Annual Report

FY2025-26














10 YEARS

marathon health

Better healthcare, closer to home

"We acknowledge Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as Australia's First People and Traditional Custodians. We value their cultures, identities, and continuing connection to country, waters, kin and community.

We pay our respects to Elders past, present and emerging and are committed to making a positive contribution to the wellbeing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, by providing services that are welcoming, safe, culturally appropriate and inclusive."

Contents

Chair report 4

CEO report 5

Strategic overview 6

Quality, governance and continuous improvement 8

Our people and the future workforce 10

Innovation, research and partnerships 12

Sustainable growth and investment 15

Delivering impact in communities 16

Celebrating recognition and organisational excellence 21

Strategic partner recognition 22

About our data

Client, participant and workforce outcomes are based on feedback collected throughout FY26. Sample sizes are shown in the accompanying data tables, charts or footnotes where relevant.

Chair report

As another year passes, I am proud to reflect on an organisation that has remained steadfast in its commitment to improving health and wellbeing outcomes for regional, rural and remote communities. What began as an ambitious vision has grown into a trusted, purpose-driven organisation supporting communities across Australia and delivering services that make a meaningful difference in people's lives every day.

The 2026 financial year (FY26) was a year of growth, innovation and achievement. It was also a year that highlighted the resilience and dedication of our people. Across a changing health landscape, increasing demand for services, workforce challenges and evolving community needs, our staff continued to show remarkable commitment to the communities they serve. Their ability to adapt, innovate and collaborate ensures Marathon Health remains responsive to local needs while continuing to strengthen the systems that support quality, safe and effective care.

Throughout the year, Marathon Health continued to mature as an organisation. We strengthened governance, maintained accreditation across four national quality frameworks, and achieved National Digital Mental Health Accreditation, providing a strong foundation for our expanding virtual service portfolio. We also progressed our Consumer and Carer Framework, enhanced cyber security and information governance capabilities, and continued embedding health equity and client outcomes into organisational decision-making. These investments reflect our commitment to sustainability, accountability and continuous improvement.

A highlight of the year was the launch of the Marathon Health Innovation Hub, creating new opportunities to bring together researchers, communities, government and industry partners to develop practical solutions to some of regional Australia's most pressing health challenges. Combined with growing research partnerships, workforce development initiatives and the opening of our purpose-built Dubbo premises, these investments position Marathon Health strongly for the future.

On behalf of the Board, I thank Chief Executive Officer Megan Callinan and Chief Operating Officer Justine Summers for their leadership, vision and steadfast commitment throughout the year. Alongside the Senior Operations Team, they have guided Marathon Health through growth, innovation and change while maintaining a clear focus on delivering meaningful outcomes for communities. This positive culture was also reflected in the annual staff survey, with 96% of employees agreeing that Marathon Health is a truly great place to work- an outstanding result.

I also extend my sincere thanks to our staff, volunteers, subcontractors, partners, funders and communities in which we work. The achievements outlined in this Annual Report are a reflection of your dedication, expertise and belief in creating thriving communities through equitable health and wellbeing.

Amanda Croft
Chair, on behalf of the Board

Directors



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MBA, BSocSC, Grad Cert Mtg, Dip Ed. GAICD

CEO report

FY26 was a year of growth, innovation and impact for Marathon Health, and a significant milestone as we celebrated 10 years of serving regional, rural and remote communities. It also marked a clear transition from strategy to execution as we continued delivering on our 2025-2029 Strategic Plan and strengthening our position as a leader in regional healthcare.

Despite ongoing workforce shortages, increasing demand for services and a changing health landscape, Marathon Health remained focused on delivering practical, community-led solutions that improve health and wellbeing outcomes for rural Australians. Our services continued to evolve through scalable, integrated models of care, while our partnerships expanded our ability to address complex challenges facing regional communities.

Alongside celebrating 10 years of Marathon Health, the year was also marked by several other important milestones. We celebrated 10 years of headspace Dubbo and headspace Orange, launched the headspace Outreach Program across remote communities and officially opened our purpose-built Dubbo premises. Together, these achievements reflect both how far we have come and our continued commitment to improving health and wellbeing outcomes for regional Australians.

