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**TO CONTRIBUTE ARTICLES/FEEDBACK**

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Post orders to: PO Box 3068, Kirrawee NSW 2232

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- Standard NSW \$15; Interstate \$20
- 2-month orders NSW \$30; Interstate \$40
- Express \$22

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Lee is available every Tuesday from 9am to 3pm.

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# WELL HELLO DOLLY



My journey to becoming an ostomate started in 1981 when I lost my mother to bowel cancer, I was 27 years old with 2 young sons, a 29-month-old and a 5-month-old. I became sick shortly after losing my mother, flu-like symptoms which progressed into stomach pain, bouts of diarrhoea, weight loss. There were many trips to the doctor. In those days Crohn's Disease wasn't very well known. My GP would say that I was stressed, made sense, home I would go. This went on for about 12 months until I was finally referred to the best Specialist in Campbelltown, Dr Andrew Gatenby. At that time, he was a General Surgeon. He sent me for every possible test you could have, lots more weight loss, lots more pain until finally after 6 months he was satisfied to diagnose, with certainty that I had Crohn's Disease in my large intestine. This was 1983 and treatment then was Salazopyrin, then Prednisolone.

I remember my first colonoscopy, horrible drink and fasting for days, I would lose 6kgs in a couple of days. The colo-

noscopy was performed with an epidural, I was awake during the procedure and my surgeon was talking to me the whole time, roll this way, move here, would you like to turn the lights out so you can see the camera moving around. That was a bit weird, it was like ET's finger with the light on the end travelling around inside my body.

The next 5 years involved flare ups, constant pain, weight loss, trips to my Gastroenterologist, doses of Prednisolone, stress and the cycle would start again until just before Christmas in 1988 I had a Crohn's ulcer perforate my large intestine allowing bowel motion to seep into my abdominal cavity. As mentioned, I had 2 young sons so as mother's do, I carried on, until I ended up in emergency at Campbelltown Hospital and again met up with my wonderful surgeon who by now had become a Colo-rectal surgeon.

My weight had plummeted to 58kgs (not usually that light, I would be described normally as thick set) at this stage I looked like someone from a con-

centration camp. My surgeon deemed me too ill to operate (sepsis) so the next 10 days were spent having blood transfusions, massive amounts of antibiotics until finally a Sub-total Colectomy was performed. I was in hospital for 3 weeks, including Christmas Day in Campbelltown hospital. The staff were brilliant to those in hospital that Christmas Day, woke us up early with little sweet treats gift wrapped, beautiful hot Christmas lunch (if only I'd had an appetite). Finally at the end of the 3 weeks I was allowed to go home. My surgeon told me on the day I was being released from hospital that at one stage he did not think that I was going to make it. I did and it was thanks to his and the hospital staff's wonderful care.

I recuperated well and was on a roll for



a while. It wasn't long before I was back on that merry-go-round again. For the next 9 years I was up and down until it attacked my rectum, it lead to no control. Back to my wonderful surgeon and we mutually decided the best option was for an Ileostomy, within 2 weeks I was in hospital and operated on. This was 1997.

The first time I met my stoma with my Stoma nurse and my wonderful husband, I think she gurgled, as they do, and my husband said "well hello dolly" she has been known as 'Dolly' ever since.

All went well for a few years then the merry-go-round started again and in 2000 I again became very ill resulting in a resite of my stoma and some of my small intestine being removed, an inline central feed to get me back to health, again my surgeon feared I may not make it, I did and since then I was able to get off the merry-go-round and live a reasonably healthy life with my wonderful, sometimes annoying 'Dolly'.

I am now 70 years old and Dolly is 27.

Sue Hancock



# My Story,

## HELLO FELLOW OSTOMATES & SUPPORTERS

Back in August 2020 I was diagnosed with stage 3 bladder cancer. (54 years young).

Like those who have had this unfortunate surreal experience it is a very emotional time. My only thought was "well that's me done!"

One of my first concerns was for poor Mum who was struggling with the fact that my much loved older sister was also battling an aggressive cancer at the same time. (Unfortunately she has now passed).

I recall meeting with my oncologist and starting to be become emotional when she told me of my challenges going forward. She said to me you will be OK, then I told her I was actually upset for my Mum, who now has two of her kids with significant health issues.

My urologist told me that with stage 3 bladder cancer I was going to lose bladder and prostate (WOW! A package deal, lucky me).

First step was having the tumors removed and then went through 6 months of intense chemo. I asked the cancer team why so much and why for so long, they said "because we know it will work" I then responded with "bring it on". I was committed to beat this bloody thing.

When the chemo was completed, I was scheduled for my bladder removal surgery February 2021.

Interestingly, I was a candidate for a Neo-bladder and if during surgery it was not able to be done, I was going to end up with a Urostomy.

I started to investigate both options and met with experienced people to discuss how to live with either one of these lifesaving changes.

As it turned out the Neo-bladder option wasn't achievable, therefore I received an ostomy. I was so glad I had prepared for both options as the shock after surgery to see the bag was not as significant as what it could have been.

The Nepean hospital stomal therapists were very helpful and continue to be to this day. I highly recommend to attend the support groups even if it's just for a chat and a cuppa.

My recovery from surgery was text book and was out of hospital quicker than what I expected. The trick was to walk around a lot as per the doctor's advice and then you get to go home earlier.

I will again mention all the staff at Nepean Hospital were absolutely brilliant and understanding.

