



THE GREG BLEWETT OUTREACH PROGRAM  
SPORTING CHANCE CANCER FOUNDATION  
WOMEN'S AND CHILDREN'S HEALTH NETWORK  
2023 ANNUAL REPORT

Shandelle Hill & Juana Xia Sun  
Regional Outreach Oncology  
Nurse Consultant

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Greg Blewett Outreach Program supports children with cancer and their families from regional and remote areas, who are receiving treatment at the Women's and Children's Hospital (WCH), Adelaide. This is achieved through education, liaison and coordination between services. The program supports children and their families as well as health care practitioners across the multi-disciplinary team. Support is provided to other tertiary centres, regional hospitals, primary and community health care agencies, general practitioners and remote health care centres. Funding is provided from the Sporting Chance Foundation to employ a Nurse Consultant at the Michael Rice Centre for Haematology/Oncology (MRCHO) at 0.8FTE, including backfill for periods of leave which enables seamless care delivery.

### Telephone triage and virtual care update

The trial to include children undergoing cancer therapy with the WCH Child and Adolescent Virtual Urgent Care Service (CAVUCS) enabled children from regional areas to access specialist paediatric urgent care assessment within their own home. Several children accessed the service which was well received by families. In one parent's words, "It was very efficient and saved us a 2 hour round trip into the hospital. We would definitely use this service again if the need arises." Another family stated, "(It) made seeking medical advice for my son very simple and cut out a 1.5hour drive". The inclusion and exclusion criteria are currently under review to enable more families to access this service.

### Aboriginal Outcomes Project Update

The Aboriginal Outcomes Project has been a huge undertaking, particularly with the challenges presented by COVID. All interviews have been completed and reviewed in conjunction with key stakeholders within the Women's and Children's Hospital Network, Aboriginal Health Division. Interviews have been summarised with key themes identified and recommendations made. Three major themes identified include delayed diagnosis, challenges of a transient workforce in remote areas, and education for children and their families. Several recommendations were made during interviews which are currently being considered for future service development. These include:

- Having telehealth contact with the treating team at WCH prior to transfer.
- Having a smaller pool of paediatricians who manage oncology patients for continuity.
- Increasing the number of combined team telehealth's with all health care teams involved in the child's care (metro, regional and remote). "Everyone hearing the same message, me not having to repeat myself or new people coming in"
- Creating a "this is me" document with the child's preferences of care for interventions, medicines and communication to assist children who live in areas with high staff turnover.
- Increasing the frequency of family meetings throughout treatment to update family at home about diagnosis and treatment. "We was getting lots of phone calls from family".

A commentary article has been written outlining the project findings, co-authored with one of the Oncologist's in the project team and the Aboriginal Liaison team at WCH. This is being submitted to Paediatric Blood and Cancer with the hope for publication.

## PROGRAM CHANGES IN 2023

In April 2023 the Greg Outreach Program farewelled our pioneer Regional Outreach Oncology Nurse Consultant, Shandelle Hill. Shandelle has been in this role since 2009 when the Greg Blewett Outreach Program commenced at the Women's and Children's Hospital. Shandelle has left an incredible legacy as the Outreach Nurse, delivering guidance, education and support to children with cancer and their families from regional and remote areas.

Shandelle has made a huge impact on the lives of the many families and created a strong network to ensure the patients from rural and remote areas in South Australia and the patients from Northern Territory to have equitable access to high quality, safe and coordinated clinical care. Shandelle has now moved into the Outpatient Nurse Consultant position in our Haematology and Oncology clinic, continues to support the needs of children with cancer and their families, and she will try to spread services into metropolitan areas.

