



2025 ANNUAL REPORT



Prevention Education & Research Unit

Research & Education Network, Western Sydney Local Health District



Western Sydney
Local Health District



THE UNIVERSITY OF
SYDNEY

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This report is available at <https://peru-programs.sydney.edu.au/>

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Acknowledgements

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We thank the Blacktown and Hills Medical Practitioners Associations for their support of schools. Thank you also to Farah Irani for volunteering her time to work with us and thank you to the university students who volunteer their time to facilitate workshops in schools. Special thanks to Professor Peter Hockey, Professor Mark McLean, Helene Abouyanni and Dalia Younan and the administrative staff of Research and Education Network for their ongoing guidance and support. We acknowledge our partnership with the Sydney School of Public Health, Faculty of Medicine and Health, The University of Sydney, for their ongoing support.

Thank you to Mara Cvejic and Dr Ralf Itzwerth for contributing to the Annual Report.

Collaborations and Partnerships

Funding Support



Education Partners



Health Partners



Affiliates



Acronyms

BEAT	Breathe Easy All Together
BPLs	BEAT Peer Leaders
BMPA	Blacktown Medical Practitioners Association
FMH	Faculty of Medicine and Health
GWS Giants	Greater Western Sydney Giants
MDMPA	Mount Druitt Medical Practitioners Association
MoH	Ministry of Health
MHCS	Multicultural Health Communication Service
MPHN	Murrumbidgee Primary Health Network
MRFF	Medical Research Future Fund
NHMRC	National Health and Medical Research Council
DoE	Department of Education
PERU	Prevention Education and Research Unit
REN	Research and Education Network
SALSA	Students As LifeStyle Activists
SIG	Special Interest Group
SPLs	SALSA Peer Leaders
SYV	SALSA Youth Voices
TSANZ	The Thoracic Society of Australia and New Zealand
USYD	The University of Sydney
WSLHD	Western Sydney Local Health District
WSPHN	Western Sydney Primary Health Network

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Foreword



Tim Lloyd

Principal, Plumpton High School

DSM Duke of Edinburgh International Award

It is an honour to be invited by the PERU team to contribute to this Foreword, thank you. This is an honour as I am principal of Plumpton High School, one of the partnership schools who work closely with the PERU team. Our school and students have benefited from the tremendous work the team undertakes through engagement in the SALSA Peer Leader program over many years and the Unpacking Vaping program more recently.

I am inspired by PERU and their unwavering focus on preparing young people for bright and prosperous futures, many of whom have become leaders in our school. By investing in this motivated and talented group of young people in Western Sydney, we are laying the foundation for a brighter tomorrow.

As you read this Annual Report, I trust you feel inspired and reassured knowing that forward-thinking programs are in place to ensure our community not only enjoys better health but is also empowered to lead and create positive change with confidence.

I am proud to be connected and collaborate with the leadership of PERU and see the impact of participants involved in their initiatives. You are all exceptional, and you truly represent the future health and influence in Western Sydney.

“Forward-thinking programs are in place to ensure our community not only enjoys better health but is also empowered to lead and create positive change with confidence”.



Professor Peter Hockey
Executive Director of Quality & Safety, WSLHD
Honorary Clinical Professor
Sydney Medical School, The University of Sydney

Thank you once again for asking me to contribute this Foreword and for inviting me to be part of the work that PERU contributes to the health of Western Sydney. PERU holds an important leadership role providing education and opportunities to the generations coming after us, as well as inspiring and enabling younger people to see their potential for leading the care and health of our communities into the future.

Leadership is a frequently used word and sometimes felt to be the role of 'others' but we should all remember that we all lead at all sorts of levels – whether it be within our families, schools, with friends or in a work environment. At its heart leadership is about getting things done by working with and through others – and the principles underpinning this are to be clear about what we're trying to do, who we need to do it with, and then working out together how to do it.

My challenge for all of you in 2026 is to think about how you might lead – and practise leading by starting with something small.

Thank you PERU for giving our future generation and leaders the opportunities to lead change.

“At its heart leadership is about getting things done by working with and through others - and the principles underpinning this are to be clear about what we're trying to do, who we need to do it with, and then working out together how to do it.

