



ANNUAL REPORT **2022-23**

phn
WESTERN NSW

An Australian Government Initiative

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Acknowledgement of Country

Western NSW Primary Health Network (WNSW PHN) respectfully acknowledges Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people as the Traditional Custodians of the nations and countries on which we work, and commit to building relationships, respect and opportunities with all Aboriginal Peoples in our region.

We pay respect to Elders past and present and extend recognition to all Aboriginal people reading this message.

We respectfully acknowledge the following Aboriginal nations: Wiradjuri, Gamarraay / Gamarroi / Kamilaroi, Wailwun, Wongaibon, Ngemba / Nyemba / Ngiyampaa, Murrawarri, Barkindji, Barindji, Barundji, Nyirrpa, Karenggapa, Wadigali, Wilyakali / Wiljali, Wandjiwalgu, Danggali, Muthi-Muthi, Kureinji, Gunu, Barranbinya, Bandjigali, Malyangaba and Dadi Dadi.

We acknowledge Elders who are the knowledge holders, teachers and pioneers, the youth who are the hope for a brighter future and who will be the future leaders.

We acknowledge and pay our respect to Aboriginal people who have gone before us and recognise their contribution to Aboriginal people and community.

Artwork:

Maradhal-Yandhul-Giriya
by Nathan Peckham (Tubba-gah Wiradjuri artist)





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Message from the Chair

We are pleased to showcase another successful year at the Western NSW Primary Health Network (WNSW PHN) as we continue to deliver strong and collaborative initiatives that directly respond to the needs of our vast region.

I'm extremely proud of how WNSW PHN has adapted and maintained a passionate, community-centred approach with a strong dedication to achieving better health outcomes, even in very challenging times. We have been confronted with the ongoing management of COVID-19, its variants and outbreaks, bushfires, floods, workforce shortages and the ongoing cost of living pressures.

The challenges faced by general practices in our region continue. The viability and sustainability of primary care is under threat and we are working to address this in an innovative, proactive and collaborative way.

We have established a foundation that will pioneer how primary care is delivered. Bringing together thought leaders and subject matter experts, we are working closely with key stakeholders and communities to co-design tailored solutions at a local level. The foundation aims to pave the way in creating better access to services, sustainability in general practice and place-based initiatives to directly respond to the needs of communities with an unwavering dedication to best practice and continuous improvement.



We continue to work in collaboration with our partners to ensure that our people get the right care, at the right place, at the right time.

Please enjoy this snapshot of our achievements.

Dr Robin Williams

Chair, Western Health Alliance Ltd.

Message from the CEO

It is my pleasure to present to you the 2022/23 Annual Report for Western NSW Primary Health Network (WNSW PHN).

This report provides a snapshot of some of the key achievements that the team has delivered for our community over the year. I am very proud to be part of an organisation that continues to build upon its achievements, most of which have been enabled by close and enduring relationships with our community, service providers and key stakeholders across our vast catchment.

This year we have learned to live with COVID-19, endured summer bushfires, followed by severe and record-breaking floods, emerging viruses such as Japanese Encephalitis, Ross River virus, local transmissions of MonkeyPox, and an increase in Influenza. We should also mention the challenges we are facing as it relates to the continued provision of General Practice services across our whole catchment. The threat of loss of such a critical community service is front and centre for the team and will be a key focus for the year to come.

Coupled with the current cost of living crisis, these events have had a significant impact on the health and wellbeing of our people. The WNSW PHN has worked tirelessly with communities to respond to the above crisis and support our people with the right care, in the right place at the right time.

The year has not been without its challenges. The fact that we were able to achieve so much and remain one of the top



performing PHNs in Australia is a testament to our staff, our leadership and the many partners that continue to support our endeavours to make a long and enduring difference to the population we serve.

We will continue to work with our partners and stakeholders across the system to deliver better care for our people. Please enjoy this report highlighting the important work we have achieved this year.

