

18 November 2011

Western NSW Local Health District Wins International Recognition!

Western New South Wales Local Health District has been awarded two of the most prestigious awards at this year's 3rd International Conference on Art and Health – The Art of Good Health and Well being, at the Australia National Gallery in Canberra.

A total of 15 Awards for Excellence were presented: 5 were awarded for international projects, 1 to the Australian National Gallery and 3 to regional NSW, of which 2 were for arts and health partnership projects involving the Western LHD, Arts OutWest, Local Government and the community. The awards were judged by a respected international panel of experts.

Bathurst's Partnership in Practice project highlighting the joint initiative between Arts OutWest and Bathurst Health Service received the award for Arts and Health in Regional and Remote Australia.

The Arts and Health Strategy, Orange Health Service was presented the award for Mental Health and the Arts.

The third award for Western NSW went to Medical Humanities and Education a partnership between West Darling Arts and the University of Sydney.

Western NSW LHD Chief Executive Ron Dunham has congratulated staff for the remarkable achievement.

"These awards are true recognition of the amazing work that goes on in our facilities. Merging art with health is a proven recipe for improved health and patient wellbeing and for bridging the gap between the health service and the community. We are very proud to now boast two internationally acclaimed projects in our Health District." Mr Dunham said.

"Congratulations also to all our partner organisations, volunteers and community members who have worked tirelessly to create the wonderful art projects that make our health facilities truly unique and accessible to all." Mr Dunham said.

Arts OutWest executive officer Tracey Callinan said the award for the Bathurst Arts and Health Program acknowledges the efforts of many project partners over more than five years.

"Embedding an arts coordinator into the health service has provided many advantages, creating a strong and supportive partnership model for the delivery of a diverse program," Ms Callinan said. "The program has had success because we've been able to work with a wide range of health and arts partners and design activities that come from direct input from local health staff and consumers."

Chair of the Orange Health Service, Art and Health Committee, Meg Simpson said she is delighted with this recognition and is extremely proud on behalf of the hundreds of people who have been involved.

"Receiving the Mental Health and the Arts Award acknowledges particularly the community participation projects: The terrazzo works in the new Lachlan Mental Health facility, the adolescent Mental Health Unit, the Aboriginal Gathering Space and the 15 Woven sculptures for the new hospital." Ms Simpson said.

For more information on the Bathurst project please contact Tracey Callinan on 6338 4657. Information on the Orange Art Health Strategy, please phone Meg Simpson on 0427 909 900.