Introduction

Since 1995, the Prevention Education and Research Unit (PERU) has been driving innovative preventative health programs and research in Western Sydney. Our award-winning peer-led initiatives empower young people to make healthy choices in diet, physical activity, asthma self-management, and prevent the uptake of smoking and vaping. By amplifying youth voices and fostering strong community partnerships, we support schools to create lasting change in school communities.

Mission

Empowering young people to make informed health decisions to prevent chronic disease and promote lifelong wellbeing.

Objectives



Reach in 2025



PERU team: Kym Rizzo Liu, Prof. Smita Shah OAM, Lance Leung, Caitlin Betts and Catriona Lockett

2025 Highlights



SALSA Program

- Over 260 Year 10 students trained as SPLs
- Presented at Western Sydney Moving Symposium

SALSA Youth Voices

- 45 Students participated in Leadership Day
- 4 School Action Plans presented at Action Day, with all student-led initiatives delivered in Term 4



Health Hackathon

- 47 Year 10 students engaged with support from industry leaders
- 4 Student-led campaigns delivered in schools



Multicultural Health

- Partnership with MHCS to train 7 Youth Ambassadors to promote healthy ageing
- Ambassadors celebrated at NSW Parliament House

Unpacking Vaping in Schools Project

- Presentations at PHAA & TSANZ Conferences
- 11 SIG meetings convened, reaching over 320 attendees



BEAT Program

- Over 270 Year 10 students trained as BPLs who delivered lessons to over 1450 Year 7 students
- Program evaluation completed

PHAA Public Health Impact Award

Professor Smita Shah OAM was received the PHAA Public Health Impact Award in recognition of a career that has spanned three decades with dedication to health equity for the prevention of chronic health conditions.

The award highlights Western Sydney's growing role as a hub for innovative, community-driven health research and education.



A/Prof. Kate McBride, Prof. Smita Shah OAM, Prof. Becky Freeman

With rates of chronic disease and health inequity disproportionately affecting the region, programs like SALSA have provided a blueprint for how collaboration between schools, health professionals, and young leaders can drive lasting change. Since its inception, the SALSA program has effectively reached over 27,000 high school students in Western Sydney and beyond. In 2026, PERU plans to consolidate and expand on the SALSA program's success with the development of a train-the-trainer package.



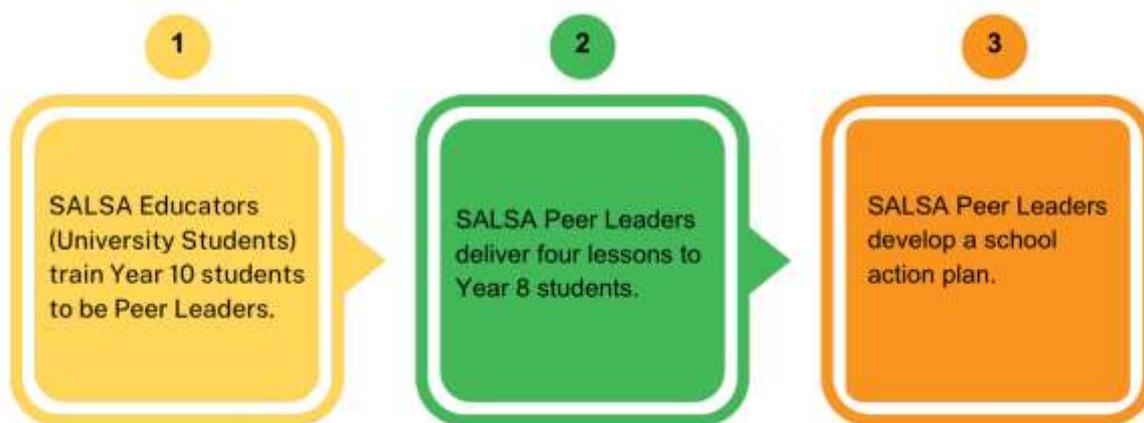
The SALSA programs reach 2004-2025

The SALSA Program

SALSA (Students As LifeStyle Activists) is a peer-led leadership program designed to motivate students to increase physical activity and improve diet. Year 10 students are trained as SALSA Peer Leaders and empowered to become lifestyle activists.

