



ANNUAL REPORT 2023/24



Adventist
HealthCare



Aligning with our Church's Identity and Objectives

Adventist HealthCare Limited (AHCL) originated with the opening of the 'Sydney Sanitarium' in 1903. As a not-for-profit institution with a long term mission of providing distinctive health care for our community and healing ministry founded on faith in God, AHCL is a centre of influence for the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

Adventist HealthCare operates several businesses including Sydney Adventist Hospital - NSW's largest private hospital, San Day Surgery Hornsby, San Radiology & Nuclear Medicine and Sydney Adventist Hospital Pharmacy. Our mission of 'Christianity in Action - caring for the body, mind and spirit of our patients, colleagues, community and ourselves'; and values of Dignity, Excellence, Integrity, and Continuity, are consistent with the christian values and teachings of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

AHCL supports the mission of the church through extending the healing ministry of Jesus Christ to thousands of community members every day, from bringing new life into the world, healing and nurturing the sick, and supporting those whose lives are at an end. We have a unique opportunity to share our Adventist ethos and philosophy to the community members we interact with every day - including our strong focus on holistic care and healthy living. Our commitment and focus on education enable AHCL to actively support the church in the training of nursing, medical and allied health personnel so that they are enabled to heal and teach others in the future.

During 2023/24 the AHCL Board, Executive and Leadership teams have collaborated to implement initiatives supporting the 2022-2025 strategy, while also adopting a more focused 'Future Ready' approach that will take the organisation into the future.

A key part of this Future Ready approach is engaging with our clinicians and our people, celebrating their achievements and acknowledging their contribution to our ongoing success. At the same time, we have been continuing to manage the lingering commercial impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic still being felt throughout the healthcare industry.



Adventist HealthCare Limited Key Objectives

Spiritual Life and Power

AHCL recognises the power of God as an essential element in recovery from illness and disease, and positive lifestyle change. The primary objective of AHCL is to introduce people to the grace and love of God through its health and healing ministry, and to provide opportunities for the fulfilment of spiritual needs of our staff, patients and visitors in the daily program of hospital operations.

Professional Excellence

AHCL is committed to delivering excellence in all services. This includes ensuring the organisation provides: healthcare services to meet community needs; appropriate facilities, technology and equipment; skilled and experienced staff; focus on quality and safety; clinical research to ensure best practice and access to the latest treatments; and a favourable environment for patients, staff, doctors and visitors.

Health Enhancement and Education

AHCL aims to enhance the lifestyle and health of its community members. This includes a focus on delivering wholistic care to patients; health education programs for patients, staff, doctors and the community; and the provision of tertiary education for nursing, medical and allied health professionals.

Stewardship

Our Mission guides us to holding in stewardship the assets, resources and operations with which AHCL has been entrusted. Sound and efficient financial management will ensure the long-term sustainability of AHCL's Mission of caring for its community.





2022 - 2025 Vision and Strategic Priorities

Our Vision is to be a thriving faith-based provider of world class care, inspiring hope and wellbeing.

The strategic work to achieve this vision is underpinned by our Mission of Christianity in Action, and our core values - Excellence, Integrity, Dignity & Continuity.

Early in 2023/24, the Board, Executive and Leadership teams remained focused on implementing initiatives supporting the 2022-2025 strategic framework developed using the Strategy House methodology. As the year progressed, the teams determined that given current challenges facing the San and the private healthcare sector more broadly, it was no longer possible to continue this trajectory alone.

The Future Ready Program was developed as a more targeted approach to deliver change in order to improve profitability and ensure Adventist HealthCare can thrive into the future.



Future Ready Program 2023 - 2024

The Future Ready Program provides AHCL with a targeted approach to deliver the changes required to ensure the organisations future sustainability and growth. There are five key focus areas with specific workstreams, dedicated project managers and teams.

