

Rural Activity Paper

PRIMARY HEALTH CARE SUPPORT TO
RURAL & REMOTE COMMUNITIES

2021

phn
HUNTER NEW ENGLAND
AND CENTRAL COAST

An Australian Government Initiative

[THEPHN.COM.AU](https://thephn.com.au)



We respect and honour Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elders past, present and future.

We acknowledge the stories, traditions and cultures of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples on this land and commit to building a brighter future together.



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For more information about these services,
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Executive Summary

Primary health care support and services have increased by a value of more than \$35 million, from 2015 to 2020, to rural and remote areas of the Hunter and New England regions of New South Wales. This is due to the actions of the Primary Health Network for the Hunter New England and Central Coast since its inception in 2015.

Key increases in support and services identified from 2015 to 2020 in rural communities were:

- Over \$4.5 million spent in response to drought, bushfires and COVID-19.
- Over \$2.1 million invested in grants to meet local community needs.
- 3.8 times greater expenditure on mental health services.
- 72.2% increase in HealthPathways that are localised to rural areas.
- 6.2 times more funding dedicated to Aboriginal Health Services.
- 200% increase in funding for drug and alcohol services.

The Primary Health Network for the Hunter New England and Central Coast (PHN) is a not-for-profit organisation funded by the Commonwealth government to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the primary health care system.

An increase in primary health care support and services to the PHN's rural and remote communities is due to an equitable process for distribution of funding based on needs identified in the PHN's health needs assessment of the entire PHN region.

A health needs assessment is a process used to identify unmet health and healthcare needs of a population, and present options for work that can be done to address these needs and improve the health of the population. The PHN Health Needs Assessment is undertaken every four years and involves extensive consultation with communities and key stakeholders in the HNECC PHN region including the PHN's Board, Clinical Advisory Committee and Community Advisory Committee. National and local health data are also analysed to complement the consultation process and gain a thorough understanding of health needs.

Below is a snapshot of the PHN region:

- Life Expectancy for males: 78.9 years (Australia: 80.4 years)
- Life Expectancy for females: 83.5 years (Australia: 84.5 years)
- Our population is over 1.2 million
- Our population is expected to increase by 19.5% by 2031
- 19.1% of our population is aged 65 years and over
- 5.4% identify as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander
- 12.4% are aged between 15-24 years old
- There are 2 Local Health Districts, 31 public hospitals and 303 pharmacies
- There are 9 Aboriginal Medical Services in our region
- There are 410 General Practices in our region with 1,250 GPs.

For this paper the following Local Government Areas have been identified as rural or remote communities:

- Cessnock
- Singleton
- Mid Coast
- Armidale Regional
- Gwydir
- Inverell
- Moree Plains
- Tenterfield
- Uralla
- Dungog
- Upper Hunter Shire
- Walcha
- Glen Innes Severn
- Gunnedah
- Muswellbrook
- Narrabri
- Tamworth Regional

Primary health care supports, and services delivered to rural and remote communities include:

Commissioned Services

The PHN does not provide health care services, instead it funds health care providers to deliver a range of primary health care services that are appropriate and relevant to the needs of their communities. The funding process is undertaken through a commissioning process which is a real-time change process, moving the local health system towards more sustainable models of care.

In 2020, 18 types of services were commissioned by the PHN, which ranged from mental health, primary care nurses, allied health, drug and alcohol, general practice support, health literacy improvements as well as aged care support. During the 2019-20 financial year the PHN commissioned more than \$52 million in contract value of services across the region.

Special Projects and Partnerships

The Primary Health Network works with local primary health care providers, Hunter New England Local Health District and Community Managed Organisations to meet local health care needs across its region.

Thirteen special projects and seven alliance projects were supported by the PHN in the 2019 -20 financial year. Special projects range from addressing resilience, access to healthcare, general practice support, health literacy and refugee resettlement. Alliance projects involve a partnership with Hunter New England Local Health District (HNE LHD) for joint work on best models of care for diabetes, COPD, palliative care, dementia and perinatal care.

Aboriginal Health Initiatives

A fundamental step towards improving health outcomes for Aboriginal people is to assist the mainstream health system to better understand and incorporate Aboriginal culture and customs. An Aboriginal health needs assessment is also undertaken in the PHN region, to help guide the organisation's aboriginal health initiatives.

In 2020, there were seven Aboriginal specific health initiatives that included mental health services, support for improved cultural safety in primary health care and support for Aboriginal health workers. Six of the initiatives commenced after 2015, with an additional \$4.8 million invested in Aboriginal health initiatives in 2020 across the region.

Health Professional Support

The PHN offers a range of programs and services for general practice and allied health professionals to enhance the quality and timeliness of care provided to patients, and to build capacity within healthcare practices to provide quality care.

Since 2015, eleven new activities have commenced to support health professionals within the PHN region. These activities range from quality improvement in practices to GP support services and education on relevant health related topics. Over fourteen thousand more health professionals attended PHN education related events in 2020, compared to 2015.

PHN Funded Grants

To support our vision of **Healthy People, Healthy Communities** there is a tailored grants program to support key community needs. The PHN grants program commenced in 2019 with over \$2.1 million invested in grants that address needs within rural and remote communities.

Stakeholder Engagement

To undertake a health needs assessment and develop appropriate projects that address those needs, the PHN is directed by its Board, Community Advisory Committees and Clinical Councils. Each group's members live and work in all areas of the PHN region and understand their community primary health care needs.

Stakeholders that aren't a member of the various PHN committees communicate with the PHN through a Peoplebank webpage and outgoing PHN communication is through a PatientInfo website and other common communication platforms. Peoplebank is an online consultation tool that was established in 2016 and now has more than 33,500 people who access it each financial year. PatientInfo is a website that was created in partnership with HNE Kids Health and HNE LHD. The site aims to help people understand and manage their health conditions and does not replace care provided by doctors and other health professionals.

Disaster Response

Disaster can have a significant impact on the mental health and wellbeing of affected communities and individuals. We have responded to the 2018-19 drought and 2019-20 bushfires by providing additional mental health and wellbeing support to those impacted by disaster within the PHN's region. These supports have ranged from wellbeing grants, easier mental health treatment plan access and increased mental health services.

Our response to COVID-19 has involved supporting primary health care professionals to be prepared and respond appropriately during the pandemic. Support has ranged from assisting the establishment of local Respiratory Clinics, providing free counselling services for general practice staff and allied health professionals as well as offering a free telehealth platform for General Practices to use during the pandemic.

Over \$4.5 million was invested in rural and remote communities in response to disasters that have impacted the PHN region. These responses included bushfire and drought community wellbeing grants; expansion of mental health services; establishment of GP-led Respiratory Clinics; telehealth grants and support for health professionals and residential aged care facilities support.

Primary health care support has substantially increased in rural and remote areas of the PHN region. Support has increased due to conducting an effective health needs assessment as well as the implementation of an equitable process to distribute funding. Since 2015, we have been responsive to community needs that change, by applying a model that allows its contracts to adapt to those changes. The PHN also quickly responds to disasters through providing appropriate primary health care support to various stakeholders with an aim to achieve the organisations goal of healthy people and healthy communities.

Introduction

Hunter New England and Central Coast Primary Health Network (HNECC PHN) is a not for profit organisation funded by the Commonwealth government to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the primary health care system.

The PHN is not a direct provider of services, instead it manages a range of service agreements with organisations to deliver primary health care programs in areas of identified need.

Since HNECC PHN's inception in 2015, there has been an increase in services and support provided to rural and remote areas of the PHN.