The long term recovery was just as intense. Remaining mentally positive can sometimes be a challenge, however it is a significant part of a quick recovery so you can start getting on with your "somewhat different" life.

For me personally the loss of my bladder and prostate and all the changes associated with that was difficult. Nevertheless, I got through it with a massive amount of support from my wife, my two sons and the entire family. Not to mention my friends and colleagues.

For me now, I have well and truly accepted my new situation and would say it's had a minimal impact on my life because I choose that to be the case.

I still do swimming, snorkeling, boating, kayaking, fishing, walking, and weights. However I still struggle with housework!!!!

This is the new normal life for me now and I consider myself very lucky.

### **Funny story:**

I recall after my operation with the ostomy bag and all the tubes hanging out of me, telling the Mrs. that I'm upset I wouldn't be able to ride a motorbike again. She very quickly replied in laughter that I never did anyway. The strange the things that go through your head in those times.

My stoma nick name: "Old mate"

Scott M



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## ORDER REQUIREMENTS WHEN **TRAVELLING OVERSEAS**

Must be placed at least three weeks prior to your departure.

You may order up to six (6) months quantity.

A Department of Health and Aged Care form Stoma Appliance Scheme Application for additional supplies — Travel or Remote location must be completed by you and sent with your order. This is available on our website [ostomynsw.org.au/FORMS](http://ostomynsw.org.au/FORMS) tab or on Department of Health and Aged Care website ([Health.gov.au](http://Health.gov.au), search Stoma / Ostomates)

## ORDER REQUIREMENTS WHEN **TRAVELLING IN AUSTRALIA**

Must be placed at least two weeks prior to your departure.

You may order up to two (2) months quantity.

# SIX HOURS IN THE AMBULANCE



Having waited 45 mins for the Ambulance to come from Queenstown to Strahan in Tasmania, I was greeted by a young dark haired Paramedic. On examining my little finger on my right hand which had become wedged between mudguard and tyre he said "it is good that it is still pink". My right hand was wrapped and enveloped in ice and then I was loaded into the Ambulance. I advised the solo Paramedic that I could connect to my night drainage bag for the trip. After an hour we were in a location where we could get phone contact and the call was made – Where are we going?

The decision to go to Launceston General Hospital was made where Plastic Surgery could be conducted on my finger. Some six hours later after being transferred to another Ambulance at Deloraine we arrived in the Emergency Section of Launceston General Hospital.

Wasn't I glad that I had a 2 Litre capacity bag attached to my Urostomy bag. Yes – a much relieved form of travel with my thoughtfulness to plan for volume at the start of the trip. In that region of Tasmania there is only one person in the ambulance, so they monitor your progress by a blood pressure cuff and conversations with the driver. Thank you to the care and skill of the two Paramedics involved in my transport.

I am now back in Sydney region and have been told that progress is good so far, but I must continue with my hand and finger exercises to gain full use of my hand.

**Bob Cooper**  
Urostomy Patient since 2017.



“ I was told early on to always do whatever you love and feel passionate about in life, no matter what challenges you have ”

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Darren, Ulcerative Colitis Champion

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# STOMAL THERAPY NURSE - LEE GAVEGAN ON **DIET AND EXERCISE**

The advice in this article is general in nature and not intended to be taken as personal advice. You should seek your own professional advice and this article may assist with questions you may ask. Discuss any issues you may have with your STN, GP or Surgeon.



## **HYDRATION** **HOW MUCH WATER?**

50-70% of your body weight is water  
What water intake should I have each day?

Individual: Activity, environment,  
breastfeeding, health e.g., dialysis  
Every body cell needs water.

Water removes waste in urination,  
perspiration, bowel movements  
& lost in breathing. Regulates  
temperature Lubricates & cushions  
joints. Protects sensitive tissues  
20% fluid from food & drinks.

Source: mayoclinic.org



## **UROSTOMATES**

Coffee, tea, alcohol, diuretics, try reducing before bed if not connecting to an overnight drainage bag or try an overnight drainage bag  
Foods high in vitamin C make the urine more acidic (citrus, soft berries, blackcurrant cordial); these reduce the risk of UTI (Urinary Tract Infection). Try limiting bananas, peanut butter or add cranberry to reduce mucous. Cranberry & Warfarin medication should not be taken together. Food dye, vitamins, beetroot, spinach will all cause a colour change to your urine.



## HINTS & TIPS: DIET

- Choosing healthier food options, read labels e.g., diet drinks often sweetened by sorbitol.
- Too much sorbitol can cause diarrhea
- Avoid high levels of salt (sodium)
- After a new faecal stoma, begin with small frequent meals and bland type food
- Revisit foods again later that may have caused discomfort
- Colostomate try not to eat evening meals too late.
- Discuss with your GP a dietary management plan with a dietitian .



## HINTS & TIPS: EXERCISE

See GP for management Plan for Exercise Physiologist or Physiotherapist

See your STN for measurement of support garment & help ordering

Look out for ConvaTec Me+ coming soon.

# EXERCISE

“Staying active regularly is essential for good physical and mental health and wellbeing. This is true no matter how young or old you are. But the amount of activity varies, depending on your age.” Source: Australian Government Dept of Health and Aged care



## 18-64 YEARS

Adults should be active most days, preferably every day. Each week, adults should do either:  
2.5 to 5 hours of moderate intensity physical activity – such as a brisk walk, golf, mowing the lawn or swimming, 1.25 to 2.5 hours of vigorous intensity physical activity – such as jogging, aerobics, fast cycling, soccer or netball an equivalent combination of moderate and vigorous activities.  
Include muscle-strengthening activities as part of your daily physical activity on at least 2 days each week.