These workstreams and projects may change over time as they evolve, however the focus areas in late 2023/24 and leading into 2024/25 are the following:

AMO Revenue and Margin Growth

Focused on review of AMO mix and margin, doctor development and recruitment, and eliminating Hospital Acquired Complications (HACs)

Operational Excellence

Focused on length of stay reduction, EC growth, Perioperative redesign and improvement projects, strategies in support of key services including cardiac and neurosciences, support service initiatives, radiology, and supply costs

Workforce Utilisation and Efficiency

Focused on FTE optimisation, labour hours and rostering, and ways of working

Admission to Cash Cycle

Focused on improvements in Health Information Services workflow and processes, front-of-house patient experience, debtor management and health fund revenue

Head Office Costs

Focused on environmental sustainability projects, emergency cash planning initiatives, and property



Accreditation, Safety and Quality

In 2023/24 AHCL remained in the midst of our accreditation cycle, having successfully achieved Australian Commission on Safety & Quality in Health Care Standards (2nd edition) accreditation for three years at both Sydney Adventist Hospital and San Day Surgery Hornsby during 2021/22.

AHCL has a comprehensive clinical governance program to monitor, assess, evaluate and improve the quality of patient care across the organisation. To ensure compliance with the clinical governance program, an audit schedule for both clinical and non-clinical practices and processes is in place.

The philosophy of continual process improvement is supported by a corporate Adventist HealthCare Thrive Awards program.

AHCL continues to focus on building a high performance culture of safety and reliability. Several programs were delivered at Sydney Adventist Hospital during 2023/24 including Speaking Up for Safety and various Work Health & Safety workshops.



