

# Southern Inland Health Initiative



## Contents

Providing better access to doctors and emergency care	2
Existing services	3
Patient story	4
Next steps for SIHI	4

## What is SIHI providing in the Goldfields?

**T**he Southern Inland Health Initiative (SIHI) is a half a billion dollar investment by the State Government's Royalties for Regions program that's transforming health care throughout the southern inland region of WA, including towns in the Wheatbelt, South West, Great Southern, Midwest and Goldfields.

Delivered by the WA Country Health Service, SIHI is the single biggest investment in country health in the State's history. A recent evaluation report shows country people in the regions covered by SIHI are receiving safer, better and more reliable health care, with significant improvements in emergency care and access to GPs.

To read the **SIHI Program Evaluation – Preliminary Key Findings March 2016** report, [click here.](#) 



Residents in Goldfields towns and surrounding communities are now benefitting from the following health initiatives and improvements thanks to this historic health investment:

## Providing better access to doctors and emergency care

SIHI is significantly improving emergency medical care by using modern technology, and by supporting more doctors to live and work in the country. The success of the SIHI program is clear – in the community, there has been a 67 per cent increase in the number of GPs staying in regional communities in the four years since SIHI began. In local hospitals and health care centres, SIHI is improving the safety and quality of care by improving support for the medical workforce.

In the Goldfields region, the following SIHI initiatives are contributing to communities getting better access to GPs, improved emergency care and a stronger country health service:



### New district medical model to encourage GPs to stay in country towns

SIHI is supporting collaboration between GPs, enhanced flexible work options, education and training and collegiate support to encourage attraction and retention of doctors providing services in WACHS facilities, including parts of the Goldfields region.



### Incentives to attract GPs to country towns and participate in Emergency Department rosters

Eligible GPs can receive financial incentives to encourage them to work in the SIHI region and take part in ED rosters at local WACHS facilities including Esperance. These incentives are in addition to the support packages provided by local government.

SIHI funds GPs to be on-call for after-hours emergencies at Esperance, Norseman, Laverton and Leonora health centres.



### Incentives for procedural specialist GPs

SIHI is providing financial incentives for anaesthetists and obstetricians to service the Esperance community and participate in after hours on-call rosters. In addition SIHI funds a Specialist Anaesthetist to provide governance, education and upskilling to local GP anaesthetists.



### Strengthened medical workforce

SIHI supports local GPs and staff in WACHS facilities by incentivising the GPs to stay in country towns, and incentivising them to provide ED, obstetric and inpatient services.



### Emergency Telehealth Service

Doctors and nurses treating critically ill and injured patients in hospital emergency departments at Norseman, Esperance, Kambalda, Laverton and Leonora, and at health centres in Menzies and Coolgardie, now have access to highly trained emergency specialists in Perth via videoconference, thanks to the Emergency Telehealth Service (ETS).



### ED Nurse Practitioner

SIHI is funding a highly-trained ED nurse practitioner to provide additional clinical support at Esperance Health Service.



### Incentives for GPs to provide primary care services and Aboriginal health services

SIHI is providing financial incentives for a GP to provide primary care services and Aboriginal health services to the Norseman, Laverton and Leonora communities.



### Outpatient services via telehealth

A free outpatient service for public patients via videoconference with participating specialists in Perth is available at the Goldfields towns of Kalgoorlie, Kambalda, Laverton, Leonora, Esperance and Norseman. Services include treatment for burns, wounds and pain management and speech pathology, gastroenterology, neurology, urology and paediatrics.



### Diabetes Telehealth

A partnership between WACHS and Diabetes WA to enhance diabetes education services for people in the Goldfields, using videoconferencing. Phone 1300 136 588 or visit the Diabetes WA website at [www.diabeteswa.com.au](http://www.diabeteswa.com.au) 

## Your local District Health Advisory Council (DHAC)

**The local District Health Advisory Council (DHAC) works in partnership with the WA Country Health Service to improve the delivery of health services in their health district.**

DHAC members share experiences with local health service providers to improve consumer-centred care and services. To find out more, visit

[www.wacountry.health.wa.gov.au](http://www.wacountry.health.wa.gov.au)  and search for 'District Health Advisory Councils'.

Your Goldfields Acting DHAC Chairperson is Margaret Christie who can be contacted on 9080 5710.

Your South-East Goldfields DHAC Chairperson is Meredith Waters who can be contacted on 9080 5710.

## Existing services

Services introduced in the Goldfields under SIHI are provided in addition to the WA Country Health Service (WACHS) programs that were already available. WACHS and continues to offer Aboriginal health, child health nursing, school health nursing, immunisation, occupational therapy, speech pathology, physiotherapy, social work, dietetics, diabetes education and mental health services throughout the region through scheduled visits and telehealth.



# Diabetes services make accessing expert advice easy

**T**he Southern Inland Health Initiative is investing more than \$2 million providing services and programs in regional WA to tackle the increasing incidence of diabetes.

One of these services, Diabetes Telehealth, was launched in April 2015. The service delivers diabetes education to regional clients via videoconferencing with health service professionals, reducing the need for patients to travel long distances to seek support.

Retired farmer John McDougall has taken charge of his diabetes thanks to the Diabetes Telehealth service.

Developed through a partnership between the WA Country Health Service and Diabetes WA, the service fills the gaps in towns where diabetes educators are not available or not easily accessible to regional clients.

Mr McDougall didn't feel he needed much help with managing his diabetes, but was interested to try out the Diabetes Telehealth service. The service involves a video-conference with a diabetes educator.

"Because of the video-conference, I became more interested in my own health. It's not good being in denial for any of these health issues, and it definitely overcomes the problem of availability to doctors," Mr McDougall said.



*Retired farmer John McDougall*

He said he had discovered that diabetes treatment had changed over the years and he had learnt new ways to manage his medication.

**To find out more about Diabetes Telehealth, contact 1300 136 588.**

## Next steps for SIHI

**S**IHI is transforming the regional health landscape in the southern inland region of WA.

The results of the first evaluation of SIHI are very encouraging. The program will continue to be assessed and future possible funding models are being developed to continue critical programs beyond SIHI's completion in June 2017.

You can keep updated on the latest SIHI news by signing up for the SIHI e-newsletter, which will be issued monthly.

If you have any queries about SIHI, please contact us by emailing [southerninland@health.wa.gov.au](mailto:southerninland@health.wa.gov.au) 📧

You can also visit the SIHI website at [www.health.wa.gov.au/southerninland](http://www.health.wa.gov.au/southerninland) 📄