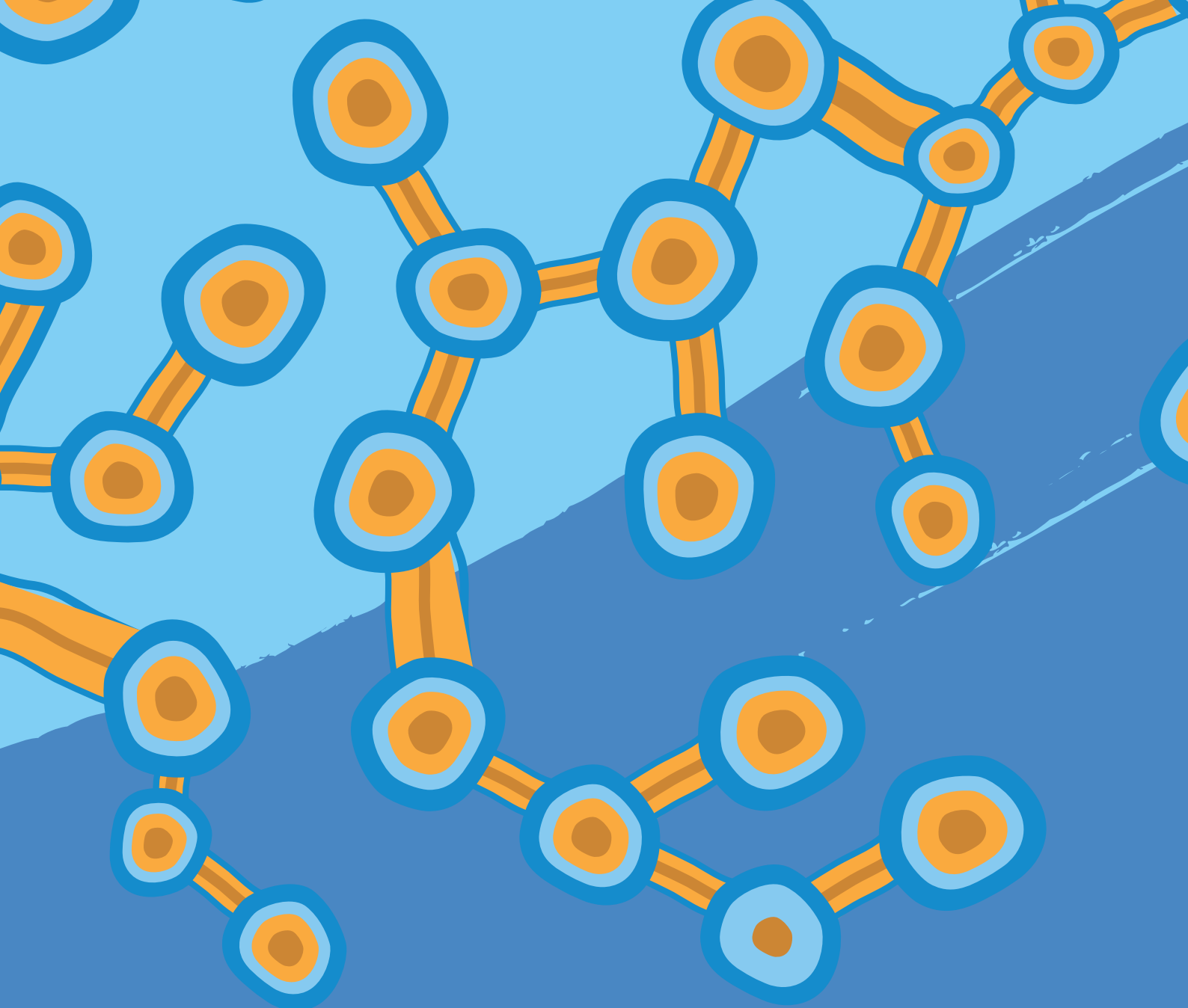




North  
Eastern  
COMMUNITY  
HOSPITAL

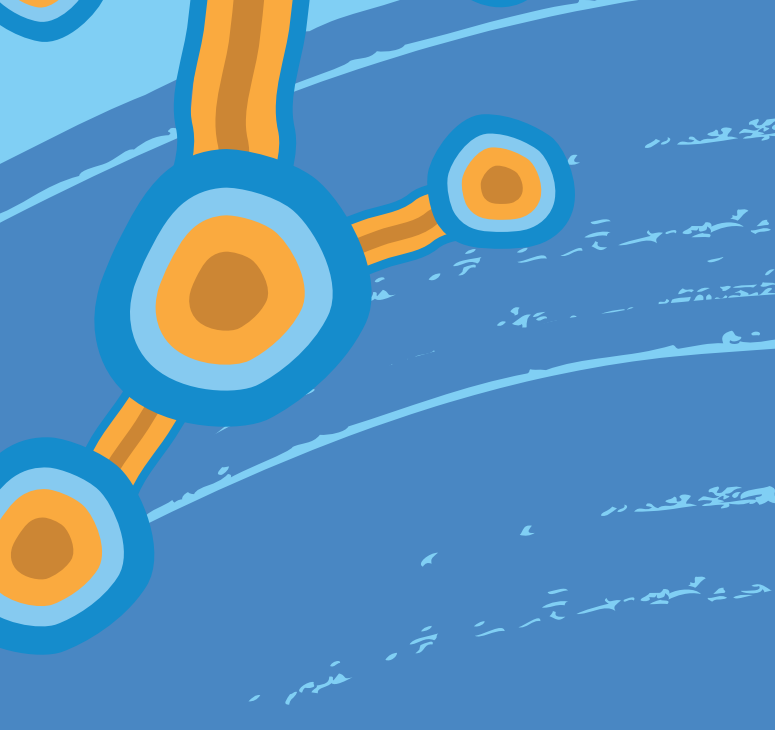
# 2021 Annual Report



## Our organisation

North Eastern Community Hospital Inc. (NECH) is a not-for-profit organisation.

As such, we return all profits to the communities we serve by updating equipment, upgrading our facilities and technology, developing new services, and investing in our people.



## Vision

To be the premier provider of health care excellence from birth to aged care.

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# Chairman's report

**Mr Michael Auciello**  
Board Chair



**One of the greatest strengths of North Eastern Community Hospital has always been its ability to adapt to change, and never was this more important or apparent than in 2020-21.**

We began the new financial year following a period of significant strategic planning, overseen by our previous Board Chair John Capaldo, in conjunction with the Board and Executive.

The challenges identified were significant. NECH had to find a way to remain financially viable and relevant to its community amid a broader national trend away from private health insurance.

Our strategy involved making significant investments in facilities and equipment to ensure patients continue to choose North Eastern Community Hospital, and to ensure we continue to attract more visiting specialists to the hospital in order to drive greater activity in our theatres and on our wards.

We invested in the \$5.6 million redevelopment of Payneham Wing, delivering brand new consulting rooms and aged care facilities. We also constructed a new gastroenterology suite to meet growing community demand, and we built a new day surgery recovery area.

We also invested heavily in new equipment for our operating theatres, so that we could attract more orthopaedic surgeons and launch ophthalmology services at the Hospital. We also began planning for the building of an additional theatre and new radiology department.

These significant investments, which were not easy decisions and came with a degree of risk, are already paying dividends for the hospital and the community we exist to serve.

Our new consulting area has helped secure new orthopaedic surgeons and new obstetricians, and our additional gastroenterology suite has allowed more gastroenterologists to bring their lists to North Eastern.

Our investment in ophthalmology equipment and the construction of a new specialist eye clinic has helped attract three new ophthalmologists to NECH.

