While working mainly at a population level with various key internal and external partners, the team also develop tailored programs for populations with specific health needs. The Centre focuses on the following key health priorities:

- Immunisation
- Communicable Diseases
- Tobacco
- Women’s Health
- Falls Prevention
- Healthy Eating Active Living
- Environmental Health
- Equitable Health

The Centre for Population Health staff are an award winning team of experienced and dedicated professionals, committed to delivering high quality programs and services, who monitor and evaluate their progress to work towards better health outcomes for people in Western Sydney.
Immunisation

- Visited 111 High Schools in Western Sydney and administered 95,950 vaccines against human papilloma virus (HPV), chicken-pox, diphtheria, tetanus and whooping cough. The team offered HPV catch-up and met the 75% target of Year 7 students receiving the 3rd dose of HPV vaccine.

- MMR catch up program for 27 selected high schools in WSLHD with a high number of Pacific Islander, Filipino, and other CALD students.

- A total of 2,198 doses of mumps, measles, and rubella (MMR) vaccine administered.

- Conducted 213 flu clinics in local hospitals, special schools and Aboriginal events and administered 5,082 flu vaccines to staff, patients and high risk groups for severe illness.

- Trained/upskilled 690 nurses, midwives and general practice staff in immunisation and provide cold chain management reviews and support to hospitals and general practice.

- Delivery of the Auburn Immunisation Clinic to address low coverage rates.

When Clinical Nurse Consultant, Caroline Scott began working at the Western Sydney School Immunisation program over 10 years ago, there were just 2 staff on the team, visiting 78 High schools, twice a year. The program has grown considerably with Caroline now leading an engaging dedicated team of 28 nurses who visit 111 schools approximately three times a year.

"We work really closely with the schools and have built up positive relationships with both students and staff", said Caroline.

"Some kids still get a little worked up about having an injection, but we try and make the environment as comfortable as possible. The kids come in small groups and the clinic has an open plan layout so they can see what’s going on. We also have distraction toys which can come in handy".

NB School vaccination data is presented by school year.
COMMUNICABLE DISEASE CONTAINMENT
Between July 2014 to June 2016 the Communicable Diseases team managed:
- 37 confirmed influenza outbreaks in Aged Care Facilities.
- 156 gastroenteritis outbreaks in institutions.
- 7 pertussis outbreaks in child care centres and high risk baby settings.
- A number of post-exposure prophylaxis clinics for contacts of patients with certain infectious diseases, including hepatitis A, meningococcal disease, pertussis and measles.
- 17 foodborne illness cluster investigations.

POLICY AND PLANS
- Contributed to WSLHD and State protocols and guidelines for managing suspected/confirmed patients with Ebola Virus Disease.
- Developed WSLHD Pertussis Exposure Management Procedure.
- Collaborated with the WSLHD Tuberculosis service to develop a local strategic plan. Population Health is assessing the tuberculosis burden and outcomes of service delivery in WSLHD.

CLINICAL SUPPORT AND PATHWAYS
- Clinical support and public health management of all notifiable conditions including pertussis, hepatitis A, typhoid, meningococcal disease, measles and influenza, as per NSW control guidelines.
- Developed an integrated pathway for the management of Acute Rheumatic Fever and Rheumatic Heart Disease in consultation with Westmead Children’s Hospital, Western Sydney Facilities and Primary Care.

“IT WAS INTERESTING TO LEARN HOW OTHER FACILITIES DEALT WITH AN OUTBREAK AND WHAT NEEDS TO BE PUT INTO PLACE”
Forum participant

In April 2016, Western Sydney Local Health District (Centre for Population Health, Older Persons Review and Assessment and Aged Care Facility Outreach services) hosted their second annual aged care forum for Western Sydney Aged Care Facilities. The forum aims to improve the management of flu outbreaks in aged care centres, especially since the increase in reported influenza outbreaks since 2014.

Dr Shopna Bag from the Centre of Population Health says, “the forum provides an opportunity to identify outbreak management issues and workshop ideas for improving preparedness and response for subsequent outbreaks in Western Sydney.”

Over 50 representatives from local Aged Care Facilities attended the Forum with overwhelming positive feedback.
Western Sydney smoking rate has more than halved since 2002, falling from 24.1 to 10.2 per cent in 2015 – the third lowest in NSW. However, smoking continues to be a major problem in some high risk groups, including those with a mental health problem, some CALD groups and among Indigenous communities in the region. In 2014, 37.3 per cent of Indigenous adults in NSW smoked, more than double the state average. (HealthStats 2016).