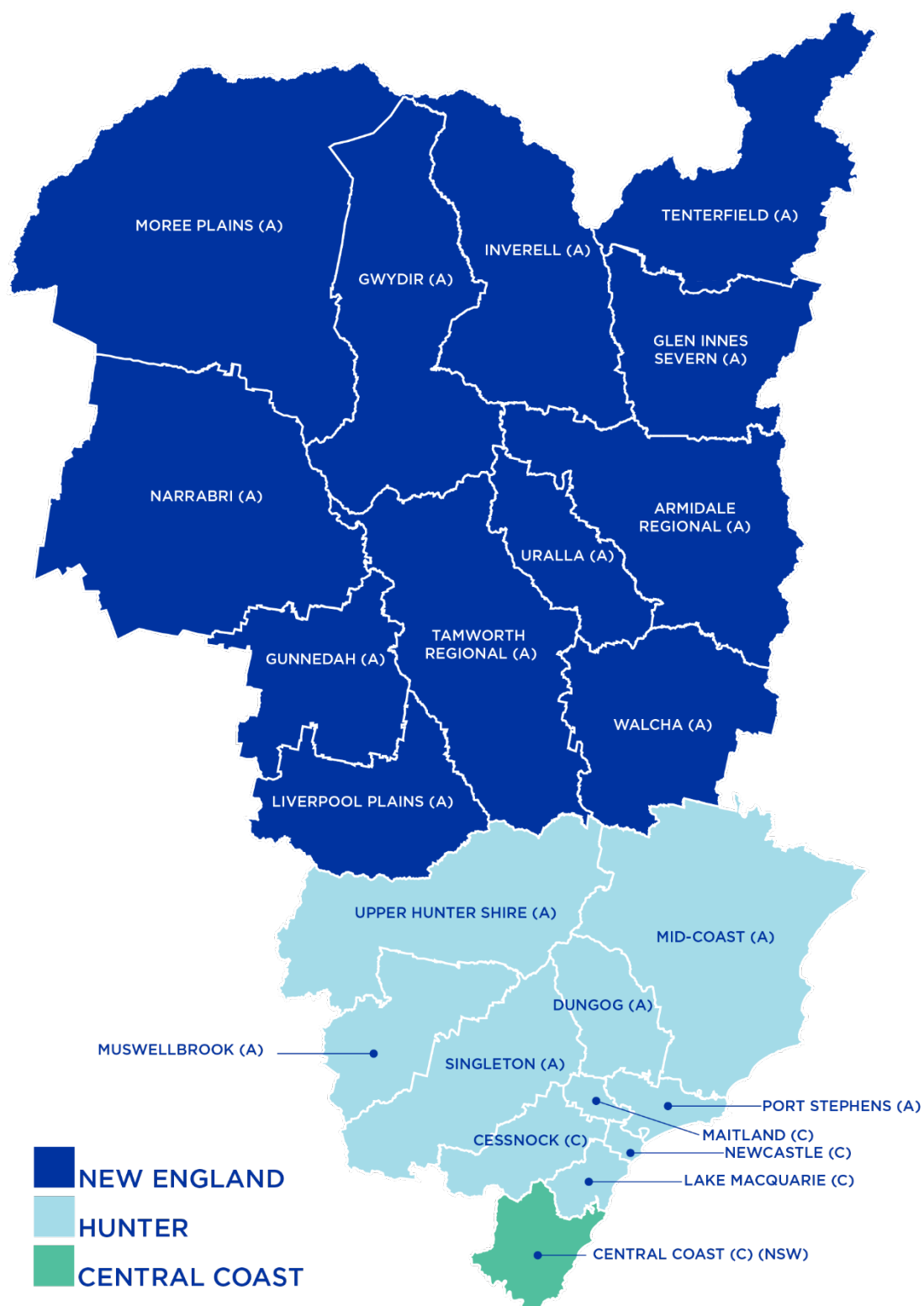
This paper highlights the increase in services and support provided to the PHN's rural and remote communities. Rural and remote areas include the Hunter and New England regions of the PHN, excluding major built up areas like Newcastle.

Highlighting the types of services and support PHN offer to rural and remote communities allows all rural and remote stakeholders, which can range from government representatives to health professionals, to understand and promote current primary health care support available in their target communities.

Key areas of support are categorised into services the PHN commission; special projects and partnerships; Aboriginal health initiatives; PHN support to health professionals; funded grants; stakeholder engagement to both share and receive information; and the PHN's response to disaster that impact it's rural and remote communities.

Regional Overview

The rural and remote parts of the Hunter and New England regions of the Primary Health Network is vast in geographical terms and diverse in terms of its communities. It stretches from the QLD border in the north to Cessnock in the south, and west past Narrabri and Gunnedah, and incorporates 18 Local Government Areas.



A population health snapshot with PHN commissioned services, can be accessed for each Local Government Area by clicking on the areas in the below table.

Hunter region		New England region	
Cessnock	Armidale Regional	Moree Plains	
Dungog	Glen Innes Severn	Narrabri	
Upper Hunter Shire	Gunnedah	Tamworth Regional	
Singleton	Gwydir	Tenterfield	
Mid Coast	Inverell	Uralla	
Muswellbrook	Liverpool Plains	Walcha	

Commissioned Services

Commissioning is an ongoing process of planning, purchasing and monitoring services to meet the needs of the local population. It includes a range of activities to assess the needs of the population, plan and prioritise services, purchase those services and monitor the quality of the services being provided.

MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

The Primary Health Network address various levels of mental health support that is needed by various population groups as per our Health Needs Assessment. The following services are funded through our Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Team:

- Mental Health Services in Primary Care
- Joint Regional Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Plan
- Mental Health in Residential Aged Care Facilities
- Low Intensity Mental Health Services
- Transitional Care Packages
- Effective Primary Care Response to Suicide Prevention
- Attempted Suicide Follow Up and Support
- Community Based Suicide Prevention Activities
- Headspace- Occasions of Service & Youth Complex services.

Timeline of Mental Health Services

Service	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20
Mental Health Services in Primary Care					
Joint Regional Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Plan					
Mental Health in Residential Aged Care Facilities					
Low Intensity Mental Health Services					
Transitional Care Packages					
Effective Primary Care Response to Suicide Prevention					
Attempted Suicide Follow Up and Support					
Community Based Suicide Prevention Activities					
Headspace- Occasions of Service & Youth Complex services					

The following table compares session numbers for the main Primary Mental Health program. It compares similar programs from 2015-16 to 2019-20 financial years.

Comparison of Primary Mental Health program

Region	Service Providers 2015-16	Service Providers 2019-20	Sessions Provided 2015-16	Sessions Provided 2019-20
New England	1	1	7,844	9,394
Hunter	1	1	15,785	22,135

Since then, newer Mental Health programs have been introduced, including Transitional Care Packages, Psychosocial Support and Suicide Prevention programs. For 2019-20, the contribution of these programs can be seen in the following table.

Contribution of other Mental Health Services

Region	Service Providers	Clients Reached
New England	6	531
Hunter	6	2,077

This includes Transitional Care Packages, Psychosocial Support and Suicide Prevention programs.

Headspace Services

Comparison of Services

Region	Service Providers 2016-17	Service Providers 2019-20
New England	1	1
Hunter	2	2
Maitland	1	1

Contribution of Youth Complex services

Region	Service Providers 2015-16	Service Providers 2019-20	Clients Reached 2015-16	Clients Reached 2019-20
New England	0	1	0	573
Hunter	0	2	0	234

PRIMARY CARE SERVICES

Timeline of Primary Health Care Services

Activity	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20
Primary Health Care Nurse					
Priority Allied Health Services					
Small Town After Hours					
Aged Care Emergency (ACE) Program					
GP After Hours Program					

Primary Health Care Nurse

This program aims to improve health and wellbeing of people living within 50 small rural and remote communities in the New England region, with a population of less than 2000. Strategies include identifying and addressing local preventative health needs through health screening, health education, preventative health and health promotion services, delivered in partnership with the community and other local stakeholders. Partnerships include Local Health District, Cancer Council, NSW Police and community groups.

Priority Allied Health Services

Identified communities from PHN's Health Needs Assessment are provided increased access to a range of primary and allied health services and activities, to improve the health and wellbeing of those communities. This is achieved through commissioning additional allied health services and improving the linkage between general practice and allied health services in the rural and remote areas of the PHN area.

Comparison of Priority Allied Health Services (PAHS)

Region	Service Providers 2016-17	Service Providers 2019-20	Sessions Provided 2016-17	Sessions Provided 2019-20
New England	1	1	8347	9018
Hunter	1	1	4033	4081

Small Town After Hours

This program is in the New England region and provides telephone medical support to local hospitals for patients presenting with Triage Categories 3 - 5 when the usual general practitioner VMO is absent/unavailable from the town.

Aged Care Emergency (ACE) Program

This service is a collaboration between HNECC PHN, Hunter New England Local Health District (HNE LHD), NSW Ambulance, Hunter Primary Care and local residential aged care facilities. The ACE program is a nurse led model of care that provides support to Residential Aged Care Facilities (RACFs) staff to facilitate residents' non-life-threatening acute care needs being met within the facility and thus avoiding an Emergency Department (ED) presentation. Where an ED presentation is required, the ACE program will enhance the flow and coordination of the care of the patient during their ED visit.

GP After Hours Program

The PHN has played a key role in improving access to After Hours primary medical care for residents across the Hunter region through:

- Phone based Assessment Service
- GP Led After Hours Clinics
- On call GPs
- Patient transport.

Overview of all Primary Care Services

Region	Service Providers 2016-17	Service Providers 2019-20	Clients Reached 2016-17	Clients Reached 2019-20
New England	1	1	3564	4160
Hunter	1	2	52,299	53,592

ALCOHOL AND OTHER DRUGS SERVICES AND PROJECTS

Timeline of Alcohol and other Drugs Services and Projects

Activity	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20
Drug and Alcohol Treatment Services					
Drug and Alcohol Treatment in Primary Care Grant					
HNECC Regional Drug and Alcohol Partnership Networks					

Drug and Alcohol Treatment Services

Drug and Alcohol Treatment services aim to increase the quantum of services available to better meet demand and address service gaps along the care continuum.