Former Board Chair John Capaldo and CEO Michele Smith are to be commended for their bold vision in backing and driving these important decisions, ones that will ensure NECH's continued success into the future.

New strategic alliances were also formed this past year. We proudly enter into partnership with Orthopaedics SA, who have taken a major tenancy in our new commercial precinct, and Benson Radiology, who are now delivering all radiology services to NECH and will begin offering MRI services later this year.

There have also been new partnerships undertaken with SA Health, which have been so important both to NECH and to the public health system. Under the agreements NECH has utilised available capacity in its theatres to help SA Health reduce surgery wait times for public patients. We are also continuing to offer medical beds to public patients, reducing bed pressures and ambulance ramping in the public system.

These models have not only been commercially beneficial for North Eastern. They are, quite simply, the right thing to do. As a not-for-profit, community-owned hospital, being able to assist SA in reducing surgery wait times and ramping for public patients absolutely fits with our ethos as an organisation, and embodies one of our core values, compassion.

This significant list of wonderful achievements has only been possible through the hard work and dedication of a remarkable team of staff right across the hospital and aged care services, now numbering almost 360 people. This kind, compassionate and versatile cohort of health care professionals ensures NECH continues to be able to offer the highest quality care to patients and residents, while maintaining our reputation as a friendly, welcoming place for all who come through our doors.

Our staff have also shown incredible strength through the periods of restrictions associated with COVID-19, quickly and continually adapting how they do their work in order to ensure the safety of all patients, residents, staff and visitors. On behalf of the Board, I want to thank each and every member of the NECH family for their sacrifices, their patience, and their commitment to their community.

2022 and the years beyond will undoubtedly bring more change and the continuing need for NECH to adapt, to evolve and to find more, better ways to serve our community. It is exciting and rewarding to be part of a team that I know is up for that challenge, and that is deeply committed to fulfilling our Mission of providing excellent care with a comprehensive range of health services in a safe, caring environment.

