Hunter PRIMARYCARE

Annual Report 2022

ABOUT THIS REPORT

This report is for the period 1 July 2021 to 30 June 2022. Financial data has been audited by PKF, Newcastle NSW 2300. This report is available to download from hunterprimarycare.com.au.

Hunter Primary Care is committed to embracing diversity and eliminating all forms of discrimination in the provision of health services. We welcome all people of diverse ethnicity, lifestyle choice, faith, sexual orientation and gender identity.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander readers are warned that the following report may contain images of deceased persons which may cause sadness or distress.

HUNTER PRIMARY CARE ACKNOWLEDGES ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER PEOPLE AS THE FIRST PEOPLES OF OUR REGION AND WE PAY OUR RESPECTS TO THEIR ELDERS PAST AND PRESENT WITH WHOM WE SHARE THIS GREAT COUNTRY.

Artwork: Saretta Fielding

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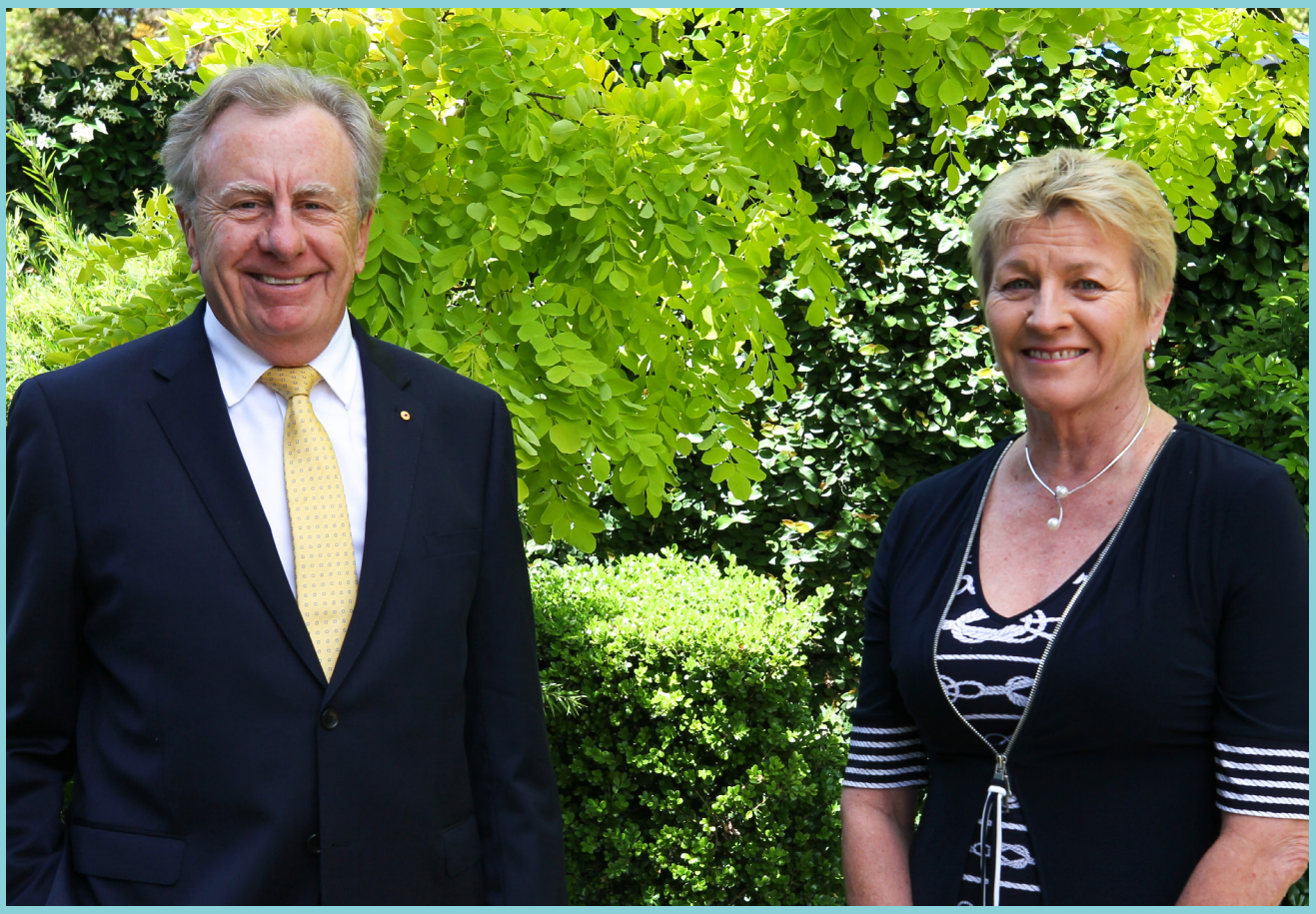
A MESSAGE FROM OUR CHAIR AND CEO



For the last two years now, we have reflected on the impact from the pandemic on our business and on our communities and expressed the hope that we would soon see a return to some form of normality. That has happened to an extent this year with the lifting of many of the restrictions and lockdowns now seeming to be a thing of the past. However, just this week we have seen a spike in infections locally but hopefully that can be kept under control and we don't see another surge in the demands on our already stretched health system.

Despite these challenges, the Hunter Primary Care team continued to build on the foundations set during the COVID-19 pandemic and modify our service delivery in line with ever-changing demands and new technologies. The team navigated mandatory lockdowns, mask wearing and vaccinations for health workers, as well as natural disasters, a change in the federal government, and a transition to a hybrid workplace, where staff were given the flexibility to work from home.

These events have all had a major effect on Hunter Primary Care but more importantly, our people and our clients. The health and safety of both is our number one priority and navigating these ongoing changes in Public Health Orders and community demand has certainly been challenging. We are proud to say we have pulled together as a team and pushed through. We may be a little biased, but we think these challenges have made our organisation better than ever.

There have been so many events and achievements throughout the year that we are proud of, we wouldn't even know where to begin… so we will touch on just some of the major successes.

In July 2021, to coincide with NAIDOC Week, Hunter Primary Care launched an exciting health awareness campaign across social media sites Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, Snapchat and YouTube, titled 'Strong Mob'. The campaign was directed at Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander youth to encourage them to visit a clinic once a year for a 715 health check. The campaign featured a series of videos and posters of four key Aboriginal influencers, Kobie Dee, BIRDZ, Naomi Wenitong and Dr Joel Wenitong, who are well-established in the Australian Aboriginal hip-hop music scene. These influencers shared their personal stories in regard to the importance of their health and wellbeing, and their connection to country, culture and community.