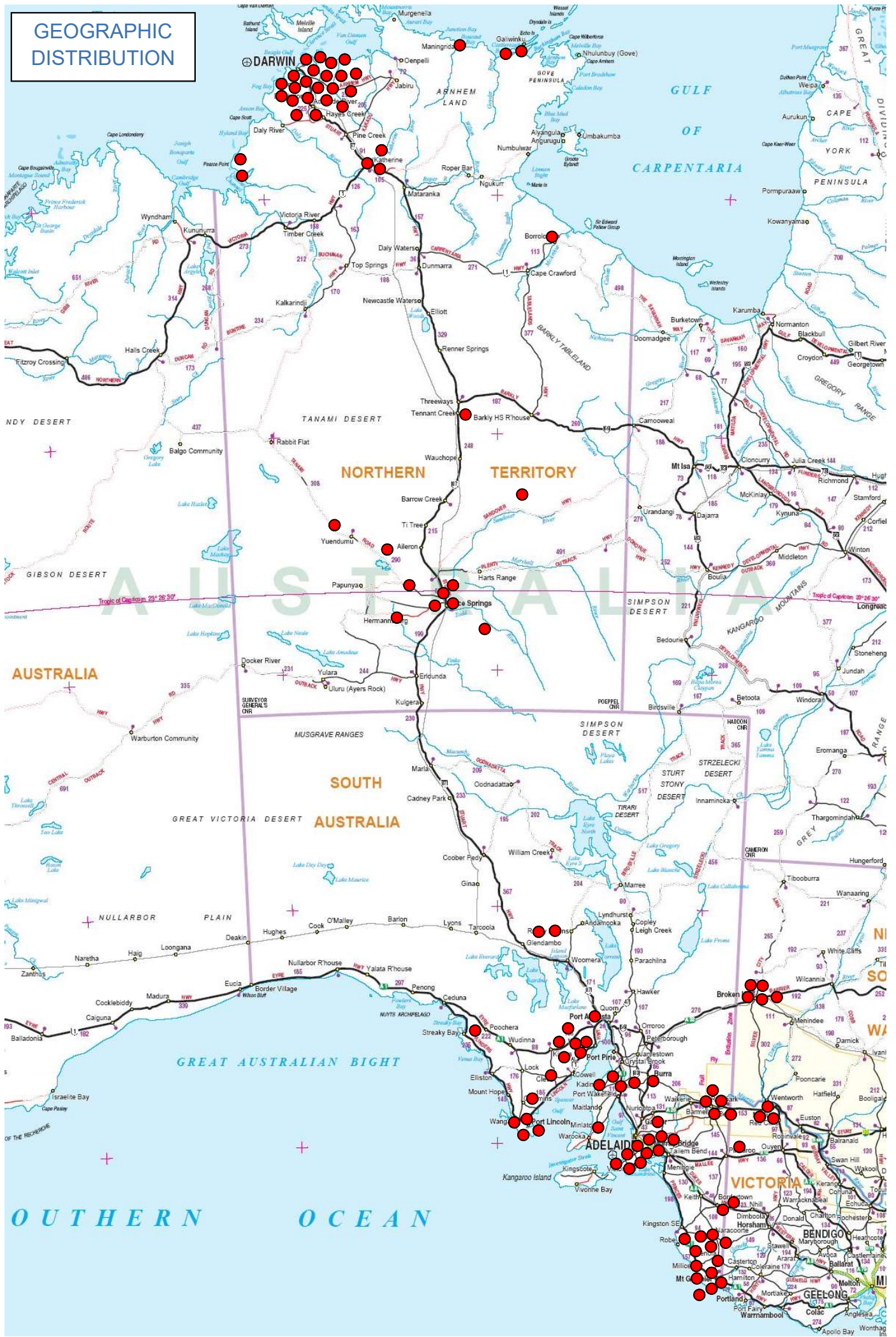
Upon Shandelle's departure, clinical nurse Juana Xia Sun has step into the Outreach Nurse Consultant role in May 2023 to continue delivering services through the Greg Outreach Program. Juana has extensive experience in Paediatric Oncology and has worked with children with cancer and their families for more than 20 years. She is aiming to leverage her experience and knowledge to continue to grow the Greg Blewett outreach program.