Andrew Coe
CEO, Western NSW Primary Health Network

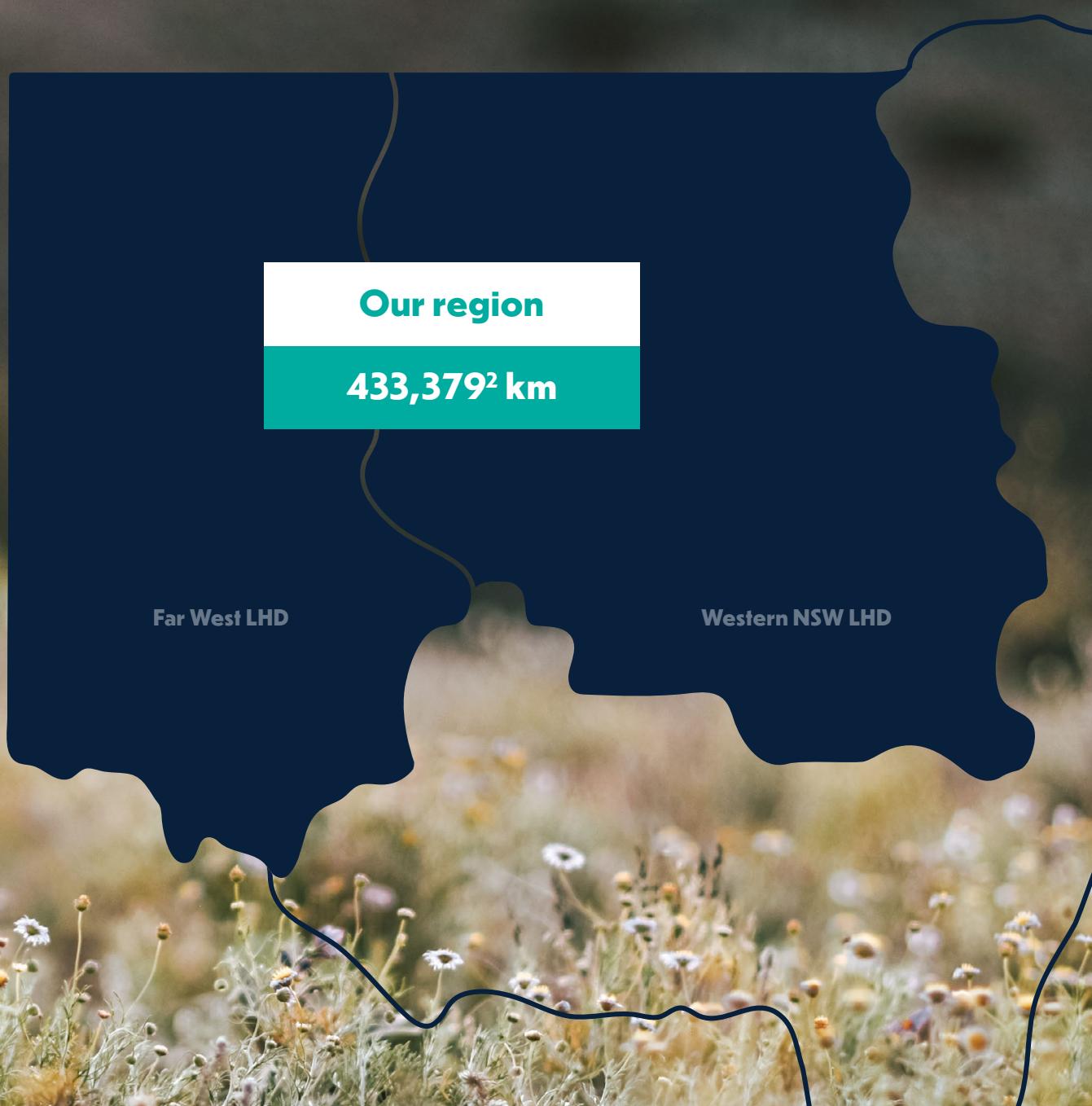
Who we are

Western Health Alliance Limited (WHAL), trading as the Western NSW Primary Health Network (WNSW PHN), is one of 31 Primary Health Networks across Australia, established to support frontline health services and increase the efficiency and effectiveness of primary health care.

Our focus is patients who are at risk of poor health outcomes and improving the coordination of their care, so they receive the right care, in the right place, at the right time. We work closely with key stakeholders and partners including general practice, other health care providers, Local Health Districts, hospitals and the broader community to align services with the health needs of the region.

WNSW PHN is a not-for-profit organisation primarily funded by the Australian Government.

Our vision is to lead, support and strengthen person-centred primary health care in Western NSW.





WNSW PHN covers both Far West and Western NSW Local Health Districts, making it the largest PHN in NSW (at 53.5%).



The total population of our region is estimated to be over **312,286** people, with 20% over the age of 65 years (ABS, 2021).



Approximately **11%** of people in our region identify as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander.



We support **437** General Practitioners that operate from **113** practices in our region.



Advisory Councils

WNSW PHN has established five Advisory Councils that report to the WHAL Board. The Councils assist the organisation in setting the strategic direction, evaluating outcomes of services, and supporting the design of new services to meet the needs of local communities.

Clinical Councils provide support and advice to the Board on opportunities to further develop clinical services to meet community needs.

Community Councils support WNSW PHN to understand and address health needs within local communities, including access to services and service gaps.

The Aboriginal Health Council supports WNSW PHN to understand locally relevant Aboriginal community perspectives in relation to their unique health needs, access to services and service gaps.

Number of meetings overall: 16

Initiatives:

- Joint meetings with Far West and Western Councils re Sustainable Primary Care in Western and Far West NSW
- Reform Projects – Place-based Commissioning
- Stakeholder Forums
- First 2000 Days Alliancing Model

Consultation with Councils:

- Diabetes Program
- Planned Care for Better Health – GP Consultation
- HealthPathways
- Cancer control related data for the region
- WNSW PHN Aged Care programs
- Digital Health – My Health Record
- Aboriginal Engagement

A snapshot of our achievements

72,980

digital health eReferrals/
HealthLink Smartforms

\$350,000

was invested in grants provided to residential aged care homes to improve digital health capability

\$34 million

of services commissioned to address health needs of our region's communities

29

health care professionals supported to become Medical Practicing Assistants, Endorsed Immunisers or Nurse Practitioners

9

HealthPathways went live in 2022-23

64%

increase in cross views of My Health Record (documents that were uploaded by one healthcare organisation and viewed by another)

6,200+

user sessions on the Western NSW HealthPathways

91

services commissioned, of which 22 are new, and 27 provided by our AMSs

1,503

health professionals participated in 82 WNSW PHN education events

\$1,485,000

grant funded activities across 211 grants to support a broad range of primary care providers

16

educational partnerships established, with Prestantia Health, Black Dog Institute, AGPAL, ECHO and more

Our strategic goals

At WNSW PHN, we are committed to improving the health outcomes of Western and Far West NSW communities.

Our vision is to lead, support and strengthen person-centred primary health care in our region, with consumers and communities at the heart of everything we do.



Goal 1

Engage with communities and stakeholders to improve health and wellbeing in our community

Effective community and stakeholder engagement is central to both delivering and building trust in a place-based approach to primary health care. In the WNSW PHN region, this requires ongoing efforts to reach and engage small communities across the region, particularly Aboriginal communities. Services need to meet the needs, circumstances and resources available in different communities.

Engaging with General Practice and Aboriginal Medical Services (AMs)

WNSW PHN works with partners to improve organisational capacity and support general practices in the region towards a sustainable primary health care model. Our Practice Development team work hard to educate, empower, advise and support each general practice and Aboriginal Medical Service to improve capability and organisational capacity. Our team works to support practices and AMs with digital health, accreditation, MBS optimisation and maximising billings, continuous quality improvement, business modelling and management, and national and state level reporting.

Quality chronic disease care closer to home for First Nations peoples

Integrated Team Care

In 2021-22, WNSW PHN undertook community and stakeholder consultations to revise the Integrated Team Care (ITC) program to its new iteration, bringing quality chronic disease care closer to home for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

The ITC program was redesigned following consultations and collaboration with the region's Aboriginal Controlled Health Services, Aboriginal Medical Services, peak bodies and additional

WNSW PHN stakeholders. The consultation process informed the revision of the program to an improved model, ensuring services offered were based on specific community requirements and aligned with National Guidelines.

The program, in its redesigned format, commenced on the 1st of January 2023. The health and wellbeing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people living in Western NSW remains the first and most essential priority in WNSW PHN's Strategic Plan as we continue to work to improve health outcomes in our region.