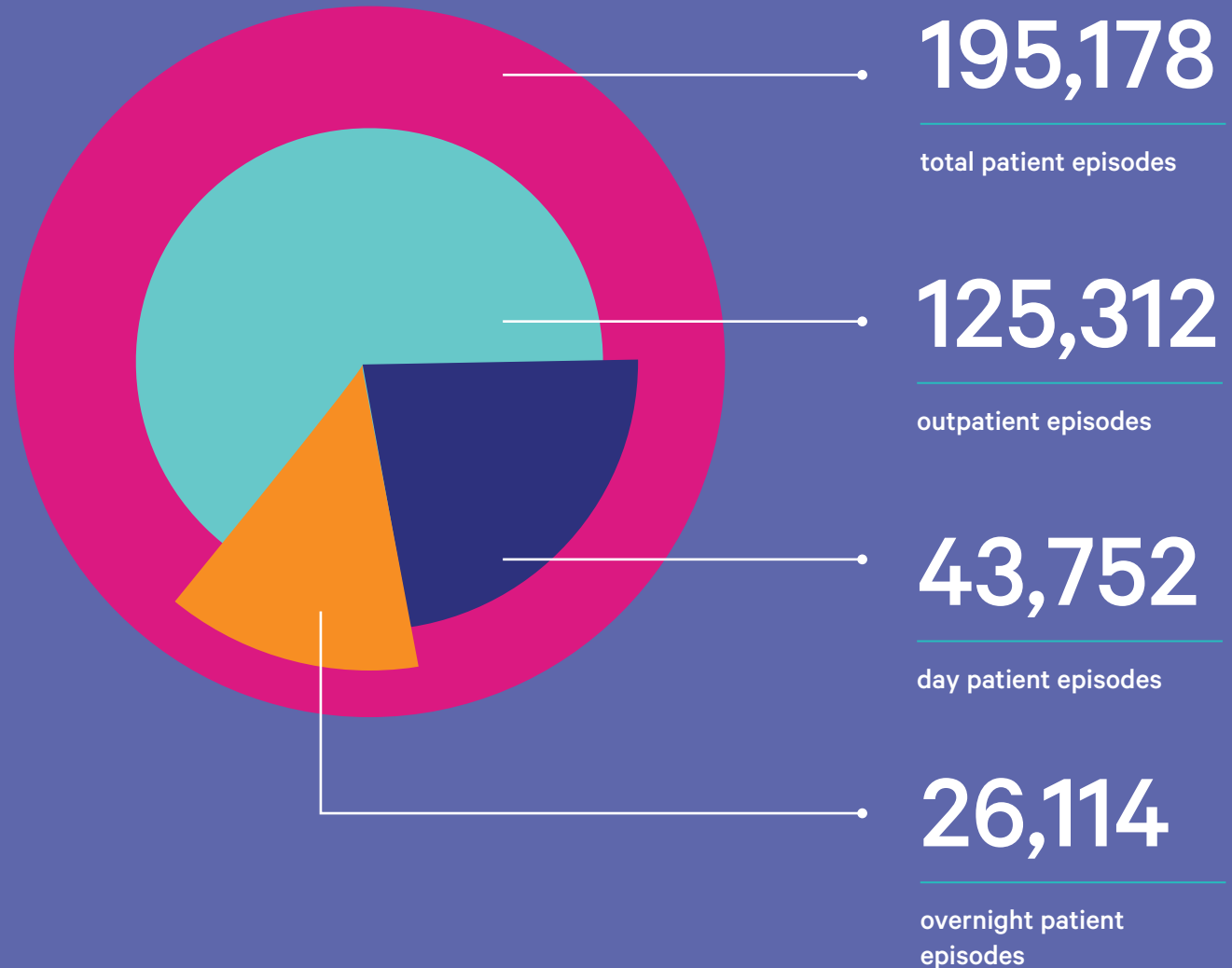




Healthcare Service Excellence

Having been a leading provider of private healthcare services and facilities since 1903, we are committed to our vision of being a thriving, faith-based provider of world class care inspiring hope and wellbeing.

In 2023/24 we remain proud of our reputation for exceptional care built on years of providing highly skilled medical and surgical services, underpinned by the expertise, commitment and compassion of our people.





1,843

babies delivered

192,295

pharmacy scripts filled

91.15%

AHCL patient overall satisfaction

20,416

emergency care presentations

5,273

cardiac rehabilitation visits

77.32

AHCL patient net promoter score

34,999

theatre / procedural cases

8,317

oncology navigator points of contact

570,403

meals prepared for staff, patients & visitors

127,966

imaging investigations

2,509

staff (headcount)

1,335

accredited
medical officers

285

volunteers



2023/24 Highlights



For the sixth year in a row, the San's cancer services were ranked highest in NSW - the San Integrated Cancer Centre, operating in partnership with Icon Cancer Centre Wahroonga, led the way providing in outstanding patient experience for cancer patients. In the annual Outpatient Cancer Clinics Survey conducted by the Bureau of Health Information

(BHI) and Cancer Institute NSW released in October 2023, the San achieved the highest ranking with 12 measures significantly higher than the NSW results, some of which were overall experience of care received; well-organised care; polite and courteous staff; comfort and cleanliness of facilities; and how well the healthcare team worked together.



Two state-of-the-art VELYS Orthopaedic robots are now being used by our Orthopaedic surgeons for knee replacement procedures. The first-of-its-kind operating table mounted system adapts to individual surgeons, utilising advanced planning capabilities and proprietary technology. The precision and accuracy provided by the system can give patients

better outcomes including less pain and swelling and a faster recovery time. Prior to their arrival, nursing and theatre staff were able to undertake next-generation hands-on training and virtual reality-based training to familiarise themselves with the technology thanks to the VELYS Mobile Lab bought onsite by the Johnson & Johnson Institute truck.

AHCL represented at the APHA Awards for Excellence 2024 – ‘QuickFox’, invented last year by a San perfusion technician and specialist as an ultra-fast new process of changing-out failed oxygenators during cardiopulmonary bypass procedures, was among the finalists in the Awards for Excellence. Their innovative invention means a life-critical procedure that generally took three minutes can now be done in around 10 seconds.



‘Rosella’ activity room opens - part of the inaugural San Foundation Research Grant, the Rosella Activity Room project is designed to improve outcomes for our dementia patients by creating a space that meets their psychosocial needs. It is evident that coming into an acute hospital setting can escalate the impacts of a cognitive impairment on patients, their families and their care team. By establishing an

environment tailored to this vulnerable group we aim to work with families and patients to reduce the impact that this stress causes where we can. This comprehensive approach embodies the San’s commitment to caring for the mind, body, and spirit. We look forward to seeing the benefits of this initiative reflected in future research papers.



