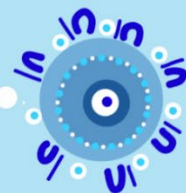
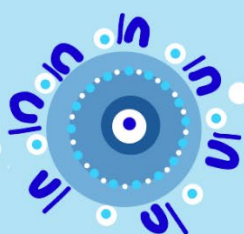




# Information Guide 2024

## Mid North Coast Local Health District



Artwork by Lisa Kelly of Gumbaynggirr Country

# Contents

1. Introduction.....	3
2. About Mid North Coast Local Health District.....	4
2.1 Organisations structure and resources.....	4
2.2 Our facilities and corporate functions .....	4
2.3 Mid North Coast Local Health District map.....	6
2.4 Governing Board.....	7
2.5 MNCLHD Leadership Team.....	7
2.6 Strategic Plan.....	7
3. Community engagement.....	8
2.1 Engagement channels.....	8
2.2 Become a consumer representative .....	8
4. MNCLHD information.....	9
3.1 MNCLHD webpage.....	9
3.2 Feedback on our services .....	9
4. Accessing MNCLHD information.....	10
4.1 Open access information.....	10
4.1.1 Contracts .....	10
4.1.2 Disclosure log .....	10
4.1.3 Documents tabled in Parliament .....	11
4.2 Proactive release of information.....	11
4.2.1 Media releases .....	11
4.3 Informal access applications.....	11
4.4 Formal access applications.....	12
4.5 Information not disclosed .....	12
4.6 GIPA related queries .....	12
4.7 Accessing your personal health record information .....	12
4.8 Your medical record.....	13
4.9 How to request medical record information .....	13
4.10 Fees and charges for your medical record information.....	13
4.11 Open data guidance and resources.....	13
5. Role of the Information Commissioner and NSW Civil and Administrative Tribunal.....	14

# 1. Introduction

The NSW Information Commissioner advises *“Open Government involves a tangible and consistent commitment by government to increase access to information, engage with citizens and be accountable. Agency Information Guides serve this commitment by providing a public resource that informs citizens about the information that the agency holds, the agency’s engagement channels, and its decision-making processes”*.

## 2. About Mid North Coast Local Health District

Mid North Coast Local Health District (MNCLHD) has a very important vision – Building thriving communities through excellence in people-centred health care.

Underpinning such a vision is a commitment to the sound management and governance of our organisation.

MNCLHD is committed to the principles and practice of transparency, accountability and compliance with all laws, codes and directions.

We are also committed to meeting the expectations of our patients, families, visitors, staff and communities.

MNCLHD extends from the Port Macquarie-Hastings Local Government Area in the south to the Coffs Harbour Local Government Area in the north and provides healthcare services across a geographic area of approximately 11,335 square kilometres. It's estimated that more than 218,180 residents live within MNCLHD.

### 2.1 Organisational structure and resources

MNCLHD commenced operations on 1 January 2011. MNCLHD is part of NSW Health. In addition to our local health district, NSW Health comprises the NSW Ministry of Health and 17 other local health districts, statutory health corporations and affiliated health organisations.

MNCLHD has been set up in accordance with the National Health and Hospital Agreement. Local decision-making is at the forefront of how the organisation will function, led by a professional health Board and Chief Executive. A guide to the key legal obligations of agencies forming part of NSW Health can be found at:

<https://www.health.nsw.gov.au/legislation/Pages/legal-compendium.aspx>

### 2.2 Our facilities and corporate functions

We provide a broad range of public health services to our community through seven public hospitals, and twelve community health centres. These services include the Mid North Coast Cancer Institute and Mid North Coast Brain Injury Service.

Our facilities are:

- Bellingen Community Health Centre
- Bellinger River District Hospital
- Bowraville HealthOne
- Camden Haven HealthOne
- Coffs Harbour Health Campus
- Coffs Harbour Community Health Centre
- Dorrigo Multi Purpose Service
- Dorrigo Community Health Campus
- Kempsey District Hospital
- Kempsey Community Health Campus
- Macksville District Hospital
- Macksville Community Health Centre
- Nambucca HealthOne

# Mid North Coast Local Health District



- Port Macquarie Base Hospital
- Port Macquarie Community Health Centre
- South West Rocks Community Health Centre
- Wauchope District Memorial Hospital
- Wauchope Community Health Centre
- Woolgoolga Community Health Centre

## 2.3 Mid North Coast Local Health District map



## 2.4 Governing Board

MNCLHD's Governing Board has been established as per the [Health Services Act 1997 No 154 - NSW Legislation](#) and is responsible for overseeing an effective governance risk management framework, collaborating with key stakeholders on its strategic directions and ensuring high standards of professional and ethical conduct are maintained.

