Meet our newest cohort of medical graduates who will spend the next year rotating through our hospitals, caring for patients and gaining the skills they need to become the medical workforce of the future.

Almost 100 new interns will train alongside experienced staff in medical units, emergency departments and theatres at hospitals across the District. SWSLHD Chief Executive Amanda Larkin said the District was pleased to have the medical graduates working in south western Sydney.

“I'd like to welcome the new interns joining us at our hospitals across the District over the coming year,” Ms Larkin said.

“The start of an internship is a key milestone in the life of every young doctor and we are fortunate to have these graduates training here.

“I wish all the interns well during their time with us and hope many of them choose to return to our hospitals throughout their careers,” she said.

Lions unite to fight the good fight

Five Lions Clubs from across Macarthur have banded together in a bid to raise a whopping $150,000 for Campbelltown and Camden Hospitals.

The money has been earmarked for specific equipment including Lucas 2 CPR Systems, Lifepak 15 Systems and portable ultrasound units.

The Lions Clubs – Macarthur, Camden, Narellan, Camden Lioness and Campbelltown hope to raise the money by May.

The project has already been very successful, with enough funds raised to purchase a Lucas 2 CPR System for Campbelltown Hospital late last year. A second Lucas 2 System will be delivered to Camden Hospital shortly.

For more information visit www.lionshospitalfund.com.au.

To submit a story contact the Media Unit on 8738 6848 or swsmedia@sswahs.nsw.gov.au
Message from the Chair

The new year brings some changes to the South Western Sydney Local Health District Board and I would like to welcome two new board members who bring a wealth of skills and experience with them.

Mr Gary Reidy brings with him a background in law and he was a director at the former Central Sydney Area Health Service. Mr Max Bosotti’s background is banking and financial management, and he is currently the Chief Executive Officer of the Paraplegic and Quadriplegic Association of NSW.

We have also seen some changes at a state level, including a new Premier, Health Minister and Mental Health Minister. We welcome the Hon Gladys Berejiklian as NSW Premier, the Hon Brad Hazzard as the new Minister for Health and Medical Research, and the Hon Tanya Davies as Minister for Mental Health.

We look forward to working with them to continue to grow and improve health services in south western Sydney.

This year we will see a number of projects and strategies implemented which aim to strengthen our workforce, governance and quality.

One such strategy is Transforming your Experience. During 2016 we consulted with over 1200 staff, patients and consumers about further improving patient and staff experiences across the District. This consultation informed the Transforming Your Experience strategy and it provides us with clear direction for working together to deliver safe and high quality health services.

It will underpin everything we do, and will guide every staff member across every facility and service, from patient support staff to clinicians. The strategy will be launched early this year.

Speaking out about battling ‘silent cancer’

Glenda Brown has been battling ovarian cancer since November 2015 and is now sharing her journey during Ovarian Cancer Awareness Month in a bid to encourage other women to get checked.

More than one year after her diagnosis, Ms Brown reflected on a disease that kills approximately 65 per cent of women diagnosed in south western Sydney every year.

“I didn’t recognise the symptoms of ovarian cancer. I should’ve gone to see a doctor earlier but I was busy with a new job and thought they were just a part of menopause,” she said.

“I was always tired and feeling full sooner than normal after eating a lot less than usual but I really didn’t think anything of it,” she said.

“I’m very lucky my ovarian cancer was caught at stage 3, any later and I probably wouldn’t be here today.

“Most women don’t think twice about where they get treatment but Dr Herbst, Dr Harrison and the team at Liverpool Hospital have really looked after me,” she said.

Director of Gynaecological Oncology at Liverpool Hospital, Associate Professor Felix Chan said the symptoms of ovarian cancer are often described as silent, because they mimic menopause, menstrual, gastro-intestinal, or back problems.

Aged care and rehabilitation enabling wellness

Focusing on wellness and enablement, the third SWSLHD Aged Care and Rehab Conference explored new ways to improve care for older people and people with a disability.

Contributing to the success of the day were the many great initiatives presented by SWSLHD staff who make enormous efforts to continually improve our Aged Care and Rehab Service.

The conference was attended by 150 people from across the District and affiliated Aged Care Services and included a keynote address by Mr Claude Tardif, Physical Rehabilitation Advisor for the International Committee of the Red Cross.
A trial using wireless music therapy is helping acute mental health consumers at Liverpool Hospital and has lead to a decrease in the amount of medication prescribed.

The Hear No Evil project was inspired by a young woman who was experiencing auditory hallucinations, and found listening to soothing music on wireless headphones helped.

Helen Driscoll, Occupational Therapist (Therapy and Recovery Service) said as part of the trial, consumers used wireless headphones to help decrease the duration and severity of their hallucinations.

“Music therapy is not new, however music played over a general PA system doesn’t cancel out background noise, so it’s not as effective as listening to music through headphones,” Helen said.

“Headphones with audio wires are not allowed on acute mental health units, but the use of wireless headphone technology has enabled our consumers to have centrally controlled, relaxing music played directly to their headphones.

“During the trial, five pairs of headphones were introduced to the acute mental health ward, and they were given to consumers to use when they were distressed,” she said.

Helen said for some consumers with persistent psychotic symptoms, hallucinations were directly responsible for profound dysfunction in all aspects of daily life.

“The traditional medical approach for controlling hallucinations is the administration of antipsychotic drugs. This process however can take some time to take effect and some consumers will continue to experience persistent hallucinations.

“Consumers reported that the music helps to drown out the voices, takes them to a different mindset, improves their mood and stops them stressing.

“The amount of PRN (short term as required) medication prescribed was monitored 131 days before and after the Hear No Evil project was implemented.

“Results showed an overall decrease in the amount of PRN medication prescribed in the ward after the introduction of the headphones,” Helen said.
Congratulations to two staff members who were awarded a prestigious Order of Australia Medal (OAM) as part of this year’s Australia Day Honours.

Director of Medical Services at Bowral & District Hospital, Dr Terry Flynn (pictured above) received the honour for service to medicine, and to medical administration.

Director of Ambulatory Care at Liverpool Hospital Professor Hugh Dickson (pictured left) received the honour for service to aged care and rehabilitation, and to medical education and administration.

Appointments to the Order of Australia are the highest recognition granted as part of the Australian honours system.

Farewell Geoff

Campbelltown Hospital’s Director of Finance, Geoff Hanson has spent the past 26 years in health and has been a joy to work with during that time! While we’ll miss having him around, we’re happy for Geoff as he transitions from a 40 year career to retirement. We hope you’ll join us in wishing him a long and happy retirement filled with relaxation and enjoyment.

New homepage

The District intranet homepage has a cleaner new look and can now be fully customised to meet your needs. The decluttered, user-friendly site was created through staff consultation and design. You can now use the customise button located on the right hand side of the homepage to add menu items. You can also provide comments or suggestions through the feedback button.

CIAP on tour

The Clinical Information Access Portal (CIAP) is visiting Liverpool Hospital on 21 February. This is a great opportunity to find out more about what’s available on CIAP and how it can be useful to you. Giveaways, brochures and additional education resources will also be available at the session. For more information contact CIAP on 8644 2306.

Save the date for the Health Beyond Research and Innovation Showcase

Save the date for the SWSLHD and Ingham Institute for Applied Medical Research 2017 Health Beyond Research and Innovation Showcase at Campbelltown Catholic Club on 7 and 8 June 2017. Almost 600 people attended the 2016 Showcase, which included stalls, international speakers, TED-style talks, innovation workshops and speed networking. For last year’s highlights visit bit.ly/2fSStmu and stay tuned for more details of this year’s event.