



HUNTER NEW ENGLAND
NSW HEALTH

EYE SURGERY IN MOREE- A COLLABORATIVE PROCESS

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Project commenced June 2006

MOREE

Moree is a rural community that lies 665 kilometres north west of Sydney



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MOREE

Moree has strong agricultural industries such as cotton, livestock, grain, oil seeds, and the largest pecan nut farm in the southern hemisphere



MOREE

Famous for the artesian bore and associated hot mineral baths which attract visitors from all over the world



Moree Plains Shire has a population of approximately 15800, with 17% of the population identified as Aboriginal

Indigenous Community

The indigenous population of the community has been at a distinct disadvantage when trying to access ophthalmology services, especially ophthalmology surgery

- Pius X Aboriginal Medical Service provide many medical services to the indigenous community of Moree, but ophthalmology services not offered
- Moree District Health Service did not provide any ophthalmology services to the Moree community

Eye Surgery in Moree

The project's main goal is to provide a high quality ophthalmology service, and in particular cataract surgery, to the community of Moree and surrounding districts



The Team

A collaboration has been formed between:

- Moree District Health Service
- Pius X Aboriginal Medical Service, Moree, and
- The Outback Eye Service, Prince of Wales Ophthalmology Department and Sydney Eye Hospital

- *A special mention must go to the St Johns Society who have supported the collaboration and the introduction of ophthalmology services to the community of Moree*

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SOLUTIONS

- The formation of the collaboration has allowed the project to grow into an exciting and productive relationship between the three organisations
- The sharing of information, knowledge, staff and equipment between the three organisations has allowed state of the art equipment to be based in Moree ensuring the provision of a high quality ophthalmology service to the Moree community

Solutions – Medical Staff

Four Ophthalmologists have been recruited to provide ophthalmology services to the Moree community.

- Two ophthalmologists are based in Tamworth, Two ophthalmologists are based on the Gold Coast

Anaesthetic services are supplied by three GP Anaesthetists from Moree.

- The GP Anaesthetists rotate on a regular basis to provide anaesthetics for all visiting ophthalmologists

Solutions – Nursing Staff

- Perioperative nursing staff at Moree District Health Service have undergone intensive training to ensure the provision of safe, evidence based nursing care to the patient undergoing eye surgery
- Registered Nursing staff have attended the Sydney Eye Hospital, the Prince of Wales Hospital and Tamworth Base Hospital to gain skills in ophthalmology surgery. The staff have undertaken a very steep learning curve with no nursing staff having any previous ophthalmology experience

SOLUTIONS

- The first operating day was held on February 2 2007. Since then, 70 patients have had eye surgery undertaken at Moree District Health Service, with many more patients having access to a consultation with an ophthalmologist in Moree during this time period