A range of local initiatives have been established to address this health issue. These include the Quit for New Life program which supports women having an Aboriginal baby to quit smoking while pregnant:
- 4 NGO and 9 smoking care advisors trained in delivering smoking care assistance to clients of Aboriginal NGOs.
- 38 pregnant/post natal Aboriginal women and 240 people from Aboriginal families have received quit services.
- Midwives and Community Health nurses trained to conduct brief intervention in smoking cessation.

Outdoor smoking bans were introduced in July 2015 in outdoor commercial dining areas of hotels, clubs, cafes and restaurants in NSW under the Smoke-free Environment Act 2000. A community awareness campaign was implemented in western Sydney focusing on dining hot spots which included the State launch by the Minister for Health, Jillian Skinner at Parramatta Park café.

The Smoke Free Health Care Policy is another important policy directive we contribute to which aims to reduce the risks to health associated with tobacco use by clients, staff and visitors to WSLHD facilities and the community’s exposure to secondhand smoke:
- Guidelines and implementation plan developed with supporting resources for communication strategy.
- Hospital audits across WSLHD indicating a 97% compliance.
- 334 clinical staff trained to conduct brief interventions in smoking cessation.

Published journal article - A qualitative study of smoking within a Western Sydney Arabic-speaking community: a focus on men in the context of their families. Health Promotion Journal of Australia, 2015.

To combat the high incidence of smoking among Aboriginal adults, a partnership has been established with Marrin Weejali Aboriginal Corporation in Blackett. Staff have been trained to work as Aboriginal Smoking Care Advisors who provide quit support and counselling specifically for Indigenous people.
Falls Prevention – Healthy Older People

**Stepping On**

Stepping On is a free evidence based multifactorial falls prevention program offered to older people living independently in the community who have fallen or are at high risk of falling.

**ACHIEVEMENTS**

79 Stepping On programs (28% above target) have been delivered with nearly 1000 participants completing the program and 21 programs delivered to Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) communities.

**Healthy Older People Partnership Program (HOPP)**

HOPP is a collaborative partnership with 35 Government and non Government aged care service organisations which aims to build Strength and Balance (S&B) of older people, improving their independence and reducing their risk of falls.

**ACHIEVEMENTS**

- 35 partner organisations engaged
- 103 Strength & Balance programs delivered to 1580 staff and clients.
- A feasibility study of the strength and balance program for CALD older people conducted.
- 92 staff trained in a pilot Home based exercise program.
- A 63% increase in services delivering S&B activities to clients.

**SENIOR FLASHMOB IN BLACKTOWN**

In April 2016, over 100 people participated in a flash mob outside the Blacktown library and shopping centre choreographed to John Paul Young's hit "Love is in the Air". This was organised by the Healthy Older People Partnership (HOPP) and designed to raise awareness of the importance of regular exercises for older people. Participants showcased exercises aimed at increasing strength and balance including heel raises, half squats, knee lifts and walking sideways. The youtube video was a hit on social media reaching over 18 000 people!

**HOPP WAS THE WINNER OF THE 2015 WS QUALITY AWARDS CATEGORY FOR PREVENTIVE HEALTH**

Main image: Stepping On participants from Alan Walker Retirement Village.
Bottom image: From L, Kitty Kaur, Trish Nove, Marta Menendez.
Healthy Eating Active Living - Children

The NSW Premier has prioritised the need to reduce childhood obesity with an ambitious reduction target of 5% by 2025. Being overweight or obese can lead to a wide range of debilitating and life threatening conditions as it increases the risk of developing chronic disease including type 2 diabetes, hypertension, heart disease and some cancers.

The WSLHD Healthy Children’s Initiative includes a range of evidence based programs in educational settings to help establish healthy habits early. All program areas are meeting/exceeding targets set by the state. In November 2015, Western Sydney piloted the inaugural Go4Fun program for Aboriginal families in the Mt Druitt area where 100% of participants completed the program.

Childcare

The Munch and Move program supports the healthy development of young children by promoting physical activity, healthy eating and reducing screen time in children attending Early Childhood Education and Care Services.

**2014/16 ACHIEVEMENTS**

- 91% participation of early childhood education and care services (407 services).
- 87% of ECECs are implementing 70% of the desirable healthy eating and active living practices (388 services).

Primary school age programs

The Live Life Well @ School program aims to get children active, more often, and eating healthily. The program supports primary schools to include strategies for the curriculum, parents, the school environment, policies and practices that affect healthy eating and physical activity.