Drug and Alcohol Treatment in Primary Care Grant

The aim of the following activities is to support the workforce through activities which promote service integration, referral pathways, quality improvement and evidence-based treatment approaches, to increase the capacity of primary care clinicians and services.

- GP and Practice Nurse Clinical Mentoring Program
- Drug and Alcohol First Aid Program
- HNECC Regional Drug and Alcohol Forums
- Psychology Drug and Alcohol Clinical Mentoring Program
- Non-Pharmalogical Treatment of Chronic Care Project
- HNECC Drug and Alcohol Referral and Service Navigation Resource
- Workforce development activities as identified through on-going sector development
- GP Drug and Alcohol Clinical Placement Program.

HNECC Regional Drug and Alcohol Partnership Networks

Includes a membership of nearly all the non-government treatment services, Aboriginal Medical Services and the Local Health District Drug and Alcohol Clinical Services to improve regional coordination, identifying system inefficiencies and sector capacity throughout the HNECC Drug and Alcohol Treatment System.

Alcohol and Other Drug Services Overview

Region	Service Providers 2016-17	Service Providers 2019-20
New England	3	2
Hunter	2	2

CARE NAVIGATION

To improve vulnerable / disadvantaged individuals' health literacy and ability to navigate and overcome barriers to accessing services. Established in 2019, HNECC PHN funded a three tier project designed to empower and enable individuals to engage in decisions on their healthcare and improve self-management.

This included funding Care Navigators in primary care service organisations to connect people to the services they need (including preventative screening); educating service users to understand referrals, assist with appointment scheduling and reminders; working with clients to identify, troubleshoot and overcome personal barriers to accessing these services in a timely manner. Examples of this may include: Signposting towards local public transport services, community transport services or if required developing an alternative transport solution.

Service organisations were also provided the opportunity to access a Care Navigation Training Package designed to improve their capability and capacity to offer care navigation services to their clients.

Special Projects and Partnerships

Timeline for Special Projects and Partnerships

Activity	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20
The Resilience Project					
Rural Communities Project					
Dolly Parton Imagination Library - Partnership					
Small Town Succession Planning					
Research Collaborations					
Community Cancer Screening Participation					
Aged Care Telehealth Project					
Aged Care Emergency (ACE)					
Refugee Resettlement in New England					
Ear, Nose and Throat Support					
Ambulance Alternative Care Pathway Program					
Rural Health Workforce Initiative					
UNE Virtual Health Network Partnership					
Hunter New England Alliance Partnerships					

THE RESILIENCE PROJECT

At the end of 2018 HNECC PHN funded a Pilot Mental Health Project for school students in Kindergarten to Year 12 living in the Liverpool Plains Shire. The Resilience Project was funded to deliver their program which aims to build resilience, feel happier, improve overall wellbeing, provide them with the skills and tools to help them thrive at school and in their personal lives using three key strategies: Gratitude (appreciating what you have, not focusing on what you don't have), Empathy (thinking of the needs of others/kindness) and Mindfulness (being present in the moment, not becoming distracted by unhelpful or negative thoughts). More than 515 students from seven schools, their teachers, parents and the wider school community participated in the program which has since been adopted and is used regularly in each of the school's classrooms across all year levels.

We plan to launch Phase 2 of the pilot to the Northern Tablelands during the 2020-21 financial year.

RURAL COMMUNITIES PROJECT

The Rural Communities Project identifies health needs, inequitable access and utilisation from the community's perspective and uses this information to co-design a local solution in the form of pilot programs designed to respond to specifically identified community needs, increase local rural health access and ensure better health outcomes in partnership with local communities.

DOLLY PARTON IMAGINATION LIBRARY - PARTNERSHIP

We provided \$60,000 partner funding to United Way Australia for Tamworth Regional Council to support the implementation of the Dolly Parton Imagination Library. The PHN has provided over 5,000 health inserts to support over 1,700 new mother's within the Tamworth LGA to connect with

other infant and maternal health supportive services and social opportunities, provide information and informal support on key milestones and available resources for things such as sleep, feeding patterns, introducing solids, when to seek assistance and what assistance is available and childhood immunisation.

SMALL TOWN SUCCESSION PLANNING

The PHN continues to collaborate with NSW Rural Doctors Network to deliver added value through the development and implementation of an integrated partnership. This approach strategically utilises PHN and RDN resources to improve access to quality primary healthcare for people in the PHN region.

RESEARCH COLLABORATIONS

The PHN is a foundation partner in National Health and Medical Research Council NSW Centre for Innovation in Regional Health, and is building capacity in Primary Care research through scholarships and supported research activities.

COMMUNITY CANCER SCREENING PARTICIPATION

The following projects support community cancer screening:

Well women's cervical screening course

Cervical screening course for practice nurses. Provided increased capacity to deliver clinical services to women across the region. From 2017 to 2019 a total of 20 practice nurses completed the course in various rural and remote areas within the HNECC PHN region. In total the combined cost of all courses equated to \$38,000.00.

Bowel cancer screening education

Education for primary care practitioners on bowel cancer prevention and screening in 2018 within Tamworth.

Tamworth Women's Health Nurse Network

Communities of Practice and network for learning around women's cancer screening and prevention as well as other women's health issues. A total of 22 health professionals were reached in 2018 at Tamworth.

Community Cancer Screening Participation

Development and implementation of a Community Cancer Screening Participation Strategy under the guidance of key stakeholders and community groups. This strategy will lead to the implementation programs aimed at increasing access to and participation in cancer (bowel, breast, cervical) screening programs, and the revision of existing information and referral pathways where required. Vulnerable communities within the region are a key focus of these activities, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, rural and remote communities and culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) populations.

AGED CARE TELEHEALTH PROJECT

The PHN has been involved in the development and implementation of a GP-led integrated telehealth model of care for the provision of care services in residential aged care facilities in the New England and North West NSW region. This work recognises and attempts to address the considerable issues faced when accessing general practice services for residential aged care

facilities in rural and remote locations. The project will involve extensive collaboration and consultation with key stakeholders including general practice, RACFs, HNE LHD, RDN and service provider HealthWISE. The aged care population is the primary target of this intervention.

AGED CARE EMERGENCY (ACE)

Since 2016, the PHN has been involved in the model for clinical triage and escalation for Residential Aged Care Facilities to Hunter New England Local Health District services in the Tamworth and Armidale areas.

REFUGEE RESETTLEMENT IN NEW ENGLAND

In 2018 the PHN helped to establish referral processes and procedures for refugees in Armidale to local GP services. The project also involves delivery of education events targeting refugee health. It has engaged and educated 172 health professionals which has resulted in 642 refugees receiving healthcare. We have assisted in the development of education resources, as well as implementing the Care Navigation project which has also been used to assist refugees in accessing health care services.

EAR, NOSE AND THROAT SUPPORT

During 2017 and 2018 the PHN funded \$17,500.00 for an ENT Telehealth project based in Armidale. The funding enabled Hunter New England Local Health District to employ a Telehealth Project Officer who established and ran ENT Outreach clinics from Armidale – increasing access to the John Hunter Hospital ENT Outpatient Service for rural and remote paediatric patients. The clinic relied on the use of sustainable store-and-forward and telehealth technologies and also facilitated the upskilling of local general practitioners in assessing and managing patients with ENT- related issues. In the first 6 months of 2017, there were 4356 scheduled outpatient ENT appointments. Of these patients, 1155 were aged between 0-16 years with 23% travelling from a distance (greater than 50kms from the JHH). This accounts for considerable time lost and financial costs for patients and their carer's. The first Armidale ENT Clinic Appointment opened on 07/06/2018 and 16 patients had attended the clinic within the first five sessions.

AMBULANCE ALTERNATIVE CARE PATHWAY PROGRAM

The PHN is working collaboratively with NSW Ambulance (NSWA) to further embed NSW Protocol 5 (Non-transport recommended) and build awareness across primary and tertiary care.

System improvements, development and expansion of the NSW Protocol 1 (Authorised and Palliative Care Plans) are also underway to achieve a reduction in hospital admission rates, with a state-wide implementation planned by NSW as a result of this work.

Ongoing collaboration with NSW, GPs and RACFs will continue to develop resources and information that educate users in the appropriate use of triple zero calls and the completion of Authorised Care Plans when clinically indicated.

Other targeted projects will focus on increasing Authorised Care Plans for patients recognised as requiring chronic disease management, for clients under Aged Care support, NDIS and those in the last year of life.

RURAL HEALTH WORKFORCE INITIATIVE

The PHN is leading a partnership of organisations from across the Hunter New England region (PHN, Hunter New England Local Health District and University of New England) to address an inadequate and unstable GP workforce and inflexible model of care, to reduce poorer health outcomes in rural and remote communities.

