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Cancer projects to benefit at-risk communities in South Eastern Sydney Local Health District

Young people of Lebanese background in the St George district are among those who will benefit from a \$795,344 boost for four locally run, innovative cancer control projects.

Associate Professor Winston Liauw, Director of Cancer Services, South Eastern Sydney Local Health District, said the investment is part of the 2018 Innovation in Cancer Control grants, delivered through the Cancer Institute NSW, and will make a difference to cancer outcomes locally.

“Almost everyone in our community has been affected by cancer in some way but there are communities that bear a higher burden of this disease.

“Funding will include \$386,076 to raise awareness of the harms of water-pipe smoking. Research from the World Health Organization shows just one shisha session an hour may be as harmful as smoking 100-200 cigarettes due to the volume of smoke inhaled.

“South Eastern Sydney is home to a large Arabic speaking community, so this funding will allow us to raise awareness of the harms of shisha smoking among the people most at risk.

“It will also fund three other projects that will focus on young women who need screening for cervical cancer, colonoscopy patients and people with colorectal cancer,” Associate Professor Liauw said.

The community-led grants, totalling \$4.5 million across the state this year, focus on groups at risk of poorer health outcomes, including Aboriginal communities, people from multicultural backgrounds, refugees and people from regional NSW.

Chief Cancer Officer and CEO of the Cancer Institute NSW, Professor David Currow, said the grants support continuous health system improvement.

“These grants will improve health outcomes for communities most at risk and are delivered by trusted organisations with the necessary relationships and expertise,” Professor Currow said.

The total \$795,344 for South Eastern Sydney Local Health District will support the following projects:

- Raising awareness of the harms of water-pipe smoking (\$386,076).
- Increasing cervical screening during the antenatal and postnatal period for never screened and under-screened Aboriginal women and women from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds (\$199,268).
- Sharing follow-up care for patients with colorectal cancer (\$120,000).
- Virtual clinics for rapid assessment and access to endoscopy for patients with positive faecal occult blood test at St George Hospital (\$90,000).

A full list of grants awarded as part of the Innovation in Cancer Control Grants is available at www.cancer.nsw.gov.au/data-research/grants/open-grants/innovations-in-cancer-control-grants