**2014/16 ACHIEVEMENTS**

- An 80% participation rate (170 schools).
- 77% of participating schools are implementing 70% of the desirable healthy eating and active living practices.

Targeted healthy eating and physical activity programs

Go4Fun – works with overweight/obese children and their parents to modify family lifestyles, improve parenting skills around healthy eating and activity, promote weight management and increases children’s wellbeing and self esteem.

**2014/16 ACHIEVEMENTS**

- 48 programs delivered to over 575 overweight/obese children and their families.
- 92% completed the program.
- Children achieve an average 1.2cm waist circumference reduction and Body Mass Index reductions.

CRUNCH & SIP (C&S)® EQUITY PILOT PROJECT

Anecdotal evidence from teachers in low SES schools indicated that a significant number of children in their classes were unable to participate in the C&S® break, as they were not bringing fruit and/or vegetables from home. A pilot project was designed to assess this claim and evaluate the ‘equity’ aspect of the existing program. The impact of providing free ‘supplementary’ fruit and vegetables to schools on participation of children in the C&S® program was examined.

Free fruit and vegetables (apples, carrots, and bananas) were provided for 10 weeks to four schools in the Blacktown LGA. The produce was provided at a subsidised rate by our “Fruit and Vegetable” Industry partners, who were critical to the success of the pilot study.

This pilot study confirmed that a large percentage of children in the four participating schools, did not have fruit and/or vegetables for their C&S® break and were consequently unable to participate in the program. The provision of ‘supplementary’ fruit and vegetables enabled significantly more children to participate in C&S® (from 46.7% to 92.0%) and it did not impact negatively on the proportion of children bringing fruit/vegetables from home.

The results of the pilot study indicate substantial potential for the program to be implemented more widely, as long as a sustainable supply of a variety of free or subsidised fruit and vegetables can be sourced and a delivery method established.

This project was presented at the Australian Health Promotion Conference, 2016.

For more information contact helen.ryan@health.nsw.gov.au
Healthy Eating Active Living - Adults

A range of State based evidence programs are implemented at a local level with the aim of reducing obesity rates amongst adults in the LHD.

A number of targeted initiatives are also delivered to reach specific populations at risk of chronic disease.

GET HEALTHY AT PARRAMASALA

Parramasala is an annual 3 day event held in Parramatta in October which attracts over 30 000 people predominantly from the subcontinent, celebrating diversity and culture. In 2015, the Get Healthy team added a health flavour to the Parramasala mix through its Get Healthy and Women’s Health at Work programs. With this community being at increased risk of type 2 diabetes, Parramasala created a good opportunity to promote healthy lifestyle messages and the free Get Healthy Information and Coaching Service. Over 150 people participated in a women’s well-being parade. Over 1500 people visited the Get Healthy stall where they could receive information in English, Hindi, Tamil and Sinhalese. There was more than a 10% conversion rate to actual registrations for the Get Healthy Information and Coaching Service, with 177 people registering.

For more information contact 1300 806 258.

GET HEALTHY @ WORK

The Get Healthy at Work initiative is a workplace intervention promoting organisational, cultural and environmental change, health risk assessment at work and incentives to take part in smoking cessation, physical activity, active travel and nutrition programs.

To date, over 112 businesses in Western Sydney have registered, with 96,519 workers engaged in the program.

WSLHD Health Promotion promoted the service through hosting Business After 5 events in partnership with Greater Blacktown Business Chamber, Blacktown Council and Parramatta Business Chamber.

LIVE LIFE WELL @ HEALTH

Live Life Well @ Health is a health facility intervention promoting healthier food and drink choices in vending machines and food retail for staff and visitors in health facilities across the local health district demonstrating that hospitals are committed to promoting health.

An average loss of 3.8kg in weight and 5.1cm off waist circumference.

50% of participants lost between 2.5% and 10% of their original body weight.

Significant improvements to physical activity and healthy eating behaviours were made and maintained at 6 months after completion of the program.

PROTECTING AND PROMOTING THE HEALTH OF PEOPLE LIVING IN WESTERN SYDNEY
AWARD WINNING MULTICULTURAL HEALTH TEAM

- Honourable Mention at the Child Protection & Wellbeing Awards 2015.