A defining achievement was the launch of the Marathon Health Innovation Hub (mhi hub), bringing together communities, researchers, industry, government and healthcare providers to develop and scale regional solutions. Through mhi hub, we are building the evidence, partnerships and capability to expand proven models of care such as Flying Start, which improves access to multidisciplinary paediatric assessment, diagnosis and support for children in regional and remote communities. We also strengthened our research capability, invested in data and digital maturity, advanced AI readiness, and achieved Digital Mental Health Accreditation, positioning us strongly for the future.

"Our greatest strength continues to be our people, which was reflected once again through the strong results received in our annual staff survey."

Throughout FY26, we continued investing in workforce development, student placements, graduate pathways and First Nations workforce initiatives while maintaining a strong focus on culture, wellbeing and inclusion. I am incredibly proud of the workplace we have built together and of the people who choose to live and work in regional communities every day.

I would like to sincerely thank our Chair, Amanda Croft, for her leadership, guidance and commitment to Marathon Health. I also thank our Board Directors for their stewardship and support as we continue to navigate growth, innovation and change while remaining focused on our purpose.

To our staff thank you for your ongoing dedication, collaboration and trust. Our achievements over the last year are a direct reflection of the passion and commitment you bring to improving health and wellbeing outcomes for rural Australians every day.

As we enter our second decade, we do so with confidence, focused on scaling what works, strengthening regional health systems and creating healthier communities across Australia.

Megan Callinan
CEO, Marathon Health

Strategic overview

For more than a decade, Marathon Health has partnered with communities across regional, rural and remote Australia to improve health and wellbeing outcomes, strengthen local services and help address some of the most complex challenges facing country communities.

Through evidence, innovation and strong partnerships, we deliver services and develop models of care that respond to local needs, build workforce capability and strengthen regional health systems for the future.

FY26 was a year of growth, innovation and impact. We celebrated 10 years of Marathon Health, launched the Marathon Health Innovation Hub (mhi hub), expanded strategic partnerships, strengthened workforce development initiatives and continued investing in the quality systems that support safe, effective and person-centred care.

We also opened our purpose-built Dubbo premises, creating a contemporary regional hub designed to support collaboration, innovation and future growth.

From community-based services delivered face-to-face to virtual programs reaching communities across Australia, our work remains grounded in a simple commitment: improving health and wellbeing outcomes for rural Australians.

FY2025-26 in focus

22,742
clients supported

28%
identified as First Nations

88%
reported improved wellbeing[1]

137
LGAs reached

62%
of services delivered face-to-face

$26.7M
invested in wages across regional communities

1,000,000+km
travelled to support communities

10 years
of Marathon Health, headspace Dubbo and headspace Orange

hOP
the largest outreach service commissioned nationally by headspace, launched across 10 remote communities

[1] 988 client responses



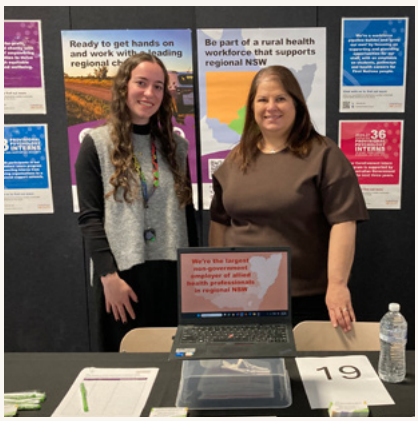


IN MY BLOOD IT RUNS









Ready to get hands on and work with a leading regional
Be part of a rural health workforce that supports regional NSW
19







Quality, governance and continuous improvement

High-quality care starts with strong governance, skilled people and a commitment to continuous improvement.

Throughout FY26, Marathon Health continued to strengthen the systems, processes and culture that support safe, accountable and person-centred care across the organisation. Investment in governance, accreditation, digital capability and information security ensures we continue to deliver high-quality services for communities, funders and partners.