In August 2021, we launched our Strategic Plan 2025, which will enable Hunter Primary Care to continue to sustainably achieve greater health and social outcomes in the communities we serve. The Plan provides the framework for us to take the next steps in our targeted business growth and increase our service provision and reach to assist more communities, in both regional and remote areas. The Plan encompasses three strategic domains that are mutually reinforcing in a 'virtuous cycle' of Healthy Clients, Strong Business, and an Engaged Workforce.

Hunter Primary Care was also successful in August 2021 in being selected for the new Participant Engagement Panel for the National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA), which operates the NDIS. As part of this role, we will assist the NDIA to capture a diverse range of views to inform NDIS policy development and service improvement. This will help give a voice to participants who in the past may not have been heard. This aligned well with our business strategy to expand NDIS services, and throughout the year we introduced NDIS Positive Behavior Support services, and significantly grew our NDIS Allied Health capacity by recruiting additional Dietitians, Occupational Therapists, Exercise Physiologists and Social Workers.

In November 2021, Hunter Primary Care was inducted into the Work Integrated Learning Hall of Fame as part of the University of Newcastle's 2021 Employability Excellence Awards thanks to our Psychology Services Student Placement Program. These Awards celebrate the professional learning experiences and partnerships that prepare students for success. Chosen from a competitive field, the award is in recognition of our contribution to the University of Newcastle, the professional preparation of students past and present, and growing and strengthening the region in which their campuses are located.

During December, our Care Coordination and Supplementary Services team was also recognised by NSW Health as leaders in virtual care for their Shared Health Appointments (SHA) program. The program provides our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Care Coordination clients with a series of online consultations in a supportive group setting where all involved can listen, interact, and learn from each other. The team was also awarded the 'Supporting Patients Through Technology' Award at the Hunter New England Central Coast Primary Health Network (PHN) Quality and Innovation Awards for this program, which is a fantastic achievement.

In February 2022, Hunter Primary Care's Stretch Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) was endorsed by Reconciliation Australia. Our RAP journey to date has seen the organisation progress from a Reflect RAP which scopes capacity for reconciliation and creates a vision, to an Innovate RAP which outlines actions and initiatives for achieving our vision. We are now at the third stage of our journey with a Stretch RAP that will embed reconciliation into our organisation.

It has been a busy year internally for Hunter Primary Care, with many exciting initiatives taking place. In March 2022, a Mental Health and Wellbeing Initiative was launched to ensure that we have a structured and strategic approach towards a mentally healthy organisational culture. The focus of this strategy is to not only protect our employees against poor mental health but works to promote good mental health; creating an environment where our people enjoy coming to work and find the experience a positive one. Our second annual Innovation Challenge program was executed with two successful submissions including Dignity and Choice Training in Aged Care, where Residential Aged Care Facility staff were provided training by our Psychology team to support residents who choose to engage in alcohol or smoking. The second submission saw our headspace Newcastle team develop a series of wellbeing modules targeted at young people within a sporting environment, which will be delivered by coaches during training sessions. Hunter Primary Care also continued its membership with the ACON Institute's Pride in Health and Wellbeing program, in order to better understand how we can further contribute to the wellbeing of LGBTQ+ people.

These are all exciting steps forward for Hunter Primary Care, as we grow and plan.

One of our core programs is GP Access which accounts for about 28 percent of our business. It is part of our organisation's DNA. Faced with funding cutbacks and the threat of further cutbacks over the next five years, in December 2021, Hunter Primary Care made the difficult decision to close the Mater Hospital GP Access clinic and reduce operating hours at our Belmont and Toronto clinics. This necessary decision was due to a reduction in support funding, together with the freeze in MBS revenue. The Board and Executive team did everything within their power to lobby the relevant Ministers, the PHN and the Local Health District to reinstate funding. This also became an issue in the lead up to the 2022 Federal election. As we now know there was significant funding for this service included in the October 2022 Federal budget. We now need to wait for full details of this additional funding from the PHN to determine the extent to which we can ramp back up the level of services we were able to provide up until last Christmas.

Stay safe, stay well.

Richard Anicich AM
Chair

Brenda Ryan
Chief Executive Officer

WHO ARE WE?

Vision

Good health and wellbeing for all.

Mission

To deliver integrated health and wellness services that help each person be their best.

Our unique value proposition

By listening to our clients, we design and deliver holistic, integrated health and wellbeing services with care and support. We invest in our people, service innovation and systems to meet the needs of diverse communities.

How we serve

Listen

We understand everyone's health care journey is different.

Care

We deliver quality primary health, mental health and after hours care in partnership with our network of health professionals.

Connect

We connect clients with services and supports to give them the skills, choice, and control to manage their physical and mental wellbeing.

OUR STRATEGY

We design, deliver and continuously improve coordinated care in response to the needs and expectations of our clients.

- Listen and engage
- Easy access
- Inclusive
- Continuous improvement

HEALTHIER CLIENTS

STRONG BUSINESS

Our strong business fundamentals ensure we can continue to serve our community in the long term.

- Sustainable growth
- Investment in systems
- Working in partnership

ENGAGED WORKFORCE

We invest in creating a culture where our people are empowered, engaged and focused on the client.

- High performing staff
- Embrace learning
- Innovation mindset

OUR SERVICES

ABORIGINAL & TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER AFTERCARE SERVICE

Supports Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander individuals who have recently experienced a suicidal crisis or attempted suicide for up to three months, based on the person's needs.

ABORIGINAL & TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER CARE COORDINATION & SUPPLEMENTARY SERVICES (CCSS)

Our Care Coordinators ease the stress and confusion that can come with having a long term illness or chronic disease, so that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander individuals can manage their health and wellness.

ABORIGINAL & TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER HEALTH WORKER SERVICE

Links Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander individuals with culturally appropriate support to access the health, community and social services they need.

ABORIGINAL & TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER MENTAL HEALTH CARE COORDINATION (YUDHILIDIN)

Provides culturally safe psychosocial support and clinical support as well as targeted suicide prevention to improve the wellbeing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander individuals experiencing mental ill-health.

ABORIGINAL & TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER PSYCHOLOGY SERVICES (YARN)

Our skilled and experienced clinicians provide culturally safe, sensitive and responsive psychology services for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander individuals.

AGED CARE EMERGENCY SERVICE (ACE)

Provides triage, consultancy, clinical support, and advice for Residential Aged Care Facility (RACF) staff, so that care for residents can be delivered in the facility where appropriate, and transfer to hospital is avoided.

CLINICAL CARE COORDINATION

Provides adults with complex and enduring mental health and psychosocial needs support for up to 12 months, so they can better manage their health to stay well and out of hospital.

