

Annual Report 2023-2024



Contents

1. From the Chair and CEO	3
2. Our Board	5
3. Executive Team	7
4. Our vision, purpose and values	8
5. Growing our quality reputation	9
Quality governance	9
6. Delivering clinical excellence for rural people by rural people	11
Medical clinic	11
Nursing	12
Allied Health	12
7. Providing care and support for the community close to home	13
Community Care	13
Community Support	15
National Disability Insurance Scheme	16
8. Working with community to promote health and wellbeing	17
Health promotion	17
Schools and youth programs	18
Indigenous programs	18
9. Ensuring sustainability through our people, systems and infrastructure	19
People and culture	19

Northern District Community Health acknowledge the traditional custodians of country across throughout its region, including the lands of the Barapa Barapa, Yorta Yorta, Dja Dja Wurrung, Wamba Wamba people. We pay our respects to Elders, past, present and emerging and their continuing connection to land, culture and community.

1. From the Chair and CEO

We are proud to present the 2023-2024 Annual Report for Northern District Community Health (NDCH). It has been a year of change and development for the organisation as we expand the range and reach of community health services and supports, all of which work to our vision of supporting healthy, inclusive and connected rural communities across the Loddon Mallee region.

Launch of Community Care

A major development for NDCH has been the addition of the Community Care program to the suite of community health services and support. The program provides support to help older people and people living with a disability to live fulfilling, independent lives, while staying connected to their community. Funded through the Commonwealth Home Support Program and National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS), the program provides a range of individual and group social supports, personal care, meals and domestic assistance.

This program represents an important strategic opportunity to integrate with our existing strengths in community health. However, it has necessitated significant investment in, our workforce, capabilities and systems, which has been a major factor influencing NDCH's financial performance this year. Although NDCH experienced a financial loss, the Board views this as an investment that will create a sustainable, integrated model of care that will empower clients to live healthy and fulfilling lives, connected with their community over the long term.

The Board is grateful to Gannawarra Shire Council for its support as we achieved a smooth transfer of services in November 2023. Together, we achieved service continuity for all clients and assured local residents that the continuation of quality, local care remains in the safe and trusted hands of NDCH.

With the program supporting Gannawarra Shire residents since November 2023, we then extended our reach into the Rural City of Swan Hill in May 2024. To date, more than 750 residents are supported by the program.

Innovative rural approaches to provide care in community

Rural communities know first-hand the challenges of accessing health care close to home. Health happens in the community and our partnerships with East Wimmera Health Service, Boort District Hospital, Inglewood and Districts Health Service, Murray Primary Health Network (Murray PHN) and Monash University allow us to deliver an innovative model of care tailored to our rural context. NDCH led the consortia to deliver the Sustainable Rural Healthcare Hubs (Sustainable Hubs) project. Funded through the Commonwealth Innovative Model of Care Program, the service provides people living with chronic and/or complex conditions comprehensive healthcare closer to home. The multi-disciplinary team is led by nurse practitioners and includes GPs, allied health professionals and a care coordinator who operate across six rural communities in our catchment.

The innovation of the Sustainable Hubs Project is twofold. First, it is underpinned by a partnership between health services at an operational and governance level. We are stronger together, and we draw upon our collective workforce capability when we work together. Secondly, a multidisciplinary approach means that our community have access to qualified, experienced health workforce all working together. Rural services too often struggle to launch because funding requirements specify certain workforce types instead of leveraging the strengths of the existing local health workforce. This model provides a team-based solution that provides care close to home for many people in rural communities, taking pressure off solo practicing GPs and preventing avoidable hospital admissions due to improved access to care for people living with chronic conditions in the community.

With the service already established in Pyramid Hill, Quambatook, Kerang and Boort, efforts are now in progress to extend the program into the communities of Birchip, Wycheproof, Donald, Inglewood and/or Wedderburn. Congratulations to the team for this fantastic innovation, and our thanks to Murray PHN for its strategic leadership and advocacy during its establishment. We look forward to the Sustainable Hubs being an enduring feature of our primary health care system across our region.

