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Annual Clinical Paediatric Conference Highlights Regional Commitment to the Future of Children's Health

Over 125 local general practitioners (GPs), GP registrars, practice nurses and allied health professionals gathered in Leura on Saturday, for the highly anticipated 2025 Nepean Blue Mountains Clinical Paediatric Conference.

Wentworth Healthcare, provider of the Nepean Blue Mountains Primary Health Network, and the Nepean Blue Mountains Local Health District, have been working together since 2013 to bring this important annual Conference on paediatric care to the local region.

This year's Conference tackled some of the most common issues in childhood health, with a strong focus on innovative approaches in primary care. Topics included managing adolescent vaping, common paediatric ear, nose and throat concerns, assessing developmental delay in young children, asthma and 'pre-school wheeze', paediatric allergies, and addressing childhood obesity.

One of the key organisers behind the event, Clinical Associate Professor Dr Habib Bhurawala, Head of Paediatrics at Nepean Hospital has, over the years, delivered on his promise to engage the brightest minds in shaping the future of children's healthcare.

"The shared passion for paediatric care among healthcare professionals, both in the hospital and out in the community, is truly remarkable. The conference has gone from strength to strength each year. From GPs, to registrars, to practice nurses and allied health professionals, I am particularly proud of the diverse range of disciplines represented at this year's event," he said.

Wentworth Healthcare Board Chair, Mr Gary Smith AM, who opened the event, acknowledged Dr Bhurawala's dedication and tireless work, which have been instrumental in shaping the event's success over the past 12 years.

"We deeply value our relationship with Dr Bhurawala, the paediatric team at Nepean Hospital, and others who have dedicated their time to help organise this event, including Dr Arman Babajanyan, Head of Paediatrics at Blue Mountains Hospital, and Dr Arpita Chauhan, Wentworth Healthcare's Continuing Professional Development GP Advisor. Their commitment to improving child health outcomes through collaboration and clinical excellence is reflected in every aspect of this year's Conference," said Mr Smith.

Mr Smith emphasised the value of events like this one for health professionals, not only as an opportunity for continued education, but also as a platform for promoting integration across the local health system through connection and knowledge sharing.

"Together with the Nepean Blue Mountains Local Health District, we are focussed on building a more efficient, equitable, integrated and patient-centred local health system that meets the needs of our growing community," he said



“One way we work towards this is through our two organisation’s combined Integrated Health and Wellbeing Joint Boards Sub Committee. This joint governance helps both organisations to work together on shared goals, and this wonderful Conference is just one example of this,” said Mr Smith.

“This Conference provides a valuable opportunity for busy health professionals, from both the hospital and non-hospital sectors, to come together and foster relationships. It provides the time and space for shared learning, meaningful discussion on continuity of care, integration and holistic approaches, to better support children and families as they navigate the health system from infancy through to adolescence,” he said.

The Conference also highlighted the vital role GPs play in supporting children and families, particularly in the early stages of care. As the first point of contact for most families, GPs are central to identifying, managing and coordinating care for a wide range of paediatric conditions.

“Primary care, and particularly general practice, plays a crucial role in childhood development and keeping children safe, healthy and happy as they grow,” said Mr Smith.

“We know that quality care in childhood can influence patient outcomes in adulthood. Bringing together experts in the paediatric space to present evidenced-based research and learnings is vital for improving the care we provide children and can help shape who they turn out to be,” he said.

Newly appointed General Manager for Nepean Hospital, Mr Brad Ceely, attended the Conference for the first time. Having worked as a clinician in paediatrics for 25 years, Mr Ceely felt a sense of connection to the work and praised both health organisations in connecting hospital services with community-based care.

“It was fantastic to see the top minds in paediatrics come together and share evidence-based research that’s improving the clinical outcomes for children in our care. I can understand why this conference is earmarked in everyone’s calendars and is a cornerstone of paediatric education and collaboration in the Nepean Blue Mountains community,” he said.

“With Stage 2 of the Nepean Hospital Redevelopment including a purpose-built paediatric inpatient unit, we will continue to elevate the standard of care for children in the region,” said Mr Ceely.

The Nepean Blue Mountains Clinical Paediatric Conference continues to be a key event for paediatric education and collaboration, driving forward the health sector’s commitment to quality care for children across the region.

Acknowledgement and thanks to the event’s sponsors Rural Doctors Network, GSK, Nestlé, Aspen Pharmacare Australia, H&H Group, Novo Nordisk, Nutricia and Pfizer.

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