# CEO's

# report

**Ms Michele Smith**  
Chief Executive Officer



## This has been the most exciting year so far during my tenure as CEO of North Eastern Community Hospital.

We have completed major projects, launched new partnerships, and significantly grown both the patient activity in the hospital and our staff cohort to meet the additional demand. All this was achieved in the context of very difficult circumstances in the health system because of the COVID-19 pandemic.

We completed the final stage of the \$5.6 million redevelopment of the Payneham Wing and officially opened the brand new consulting rooms and new aged care facilities. This was a watershed moment for North Eastern and the entire team involved in the project can be incredibly proud of what they have achieved. The redevelopment positions NECH to continue to grow activity by having the capacity to welcome more visiting specialists, and to keep providing industry-leading aged care services well into the future.

Construction was also completed on a new recovery area for day surgery patients, works commenced on a new specialist eye clinic, and planning is underway to build an additional surgical theatre and a new radiology department.

There was also a focus in the financial year on strengthening existing partnerships, and forging new ones. North Eastern continued to partner with SA Health, utilising our available capacity to offer medical beds to public patients. This innovative partnership eased bed pressures and ramping within the CALHN network by outsourcing longer-than-optimal stay medical patients to the private sector, reducing surgery wait times for public patients in the process.

We welcomed Orthopaedics SA and two new visiting obstetricians to our brand-new consulting rooms during the year, and commenced ophthalmology surgery in our theatres in February 2021 following significant investment in new equipment. Benson Radiology are also now providing all radiology services to the hospital going forward and bringing a new MRI service in early 2022.

We also welcomed new Board Chair Michael Auciello in November 2020. Michael has served on the Board of NECH for 17 years and is an experienced Chief Pharmacist and business person who operates a number of successful pharmacies in metropolitan Adelaide. The significant experience he brings to the role is a major asset to North Eastern and I look forward to continue working with him over the coming years.

The significant achievements in the year across our theatres and gastroenterology suites and on our surgical ward cannot be overstated. There was an 11.86 per cent increase in patients admitted to the hospital and a 10.93 per cent increase in procedures performed, compared to the previous financial year. This growth dwarfs the average growth seen in admissions for public and private hospitals in South Australia over the last five years, which is around 3.5 per cent. The additional activity required additional resources, with forty new staff joining NECH over the period.



Crucially, this increased activity was achieved while maintaining the highest quality of care for our patients – backed up by patient survey results that show 99 per cent of patients rated the care they received from nurses as ‘very good’ or ‘good’. Patients assigned the same rating to 98 per cent of our doctors.

We also adapted our workforce to incorporate all gynaecology surgery into the maternity services offer on Glynde Ward, and achieved outstanding results in terms of occupancy and staff turnover in the aged care home.

North Eastern Community Aged Care Home achieved an outstanding occupancy rate of 96.74 per cent, well above the national average, while experiencing an extremely low staff turnover rate of just 1.58 per cent. The home also maintained its top ‘four dot’ rating from the Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission which can assure the community of the excellent quality aged care services that we provide.

Of particular importance to me personally was the launch in the year of NECH’s first ever Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) to mark National Reconciliation Week. I am so proud to lead an organisation that is committed to health equity for all Australians, regardless of where they live or their Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander descent.

Our RAP is all about accepting the challenge of the 2021 National Reconciliation Week theme ‘More than a word. Reconciliation takes action’. We want to deepen the understanding of all staff of Traditional Owners and the lands on which NECH operates and achieve goals for stronger engagement with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations and attraction and retention of Aboriginal consumers, staff and suppliers.

I would like to personally thank our executive team, who have been central to the significant achievements in 2020-21. Director of Clinical Services Mr Edmondo Palombo, Aged Care Director Mr Roger Levi, Director of Commercial Operations Mr Shamus Cogan and Human Resources Manager Mr Jayson Merritt – your hard work and dedication is paramount to the success of North Eastern Community Hospital.

I would also like to personally acknowledge the resilience of all NECH staff, who have stepped up during difficult and disruptive times, particularly lockdown periods, and been adaptable to ensure the continued delivery of the highest quality care for patients and residents.

In particular, I’d like to thank my Executive Assistant, Miranda Aristides, who has once again been an exceptional organiser and problem solver for the executive team. We would be lost without her.

All the measures undertaken in the financial year had one core goal – to ensure the services we offer continue to match the needs of our community, from birth through to aged care. I look forward to continuing to work with the board, executive and all staff towards achieving that goal in 2021-22.



## Mission

North Eastern Community Hospital Inc. is a not-for-profit organisation comprising of a private independent acute care hospital and an aged care home, providing excellent care to the community with a comprehensive range of health services in a safe, caring environment.





## Values

Compassionate

Innovative

Collaborative

Respectful

# New

# developments

## **New specialist eye service**

New Ophthalmology surgical services commenced following installation in theatres of new state-of-the-art equipment. Construction also began on a new comprehensive specialist eye clinic.