Partnerships make a difference

We place enormous value on the partnerships that we hold with health and community services and groups, government and advocates. In all instances, our partnerships enhance access and amplify the advocacy voice for the health and wellbeing needs of our community. We are so much stronger when we work together and while partnerships are part of everything we do, we share the following examples to recognise and highlight some of the great achievements that have been delivered through our partnerships:

- NDCH will welcome Dr Joe Dawson to our Kerang Clinic early 2025. This has been achieved through an innovative collaboration between health services, [Connecting the Docs](#), all working together to provide clear pathways and tailored support to recruit doctors to our region.
- Our partnership with the Loddon Shire Council will soon launch the new Pyramid Hill Community Facility scheduled to open early 2025. This will be a community hub in every sense of the word, with our nursing team co-located with maternal child health services, senior citizens and community organisations. In addition to our capital contribution towards the construction of the facility made over 2023-2024, we are excited about the early intervention and health promotion opportunities that will come from our co-location with the community.
- The [Alliance of Rural and Regional Community Health](#) (ARRCH) brings together the eleven rural and regional registered community health organisations across Victoria. It brings a collaborative approach to investment and innovation and a strong advocacy voice focussed upon the social determinants of health and a building contemporary community health platform. In October 2023, AARCH held its inaugural [ARRCH Conference](#) showcasing the rural and regional way of community health.
- Our partnership with local government and health agencies across Buloke, Loddon and Gannawarra (BLG) has paved the way for a range of shared planning, health promotion and early interventions to address the needs of communities across the region. One such example the Community Resilience and Recovery project; a model that supports disaster recovery at the local level by strengthening community resilience and preparedness between disasters and uses a trauma informed approach to address the health and social impacts of climate change and disasters.

Looking ahead

Looking ahead, we are optimistic about the future of NDCH and the opportunities that lie before us. Our focus will remain on:

- Deepening our connection with communities across the region. We will launch a community advisory structure in 2025 which will grow our opportunities for the community to inform local area health needs and service planning, embedding the voices and experiences of all community members within our governance.
- Continuous improvement as our data governance, quality systems and reporting capability matures. Our investment in leadership this year provides essential foundations for the organisation that will, for example, support our readiness for the new Aged Care reforms to be introduced from 1 July 2025. Ensuring that everyone one has the best care possible to be healthy and active within our community.
- Growing our capability through professional development, succession planning, enhancing opportunities for clinical and non-clinical placements and, of course, nurturing our partnerships for shared community benefit.
- Securing our financial sustainability and security through our quality assurance program, diversifying revenue through our charitable status and prudent financial planning and investment.

We want to express our sincere gratitude to our clients, partners and community for their continued support and commitment to the organisation. We are especially grateful to the staff of NDCH and particularly our General Managers, Alexia Stephens and Deanne Radcliffe who have been instrumental in managing change and service continuity as our programs expanded and leadership transitioned throughout the year. We extend our deep thanks and gratitude for everyone's work and dedication to the organisation.



Meghan Stewart

Board Chair

Northern District Community Health



Penny Wilkinson

Chief Executive Officer

Northern District Community Health

2. Our Board



Meghan Stewart Board Chairperson

Meg Stewart joined the NDCH Board in 2017. She has extensive experience in finance and research administration and management across the health, community and education sectors. Meg is passionate about addressing health inequality for people in regional, rural and remote areas through innovative, consumer-centred, collaboratively driven models of care.



Jane Ogden Deputy Chairperson

Jane Ogden joined the NDCH Board in 2022 and has experienced a varied working life in Sydney, Melbourne, and Kerang. She has worked in advertising, theatre, film and television production, state, and local government, and was a Local Government Councillor for the Gannawarra Shire Council until October 2024. Jane brings deep expertise in community participation and engagement and understands the value connection to community brings to NDCH.



Richard Morrison Board Treasurer

Richard Morrison joined the NDCH board in 2018. He has extensive experience in finance and business management in both the private and public sectors. Richard is currently Director of Corporate Services at Rochester and Elmore District Health Service and has significant health industry experience. He is passionate about ensuring the long-term sustainability, quality and integrity of services in rural communities.



Kathy Day Board Member

Kathy Day joined the NDCH Board in 2022. She holds a Master of Nursing and Master of Business Leadership. She is passionate about using Community Care to ensure clients receive the best support possible. Kathy has worked in Executive Management in rural, regional and metropolitan community health services for more than 20 years. Kathy has been on multiple boards and presented at international conferences on Community Care in Australia.