## 65+ YEARS

As you get older, it's important to do some form of physical activity every day. What you do depends on your health and lifestyle. But there are easy ways to add activity to your day. If you have health problems, it's a matter of finding what works for you. Talk to your doctor about what activity suits you. For example, if you have: heart problems, diabetes or asthma – you can start moderate walking or swimming arthritis – you can try hydrotherapy or swimming in a warm pool osteoporosis – you can try weight bearing and strength activities.



# CORE ENGAGEMENT



- Abdomen + spine = core
- Abdominal muscles supporting stoma are part of the core
- Strengthening core = better posture, body awareness, reduction in parastomal hernia development, greater independence.



# LIFTING

- Heavy lifting should be avoided until you are comfortable
- If lifting bend knees
  - Feet apart
- Keep objects close to body
- Regular lifting wear a support belt
- STN needs to measure you for support belt

# STOMAL THERAPY SERVICES - (NSW &

## **OSTOMY NSW LIMITED CLINIC**

Lee Gavegan CNC

Phone: **(02) 9542 1300 for appointment**

A free Clinic is held every Tuesday between 9am and 3:00pm. Please ring ONL to make an appointment. The telehealth clinic will operate on Tuesdays from 9am to 3pm. Please call our office on (02) 9542 1300 to make an appointment, and Lee will contact you for a time to meet. The virtual clinic is offered to all of our members and we would appreciate a donation to Ostomy NSW to support the cost of providing this service. This service is especially recommended for members who are not able to see a local STN. At this stage there is no face-to-face clinic available at our temporary location.

## **NSW STOMA LTD. CLINIC**

Anne Marie Lyons STN..

Mobile: **0468 582 951**

Email: [stomanurse@nswstoma.org.au](mailto:stomanurse@nswstoma.org.au)

The NSW Stoma Clinic (free to members) is open from 11am to 1pm at half-hour intervals on the second and fourth Thursday of each month in the private room at our office in Unit 5, 7-29 Bridge Rd Stanmore. Our lift has wheelchair access. Members with an ostomy problem may phone to organise a free consultation.

Due to COVID-19 our on-site clinic has been replaced by a phone and email service.

## **SYDNEY METRO AREA**

### **BANKSTOWN-LIDCOMBE, FAIRFIELD & BRAESIDE HOSPITALS**

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Mobile: **0408 923 788**

### **CAMPBELLTOWN PRIVATE HOSPITAL**

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Phone: **(02) 9477 9184**

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Erin Wagner STN Mobile: **0419 224 662**

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Katherine Wykes Monday & Tuesday Page  
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ManagementCNCs@health.nsw.gov.au  
Level 2, Dickinson Building, Barker Street,  
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nsw.gov.au  
Colleen Mendes CNC  
Maria Bongat

## **RYDE HOSPITAL**

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Stomal Therapy & Wound Care  
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## **ST GEORGE PRIVATE HOSPITAL, KOGARAH**

Phone: **(02) 9598 5342**  
Kerrin Hammon CNS

## **ST GEORGE PUBLIC HOSPITAL**

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Anne Mamo CNS Deborah Dutchak CNS  
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# STOMAL THERAPY SERVICES - (NSW &

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Rebekah.mullen@svha.org.au

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Mark Murtagh CNC  
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(pager 6158)  
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Email: StomalTherapy@sah.org.au  
Phone: **(02) 9487 9111**  
Kerrie Whitson CNC STN (Mon and Wed)  
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Michelle Scoble (Friday)  
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## **WESTMEAD HOSPITAL**

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Email: Karen.Shedden@health.nsw.gov.au  
Ashleigh Peters (Mon and Tue)  
Email: Ashleigh.peters@health.nsw.gov.au  
Call the answering service on **(02) 8890 7969**  
if unable to contact via pager.

## **ILLWARRA AND SOUTH COAST**

### **BATEMANS BAY & MORUYA HOSPITALS**

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Tablelands..

### **BEGA COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTRE**

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### **NOWRA COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTRE**

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Fax: (02) 4286 1312

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Emma Cutugno

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Phone: **(02) 4304 3297**  
Dee Coulton STN

# ACT) DIRECTORY AS AT JANUARY 2024

## NEWCASTLE REGION

### CALVARY MATER HOSPITAL

Phone: (02) 4014 3815

Email: stomaltherapy@calvarymater.org.au

Kellie-Anne Russell, Deb Smith

Phone: (02) 4014 3810.

