

NSW Telestroke Service

# The Reperfusion Times

An internal newsletter for staff at NSW Telestroke Service Referring Sites

March 2022

## Medical Director's Foreword

### Professor Ken Butcher

It is somewhat difficult to believe, but it has now been two years since the NSW Telestroke Service (NSW TSS) went live. In that time, we have grown from our initial 2 sites in the Mid North Coast to 18 fully operational Regional Telestroke Referral Centres. Approximately half of our sites have moved from the implementation to business-as-usual phases and the final 5 hospitals will go live within the next 6 months.

I continue to be astounded by both the quantity and quality of care delivered by the combined efforts of the local and Statewide teams. Soon we will pass the 2000 patient mark. This milestone is an accomplishment in itself, but our treatment rates are even more impressive. A total of 34% of our acute ischaemic stroke patients have received a reperfusion therapy. Our thrombolysis rate is an incredible 25%. To put this in perspective, a thrombolysis rate of 20% is generally accepted as excellent internationally and in Australia the rate was 10% in 2019. These are world leading rates and something we should all be proud of.

Most importantly, however, we are benefiting patients. For those of you who attend our weekly multidisciplinary team meeting on Friday afternoons, you know that thrombolysis delivered in the Telestroke setting often results in an open artery by the time the patient makes it to their nearest Comprehensive Centre. This is even more obvious when we review all cases sent to the Comprehensive Centres, where up to 50% of the patients don't actually require a clot retrieval. It has also been very gratifying to see our colleagues in other fields embrace the therapy, related perhaps in no small part to our safety numbers. To date, the symptomatic haemorrhage rate with thrombolysis is 2.2%, which is actually lower than that seen with endovascular clot retrieval (5%) or any of the clinical trials. Please forgive me for going on about all of the numbers, but I do believe they summarise some truly excellent work that you can all be proud of.

I look forward to meeting with many of you in person on 31st March and 1st April here in Sydney at the ACI Stroke Forum. Covid has kept us physically apart for far too long. This will be a chance for us to celebrate our achievements together, but also an opportunity for me and the rest of the Consultant group and Host Site team to hear your perspectives from the coal face of the service. We are at a point where we can consider what is working well, but also make adjustments where necessary. We are also going to do some brainstorming around potential new innovations. As I mentioned in the last newsletter, we are also keen to explore developing the research potential of some of our sites. Our model of care has improved care at referring sites to the point it is actually as good or better than that provided in many of our metro teaching centres, so there is certainly no reason to think excellent research can not also be conducted regionally.

Once again, thank you all for your hard work, dedication, patience and support. We are indebted to so many individuals and groups across NSW Health, but I would like to express my personal gratitude to the Project Officers, Stroke Coordinators and all of the Medical, Nursing and Allied health staff at our Regional Sites.

Ken

Photo: Prof Ken Butcher, Fiona Ryan, Dr Tim Ang and Kate Jackson at Bathurst Hospital



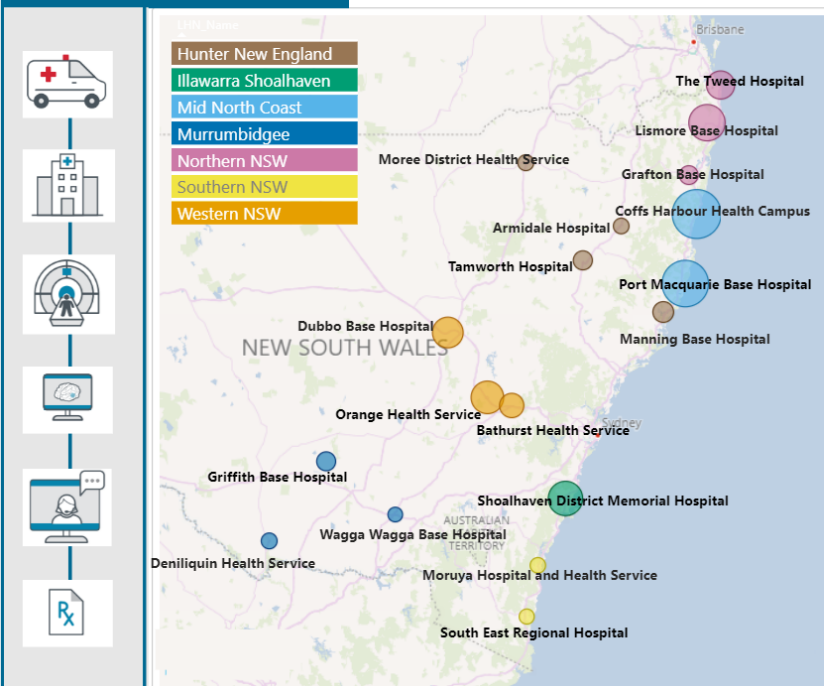
National Safety and Quality Health Service Standards tagged throughout this newsletter