Charlie Gillingham Board Member

Charlie Gillingham joined the NDCH Board in 2014. During the past 20 years he has served on numerous committees locally and is currently in his second term as a Councillor with the Gannawarra Shire. He has a strong association with the local region having lived here all his life. Charlie believes the health system is of the utmost importance, especially in regional and rural Victoria.



Cameron Hodge Board Member

Cameron Hodge has been a member of the NDCH Board since 2019. He contributes valuable expertise from his extensive experience in the private sector and various health-related governance roles. Recently semi-retired from a career in agriculture, Cameron now divides his time between working in the aviation industry, restoring vintage cars, and exploring his passion for travel.



Mebin Baby Board Member

Mebin Baby joined the NDCH board in 2024. Mebin is deeply committed to building inclusive communities, equal access to services and brings a lifelong commitment to working with remote and vulnerable communities. Mebin has a long career in the health sector with several key leadership roles in regional public hospitals overseeing Community Care services.



Lynne Sinclair Board Member

Lynne Sinclair joined the NDCH board in 2024. She is a retired registered nurse, having been employed at local health services for more than 40 years. Lynne has extensive experience in health sector management with a passion for all matters related to providing quality and safe services for rural communities.



Dianne Bowles Board Member

Di Bowles joined the NDCH board in 2024. She has more than 15 years' experience on a variety of boards and is a member and graduate of the Australian Institute of Company Directors. She also holds an Advanced Diploma in Agribusiness and a Diploma of Agriculture. Mental health and wellbeing are areas Di is very interested in as well as advocating for the same access and rights for rural and regional areas. Di and her husband Gary own a dairy farm in Mead, near Cohuna.



3. Executive Team



Penny Wilkinson Chief Executive Officer

NDCH welcomed Penny as its Chief Executive Officer in May 2024. Prior to that time, Penny held executive roles in the Health Sector for more than 10 years where she was Executive Director for the COVID-19 Positive Pathways Program at the Department of Health, and Director of Commissioning for Murray PHN. In both roles, what mattered most was timely access to quality health services and supports close to home. She brings these lessons and insights to Northern District Community Health and is committed to improving timely access to healthcare for people and communities across the local government areas of Buloke, Loddon, Gannawarra and Swan Hill.

Staying true to her commitment to rural Victoria and not for profit services, Penny has held a number of Board positions across the NFP sector and is currently a Board Director for Women's Health Loddon Mallee. Penny holds a Bachelor of Arts, Post Graduate of Business Management and is a member of the Australian Institute of Company Directors.



Alexia Stephens General Manager Community Support

Alexia is an experienced healthcare professional with over 19 years of service at NDCH. She began her journey at NDCH in 2005 as a Community Health Nurse, later transitioning into a management role, where she has spent the last 9 years. Alexia has lived and worked in the Gannawarra Shire for over 30 years, deeply understanding the community's needs and the complexities of healthcare in this region.

Alexia's tertiary qualifications in Nursing, Midwifery, Community Health, and Health Service Management has enable her to work in a variety of roles and settings. Before joining NDCH, she worked as a Midwife, demonstrating her commitment to both the acute and community sectors. Alexia is passionate about creating environments where exceptional care happens every day, emphasizing the importance of how staff are recruited, trained, and supported.



De Radcliffe General Manager Corporate Services

Deanne has been General Manager of Corporate Services at NDCH since 2022 and leads all governance, asset and infrastructure, finance and human resource functions for NDCH.

Deanne brings a long history of financial management and accounting, particularly in health care settings where she managed two private medical clinics. Deanne served as a Board Director for Cohuna District Hospital between 2015 and 2024 and holds a Master of Commerce in Professional Accounting from the University of New England and a Bachelor of Business in Accounting from La Trobe University.

4. Our vision, purpose and values

NDCH is all about helping people live their best lives. We provide vital health and preventive care services to keep people connected to their communities and engaged in their own well-being. Our deep-rooted connections with local communities, combined with our partnerships with regional health services, allow us to make a real difference in the Loddon Mallee region.

Vision

Building healthy, inclusive and connected rural communities.

Purpose

To improve health and wellbeing and reduce rural health inequity by working across the social determinants of health.

Values



We trust, encourage and look out for each other.



We have the courage and agility to champion new ways.



We have an eye on shaping the future.



We can be counted on to deliver and do this well.



We listen.



We know diversity of people, experiences and perspectives make our work stronger.



