



THE GREG BLEWETT OUTREACH PROGRAM  
SPORTING CHANCE CANCER FOUNDATION  
WOMEN'S AND CHILDREN'S HEALTH NETWORK  
2021 ANNUAL REPORT

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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 (0.8FTE), including backfill for periods of leave which enables seamless care delivery.

### Activity

The last 12 months have seen sustained, high levels of activity and acuity within the Michael Rice Centre for Haematology/Oncology. This increased activity has also been evident within the Greg Blewett Outreach Program. Increased levels of activity are demonstrated across almost all areas in the last 12 months including:

- 15% increase in the total number of patients cared for by the service
- 46% increase in children receiving shared care within their own community
- An additional 20% health care services were supported within the last year.

After more than doubling last year, episodes of telehealth have continued to grow with an increase of 32% in the last 12 months.

### Research Project

The department of Clinical Haematology/Oncology at the Women's and Children's Hospital have previously published two scientific papers demonstrating a difference in outcomes for remote Aboriginal children. Similar findings have also been presented at recent conferences including the Australia and New Zealand Children's Haematology/Oncology Group (ANZCHOG) Annual Scientific Meetings. Given these findings, a grant application was submitted to the WCH Foundation to investigate the challenges and inadequacies, which may contribute to health outcomes for remote Aboriginal Children. The grant was successful and a project team was developed including 2 Aboriginal Liaison Officers, 3 Oncologists, and 2 Nurses, with advice from the Executive Director, Aboriginal Health Division, and Strategic Operations Manager, Aboriginal Health Division. As a key individual who works with children and families from remote communities, the Oncology Outreach Nurse Consultant is taking a lead role.

The aim of this qualitative research project is to help understand the patient journey. Ethics applications have been submitted to the WCH Human Research Ethics Committee as well as Aboriginal Human Research Ethics Committee. Current and past patients and families will undertake semi-structured interviews examining the patient journey from time of first symptom, to completing of treatment, returning home and post treatment follow up. Regional and remote health care workers will also be interviewed. The aim is to highlight barriers to care which hinder timely diagnosis, the treatment journey and best outcomes. Results will be shared with the Department of Health, as well as the Aboriginal Health Council, with recommendations for areas of improvement

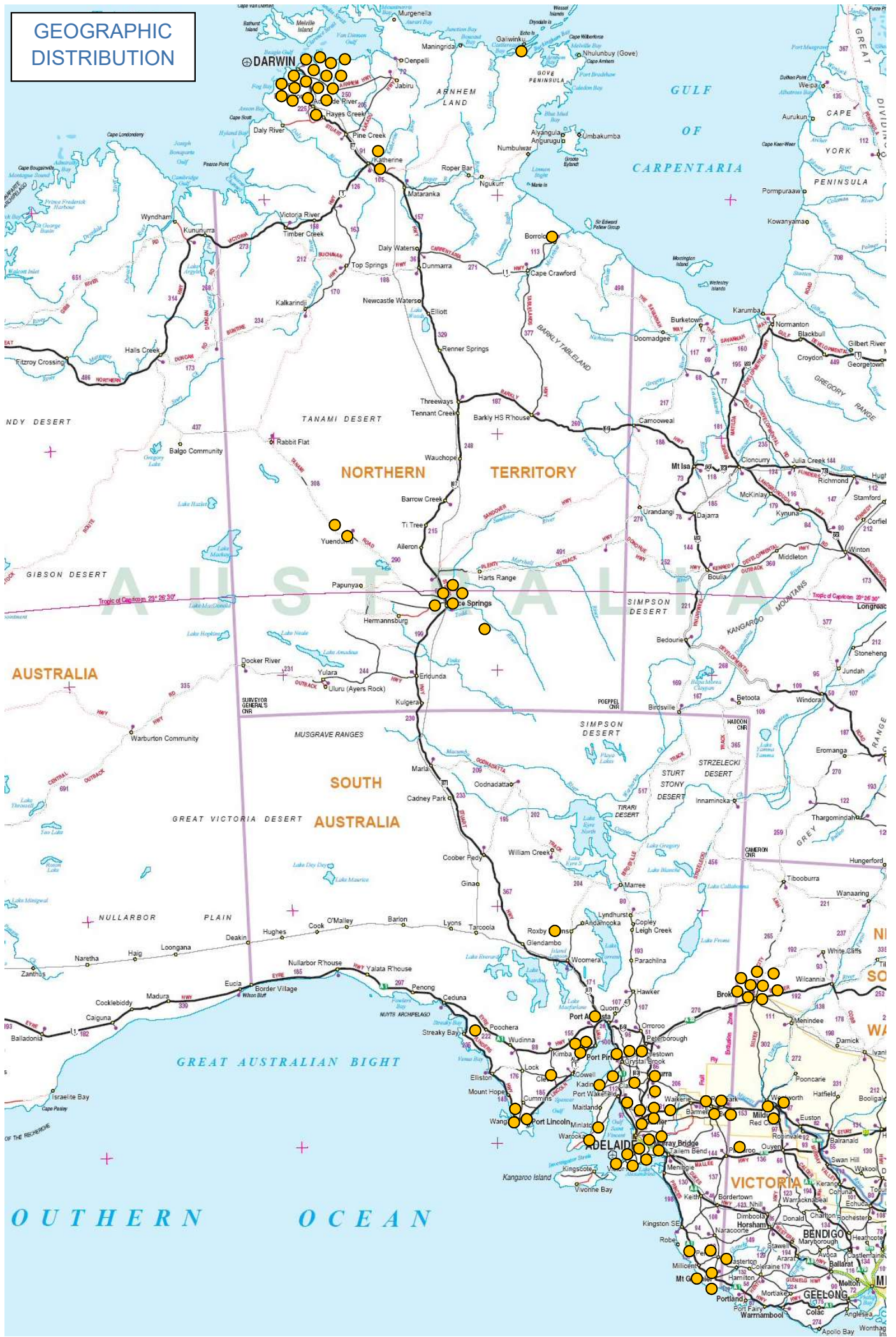
### Clinical placement for RDH nursing staff