COMMONWEALTH PSYCHOSOCIAL SUPPORT (CPS) SERVICE

Assists people with severe mental illness, who have reduced psychosocial function and are not eligible for assistance through the NDIS, to build daily living skills and connect with services based on their goals.

GP ACCESS AFTER HOURS

Provides comprehensive and quality after-hours medical care and advice to people of Newcastle, Lake Macquarie, Maitland and surrounding areas over the phone or at one of our four co-located clinics.

HEADSPACE NEWCASTLE

Is a place where young people, aged 12-25, and their families can come and talk to people who are specially trained to help young people deal with a range of mental health issues.

IT SERVICES

Provides IT support and services to general practices, allied health, specialists and RACFs, and has specialised expertise in primary health care information management and technology systems.

NDIS ALLIED HEALTH

Uses evidence-based practices to prevent, diagnose and treat various conditions and illnesses by providing therapeutic supports to participants, as well as assessments and reports that inform access and planning decisions for their NDIS plan.

NDIS POSITIVE BEHAVIOUR SUPPORT

Is a strengths based, person-centred approach to support behaviour change to reduce or eliminate behaviours of concern. Focuses on improving quality of life, teaching adaptive and functional skills, and reducing or eliminating restrictive practices where possible.

NDIS SPECIALIST SUPPORT COORDINATION

Similar to Support Coordination, however concentrates primarily on a particular area of expertise, including Mental Health Specialists, Occupational Therapists, Dietitians and Social Workers, as well as providing support to participants with complex circumstances.

NDIS SUPPORT COORDINATION

Is a level of support for NDIS participants to establish contact with providers and organise routines and appointments, understand their NDIS plan, and assist them to achieve their NDIS plan goals.

MINDREACH LOW-INTENSITY MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

Is a free, low-intensity psychological service provided by telehealth, which helps to build skills to manage mild to moderate mental health concerns, such as anxiety and depression, as well as alcohol or drug use.

PRIORITY ALLIED HEALTH SERVICE

Delivers primary and allied health services in rural locations in the Hunter region to pensioners, Health Care Card holders or low-income earners who would not otherwise be able to access a local service.

PSYCHOLOGY SERVICES

Provides bulk billed psychological counselling for people with common mental health conditions and substance use problems. Our services include general psychology, child and family, perinatal, aged care, drug and alcohol counselling.

THE WAY BACK SUPPORT SERVICE

Developed by Beyond Blue and is designed to support people who have recently experienced a suicidal crisis or attempted suicide. The Way Back provides clients with non-clinical, practical support in the community for up to three months.

Find out more about our services at hunterprimarycare.com.au

OUR REGION

The Hunter Primary Care region is located on the NSW east coast and services the following areas:

Newcastle, Lake Macquarie, Port Stephens, Maitland, Cessnock, Singleton, Muswellbrook, Upper Hunter, Dungog, Great Lakes, Gloucester, Greater Taree, Wyong, Tamworth and Armidale.

Our region covers the traditional Aboriginal nations of Anaiwan, Awabakal, Biripi, Darkinjung, Gaewegal, Kamilaroi, Wonaruah and Worimi peoples.

OUR YEAR IN NUMBERS

89%

Average client satisfaction score for Care Coordination services

468

Hunter Primary Care staff members (including GPs working for the GP Access service)

4.5/5

Average client satisfaction score for Psychology Services

62,343

Calls taken by GP Access

29,803

Psychology Services sessions provided

712

NDIS clients supported

4,924

hours of support provided through the CPS program

5,845

headspace Newcastle occasions of service

DIVERSITY & INCLUSION

Hunter Primary Care is committed to embracing diversity and eliminating all forms of discrimination in the provision of health services. We welcome all people of diverse ethnicity, lifestyle choice, faith, sexual orientation, gender identity and those who have a lived experience with disability.

Through a range of inclusion initiatives, we work tirelessly to improve Hunter Primary Care as an inclusive and culturally-safe organisation, both for staff and for the community, providing high quality health care services where all people are treated equally and with respect.

Our objective is to ensure that our organisation is welcoming and accepting of all people in the community, every time they visit one of our locations or interact with us in any way.

OUR RECONCILIATION ACTION PLAN

Hunter Primary Care is committed to reconciliation and building strong, sustainable and mutually respectful relationships between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and other Australians. Hunter Primary Care recognises and understands that reconciliation is the journey that the organisation must take to realise a future where Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and other Australians stand together as equals. By focusing on improving relationships, enhancing respect and promoting opportunities, Hunter Primary Care is working to create a reconciled and equitable Australia.

Our RAP journey to date has seen the organisation progress from a Reflect RAP which scopes capacity for reconciliation and creates a vision, to an Innovate RAP which outlines actions and initiatives for achieving our vision. We are now at the third stage of our journey with a Stretch RAP 2025 that embeds reconciliation into our organisation, which was endorsed by Reconciliation Australia in February 2022.

Some of our key achievements throughout the 2021-2022 year include:

Strong Mob Healthy Community

To coincide with NAIDOC Week in 2021, Hunter Primary Care launched the 'Strong Mob' campaign, which featured a series of videos and posters of four key Aboriginal influencers, Kobie Dee, BIRDZ, Naomi Wenitong and Dr Joel Wenitong (The Last Kinection), who are well-established in the Australian Aboriginal hip-hop music scene. These influencers shared their personal stories in regard to the importance of their health and wellbeing and their connection to country, culture and community. The campaign ran across social media sites Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, Snapchat and YouTube, receiving over 2 million advertisement impressions, over 18, 000 visits to the website and over 877, 000 video views.

headspace Winged Mural

The team at headspace Newcastle unveiled their long-awaited Winged Mural adorning the walls of the waiting room. The mural was created by young people, for young people. The wings are scaled eagle wings which is of significance to the traditional owners of the land on which headspace Newcastle stands, the Awabakal people. The aim of the mural was to create a welcoming and safe space for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander youth attending our service. 64 students from both Newcastle High School and Callaghan College Waratah contributed to the mural. Watch the unveiling of the mural here.