A new Heart Failure Service Pilot Program, led by specialist cardiac nurses, now provides comprehensive care, education and support to our heart failure patients both during their hospital stay and when they go home with proactive follow-up after discharge. Patients are mostly monitored and assessed remotely via teleconference calls, and referred back to their specialist, GP and to other rehab and allied health services as clinically necessary. The service aims to reduce unplanned readmissions for patients, encourage self-care and exercise, and improve the outcomes and quality of life for our patients.

Advanced heart lung machine installed – the latest in cardiopulmonary perfusion technology, the Essenz Perfusion System provides perfusion specialists flexibility and scalability during procedures to optimise patient care. The San is only the fifth site in Australia to install these machines, considered indispensable when performing cardiac surgery with the insightful data that support doctors in making decisions and tailoring individual patient care.

Spiritual blessing opens new cardiac ward – the ward has relocated to a new home on the same floor as other cardiac services, meaning that all inpatient cardiac services are located on the same level. The move streamlines patient transitions between cardiac procedures, immediate post-operative specialised cardiac monitoring, and ongoing patient care.

New treatment available at the San for children living with achondroplasia – a genetic condition affecting one in 20,000 babies by impeding bone growth and limiting adult height to 120cm on average. This new treatment involves a drug only recently available in Australia at Children's hospitals, resulting in often long waiting lists. Giving patients quick access to this treatment at the San at an early age is potentially life changing, adding potentially up to 30 centimetres to the height of children living with achondroplasia.

Sydney Adventist Hospital named among nation's best for stroke care – the San was recognised for our high standard of stroke care, joining a list of only 19 Australian hospitals to have received official stroke unit certification from the Australian Stroke Coalition (ASC), recognising we have met a set of national criteria to deliver the best possible stroke care to patients. The San's extensive team of neurologists, neurology registrars, neurosurgery registrars, neurophysiology technicians, neuropsychologists and neurosurgeons are recognised as one of the largest neurological and neurosurgical teams of any private hospital in NSW. Staff and doctors were recognised for their exceptional care for our stroke patients with presentation of the certification during Stroke Week.

New robotic technology enhances San Pharmacy services - a new robotic storage and dispensing system is now in operation within San Pharmacy, with the intention that the technology will enable faster and less labour-intensive dispensing, help reduce dispensing errors and improve stock management. A blessing and celebration were held to showcase the new robotic technology to interested staff outside of Pharmacy, and more importantly, to recognise the efforts of those involved in implementing it – especially the Pharmacy staff who continued to operate their daily service despite the disruptions of the build happening around them.

First deep brain stimulation (DBS) procedure performed at the San - this marks the start of a new service at the San providing an advanced treatment option for those living with Parkinson's disease and other movement disorders. A team of Neurosurgeons and Neurologists developed the DBS service at the San to provide effective, long-term management for patients in our region living with Parkinson's disease and other movement disorders. These conditions are caused when brain cells don't talk to each other properly, and the DBS procedure involves implanting electrodes into specific deep-brain structures and using electrical impulses to stimulate specific areas in the brain and target specific patient symptoms. DBS provides benefits indefinitely and, although it is not a cure for Parkinson's disease, it can greatly improve symptom control and quality of life for patients.



**\$7 million donation
funds purpose-built
Robert & Jeanne Szeto
PET-CT Centre**



Housing the latest generation digital PET-CT scanner and patient facilities opened in November, changing lives through earlier detection and treatment of cancer and brain disease. The new generation scanner requires smaller doses of radiation which reduces radiation

exposure for patients, and also enable shorter scan times due to their larger field of view. The centre's state-of-the-art imaging technology will also boost the San's capacity to undertake world class research, both on-campus and through joining other multi-centre trials.

The new facility was made possible through the extraordinary generosity of nuclear medicine physician Dr Edwin Szeto, who donated millions to build the centre in honour of his parents, and the San Foundation.



Research

AHCL recognises the significant value of research in enabling the organisation to remain at the forefront of healthcare and improving patient outcomes. Research enables our community to have access to the latest treatments and offers opportunity to seek new and improved healthcare options for patients into the future.

