

## CONFERENCE ABSTRACT

# 'Doing Better Together': Developing a cross-agency regional child health and wellbeing plan

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In 2013, the alignment of the geographic boundaries of the regional Local Health District, Family and Community Services and the Medicare Local/Primary Health Network presented a strategic opportunity to form a high-level strategic partnership and planning group. This group provided an ideal platform for collaboration.

The Local Health District had already identified the need for a five-year child health plan and proposed that this was completed collaboratively and that it covered both health and broader wellbeing. The emergence of integrated care as a focus area for the New South Wales (NSW) Ministry of Health was an additional driver for developing a shared plan. Membership of the Senior Partnership and Planning Group was expanded to include representatives from the child and family non-government sector and the Department of Education.

Whilst each organisation involved are working towards child health and wellbeing in many ways every day, the Plan focuses on the 'additionality' that comes from cross-agency collaboration and integration.

A stakeholder consultation workshop with over one hundred service providers informed the determination of strategic priorities and related actions for inclusion in the Plan. The Plan provides a framework for shared governance, collaboration and a common vision for child health and wellbeing outcomes over a five year period.

The mission for the Child Health and Wellbeing Plan is for the children of Inner West Sydney region to be healthy, safe, respected, valued and happy, living in supportive families, and nurtured in strong inclusive communities.

The Plan is based on the important idea that agencies working together, in collaboration with communities, can do more and can achieve meaningful change, particularly when vulnerable children and families are involved. Vulnerable children include those living in poverty, at risk of violence, abuse and neglect, newly arrived refugees and migrants, living with parents or carers who have mental health and/or substance abuse issues, and whose chances of reaching their potential are reduced or at risk.

The 'Inner-West Child Health and Wellbeing Plan: Doing Better Together' was launched by the NSW Minister for Health in November 2015.

'Healthy Homes and Neighbourhoods' is a three-year integrated care initiative funded through a NSW Ministry of Health Integrated Care Planning and Innovation Fund. 'Healthy Homes and Neighbourhoods' is a demonstration project of the Child Health and Wellbeing Plan and provided an immediate and significant opportunity to extend and test the collaborative partnership.

The program addresses the complex health and social needs of the most vulnerable families in our community who may be disconnected from key services and who require multi-agency assistance. Approximately 170 individuals have enrolled for care coordination since program implementation in June 2015. All the needs of identified families are in scope for the intervention, including housing, employment, income support and legal advice. Geospatial mapping identified clusters of extreme family disadvantage, where additional community projects are being implemented.

Scoping papers have been completed for the Child Health and Wellbeing Plan high priority initiatives with oversight, support and quality assurance from an Implementation Sub-Committee with cross-agency representation.

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