Bush Tucker Program

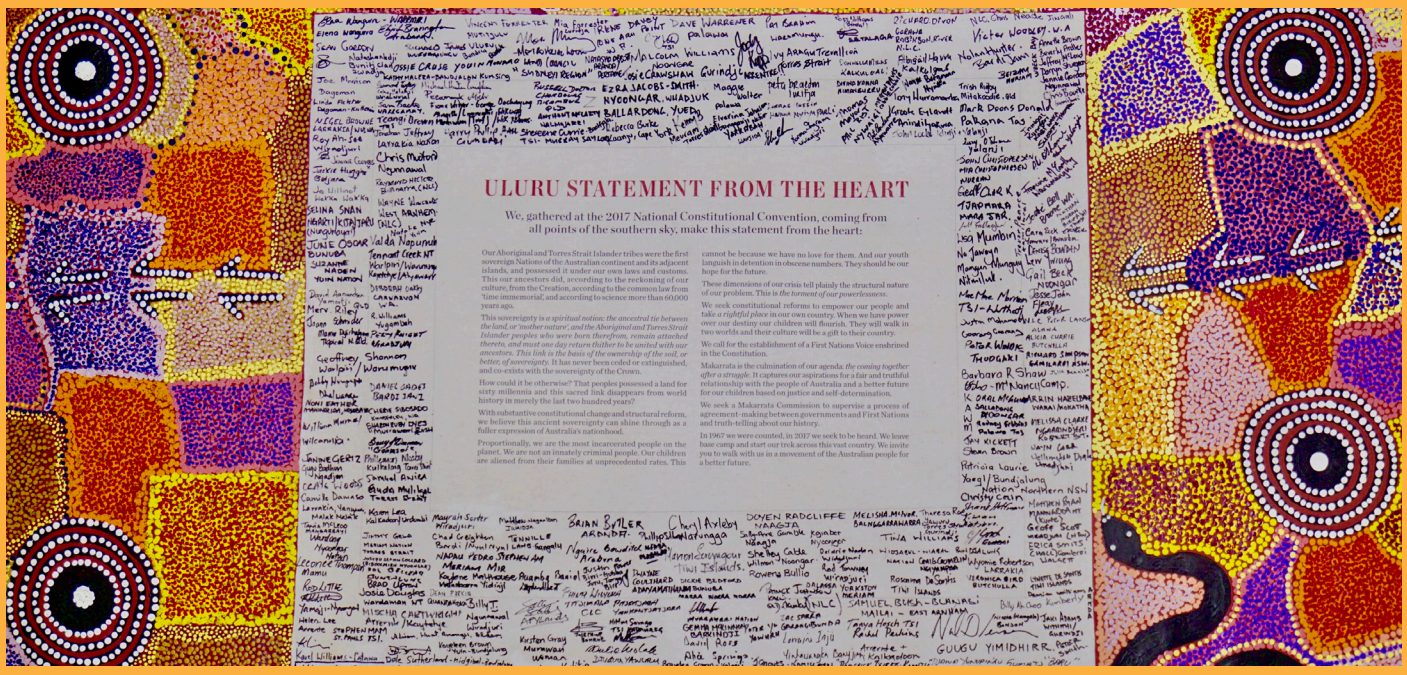
After delivering the Yantiin Kalabara 12 Ways to a Healthier You program to five local schools in early 2021 and taking out the 'Closing the Gap' Award at the 2021 Hunter New England Central Coast Primary Health Network (PHN) Primary Care Quality & Innovation Awards, our Care Coordination & Supplementary Services (CCSS) continued to deliver a spin-off Bush Tucker Program to local schools in 2022. They attended both Karuah Public School and Merewether Public School to have a yarn with students, who were able to touch and taste some native cooking ingredients including wattle, finger lime, lemon myrtle, bush tomato and even witchetty grubs! After learning about native cooking ingredients everyone had a great time preparing some tasty slow cooked kangaroo wraps for lunch.

National Reconciliation Week

We had the pleasure of hosting two internal National Reconciliation Week events at both Hunter Primary Care head office in Warabrook and headspace Newcastle in May 2022. We were privileged to have local Indigenous Elder Edward Smith deliver an Acknowledgment of Country, followed by an educational presentation on Australian native ingredients from Oz Tukka. Attendees were invited to try as they learnt and the looks on their faces were priceless. The events finished with a catered lunch featuring traditional native ingredients like lemon myrtle and warrigal greens. Inspired by this year's theme to 'Be Brave. Make Change' we hope we have encouraged people to introduce native ingredients into their everyday meals.

Uluru Statement from the Heart

Hunter Primary Care made a public statement to endorse the Uluru Statement from the Heart, which calls for a 'First Nations Voice to Parliament' and the establishment of the 'Makarrata Commission' to supervise a process of 'agreement-making' and 'truth-telling' between governments and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. These reforms are: Voice, Treaty, Truth.



PRIDE IN HEALTH + WELLBEING MEMBERSHIP

Hunter Primary Care continued our Pride in Health + Wellbeing program membership throughout the year to understand how we can further contribute to the wellbeing of LGBTQ+ people through the ongoing provision of safe and inclusive services.

We are a proud member of the ACON Institute's 'Welcome Here' project that demonstrates to the LGBTQ+ community that our organisation is safe, inclusive and welcoming to all people in the community. By displaying the 'Welcome Here' sticker on the front door of all of our business locations, we publicly embrace the LGBTQ+ community while also actively promoting our organisation as a place that is free from judgement, prejudice and discrimination.

Throughout the year, the teams worked hard to create safe and inclusive spaces for our LGBTQ+ clients and the community. Some initiatives we have implemented throughout the year include providing staff with access to regular PRIDE training with the ACON Institute, ensuring gender inclusivity in client data collection, displaying inclusive signage at our offices, and providing staff the option to include their pronoun in their email signatures.

ADVISORY & REFERENCE GROUPS

Hunter Primary Care recognises the importance of consumer and family/carer participation in the development, implementation and evaluation of responsive and innovative programs for the community.

As such, we have developed a number of Advisory & Reference Groups which allow us to enhance our client's recovery and wellbeing, and leads to improved service quality and development through the expression of collective experience and expertise.

These Groups meet with Hunter Primary Care and headspace Newcastle staff a minimum of 4-6 times per year, and include:

- Lived Experience Advisory Group for our Mental Health Care Coordination services
- Youth Reference Group for headspace Newcastle
- Family & Friends Reference Group for headspace Newcastle
- As You Are LGBTQ+ for headspace Newcastle

INNOVATION

ANNUAL INNOVATION CHALLENGE

Hunter Primary Care is committed to innovation. We encourage our staff to think outside the box, contribute ideas, and explore opportunities to ensure we are not only keeping pace but leading the way in providing good health and wellbeing for all. As an organisation, we are working to build and support a culture of innovation to help us evolve and grow. Innovation focuses on new ways of doing things; not simply continuous improvement of our current practices or systems. We might establish a new service, product or process; test using tools, or explore new technologies.