### JOHN HUNTER HOSPITAL

Phone: (02) 4921 3000

Email: HNELHD-JHHStomal@hnehealth.nsw.gov.au

Jenny O'Donnell CNC, Karen Cole STN

Mitchell Eddington, Renee Bootland

### HUNTER VALLEY PRIVATE HOSPITAL

Alison Lincoln STN

Phone: (02) 4944 3777

Email: alison.lincoln@healthecare.com.au

### LAKE MACQUARIE PRIVATE HOSPITAL

Ellie Duiz STN

Phone: (02) 4947 5362

Duiz.ellie@ramsayhealth.com.au

### LINGARD PRIVATE HOSPITAL

Alison Lincoln STN

Phone: (02) 4969 6799 for an appointment

Email: alison.lincoln@healthecare.com.au

### MAITLAND PUBLIC HOSPITAL

Phone: (02) 4936 5507

Annika Leyshon (Mon-Tues & Thurs-Fr)

Email: annika.leyshon@health.nsw.gov.au

Phone: (02) 4939 2000

### MAITLAND PRIVATE HOSPITAL

Alison Lincoln (visiting STN)

Phone: (02) 4931 2304

### NEWCASTLE PRIVATE HOSPITAL

Phone: (02) 4941 8741

Cecelia King STN

Email: cecilia.king@healthscope.com.au

Melissa Williams STN

### WALLSEND COMMUNITY HEALTH

Please refer back to the hospital where you had your surgery.

Nash Street, Wallsend.

Phone: (02) 4924 6100

## NORTH COAST

### COFFS HARBOUR COMMUNITY NURSING HEALTH CAMPUS

Mandy Hawkins CNC, STN Stoma Continence

Phone: (02) 6656 7804

Email: mandy.hawkins@health.nsw.gov.au

Alyssa Higoe CNS, STN Stoma Continence

Email: Alyssa.higoe@health.nsw.gov.au

Phone: (02) 6656 5467

Darren Fitzgerald RN Stoma Continence

Email: darren.fitzgerald@health.nsw.gov.au

Phone: (02) 6656 5468

Serving the towns of Coffs Harbour, Dorrigo, Bellingen, Macksville and Woolgoolga.

### GRAFTON BASE HOSPITAL

Jane Kulas STN CNS

Phone: (02) 6640 2222

Email: jane.kulas@health.nsw.gov.au

### GRAFTON COMMUNITY HEALTH

Jane Kulas STN CNS

Phone: (02) 6641 8200

Email: jane.kulas@health.nsw.gov.au

### LISMORE BASE HOSPITAL

Phone: (02) 6620 2850

Ed Cooke STN for all out-of-hospital ostomy patients

Edgar.Cooke@health.nsw.gov.au

Phone: (02) 6621 3252

Outpatient service also available on Tuesday and Friday

### LISMORE COMMUNITY HEALTH

Janelle Wilson STN

29 Molesworth Street, Lismore.

Phone: (02) 6620 2097

Fax: (02) 6620 2963

### MACLEAN DISTRICT HOSPITAL AND COMMUNITY HEALTH

Jane Kulas STN CNS

Email: jane.kulas@health.nsw.gov.au

### MANNING HOSPITAL (TAREE)

Phone: (02) 6592 9469

Karla MacTaggart STN (Tue. to Thu.)

Mobile: 0419 859 281

Serving towns & communities between

Wingham, Forster, Tuncurry, Taree,

Harrington, Gloucester and Bulahdelah..

# STOMAL THERAPY SERVICES - (NSW &

## **PORT MACQUARIE BASE HOSPITAL**

Jean McCarroll STN has retired  
Zsusi DERWENT, RN  
Mobile: **0427 795 765**  
Phone: **(02) 5524 2439**  
Email: Zsuzi.Derwent@health.nsw.gov.au

## **PORT MACQUARIE AND KEMPSEY COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTRES**

Maria Emerton-Bell STN CNC  
Phone: **(02) 6561 2790**  
Casey Luke STN Serving towns and  
communities between Laurieton, Port  
Macquarie, Kempsey, Wauchope, South West  
Rocks and Stuarts Point.

## **ST VINCENT'S HOSPITAL (LISMORE)**

Tracey Eason STN  
Phone: **(02) 6627 9448** or **(02) 6627 9449**

## **TWEED HEADS COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTRE**

Lisa Clare Stomal/Continence Advisor.  
Phone: **(07) 5506 7540**  
Email: Lisa.Clare@health.nsw.gov.au  
Siobhan Mills  
Mobile: **0427 064 815**  
Covering Tweed Heads Hospital &  
Communities from the Tweed Heads NSW/  
QLD border to Bangalow.

## **NEW ENGLAND**

### **TAMWORTH BASE HOSPITAL**

Robin Skillman CNC  
Phone: **(02) 6767 7733**  
Serving towns and communities between  
Tenterfield, Boggabilla, Mungindi, Moree,  
Wee Waa, Quirindi, Armidale, Walcha,  
Uralla, Guyra, Bundarra, Tingha, Glen Innes,  
Emmaville, Ashford, Warialda, Inverell,  
Bingara, Barraba, Boggabri, Manilla,  
Gunnedah, Tamworth, Werris Creek, Nundle.

### **NARRABRI COMMUNITY HEALTH**

Lavinia (Alvin) Hill  
Phone: **(02) 6799 2800**

## **WESTERN NSW**

### **ALBURY WONDONGA HEALTH SERVICE**

Phone: **(02) 6058 1800**  
Mobile: **0457 522 000**  
Gerardine O'Brien  
Amanda Forbes

### **ALBURY WODONGA PRIVATE HOSPITAL (AWPH/ASG)**

1125 Pemberton St., Albury 2640  
Gerardine O'Brien STN  
Phone: **(02) 6022 4350**  
Email: gerardine@alburiesurgical.com.au

### **BATHURST HEALTH SERVICE**

Louise Linke NP STN  
Phone: **(02) 6330 5676**  
Fax: (02) 6330 5742  
Email: louise.linke@health.nsw.gov.au  
Serving Bathurst, Orange, Parkes, Forbes,  
Cowra, Lithgow, Condobolin and surrounds.