The Board is chaired by Mr Peter Treseder AO and has eight members:

- The Hon Luke Hartsuyker (Deputy Chair)
- Dr Jenny Beange
- Mr Michael Coulter
- Mr Gary Humphreys
- Ms Susan McGinn OAM
- Dr Shehnarz Salindera
- Ms Tracy Singleton
- Ms Jenny Zirkler

## 2.5 MNCLHD Leadership Team

Mr Stewart Dowrick, Chief Executive, heads the Leadership Team which consists of the following positions:

- Director Aboriginal Health and Primary Partnerships
- Director Communications and Strategic Relations
- Director Digital Health
- Director Finance and Performance
- Director Integrated Care, Allied Health and Community Services
- Director Integrated Mental Health, Alcohol and Other Drugs
- Director Internal Audit and Risk
- Director Medical Services and Clinical Governance
- Director North Coast Population and Public Health
- Director Nursing, Midwifery, Sustainable Healthcare and Health Services Functional Area Coordinator (HSFAC)
- Director People and Culture
- Director Research and Knowledge Translation
- Coffs Clinical Network Coordinator
- Hastings Macleay Clinical Network Coordinator

## 2.6 Strategic Plan

At the heart of the [MNCLHD Strategic Plan 2022-2032](#) are the strategic objectives. These statements summarise our main intentions for what we want to achieve.

Focus Area 1 – Informed, engaged, empowered, community

Focus Area 2 – Positive and personalised care experiences

Focus Area 3 – Strong prevention and early intervention

Focus Area 4 – Partnering, collaboration, communication

Focus Area 5 – Streamlined processes that support safety and best practice

Focus Area 6 – Research, health intelligence, strategic management

Focus Area 7 – People, culture and capability

Focus Area 8 – Resource stewardship

# 3. Community engagement

Our aim is to be a truly people-centred organisation, where employees, volunteers, partners, community and consumers, work together as a unified team to deliver high quality care and better health outcomes for individuals and communities.

## 2.1 Engagement channels

In MNCLHD, we value the experiences of consumers (patients, carers and families).

We know that consumers have better health outcomes in which there are mutually beneficial outcomes, when they're involved in the design, delivery, and measurement of systems and services.

MNCLHD also recognises the importance of involving patients in their own care and providing clear communication to patients.

Examples of how MNCLHD partners with consumers include:

- completing local patient experience surveys
- completing statewide surveys through the Bureau of Health Information
- inviting consumer feedback on data collection and reporting
- participating in working parties for new builds (such as the Coffs Harbour Health Campus redevelopment)
- collaboration on artworks, building design and use of language (such as in the new Macksville District Hospital)
- membership on advisory committees (such as the Healthy Communities Advisory and Aboriginal Advisory Committees)
- membership on hospital and Governing Board sub-committees
- the REACH program
- community connections forums and much more.

## 2.2 Become a consumer representative

A consumer representative is someone who has chosen to become involved and provide advice, based on their own experiences and knowledge, with the ultimate aim of improving local health services.

Consumer representatives are often involved with a committee, project or event and can provide a unique point of view, while also connecting with communities to find out their perspectives and experiences.

To explore how you can be involved contact MNCLHD's Consumer Engagement Coordinator via email at [MNCLHD-CommunityEngagement@health.nsw.gov.au](mailto:MNCLHD-CommunityEngagement@health.nsw.gov.au).

Information on the national approach to partnering with consumers can be found at the [Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care](#) website.



## 4. MNCLHD information

### 3.1 MNCLHD webpage

MNCLHD maintains a comprehensive internet site that includes a wide range of information on health matters, our health workforce, hospitals and other health services, publications and projects.

Our website at <https://mnclhd.health.nsw.gov.au/> is used to provide the public with resources and information about our regulatory functions and activities, health alerts, submissions, policies, news and developments.

### 3.2 Feedback on our services

MNCLHD values feedback and we can't change what we don't know.

To provide feedback on our services and functions, please contact the manager of the health facility in the first instance. These managers are available Monday to Friday, during business hours or for urgent assistance outside of these hours, call the hospital and ask to speak with the Executive on Call.

For further information please contact the Consumer Relations Coordinator on 1800 726 997 or via the website at <https://mnclhd.health.nsw.gov.au/contact/#feedback>.

## 4. Accessing MNCLHD information

The NSW Government has made a commitment to provide access to information held by the government, unless on balance it is contrary to the public interest to provide that information.

Under the provisions of the Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009 (GIPA Act) there is a right of access to certain information held by MNCLHD.

MNCLHD makes information available under the GIPA Act in four ways:

- as open access information
- through proactive release of information
- through informal access
- in response to a formal access application.