Our commitment to research has been enhanced in 2023/24 as our Research Office team has continued to support our researchers. Implementation of the Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Healthcare's 'National Clinical Trial Governance Framework' is a significant undertaking and will optimise organisational strategic planning to deliver clinical trial services and more efficient trial operations while strengthening the clinical and corporate governance arrangements.

Our Research website has proved a helpful tool for researchers. The team are continuously updating and improving the guides and resources to ensure our researchers have the most up-to-date information, while Quarterly Research Advisory Committee meetings ensure research at the San is strategically led and encourage interdisciplinary communication on research underway and planned.

Every car parking ticket issued contributes \$1.00 to the support of research at AHCL.

49

research publications associated with AHCL

26

patients enrolled in 33 open San CTU clinical trials

43

projects approved by HREC and Research Governance Office

2023/24 initiatives include:

- **San Clinical Trials Unit** – offering patients the opportunity and ability to participate in the most current treatment options available in the field of medical oncology
- A number of **AHCL doctors and staff have been involved in clinical research publications** – including Australian and International publications
- **(HREC) Human Research Ethics Committee** – facilitating ethical and safe research. Comprised of a group of dedicated members including community representatives with expertise in the types of research conducted at AHCL. Close collaborations with external lead HRECs have also been established to support San researchers intending to conduct multi-centre research across Australia
- **Research databases and registries** – a significant number of projects are underway utilising the unique SAH oncological research database (ICIMS), many in collaboration with ANU students and affiliated doctors. These projects will contribute to providing the best, scientific-based and up-to-date treatments for our patients. The San contributes to 16 national clinical and research registries, supporting research efforts relevant to public health and safety
- **The Australasian Research Institute (ARI)** – unfortunately this highly regarded service ceased to operate on the SAH campus in May 2024
- **San Foundation Research Grant** – up to \$20,000 offered for a research project leading to improvements in patient experiences, patient outcomes and / or health systems. The recipients of the 2022/23 grant have now established their research project into the introduction of a new model of care for treating patients with dementia.
- **Research collaboration with tertiary education providers Avondale University and the Australian National University (ANU).** Policies and processes are in place to foster collaboration and encourage research across multiple sites. Joint efforts between ANU and SAH to integrate research infrastructure, enhance communication about research opportunities and share knowledge see several collaborative projects underway or being planned.

Research Result: COVID Lockdown Cancer Spike

In June 2024 results were released from a study conducted by researchers from the ANU Clinical School based at the San and utilising the ICIMS database, showing that more patients have been diagnosed with advanced breast cancer since the COVID-19 pandemic. This has been linked to the fact that women attended their GP and hospital appointments less frequently during pandemic both due to lockdowns and fear of catching COVID, and also because of breast screening service shutdowns for a period of 6 months in 2020 and 2021. Patients with breast cancer diagnosed between July 2019 and June 2022

were categorised into pre-pandemic, pandemic and post-pandemic groups, with more patients diagnosed with advanced breast cancer (stage 3 or 4) in the pandemic and post-pandemic group (8.5 per cent and 7 per cent) compared to the pre-pandemic group (4.6 per cent). Patients also had more chance of the disease spreading to their lymph nodes and developing into stage 2 breast cancer.

Lead author, Professor John Boyages AM, from Icon Cancer Centre at the San spoke to numerous media outlets about the study's findings when they were published.





Health Workforce Education

AHCL has a strong commitment to educating the healthcare workforce, ensuring they are well-equipped to deliver competent and excellent care both now and in the future.

This year we were excited to expand our face-to-face conferences and workshops, enhancing hands-on learning and collaboration. At the same time, we continue to prioritise high-quality online education programs for our staff, providing flexible options to meet diverse learning needs and preferences.