Progress under our Consumer and Carer Framework, expanded organisational reporting aligned to the Quintuple Aims and ongoing improvements in cyber security and privacy capability reflect our commitment to quality at every level. Our AI Strategy and Policy also provide a clear framework for the safe, ethical and responsible use of AI, with safeguards addressing clinical risk, privacy, security and consumer protection.

Highlights



Achieved Digital Mental Health Accreditation to secure and support our expanding virtual health portfolio



Progressed Year 1 priorities under our Consumer and Carer Framework, strengthening consumer involvement in service design and improvement



Maintained accreditation across four national quality frameworks



Strengthened cyber, privacy and information governance capability

100%

compliance record: completed NDIS mid-cycle audit with no non-conformities



Established a strong governance framework for the safe, ethical and responsible use of AI

Our people and the future workforce

Our people are one of Marathon Health's greatest strengths.

Across regional, rural and remote Australia, our workforce brings together diverse skills, experiences and perspectives to improve health and wellbeing outcomes. Our people live and work in the communities they serve, bringing local knowledge and strong connections to their work. Through investment in leadership, cultural capability, wellbeing and professional development, we continue to strengthen our workforce while helping build the future rural health workforce.

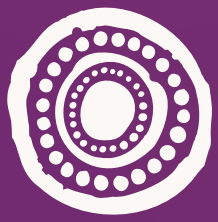
Guided by our Cultural Safety Framework and Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan, we continued strengthening cultural capability, inclusion and representation across the organisation. First Nations representation remains embedded across our Board, leadership and service delivery teams, while new CALD and LGBTQIA+ employee committees broaden opportunities for participation, connection and inclusion.

Staff highlights



307
employees

129
subcontractors



12%
First Nations representation across our entire regional workforce footprint

96%
of staff agree Marathon Health is a truly great place to work[2]

96%
report a workplace free from racism, discrimination and harassment[2]

97%
of all corporate and frontline staff completed comprehensive Cultural Safety training

[2] 234 staff survey responses

Building the future workforce

Building a sustainable rural health workforce remains a strategic priority for Marathon Health.

Through targeted workforce development initiatives, we continue creating opportunities that attract, develop and retain a multidisciplinary team of health professionals to live and work in regional communities. These investments not only strengthen our organisation but contribute to the future health workforce across regional, rural and remote Australia.

Workforce pathway initiatives included three First Nations student placements, a traineeship at headspace Queanbeyan, and internship support for 36 provisional psychologists over three years.



16
student placements supported through headspace National Early Career Program funding

Workforce pathway highlights



63
students supported through placements across

10 disciplines

19 tertiary institutions

7 students transitioned into employment with Marathon Health



9
social work graduates moving towards Mental Health Accreditation

15
provisional psychologists placed through CoreConnectPlus

12 employed with Marathon Health

Innovation, research and partnerships

FY26 marked a significant milestone with the launch of the Marathon Health Innovation Hub (mhi hub).

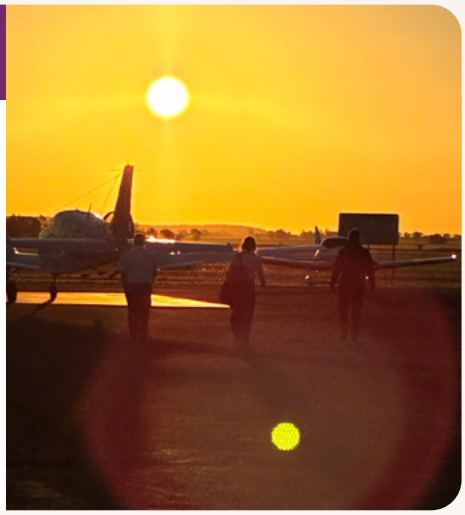
By bringing together researchers, industry, government, healthcare providers and communities, mhi hub is helping translate evidence and ideas into practical solutions that improve health and wellbeing outcomes across regional, rural and remote Australia.

In its first year, mhi hub expanded research, strengthened partnerships and created new opportunities for collaboration across multiple sectors. This work builds on Marathon Health's established research, service design and partnership activity, creating a strong foundation for the next generation of place-based rural health initiatives.