Integrated Team Care

Valma Marks, an Aboriginal woman from Condobolin, lives with chronic illness and requires regular specialist appointments in Orange (some 200km away) to help manage her conditions.

Valma says that without the Integrated Team Care program and Care Coordinators managing patients' care, she would not be able to attend her appointments.

"I wouldn't be able to [do this by myself]. I wouldn't even be able to get out of Condo if it wasn't for these fellas," says Valma.

ITC Care Coordinator, Kym Lees, at Coonamble Aboriginal Health Service says that the program is "very important. It's getting them to their appointments, helping close the gap. If this program wasn't there, I don't think they would attend their appointments".

Learn more about the ITC program at wnswphn.org.au/itc



Primary care engagement

In September 2022, a series of primary care stakeholder engagement sessions were conducted. The aim of these sessions was to:

- commence a dialogue with stakeholders on issues and opportunities relating to primary care in the region,
- understand priority issues and focus areas from the perspective of participants, and
- gauge stakeholder willingness and appetite for ongoing discussion and engagement.

Face-to-face sessions were conducted in Bathurst, Dubbo and Broken Hill and one virtual session was also held.

Attendees actively participated in the discussions, sharing their views and perspectives and identified key areas of opportunities and concerns.

WNSW PHN considered the feedback received in the sessions and identified key actions to address the topics raised. This has formed part of our Stakeholder Engagement strategy which seeks to build on existing engagement approaches and further develop robust and positive relationships to ensure that we are in the best position to meet the needs of communities as well as deliver on key strategic and operational requirements.

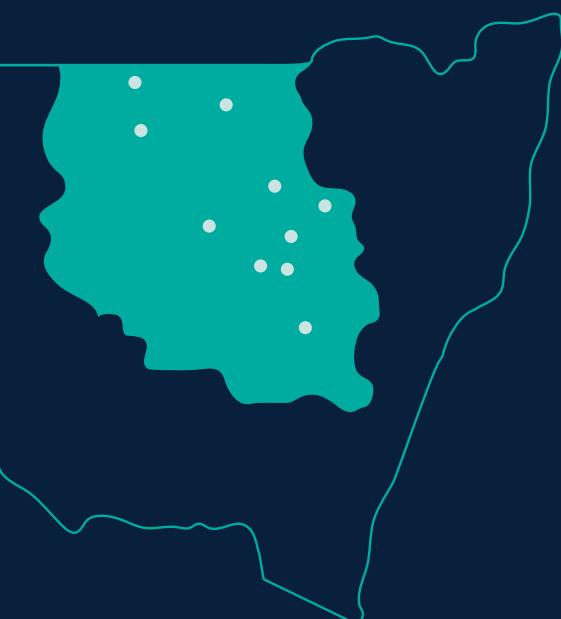
Cancer screening and community education

WNSW PHN carried out a number of Aboriginal community consultations that focused on cancer screening, in particular bowel cancer screening. The purpose of these sessions was to enhance screening awareness for eligible Aboriginal people.

Community education sessions were held in Dubbo, Nyngan, Gilgandra, Orange, Coonabarabran, Trangie, Bourke, Ennionia, Grawin and Coonamble with grant funds supporting activities.

We worked closely with partners and stakeholders to optimise engagement and achieve a greater reach and response in the region.

Culturally safe and relaxed yarning sessions around breast and cervical screening were held with local communities. Our dedicated staff continue to engage with these communities at regular meetings to ensure the flow of true information and updates, respond to questions and concerns and promote health literacy amongst communities.



Our partners in cancer screening and immunisation activities include:

- Local Aboriginal Lands Councils
- Western and Far West NSW Local Health Districts (LHD)
- Shire Councils
- Royal Flying Doctors Service (RFDS)
- Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Services (ACCHSs)
- National Centre for Immunisation Research and Surveillance (NCIRS)
- National Cancer Screening Register (NCSR)
- Housing Plus
- Men's Shed
- NSW Cancer Council
- Cancer Institute NSW
- General practices
- Residential Aged Care Homes (RACHs)
- Pharmacies
- Community services

**Map indicates areas where cancer screening and community education sessions were held.*

Community education sessions have forged new networks and created avenues for greater engagement, helping to embed sustainability beyond the life of the bowel screen education project. We now receive invitations from community groups and services to attend community events including NAIDOC, Sorry Day and Community Wellbeing events to deliver cancer screening education.

Consumer awareness of how to screen and the importance of timely screening have been enhanced. Quality Improvement (QI) activities to support processes that lead to change have been expanded. It is anticipated that QI will continue to grow as general practices integrate the National Cancer Screening Register (NCSR) and utilise initiatives such as ordering supplies of bowel screening test kits to issue to eligible patients.

Immunisation

WNSW PHN works collaboratively with the Local Health District's Public Health Unit (PHU's) on activities including data cleaning for childhood immunisation, annual immunisation conferences, disseminating information and supporting general practices as required. The June 2023 Australian Immunisation Register (AIR) reported coverage rates at; 96.47% for All Children at 5 years. WNSW PHN coverage rates for Aboriginal children at 5 years were 97.40% representing the third highest coverage rate by age by PHN.

We have consistently maintained some of the highest immunisation rates in Australia for the All Children at 5 years group, achieving rates of over 96% consistently from September 2022 to June 2023.

Continuous development and capability building

WNSW PHN undertook media training with MindFrame to promote awareness and adherence amongst staff on the responsible reporting of mental illness and suicide.

Working closely with our partners, we delivered training to local communities across Western and Far West NSW, which included Mental Health First Aid, Optimal Health Program and other mental health and wellbeing initiatives. These activities were informed and delivered based on community and service system needs and included priorities identified by local Suicide Prevention Networks.

Lived experience engagement

The Mental Health Lived Experience Engagement Network (MHLEEN) is an initiative for PHNs to embed consumer and carer participation into the commissioning cycle and to promote and develop the lived experience workforce in Australia. The Network aims to share approaches to co-design, lived experience engagement and development of the peer workforce. Three leadership initiatives were established with the aim of developing knowledge and skills of consumers and carers to participate in co-design and leadership, and guiding organisations on engaging with people with a lived experience.

