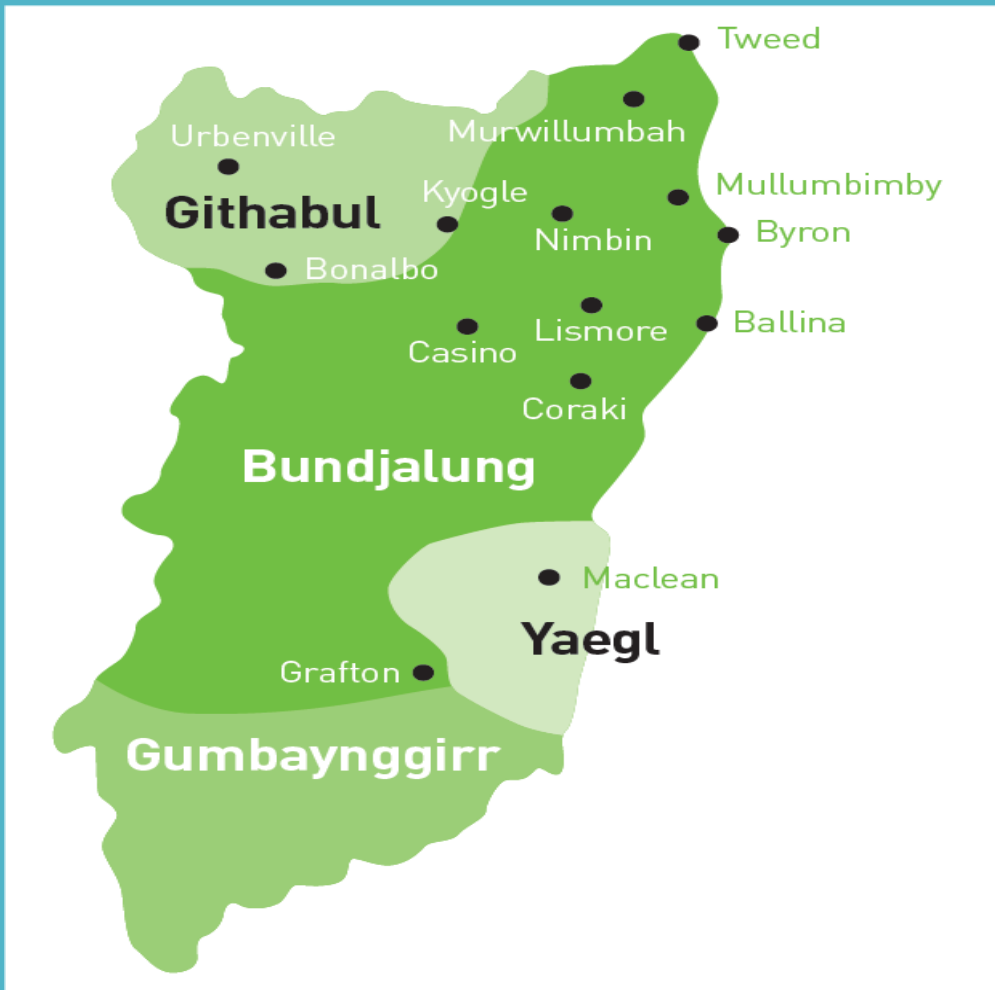


Nurse Led Models of Care Facilitating Timely access to Palliative Care in Regional and Remote Settings

Nurse Practitioners:
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Northern NSW Local Health District (NNSWLHD) covers an area of 20,732 square kilometres, from the QLD/NSW border in the North, the Clarence Valley in the south, the Great Dividing Range in the West and the Pacific Ocean Coastline in the east.

Our Team of Nurse Practitioners

Four full time equivalent Nurse Practitioners who work across three geographical footprints covering regional and remote areas across all NNSWLHD.



Our model of care includes community, inpatient setting, Residential Aged Care Home (RACH). We provide face to face consults in the home, telehealth via healthdirect and provide an outpatient clinic service. The NP's lead a full episode of care.



We provide 7 day a week on call support to our palliative care nurses in the community on a rotating roster.

Aim of Service review and methods

A review of the service to ensure timely, equitable access with a flexible approach to Palliative Care for individuals living with a life limiting illness and their families in NNSWLHD.

Five open ended questions sent out to the staff of our local SPCS for reflection on the contributions of NPs for after-hours clinical support and any improvements needed in working with a NP

Review Questions

What are the three top things that come to mind when working with a nurse practitioner in the management of palliative care needs for your patients?

How do you see the nurse practitioner as a role model for the specialist palliative care service?

Have you used telehealth with the nurse practitioner and if so, how has this made a difference in managing the palliative care needs of your patient?

What are the benefits of having a nurse practitioner available for clinical support afterhours and on weekends?

What are the key areas you would like to see improved by the nurse practitioner service?



Who
responded to
the questions?

What are the three top things that come to mind when working with a nurse practitioner in the management of palliative care needs for your patients?

Clinical Expertise & Knowledge: Advanced assessment, symptom management, and prescribing.

Support & Collaboration: Enhances teamwork and fills gaps in medical coverage.

Medication Management: Central role in prescribing and reviewing medications.

Patient-Centred Care: Improves outcomes and supports home-based care.

Accessibility & Availability: Approachable and responsive for consultations.

Leadership & Role Modelling: Guides best practice and mentors staff.

How do you see the nurse practitioner as a role model for the specialist palliative care service?



Clinical Expertise & Knowledge: Skilled in assessment and symptom management.



Support & Mentorship: Guides junior staff and fosters professional development.



Leadership & Role Modelling: Sets high clinical standards and influences team culture.



Patient-Centred Care: Holistic and compassionate approach.



Team Collaboration: Coordinates care and bridges disciplines.

Have you used telehealth with the nurse practitioner and if so, how has this made a difference in managing the palliative care needs of your patient?



Timely Access to Care: Enables rapid symptom management and decision-making.



Medication Prescribing: Facilitates quick adjustments and prescriptions.



Patient Reassurance: Supports patients and carers at home.



Collaborative Planning: Enhances shared care and clinician support.



Technical Limitations: Minor issues noted but overall positive impact.

What are the benefits of having a nurse practitioner available for clinical support afterhours and on weekends?

Timely Clinical Support: Rapid assistance for urgent patient needs.

Medication Management: Prevents hospital admissions and ensures continuity.

Reduced Staff Stress: Provides reassurance and confidence.

Improved Patient Outcomes: Enhances comfort and safety at home.

Accessibility & Leadership: Strengthens service delivery during off-hours.

What are the key areas you would like to see improved by the nurse practitioner service?

Increased Availability & Coverage: More NPs across sites and during NP annual leave.

Education & Mentorship: More training and support for nurses.

Communication & Role Clarity: Clear guidelines and consistent expectations.

Telehealth Expansion: Greater use to improve access.

Outpatient Clinics: Development of NP-led clinics.

Administrative Support: More support to increase clinical time.

Referral Criteria: Standardised referral processes for chronic disease patients.

What's Next

Review of the Specialist
Palliative Care Afterhours
Service

Staff survey focusing on -
access, equity, flexibility
and service gaps

Conclusion

NPs support the SPCS in many ways, PC staff are easily able to identify and articulate the benefits in collaborating with NPs in support of their clinical practice and management of patients' palliative care needs

NPs are critical to sustaining the anticipated increase in need for community pc services

Nightcap National Park

**Northern NSW
Local Health District**