Flying Start Paediatric Service

Co-designed with communities and partners, Flying Start brings together paediatricians and local multidisciplinary care teams to improve access to assessment, diagnosis and ongoing support for children in regional and remote communities.

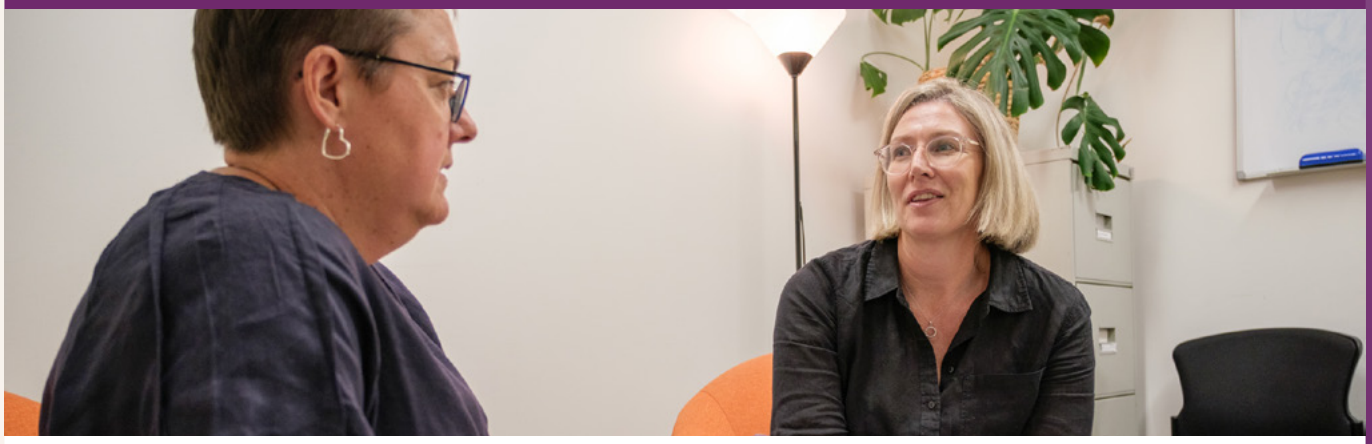
During FY26, the service supported families across 11 Western NSW communities, with independent evaluation confirming its effectiveness in addressing critical paediatric service gaps. The model was also recognised nationally, receiving the Third Sector Collaboration Excellence Award.



Macquarie University Sensory Screening Study

Supported through the Macquarie University Strategic Research Initiative Scheme, this multi-year pilot is training Marathon Health nurses to use the low-cost Arclight device and a smartphone app to screen older people for vision and hearing loss during routine visits. By embedding screening into existing services and enabling non-specialist health professionals to identify sensory loss earlier, this innovative approach aims to address regional workforce shortages and improve access to culturally appropriate care for vulnerable older people. The study will assess the feasibility and acceptability of the model and continue until 2027.

Westfund Care Coordination Pilot Program



The Care Coordination Program provides personalised, one-on-one support to help Westfund members living with chronic health conditions better manage their health and navigate the healthcare system. Through health coaching, care planning and coordinated access to services, the program empowers participants to achieve their health goals.

During FY26 the program expanded nationally and continues to demonstrate the potential of partnership-led approaches to keep people living well and out of hospital.

95%

of participants reported improved wellbeing[3]

"Amazing program! Covered both my mental and physical health! I feel more confident in my decisions and was given so much amazing information that really helped me. It's made an incredible difference to my life… My life now compared to several months ago is vastly different and so much easier."

– Westfund Care Coordination Client

Waluwin Ngurambang (Healthy Country) Diabetes Program

Supported by La Trobe University's Violet Vines Marshman Centre for Rural Health, Waluwin Ngurambang strengthened workforce capability and community understanding through culturally safe diabetes education across the Murrumbidgee.