WNSW PHN met and engaged with partners to embed and implement lived experience within the organisation. Our CEO and staff attended and presented at the MHLEEN forum in May 2023, joining a panel of thought leaders to share insights into mental health in rural and remote communities.



**Mitch Cain lives with
Type 2 Diabetes.**

Listen to his story [here](#).

Goal 2

Strengthen health system reform through service integration, innovation and place-based initiatives

Working in partnership to pursue health system reform as enablers of change. We are committed to regional planning with our stakeholders to integrate services and reduce duplication through joint needs assessment (including place-based), shared data for decision making and evaluation of outcomes together.

Care Partnership – Diabetes

The Care Partnership – Diabetes (CP-D) program aims to improve health outcomes for more than 11,500 people living with Type 2 Diabetes Mellitus (T2DM) in the Western and Far West NSW regions.

CP-D is funded by the NSW Ministry of Health's Collaborative Commissioning program and is a partnership between Western and Far West NSW Local Health Districts (LHDs), Rural Doctors Network and WNSW PHN. The objectives of the program are to strengthen relationships with stakeholders and communities, achieve earlier identification of T2DM, enhance the coordination of patient care delivered by health services and support the health workforce that provides care for people living with T2DM.

The implementation of CP-D commenced in 2022-23 establishing governance, partnership processes with general practices and Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Services (ACCHSs), supporting the health workforce and offering enrolments to the first cohort of patients.

Mental health and suicide prevention initiatives

WNSW PHN works closely with regional stakeholders and service providers to engage, coordinate and integrate early intervention and suicide prevention activities across the region.



Activities were designed in close collaboration with partners, the WNSW Local Health District (LHD), to co-design and implement Universal Aftercare and manage the transition from the Way Back Support program across the region.

We strive to achieve a collaborative approach to service integration and service design, embedding lived experience in leadership and governance to:

- Maximise opportunities and engagement in co-design, and
- Build and support the lived experienced workforce.

In 2022, WNSW PHN collaborated with WNSWLHD to organise and hold the Suicide Prevention Forum – Working with Older People. The event focused on the mental health of older generations and showcased suicide prevention initiatives and service developments across Western NSW. Presenters held educational sessions, discussed the Older People's Suicide Prevention Pathway Project and heard from people with lived

experience of mental ill-health or suicide.

Over 150 people attended the event with an audience consisting of health care professionals, peer workers and workers with lived experience, emergency services staff, residential aged care homes, and other health professionals and members with an interest in mental health.

IAR-DST implementation and engagement

The Initial Assessment and Referral Decision Support Tool (IAR-DST) commenced in March 2023 with a national and local training schedule available for general practitioners. Training targets were set by the Department of Health and Aged Care (DoHAC) with WNSW PHN allocated a 1.3% share of the GP workforce, equating to 261 general practitioners.

While the primary focus of the IAR measure is to train and support GPs in the use of the tool, IAR Training Support Officers (TSO) are also required to train and support staff working in Head to Health Centres, Aboriginal Medical Services and commissioned service providers.

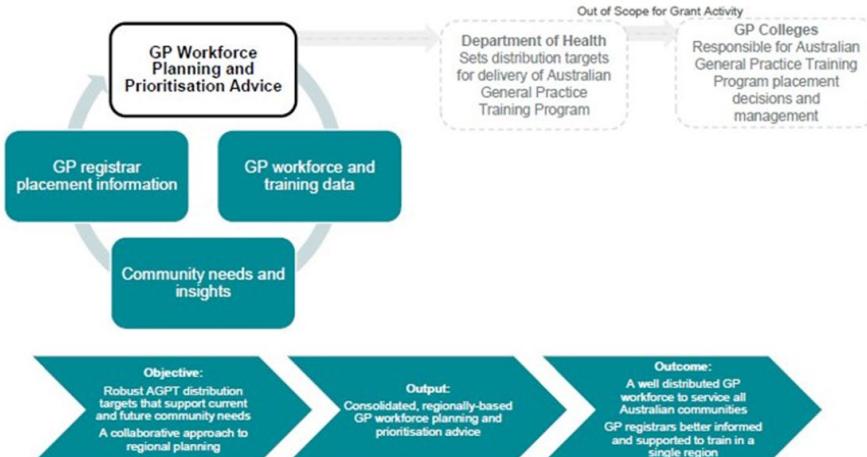
Training is offered weekly with almost 90 professionals undertaking the training in our region; a combination of GPs, registrars and commissioned service providers. Further sessions are scheduled to continue sharing information and internal coordination of enabling factors, such as how the IAR-DST will be adopted and supported as part of the broader mental health strategy for the region.

Training evaluation survey responses have been largely positive,

with GPs looking for further information around locally available mental health services and embedding the use of the tool in daily workflows to be able to streamline their processes. Participants have reported a positive response to small training groups in order to generate discussions and peer-to-peer learning.

Workforce Planning and Prioritisation initiative

The Workforce Planning and Prioritisation (WPP) initiative has been developed to address GP workforce placements in the region. The program undertakes research that will be utilised when incentivising future GP registrar placements. This program is an initiative of the Department of Health and Aged Care, RACGP and ACRRM which continue to act as the steering committee for this initiative.



The objectives of this initiative are to deliver robust, independent and evidence-based recommendations to GP colleges (ACRRM and RACGP) and DoHAC on AGPT training allocation priorities, to document current training capacity, develop future capacity and pathways and to foster collaboration with stakeholders across regions.

WNSW PHN developed and collated research on GP catchments in the region, which included prioritisation ranking, recommendations, reasoning and evidence. As a direct result of this intelligence, RACGP strategised their placements for 2024.

We have established and developed a strong rapport with the School of Rural Health (SRH) and Dubbo Regional Council, supporting local networking events. We also played a pivotal role in connecting both training colleges with Local Connectors from The Welcome Experience, a service which provides community integration support for targeted professionals. This is a pilot program currently being delivered in Broken Hill and Walgett.

The WPP initiative will continue to develop to provide a regional snapshot, prioritisation results, plus an overview of catchments, community access to primary care, and the GP workforce profile.



We commission a wide range of services for our region.

[View them all here](#).

