Nepean medical researcher comes full circle

When a young medical researcher was undertaking his PhD in 1997 at Nepean Hospital he had no idea that nearly 20 years later he would be asked to take an appointment to lead Nepean Blue Mountains Local Health District’s new stronger commitment to supporting local research.

Associate Professor Guy Eslick from the Sydney Medical School Nepean, University of Sydney has taken on the new role of Director Research to promote and help facilitate research across the District.

Guy says balancing the demands of a clinical workload with the complexity of conducting research can be a challenge for health staff but he says the flow-on benefits to patient care can have an enormous impact on health service delivery.

“There are some really productive groups out there doing cutting-edge research that have real clinical translation into practice for patients,” Guy says.

“Research within our hospitals and in our community, mental health, drug and alcohol and allied health services is going on, but the outputs are currently unknown,” Guy says. “Some really good projects are just not ever completed.”

“My role is to find out what cutting edge research is out there and then to work with the LHD to unblock barriers and streamline new processes that will help research happen more quickly and researchers see it through to the end and publish their findings,” Guy says.

In 2016 the Local Health District’s Research Ethics and Governance team will be expanded to include a research manager and biostatistician to advise how to design research studies, support the recruitment of participants, assist with human research ethics approvals and help analyse the data to improve the outputs.

Guy says the LHD’s new stronger focus is designed to identify what people need and help them find a balance between their clinical role caring for and treating patients, and the important role that research should play in their profession.

Mrs Kay Hyman, Chief Executive Nepean Blue Mountains Local Health District says she’s confident that Associate Professor Eslick will help support the creation of a boom industry in local research.

“We are looking toward developing a strong emphasis on research for the LHD that will set the groundwork for the development of a research foundation,” Kay says.

“A research foundation would be a significant force to help provide best practice care to the communities of Penrith, the Hawkesbury, the Blue Mountains and Lithgow.”