5. Growing our quality reputation

Quality governance

NDCH is a trusted organisation and has been connected and engaged with the local community for 35 years. Risks to our services such as pandemics, workforce challenges, funding loss and significant natural disasters like floods can impact capacity to deliver programs. During the past year, our Quality Team has worked to build and develop strategies to mitigate the impact these events could have on NDCH's delivery of quality care.

Our Quality Team has used their collective experience to review, renew and improve NDCH's processes, compliance, practices and standards. The establishment of the Quality Care Committee has ensured that quality improvements are reflective of best practice standards and organisational policy. To improve workflow and enhance quality the practices are standardised, evidence-based

reporting is analysed and areas of improvement are identified. During the past year NDCH has undergone rapid change and growth. As a result, the Quality Team has developed multiple solutions to implement change and achieve excellence. Some key improvements include:

- Improved incident and feedback reporting and training staff in its use;
- Developing a Quality Governance Framework and refreshing policies to manage risk.
- Establishing an internal operations quality committee to underpin ongoing quality improvement and reinforce that quality is everyone's business and that quality is part of our practice and culture.



Charlie Gillingham, Richard Morrison, Cameron Hodge, Meghan Stewart, Kathy Day and Jane Ogden



NDCH says no to family violence

At a glance: Accreditation pathway for NDCH

NDCH achieved accreditation for all major standards (noting that NDIS is pending approval following recommendation for accreditation by the Auditor to the Commission). Quality improvement at NDCH is not set and forget and our commitment to quality is underpinned by a continuous improvement principle as well as preparing for new requirements across Aged Care and NDIS.

NDCH current accreditations include:

- RACGP Standards for General Practice
- NDIS Practice Standards (pending; recommended for accreditation by auditor)
- Human Services Standard
- Home Care

Primary suite of accreditation standards:

- Aged Care Quality Standards
- National Safety Quality Primary and Community Healthcare Standards
- NDIS Standards
- RACGP Standards



Other standards:

- Child Safe Standards
- MARAM (Standards for identifying, assessing and managing family violence risk)
- Social Services Standards (moving from HSS)

6. Delivering clinical excellence for rural people by rural people

NDCH is committed to providing high quality clinical care to our rural communities. That's why we work to address physical, mental, social, and cultural needs, through our integrated services. In 2024 NDCH upheld our commitment to delivering clinical excellence across our various service offerings.

Medical clinic

During the past year the NDCH Medical Clinic continued to provide essential health care services close to home. Our practice coordinator has worked alongside the team of GP's, practice nurses, nurse practitioners and medical receptionists to ensure high quality health care is within reach for our local communities.

Through our clinic, our community was able to access GP consultations, immunisations, travel vaccines, heart and lung tests, blood pressure monitors and more. Visiting specialists also provided specialist services such as cardiology, psychology, geriatrics and hearing.

By providing access to comprehensive, patient centred care, NDCH's Medical Clinic improved access to preventative health assessments, referral pathways and specialised care, ultimately strengthening the community's health and wellbeing outcomes.

2024 in numbers



Total appointments:
18,337



Total individual clients:
3,790

65+

29 per cent of clients are
over **65 years old**

“The reception staff are always friendly, calm and I am not kept waiting long. The doctors I have seen over the last 12 to 15 months, have always been respectful and more than willing to find me answers for my health issues, in a kind and reassuring manner. I would like to particularly thank Dr John who went above and beyond to make my family comfortable and reassured that we were making the best decisions possible for our mother during her end of life at Glenarm. He was not her regular doctor, but that was not an issue for him, he treated us and the situation with quiet respect, kindness and empathy.”