As demonstrated in the distribution map, the highest concentration of children cared for by the Greg Blewett Outreach Program come from Darwin and surrounds. Despite the challenges of COVID restrictions, we were able to facilitate the clinical placement of four nurses from Royal Darwin Hospital. The nurses spent a full week gaining hands on experience in the inpatient and outpatient settings, consolidating their competence in paediatric chemotherapy administration and management of newly diagnosed and unwell patients.

## PROGRAM SNAPSHOT

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

# GEOGRAPHIC DISTRIBUTION



## GREG BLEWETT OUTREACH PROGRAM 2020/2021 ACHIEVEMENTS

Achievements over the last 12 months include:

- Virtual presentation at London Cancer Week, "The Global Power of Oncology Nursing".
  - Hill S, "The power of culture: Caring for young Aboriginal Australians undergoing cancer treatment", United Kingdom Oncology Nursing Society (UKONS) virtual conference, 17 November, 2020.
- Commencement of research project; "Improving Outcomes of Aboriginal Children Diagnosed with Cancer"
- Facilitate clinical placement of 4 nurses from Royal Darwin Hospital for education and training
- Involvement in chemotherapy quality improvement project
- Attend ANZCHOG virtual Annual Scientific Meeting
- Contribution to MRCHO nursing planning day to identify service priorities
- Multiple presentations including an international virtual conference
- Support chemotherapy accreditation utilising PADAC framework.



RDH nurses during clinical placement at WCH

## Presentations

- Presentation at United Kingdom Oncology Nursing Society virtual conference, "The Global Power of Oncology Nursing".
  - "The power of culture: Caring for young Aboriginal Australians undergoing cancer treatment." Shandelle Hill, Robert Dann ALO. 17 November 2020.
- Presentation to WCH Oncology Study Day
- Inservice presentations



## OUTREACH TRAVEL

Travel has been limited due to well-established services in many regional locations. There were two visits to Murray Bridge in the last 12 months for the purpose of chemotherapy education and training.

## GREG BLEWETT OUTREACH PROGRAM: looking forward 2020/2021

- Completion of research project; "Improving Outcomes of Aboriginal Children Diagnosed with Cancer"
- Submit abstract for oncology scientific meetings regarding the outcome of the research project
- Improve connections with remote communities, providing in person education to key areas
- Further enhance paediatric chemotherapy services within regional South Australia
- Undertake workshops and study day at Royal Darwin Hospital
- Develop a resource for WCH team regarding telehealth utilisation