- Surgical lists are fully booked up to, and including, March 2008

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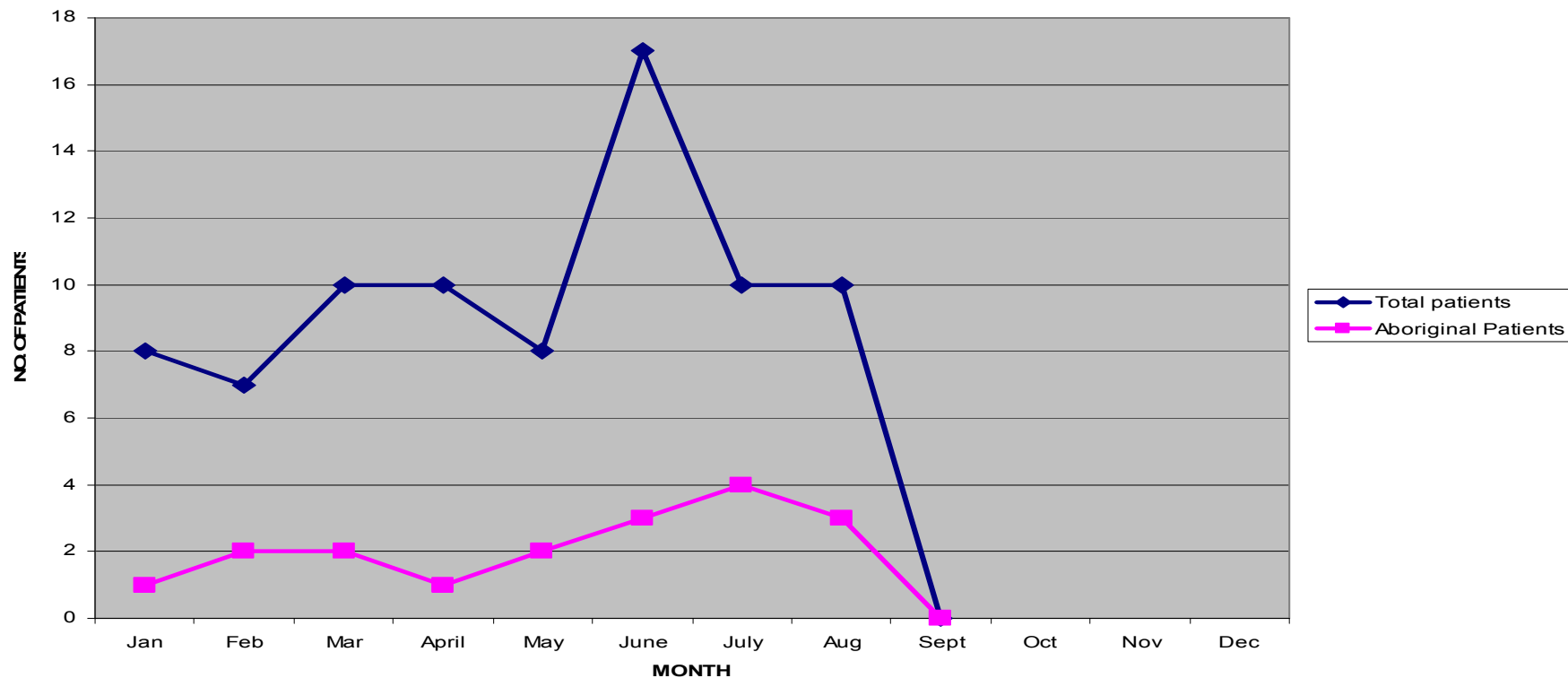
Outcomes and Evaluations

- This new service has benefited patients from the Moree community and surrounding districts by enabling the patient's to access an ophthalmology service within their own community, thus decreasing travelling times and the costs associated with this travel, which can be a financial burden on patients
- The introduction of ophthalmology services in Moree will ensure an improvement in the eye health of the indigenous population of Moree and surrounding districts

Outcomes and Evaluations

- 22.5% of ophthalmology procedures conducted at Moree District Health Service since February 2007 have been performed on indigenous people

OPHTHALMOLOGY PROCEDURES MOREE DISTRICT HEALTH SERVICE 2007



Sustainability

- Management from Moree District Health Service and Pius X Aboriginal Medical Service meet regularly to ensure communication about the service and any problems are discussed in a timely and appropriate manner. Contact is maintained between all organisations regularly through various modes of communication
- Moree District Health Service, Pius X Aboriginal Medical Corporation and the Outback Eye Service have committed to sustaining the newly introduced ophthalmology service to the Moree and surrounding communities



Sustainability

This commitment is evidenced by :

- ongoing funding for the service being provided by Hunter New England Health
- An increase in theatre time available at Moree District Health Service
- Dedicated ‘Eye Health” nurse positions being introduced at both Moree District Health Service & Pius X Aboriginal Medical Clinic
- Continued support by the Outback Eye Service to clinicians in Moree

Future Sustainability

The future of ophthalmology services in Moree is dependant on the following factors:

- The ability to retain the services of specialist ophthalmologists to ensure ongoing services
- The ability to recruit and retain procedural General Practitioners to ensure ongoing anaesthetic services
- The ability to recruit and retain skilled perioperative nursing staff to Moree District Health Service

Future Direction

- The future direction for the ophthalmology services introduced to Moree District Health Service is to ensure a continuance of the high quality service that has been implemented over the past eight months
- The future scope of the ophthalmology service is exciting, with the opportunity to introduce further ophthalmology procedures and services to the community of Moree and surrounding districts