In 2021 we held our annual Innovation Challenge to encourage staff to address a specific issue within our business and service delivery environment. The theme was what new services and supports can Hunter Primary Care offer to the community, and how could our current services be changed or expanded to increase community wellbeing.

The Challenge proved to be an outstanding success, with the following finalists' ideas selected for further development and implementation:

OneTeam Modules

OneTeam is a series of wellbeing modules targeted at young people within a sporting environment, created by the team at headspace Newcastle. The modules are designed to be delivered by coaches during training sessions and focus on a variety of wellbeing themes.

Dignity & Choice Training

Our Aged Care Psychology Services team delivered training to staff at Residential Aged Care Facilities (RACF), which focused on the challenges staff face in supporting residents who choose to engage in potentially risky behaviours, such as consuming alcohol or smoking. The aim of the training was to increase staff confidence to manage duty of care whilst supporting their residents to exercise informed choice in various aspects of their lives, with a particular focus on alcohol consumption.

Animal Assisted Therapy

Our Aged Care Psychology Services team undertook training to provide Animal Assisted Therapy in RACFs. The program is provided through a joint delivery of care by a Delta Handler, Accredited Animal and Psychology Clinician. The program serves as a low to moderate intervention assisting with step up/ step down of psychological interventions.

SHARED HEALTH APPOINTMENTS

Our Care Coordination & Supplementary Services team was recognised by the NSW Health Strategic Reform and Planning Branch for their Shared Health Appointments and Social Outreach Worker role.

Known to participants as 'Lifestyle Support Groups', Shared Health Appointments are a series of consecutive online consultations in a supportive group setting where all involved can listen, interact, and learn from each other. Participants have access to:

- An Exercise Physiologist to support them to be more active
- A Dietitian who can help them make positive food choices and teach healthy eating and cooking skills
- Aboriginal Health Workers to support cultural wellbeing and safety
- Occupational Therapists who will help develop and maintain meaningful activities
- Registered Nurses to help participants learn more about their health, and support them to achieve their health and wellbeing goals; and
- A Social Outreach Worker to provide support for those experiencing social isolation.

A video animation case study was created to tell the story of a participant and the positive outcomes she has experienced from the group, which can be viewed on the NSW Health website here.

The team was also successful in being awarded the 'Supporting Patients Through Technology' Award at the 2022 Hunter New England Central Coast Primary Health Network Quality & Innovation Awards.

EXPANDING NDIS SERVICES

In response to increased demand in the community for NDIS services, Hunter Primary Care introduced NDIS Positive Behaviour Support services, and significantly grew our NDIS Allied Health capacity by recruiting additional Dietitians, Occupational Therapists, Exercise Physiologists and Social Workers. A new NDIS advertising campaign across TV, radio, social media advertising, YouTube and online display advertising was also introduced.

The new campaign presented the concept of – 'Choice'. The rationale behind this was to make an emotional connection with the market as we understand that every day, in every situation we are overwhelmed by the amount of choice we have. Particularly when it comes to the NDIS. Watch the TV commercial here.

E-MENTAL HEALTH PROGRAM PILOT

In response to the increased need to improve the access, flexibility, and cost effectiveness in mental health service delivery, and in a bid to reduce waitlists for our services, our Psychology Services team developed an e-Mental Health (Low Intensity Cognitive Behaviour Therapy Interventions) pilot program. The delivery of e-Mental Health services has been identified strongly as one of the key recommendations from the recent National Mental Health Commission reports.

The program assists clients to build skills to manage mental health concerns, such as anxiety and depression, as well as drug and alcohol use, and has two main features:

1. Patients are assessed to determine where they initially access care along the treatment continuum.
2. Patients can move within the 'steps' of care based on clinical need or other requirements.

The service is delivered over the telephone, video conference, and web-based support.

HEADSPACE WORK & STUDY PROGRAM

As part of their holistic approach to youth mental health, headspace Newcastle has been working with young people to build employability skills and develop their work readiness.

The headspace Work & Study program is a free service that works with young people to build the skills needed to secure work, explore training options and achieve their employment goals. They will then be matched with employers in the local area for an employment opportunity or work experience to help them get a better understanding of the workplace.

OUR PEOPLE

SOPHIA EUHUS

SOCIAL WORKER - CLINICAL CARE COORDINATION

I am an accredited Social Worker working in the role as a Mental Health Clinician in the Clinical Care Coordination program at Hunter Primary Care. Within the program I work with individuals who live with complex and enduring mental health and psychosocial needs. I practice from a strengths based perspective providing people with practical and evidence based therapeutic interventions, while also creating a supportive and safe space for individuals to identify and address barriers to their recovery.

From a very young age I have always had a passion for inclusivity and equality. I have always placed a high value and commitment on social justice which is what led me to pursue my career in social work. I am passionate about what I do and enjoy working in a multidisciplinary team of like-minded professionals who share the same values of social justice as myself. The Clinical Care Coordination team is genuine, authentic and passionate with the common goal to provide a non-judgemental, safe space for participants who may be affected by life challenges and their mental health needs.

I would like to acknowledge that every participant has their own life experience and mental health needs, with every individual being at a different stage of their mental health recovery journey. This means that I flexibly use my training, credentials and knowledge in evidence based therapeutic interventions to provide person centered support that suits every individual presenting to our service. I am committed to helping people address their mental health and psychosocial needs, while walking alongside participants to collaboratively identify and address their goals. It is my passion to empower people to address their mental health needs and develop skills to flexibly work with the challenges that life presents.

I continue to be inspired by my participants' courage, strength and resilience. It is an absolute privilege to work alongside participants on their path of healing and personal growth as well as promoting positive changes for our participants.

CATHERINE WATERTON

SPECIALIST SUPPORT COORDINATOR - MENTAL HEALTH CARE COORDINATION

Specialist Support Coordinators focus on reducing complexity in our client's support environment, help our clients overcome immediate and significant barriers in their NDIS plan implementation by addressing complex barriers that affect their access to supports. I particularly enjoy working with our more complex clients, their families, Support Coordinators and the networks of supports to identify and understand the barriers impacting the client's ability to access, use and maintain their supports, finding and trialing solutions to address and establishing processes, to overcome these barriers.

ELLEN KOTTEAKOS

ADMINISTRATION OFFICER - GP ACCESS

I have been a part of the Hunter Primary Care family for almost 20 years in my role as an Administration Officer at our GP Access clinics. The clinics are a wonderful, essential service for people of the Hunter area. I work with some of the most amazing health care professionals around. Alongside the Nurse and GP on duty, we work hard to provide the most comprehensive, caring experience for our patients and their loved ones.