### **BROKEN HILL BASE HOSPITAL**

Shirley Victory (resources person only)  
Phone: **(08) 8080 1642**

### **DUBBO BASE HOSPITAL**

Thulisile Moyo STN  
Phone: **(02) 6809 6000**  
Mobile: **0427 150 649**  
Hannah Mines  
Phone: **(02) 6908 6809**  
Serving Dubbo, Cobar, Coonamble,  
Narromine, Nyngan, Trangie, Warren,  
Wellington, Baradine, Gulargambone, Coolah,  
Gilgandra, Coonabarabran, Dunedoo,  
Gulgong, Mudgee, Bourke, Brewarrina,  
Collarenebri, Goodooga, Lightning Ridge &  
Walgett.

### **GRIFFITH BASE HOSPITAL**

Naomi Smith  
Phone: **(02) 6969 5555** (ext. 695)

### **GRIFFITH COMMUNITY HEALTH**

Phone: **(02) 6922 9903**

# ACT) DIRECTORY AS AT JANUARY 2024

## **ORANGE HEALTH SERVICES**

Joe Webster STN  
Phone: **(02) 6369 7455**  
Email: Joseph.Webster@health.nsw.gov.au

## **WAGGA WAGGA BASE HOSPITAL**

Irene Cozens  
Phone: **(02) 5943 1545**  
Email: irene.cozens@health.nsw.gov.au  
Naomi Smith  
Mobile: **0412 324 136**  
Email: naomi.smith@health.nsw.gov.au

## **CALVARY PRIVATE WAGGA WAGGA HOSPITAL**

Naomi Smith  
Mobile: **0412 324 136**

## **YOUNG MERCY CENTRE**

Contact Community Nurses  
Phone: **(02) 6382 8444**  
Serving Young, Harden, Cootamundra,  
Boorowa, Grenfell and district.

## **CANBERRA AND DISTRICT**

### **CANBERRA HEALTH SERVICES**

Phone: **(02) 5124 0000**

### **STOMAL THERAPY SERVICE**

You can make an appointment by calling  
Central Health Intake on **(02) 5124 9977**.

### **CANBERRA HOSPITAL**

Anju Mamachan  
Phone: **(02) 5124 4255** Pager 50959  
Email: anju.mamachan@act.gov.au

## **BELCONNEN HEALTH**

Cheryl Jannaway CNC  
Phone: **(02) 6205 1201**

## **CALVARY HOSPITAL (CANBERRA)**

Marree Pegrem STN.  
Phone: **(02) 6201 6045**  
Kellie Burke CNC  
Phone: **(02) 6244 2222**  
(then page stomal therapist)

## **QUEANBEYAN COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTRE**

Jo Morgan STN  
Phone: **(02) 6150 7144** or **(02) 6150 7670**  
Visits patients in Queanbeyan & Yarralumla  
areas

## **COOMA HEALTH SERVICE**

Vicki Black STN  
Phone: **(02) 6455 3222**

## **COOTAMUNDRA HOSPITAL**

Vacant  
Phone: **(02) 6942 1861**  
Mobile: **0419 123 508**

## **ALBURY WODONGA HEALTH**

Albury Community Health Centre,  
Gerardine O'Brien  
Phone: **(02) 6058 1800**  
Email: stomaltherapy@awh.org.au

## **ALBURY WONDONGA PRIVATE HOSPITAL**

Gerardine O'Brien  
Phone: **(02) 6022 4350**

*Any errors or omissions please email Heather Hill at  
[heathermaryhyde@yahoo.com](mailto:heathermaryhyde@yahoo.com) OR phone: 0422 204 497(M)*



# NSW / ACT SUPPORT

## BANKSTOWN AREA

**Dates:** 2nd Wednesday every 3rd month commencing Wednesday 13th March 2024; 12th June 2024, 11th September 2024 and 11th December 2024

**Time:** 10:00am to 12:00pm – morning tea

**Address:** Revesby Workers Club, 2B Brett St, Revesby, Ph 02 9772 2100

**Access:** Close to public transport and lots of free parking

**About:** A stoma support group hosted by Bankstown Hospital STNs for you and your family. Everyone is welcome but must be double vaccinated.

**RSVP:** Please RSVP for catering purposes to your Bankstown Hospital STN or Mariam Elfoul on 0400 921 901, email: aumael@coloplast.com.

## ST GEORGE AREA

**Dates:** Thursday 7th March, 13th June, 12th September and 5th December 2024,

**Time:** 11:00am - 1:00pm – morning tea

**Address:** Ramsgate RSL Club

Corner Ramsgate Rd and Chuter Ave, Sans Souci NSW 2219

**Access:** Close to public transport and free parking

**About:** Everyone welcome – please RSVP for catering purposes to your STN or Mariam Elfoul on 0400 921 901, email: aumael@coloplast.com

## SHOALHAVEN SUPPORT GROUP

**Dates:** 28th Feb. Nowra Community Health Centre, 5-7 Lawrence Avenue Nowra.  
27th March. Ulladulla Community Health Centre, Cnr Princes Hwy & South St Ulladulla.  
26th June. Nowra Community Health Centre.  
30th October. Nowra Community Health Centre.  
26th November (Tues.) Ulladulla Community Health centre.

