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## **New plan to promote patient care with creative arts**

The power of music, visual arts and the written word to bring comfort is at the heart of a new plan aimed at promoting health and healing for residents across south western Sydney.

The South Western Sydney Health and Arts Strategic Plan 2018-2023 is aimed at transforming the lives of people with illness or disability through creativity and imagination.

The plan is a collaboration between South Western Sydney Local Health District, Liverpool City Council, and Casula Powerhouse Arts Centre which have worked with universities and a group of artists on its development.

Ms Amanda Larkin, Chief Executive, South Western Sydney Local Health District, said the Plan would guide the role of the arts in healthcare during the next five years and beyond.

“The plan outlines key areas of focus and how in partnership the District will work to deliver an arts program that supports health outcomes for our patients and the people in our community,” Ms Larkin said.

“The arts, music and creative expression will help our health services to develop an environment of healing, support, comfort and wellbeing for our patients, carers and staff.

“I am excited to see the implementation of this important Strategic Plan across our hospitals and community.”

Liverpool Hospital Palliative Care Unit volunteer and retired classical pianist Denise Zanker experiences first-hand the benefits of music for patients, their families and staff.

“Music brings relaxation and can even be cathartic in helping patients express their emotions and diverting them from their pain and discomfort,” Ms Zanker said.

“Music can help them face their final journey with calmness and some resolution.”

Ms Zander welcomed the Strategic Plan to highlight the importance of the arts in healthcare.

“The more we can put the arts into a healthcare setting the better,” Ms Zanker said.

For more information about the South Western Sydney Health and Arts Strategic Plan 2018-2023 visit the South Western Sydney Local Health District website at [www.swslhd.health.nsw.gov.au](http://www.swslhd.health.nsw.gov.au).