Goal 3

Lead evidence-based commissioning

Service commissioning is undertaken based on a gap analysis of our region to improve equity and access to local services. Service solutions are identified, monitored and evaluated to ensure service impact is improving health for our communities who have limited access to services.

Commissioned Service Provider Forum

At WNSW PHN, we continue to facilitate access to a range of services across our region through the commissioning of 91 services in Western and Far West NSW in the 2022 - 2023 financial year. In late 2022, we held the first Commissioned Service Provider Forum face-to-face post the COVID-19 pandemic. The Forum provided us an opportunity to share information with our providers about WNSW PHN priorities and to capture feedback on how we can work together in greater collaboration to achieve improved health outcomes for our communities.

Pandemic Response Program

In response to evolving community service needs in the region that arose from COVID-19, WNSW PHN implemented a range of temporary enhancement services to respond to demands through the Pandemic Response Program.

- Strong Minds – this program provided increased access to psychological supports for community members.
- We partnered with Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Services (ACCHSs) in the region to support their increased delivery of both mental health supports and social, emotional and wellbeing services.

- We have expanded our Aged Care supports across the region, commissioning and implementing and the successful care finder program.

We continue to focus on commissioning new services that respond to community needs, streamlining systems and processes and strengthening relationships with stakeholders to enable us to better respond to evolving service and sector demands.

Care finder program

WNSW PHN commissioned the care finder program to support vulnerable older people who require intensive assistance in arranging services, especially if they don't have family, friends or a carer who can assist them. The aim of the program is to improve outcomes by enhancing the coordination of aged care services and promoting better integration between health, aged care and other local systems. Care finder helps strengthen health system reform by implementing service integration, innovation and place-based initiatives. We worked with locally based service providers, Social Futures, Kirinari and the Benevolent Society to bring this initiative to older people in our region showing success in its first year, with:

- 124 clients supported to access aged care services
- 252 clients being referred to appropriate services
- Offering high level check-ins for up to 2 years after the supports have been put in place

HEAD TO HEALTH

A Head to Health Centre in Dubbo and Satellite Service in Bathurst NSW will be established in the coming year. This was a part of a bilateral agreement with DoHAC and the NSW Ministry of Health.

The Head to Health Centre and Satellite Service is an addition to the initial eight adult mental health centres that were trialled across the country, one located in each state and territory to better support mental health and social wellbeing and ease the burden on hospitals.

This year the NSW & ACT PHNs received additional funding from the Department of Health and Aged Care to continue promoting the Head to Health phoneline across the state and territory, to raise awareness of how the Head to Health service can help people find the mental health support that's right for them.

In collaboration with the other NSW PHNs and led by Wentworth Healthcare (Nepean Blue Mountains PHN), the Head to Health phoneline was advertised in 5 different marketing campaigns in the 2022-23 period.

The Social Media Influencer Campaign saw 4 influencers (Paralympian Ellie Cole, Rally Car Driver Molly Taylor, General Practitioner Dr. Preeya Alexander, and Interior Design Experts Michael and Carlene Duffy) create 12 videos released across Instagram and Facebook over October (Mental Health Month) and November 2022.

In February 2023, the campaign was nominated as a finalist in the Australian Influencer Marketing Council (AiMCO) Awards in the category of Best Health, Fitness or Sport Campaign, amongst brands such as Paramount, Netflix, CBA, BUPA, ALDI, PayPal, Maybelline, Colgate and more.

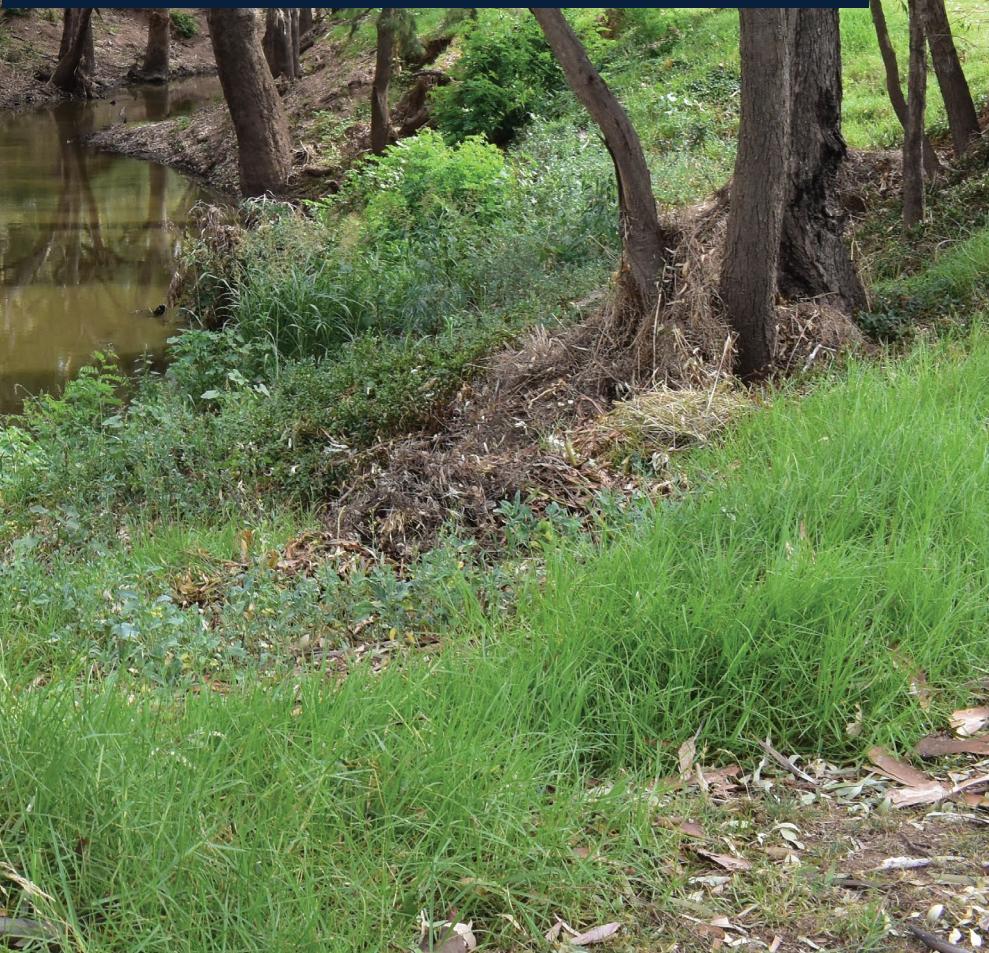
The Head to Health brand was also advertised on washroom and toilet doors across the state, on the LiSTNR app, Spotify, Sydney Entertainment Network (SEN), the breakfast show with Vossy & Brandy, 7Plus, 9Now, 10Play, SBS, Foxtel and Kayo, YouTube and TikTok.