**Time:** 2pm

**Address:** Nowra school of Arts Annex: adjacent to School of Arts, 12 Berry Street, Nowra.  
Car parking surrounds the building. Ulladulla Community Health Centre:  
Corner of South Street and Princes Hwy, Ulladulla. Street parking..

**About:** The contact is Brenda Christiansen STN CNC. Ph. 02 44246300  
e. [brenda.christiansen@health.nsw.gov.au](mailto:brenda.christiansen@health.nsw.gov.au)

## NEPEAN EDUCATION STOMA SUPPORT GROUP

**Dates:** Fridays every second month, commencing on 23rd February 2024, 3rd May 2024, 26th July 2024, 18th October 2024 and 6th December 2024.

**Time:** 2-3:30pm – afternoon tea

**Address:** Medical School – Outpatients department, 62 Derby Street, Kingswood. NSW 2747

**Access:** The building is opposite Nepean Hospital's Emergency Department. Enter via the side path to the Clinical School's Outpatient waiting room. Please wait until 2:00 pm when you will be directed to the meeting room.

Car Parking: Either on the street or in the multi-story car park on Somerset Street, Kingswood (free for pensioners for the first 3 hours)

**About:** Family and friends are most welcome.

Any enquiries please contact Naomi Houston on 02 4734 1245

# GROUP MEETINGS 2024

## **SOUTH WEST SYDNEY AND LIVERPOOL STOMA SUPPORT GROUP**

**Dates:** **Thursday every second month (1st Thurs in December)**  
**15th Feb 2024, 18th April, 20th June, 22nd Aug, 24th Oct and 5th Dec.**

**Time:** 1:30pm to 3:30pm

**Address:** Campbelltown Catholic Club, 20/22 Camden Rd, Campbelltown NSW 2560

**RSVP:** Erin 0419 224 662 or Lu 0417 026 109 for catering purposes please.

## **ILLAWARRA OSTOMY INFORMATION GROUP**

**Dates:** **14th Feb, 10th April, 12th June, 14th August, 9th Oct, 11th Dec (Christmas luncheon. Venue to be advised)**

**Time:** 10am to 12pm

**Address:** Education Room, Figtree Private Hospital, 1 Suttor Place, Figtree

**Contact:** For Further Information contact:  
Helen Richards CNC STN Wollongong Private Hospital phone: 42861109  
richardsh@ramsayhealth.com.au Julia, Sam & Rachael Stomal Therapy Nurses  
Wollongong Hospital mob: 0414421021  
islhd-stomaltherapy-NIHG-SIHG@health.nsw.gov.au

## **BOWRAL STOMA SUPPORT GROUP**

**Dates:** **Tuesday 5th March, 4th June, 3rd September and 3rd December 2024**

**Time:** 11:00am to 12:00pm Everyone is welcome!! Please RSVP 1 week prior.

**Address:** Bowral Bowling Club, 40 Shepherd St, Bowral.

**Contact:** Lu Wang & Erin Wagner Stomal Therapists, Liverpool Hospital—(02) 87384308 Or Mariam Elfoul on 0400 921 901, aumael@coloplast.com  
Plenty of car parking for everyone! Tea/Coffee with be available; Finger food will be available

## **CANBERRA ACT SUPPORT GROUP \*\*NOT UPDATED FOR 2024 AT TIME OF PUBLISHING\*\***

**Dates:** 2nd Tuesday every month – commencing from Tuesday 11th July 2023, 12th September, 14th November..

**Times:** 10am to 12pm

**Address:** Act & Districts Stoma Association {the old stoma association room}  
2nd Floor, City Health Building, 1 Moore St, (Cnr Moore & Alinga ST), Canberra

**Contact:** Your Stomal Therapy Nurse, or Geoff Rhodes {actual ostomate happy to chat with you} on 0416 206 871 or email Geoff at grhodes@homeemail.com.au for further Information.  
Everyone is welcome but must be COVID vaccinated to attend.  
RSVP for this meeting is required by ACT Health so we can comply with COVID numbers & restrictions.  
\*CLINICAL ADVICE CANNOT BE GIVEN, PLEASE CONTACT YOUR STOMAL THERAPY NURSE

## **GRAFTON/CLARENCE VALLEY**

**Dates:** **2nd Tuesday Bi-monthly commencing Tuesday 13th February 2024, 14th May 2024, 14th August 2024 and 12th November 2024**

**Time:** 10am to 11:00am Everyone is welcome!!

**Address:** Aruma Community Health, 175 Queen St, Grafton NSW 2460

**Register:** Jane Kulas Tel (02) 6640 2222 | Mob 0459 943 062

**Contact:** Jane Kulas 0459 943 062 or Gary Tobi n 0400 675 277



# NSW / ACT SUPPORT GROUP MEETINGS

## BEAT BLADDER CANCER

**Dates:** Last Tuesday of every month

**Time:** 7:00pm to 8:30pm

**Address:** Macquarie University Hospital, 3 Technology Place, Macquarie University

**Contact:** Adam Lynch, President BEAT Bladder Cancer 0421 626 016

## GOULBURN STOMA SUPPORT GROUP 2024

**Dates:** 8th May, 7th August and 6th November 2024

**Time:** 10:00am to 12:00pm Everyone is welcome!! Please RSVP 1 week prior.

**Address:** Goulburn Workers Club, 1 McKell Place, Goulburn, NSW 2580

**Contact:** Mariam Elfoul on 0400 921 901, or email: aumael@coloplast.com

Hope to see you, your friends and loved ones there. Plenty of car parking for everyone!