## **\$5.6m Payneham Wing redevelopment completed**

Final stage of Payneham Wing redevelopment completed, and new consulting rooms and aged care facilities officially opened.

## **Reconciliation Action Plan**

NECH launched its first Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) to mark National Reconciliation Week 2021.

## **New risk management and patient feedback system implemented**

New incident, risk management and patient feedback system 'One Vault' implemented.





### **New day surgery suite completed**

Construction of the new day surgery suite on level 1 was completed and services commenced.



### **Orthopaedics SA commence at NECH**

Orthopaedics SA launched new consulting rooms at NECH, with five orthopaedic specialists on site which are also performing procedures at NECH.

### **Bensons deliver radiology services**

Benson Radiology were successful in tendering to deliver all radiology services going forward, and will construct a new radiology department with MRI.

### **Growth in staff to meet increased activity**

Staffing levels were grown by 12.5 per cent to 359 employees in order to service increased activity in theatres and decrease the hospital's reliance on agency staff.



# Hospital performance



## Increased activity

There was an 11.86% increase in people admitted to the hospital compared to the previous financial year, driven by the securing of new specialists and new partnerships with SA Health. Forty additional staff were hired to meet the increased demand and decrease reliance on agency staff.

## Hospital accreditations

NECH underwent major ISO 9000 system management accreditations in October 2020 (delayed due to COVID restrictions) and May 2021 and achieved full compliance with the National Safety and

Quality Health Service (NSQHS) Standards.

The yearly food audit performed by the local council was also undertaken and successfully passed.

## Financial performance

NECH experienced continued growth through 2020-21 and positive performance targets were achieved through greater efficiencies and by continuing to diversify and implement services desired by the community.

## COVID-19 response

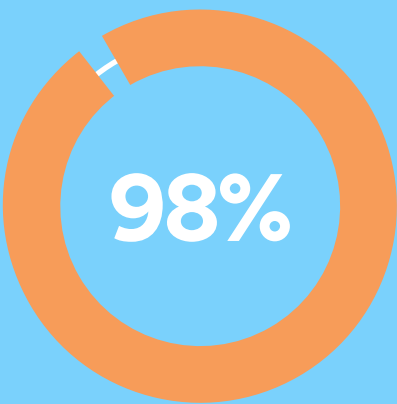
NECH implemented safety requirements and COVID-19 risk minimisations activities with great results in the

financial year, continuing to provide surgical, obstetrics and medical activities even during the toughest periods of restrictions. NECH also supported SA Health during the lockdown periods, safely managing and supporting patients transferred from the public system.

## COVID-19 vaccination of staff

As of 17 September 2021 100 per cent of Aged Care staff had been vaccinated. NECH is also actively encouraging all hospital staff to have the vaccine to keep the workforce and patients as safe as possible.

Said the doctors that cared for them were either **'very good'** or **'good'**

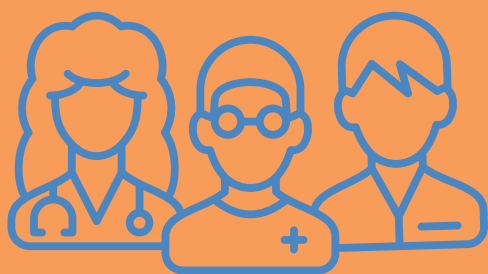


In patients admitted to the hospital in 2020-21 (8,273 total)



**11.86%**  
Increase

Up by 40 positions to meet increased activity



**359 staff employed**

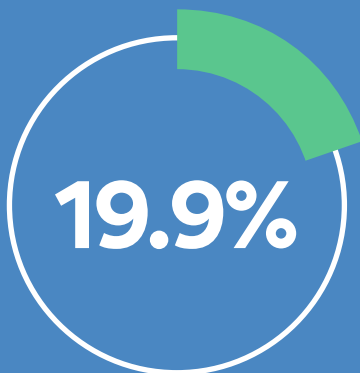


**2020  
successful  
hospital  
ISO 9000  
accreditation**



**2021  
successful  
hospital  
ISO 9000  
accreditation**

Staff turnover percentage



**2021 local  
council food  
audit passed  
successfully**





## Maternity

**Glynde Ward at North Eastern Community Hospital is not only a much-loved maternity ward where families return over multiple births and multiple generations, it's also a preferred employer for midwives and nurses. In the 2020-21 financial year only four staff left the ward – all to retire.**

In fact, many of Glynde's clinical staff have been on the ward for decades, including one midwife who has been working at NECH for 36 years. This strong, connected team of staff create a sense of family on the ward that patients appreciate.

It was a busy year on the ward. Despite the number of babies born on the ward falling by 80 to 334 as a result of the retirement of a popular visiting Obstetrician, the workforce was adapted to begin managing all Gynaecological surgery on the ward. The midwifery-run post-natal baby clinic was also moved into the new Obstetric hub on level 1.