UNE VIRTUAL HEALTH NETWORK PARTNERSHIP

This is an innovative, digitally-enabled network from across the Hunter New England region with the PHN being a partner of Hunter New England Local Health District and the University of New England to support the delivery of in-place education and healthcare, and assist health professionals in rural and remote communities.

COLLABORATIVE MODELS OF CARE

The PHN is proactive in engaging in collaborative models of care in order to make systemic improvements to primary care. We achieve this through partnerships, innovation projects and collaborations designed to support the development, trial, implementation and uptake of new models of care that are designed to reduce the burden of chronic diseases and demands on health services.

Hunter New England Alliance Partnerships

The Alliance works together to respond to across twelve identified shared priority areas in partnership with Hunter New England Local Health District (HNE LHD). By enhancing strategic Alliances, it ensures commissioned services align to Alliance priorities and contribute to the health outcomes being achieved across a 'whole of system' focus. Alliance projects include:

First 2000 Days

Integration and collaboration of multiple services in supporting the development of children, including primary, secondary and tertiary mental and physical health services, education, child protection and Indigenous services.

Chronic Disease

Work in partnership to clearly define the roles of primary, community and acute health professionals in relation to the management of chronic disease.

Palliative and end of life care

To determine the preferred setting where residents at residential aged care facilities would like to receive their end-of-life care and inform the implementation and evaluation of a proven model in palliative care.

COPD Models of Care

A co-commissioning pilot with HNE LHD in Hunter for a new model of care which places pulmonary rehab and specialist appointments in Primary Care settings, increasing the proportion of patients who commence and complete Pulmonary Rehab and reducing patient admissions.

Hunter New England Diabetes Model of Care

The PHN co-commissions the implementation of the Diabetes Model of Care, which enhances Diabetes care in Primary Care with HNE LHD. This model reduces the demand on tertiary services.

Hunter and New England Dementia Alliances

Support, education and training initiatives for consumers, families/carers and health professionals. Educational forums delivered in the new England region to a mix of tertiary and primary care clinicians from 2017 to 2020.

Health Care Homes

Health Care Homes are general practices or Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Services that provide better coordinated and more flexible care for Australians with chronic and complex health conditions.

Aboriginal Health Initiatives

Timeline of Aboriginal Health Initiatives

Activity	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20
Mental Health Services					
Healing Foundation					
Integrated Team Care					
Aboriginal Medical Services Grants					
Scholarships for Certificate IV in Alcohol and other Drugs and Certificate IV in Mental Health through TAFE NSW					
Cessnock Walks Kawuma					
On Country Care					

COMMISSIONED SERVICES

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Mental Health Services

The PHN commission culturally sensitive and safe primary mental health services for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people that live within the PHN region.

Mental Health Services Overview

Region	Service Providers 2016-17	Service Providers 2019-20	Clients Reached 2016-17	Clients Reached 2019-20
New England	2	2	273	518
Hunter	2	2	170	712

Healing Foundation

The Inverell and surrounding communities healing forum was the first of four forums to be delivered across New South Wales in 2020 through a partnership between the PHN and The Healing Foundation. The aim of the healing forums is to increase access to Aboriginal community identified approaches to improve the healing and wellbeing needs of our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.

Integrated Team Care

PHN's Integrated Team Care works across the Indigenous and mainstream primary care sectors, to assist Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to obtain primary health care as required. The team also commission care coordination services to eligible Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with chronic disease/s who require coordinated, multidisciplinary care, and improve access their access to culturally appropriate mainstream primary care.

Region	Services funded 2015	Services funded 2020
Greater Taree/Mid Coast	0	1
New England	0	1
Hunter	0	1

SUPPORT FOR ABORIGINAL HEALTH WORKERS

Through various funding and partnerships, support is provided to aboriginal health workers to provide culturally safe and best practice to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people within the PHN region, which include:

- Aboriginal Medical Services Grants
- Scholarships for Certificate IV in Alcohol and other Drugs and Certificate IV in Mental Health through TAFE NSW.
- Aboriginal Health Partnership Model.

ABORIGINAL CONSUMER SUPPORT

- Improving access to culturally appropriate mainstream primary care:
 - A framework was created to guide the design and implementation of culturally responsive healthcare services and programs that are funded by the PHN.
- Support and attend Aboriginal Knock-Out Challenges within the PHN region.
- Promote and support Cessnock Walks Kawuma against domestic violence
- On Country Care:
 - Partner with primary care service organisations at the Elder's Olympics to conduct culturally appropriate health care checks and connect them to culturally safe services to follow up on their checks.

Health Professional Support

Time of Health Professional Support

Activity	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20
Primary Care Improvement Support					
Practice Incentives Program Quality Improvement Support					
Lumos Project					
E-Referral					
MyHealth Record and Secure Messaging					
Healthy Weight Initiative					
Psychiatry Advice Line for GPs					
Home Care Package Provider Portal					
Education					
HealthPathways					
Heart Ambassador Program					
Perinatal Work Group					
Health Provider Scholarships					
Wellness Workshops					

GENERAL PRACTITIONER SUPPORT

Primary Care Improvement Support

The PHN enables primary care improvement support through commissioning a third-party provider to extract and collect aggregated data from general practices to benchmark and identify those practices which would benefit most from intensive quality improvement activities.

Practice Incentives Program Quality Improvement Support to General Practice

This program involves a Federally funded payment to encourage practices to participate in quality improvement activities, aimed at improving patient outcomes.

Quality Improvement activities include:

- Practice data analysis
- Practice Management
- Education / Professional Development
- Digital Health
- Accreditation
- Chronic Disease Management
- Preventative Health / models of care
- Workforce Support
- Immunisation.

Lumos Project

Lumos is a partnership initiative between the Hunter New England and Central Coast Primary Health Network and the NSW Ministry of Health to assist practices to gain a stronger understanding of their

patients' journey across the health system and improve provider experience through greater collaboration.

eReferral

As a commissioning organisation, the PHN has initiated licencing and purchasing of portal and third-party IT support required to successfully deliver an effective eReferral system. eReferral has been designed for the following benefits and efficiencies:

- Improves the upload rate of shared health summaries and greater identification of gaps in health information and/or access to such information.
- Updates to the National Health Services Directory and promote the directory to stakeholders.
- Development of 'smart' eReferral forms, which facilitate first level triage by GPs and automatic inclusion of relevant clinical information
- To maintain a database of both public and private health care providers (specialists and allied health) including the clinical areas and conditions or issues they receive referrals to
- To implement the eReferral solution into both General Practices and private healthcare providers to support the receipt of referrals into the public health system.

MyHealth Record and Secure Messaging

The PHN offers support to healthcare providers to register for My Health Record and facilitate meaningful use of the system.

Secure messaging delivery (SMD) supports the sharing of clinical documents and other personal information between healthcare organisations.

Healthy Weight Initiative

The PHN developed a Healthy Weight Initiative that was designed to encourage food and active living environments through a social movement in order to support residents of our region and promote healthier behaviours.

The initiative consisted of a structured, evidence-based weight management program over 12 weeks and commences with baseline assessment, goal setting for weight loss; calorie intake and physical activity levels. The program then involves weekly weight checks and/or education sessions on nutrition and physical activity, and utilising additional services and health providers for provision of support to participants. Progress is tracked and support provided through a Virtual Fitness Platform (VFP).

Psychiatry Advice Line for GPs

The PHN supports general practice through the provision of an advice line with psychiatry expertise to manage more complex mental health care and treatment that they would ordinarily refer out of the practice.

Home Care Package Provider Portal

This portal is a 'home base' to coordinate care for patients with chronic and complex conditions throughout the health care system.

EDUCATION

Education events

Various types of education are delivered by the PHN for numerous stakeholders, including general practitioners, nurses, allied health professionals and their business stakeholders. The types of education events include face to face, webinars and live streaming. In 2020 there was an increase in online education events, due to COVID-19 restrictions and concerns.

Total # Delivered 2015	Total # Delivered 2020	Total # of Participants 2015	Total # of Participants 2020
27	271	159	13537

Masterminds

These education events are short, 20 to 40 minute, webinars that are offered over lunch time for General Practice staff. Information covered includes practice quality improvement tools and skills, mental health support and other practice tools and support available.

Total # Delivered 2018	Total # Delivered 2020	Total # of Participants 2018	Total # of Participants 2020
62	19	467	901

HEALTHPATHWAYS

HealthPathways offers clinicians locally agreed information to make the right decisions together with patients, at the point of care. The localised pathways are designed primarily for general practice teams, but are also available to specialists, allied health professionals, and other health professionals in the PHN region.

Number of clinical pathways		Pathways localised to rural areas (% of total)		Clinicians involved in pathway development		Users per month	
2015	2020	2015	2020	2015	2020	2015	2020
151	343	27%	99.2%	1843	2479	1003	1915

HEART AMBASSADOR PROGRAM

This program involves the collaboration of general practices to discuss and share information on cardiovascular disease to ensure they implement best practice to benefit their patients.