Central West NSW Flood Response

In 2022, the Central West NSW towns of Molong, Parkes, Forbes and Eugowra were heavily impacted by a severe flooding event. Damage to properties included schools, pharmacies, childcare centres, houses and local businesses. Many people were displaced and two lives were lost.



WNSW PHN visited stakeholders and the communities affected by the disasters to conduct a needs assessment to identify areas of greatest need. The team consulted with primary and acute health care providers, Recovery NSW, the Local Health District, community health, schools, local councils, pre-schools, general practitioners, pharmacy and local businesses. Feedback and experiences were captured and documented to develop a needs assessment which highlighted a need for additional mental health services, particularly in children aged 0 to 5 years.

In response to this, we successfully executed three psychology services; two face-to-face and one virtual psychology service. We also facilitated grants of up to \$20,000 available per application for the affected communities. The Wellbeing and Resilience grants aim to facilitate the delivery of community-led and focused wellbeing initiatives that aim to help improve mental health and build community resilience.





Goal 4

Support high-quality sustainable primary health care

Advocate with partners and stakeholders to support high-quality, person-centred sustainable primary health care in Western NSW.

COVID-19 ongoing management

WNSW PHN continues to play an integral role in the ongoing management of the COVID-19 pandemic. Over the years of the pandemic, our focus was on communities, to efficiently share true and timely information, set up vaccination clinics, distribute protective gear across our vast region and assist our general practices, service providers and partners with managing the pandemic. We continue to support primary care providers and ACCHSs in the ongoing COVID-19 response.

37 practices received a vulnerable population grant in round 1 with over 1,826 COVID-19 vaccinations completed and 2,790 Influenza vaccinations.

548 non-Medicare patients were able to access COVID-19 vaccinations.

Working closely with the Department of Health and Aged Care (DoHAC), we were able to facilitate vaccinations for residents in aged care homes across the region by utilising a local pharmacist who has been able to travel remotely and widely to attend to vaccinations where a local provider has not been able to be sourced.

86 practices continue to vaccinate across the region.

Good News Stories from our practices and pharmacies – COVID-19 Vaccination Grant Program

“After hearing our advertisement on the radio, Mr EH called the pharmacy to enquire about vaccines. Mr EH is 78 years old and has had one leg amputated above the knee and requires an electric wheelchair to get around. To save him the hassle and cost of arranging community transport to get to the pharmacy, I organised to go to his home after hours and do his vaccinations (COVID and flu) there. I hadn’t seen Mr EH face-to-face in a couple of years as it is not easy for him to get to the pharmacy now, so while waiting for the 15 minutes after the vaccinations it was great to have a chat and catch up. Mr EH was very grateful for the visit. This grant has allowed me to allocate more of my time towards vaccinations over normally more profitable areas of the business.”

“We arranged for all members of 3 of our Aboriginal families to receive both their COVID-19 and flu vaccinations. This resulted in 5 adults and 11 children having had these vaccines for the first time.”

“We conducted on-site vaccination clinics for patients with disability who are supported by Westhaven, resulting in the administration of 17 COVID-19 vaccinations and 19 flu vaccinations.”

“Vaccination clinics were scheduled and conducted at some of our RACHs, whilst liaising with staff at other RACHs resulted in the identification of patients eligible for COVID-19 and/or flu vaccinations and scheduling of these patients into PHN-supported vaccination clinics.”

HealthPathways

The WNSW PHN HealthPathways program completed 10 request pages in the 22-23 financial year. User engagement statistics include 13,547 page views and 5,402 sessions. The program is currently on track to deliver Dementia and Diabetes pathways along with the associated request pages.

Telehealth

WNSW PHN is working with DoHAC to implement grants to assist Residential Aged Care Homes (RACHs) to enhance their access to quality virtual care.

The project aims to increase the provision of virtual consultation capabilities for RACHs via telehealth, while also increasing the quality of digital healthcare - for both social connection and access to shared plans and electronic health records. It does this by firstly understanding the current equipment, training and education needs of Homes and staff. A digital health maturity assessment of RACHs helped to understand the spectrum of current technical capabilities and needs.

Of those who responded, 55% believe their facilities have insufficient infrastructure available to support telehealth and much work remains to drive the meaningful use of digital health solutions.

For some, access to external health practitioners was

poor, with the most difficult to access being GPs, mental health and allied health professionals. Facilities who had good access to health practitioners didn't use telehealth services as much as those who had poor access. Feedback from the survey will align the WNSW PHN aged care schedule and workplan with training plans in development in partnership with other PHNs.

2022-2027 Digital Health Strategy

WNSW PHN's Digital Health Strategic Plan 2022-2027 seeks to support the delivery of digital health solutions that improve standards of care by health care providers to health consumers.

We are committed to building on significant existing digital health capabilities and projects within the region, and to improve knowledge, connection, collaboration and access for health care consumers and carers, practitioners, organisations and the system, focusing on:

- establishing important organisation-level maturity assessment modelling around digital health for RACHs and GPs/ACCHSs
- improving overall digital health literacy through more exposure to educational resources, training, and communications
- increasing digital health adoption and more uniform usage
- increasing digital health enabled exchange of clinical information between patients and their health care professionals

- improving consumer, carer and health care professional access to health and health service information