Tea/Coffee with be available; Finger food will be available

## COFFS OSTOMY GROUP 2024

**Dates:** 4th Thursday of every second month –meeting dates 22nd February 2024, 25th April 2024 (may be changed – Anzac Day), 27th June 2024, 22nd August 2024, 24th October 2024.

**Time:** 2pm-4pm

**Address:** Sawtell RSL, First Avenue SAWTELL 2452. Upstairs

**Contact:** Mandy Hawkins CNC Stoma Continence Coffs Harbour Health Campus

**Phone:** (02) 66567804 Email: mandy.hawkins@health.nsw.gov.au

## MANNING AND GREAT LAKES OSTOMY SUPPORT GROUP.

**Dates:** he first Wednesday of every 2nd Month: 7th February 2024, 3rd April 2024, 5th June 2024, 7th August 2024, 2nd October 2024 and 4th December 2024.

**Time:** 10.30 am

**Address:** Taree Group Three Leagues- Downstairs meeting room, 43 Cowper St, Taree.

**Contact:** Karla McTaggart, CNC Stoma | Wound | Gastrostomy, Hunter New England Local Health District T (02) 6592 9169 email: karla.mactaggart@health.nsw.gov.au

## JOHN HUNTER HOSPITAL OUTREACH CLINICS

**Dates:** Muswellbrook Hospital 5th June 2024, 4th December 2024

Singleton Hospital 15th August 2024

Tomaree Community Hospital 17th April 2024, 23rd October 2024

**Contact:** To make an appointment, phone John Hunter Hospital switch 02 4921 3000 pager 36206, or Email: HNELHD-JHHStomal@health.nsw.gov.au  
Priority will be given to patients who have not been reviewed by a Stomal Therapy Nurse in the past 5 years.

## CENTRAL COAST STOMAL THERAPY SUPPORT GROUP

**Dates:** Thursday May 23rd 2024 at Wyong, Tuesday 26th November Venue TBC

**Time:** 1:30pm to 3:30pm Everyone is welcome!!

**Address:** Wyong Community Health Centre- Group room, Level 1, 38A Pacific Hwy, Wyong NSW 2259

**Register:** To your local Stoma nurse via email by May 1st

**Email:** CCLHD-Stomaltherapy@health.nsw.gov.au or Phone: 4320 3323

**Contacts:** We look forward to meeting you, seeing you & supporting you Stomal Therapy Team  
Emma, Mary, Sharon, Nichole





LeeAnne, CeraPlus™ Product User

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-LeeAnne^

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^LeeAnne is a CeraPlus Product user who has received compensation from Hollister Incorporated for this statement.

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# IN THE SPOTLIGHT

## NORMA GILL A PIONEER WITH A HEART OF GOLD



“Norma Gill’s journey through life reads like an inspiring tale of resilience, faith, and determination. Though her name may not be familiar, her story is a testament to the remarkable impact one person can have on an entire field, even without a medical background.”

Norma wasn’t a nurse or a doctor, but she became a trailblazer in the field of stomal therapy—a medical discipline dedicated to improving the lives of people with stomas. A stoma is an opening in the body created during surgery, and Norma’s journey began when she was diagnosed with ulcerative colitis, a chronic condition affecting the colon and rectum.

Life threw her curveballs that would have discouraged most, but not Norma. In a time when racial tensions ran high, and African Americans faced systemic discrimination, Norma found strength in her faith and a deep desire to make a difference. Her story starts in Akron, Ohio, a city of contrasts in the 1950s. It was a place known for innovation yet marred by racial inequality.

Despite personal challenges, including her own health struggles and the loss of her first husband, Norma pressed on. She had a vision—a vision to create a sanctuary where people of all races could find faith and support, away from the racial biases of her era.

Then, a diagnosis of ulcerative colitis changed her life forever. Before her life-changing surgery, Norma found herself racing to the toilet 15 to 20 times a day, a relentless cycle that left her weakened and drained. In the dead of night, she would crawl on the floor to attend to her newborn child, her hands blistered and swollen from the ulcers that plagued her.

The ulcers, a result of pyoderma gangrenosum, were relentless. They covered

her face, legs, back, and abdomen. On her face, they were so severe that she later required plastic surgery. On her legs, the ulcers were so agonizing that flesh would fall off the bone, exposing nerves and emitting a horrifying smell of decaying tissue. The pain was so intense that she resorted to wrapping her legs in towels overnight to collect the fluid oozing from the ulcers. However, the mornings brought even more agony: removing the towels caused her such pain that tears would stream down her face.

---

Her turning point came when she turned to God for help and used transcendental meditation to help deal with her pain. In her darkest hours, she made a vow: if she survived, she would dedicate her life to serving others.

---

After a long and arduous journey to recovery, Norma began volunteering at a local hospital, distributing mail, and helping patients. She soon met Dr. Rupert Turnbull, and their partnership became the cornerstone of stomal therapy. They pioneered new techniques, collaborated with manufacturers, and worked tirelessly to improve the lives of people with stomas.

Norma's legacy is a lasting one. Her work paved the way for the formalization of stomal therapy, leading to the establishment of professional organizations and training programs. Today, stomal therapy is a global field dedicated to helping individuals live fulfilling lives

after stoma surgery.