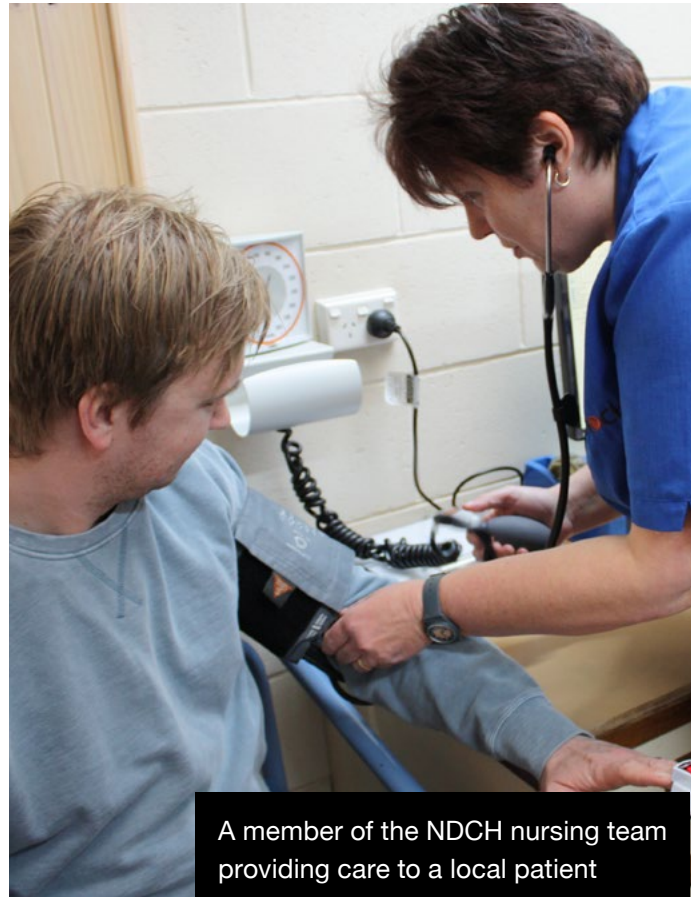
- **Simone**

Nursing

During the past year, our nursing team provided high quality care across Community Health, Primary and Secondary School Programs, the NDCH Agrisafe Clinic, Chronic Disease Management, Social Prescribing, Mental Health First Aid, Smoking Cessation and the NDCH Medical Clinic.

All NDCH's Nurse Practitioner outreach sites experienced an increase in patients. The program has expanded and now currently supports more than 3,200 people living around Quambatook, Kerang and Pyramid Hill. Our highly capable team worked in collaboration with other health professionals, including doctors, to effectively refer patients resulting in more efficient and appropriate escalation of care.

Community health is a powerful tool to reduce health inequity and improve community wellbeing in rural and regional locations. By providing services on site and in community, our multidisciplinary team promotes flexible health care and ultimately access for those in their local regional and rural locations.



A member of the NDCH nursing team providing care to a local patient



Allied Health practitioner providing care to clients

Allied Health

NDCH's Allied Health team plays a critical role ensuring the local community has access to specialist care across seven disciplines – diabetes, speech pathology, physiotherapy, occupational therapy, exercise physiology, dietetics and podiatry.

Our diverse team of Allied Health professionals work together, and with NDCH's other services, to provide quality and comprehensive care to the community. Together, our skilled team deliver an integrated model of care that improves health equity, particularly for priority populations across the region, through improved access to quality care.

7. Providing care and support for the community close to home

Community health makes essential care accessible locally, allowing people to stay engaged and connected within their communities. NDCH's Community Care, Community Support, and NDIS teams are dedicated to empowering our community members by delivering compassionate, local healthcare that enhances quality of life and fosters independence.

Community Care

In November 2023, NDCH welcomed Community Care as a new service after the Gannawarra Shire Council transferred Community Care services to NDCH. Since then, NDCH's Community Care team have worked to provide quality care close to home by ensuring clients can access specialist services from the comfort of their own home. This includes in-home aged care, disability, meals, property maintenance and mental health support.

In May 2024, the number of people supported by NDCH's Community Care team grew when we expanded into Swan Hill. NDCH is very proud to support more than 750 clients.

We know this work makes a difference to supporting people live fulfilling, independent lives at home and connected to community.



NDCH's NDIS team



NDCH Board members with client

Jan's story

One of NDCH's important Community Care services is Meals on Wheels – a service that delivers hot meals to clients across Kerang and Cohuna. Cohuna local Jan has been driving hot, fresh meals to residents for nine years as a way to give back to the community. It is something she had aspired to do and thought it would be a great thing to do when she finished working.

“Sometimes we are the only ones who might visit for the day or even the week as clients might not have relatives in town or anything. It's nice to see the faces brighten up for the time we are there,” Jan said.

Jan said Community Care clients are extremely grateful to note only have a fresh and warm meal delivered directly to their door, but also to have the opportunity to engage with one of the dedicated volunteers or Community Care workers.

“The only problem when you're dropping off food is that clients often want to have a good chat, but you have more hot meals to deliver. You feel awful as you back out the door.”