PERINATAL WORK GROUP

This PHN-initiated group supports perinatal, maternal and child health in the Tamworth LGA using a shared care model with local GPs.

HEALTH PROVIDER SCHOLARSHIPS

In partnership with RDN and Hunter New England Local Health District, the PHN co-commissions, provides scholarships and education programs in response to specifically identified client needs (eg. upskilling of practice nurses).

WELLNESS WORKSHOPS

The PHN delivered a two-day conference in Narrabri that provided wellbeing and mental health information to clinicians in rural communities on how to manage their mental health as well as their patients during the drought period.

PHN Funded Grants

Timeline of PHN Funded Grants

Activity	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20
Healthy Weight Lifestyle Community Grant					
Early Start to Life					
Pitch Nights					

HEALTHY WEIGHT LIFESTYLE COMMUNITY GRANT

The PHN funded 12 projects (\$600k total) that were designed to expand on the evidence that supports models of primary prevention strategies that increase the likelihood of shifting physical activity, healthy eating and lifestyle choices towards an energy balanced approach being delivered at a community or locality level.

EARLY START TO LIFE

This is a capacity building program targeting early start to life and activities which support a healthier approach to lifestyle choices from 0-11 years of age. Programs build resilience, emotional intelligence and support engagement in school and community. The PHN has engaged facilitating partner in Moree and Cessnock to deliver this, as well as two community partners.

The activity involves identifying a community based 'Facilitating Partner' for each local government area who will be engaged to conduct the following activities:

- **Early Start Committees** – to engage local stakeholders in the evaluation and endorsement of initiatives to be delivered by Community Partners.
- **Build capability of Community Partners** – by providing support opportunities for quality improvement and staff training to improve early identification of developmentally vulnerable children.

Six hundred students were exposed to the program.

PITCH NIGHTS

Since 2017 the PHN has hosted three Pitch Nights which is an event held for organisations to pitch their own innovative ideas to gain exposure and funding. Each of the three Pitch Night's held to date has had its own focus area:

- Getting your community moving
- Eating right and eating healthy, or
- Promote lifestyle changes that improve all aspects of individual health.

2017: Pitch Night 1 Community Health Innovations – focus region Hunter, New England, Central Coast

2018: Pitch Night 2 Aboriginal Health – focus region New England North West

2019: Pitch Night 3 Getting your community moving – focus region Newcastle/ Central Coast

	Region	Project
Pitch Night 1	Upper Hunter	Where There's a Will
	Moree	Pius X
Pitch Night 2	Moree	Beyond Empathy – Moree Mari- Dhaadharr (Men's Hut)
	Tamworth	Tamworth Aboriginal Lands Council – School Holiday Programs
	New England North West	Gomeri Education and Training – Aboriginal Men's Groups
Pitch Night 3	Whole of Hunter New England and Central Coast	Diabetes NSW
		Live Life Get Active

SUICIDE PREVENTION CAPACITY BUILDING

Grants were available in 2019 for community organisations to apply capacity building activities within their communities to prevent suicides. Eight successful applicants were funded for their activities.

SMALL GRANTS

In 2019 the PHN established a grants program to support health professionals, Practices and community organisations in addressing needs identified in the PHN Health Needs Assessment. Over \$200,000.00 has been invested by the PHN in small grants since the grants program commenced.

Grants Overview

Total # Delivered 2015-16	Total # Delivered 2019-20
0	58

**Some grant programs encompassed the entire PHN region, which supported both city and rural/remote areas.*

Stakeholder Engagement

STAKEHOLDER REPRESENTATION

Board

The Primary Health Network currently has 11 board members, all from the region, one of whom lived in Gunnedah for over 20 years and another that currently lives in Tamworth, NSW.

Clinical Councils

Clinical Councils are GP-led and include members from other primary health care professions who will assist the PHN to develop local strategies to improve the operation of the health care system for patients. There are three Clinical Councils, one in Hunter New England, Hunter Metro and Central Coast regions. Each clinical council is made up of 10 members that live locally to the area they represent.

Community Advisory

There are three Community Advisory Committees in the PHN region based in Erina, Tamworth and Newcastle. Their role is to provide the Board of the PHN with locally relevant perspectives on community health issues. The community advisory committees are made up of members with active community networks who can provide the advice, feedback, community perspective and context which helps to shape our program delivery and development.

STAKEHOLDER COMMUNICATION

Peoplebank

Peoplebank is an online consultation tool developed by HNECC PHN to ensure all communities across the large HNECC region can join in on the conversation about improving local health. Peoplebank yearly engagements since its establishment in 2016 were:

Year	Engagements
2017-18	2,734
2018-19	9,562
2019-20	33,761

Community Support Resources

PatientInfo is a publicly available health information portal (no username or password required). It aims to help people understand and manage their health conditions. Most of the information contained on PatientInfo is drawn directly from the HealthPathways website. However, feature topics and pages are also developed to meet the identified needs of the community. All information is assessed using a set of health literacy standards to ensure that it is easy to understand.

Total pages		Number of feature topics relevant to rural areas		Amount Spent (\$)		Users per month	
2015	2020	2015	2020	2015	2020	2015	2020
272	486	0	13	5000	5000	52	755

Feature topics = Drought Support; Bushfire; Youth Mental health; Breast, Bowel, and Cervical Cancer Screening; Prostate Cancer Early Detection; Advance Care Planning; COVID-19 Testing; COVID-19 Information; COVID-19 Mental Health Supports; COVID-19 and Aboriginal Health; COVID-19 Disability Information.

Engagement with Stakeholders

Communication to all stakeholders includes a range of options appropriate to the type of engagement required, which includes inform, consult, involve, collaborate or empower. Communication channels include, but are not limited to website, fact sheets, newsletter distribution, email alerts, surveys, media releases, focus groups, committee meetings, public and industry forums and social media.

Disaster Response

Timeline of Disaster Response

Activity	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20
Drought Response					
Bushfire Mental Health Response					
COVID-19 Response					

DROUGHT

The 2019 drought significantly impacted rural communities within the HNECC PHN region, causing an increase in mental health issues. The PHN were tasked with addressing mental health concerns through the following initiatives:

Empowering Our Communities

The Empowering our Communities initiative provided funding to community led mental health, social and emotional wellbeing and suicide prevention initiatives that supported communities significantly impacted by drought conditions. This initiative was run in 2019 with a total of \$2 million being spent in rural communities of the PHN region.

Trusted Advocate Pilot

Ten key community members in Scone were provided with mental health training to allow them to provide peer support to their networks and guide them to appropriate mental health services during the drought. A total of \$50,000.00 was spent on this project for the Scone community.

BUSHFIRE

During the spring and summer of 2019, the Black Summer bushfires devastated rural communities in the New England and Mid Coast region of the PHN. A total of \$1.3 million was spent to address mental health concerns through the following initiatives:

Emergency Stress and Trauma Counselling

The PHN commissioned Beyond Blue to provide New Access wellbeing coaching services to bushfire affected communities.

Bushfire Trauma Response Coordinators

Two bushfire response coordinators were employed to promote mental health services available to bushfire affected communities as well as work with stakeholders on addressing mental health needs within those communities.

Expansion of Mental Health Services

The PHN have commissioned Catholic Care and HealthWISE to provide up to 10 free counselling sessions without needing a referral by a GP for bushfire affected people. Lifeline has also been commissioned to provide a peer support program to assist bushfire affected communities with accessing mental health support.

Bushfire Recovery Grants

The bushfire recovery grants provided funding to community led mental health, social and emotional wellbeing and suicide prevention initiatives that supported communities significantly impacted by the black summer bushfires. This initiative was first run in 2020 with a total of \$200,000 being spent in rural communities of the PHN region.

Additional Headspace Services

Headspace services were expanded in bushfire affected regions of the PHN to support youth to overcome trauma related to the black summer bushfires.

COVID-19

Subsequent impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic resulted in a significant reduction in caseload and incomes across general practice and allied health. This resulted in a threatened viability of practices as well as lack of visibility and coordination regarding capacity in primary care and aged care services. A budget of over \$1.5 million was dedicated to supporting HNECC PHN's stakeholders through the following activities:

COVID GP-led Respiratory Clinics

Establish and fund GP-led respiratory clinics and outreach clinics as appropriate across the HNECC PHN region to:

- Distribute Personal Protective Equipment to primary care providers as directed by Department-issued guidance
- Identify potential new sites for GP-led Respiratory Clinics
- Increased liaison with general practices, the Department of Health and third parties as appropriate.