Developed in 2004 by PERU, Mt Druitt Medical Practitioners Association, and Rooty Hill High School, the program was designed to reach adolescents where they are-at school. The SALSA program is underpinned by Empowerment Education and the Social Cognitive Theory.

How the SALSA Program works



SALSA Educator Workshop

Four workshops were delivered to university students across allied health, medicine, pharmacy and public health. A total of 43 students from the University of Sydney, Western Sydney University, Macquarie University, UNSW, Australian Catholic University, the University of Newcastle (with HealthWISE, Tamworth) and the UNSW Rural Clinical Campus participated. In addition, two Parramatta Council staff and three HealthWISE Aboriginal Health Workers were trained.

Program Outcomes

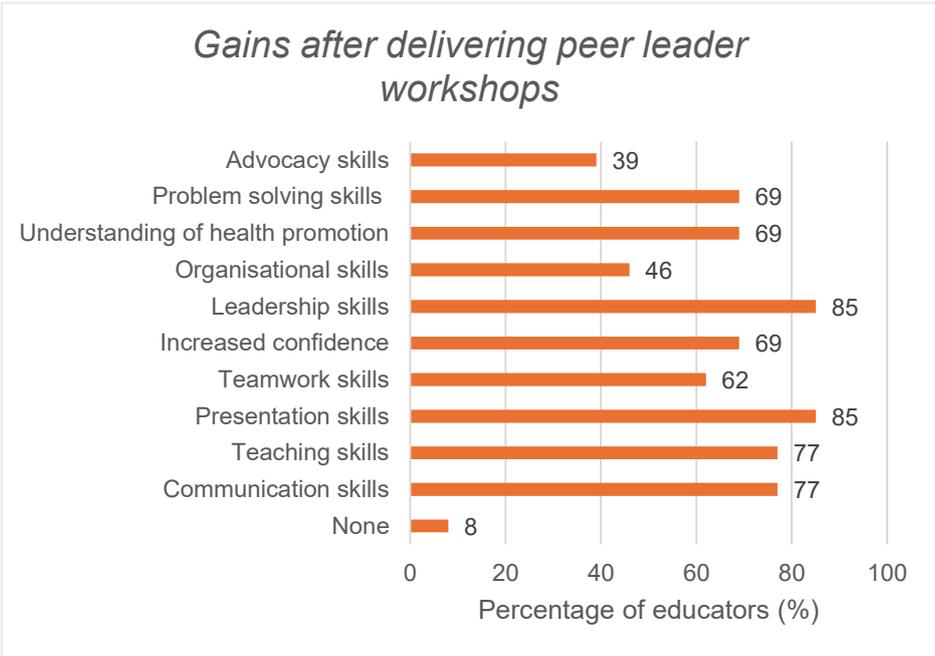
The SALSA Educator workshops received resoundingly positive feedback from participants (N=39) who highly rated the workshops and considered the content to be well-aligned with their studies. Educators indicated that the workshop exemplified community-based health promotion in practice which resonated well for those studying education, allied health, public health and pharmacy.

Following the workshop, educators reported a range of gains, including practical skills, enhanced understanding of health-related behaviours and effective strategies for engaging young people.



Rated the program as very good or excellent, and agreed that it was relevant to their area of study.

After delivering the SALSA program to high school students, most educators (n=13) agreed that the experience strengthened their understanding of public health in practice and encouraged them to make small, positive changes to their health behaviours. Moreover, training Year 10 students enabled educators to enhance their practical skills, preparing them for the future workforce.



Agreed the SALSA program improved their understanding of public health



Agreed they made some healthy dietary changes and/or increased their physical activity



SALSA Educators workshops The University of Sydney and The University of Newcastle, Tamworth

“It helped me to make real change and influence young people to be active and prevent some long- term conditions, which we really value in Physiotherapy.”

SALSA Educator, The University of Sydney

SALSA Peer Leaders Workshop

We held eleven peer leader workshops in 2025, with (n=282) Year 9/10 students trained. The SALSA Program was delivered by the peer leaders to (n=>1300) Year 7 or 8 students.

To ensure the program's impact and relevance, we held debrief sessions with peer leaders at each school. Students completed a pre- and post-program questionnaire to assess changes in health behaviours and measure the development of leadership skills, while also reflecting on their experiences as SALSA Peer Leaders.