Jan also said that another important aspect of the meal-delivery service is checking on clients to make sure they are OK, and if there is an issue, reporting back to the hospital for follow-up.

“It is a lovely service for the town, and we are very lucky to have it here.”

Community Support

NDCH's Community Support team provides essential services to local community members. During the past twelve months NDCH's six Community Support team members have supported 511 clients across five programs. Our team's drive and commitment to clients has seen all targets be met, or exceeded, over the past year.

NDCH Community Support service

Mental Health Support – 110 clients



General Counselling and AOD – 117 clients



Supported Playgroups – 95 clients



Specialist Homelessness Services – 91 clients



Support for Carers Program – 68 clients



Georgia's story

Unpaid carers play an essential role in supporting family members or friends with disabilities, mental health challenges, medical conditions, palliative needs, or age-related frailty. NDCH recognises that many of these unpaid careers face challenges such as isolation, carer burn out and a lack of time to engage in their own life.

NDCH's Carer Support Program, is a government-funded initiative dedicated to supporting the well-being of carers. Georgia oversees services across Gannawarra, Loddon, Buloke, and Swan Hill, personally connecting with each carer to assess their unique needs. She ensures tailored support and services that deliver meaningful relief to each individual.

"There are carers on the brink of relinquishing due to the intensity of caregiving," said Georgia.

"Through our program, we can help ease their burden, whether it's arranging a much-needed break, covering travel costs for medical appointments, or simply offering a listening ear."

Georgia notes that similar services can be hard for carers in rural areas to access and that by offering this service, NDCH helps local carers overcome barriers to accessing this support.

Currently, the program hosts two support groups, with plans to expand further in Loddon and Swan Hill to address the growing demand for carer support. In the first quarter of the financial year alone, Georgia already engaged 50 carers through the service.

"Our service genuinely makes a difference. Often, a simple phone call means the world to someone who just wants to be heard. It's truly special that a rural service like ours can provide such impactful relief in so many ways," said Georgia.

National Disability Insurance Scheme

NDCH's NDIS program provides everyday support to community members living with a disability to achieve greater independence and quality of life. During the past year, our three Support Coordinators have empowered 66 clients, helping them navigate the NDIS system, optimise their funding and connect to essential services. Through personalised planning and guidance, clients have gained confidence and independence, with some even stepping into volunteer roles or part-time work.

Despite changes in the regulatory landscape, our team's expertise and commitment have remained steadfast, enhancing service offerings and fostering partnerships that further enrich our clients' lives.



NDCH's NDIS Support Coordinators



Hayley's story

For more than four years, Hayley has received dedicated support from NDCH's NDIS team. With personalised care from Support Coordinators, General Practitioners, and Allied Health professionals, Hayley benefits from a comprehensive approach that empowers her to live fully and independently.

Michelle, Hayley's NDIS Support Coordinator, has been instrumental in helping Hayley build and refine her NDIS plan, providing ongoing guidance that has boosted her confidence and enriched her quality of life. With this newfound self-assurance Hayley has participated in events such as concerts and art groups.

According to Hayley, these activities "allow [her] to live a normal life."

This year, Hayley's NDIS support enabled her to save up for an incredible three-week cruise to Fiji with friends – an adventure she says she wouldn't have had the confidence to pursue just a few years ago.

Along with her relationship with Michelle, Hayley has formed a strong bond with her Nurse Practitioner, Yvonne, who supports her in all aspects of general health, including follow-ups with specialists and managing women's health.

Both Yvonne and Michelle have witnessed Hayley's remarkable personal growth firsthand. Michelle shared that, "it's been so wonderful to witness Hayley's growth, her confidence has really blossomed."

Michelle emphasised how important in-home support has been for Hayley as well as her Mum, who also uses NDCH's NDIS services.

"It's been so valuable for Haley to be able to receive the majority of her support services in the comfort of her own home, as it allows her to maintain her independence and benefit from the comprehensive care and assistance provided by NDCH," Michelle said.

"NDCH helps me to live a better life," said Hayley.

8. Working with community to promote health and wellbeing

Community health extends beyond medical care. NDCH partners with local governments, schools, social services, and various community organisations to build a comprehensive support network. These collaborations address health needs more effectively and create a united front against community specific health challenges.

Health promotion

During the past year, NDCH focused on health promotion as part of our work with the Gannawarra and Loddon Shire Community Health - Health Promotion (CH-HP) Plans. A key part of this was progressing [The Gannawarra and North Loddon Community Health – Health Promotion 2024 - 2025 Action Plan](#).