I love coming to work, meeting new people and doing what I can to help people who are often having a hard time. No two clinic sessions are the same, and it's this variety that keeps my job interesting and rewarding. I wouldn't want to work anywhere else.

PAIGE CORNELL

CLINICAL PSYCHOLOGIST - PSYCHOLOGY SERVICES

Throughout my four years with Hunter Primary Care I've held a few different roles including Team Leader and Clinical Advisor, as well as my usual clinical work as a Clinical Psychologist. I enjoy the variety in work that Hunter Primary Care can offer due to the many services it provides, as well as the clinical support that is provided by the Psychology team. But ultimately, my clients play a huge part in my job. I really love connecting with them and always feel privileged to hear their stories. It is also important for me that clients are able to access a free service for their mental health, and I'm glad I'm able to be part of that.

HANA EDGAR-JONES

INDIGENOUS PEER NAVIGATOR - YUDHILIDIN CARE COORDINATION

I'm a proud Wonnarua and Gringai woman from the Upper Hunter. As an Indigenous Peer Navigator, my role is to walk alongside participants of the Yudhilidin program to support them in overcoming barriers they face in their mental health journey. It's such a privilege to be able to work on Country with mob, but it can also take a huge toll on your own mental health.

Hunter Primary Care has been nothing but supportive to ensure I'm keeping well at work, and feel comfortable and capable to do my job to the best of my ability. It makes me proud to work for an organisation that truly values First Nations staff and community members, and is consistently working to better health outcomes for mob.

MEREDITH LONG

PSYCHOLOGIST - PSYCHOLOGY SERVICES

My role at Hunter Primary Care is as a Psychologist working with a range of people who are experiencing mental health challenges including anxiety, depression and PTSD. I work across many programs including YARN, Drug and Alcohol Counselling, Perinatal, Families and Better Outcomes for Mental Health and the Suicide and Self Harm Prevention Program. What I love about working at Hunter Primary Care is getting to deliver such important therapeutic support to vulnerable members of the community. Our work is incredibly impactful and helps people enhance their quality of life. By accessing the psychological support they need, we can re-establish a renewed sense of hope and joy in life.

SIAN PALMERI

SUPPORT COORDINATOR - THE WAY BACK SUPPORT SERVICE

I have a fire in my belly for all things suicide prevention. The work I do, doesn't feel like 'work' most days. Hearing people's stories, supporting them through some of their darkest moments and walking alongside them as they come out the other side – it has got to be one of the most rewarding 'jobs' in the world. My background in Psychology, paired with my own lived experience, has equipped me with a toolkit of compassion, knowledge and motivation to make even just the slightest positive difference in someone's life. I feel empowered, recognised and encouraged by the amazing people around me, all of whom bring their own expertise and flavour to our diverse team – all with the common goal of helping to save lives.

ANDREW STINSON

SOCIAL WORKER - PRIMARY CARE COORDINATION

Starting out in the midst of COVID-19 in 2020 as a Social Outreach Worker tasked with supporting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with a chronic illness in connecting with online Health Services, my role expanded into Care Coordination and more recently I have been able to expand upon that once again and pivot my service provision into the NDIS.

With Hunter Primary Care investing in my discipline, the foundation for my role expansion can be attributed to the support and backing of an interdisciplinary Allied Health team which has allowed me to grow my confidence and service provision as an emerging social worker. I have established and built a network of connections with the internal and external Hunter Primary Care community and its service provisions that allows our clients and participants access to continuity of care and services that meets their health and wellbeing goals. While I feel supported, our clients are supported.

OUR CLIENTS

AGED CARE PSYCHOLOGY CLIENT WITH A LONG STANDING HISTORY OF MELANCHOLIC DEPRESSION

Situation
The client had received support from Older People's Mental Health Services and had indicated self-injuring in the past. He felt there had been not a lot of change with him in therapy to date due to his feelings of life in a Residential Aged Care Facility being the worst possible outcome following several strokes. The client often spoke about his connection to a local Scout Camp, having spent a lot of time there as a child whilst his father was a caretaker.

Outcome
- The Psychologist spoke to Residential Aged Care Facility staff about his family taking him to the Scout Camp for a visit, attempted a telehealth consultation from the Camp to engage him in reminiscence therapy, captured video footage of the Camp and found him a book about the Camp with a lot of old photos.
- The Psychologist then sat with the client who watched the videos and read the book, and told the Psychologist about his time there and what had/had not changed. It was an enjoyable experience for the Psychologist seeing him smile and sharing a big part of his world.

NDIS DIETITIAN PARTICIPANT WITH AN INTELLECTUAL DISABILITY

Situation
A 55 year old Participant with an intellectual disability presenting with increased coughing during mealtimes, as well as tongue dyskinesia that compromises oral swallowing.

Outcomes
- Dietitian provided an assessment with an updated Mealtime Management Plan.
- Dietitian educated support staff to keep a cough log following implementation of Mealtime Management Plan
- The Participant is no longer coughing, and now has a healthy and stable weight.

NDIS EXERCISE PHSYIOLOGY PARTICIPANT WITH CHARCOT-MARIE-TOOTH DISEASE (CMT)

Situation
A 57 year old male Participant living with his wife in an isolated town, which required crossing a border for hospital treatment. The Participant's disability was quite severe in nature - affecting activities of daily living, experiencing persistent infections, unable to access his community and/or attend his church meeting to complete public speaking engagements.

Outcome
- Exercise Physiologist (EP) provided an initial functional assessment, communicated with the Participant's support team and developed a home exercise program, provided clinic-based exercise recommendations and bi-monthly consultations.
- The Participant relocated to Sydney to be closer to medical and disability supports, and through ongoing consultation, plan reviews and communications among stakeholders facilitated by the EP, has now returned to public speaking engagements within his community and church, and has increased access to the community due to improved balance, strength and cardiovascular markers.

NDIS OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY PARTICIPANT WITH MYOTONIC DYSTROPHY

Situation
26 year old female Participant experiencing a sudden unanticipated decline in function and noted that their "quality of life had taken hit." The Participant was experiencing increased falls and a significant loss of upper limb gross and fine motor coordination. They were unable to prepare their own meals, do groceries, operate their phone, and iron their clothes.

Outcomes
- An urgent functional assessment and report was completed outlining reduction in function and funding required to meet goals
- A plan review was initiated with evidence
- The Participant was successfully allocated all funding recommended by Hunter Primary Care

OUR COMMUNITY

For 30 years, Hunter Primary Care has been committed to meeting the health needs of local communities. Community is engrained in what we do - our vision is good health and wellbeing for all supported by our mission to deliver integrated health and wellness services that help each person be their best.