THE NSW EDUCATION PROGRAM ON FGM (FEMALE GENITAL MUTILATION)
The NSW Education Program on FGM auspiced by WSLHD is a State wide program with a House of Parliament folder. The program delivers both a clinical/service provider and community education strategy. It consults with key government stakeholders such as Ministry of Health and NSW Police around policies and laws affecting children. In 2015:

- The Maternity Guidelines Flip Chart was launched at the Midwife’s Conference at Rooty Hill.
- 7 Women’s Health Day Events were held with women from 9 Ethnic backgrounds.
- 10 new male BCWs were trained in the Men’s Health and Traditions Program.
- Implemented a media awareness campaign, targeting specific communities and published several FGM articles in a number of languages.
- Provided input to the National Education Toolkit Feedback Awareness Committee funded by the Federal Government.

TRANSLATION SERVICE
The WSLHD Translation Service provides a full range of translation services and language consultancy in over 100 languages. It aims to ensure CALD communities have access to multilingual information to minimise the risks of miscommunication and improve health literacy and health outcomes. During 2014-2015:

- 25 education resources developed and translated to multiple languages.
- 76 patient related documents translated.
- Health Literacy Project completed - a series of medicines fact sheets produced in 8 languages. A Ministerial launch of this resource was conducted by the Hon. John Ajaka, Minister for Ageing, Disability Services, and Multiculturalism at Auburn Hospital in February 2016.
- Coordinated a research project in partnership with University of NSW on cross cultural issues in Korean interpreter mediated consultations.

KEY OUTCOMES IN MULTICULTURAL HEALTH

- 1475 CALD background community members attended Bilingual Community Education (BCE) Programs - 8001 occasions of service.
- ‘Healthy Eating and Physical Activity’ manual developed for delivery by the BCE program. Australian Dietary Guidelines translated into 11 languages.
- Building CALD parent’s capacity to increase children’s safety and wellbeing programs delivered in Arabic, Dari, Mandarin, Farsi, Indian sub-continent languages (Tamil/Punjabi/Hindi), reaching approximately 2000 parents.
- 261 sessions on health topics, delivered to 2,681 CALD background people.
- Diabetes awareness program delivered to 247 people.
- 5 BCES trained on the Stanford Chronic Disease Self Management Program and commenced delivery of programs to CALD background communities in partnership with Connecting Care.
- 109 women from Indian, Vietnamese, Sudanese and Chinese speaking backgrounds completed the Stepping Out - Women and Work program in 2014/15.

Inset: MHP team members: (from left to right) Kaylene Poore, CALD Community Focused Dietitian, Martina Memendi, Senior Multicultural Health Promotion, Officer and Accra John, BCE Program Coordinator and Elissa Kiggins, SWSLHD Population Health Nutritionist.

CENTRE FOR POPULATION HEALTH, WESTERN SYDNEY LOCAL HEALTH DISTRICT
Environmental Health

The Environmental Health Team focuses on protecting the community of western Sydney both through education on environmental health issues and if necessary through regulatory means. Environmental Health focuses on a broad range of environmental issues that can impact on the health of the community such as air and water quality, control of legionnaires disease in water cooling systems, swimming pools, hazardous chemicals, tobacco control and smoke free environments.

Housing is an important determinant of health. Aboriginal families in both urban and rural settings live in houses which are often of poor quality. In these families high rates of respiratory disease, injury and skin infections can be attributed to housing conditions.

The Housing for Health project not only collects data on housing infrastructure that can affect health such as electrical safety and the ability to wash children and safely store and cook food but also offers a fix component where urgent jobs are fixed by qualified tradespeople. In February 2015, the Housing for Health methodology was applied for the first time in an urban setting, targeting 50 Aboriginal families with vulnerable children in the Mt Druitt area. Of the surveyed houses, 44 had at least as many faults as those surveyed in rural and remote parts of NSW. Problems identified were fixed by teams of tradespeople. A follow up survey will be conducted to establish the effectiveness of the program and record improvements to housing infrastructure.