Restrictions associated with COVID-19 were, of course, a significant challenge for staff and for women birthing on the ward. Limits to numbers of visitors were especially difficult for mums, who understandably wanted to share the experiences of the precious first days with loved ones.

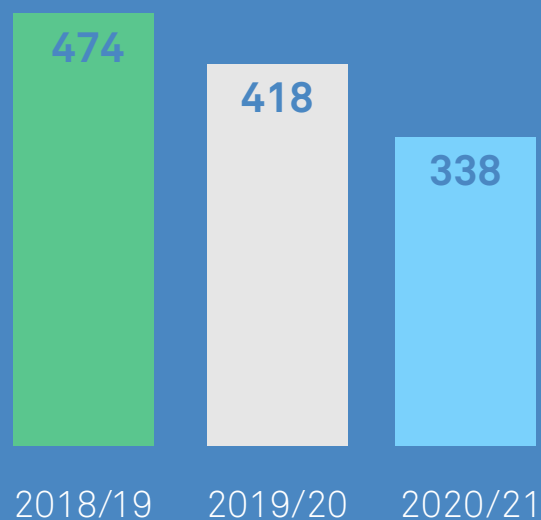
However, the strict visitation, hygiene and distancing measures did not prevent staff from providing the best possible care to their patients, and a silver lining has been more time for midwives to focus on education, particularly with new mums.

While birthing numbers have fallen over the past three years, Glynde Ward aims to grow birthing numbers in 2021-22 through new marketing initiatives and the commencement of two new obstetricians, who have joined the existing team of specialists delivering on the ward and consulting out of the brand new rooms in Payneham Wing.

What our patients say

**“I had the most incredible experience in your birthing unit and the memories following the birth I shall cherish forever.”**

Birthing numbers on the ward



Joined in 2021



**2 new  
obstetricians**

Our longest serving midwife





# Aged care

## North Eastern Community Aged Care achieved some major milestones in 2020-21 and outperformed its competitors in several key indicators.

The final stage of the \$5.6 million Payneham Wing redevelopment was completed in 2020, delivering upgraded rooms with ensuites for 23 care recipients, as well as a sun lounge and outdoor space with a purpose-built, communal garden. The redeveloped spaces have been enthusiastically welcomed by residents, their families and staff, and the completion of the project is a watershed moment in the history of NECH and the Aged Care Home.

After being postponed due to COVID-19 restrictions, the redeveloped Payneham Wing was officially opened on 23 June 2021 by His Excellency the Honourable Hieu Van Le AC, Governor of South Australia. The event was attended by the NECH Board, Executive Team, staff, volunteers, residents, friends and families, and a moving and inspiring Welcome To Country was conducted by Kurna man Robert Kardi Taylor.

North Eastern Community Aged Care Home once again achieved an outstanding occupancy rate, at 96.74 per cent for the year – more than 10 per cent higher than the national average. This is a testament to the professionalism, care and communication delivered by staff. In total, the home welcomed 25 new permanent and 37 new respite residents in the year.

The home also achieved an extremely low staff turnover rate of 1.58 per cent – astronomically low compared to the national average of 29 per cent. North Eastern Community Aged Care also maintained its top 'four dot' accreditation rating from the Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission.



COVID-19 restrictions significantly impacted residents and their families in the year, particularly during lockdown periods. Not being able to physically visit with family and friends increased the emotional stress and strain already being felt by residents. However, the Executive were incredibly proud of staff, who stepped up and continued to provide the quality care they are known for, while also assisting residents with some tasks ordinarily carried out by their loved ones. Of note was the 'Window of Love' – an opportunity for residents to visit with their families and friends at a large window located at the front of the building and speak at the same time over the phone.

To help alleviate the additional strain on staff resources created by restrictions, a facial recognition thermal imaging system was implemented to streamline the check-in of visitors. The system proved very effective, decreasing the need for concierge services, and enabling more efficient screening of visitors.

In 2020 the influenza vaccination for all staff, volunteers, contractors, and visitors was mandated by the Government. This had a very positive impact, with zero influenza cases recorded among residents and staff for two consecutive years.

From Aged Care Quality  
and Safety Commission



**TOP** rating  
maintained

Admitted in 2020-21  
(permanent and respite)



**62**  
new  
residents

Well below national average of 29%

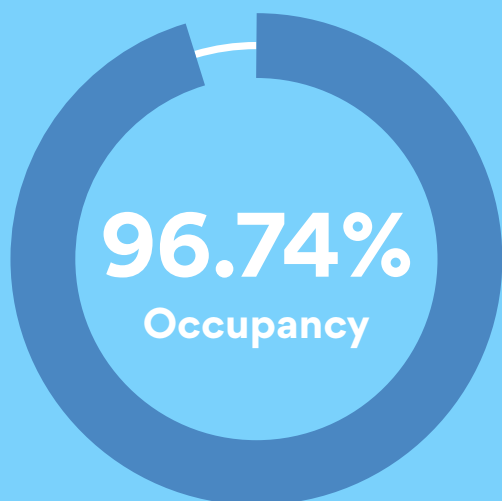
**1.58%**  
staff  
turnover



2 personal  
care workers



More than 10% higher than national average



**Promoted to  
registered  
nurses**



## Surgical, theatres & gastroenterology

**North Eastern's theatres, gastroenterology suites and surgical ward have been the engine room of increased activity in the hospital across the year.**