Workforce Infection Control and Surge Capacity

Based on regional needs, the PHN will improve the capability and capacity of the primary care workforce in the region to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic by:

- Development and delivery of online training for health professionals
- Identifying options to address workforce shortages resulting from pandemic impact
- Development of new HealthPathways
- Developing education resources for health professionals
- Providing appropriate training to PHN staff
- Investing in research and development activities to inform strategies
- Supporting business continuity activities through the COVID-19 pandemic
- Undertaking external reviews of processes and workflows.

Digital & Telehealth Response

- Rapid Telehealth Strategy & Policy Paper developed to enable ongoing telehealth continuity, including policy advice to government, potential piloting, and practice support for clinicians.
- Over \$510,000.00 contributed towards telehealth grants to support General Practices in a rapid response to provide telehealth services.
- e-Referral, e-pathology, e-imaging; utilise available opportunities to rapidly implement improved and digital and electronic means to transfer care or diagnostics. For pathology and imaging, to move to a paperless system using SeNT as the vehicle.
- Remote Monitoring to enable GPs to support patients, who have been diagnosed with an illness, in regional and remote areas and provide ongoing health care support in their own home.

Urgent Care Network

Through consultation and codesign create a collaborative GP Network around Urgent Care that features:

- Available operating hours across the network as a whole
- Available urgent appointments each day
- Urgent care appointments are booked by patients online

- Patients can view next available appointments and cost
- For any appointments, GP handover to the patient's regular GP
- Electronic referral and access to pathology & imaging
- Upskilling and training for GP and nurses.

Residential Aged Care Facilities Support through Capacity Tracker

A cloud-based, near real-time tool called Capacity Tracker that is monitoring the status of PPE supplies, bed capacity, staffing and general practice support for residential aged care facilities in the region during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Appendix 1

SERVICES/INITIATIVES BY LGA

Armidale Regional

MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES IN PRIMARY CARE

- Joint Regional Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Plan
- Mental Health in Residential Aged Care Facilities
- Low Intensity Mental Health Services
- Transitional Care Packages
- Effective Primary Care Response to Suicide Prevention
- Attempted Suicide Follow Up and Support
- Community Based Suicide Prevention Activities
- Headspace- Occasions of Service & Youth Complex services.

PRIMARY CARE SERVICES

- Primary Health Care Nurse
- Priority Allied Health Services
- Small Town After Hours
- Aged Care Emergency (ACE) Program

ALCOHOL AND OTHER DRUGS SERVICES AND PROJECTS

- Drug and Alcohol Treatment Services
- Drug and Alcohol Treatment in Primary Care Grant
- HNECC Regional Drug and Alcohol Partnership Networks

SPECIAL PROJECTS AND PARTNERSHIPS

- Small Town Succession Planning
- Research Collaborations
- Community Cancer Screening Participation
- Aged Care Telehealth Project
- Aged Care Emergency (ACE)
- Refugee Resettlement in New England
- Ear, Nose and Throat Support
- Ambulance Alternative Care Pathway Program
- Rural Health Workforce Initiative
- UNE Virtual Health Network Partnership
- Hunter New England Alliance Partnerships

ABORIGINAL HEALTH INITIATIVES

- Mental Health Services
- Integrated Team Care
- Aboriginal Medical Services Grants
- Scholarships for Certificate IV in Alcohol and other Drugs and Certificate IV in Mental Health through TAFE NSW
- On Country Care

HEALTH PROFESSIONAL SUPPORT

- Primary Care Improvement Support
- Practice Incentives Program Quality Improvement Support

- Lumos Project
- E-Referral
- MyHealth Record and Secure Messaging
- Healthy Weight Initiative
- Psychiatry Advice Line for GPs
- Home Care Package Provider Portal
- Education
- HealthPathways
- Heart Ambassador Program
- Perinatal Work Group
- Health Provider Scholarships

DISASTER RESPONSE

- Empowering Our Communities grants
- Emergency Stress and Trauma Counselling
- Expansion of Mental Health Services
- Bushfire Recovery Grants

Cessnock

MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES IN PRIMARY CARE

- Joint Regional Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Plan
- Mental Health in Residential Aged Care Facilities
- Low Intensity Mental Health Services
- Transitional Care Packages
- Effective Primary Care Response to Suicide Prevention
- Attempted Suicide Follow Up and Support
- Community Based Suicide Prevention Activities
- Headspace- Occasions of Service & Youth Complex services.

ALCOHOL AND OTHER DRUGS SERVICES AND PROJECTS

- Drug and Alcohol Treatment Services
- Drug and Alcohol Treatment in Primary Care Grant
- HNECC Regional Drug and Alcohol Partnership Networks

CARE NAVIGATION

SPECIAL PROJECTS AND PARTNERSHIPS

- Community Cancer Screening Participation
- Aged Care Telehealth Project
- Ambulance Alternative Care Pathway Program
- Hunter New England Alliance Partnerships

ABORIGINAL HEALTH INITIATIVES

- Mental Health Services
- Integrated Team Care
- Aboriginal Medical Services Grants
- Scholarships for Certificate IV in Alcohol and other Drugs and Certificate IV in Mental Health through TAFE NSW
- Cessnock Walks Kawuma
- On Country Care

HEALTH PROFESSIONAL SUPPORT

- Primary Care Improvement Support
- Practice Incentives Program Quality Improvement Support
- Lumos Project
- E-Referral
- MyHealth Record and Secure Messaging
- Healthy Weight Initiative
- Psychiatry Advice Line for GPs
- Home Care Package Provider Portal
- Education events
- HealthPathways
- Health Provider Scholarships

DISASTER RESPONSE

- Emergency Stress and Trauma Counselling
- Expansion of Mental Health Services
- Bushfire Recovery Grants

Dungog

MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES IN PRIMARY CARE

- Joint Regional Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Plan
- Mental Health in Residential Aged Care Facilities
- Low Intensity Mental Health Services
- Transitional Care Packages
- Effective Primary Care Response to Suicide Prevention
- Attempted Suicide Follow Up and Support
- Community Based Suicide Prevention Activities
- Headspace- Occasions of Service & Youth Complex services.

PRIMARY CARE SERVICES

- Priority Allied Health Services
- Small Town After Hours
- Aged Care Emergency (ACE) Program

ALCOHOL AND OTHER DRUGS SERVICES AND PROJECTS

- Drug and Alcohol Treatment Services
- Drug and Alcohol Treatment in Primary Care Grant
- HNECC Regional Drug and Alcohol Partnership Networks

SPECIAL PROJECTS AND PARTNERSHIPS

- Small Town Succession Planning
- Research Collaborations
- Community Cancer Screening Participation
- Aged Care Telehealth Project
- Ambulance Alternative Care Pathway Program
- Rural Health Workforce Initiative
- UNE Virtual Health Network Partnership
- Hunter New England Alliance Partnerships

ABORIGINAL HEALTH INITIATIVES

- Mental Health Services

- Integrated Team Care
- Aboriginal Medical Services Grants
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- and Certificate IV in Mental Health through TAFE NSW

HEALTH PROFESSIONAL SUPPORT

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- Education
- HealthPathways
- Health Provider Scholarships

DISASTER RESPONSE

- Empowering Our Communities grants

Glen Innes Severn

MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES IN PRIMARY CARE

- Joint Regional Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Plan
- Mental Health in Residential Aged Care Facilities
- Low Intensity Mental Health Services
- Transitional Care Packages
- Effective Primary Care Response to Suicide Prevention
- Attempted Suicide Follow Up and Support
- Community Based Suicide Prevention Activities
- Headspace- Occasions of Service & Youth Complex services.

PRIMARY CARE SERVICES

- Primary Health Care Nurse
- Priority Allied Health Services

ALCOHOL AND OTHER DRUGS SERVICES AND PROJECTS

- Drug and Alcohol Treatment Services
- Drug and Alcohol Treatment in Primary Care Grant
- HNECC Regional Drug and Alcohol Partnership Networks

CARE NAVIGATION

SPECIAL PROJECTS AND PARTNERSHIPS

- The Resilience Project
- Rural Communities Project
- Community Cancer Screening Participation
- Aged Care Telehealth Project
- Rural Health Workforce Initiative
- UNE Virtual Health Network Partnership
- Hunter New England Alliance Partnerships

ABORIGINAL HEALTH INITIATIVES

- Mental Health Services
- Integrated Team Care
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HEALTH PROFESSIONAL SUPPORT

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- Healthy Weight Initiative
- Psychiatry Advice Line for GPs
- Home Care Package Provider Portal
- Education
- HealthPathways
- Health Provider Scholarships

DISASTER RESPONSE

- Empowering Our Communities grants
- Emergency Stress and Trauma Counselling
- Expansion of Mental Health Services
- Bushfire Recovery Grants

Gunnedah

MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES IN PRIMARY CARE

- Joint Regional Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Plan
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PRIMARY CARE SERVICES

- Primary Health Care Nurse
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- Small Town After Hours