### 4.1 Open access information

Information which is classified as open access, is information that the MNCLHD is required to make available. This information is made available unless it is not in the public interest to do so.

Open access information is made available via our website and is freely available through the following publications:

- [Annual privacy reports](#)
- [Strategic Plans](#)
- [Governing Board minutes](#)
- [Clinical Service Plan 2018 – 2022](#)
- [Corporate Governance Framework](#)
- Current policy documents
- [Register of government contracts](#)
- MNCLHD Agency Information Guide

#### 4.1.1 Contracts

The NSW Ministry of Health is required to keep a register of government contracts that record information about each contract that has or is likely to have a value of \$150,000 or more.

Details concerning NSW Health contracts are available at the [NSW eTendering](#) website.

#### 4.1.2 Disclosure log

MNCLHD maintains a disclosure log as per section 25 of the GIPA Act which documents the information we release in response to access applications, and that may be of interest to members of the public.

Our disclosure log provides a mechanism to further proactively release information to the public and is located at: <https://mnclhd.health.nsw.gov.au/about/government-information-public-access-act-gipa/>.

## 4.1.3 Documents tabled in Parliament

MNCLHD is required to provide access to information about MNCLHD contained in any document tabled in Parliament by or on behalf of MNCLHD. As such these links are provided:

- [Tabled papers in Legislative Assembly](#)
- [Tabled Papers in Legislative Council](#)

## 4.2 Proactive release of information

Through the disclosure of proactive information, the MNCLHD aims to assist the public with access to other MNCLHD information. This is information that MNCLHD holds that is not required by the GIPA Act in the form of open access and routinely identifies as information for proactive release. Currently proactively released information available on MNCLHD's website includes:

- [Corporate Governance Attestation Statement 2022-2023](#)
- [Aboriginal Health Strategic Framework 2024-2034](#)
- [Sustainable Healthcare Framework Towards 2030](#)
- [Service Agreement and Budget Allocations](#)
- [Safety and Quality Account 2022- 2023](#)
- [Privacy Information for Patients](#)
- [MNCLHD By-laws](#)
- [Statement of Business Ethics](#)
- [Partnering with Consumers for Patient Safety and Quality Framework 2021-2026](#)
- [2022-2023 Year in Review](#)

### 4.2.1 Media releases

MNCLHD's media and communications team is responsible for all MNCLHD media requests and enquiries and is the primary point of contact for news organisations and can arrange media interviews with staff, on site media filming and major public health issues, disease outbreaks, upcoming events, research projects and capital works.

[Media releases](#) are available on our website and the media team can be contacted via email at [MNCLHD-Media@health.nsw.gov.au](mailto:MNCLHD-Media@health.nsw.gov.au) or telephone 0408 693 688.

## 4.3 Informal access applications

A request may be made at any time for other information held by MNCLHD. While MNCLHD reserves the right to require a formal access application to be made, we will generally provide these types of information in response to an informal request, without the need to make a formal access application:

- copies of correspondence, where the person requesting the correspondence was the person who sent it to MNCLHD who has forwarded the correspondence to the MNCLHD for action
- documents that contain only personal information about a particular individual, and that is the person who is requesting the information
- documents that have already been made public in some other way
- other reasonable requests for information the release of which would not raise any potential concerns in terms of public interest considerations against disclosure.

MNCLHD reserves the right to impose conditions in relation to the use or disclosure of information that is released in response to an informal request.

There is no requirement to complete a formal access application and there is no application fee. In some situations, charges may be incurred for services such as photocopying.

## 4.4 Formal access applications

An [access application](#) may be made for all other information held by MNCLHD.

Applications for access to information under the provisions of the GIPA Act should:

- be in writing and accompanied by the \$30 application fee
- include certified proof of identification if seeking access to personal information
- clearly indicate that it is a formal access application made under the GIPA Act
- state the name of the applicant and a postal or email address
- provide such information as is reasonably necessary to enable identification of the information requested.

An applicant must disclose on their access application whether they have applied to another agency, at any time, for substantially the same information, and if so, they must identify the agency. An application will not be invalid if an applicant fails to make this disclosure.

It should be noted that hourly processing charges (\$30 per hour) may apply.

## 4.5 Information not disclosed

As MNCLHD makes decisions about open access information that may not be disclosed due to an overriding public interest, it will publish this information on the website. This will detail the information requested and the reasons behind MNCLHD deciding not to release the information.

## 4.6 GIPA related queries

Formal and informal applications can be made to:

Consumer Relations Coordinator  
Mid North Coast Local Health District  
PO Box 126  
PORT MACQUARIE NSW 2444

For any GIPA enquiries, please contact the Consumer Relations Coordinator via email at [MNCLHD-ConsumerRelations@health.nsw.gov.au](mailto:MNCLHD-ConsumerRelations@health.nsw.gov.au) or on phone 1800 726 997.