There was an 11.86% increase in patients admitted to the hospital in 2020-2021 and a 10.93% increase in procedures carried out across theatres and gastroenterology. Occupancy in theatres was at 92 per cent – up considerably from the 50 per cent recorded in the previous year. Forty additional staff were hired in the year to meet the increased demand on resources and decrease the reliance on agency staff, and recruitment is underway for additional staff on Steele Ward.

These excellent results were driven by increased surgical activities as a result of new Orthopaedics Surgeons, Gynaecology Surgeons and Ophthalmologists working and consulting at NECH, as well as through new partnerships with SA Health in which surgical procedures on public plastics and gastroenterology patients who have been on waiting lists for extended periods were carried out at NECH.

There was also significant investment in equipment and new projects launched in the year. State-of-the-art new equipment was purchased and installed across services, including new Aquarius monitors for Steele Ward, specialist eye surgery equipment for theatres and a major upgrade to Gastroenterology equipment, including the purchase of three new colonoscopes, a 4K Monitor and a new processor and integrated reporting system.

Construction was also completed on the new pre- and post-operative recovery area for day surgical patients, and works commenced on the new specialist eye clinic, due to be completed in the second quarter of 2021-22. Planning is also underway to build an additional surgical theatre to meet continued high demand, as well as for the construction of a new radiology department, with services, included MRI, delivered by Benson Radiology.

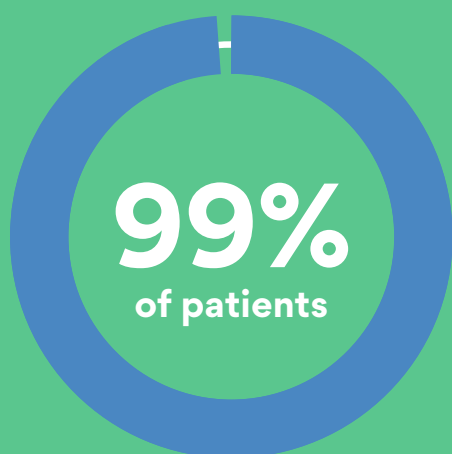
Since October 2020, NECH has also implemented 'One Vault', a new incident and risk management reporting system, designed to increase staff reporting of incidents and improve the management of outcomes. The new system also enabled NECH to implement an improved consumer feedback system in March 2021, which will increase the volume of patient feedback harvested and improve the quality of services provided. The system attracted almost 350 responses in the final quarter of 2020-21, and has already provided excellent insights, including that 99 per cent of patients said NECH nurses provided either 'very good' or 'good' care.

Said they received the right amount of information about their condition or treatment



**93.3% of patients**

Said the nurses provided either 'very good' or 'good' care



In surgical theatres



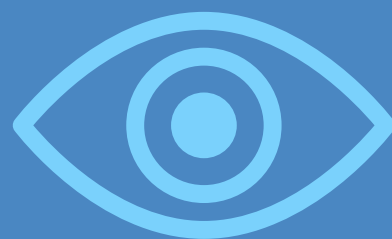
**92% occupancy**

In our theatres and gastroenterology suites (up 10.93%)



**6,718**  
procedures  
performed

Construction  
started



**New specialist  
eye clinic**





North Eastern Community  
Hospital is home to  
50+ Visiting Medical  
Specialists & Consultants.

# Visiting specialists & consultants

## Gastroenterology and/or General Surgery

Dr Mark Arens  
Dr John Argyrides  
Dr Rob Bryant  
Dr James Fon  
Dr Philip Game (General Surgeon)  
Dr Biju George  
Dr Anurag Gupta  
(Breast & Endocrine Surgeon)  
Dr David Hetzel  
Dr Dep Huynh  
Dr Paul Kuo  
Dr Ilmars Lidums  
Dr Nam Nguyen  
(Endoscopic Ultrasound)  
Dr Greg Otto  
Dr Tsai-Wing Ow  
Dr Vinh-An Phan  
Dr James Roberts  
(General Surgeon)  
Dr Marcus Teo  
Dr Nainoor Thakore (General Surgeon)  
A/Prof Edmund Tse  
Dr Philip Worley (General Surgeon)  
Dr Jonathan Yong  
(colorectal and general surgeon)

## General Physicians/ General Medicine

Dr Sujith Hattotuwa  
Dr P C Lee  
Dr Chen Siang Peh  
(Geriatric and General Medicine)  
Dr Sudheer Ahamed  
Puthiyaveetil (Dr P)  
Dr Jason Tan  
Dr Boon Woo