Electronic Referrals

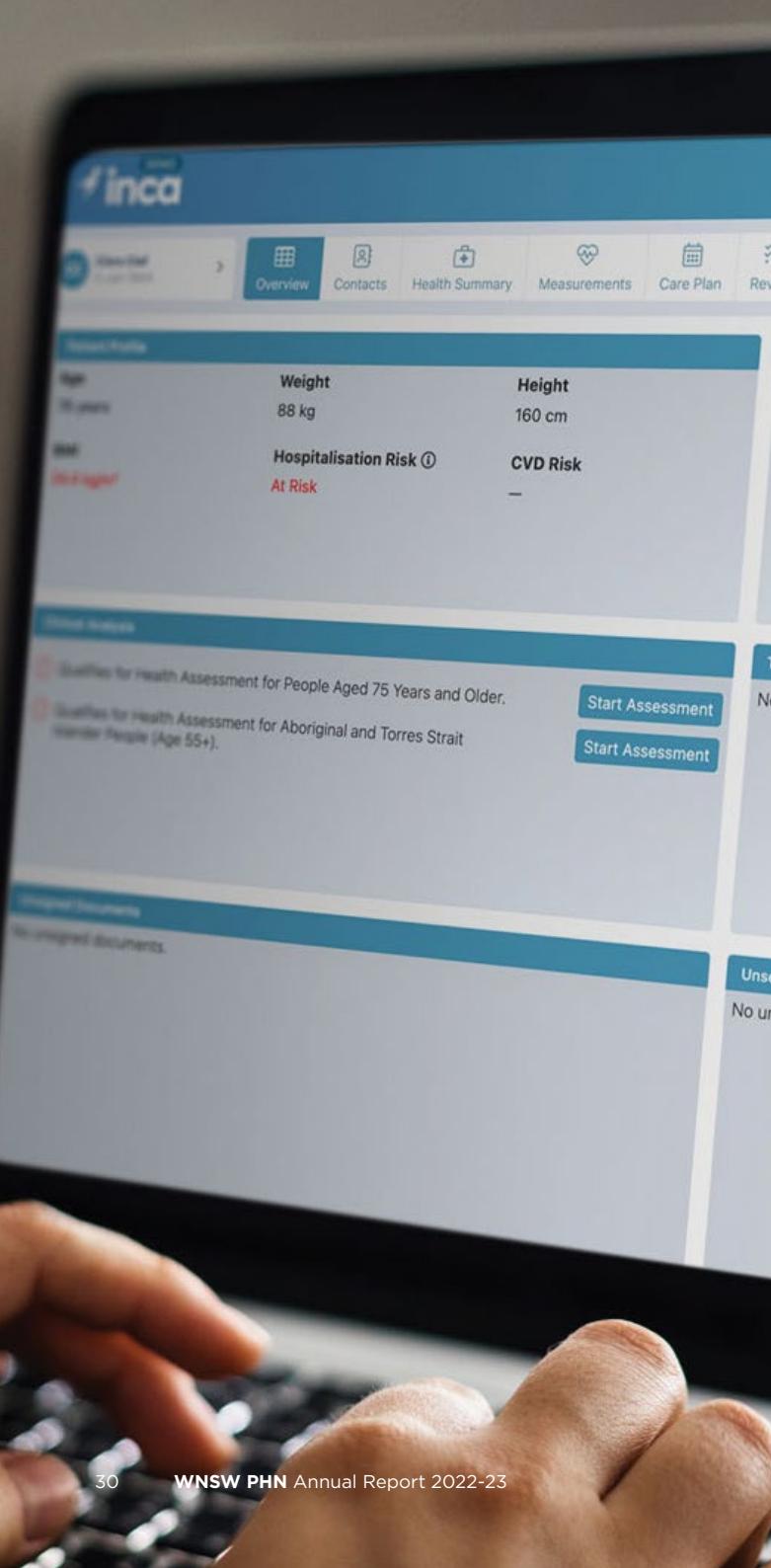
There has been a significant increase in Digital Health eReferrals / HealthLink Smartforms: 148 Primary Care Providers sent 72,980 e-referrals in FY 22-23 compared to 52,163 in FY 21-22.

eReferrals /HealthLink Smartforms technology allows health professionals to refer directly from their Best Practice, Medical Director, Genie and Communicare software. Argus secure messaging has also seen a 4.2% increase on sends in FY22-23 compared to FY21-22.

My Health Record

The My Health Record system shows an increase of 30% in the number of successful transactions that have been uploaded and viewed.

Cross views of My Health Record (documents that were uploaded by one healthcare organisation and viewed by another) demonstrated a 64% increase for the reporting period. This increase shows that more and more healthcare professionals are accessing patient records in My Health Record.



WNSW PHN pilots integrated shared care planning platform

Inca is an integrated shared care planning platform that allows healthcare teams to manage patients with chronic disease in a collaborative manner, bringing multidisciplinary health teams together to help keep patients out of hospital.

Using Inca, GPs can create patient-centred, Medicare-compliant GP Management Plans (GPMPs) and Team Care Arrangements (TCAs) that can be securely shared with a patient's health team, allowing for an integrated approach. Inca is made available to general practices in Far West and Western NSW free of charge under the Care Partnership – Diabetes (CP-D) program.

The portal shows who is on the patient's care team and the managing doctor can manage GPMP and TCA contributions and approvals with external care team providers such as allied health professionals, diabetes educators and specialists. Care teams can also easily communicate in real-time and share patient notes and reports.

Inca's patient-centred approach means that patients can actively participate in their care. By linking the Meditracker mobile app to Inca, patients can access their medical records in real-time and contact members of their care team. Patients can also add measurements via Bluetooth-enabled devices, such as weight, blood pressure, blood glucose, temperature, pulse rate and blood oxygen saturation levels.

Molong HealthOne General Practice's GP Dr Alexander Hoyle has been using Inca for the last 18 months to help manage his patients with chronic disease and has found the platform to be helpful in reducing administrative burden.

"Clinical outcomes get harvested from our practice software and are automatically uploaded, as do the medication lists so you know the people who you're referring to can get the latest measurements and parameters that are relevant to that patient," Dr Hoyle said.

