



PO Box 615  
Carlton South VIC 3053  
hestaawards.com.au

 @HESTAPHCawards

**Media release 14 May 2013**

## **Illawarra Shoalhaven health team a finalist in national primary health awards**

An Illawarra Shoalhaven Local Health District team that has provided better, integrated care for people with chronic disease, has been named a finalist in the 2013 HESTA Primary Health Care Awards.

The Shoalhaven arm of the Connecting Care in the Community and Chronic Disease Management teams, has been recognised as one of five finalists in the Team Excellence category. The teams have been formed through a partnership with the Illawarra Shoalhaven Local Health District and the Illawarra Shoalhaven Medicare Local.

The awards recognise the dedication and professionalism of those working in primary health care, including physiotherapists, dentists, pharmacists, therapists, GPs, rehabilitation professionals, health educators and medical practice managers.

Director of Operations, Planning and Performance, Michelle Noort, said the team's approach leads to better identification of patients, improved coordination of care and more timely referrals for people with chronic disease in the area.

"The Connecting Care Coordinators and Chronic Disease Teams have collaborated to share resources, improve communication and deliver patient-centred care to people with chronic disease in the local area," Ms Noort said.

"Connecting Care Coordinators provide case management through comprehensively assessing patients and linking them to services, provide advocacy and develop shared care plans. These are then followed through with the patient, GP and specialist physicians.

"The Chronic Disease Teams provide referrals to the care coordinators and offer a range of expert advice about their service.

"This model of care has identified and provided care coordination to close to 900 patients in the Shoalhaven region, in this very high risk group of people with chronic diseases. More than half of these people now have a shared care plan, and chronic disease teams have access to this information through shared electronic medical records.

"Preliminary data has demonstrated that this approach has had a positive impact on hospital re-admissions and hospital bed day savings."

Team members, Simone Jones, Karin Robinson and Monica Taylor and the other finalists will be flown to Melbourne for an awards dinner on 6 June 2013, when the winners will be revealed.

A \$30,000 prize pool will be shared among the winners, courtesy of long-term HESTA awards sponsor, ME Bank. The Young Leader and Individual Distinction Award winners will each receive a \$5,000 ME Bank *EveryDay* Transaction Account and a \$5,000 education grant. The Team Excellence Award winner will receive a \$10,000 development grant to put towards the implementation of their program or initiative.

HESTA is the leading super fund for health and community services, with more than 750,000 members and \$22 billion in assets. More people in health and community services choose HESTA for their super.

**MEDIA CONTACT: Luisa Saccotelli 0400 149 901 or Aileen Muldoon 0419 112 503**