Clinical Governance Standard	Partnering with Consumers Standard	Comprehensive Care Standard	Communicating for Safety Standard
Preventing and Controlling Infections Standard	Medication Safety Standard	Blood Management Standard	Recognising and Responding to Acute Deterioration Standard

<https://www.safetyandquality.gov.au/standards/nsqhs-standards>

## NSW Telestroke Service



18

Live sites

Site	Live since
Coffs Harbour	16 Mar 20
Port Macquarie	16 Mar 20
Lismore	08 Sep 20
Orange	28 Sep 20
Dubbo	17 Nov 20
Bathurst	02 Dec 20
Shoalhaven	13 Jan 21
Grafton	08 Apr 21
Griffith	04 May 21
Tweed	10 May 21
Deniliquin	18 May 21
Wagga Wagga	21 Jul 21
Tamworth	25 Aug 21
Manning	28 Sep 21
Armidale	06 Oct 21
Moree	14 Oct 21
SERH	08 Feb 22
Moruya	10 Feb 22

1923

Telestroke cases

372

Reperfusion recommendations

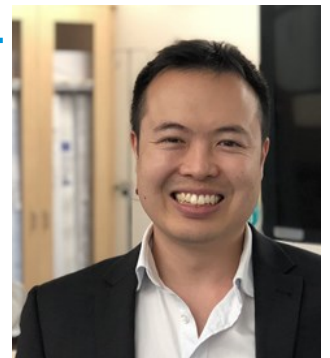
## NSW TSS Neurologists' Spotlight WNSWLHD

### Dr Tim Ang | Dubbo and Bathurst NSW TSS Site Neurologist

Working with Bathurst and Dubbo has been a very satisfying experience. Since my time as a humble intern at Bathurst Hospital eons ago, I've harboured an ambition to return in some way, as a Specialist. It's a pleasure to do so under the guise of the NSW Telestroke Service. Both sites were outstanding before the NSW TSS came along so marrying the strengths of the different services to produce world class stroke care for patients in the region, has been an absolute pleasure.

There's a stroke trial that has been actively recruiting called MIDAS-2. It's a study aimed at proving the efficacy of Modafinil as a treatment for stroke-related fatigue. It's an amazing study and I've been enrolling patients from Bathurst and Dubbo with great anecdotal improvements. Can't wait for the trial to release its results! I also practice and research in use of novel antithrombotics in neuroendovascular procedures — exciting stuff so watch this space!

**FUN FACT:** I love playing footy but there's a Bluey episodes that chillingly sums up my situation: see [Episode 17 Fruitbat](#). For all those footy loving Dads cut down in their prime by the birth of their kids, this episode will make you laugh (and cry).



### Dr James Evans | Orange NSW TSS Site Neurologist

Working with the team at Orange Health Service to implement and embed the NSW TSS and model of care has been a great pleasure. Orange has an excellent stroke service and to be able to work with local Neurologist Dr Rami Haddad and Stroke Care Coordinator Fiona Ryan, to incorporate the NSW TSS process at their site has been, and continues to be very rewarding. The consistently impressive metrics from Orange Health Service are a testament to the local team and their work to ensure sustainable service delivery.

**FUN FACT:** In keeping with the footy focus, I was hoping to celebrate a triumphant beginning to the 2022 season by the Mighty Bombers. The first round hasn't got my spirits high but a true footy fan never leaves their team! I remain ever hopeful of seeing them *fly up, up...*

# NSW Telestroke Service: LHD Spotlight

## Western NSW LHD



This issue we visit WNSWLHD whose NSW TSS Referring Sites; Orange, Dubbo and Bathurst went live from September to December 2020.

### Orange

In Orange, the collaboration of Stroke Care Coordinators Fiona Ryan and Anders Jansson, has enabled resources to focus on Telestroke Quality Improvement (QI) activities.

One of these activities has been embedding a sustainable education plan for Medical Officers at Orange. With sponsorship by local Neurologist Dr Rami Haddad, Medical Officers are supported to attend NSW TSS BPT webinars and have NSW TSS education integrated into their hospital orientation. The education plan also includes ad-hoc education sessions tailored around on-call rostering.

This QI activity has demonstrated the effectiveness of strong local sponsorship and collaboration in sustaining NSW TSS education.