ALCOHOL AND OTHER DRUGS SERVICES AND PROJECTS

- Drug and Alcohol Treatment Services
- Drug and Alcohol Treatment in Primary Care Grant
- HNECC Regional Drug and Alcohol Partnership Networks

CARE NAVIGATION

SPECIAL PROJECTS AND PARTNERSHIPS

- The Resilience Project
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- HealthPathways
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DISASTER RESPONSE

- Empowering Our Communities grants

Gwydir

MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES IN PRIMARY CARE

- Joint Regional Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Plan
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PRIMARY CARE SERVICES

- Primary Health Care Nurse
- Priority Allied Health Services
- Small Town After Hours

ALCOHOL AND OTHER DRUGS SERVICES AND PROJECTS

- Drug and Alcohol Treatment Services
- Drug and Alcohol Treatment in Primary Care Grant
- HNECC Regional Drug and Alcohol Partnership Networks

SPECIAL PROJECTS AND PARTNERSHIPS

- The Resilience Project

- Small Town Succession Planning
- Community Cancer Screening Participation
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DISASTER RESPONSE

- Empowering Our Communities grants

Inverell

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DISASTER RESPONSE

- Empowering Our Communities grants
- Bushfire Recovery Grants

Liverpool Plains

MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES IN PRIMARY CARE

- Joint Regional Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Plan
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PRIMARY CARE SERVICES

- Primary Health Care Nurse
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ALCOHOL AND OTHER DRUGS SERVICES AND PROJECTS

- Drug and Alcohol Treatment Services
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- HNECC Regional Drug and Alcohol Partnership Networks

CARE NAVIGATION

SPECIAL PROJECTS AND PARTNERSHIPS

- Community Cancer Screening Participation
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DISASTER RESPONSE

- Empowering Our Communities grants
- Emergency Stress and Trauma Counselling

Mid Coast

MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES IN PRIMARY CARE

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CARE NAVIGATION

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- Health Provider Scholarships

DISASTER RESPONSE

- Emergency Stress and Trauma Counselling
- Expansion of Mental Health Services
- Bushfire Recovery Grants
- COVID GP-led Respiratory Clinics

Moree Plains

MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES IN PRIMARY CARE

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- Health Provider Scholarships

DISASTER RESPONSE

- Empowering Our Communities grants

Muswellbrook

MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES IN PRIMARY CARE

- Joint Regional Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Plan
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- Priority Allied Health Services

ALCOHOL AND OTHER DRUGS SERVICES AND PROJECTS

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- HNECC Regional Drug and Alcohol Partnership Networks

CARE NAVIGATION

SPECIAL PROJECTS AND PARTNERSHIPS

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- Health Provider Scholarships

DISASTER RESPONSE

- Empowering Our Communities grants
- Trusted Advocate Pilot

Narrabri

MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES IN PRIMARY CARE

- Joint Regional Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Plan
- Mental Health in Residential Aged Care Facilities
- Low Intensity Mental Health Services

- Transitional Care Packages
- Effective Primary Care Response to Suicide Prevention
- Attempted Suicide Follow Up and Support
- Community Based Suicide Prevention Activities
- Headspace- Occasions of Service & Youth Complex services.

PRIMARY CARE SERVICES

- Primary Health Care Nurse
- Priority Allied Health Services
- Small Town After Hours

ALCOHOL AND OTHER DRUGS SERVICES AND PROJECTS

- Drug and Alcohol Treatment Services
- Drug and Alcohol Treatment in Primary Care Grant
- HNECC Regional Drug and Alcohol Partnership Networks

CARE NAVIGATION

SPECIAL PROJECTS AND PARTNERSHIPS

- Small Town Succession Planning
- Research Collaborations
- Community Cancer Screening Participation
- Aged Care Telehealth Project
- Rural Health Workforce Initiative
- UNE Virtual Health Network Partnership
- Hunter New England Alliance Partnerships

ABORIGINAL HEALTH INITIATIVES

- Mental Health Services
- Integrated Team Care
- Aboriginal Medical Services Grants
- Scholarships for Certificate IV in Alcohol and other Drugs and Certificate IV in Mental Health through TAFE NSW

HEALTH PROFESSIONAL SUPPORT

- Primary Care Improvement Support
- Practice Incentives Program Quality Improvement Support
- Lumos Project
- E-Referral
- MyHealth Record and Secure Messaging
- Healthy Weight Initiative
- Psychiatry Advice Line for GPs
- Home Care Package Provider Portal
- Education
- HealthPathways
- Health Provider Scholarships
- Wellness Workshops

DISASTER RESPONSE

- Empowering Our Communities grants

Singleton

MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES IN PRIMARY CARE

- Joint Regional Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Plan
- Mental Health in Residential Aged Care Facilities
- Low Intensity Mental Health Services
- Transitional Care Packages
- Effective Primary Care Response to Suicide Prevention
- Attempted Suicide Follow Up and Support
- Community Based Suicide Prevention Activities
- Headspace- Occasions of Service & Youth Complex services.

ALCOHOL AND OTHER DRUGS SERVICES AND PROJECTS

- Drug and Alcohol Treatment Services
- Drug and Alcohol Treatment in Primary Care Grant
- HNECC Regional Drug and Alcohol Partnership Networks

SPECIAL PROJECTS AND PARTNERSHIPS

- Community Cancer Screening Participation
- Aged Care Telehealth Project
- Ambulance Alternative Care Pathway Program
- Hunter New England Alliance Partnerships

ABORIGINAL HEALTH INITIATIVES

- Mental Health Services
- Integrated Team Care
- Aboriginal Medical Services Grants
- Scholarships for Certificate IV in Alcohol and other Drugs and Certificate IV in Mental Health through TAFE NSW
- On Country Care

HEALTH PROFESSIONAL SUPPORT

- Primary Care Improvement Support
- Practice Incentives Program Quality Improvement Support
- Lumos Project
- E-Referral
- MyHealth Record and Secure Messaging
- Healthy Weight Initiative
- Psychiatry Advice Line for GPs
- Home Care Package Provider Portal
- Education events
- HealthPathways
- Health Provider Scholarships

DISASTER RESPONSE

- Emergency Stress and Trauma Counselling
- Expansion of Mental Health Services
- Bushfire Recovery Grants

Tamworth Regional

MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES IN PRIMARY CARE

- Joint Regional Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Plan

- Mental Health in Residential Aged Care Facilities
- Low Intensity Mental Health Services
- Transitional Care Packages
- Effective Primary Care Response to Suicide Prevention
- Attempted Suicide Follow Up and Support
- Community Based Suicide Prevention Activities
- Headspace- Occasions of Service & Youth Complex services.

PRIMARY CARE SERVICES

- Primary Health Care Nurse
- Priority Allied Health Services
- Small Town After Hours

ALCOHOL AND OTHER DRUGS SERVICES AND PROJECTS

- Drug and Alcohol Treatment Services
- Drug and Alcohol Treatment in Primary Care Grant
- HNECC Regional Drug and Alcohol Partnership Networks

CARE NAVIGATION

SPECIAL PROJECTS AND PARTNERSHIPS

- Dolly Parton Imagination Library – Partnership
- Small Town Succession Planning
- Research Collaborations
- Community Cancer Screening Participation
- Aged Care Telehealth Project
- Rural Health Workforce Initiative
- UNE Virtual Health Network Partnership
- Hunter New England Alliance Partnerships

ABORIGINAL HEALTH INITIATIVES

- Mental Health Services
- Integrated Team Care
- Aboriginal Medical Services Grants
- Scholarships for Certificate IV in Alcohol and other Drugs
- and Certificate IV in Mental Health through TAFE NSW

HEALTH PROFESSIONAL SUPPORT

- Primary Care Improvement Support
- Practice Incentives Program Quality Improvement Support
- Lumos Project
- E-Referral
- MyHealth Record and Secure Messaging
- Healthy Weight Initiative
- Psychiatry Advice Line for GPs
- Home Care Package Provider Portal
- Education
- HealthPathways
- Heart Ambassador Program
- Perinatal Work Group
- Health Provider Scholarships

DISASTER RESPONSE

- Empowering Our Communities grants
- COVID GP-led Respiratory Clinics

Tenterfield

MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES IN PRIMARY CARE

- Joint Regional Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Plan
- Mental Health in Residential Aged Care Facilities
- Low Intensity Mental Health Services
- Transitional Care Packages
- Effective Primary Care Response to Suicide Prevention
- Attempted Suicide Follow Up and Support
- Community Based Suicide Prevention Activities
- Headspace- Occasions of Service & Youth Complex services.

