page has been developed to help staff navigate the site much easier.

There is new information about Be Healthy, Be Safe, Be Well; and important information for managers and employees on health and wellbeing.

Happy and healthy go hand in hand and your wellbeing is of the utmost importance to us.

We are proud of what we are achieving in the South West and we want staff to be able to find any information relating to health, safety and wellbeing easily. So please check it out today!

BUILDING OUR LEADERS OF TOMORROW, TODAY

Over 50 South West Hospital and Health Service staff and managers were nominated to meet with Brielle Bunce from Hudson Talent Management to discuss the next steps in the Lead4Queensland (Lead4Qld) program in February.

It was a great opportunity for our staff to be a part of such an innovative program which is designed to build Queensland’s leaders of tomorrow through the latest thinking in leadership capability, assessment and development.

The program provides individuals with customised insights into leadership strengths and development areas, personalised development action plans, in addition to career pathways and growth development opportunities.

Our staff involved discussed the next steps in the development program and were shown what resources and continuing development opportunities were available through the Lead4Qld dashboard.

And now not only do they have access to their comprehensive Lead4Qld leadership reports, but they also have access to a range of tools and resources that are designed to continue their development and advancement as leaders including:

- Self-reflection tools for leadership development including a Keep, Stop, Start tool;
- Development Action Planning tool that is designed to help managers plan their own development as leaders and managers;
- Benchmarking tools to enable managers to understand and plan future development that is in line with their career pathway and goals;
- Activities to increase their own personal capabilities as leaders.

The Lead4Qld program participants will continue their development journeys as part of the Lead4Qld program, utilising the various tools and activities provided through the Lead4Qld dashboard and it is exciting to see what this program has to offer.

The South West HHS is committed to investing in the development of its staff and if you would like to be considered for development programs such as the Lead4Qld program, please contact your line manager and be sure to mention development opportunities as part of your #MyPathway discussions as we are all leaders, whether that be leader of self, leader of others, leader of leaders, executive or chief executive.
OUR GENERAL PRACTICE IT UPGRADE: BEST PRACTICE IMPROVEMENT PROJECT

This year marks some exciting changes when it comes to the use of technology in our primary care and general practices through the new Best Practice Infrastructure Improvement Project (BPIIP).

The South West HHS Executive and Board have recognised your patience with the many challenges you have faced with the slow performance of the system, manual backup processes, lack of data sharing across the south West HHS and out of step updates.

We aim to fix this with the BPIIP and are committed to delivering a better ‘Best Practice’ experience.

In January, our Board approved the business case to upgrade and improve the infrastructure that supports the Best Practice system. It has been a long road to get to this point, but we are here!

The BPIIP aims to provide a modern, contemporary platform that will enable us to have more reliable performance with Best Practice.

It will also enable us to have a whole of HHS record for our patients, engage with My Health Record and integrate with HBCIS so that we can include patient UR numbers in Best Practice. These are ambitious aims, but the Executive and the Board feel we are more than ready.

Project planning has commenced, and we hope that we can have all practices migrated by June! So please bear with us as we plan, build, test and deliver this exciting initiative.

We know that this project will not fix everything. Some of our sites have slow networks or connections that don’t go the shortest distance between sites.

We are working closely with eHealth Queensland and Telstra to improve the performance of our network. While we can improve the infrastructure underpinning the system, there will always be some limitations because of the distance our network travels.

In the meantime, we are going full steam ahead, cleansing our data, understanding the best way to bring all the separate instances of Best Practice together and ensuring that all sites are on the same version, with the same modules activated. The work has begun!

If you have any questions, please reach out to our Ask Executive email, as we appreciate hearing your perspective and addressing your queries.

Jan Pallisier, Enrolled Nurse Advanced Practice, Mitchell Medical Practice

QH apps are available via our mobiles now
Jane McArthur is the South West Hospital and Health Service's #SWspirit recipient for the month of February.

#SWspirit is a regular initiative to recognise staff who exemplify the organisation's spirit through living our values in the way they work every day.

Commitment, compassion and community are three very common themes when it comes to Jane McArthur and her passion towards her role in the South West. Jane works with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community, the Aboriginal Medical Services and the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Liaison Officers to achieve improved health outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

“Jane exudes so much passion for her role as one of South West’s Chronic Disease Clinical Nurses in Primary and Community Care (Adult Health) and goes above and beyond every day and to everyone that comes her way.”

Her colleagues couldn’t speak highly enough about her – from her being “hard working and reliable” to “always having a smile on her face” – Jane is certainly well liked and respected by her peers and the communities she works in.

As one of her colleagues said “Jane cheers up all her patients and peers even just with her smile. She goes above and beyond for everyone and is always willing to lend a hand wherever needed.

Her way with our communities is very special. She has her own unique way of being able to connect with everyone.

“Her compassion, quality of care, engagement and accountability for ensuring everyone in the South West receives the highest standards of health care is second to none and we, and the communities she visits, are very lucky to have her.”

Another one of her colleagues said, “at one of our recent community clinics we had two older gentlemen who, for the first time, engaged with us. Through Jane’s comforting and compassionate way the men agreed to have their blood pressure taken for the first time and were intrigued at how it worked. We are sure they will be back to get a check-up at the next clinic we hold in their community.”

Through her dedication within the Primary and Community Health team and her passion for ensuring everyone receives quality health care, she is definitely a shining light for the communities across the South West.

Congratulations Jane for giving so much to the people and the communities you work with everyday across the South West. Your quality of care, compassion, engagement and adaptability to caring for and helping every person who comes your way makes you a true asset to the South West.
NEW ROMA HOSPITAL COMMISSIONING UPDATE

The focus of the new Roma Hospital commissioning activities through February has been on final confirmation of the shelving solutions for all the hospital store rooms.

Work has continued to refine the move planning and the Move Strategy, developed in January, has been endorsed by the Project Commissioning Committee and is currently being reviewed by the Project Steering Committee prior to final approval.

The process for pre-occupancy testing and evaluation has also been completed, which is a systematic process for verifying the performance of the facilities, systems and assemblies to ensure that the rooms function for their intended purpose; that equipment is installed and working and that finishes, fittings and fixtures, including data and power points, are as per the approved documentation.

The commissioning leads will complete this process with the commissioning team during Watpac’s operational trial period.

The regular site tours for staff are continuing to be very popular with all tour dates filling quickly and some weeks in March already booked. These provide staff with the opportunity to visit all areas within the new hospital, many of which are near completion in terms of internal fit out.

To book a tour please email Kirsty.dykes@health.qld.gov.au

CONSTRUCTION PROGRESS

- Commissioning of services is continuing to be progressed
- Final internal fit outs near completion
- External works have commenced
- Work on the after-hours staff car park outside the Ambulance Bay has commenced with cement work completed and landscaping underway.