Staff completed self-assessments aligned with the National Diabetes Nursing Education Framework, participated in targeted two-day training and received ongoing multidisciplinary mentoring to translate learning into practical, person-centred support. Community health yarns in Tumut and Narrandera used accessible, visual and practical activities to build understanding of diabetes, nutrition, self-management and available supports. The program also supported continuous quality improvement by identifying priorities for further workforce development, while strengthening community confidence and engagement in managing diabetes.

[3] **73 client program evaluations**

NSW Ambulance and care finder Pilot

Established in partnership with NSW Ambulance, the care finder referral pathway connects vulnerable and socially isolated older people with sustained, local support. Many live with chronic health conditions, declining functional capacity and limited connection to health, aged care and community services, with some known to ambulance services through repeat callouts.

From April 2025 to July 2026, 37 referrals were accepted and 284 hours of support delivered. Of those accepted, 73% were referred to aged care services and 83% remained connected to services and supports. By addressing the underlying health and social factors contributing to repeat ambulance use, the pilot is designed to help reduce avoidable hospitalisation and premature entry into residential aged care.

Innovation and partnership highlights



mhi hub is launched and Westfund is announced as founding partner



mhi hub Research Table established with Charles Sturt University, University of Newcastle and Monash University

15
conferences presented to: one international, eight national and six regional or statewide

11
papers prepared for journal publication

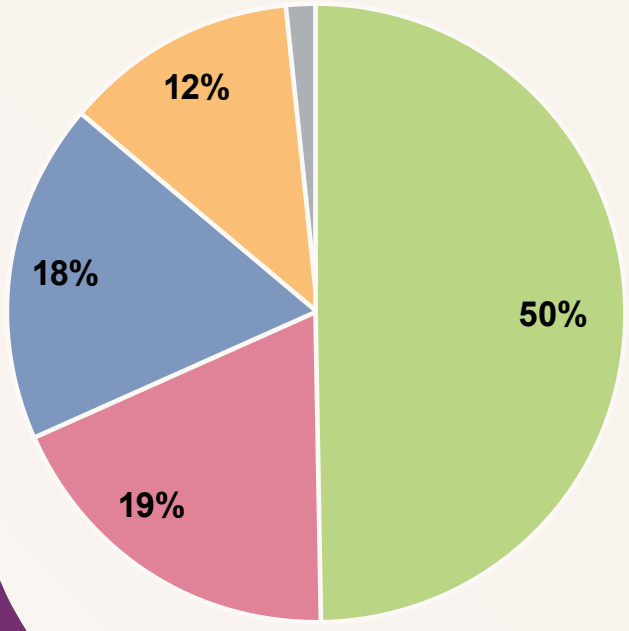
21
active research projects underway

Sustainable growth and investment

Marathon Health manages a diverse funding portfolio that supports the delivery of high-quality services, workforce development, innovation and research across regional, rural and remote Australia.

This diversified portfolio helps ensure organisational sustainability while enabling continued investment in community impact and future opportunities.

FY2025-26 funding allocation



- Mental health
- NDIS and early childhood intervention
- Preventative health and chronic disease
- Wellbeing (place-based, person-centred)
- Other

Total: **$37.4m**

Delivering impact in communities

Every year, Marathon Health works alongside communities across regional, rural and remote Australia to improve access to care, build workforce capability and strengthen health and wellbeing outcomes.

Across mental health, chronic disease management, early intervention, disability support and community wellbeing programs, our focus is on delivering practical, person-centred models of care that shape a stronger regional health system for the future.

88%
of clients reported that their overall wellbeing has improved through our care[4]

96%
would recommend our services to family and friends[5]

98%
felt respected for self, including their unique culture and identity[6]

















Mental health and wellbeing

Our mental health portfolio focuses on breaking down regional barriers to care, strengthening wellbeing and helping people access high-quality support when they need it.

Strong Minds Western NSW delivered structured psychological therapy to 1,314 people during FY26, 24% of whom identified as First Nations. Among clients with matched pre- and post-treatment measures, 77% showed reduced psychological, emotional or behavioural difficulties[7]. Demand also grew, with new referrals increasing by 14%, from 1,554 to 1,770.

"I really connected with the psychologist and felt very comfortable and cared for which is rare in the mental health space."