Continuing Professional Development (CPD)

- Accredit Sessions for CPD points RACGP and ACRRM
- 4 accredited Education Activity Representatives in the team
- Annual Learning Needs Survey conducted in October 2022
- Needs assessment completed per event as to
 - » Relevance to General Practice
 - » Need for topic (eg locally identified issues, burden of disease, knowledge gap)
 - » Evidence Base (including references) for the Presentation
- 82 events delivered by the Team (July 2022 – June 2023) including practical all day workshops, interprofessional webinars, GP masterclasses, multidisciplinary events and ECHO Sessions

Aboriginal health focused sessions

- Aboriginal Health Worker (AHW) learning needs survey and Education EOI conducted
- AHW Diabetes Series – Supporting our Mob living with Diabetes (3 x virtual session series)
- AHW Immunisation/Influenza Update
- Yamayamarra – Accidental Counsellor

- Building Cultural Safety in Primary Care (Tafe NSW)
- Culturally Relevant and safe healthcare (AGPAL)
- Understanding Chronic Kidney Disease for AHW
- Benchmarque Workshops – Chronic Disease Care Planning, Foot Care, Nutrition
- Asthma Update for AHW
- AHW invited and included in all interdisciplinary CPD sessions

ECHO Series

General Mental Health ECHO – Partnership with SLHD, WNSWLHD and WNSW PHN

Spring Series 2022 – 10 sessions total 65 participants

Type 2 Diabetes ECHO

Series 1 (3 virtual session fortnightly) October / November 2022

Series 2 (3 session virtually) February / March 2023

Our panel of experts:

- Dr Sashie Howpage (Endocrinologist)
- Dr Manik Mayadunne (Endocrinologist)

- Alison Amor (Diabetes Educator)
- Kaye Foster-Powell (Dietitian)
- Tim Morris (Podiatrist)
- Nicole Turner (Nutritionist)
- GPs – Dr Catherine Stewart, Dr Martin Watson, Dr Alex Hoyle

Didactic presentations being covered across this series are:

- Escalation of T2D Treatment (Dr Sashie Howpage)
- T2D, Diet & GI Principles (Kaye Foster-Powell)
- Diabetic Kidney Disease (Dr Manik Mayadunne)
- Social Determinants of Health & T2D (Nicki Turner)

ECHO allows health professionals to access a panel of experts (whom they may not be able to access locally) to help them manage complex patients. It also enables peer support from colleagues present who are also invited to provide recommendations.

Some participant feedback:

“The group interaction was positive and supportive. Great session.”

“Good to have an update on diabetic diet from a dietitian.”

“Really enjoying the sessions!!!!”

“Great to get others perspective and ideas on case study.”

“Very informative. Thank you.”



Partnerships in the CPD Program

- Black Dog institute
- Prestantia
- NCIRS
- Tafe NSW
- WNSWLHD
- Sydney LHD
- AGPAL
- Marathon Health
- The Benchmarque Group
- Royal Life Saving Australia
- Breastscreen NSW
- Kidney Health Australia
- Lifeline Central West
- National Asthma Council
- Rural Doctors Network



Financial Reports

WESTERN HEALTH ALLIANCE LIMITED
(a company limited by guarantee)
ABN 59 605 922 156

STATEMENT OF COMPREHENSIVE INCOME
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2023

	Notes	2023 \$	2022 \$
Revenue	2	41,927,360	50,173,873
Service supplier expenses		[30,662,204]	[39,316,611]
Employee expenses		[7,090,716]	[7,308,681]
Interest expense	3	[35,729]	[39,891]
Information technology and communication		[571,307]	[637,845]
Travel expenses		[303,352]	[121,971]
Property expenses		[142,856]	[112,938]
Council payments		[39,408]	[40,351]
Program delivery expenses		[1,666,434]	[1,380,150]
Motor vehicle expenses		[166,647]	[60,734]
Depreciation expense	3	[348,171]	[350,223]
Other expenses	3	[457,112]	[745,939]
Surplus for the year		\$443,424	\$58,539

WESTERN HEALTH ALLIANCE LIMITED
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STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION
AS AT 30 JUNE 2023

	Notes	2023 \$	2022 \$
ASSETS			
CURRENT ASSETS			
Cash and cash equivalents	4	39,887,001	28,036,660
Trade and other receivables	5	2,595,166	2,135,386
Other assets	6	201,343	226,534
TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS		42,683,510	30,398,580
NON-CURRENT ASSETS			
Property, plant and equipment	7	-	-
Right of use assets	8	491,188	839,359
TOTAL NON-CURRENT ASSETS		491,188	839,359
TOTAL ASSETS		43,174,698	31,237,939
LIABILITIES			
CURRENT LIABILITIES			
Trade and other payables	9	10,890,977	13,348,748
Lease liabilities	10	338,137	336,012
Provisions	11	718,329	607,250
Contract liabilities	12	28,274,483	14,112,333
TOTAL CURRENT LIABILITIES		40,221,926	28,404,343
NON-CURRENT LIABILITIES			
Lease liabilities	10	181,471	519,609
Provisions	11	152,328	138,438
TOTAL NON-CURRENT LIABILITIES		333,799	658,047
TOTAL LIABILITIES		40,555,725	29,062,390
NET ASSETS		\$2,618,973	\$2,175,549
EQUITY			
Retained earnings		2,618,973	2,175,549
TOTAL EQUITY		\$2,618,973	\$2,175,549

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STATEMENT OF CHANGES IN EQUITY
 FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2023

	Retained Earnings \$	Total \$
Balance at 1 July 2021	2,117,010	2,117,010
Surplus for the year	58,539	58,539
Balance at 30 June 2022	2,175,549	2,175,549
Surplus for the year	443,424	443,424
Balance at 30 June 2023	2,618,973	2,618,973

WESTERN HEALTH ALLIANCE LIMITED
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STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS
 FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2023

	2023 \$	2022 \$
CASH FLOWS FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES		
Grant moneys received	57,722,046	54,626,116
Receipts from customers	57,709	83,888
Interest received	722,841	86,299
Payments to suppliers and employees	(46,280,513)	(47,342,016)
Net cash flows provided by operating activities [Note 14.2]	12,222,083	7,454,287
CASH FLOWS FROM INVESTING ACTIVITIES		
CASH FLOWS FROM FINANCING ACTIVITIES		
Proceeds from right of use asset leases	-	16,615
Repayment of right of use asset leases	(371,742)	(406,728)
Net cash flows used in investing activities	(371,742)	(390,113)
Net increase in cash and cash equivalents	11,850,341	7,064,174
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the year	28,036,660	20,972,486
CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS AT THE END OF THE YEAR [Note 14.1]	\$39,887,001	\$28,036,660



WESTERN NSW PRIMARY HEALTH NETWORK

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