PRIMARY CARE SERVICES

- Primary Health Care Nurse
- Priority Allied Health Services
- Small Town After Hours
- Aged Care Emergency (ACE) Program

ALCOHOL AND OTHER DRUGS SERVICES AND PROJECTS

- Drug and Alcohol Treatment Services
- Drug and Alcohol Treatment in Primary Care Grant
- HNECC Regional Drug and Alcohol Partnership Networks

SPECIAL PROJECTS AND PARTNERSHIPS

- The Resilience Project
- Rural Communities Project
- Small Town Succession Planning
- Research Collaborations
- Community Cancer Screening Participation
- Aged Care Telehealth Project
- Ambulance Alternative Care Pathway Program
- Rural Health Workforce Initiative
- UNE Virtual Health Network Partnership
- Hunter New England Alliance Partnerships

ABORIGINAL HEALTH INITIATIVES

- Mental Health Services
- Integrated Team Care
- Aboriginal Medical Services Grants
- Scholarships for Certificate IV in Alcohol and other Drugs and Certificate IV in Mental Health through TAFE NSW
- On Country Care

HEALTH PROFESSIONAL SUPPORT

- Primary Care Improvement Support
- Practice Incentives Program Quality Improvement Support
- Lumos Project
- E-Referral

- MyHealth Record and Secure Messaging
- Healthy Weight Initiative
- Psychiatry Advice Line for GPs
- Home Care Package Provider Portal
- Education
- HealthPathways
- Health Provider Scholarships

DISASTER RESPONSE

- Empowering Our Communities grants
- Emergency Stress and Trauma Counselling
- Expansion of Mental Health Services
- Bushfire Recovery Grants

Upper Hunter Shire

MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES IN PRIMARY CARE

- Joint Regional Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Plan
- Mental Health in Residential Aged Care Facilities
- Low Intensity Mental Health Services
- Transitional Care Packages
- Effective Primary Care Response to Suicide Prevention
- Attempted Suicide Follow Up and Support
- Community Based Suicide Prevention Activities
- Headspace- Occasions of Service & Youth Complex services.

PRIMARY CARE SERVICES

- Primary Health Care Nurse
- Priority Allied Health Services
- Small Town After Hours
- GP After Hours Program

ALCOHOL AND OTHER DRUGS SERVICES AND PROJECTS

- Drug and Alcohol Treatment Services
- Drug and Alcohol Treatment in Primary Care Grant
- HNECC Regional Drug and Alcohol Partnership Networks

SPECIAL PROJECTS AND PARTNERSHIPS

- Community Cancer Screening Participation
- Aged Care Telehealth Project
- Rural Health Workforce Initiative
- UNE Virtual Health Network Partnership
- Hunter New England Alliance Partnerships

ABORIGINAL HEALTH INITIATIVES

- Mental Health Services
- Integrated Team Care
- Aboriginal Medical Services Grants
- Scholarships for Certificate IV in Alcohol and other Drugs
- and Certificate IV in Mental Health through TAFE NSW

HEALTH PROFESSIONAL SUPPORT

- Primary Care Improvement Support
- Practice Incentives Program Quality Improvement Support
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- MyHealth Record and Secure Messaging
- Healthy Weight Initiative
- Psychiatry Advice Line for GPs
- Home Care Package Provider Portal
- Education
- HealthPathways
- Health Provider Scholarships

DISASTER RESPONSE

- Empowering Our Communities grants
- Trusted Advocate Pilot
- Emergency Stress and Trauma Counselling
- Expansion of Mental Health Services
- Bushfire Recovery Grants
- COVID GP-led Respiratory Clinics

Uralla

MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES IN PRIMARY CARE

- Joint Regional Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Plan
- Mental Health in Residential Aged Care Facilities
- Low Intensity Mental Health Services
- Transitional Care Packages
- Effective Primary Care Response to Suicide Prevention
- Attempted Suicide Follow Up and Support
- Community Based Suicide Prevention Activities
- Headspace- Occasions of Service & Youth Complex services.

PRIMARY CARE SERVICES

- Primary Health Care Nurse
- Priority Allied Health Services
- Small Town After Hours
- Aged Care Emergency (ACE) Program

ALCOHOL AND OTHER DRUGS SERVICES AND PROJECTS

- Drug and Alcohol Treatment Services
- Drug and Alcohol Treatment in Primary Care Grant
- HNECC Regional Drug and Alcohol Partnership Networks

CARE NAVIGATION

SPECIAL PROJECTS AND PARTNERSHIPS

- Small Town Succession Planning
- Research Collaborations
- Community Cancer Screening Participation
- Aged Care Telehealth Project
- Aged Care Emergency (ACE)

- Ambulance Alternative Care Pathway Program
- Rural Health Workforce Initiative
- UNE Virtual Health Network Partnership
- Hunter New England Alliance Partnerships

ABORIGINAL HEALTH INITIATIVES

- Mental Health Services
- Integrated Team Care
- Aboriginal Medical Services Grants
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- Healthy Weight Initiative
- Psychiatry Advice Line for GPs
- Home Care Package Provider Portal
- Education
- HealthPathways
- Health Provider Scholarships

DISASTER RESPONSE

- Empowering Our Communities grants

Walcha

MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES IN PRIMARY CARE

- Joint Regional Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Plan
- Mental Health in Residential Aged Care Facilities
- Low Intensity Mental Health Services
- Transitional Care Packages
- Effective Primary Care Response to Suicide Prevention
- Attempted Suicide Follow Up and Support
- Community Based Suicide Prevention Activities
- Headspace- Occasions of Service & Youth Complex services.

PRIMARY CARE SERVICES

- Primary Health Care Nurse
- Priority Allied Health Services

ALCOHOL AND OTHER DRUGS SERVICES AND PROJECTS

- Drug and Alcohol Treatment Services
- Drug and Alcohol Treatment in Primary Care Grant
- HNECC Regional Drug and Alcohol Partnership Networks

CARE NAVIGATION

SPECIAL PROJECTS AND PARTNERSHIPS

- Community Cancer Screening Participation

- Aged Care Telehealth Project
- Rural Health Workforce Initiative
- UNE Virtual Health Network Partnership
- Hunter New England Alliance Partnerships

ABORIGINAL HEALTH INITIATIVES

- Mental Health Services
- Integrated Team Care
- Aboriginal Medical Services Grants
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- Healthy Weight Initiative
- Psychiatry Advice Line for GPs
- Home Care Package Provider Portal
- Education
- HealthPathways
- Health Provider Scholarships

DISASTER RESPONSE

- Empowering Our Communities grants
- Emergency Stress and Trauma Counselling
- Expansion of Mental Health Services
- Bushfire Recovery Grants

Appendix 2

SERVICES BY 2015 IDENTIFIED HEALTH NEEDS

Health Literacy

- Care Navigation
- Patientinfo

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health

- Mental Health Services
- Integrated Team Care
- Aboriginal Medical Services Grants
- Scholarships for Certificate IV in Alcohol and other Drugs and Certificate IV in Mental Health through TAFE NSW

Health Needs of an aged and ageing population

- Aged Care Telehealth Project
- Aged Care Emergency (ACE)

Culturally and Linguistically Diverse populations

- Refugee Resettlement in New England

Child and maternal health

- Perinatal Work Group
- Dolly Parton Imagination Library

Youth Health

- Headspace- Occasions of Service & Youth Complex services.

Rural Health

- Small Town Succession Planning
- Research Collaborations
- Community Cancer Screening Participation
- Ear, Nose and Throat Support
- Ambulance Alternative Care Pathway Program
- Rural Health Workforce Initiative
- UNE Virtual Health Network Partnership
- Hunter New England Alliance Partnerships
- Primary Health Care Nurse
- Priority Allied Health Services
- Small Town After Hours
- Primary Care Improvement Support

- Practice Incentives Program Quality Improvement Support
- Lumos Project
- E-Referral
- MyHealth Record and Secure Messaging
- Psychiatry Advice Line for GPs
- Home Care Package Provider Portal
- Education
- HealthPathways
- Health Provider Scholarships
- Empowering Our Communities grants
- Emergency Stress and Trauma Counselling
- Bushfire Recovery Grants

Dementia

- New England Dementia Partnership (NEDP)

Overweight and obesity

- Healthy Weight Initiative

Health risk behaviours

- Drug and Alcohol Treatment Services
- Drug and Alcohol Treatment in Primary Care Grant
- HNECC Regional Drug and Alcohol Partnership Networks

Chronic disease

- Heart Ambassador Program

Mental Health

- Joint Regional Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Plan
- Mental Health in Residential Aged Care Facilities
- Low Intensity Mental Health Services
- Transitional Care Packages
- Effective Primary Care Response to Suicide Prevention
- Attempted Suicide Follow Up and Support
- Community Based Suicide Prevention Activities
- Headspace- Occasions of Service & Youth Complex services.

Alcohol and other drug misuse

- Drug and Alcohol Treatment Services
- Drug and Alcohol Treatment in Primary Care Grant
- HNECC Regional Drug and Alcohol Partnership Networks

 **PRIMARY
HEALTH
NETWORK**

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AND CENTRAL COAST

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