– Strong Minds Client via Yes PHN Survey

Commonwealth Psychosocial Support continued helping people living with severe mental illness build independence and work towards recovery. Across Western NSW and the Central West, the program supported 577 participants and delivered more than 20,000 occasions of service. Compared with the previous year, service delivery grew by 47% in Western NSW and 18% in the Central West, while the number of participants supported increased by 29% and 15% respectively.

Across regional NSW, our six headspace centres secured additional funding to strengthen youth mental health services, while the headspace Outreach Program (hOP) became the largest outreach service commissioned nationally by headspace, extending culturally responsive mental health support across remote communities.

"Being able to support young people to open up about what they're going through has been incredibly rewarding. It makes me proud when parents tell me their children look forward to seeing me."

– Clayton Carr, Aboriginal Youth Wellbeing Worker, headspace Outreach Program

Together, our services improve equitable access to mental health care, helping people navigate recovery and stay connected to support networks within their local communities.

Highlights



14%
increase in new referrals to Strong Minds



hOP
the largest outreach service commissioned nationally by headspace



89%
overall client satisfaction score maintained across our regional mental health network[8]



93%
of mental health clients reported they would recommend the service to others

[4] 988 client responses, [5] 1,217 client responses, [6] 351 client responses, [7] 354 of 458 clients with matched K10+, K5 or SDQ outcome measures., [8] 393 community responses, [9] 254 client responses

Healthier communities

Helping people stay well, manage complex chronic conditions and access high-quality, team-based care remains a core focus for Marathon Health. Through multidisciplinary teams, evidence-based outreach models integrated with primary care and culturally responsive programs, we work alongside communities to improve health outcomes and reduce barriers to care.

Our delivery models include Keeping Healthy Puura Manti, the Medical Outreach Indigenous Chronic Disease and Rural Health Outreach programs, Wellness and Resilience Achieved Through Allied Health (WARATAH) in the Murrumbidgee, and specialised After-Hours GP Care that helps reduce avoidable emergency department presentations.

Across 10 care coordination and health navigation models, we help people navigate complex health systems, connect with the right services and manage their health with greater confidence. Care coordination roles represent 12% of our service delivery workforce, demonstrating the scale of this capability across Marathon Health.

"I attended the after-hours clinic extremely emotional and desperate for help. They were very kind and supportive… Both the receptionist and the GP were very patient with me and listened to me. They didn't rush me, and I felt supported."

– After Hours GP Client

Highlights

96%
reported direct, measurable progress toward their personal goals[10]

98%
of chronic disease clients would recommend our services to family and friends[11]

99%
of individuals reported they felt listened to and their unique needs understood[12]









Building independence, participation and opportunity

Independence, participation and opportunity are critical to health and wellbeing. Across disability, behaviour support and early intervention allied health services, Marathon Health works alongside children, families and participants to build skills, strengthen confidence and achieve their goals.

This year, Positive Behaviour Support service hours grew by 64%. Our NDIS allied health team delivered specialised early intervention through the Western NSW Speech Program, Mudgee Flying Start Service and WARATAH for Kids screening clinics, strengthening access for children and families and supporting developmental, educational and lifelong wellbeing outcomes.

"I'm grateful that the service was provided locally. I didn't have to travel out of town to access it. The sessions were engaging, and I was given resources and confidence to support my child's learning at home."

– WNSWPHN Speech Pathology client

Delivered nationally, our NDIS After Hours Crisis Referral Service supports participants experiencing crisis and works with emergency departments and service providers to facilitate safe and appropriate discharge pathways.

"We genuinely appreciate how proactively your team becomes involved, particularly in taking the lead with liaising with service providers… with a clear focus on expediting a safe and appropriate discharge plan. This support is invaluable in the ED setting."

– Hospital ED clinical feedback on our NDIS After Hours Crisis Referral Service

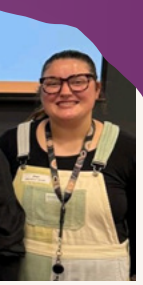
Highlights

98% of clients would recommend our services to others[13]

97% reported direct, measurable progress toward their personal goals[14]

Service hours for Positive Behaviour Support grew by 64% from last financial year

93% of Western NSW Speech Program goals were achieved or showed progress[15]







[10] 214 client responses, [11] 564 client responses
[12] 295 clinical responses, [13] 252 responses
[14] 178 responses, [15] 125 of 135 goals

Place-based models of care

Every community is different.