Norma's life story is not just about medical innovation; it's about the human spirit's capacity to triumph over adversity. Her legacy reminds us that one person's determination and faith can change the world, and no matter the challenges we face, we can find purpose and make a difference.

As we celebrate the life of Norma Gill, let her story inspire us all to find strength in our own journeys and to reach out a helping hand to those in need. Her impact continues to ripple through time, reminding us that every life can leave a legacy of hope, healing, and compassion.

THE 43RD AASTN & 10TH APETNA CONFERENCE

# 'NEW HORIZONS

AUSTRALIAN ASSN. OF STOMAL THERAPY NURSES & ASIA  
PACIFIC ENTEROSTOMAL THERAPY NURSES ASSN.

FREMANTLE  
Western Australia

13<sup>TH</sup> – 16<sup>TH</sup>  
April 2023



**Heather Hill (ONL Volunteer) and Louise Walker (Queensland) the new AASTN President at one of the social functions**

Approximately 600 delegates attended from all over Australia plus many colleagues and friends from the Asia Pacific area. What an incredible experience this conference was. No-one could ever imagine how much everyone would gain from so many unexpected aspects. All the Committee(s) involved should give themselves a huge pat on the back for the way it was organised. Since returning to Sydney I have not ceased extoling the breadth of learn-

ing, knowledge, sharing and caring that exuded from everybody there. One of the most important things about any Conference is the opportunity to network with colleagues from the many different areas of our profession with the end goal hopefully being that our professional practices will keep improving life for the members of all the associations who trust in our care.

AASTN took advantage of the Conference to celebrate our 50th birthday + 2. Like everyone else Covid stopped many things happening which is why we were two years late celebrating it!

Our education was not only broadened by the excellent papers we were able to listen to but also increased by a diverse array of ePOSTERS – 81 in total. I am in awe of the talent around. A quote I used in 1986 bears repeating:

'Robert F. Kennedy may not have been a stomal therapy nurse but his words are appropriate!



***A few of the 26 AASTN Life Members at the cutting of the 50th birthday cake***

“The future does not belong to those who are content with today, timid and fearful in the face of new ideas and bold projects. Rather, it will belong to those who can blend vision, reason and courage in a personal commitment”.

As usual the Companies had excelled themselves and were so supportive. The Exhibitors Hall was always well attended in the breaks, so much to view and learn about. There were at least 45 booths so everyone was kept on their toes ensuring they were able to spend time at every stand. As you can imagine a popular draw card was the Barista booth kindly supplied by Liberty Medical/Hollister and Dansac.!

Before the commencement of the huge diversity of presentations we were

warmly welcomed by our non-stop AASTN President, Fiona Bolton and the Chancellor of University of Notre Dame, the Hon. Chris Ellison. The Welcome to Country given to us by Auntie Marie Taylor was truly remarkable. The resounding applause she received at the end of her beautiful Welcome to Country demonstrated clearly how moved we all were. There was then a parade of 15 Pan Pacific delegates each in their national dress representing the countries present at the conference.

Professor Keryln Carville opened the academic proceedings with a very appropriate presentation on the Evolution of Wound, Ostomy and Continence Nursing. An excellent start to a plethora of papers we were about to be treat-

# CONFERENCE

ed to over the next 3 days.

An unexpected and very special treat was in store before we broke for morning tea – the brilliant sound of children’s pure voices washed over us and entertained us for the next 15 minutes – the Karrinyup Choir – glorious performance.

A plethora of papers indeed! What to select?! The choices were difficult as quite often, with the concurrent sessions, one would want to go to all three choices. It was broadly separated into Stoma, Continence or Wounds but there were many other interesting topics regarding care in other lands, the differences between states, surgical aspects, specific disease processes, paediatric care, multi-disciplinary care, sexuality, research, pregnancy, various specific case studies etc. etc. No-one could have left that Conference feeling they had learnt nothing – it was an extraordinary Conference from beginning to end. Congratulations to the AASTN Executive and planning committee.

June 26th we commemorate Norma N. Gill’s birthday. For those of you that are not aware Norma was the first ET, or, as we call them in Australia, the first official STN (stomal therapy nurse) in the world.

In the 1930s Norma was very ill and eventually diagnosed with Ulcerative Colitis. In 1955 Rupert Turnbull (Cleveland Clinic, USA) had to perform major surgery on Norma to save her life, an abdominal perineal resection, a total colectomy and formation of an end ileostomy.



# CONFERENCE



**Auntie Marie Taylor - Welcome to Country**



**Learning never stops - some of the 600 delegates in a session**

Rupert Turnbull could do lifesaving surgery but was concerned about what would happen to people when they returned home. He asked Norma if she would become his Enterostomal Nurse and in 1961 they started the first Enterostomal Therapy School in Cleveland Clinic. Throughout their lives they were often affectionately called the Father and Mother of stomal therapy.

Throughout my nursing career I often used one of my favourite quotes of Norma's which I am now going to use once again because it explains stomal therapy nurses exactly.

"In a pioneering field like enterostomal therapy, all the players have travelled different routes, yet most have become involved out of a love for humanity and a desire to end suffering. By remaining true to themselves they have achieved professionalism and are thus able to educate others to continue the cycle".

**Heather Hill AM**  
**AASTN Life Member**



**Helen Richards & Julia Kittscha**  
**(STNs in Wollongong NSW)**

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