Photo: Orange ED and Stroke Team

### Dubbo

Dubbo has undergone a major redevelopment including a new Coronary Care Unit and a 4 bedded Stroke Unit. The Stroke Unit was officially opened on 15th February 2022, a very proud moment for all.

The new Stroke Unit will allow patients to be cared for in state of the art facilities and allow stroke MDT to deliver evidence-based stroke care from admission through to discharge. As part of the redevelopment, Dubbo also received a second CT scanner and it's first MRI.

Congratulations are also in order for the stroke team at Dubbo Health Service who received WSO Gold Status in 2021. This is well deserved recognition for Debra Sloane (Stroke Care Coordinator), Dr Kate Crossley (Neurologist) and the local stroke team for the excellent stroke care they deliver across the patient care continuum.



Photo: Dubbo Stroke and Medical Imaging Team

### Bathurst

Bathurst Health Service went live as a referral site to the NSW Telestroke Service in December 2020.

As the Stroke Care Coordinator at both Orange and Bathurst, Fiona Ryan has been sustaining a number of QI projects. One project involves regular review of the NSW TSS Call Log, feeding back learnings to the local team to continue to improve the process and identify suitable calls to the NSW TSS.

Fiona Ryan and Michelle Kemp (Stroke Care Coordinator), provide ongoing NSW TSS education to ED staff aimed at improving the Door to CT and DTN metrics. They are also working together to develop QI around implementing discharge care plans for acute stroke patients in line with current best practice.



Photo: Michelle Kemp (PT/SCC), Charlene Butler (RN), Heidi Lees (A/ED NUM) and Lisa Pearce (NUM)

## NSW TSS Recognition

Congratulations Tamworth, Tweed and Orange for receiving recognition in Q4 2021 **World Stroke Organisation (WSO) Angels Awards**.

# NSW Telestroke Service: Updates from the team

## eHealth

### Tips & Tricks



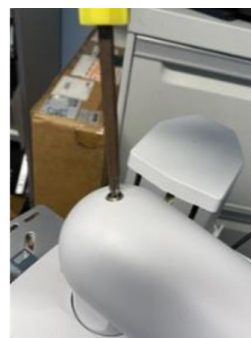
#### WOWs – Panasonic Camera falling forward

[Tightening the screw on top of the camera](#)

If the camera is loose and is falling forward, use a Philips head screwdriver and a minimum of 20 turns to tighten the screw.

[Why so many turns?!](#)

The screw requires many rotations to ensure a more stable position. See image to the right, to conceptualise the length of the screw.



#### Emergency NSW TSS technical support

If you experience technical issues pertinent to the NSW TSS which require **urgent** escalation, call the Statewide Service Desk (SWSD) on **1300 285 533**. Clearly state that the issue is for “Telestroke” or use the SARA ‘Create Incident’ form and search for “Telestroke” as the Business Service/Application.

Business Service/Application

🔍 Telestroke

#### Non-Emergency NSW TSS technical support

In the event that a **non-urgent** technical issue needs to be addressed, call the Statewide Service Desk (SWSD) on **1300 285 533** or use the SARA incident form. Clearly state that the issue is for “Telestroke”. Once the ticket is lodged, a confirmation email will be sent.

## ACI

### Implementation Update

All remaining sites have successfully recruited Project Officers. Welcome to Emma Turner and Michelle Lloyd-Jones at SNSWLHD; Anthony Farquhar at FWNSWLHD and Shaun Seldon at NBMLHD.

SNSWLHD: Congratulations SERH and Moruya on your Go Live in February 2022!

New implementing sites will be the first NSW TSS sites to use Microsoft Teams as eHealth transitions from Skype for Business Statewide.

We would like to acknowledge the hard work for all sites in managing service complexities presented by Covid-19.



Photo: SERH ED Team



### Stroke Network Update

The **Rural Stroke Network** will host their annual face to face meeting on the 30th March at the ACI in St Leonards, Sydney.

Stroke clinicians will have the opportunity to present QI initiatives and research that are impacting outcomes for stroke patients in NSW on 31st March at the [Stroke Forum](#). The Stroke Forum is both a face to face and [virtual event](#).

An addition to the forum this year will be an extra half day devoted to the [NSW Telestroke Forum](#) on the 1st of April, there will be an opportunity to come together to celebrate the success of the project and share lessons learnt.

From 1st April in metro Sydney (excluding Northern Sydney LHD), **NSW Ambulance** will be extending the window of “*last known well*” for all suspected stroke patients beyond 4.5 hours to 24 hours. This is a phased implementation and further updates will follow.

Coming soon....a **NSW Education and Mentorship Program** for Rural Stroke Coordinators....more information will be circulated by the Network in the coming months.