"Since the Greg Blewett Outreach Program commenced at the Women's and children's hospital in 2009, I have always admired the work of the regional outreach nurses and I am passionate about patients receiving the highest standard of care without having to leave their regional community. In this role, it's a privilege to meet children with cancer and their families, getting to know them and support them. Essentially, to do anything possible to make life a little easier for these children and their families. It is so rewarding. You can see the positive impact from the outreach services and the Sporting Chance Cancer Foundation has played an enormous role in facilitating this for children with cancer." Juana Xia Sun

## PROGRAM SNAPSHOT

- 104 patients under care of outreach service (distribution map page 6)
  - 71 on active treatment
  - 32 required coordination of travel and appointment scheduling, including telehealth consults
  - 23 patients of ATSI origin
- 58 patients received shared care and/or follow up within their local health care service
- 30 families were able to reside at home during treatment with support of Greg Blewett Outreach Program
- 24 families supported to return home during and post treatment
- 32 health care services supported to care for paediatric patients with cancer
- 44 episodes of telehealth
  - 27 consults
  - 3 family meetings
  - 2 multi-disciplinary complex transfer planning
  - 12 pre-chemotherapy patient assessments
- 1 episode of outreach travel
- 2 patients received intravenous/subcutaneous chemotherapy at their local health care service
- 1 rural/regional school visit/calls undertaken as part of Greg Blewett Outreach Program
- 3 transitioned to adult services

# GEOGRAPHIC DISTRIBUTION



## GREG BLEWETT OUTREACH PROGRAM 2022/2023 ACHIEVEMENTS

Achievements over the last 12 months include:

- Completed trial to integrate MRCHO telephone triage service with WCHN Child and Adolescent Virtual Urgent Care Service (CAVUCS). Plan to expand this service through modification of inclusion and exclusion criteria.
- Project lead "Improving Outcomes for Aboriginal Children Diagnosed with Cancer" supported through the WCH Foundation.
- Co-author of commentary article on providing care to Aboriginal Children and their families for submission to Paediatric Blood & Cancer
- Submitted joint abstract for oral presentation at Australia New Zealand Haematology/Oncology Group (ANZCHOG) Annual Scientific Meeting.
- Nurse Consultant lead for planning and implementation of nurse led clinics for Electronic Medical Records (EMR).
- Clinical lead for local safety and quality groups – short term projects and long term projects
- Intensive liaison with specific regional sites to expand clinical services available, limiting travel from inner county areas.
- Provide clinical support to MRCHO.

# CHILD & ADOLESCENT Virtual Urgent Care Service

Q WCH Virtual Urgent Care



## OUTREACH TRAVEL

Victor Harbor 20/10/22

This travel was for the purpose of education and training. Services within this regional area developed into community care agencies, as well as the South Coast District Hospital. Close liaison with the Cancer Care Coordinator at the South Coast chemotherapy unit has resulted in support from the local team to provide care for paediatric patients. Education was provided to the community care team regarding paediatric cancers, treatment, supportive care and use of central venous access devices (CVAD). This has enabled children to receive intravenous infusions and CVAD care within their own community, resulting in being able to stay within their own community and prevent daily travel into the Women's and Children's Hospital. The Greg Blewett Outreach Program is currently liaising with the South Coast chemotherapy unit to further upskill the team for paediatric care.



**South Coast District Hospital in Victor Harbor (85Km From Adelaide)**



## GREG BLEWETT OUTREACH PROGRAM: LOOKING FORWARD 2023/2024

- Facilitation of placement of 2 groups of Royal Darwin Hospital nurses for chemo training and education in Michael Rice ward and clinic
- Increase referrals to Country Health SA chemotherapy units to facilitate the administration of intravenous antifungal medication, prophylaxis intravenous antibiotics and blood products for paediatric haematology and oncology patients.
- Develop series of education sessions for regional hospitals and local community nurses' team, aim for short, easy topic but useful and practical, for example:
  - For port:
    1. How to deaccess the port?
    2. How to access the port?
    3. How to flush the port?
    4. How to take blood sample from the port?
  - For CVC:
    1. How to do the CVC dressing?
    2. How to take blood sample and Tauro lock the CVC line?
    3. How to monitor the line infection?
    4. What to do if noticing any signs of line infection?
- Continue to build and foster relationships with our shared care hospitals, such as Royal Darwin Hospital and Alice Springs Hospital.
- Continue to support our children and adolescent patients through transition from Michael Rice cancer centre to local shared services.
- Continue to act as a resource person for medical and nursing staff in regional hospitals in South Australia.
- Review the outreach nurse scope of practice to enhance the existing services.
- Participate in consumer feedback, conduct an audit, and develop a questionnaire to collect the data for analysis and evaluation.