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

- Exceeded required inspections for all tobacco compliance indicators for reporting year including: ‘selling tobacco to minors’ (99%); tobacco advertising (81%) and ‘smoke free environments’ (85%).
- Responded to 369 complaints/requests in 2015/16 for information/assistance on a wide range of environmental health issues.
- Improved skills and the capacity of staff to respond to disasters by implementing public health emergency response exercises and desktop discussions.
- Worked in collaboration with hospital maintenance and infection control staff to develop a risk-based Warm Water System Management Plan.
- Legionella – completed 96 samples across facilities as part of hospital sampling quality assurance program and investigated 14 local community acquired cases and provided staff expertise and support to 2 CBD outbreaks and 1 outbreak in another LHD.
- Inspected 16 Council swimming pools as part of annual inspection program.
- Completed 16 case investigations of cryptosporidiosis associated with swimming pools or petting zoos.
Key Strategic Health Partnerships

To better reach the whole WSLHD population, the Centre for Population Health develops strategic partnerships with key agencies to influence the social determinants of health. These include:

- Education (Primary and Secondary schools, TAFE Colleges and the University of Western Sydney)
- Local Government
- Legal Aid: Health Justice Partnership including increasing access to legal assistance and Work Development Orders as an incentive for participation in health related activities

**PRIMARY SCHOOLS:**

Complementing the Healthy Eating Active Living - Children initiatives, the Live Life Well @ School program implemented the:

- The PDHPE Network for primary school teachers is run quarterly, providing professional development for teachers on a range of topics, such as: dance, gymnastics, fundamental movement skills. A memorable workshop was the ‘Sport and Games in the Special Education Context’. The Network achieved accreditation by the Quality Teaching Council, as an endorsed provider of professional development for teachers.

- LLW@S partners with the Cancer Council, to support them in implementing their ‘Eat It To Beat It’ program in WSLHD schools. The partnership resulted in all program targets being met, with WSLHD providing funds for the development of a modified ‘Healthy Lunchbox’ session for Arabic communities and a modified ‘Fruit & Veg Sense’ workshop for groups with low levels of literacy.

80% LLW@S PROGRAM PARTICIPATION ACHIEVED

Main image: Rosehill Public School take part in the Live Life Well @ School program. Left: The Crunch and Sip program continues to be popular with schools to establish healthy eating habits early.
SECONDARY SCHOOLS:

- Population Health support PERU (Primary Health Care Education & Research Unit) to implement and evaluate their SALSA (Students As Lifestyle Activists) program. SALSA engaged 19 WSLHD schools and is the recipient of numerous awards and grants.
- ‘My Canteen Rules’ student projects implemented in 2 schools.
- Strategies trialled in 13 schools to promote healthier canteens.

TERTIARY EDUCATION, TAFE & WSU:

- Travel Access Guides developed for each TAFE College in Western Sydney Institute.
- Western Sydney Institute and 3 LHDs are implementing Aboriginal Tobacco Control initiatives.
- All TAFE Colleges in 3 Institutes are now smoke free or restricted to designated smoking areas.
- A staff nutrition and physical activity challenge developed for TAFE.
- WSU Fit & Strong Challenge implemented and increased referral rates to the Get Healthy Information and Coaching Service from WSU.
LOCAL GOVERNMENT

- A WSLHD initiative to promote the International Charter for Walking resulted in 4 councils signing the Walk 21, International Charter for Walking. Councils have translated commitment into action through a forum held in partnership with PCAL and WSROC.

- Healthy Urban Development Promotion work included briefs, reports, submissions and presentations to councils. Some examples:
  - Benefits of Active Living and Best Practice Approaches.
  - Health Impacts of Heat Stress
  - Literature review on CALD populations and Physical Activity
  - Blacktown Redevelopment: Active Living at Blacktown Hospital

- With the support of Blacktown City Council, the Outer West Domestic Violence Interagency (chaired by Population Health) revised and reprinted the Outer West Domestic Violence Service Providers Directory (1,500 copies) now with 17 community languages inserted.

OTHER KEY ORGANISATIONS

- In partnership with WentWest and BreastScreen Western Sydney, produced two locally designed brochures (Aboriginal and low literacy versions) promoting cervical screening, distributing 2,000 at NAIDOC, Close the Gap and other community events.

HEALTH JUSTICE PARTNERSHIP WITH LEGAL AID

Emerging research has identified legal issues as a determinant of health. Health Justice Partnerships seek to provide a different approach to practice whereby shared knowledge, shared resources and joint problem solving enable a comprehensive approach to addressing an individual’s needs. The Centre for Population Health has been instrumental in facilitating the health justice partnership, including the launch of an integrated Legal Service at Blacktown Hospital in June 2016. Another health justice partnership example is the Work and Development Order Scheme (WDO) whereby eligible clients can reduce their fines/debt through participation in health related activities such as counselling sessions and lifestyle and quit smoking programs etc, with an approved organisation. While the WDO helps to reduce their debt, it also improves their health and well-being. The WDO program is currently being piloted with selected programs in the Centre for Population Health. To date over $800,000 worth of fine debt has been reduced.