## Gynaecology

Dr Hanan Maghazaji  
Dr Tran Nguyen  
Dr Priti Pradhan  
Dr Majid Rasekhi

## Obstetrics and Gynaecology

Dr Christopher Hughes  
Dr Ian Jones  
Dr Kati King  
Dr Ellen Raghoudi  
Dr Neil Tamlin  
Dr Valerie Thompson

## Ophthalmology

Dr Jaz Aujla  
Dr Edward Greenrod  
Dr Adam Rudkin

## Oral Surgery

Dr Ben Grave  
Dr Tchen Terk Wong  
Dr Terence Yuen

## Orthopaedic Surgery

Prof Greg Bain  
Dr David Hermann  
Dr Saleem Hussenbocus  
Prof Jegan Krishnan  
Dr Sunil Reddy  
Dr Aman Sood  
Dr Justin Webb

## Paediatricians

Dr Vanessa Brooks  
Dr Therese Post  
Prof Geoffrey Thompson

## Plastic Surgery

Dr Marcus Wagstaff

## Sleep Studies

Saul Gilbert (Manager &  
Principal Sleep Scientist)  
Dr Madhu Chandratilleke  
Dr Michael Chia

## Substance Treatment

Dr Paul Vaska

To contact one of the NECH visiting medical specialists or consultants  
visit [northeasternhospital.com.au/hospital/specialists](http://northeasternhospital.com.au/hospital/specialists)