COMMUNITY EVENTS

Unfortunately the ongoing effect of COVID-19 resulted in a number of community events being cancelled, particularly the 2021 NAIDOC Week events across Newcastle and the Hunter where Hunter Primary Care is usually a regular attendee. We were, however able to get out and about in some capacity and attend the following events, which is just some of the extensive community engagement our people do in their daily roles:

- Hunter Disability Expo
- Awabakal Internal Expo
- Karuah Land Council's Cultural Fun Day
- The Wollatuka Institute's Rising from the Embers Festival
- CEO Presentation on ACON Institute's 'A Leadership Conversation' Panel
- Singleton Neighbourhood Centre 'Connecting the Dots'
- Newcastle City Council's Count Us In Program
- Unity in Diversity Festival

HUNTER POST-GRADUATE MEDICAL INSTITUTE (HPMI)

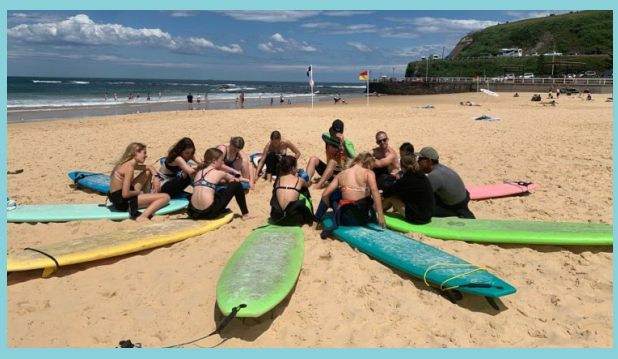
In 2021-2022 Hunter Primary Care was a proud sponsor of HPMI, which is committed to the Continuing Professional Development of health professionals in the Hunter and surrounds. The organisation is committed to the planning, provision, and continuing evaluation of educational programs based on the needs of health professionals, and works in collaboration with other local organisations including The University of Newcastle to progressively improve the standards of medical practice in the region.

UNIVERSITY OF NEWCASTLE EMPLOYABILITY EXCELLENCE AWARDS

Hunter Primary Care was inducted into the Work Integrated Learning Hall of Fame as part of the University of Newcastle's 2021 Employability Excellence Awards. These Awards celebrate the professional learning experiences and partnerships that prepare students for success. Chosen from a competitive field, the award is in recognition of our contribution to the University of Newcastle, the professional preparation of students past and present, and growing and strengthening the region in which their campuses are located.

HEADSPACE NEWCASTLE WAVES OF WELLNESS

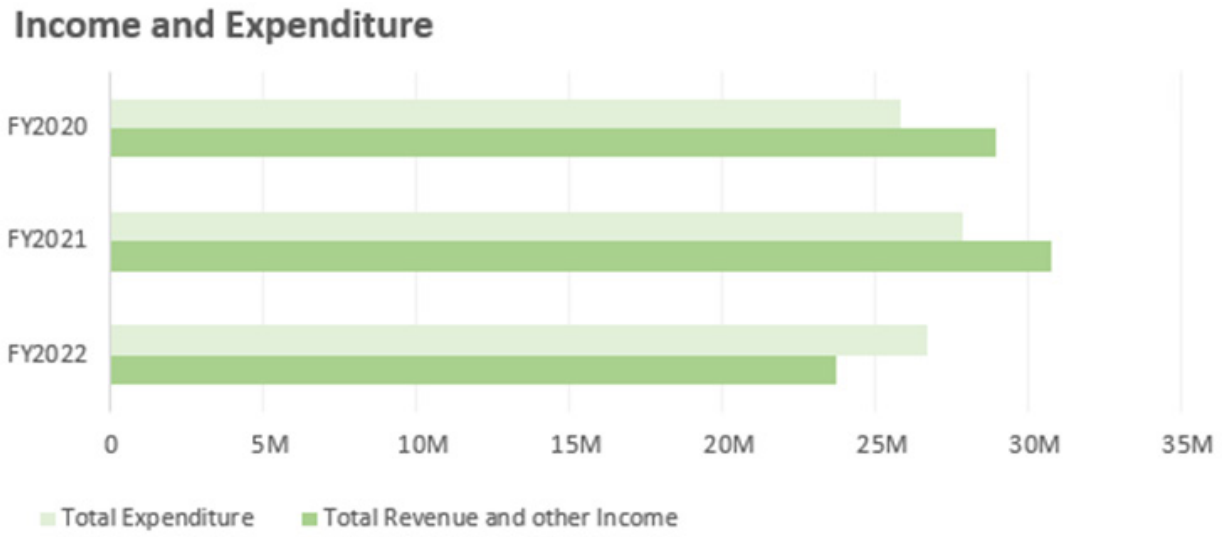
headspace Newcastle has been working with the Waves of Wellness Surf Experience since the organisation ran a pilot program with headspace Newcastle clients in 2016. This year saw the continuation of the relationship with students engaged from Big Picture Campus Cooks Hill.

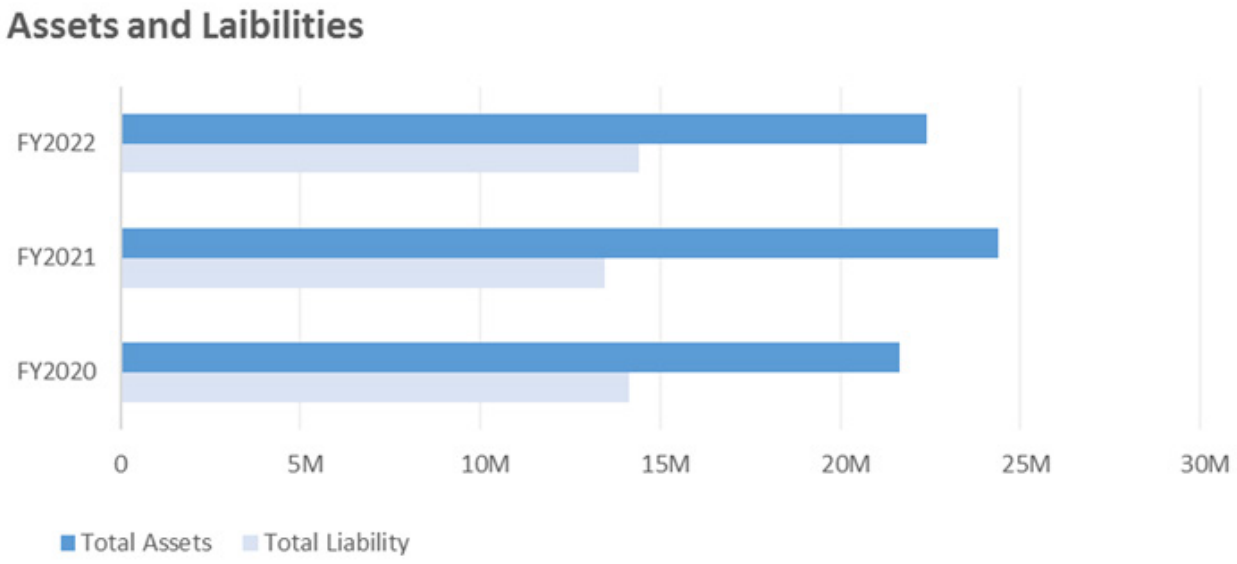


OUR FINANCES

Hunter Primary Care Limited operates as a not-for-profit health promotion charity and community health services organisation. It is an independent public company limited by guarantee registered with the Australian Charities and Not-for-Profits Commission.

