

MEDIA RELEASE



NHW Annual General Meeting The Year that Was 2005/2006

Wednesday 1st November 2006

Northeast Health Wangaratta held a successful 134th Annual General Meeting on Thursday evening, which saw the announcement of the organisation's 2005/06 Annual Performance Report, Board President Mr Geoff Dinning's Report, the launch of the organisation's Quality of Care Report, guest speakers Kerrin Elliott and Sally Bolitho and the presentation of the prestigious Staff Quality Awards, Travelling Scholarship Award and Life Governorship

The Staff Quality Award recipients were announced and congratulated recognising outstanding research and innovation in the work place, making the organisation a better place for all internal and external customers, and celebrating excellence.

Nominations were received for each of the category areas and a panel of independent judges then decided on winners of each award.

For the clinical and non clinical awards there are set assessment criteria that are used in order to systematically and fairly determine winners. These criteria look at whether the project has followed the Quality Cycle, that is:

- Problem identification
- Improvement activities
- Evaluation
- Outcomes or results.

Decisions surrounding the Customer Service Award consider evidence provided by the person nominating an individual for the award. We are looking for someone who embodies what we strive for in Customer Service at NHW.

Northeast Health Wangaratta Staff Quality Achievement Awards

CLINICAL Award was presented to the Diabetes Educators for their work in improving care caring for inpatients with hypoglycaemia.

The diabetes educators noted on the wards that care of inpatients with hypoglycaemia could have been improved. There was no current policy or guideline to assist staff in the management of this clinical condition.

A policy was introduced and extensive education of staff undertaken. Evaluation of staff knowledge was demonstrated through the use of a quiz which 50 staff completed with excellent results. A repeat survey is planned for 2007 to ensure this knowledge is maintained.

Congratulations to the Diabetes Educators for an excellent initiative that has helped to improve the clinical care of our patients.

NON CLINICAL Award winner this year is the Community Relations Department for the design and successful implementation of the NHW website.

The Community Relations Department consisting of Tanya Tatulaschwili, Kerryn Mitchell & Amanda Earnshaw has worked in collaboration with others to successfully design and implement a fully functional website which became operational in July 2006. On this site you will find information about NHW, the services it provides, employment opportunities, how to provide feedback and also copies of our Annual and Quality of Care reports.

The site has been presented to various staff and community groups with positive feedback. In addition, success has been demonstrated by the fact that since going 'live' there have been over 10,000 hits to the site per month.

CUSTOMER SERVICE Award is provided each year to an individual who embodies the customer service philosophy we strive towards at NHW. We look towards staff who are friendly, helpful, professional and generally treat others how they would like to be treated themselves.

This year it was impossible to split the winner of the customer service award so we have given 2 awards. Both these staff members are cheerful, courteous, helpful and go out of their way to be of assistance where they possibly can. They greet others, both staff and the general public, with a smile and offer to help. They take the time to learn others names and communicate clearly and appropriately.

The Customer Service Award was presented to Kylie Morgan, Courier and Receptionist and Caterina McMillan, Ward Clerk in the Thomas Hogan Centre.

Travelling Scholarship

Each year the Board of Management of Northeast Health Wangaratta offers a Travelling Scholarship to staff interested in pursuing particular areas of study, work experience, conferences or workshops, either in Australia or overseas, that will add value to the knowledge and experience of staff.

The value of the Travelling Scholarship is \$5000, and it is intended to cover travel, registration and accommodation expenses whilst the staff member or members receive study leave.

This year the Board has decided to offer the Travelling Scholarship for 2006 to two well deserved applicants - Paul Crimmin and Bernadine Hamer.

Paul is the Manager of Community and Aged Care Services and Bernie is the Manager of Hospital Admission Risk Program - Chronic Disease Management.

They will both attend the "International Conference on Chronic Disease" which will be held on 29 October to 1 November 2007, in Calgary, Alberta. This year's focus will be on recognizing achievements in the prevention and management of chronic illness.

They will also take the opportunity to visit local health service providers within the Calgary Health Region.

Board of Management President Mr Geoff Dinning and Chief Executive Officer Mr Peter McGregor congratulated all award recipients on their achievements and dedication to ensuring quality comprehensive health care is provided to the community in North East Victoria.

Life Governorship

The Board of Management decided to award a Life Governorship at this year's AGM to a well deserving community member and dedicated volunteer at Northeast Health Wangaratta, Mrs Cath Cutler.

Cath has been a valued member of the "Friends of the Hospital" Auxiliary, and her and her husband Laurie have delivered meals from the hospital once a fortnight since 1987 for 'Meals on Wheels'. As a member of "Friends of the Hospital, Cath is famous for her many and varied delicious cakes made to sell at the monthly cake stall. The "Friends of the Hospital" raise funds to buy medical equipment for the hospital. This year alone the "Friends of the Hospital" raised over \$30,000.

Cath is also a member of the local Anti Cancer Council Committee, which endeavours to raise funds for continued research into the cause and treatment of cancer. Currently Cath is knitting scarves for Cancer to sell at the local market and she also knits rugs that are sent to places like Nepal.

Mind-you this is all achieved by Cath after 30 years as a sewing teacher and running her own sewing business.

The local media has described Cath as *"taking her knitting needles everywhere she goes, and she usually has a cake baking in the kitchen – all in the name of a number of local charities"*.

Cath retires from the "Friends of the Hospital" at the end of this year. She will be greatly missed, along with her cakes, and in particular her famous Lemon Yoghurt Cakes, which Cath has made over 1,000 of these for the "Friends of the Hospital" cake stalls.

The Board of Management, Executive and Staff at NHW and the wider community thank you for your contribution and are pleased to award you with this Life Governorship.

Quality of Care Report

Northeast Health Wangaratta officially launched its fifth Quality of Care Report to the community. The report is a move away from the traditional annual report and aims to provide people with information regarding the quality and safety of patient care throughout Northeast Health Wangaratta. All Victorian public hospitals are now required under legislation to produce such a document each year.

This year the Quality of Care Report focuses on two of our key service areas: Elective Surgery and Medical Management of Patients. Last year, the Quality of Care Report assessment was positive and Northeast Health Wangaratta was voted "most improved report" and "short listed report" in the regional category. This year we have built on the constructive comments provided to make the report informative and interesting to read.

Mr Dinning stated that "the report informs our community about the aspects of health care that affect them most. These aspects include areas such as the quality improvement of services,

the safety and cleanliness of wards and departments, customer satisfaction, our complaints procedures, the admission and discharge processes, infection control, staff credentials and clinical governance. For those who also wish to know about the more traditional aspects that were found in previous annual reports, an accompanying publication that includes audited financial statements, staffing details and statistics is also available”.

The Quality of Care Report will be widely circulated throughout the community and is currently available from the Hospital’s front reception.

For further information on any of the information above or to discuss the organisation’s 2005/06 Annual Finance and Performance Report, please contact the CEO’s Office on (03) 5722 0280