By responding to local priorities and working alongside communities, these programs help people remain connected, access support and navigate complex challenges.

During FY26, Marathon Health's Multisystemic Therapy for Child Abuse and Neglect (MST-CAN) team achieved the highest model adherence score in NSW, helping children remain safely connected to their families and communities. Our Murrumbidgee care finder program helped older people navigate the aged care system and access the support they need to age well in place. A formal referral pathway with NSW Ambulance generated 31 new referrals, while expansion into Western NSW reflected growing recognition of Marathon Health's high-quality delivery of the national model. Together, these programs demonstrate our commitment to responsive, community-led approaches tailored to local needs.

Highlights

97%
client satisfaction score across all place-based operations

95%
reported direct, measurable progress toward their personal goals

"I would recommend care finder to anyone who needs any level of support. Nothing is an issue and they are willing to help. I feel more connected and supported now."

– care finder Client



















Celebrating recognition and organisational excellence

Annual ICARE Awards

Each year, the Marathon Health ICARE Awards celebrate individual staff members who embody our core corporate values and make an outstanding contribution to regional communities. Established in memory of our inaugural Chairperson, the Garry Burton ICARE Award recognises exceptional dedication and service across the country health landscape.



The Garry Burton ICARE Award for Exceptional Dedication:
Kylie Falciani, General Manager Operations



Integrity and Trust Award:
Elise Gale, Practice Lead (headspace Bathurst)



Collaboration and Innovation Award:
Ash Credlin, Acting Portfolio Manager Primary Health and Wellbeing (Wagga Wagga)



Achievement and Excellence Award:
Rachel Coleman, Portfolio Manager Behaviour Support (Albury)



Respect and Empowerment Award:
Shelley McDonald, Group Manager Youth Mental Health (Dubbo)



Empathy and Understanding Award:
Jointly awarded to Alisha Cook, Youth Care Coordinator (headspace Lithgow) and Rajesh Gurung, IT Systems Officer (Orange)

Sector awards and key milestones

Winner – Third Sector Collaboration Excellence Award: Awarded to the Variety Flying Start Paediatric Service for outstanding community-integrated care models.

Finalist – Outstanding Community Organisation: headspace Orange (Regional Business Awards).

Finalist – Outstanding Business Leader: headspace Orange Leadership Team.

Strategic partner recognition

We extend our deepest gratitude to our corporate partners, government funding bodies, and clinical allies who share our commitment and make our work possible:

- Argyle Housing
- Australian Government Department of Health and Aged Care
- Australian Government Department of Industry, Science, Energy and Resources
- Australian Government Department of Social Services
- Charles Sturt University
- Department of Regional NSW
- EnergyCo
- headspace National Youth Mental Health Foundation Ltd
- firsthealth Limited and Murrumbidgee Primary Health Network
- National Disability Insurance Agency
- Nepean Blue Mountains Primary Health Network (Wentworth Healthcare)
- Newcastle Permanent Charitable Foundation
- NSW Department of Communities and Justice
- NSW Department of Premier's and Cabinet
- NSW Ministry of Health
- NSW Rural Doctors Network
- Rural Health Research Foundation
- South Eastern NSW Primary Health Network (COORDINARE)
- University of Melbourne
- Macquarie University
- La Trobe University
- Variety – the Children's Charity (NSW/ACT)
- Western NSW Primary Health Network (Western Health Alliance Network)
- Westfund

We also thank the communities we operate in, where both organisations and individuals generously provided small grants, local donations and vital in-kind support to help us develop and deliver quality health and wellbeing services.

10 YEARS

marathon health
Better healthcare, closer to home

Marathon Health is a not-for-profit, registered charity delivering high quality health and wellbeing services to people wherever they choose to live. ACN 154 318 975