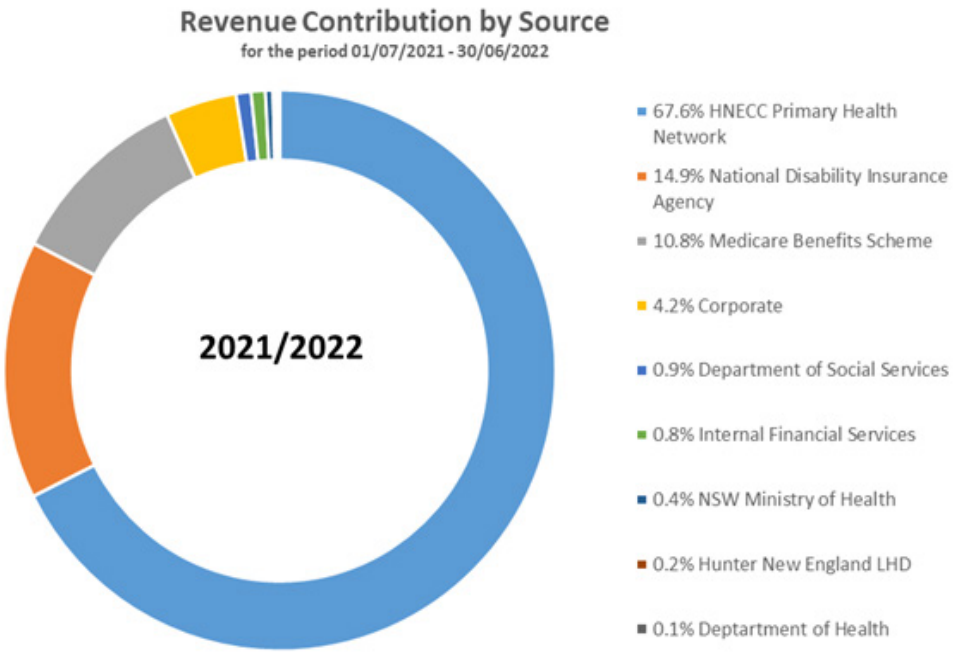
As a registered public company, Hunter Primary Care undergoes an annual independent financial audit to ensure its compliance with Australian Accounting Standards and the Australian Charities and Not-for-Profits Commission (ACNC) Act 2012.



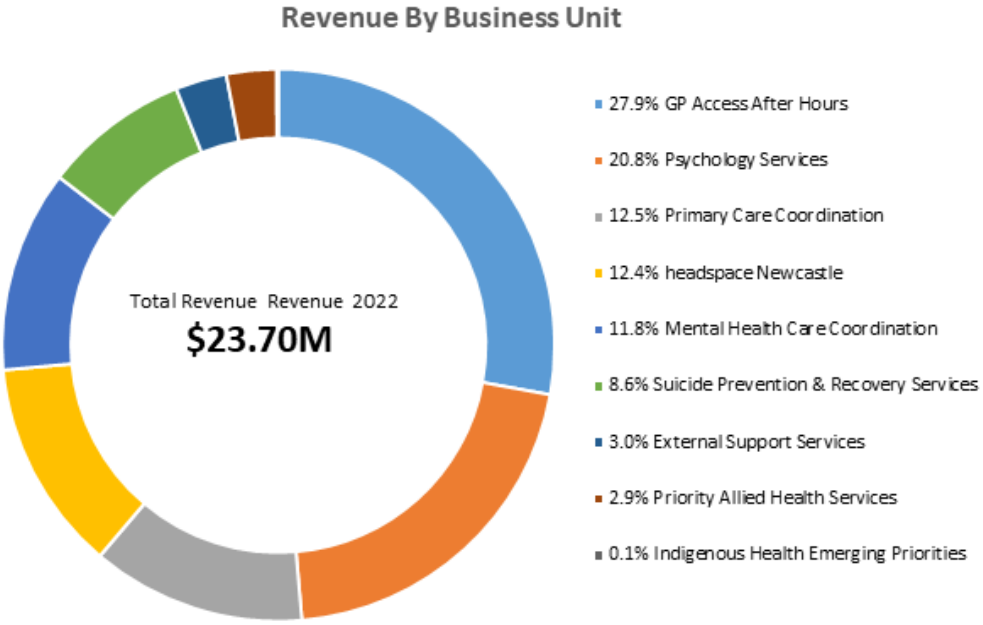


SNAPSHOT OF ACTIVITIES

Hunter Primary Care receives its revenue from a variety of government and non-government sources, the largest of which are the Hunter New England Central Coast Primary Health Network, the National Disability Insurance Agency and Medicare billings through the Medicare Benefits Scheme. The sources of income received by Hunter Primary Care for the 2021-2022 year are presented in the below figure;



Hunter Primary Care uses these revenues to support a range of services. Revenues by service for the 2021-2022 year are presented in the below figure;



FUTURE DIRECTIONS

As at 30 June 2022, Hunter Primary Care has net assets amounting to $7.985 million which, despite the 2021-2022 deficit, follows several years of growing revenues and strong financial performance. Together with a broad portfolio of services and increasingly diversified revenue streams, Hunter Primary Care is well placed to capitalise on new opportunities and continue its growth into the future.

Comprehensive 2021-2022 financial statements can be found on the Hunter Primary Care website.

THANK YOU TO OUR FUNDERS

Hunter Primary Care acknowledges the financial and other support from the Australian Government Department of Health, the Department of Social Services, NSW Ministry of Health, the Hunter New England Local Health District, Hunter New England Central Coast Primary Health Network, Beyond Blue and headspace National.

Hunter PRIMARYCARE

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