# Board



**Michael Auciello** – Chair



**Cara Miller** – Deputy Chair



**John Capaldo** – Outgoing Chair



**Steven Simionato**



**Dr Cathy Reid**



**Lynette Pugh**



**Nicole Major**

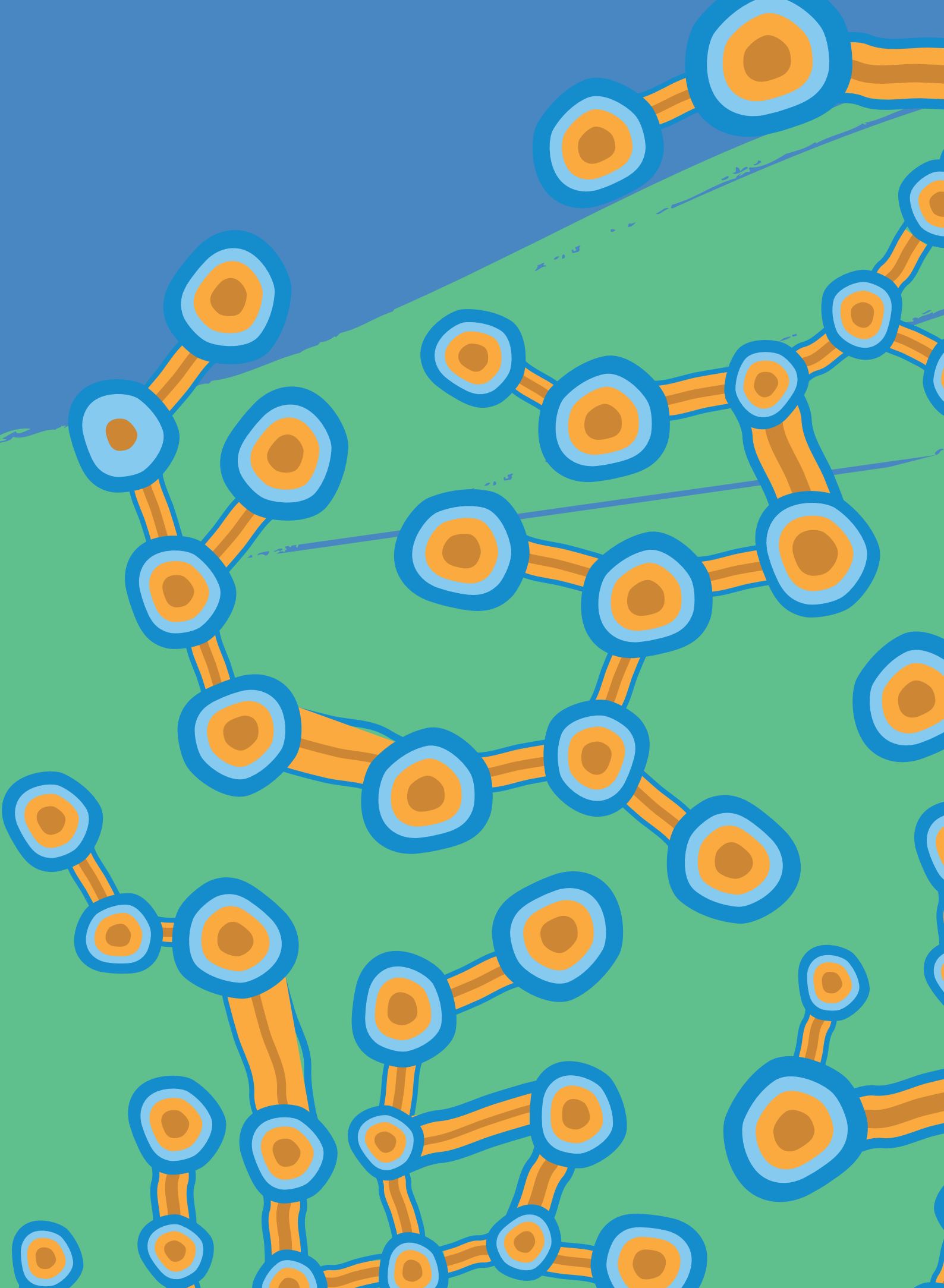


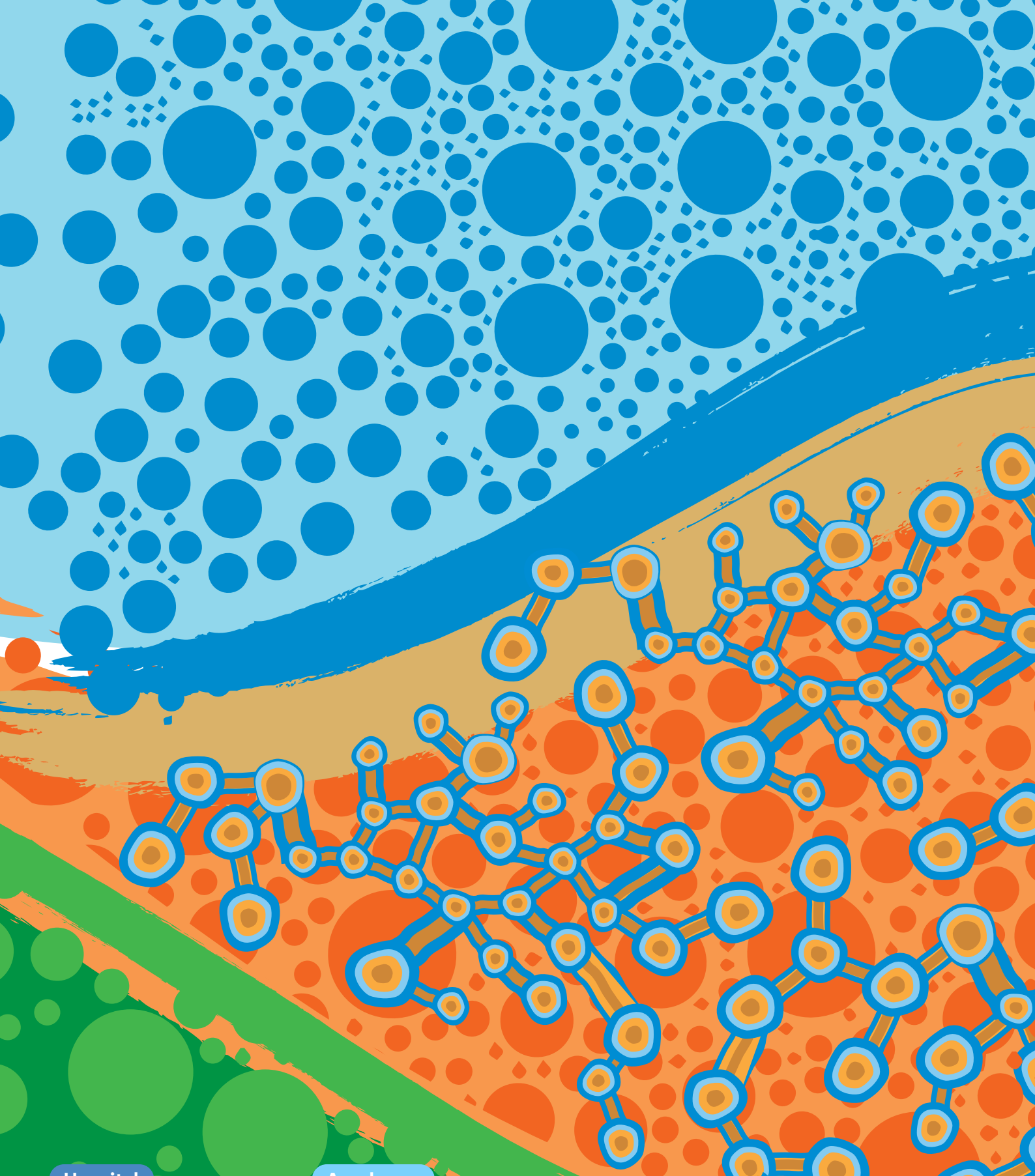
**The Hon Jack Snelling**



**Lidio Andreotti**







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Fax: (08) 8366 8260

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**North  
Eastern**  
COMMUNITY  
HOSPITAL