In line with this plan, our team of 12 professionals collaborated with other local agencies to address health and wellbeing issues. Our CH-HP programs promote wellbeing, strengthen community capacity and minimise the burden of serious disease.

In alignment with the Gannawarra and Loddon CH-HP plan, NDCH upheld our commitment to improving health outcomes across six priority areas. These include:

Increase healthy eating



Improve mental health

Increase active living



Prevention of family violence

Reduce tobacco and e-cigarette related harm



Improve sexual and reproductive health



Local children get educated thanks to NDCH's school and youth programs

Schools and youth programs

Local schools within our community are one of the key locations for NDCH's health promotion work.

During the past year, our school and youth programs included leading the Mallee School Refusal Forum which saw 80 teachers and support staff discuss ways to re-engage vulnerable and disengaged youth. It also included facilitating the Lego Club Training, which equipped teachers with the skills needed to offer vulnerable children Lego therapy.

NDCH also launched the Vaping Prevention Pilot across schools to reduce tobacco and e-cigarette related harm. The program saw 95 per cent of students learn new information on the harmful effects of vaping and e-cigarettes. These students also said they had greater awareness of the methods tobacco companies use to get new smokers hooked.

Indigenous programs

NDCH is committed to improving health outcomes for the local Indigenous community through three key programs: the Kethawil Pembengguk (KP), Tyipen Kwe Children (TKC), Tyipen Kwe youth (TKY).

These programs work collaboratively with partners to support more than 70 First Nations clients. During the past twelve months our Tyipen Kwe Children program, which is designed to develop participant's knowledge of art and storytelling, has seen a 25 per cent increase in attendance. The program includes input from local Elders who ensure the content is culturally safe.

95 per cent of students

learned new information on the harmful effects of vaping and e-cigarettes

9. Ensuring sustainability through our people, systems and infrastructure

NDCH's Corporate Services team play a crucial role enabling our clinical and community care teams to provide life changing care to our community.

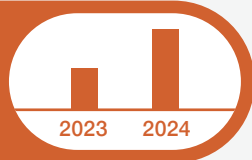
People and culture

2024 staff in numbers

87 per cent female workforce



95% increase in staff compared to 2023



146 members of staff



The NDCH team is at the heart of our success, and we are incredibly proud of the diverse skills, expertise, and leadership that span our organisation. Reflecting the growth and complexity of our services, we introduced a new organisational structure this year. This structure includes new leadership roles dedicated to managing our suite of Community Health and Community Care services, embedding quality and business acumen across all we do. We have incorporated succession planning into our organisational structure, which is vital for our team's professional development, growth and staff retention.

In December 2023, we said farewell to Mandy Hutchinson, who served as CEO with dedication and vision over six successful years. We are grateful for the stability and guidance provided by Margaret McDonald as Interim CEO, and we were thrilled to welcome our new CEO, Penny Wilkinson, after a rigorous recruitment process. Penny hit the ground running in May 2024 and continues to grow relationships with our partners and community leaders and lead the organisation to its next phase of development and delivering quality, sustainable healthcare and support across the region.

In a remarkable milestone, NDCH onboarded 122 new staff members this year, many joining Community Care, our latest service delivery model. With the addition of this new service, a dedicated team was needed to provide in-home support. We embarked on a large-scale recruitment drive to bring on care workers and administrative staff, who were warmly welcomed and quickly began engaging with clients, greatly enhancing our capacity to support vulnerable community members. This achievement during peak demand was made possible by our expanded team and the collaborative spirit across NDCH, fostering a supportive environment that fuels our people and culture.

A Cultural Review initiated earlier this year confirmed very high levels of role satisfaction and a deep commitment to both their community and the organisation. We remain focused on creating a workplace where our people can thrive, grow, and feel empowered to make a difference. We continue to invest in the development of our team ensuring that our culture is one of inclusion, trust and continuous learning.

Head Office

24 Fitzroy Street
Kerang VIC 3579

Kerang

(03) 5451 0200

NDCH Medical Clinic

(03) 5452 1366

Cohuna

(03) 5451 0250

Boort

(03) 5451 0260

Quambatook

(03) 5457 1300

Pyramid Hill

(03) 5455 7065



info@ndch.org.au
www.ndch.org.au