2023/24 initiatives include:

- **RACGP Accredited Education for GPs** – regular medical updates for GPs delivered by AHCL specialists, including 7 face-to-face conferences and 1 online webinar this year
- **San Education** – education for AHCL staff and community with face-to-face conferences and symposiums growing in attendance this year
- **Clinical Education Centre** onsite at Sydney Adventist Hospital training medical, nursing and allied health workers for the future
- **San Structural Heart Centre of Excellence for Left Atrial Appendage meetings** – AHCL specialists recognised globally as leaders in this field facilitated training for visiting cardiologists on three occasions this year

381

attendees in 8 RACGP formal education sessions for GPs (225 in person and 32 online)

463

attendees at 21 San Education courses and workshops

467

attendees at 5 San Education conferences and symposiums

214

e-learning packages available online to staff



Spiritual Care

AHCL continues to care for the spiritual needs of our staff, patients and visitors in our daily program.

389

spiritual events held

26,031

chaplain visits to patients

128

volunteers recruited and trained

543

hours of staff support provided

1,311

prayer requests received and responded to

318

occurrences of support for deaths, viewings and funerals

34

Clinical Pastoral Education students being trained

273

counselling interventions

2023/24 initiatives include:

- **Spiritual Care services** provided to patients
- **Mission Integration Plan** provides a framework to enhance Mission awareness within the organisation
- **Vespers service** on Friday evenings featuring pre-recorded messages of prayer, reflection on biblical stories and worship in song, streamed to patient TVs
- **Monthly 'First Friday' events** – meetings featuring local churches partnering with AHCL to share stories of healing and restoration, communal prayer and worship in song, with services streamed to patients through San TV
- **Sabbath School and Church services** – Wahroonga Adventist Church programs live-streamed for patients
- **Monday Mission Message** – newsletter shared with all employees, focusing on specific aspects of AHCL's Mission and Values
- **Clinical Pastoral Education Training** – continues for a seventh year with 36 students, and places for the 2024/25 course are already filled. Previous graduates are all currently involved in chaplaincy and pastoral ministry within the South Pacific Division
- **Spiritual Ambassadors program** continues to grow with 77 ambassadors ministering within their workplace environment
- **Prayer requests** received and attended to for hospital patients, family, visitors, staff and community members
- **San Prayer Hotline 24x7** – launched during the Week of Prayer
- **Compassionate Care Calls** – regularly made to previous patients. This initiative commenced during COVID to contact people in the community who were lonely and needing support, care and compassion. Since October 2019, more than 33,000 phone calls have been made by our Spiritual Care Volunteers
- **Prayer and Bible study groups** are held across the week by various staff teams
- **Welcome to the San Initiative** – a new initiative to welcome all new employees with the 'Take me to the San' book and a special card
- **Prayer partners** - a database of 1,140 prayer partners provide the San with much-needed prayer support for the challenges faced daily
- **24-Hour Prayer, Praise and Fasting event** – the community united in gratitude and faith during this uplifting and unifying occasion, the first event of this nature to be held in the San Chapel
- **PNG for Christ** – Two teams from the San travelled to PNG in April & May 2024, conducting two evangelistic campaigns and enabling the local pastors to baptise nearly 3,200 people



Week of Prayer – a week of celebrating abundant life at the San. Pastor Gerald Frank Christo, from the Southern Asia Church, Washington DC, presented on the theme “Inspiring Hope”. Special emphasis was given to patients and their families through music ministry in all the wards in the hospital. Donations of non-perishable food items were encouraged to support ADRA Community Centre programs



Health & Wellness

Adventist HealthCare has a rich history of promoting health and wellbeing for our community – since first opening in 1903 as the ‘Sydney Sanitarium’ – a place where people learnt to stay well. Our commitment to wellbeing includes providing services that will support our community members to live healthier lives before, during and after acute care.