## 4.7 Accessing your personal health record information

Medical records can be accessed under the GIPA Act but are generally accessed under the Health Records and Information Privacy Act 2002 (HRIPA).

MNCLHD collects personal information from patients so that we can provide them with treatment and advice. Test results and further information collected while patients are being treated are kept with their health record. MNCLHD only collect information that is relevant and necessary for the patient's treatment and to manage the health services we provide.

Patient information may be held in paper or electronic files, including visual image and audio formats. We take all reasonable steps to ensure the information we collect about patients is stored securely. We are required by law to retain health records for certain periods of time, depending on the type of record and facility. We have appropriate systems and policies in place to protect patient information from loss, unauthorised access and misuse.

## 4.8 Your medical record

Consumers can ask for any kind of personal information pertaining to themselves, which is contained in their health record and created by MNCLHD. This information may include emergency, outpatient and inpatient notes, community health services, pathology results and medical imaging reports, correspondence, medication sheets and discharge summaries.

Consumers are also entitled to view their health information, and this can be organised by contacting the [hospital](#) or [Community Health Centre](#). A healthcare provider or health information manager must be present for this viewing.

Access to patient personal health information may be declined in special circumstances, such as where giving access would put that person or another person at risk of harm. Access may also be declined if parts of a health record contain information which, by law, cannot be given, such as information about another person.

For assistance to access your personal health information, contact the relevant hospital:

**Coffs Harbour Health Campus, Macksville District Hospital, Bellinger River District Hospital, Dorrigo Multi Purpose Centre**

Phone 6656 7488, email [MNCLHD-CHHC-HRIS@health.nsw.gov.au](mailto:MNCLHD-CHHC-HRIS@health.nsw.gov.au)

**Kempsey District Hospital, Kempsey Community Health, South West Rocks Community Health**

Phone 6561 2664, email [MNCLHD-KEMP-MedicalRecords@health.nsw.gov.au](mailto:MNCLHD-KEMP-MedicalRecords@health.nsw.gov.au)

**Port Macquarie Base Hospital, Port Macquarie Mental Health**

Phone 5524 2022, email [MNCLHD-PMBH-HIRS@health.nsw.gov.au](mailto:MNCLHD-PMBH-HIRS@health.nsw.gov.au)

**Port Macquarie Community Health, Camden Haven Community Health**

Phone 6589 2363, email [MNCLHD-PMCH-MedicalRecords@health.nsw.gov.au](mailto:MNCLHD-PMCH-MedicalRecords@health.nsw.gov.au)

## 4.9 How to request medical record information

Complete an application form and post, email or deliver the form to the facility you attended addressed to the “Medical Records Department/Health Information and Records service”.

## 4.10 Fees and charges for your medical record information

Access to health information is made available at the lowest reasonable cost and without excessive delay. This means that MNCLHD are entitled to charge a fee to cover the administrative costs, such as time taken, photocopying, printing, or going through the record with you.

The fees charged are to cover the costs of providing you access, and therefore shouldn't be excessive. You should be provided with information about the cost at the time you make the request, or shortly after.

If you are worried about the amount of the fee, contact the hospital directly and let them know about your circumstances.

## 4.11 Open data guidance and resources

Information and health data can also be sourced at the following links:

[Bureau of Health Information](#)

[HealthStats NSW](#)

[NSW Government Portal](#)

[NSW Ministry of Health](#)

## 5. Role of the Information Commissioner and NSW Civil and Administrative Tribunal

Anyone can complain to the Information Commissioner about the conduct (including action or inaction) of an agency in the exercise of functions under the GIPA Act, including conduct that is alleged by the person to constitute a contravention of the GIPA Act.

A complaint may be made in one of the following ways:

- Post:** GPO Box 7011, Sydney NSW 2001
- Phone:** 1800 472 679
- Email:** [ipcinfo@ipc.nsw.gov.au](mailto:ipcinfo@ipc.nsw.gov.au)
- In person:** Level 15, McKell Building, 2-24 Rawson Place, Haymarket

The Information Commissioner may decide to investigate, not to continue to investigate, or not to investigate a complaint. More information regarding complaints about an agency's conduct is available on the IPC website at <https://www.ipc.nsw.gov.au>.

[New South Wales Civil and Administrative Tribunal](#) (NCAT) deals with a broad and diverse range of matters, from tenancy issues and building works, to decisions on guardianship and administrative review of government decisions.

NCAT's [Administrative and Equal Opportunity Division](#) reviews administrative decisions made by NSW Government agencies and resolves discrimination matters. They can also review decisions made under the GIPA Act, Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1988 and HRIPA.