2023/24 initiatives include:

- **Social media** – AHCL continues to be active on Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn and YouTube, sharing health and wellbeing information to the broader community
- **Health Education Forums** held for our community focused on cancer treatments and Alzheimer’s Disease this year
- **Birthing and parenting classes** – improving life skills of new mums and families, now available online through San Cradle education portal, as live zoom classes and as face-to-face classes
- Interviews on Radio 2GB – our talented doctors and staff sharing information about health and wellbeing with our community
- **Publications** – San News covers health related topics and hospital news to our community through eNewsletters, San Doctor provides health related information to our medical community, and San AMO provides important AHCL updates and education for our accredited doctors
- **AV productions** – our communications team continue to share a range of AV presentations on health & wellness related topics with staff and the community via the website, social media platforms, intranet and inhouse TV
- **Website** – a wealth of health, wellness and support information is available on the SAH website
- **Fitness Passport for staff** – program available to AHCL staff and family members encouraging participation in fitness and healthy living activities
- **Cancer Support Centre** continued to see growth in participation in the quality services provided this year. The counselling service grew by more than 20% with 890 appointments this year. New support groups and therapy programs bolstered our existing offerings and resulted in support for oncology patients and their families on 3,800 occasions
- **Oncology patient navigators** – our breast, prostate and gastrointestinal patient navigators provide an invaluable service for our patients and their families, from pre-admission support and care through inpatient education and follow up phone calls, contact with doctors and referrals to support services



2,329

attendees at cancer support services, events & programs



26

AV productions



895

members in the fitness passport program



1,185

participants in 9 regular cancer support group sessions



18

radio interviews



1,420,061

SAH website unique page views



345

participants in 4 community health education events & forums



789

expectant parents registered for online Maternity education through San Cradle

San Foundation

SAN FOUNDATION ACTIVELY WORKS WITH GRATEFUL HOSPITAL PATIENTS, LOCAL COMMUNITY GROUPS AND BUSINESSES TO RAISE MUCH NEEDED FUNDS FOR SYDNEY ADVENTIST HOSPITAL; FUNDS THAT HAVE BEEN CRUCIAL THIS YEAR IN HELPING THE HOSPITAL MAINTAIN ITS REPUTATION FOR EXCELLENCE AND FULFILLING ITS MISSION OF CARING FOR THE COMMUNITY.

San Foundation funding supports important services, technology and equipment, such as cancer patient navigators, vital surgical equipment and new technology to diagnose and treat patients more effectively.

Thanks to the generosity of supporters, in 2023/24 San Foundation provided more than \$2.36M in funding to Sydney Adventist Hospital for:

- Cancer services through support, research, facilities and patient navigator roles
- Maternity through Special Care Nursery equipment
- Cardiac services through specialised equipment
- Research through awards and grants
- Staff education through scholarships



Community Engagement

AHCL continues to engage with our community through events and initiatives that are thoroughly enjoyed by all involved.





5,000+

participants in 3 major community events held both onsite and as an onsite / online combination



29,470

volunteer hours



285

San Volunteers

2023/24 initiatives include:

- **Teddy Bears Picnic** – this much-loved event brought hundreds of mums with their bubs and families back to the San again, to the great delight of our community and all the staff and doctors involved
- **San Volunteers** – AHCL has 285 passionate and dedicated community members who volunteer their time regularly throughout numerous departments
- **AHCL has supported a range of local community fundraising and awareness initiatives** wherever possible this year including the Cancer Council, Prostate Cancer Foundation Australia, Breast Cancer Network Australia, R U OK? Day and Lifeline
- **The Dish** – AHCL participates in this inter-denominational program providing meals and support to homeless and disadvantaged members of our local community
- SAH continues to provide **opportunities for disabled individuals in the community** to undertake job ready skills and employment in areas such as the Mail Room, Food Services, Theatres, HR and Grounds
- A variety of **public health information displays and awareness programs** were featured at Sydney Adventist Hospital including for hand hygiene, antimicrobial awareness, sepsis, wound and dementia awareness, for the education of patients, staff and visitors
- **Annual San Homecoming event** was held with both an in-person church audience and livestreamed online this year, with community members invited back to the San for museum tours, lunch and afternoon tea
- **Open Heart International (OHI)** involvement - AHCL continues its partnership with and support of OHI with overseas trips continuing to expand
- **San Carols by Candlelight** - we were thrilled to host our annual San Carols program on the Village Green once again this year and welcome our community back with our much-loved family activities, wonderful performances to entertain all ages, and a thrilling fireworks display to conclude the nights festivities



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