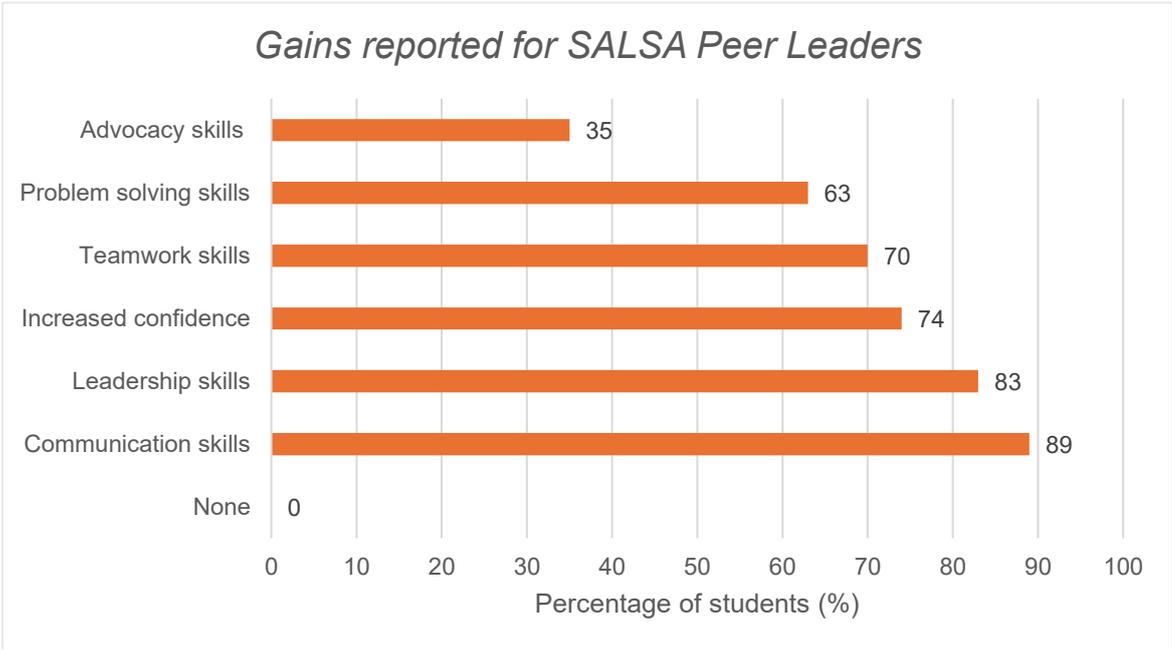
Program Outcomes

The following reports on all students who completed the pre (n=209) and post (n=167) questionnaire. After participating in SALSA, over half of peer leaders (53%) indicated that “I now know that making small changes to my eating and physical activity can have a positive impact on my health”.

Moreover, peer leaders reported the following behaviour changes:

- ↑ **11.3%** Eating breakfast on 5 or more days per week
- ↑ **9.3%** Eating 2 or more serves of fruit each day
- ↑ **8.6%** Engaging in 60 mins of physical activity each day
- ↑ **8.0%** Eating 5 or more serves of vegetables each day

Beyond shaping healthy lifestyle behaviours, the SALSA program enables students to enhance their practical skills and develop student agency.



Other gains described by peer leaders during the debrief session included:



SALSA Peer Leader Workshop Blacktown Girls High School



SALSA Peer Leader Workshop Model Farms High School

Youth Voices Initiatives

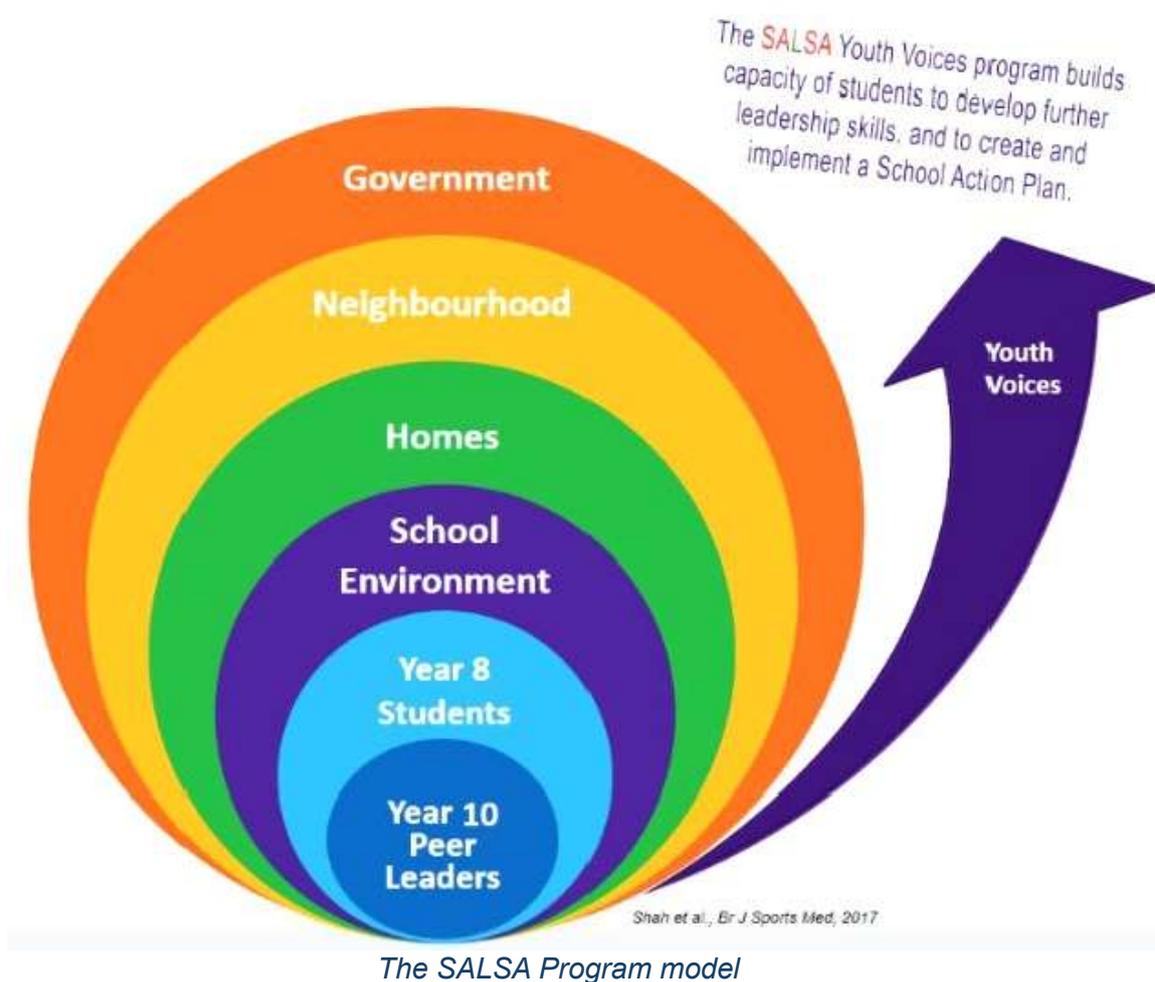
Youth voice is widely recognised as a key ingredient to ensuring youth empowerment. By involving young people in the development and delivery of health prevention messaging they feel a sense of ownership over health decisions.

Youth voice is the cornerstone of many PERU programs including SALSA Youth Voices, the Health Hackathon and the Multicultural Health Week Youth Ambassadors.

SALSA Youth Voices is an extension of the SALSA program. It empowers students to create a healthier school environment. Grounded in the Socio-Ecological Model and Positive Youth Development Framework, the initiative follows a two-step process:

1. Leadership Day: SALSA Peer Leaders attend a one-day workshop where they identify barriers to healthy eating, and physical activity in their school. SPLs are asked to develop, implement, and evaluate a school-wide health initiative.

2. Action Day: Students showcase their initiatives to an audience of health and education professionals.



SALSA Youth Voices Leadership Day

The 9th Annual SALSA Youth Voices Leadership Day was hosted in collaboration with the GWS Giants and attended by 45 students from five high schools. Timed to coincide with the Giants’ semi-final preparations, the day gave students a unique opportunity to watch elite athletes train, cheer on the team, and experience the club environment firsthand. Students also had the chance to meet their favourite players and take part in games on the Giants’ pitch.

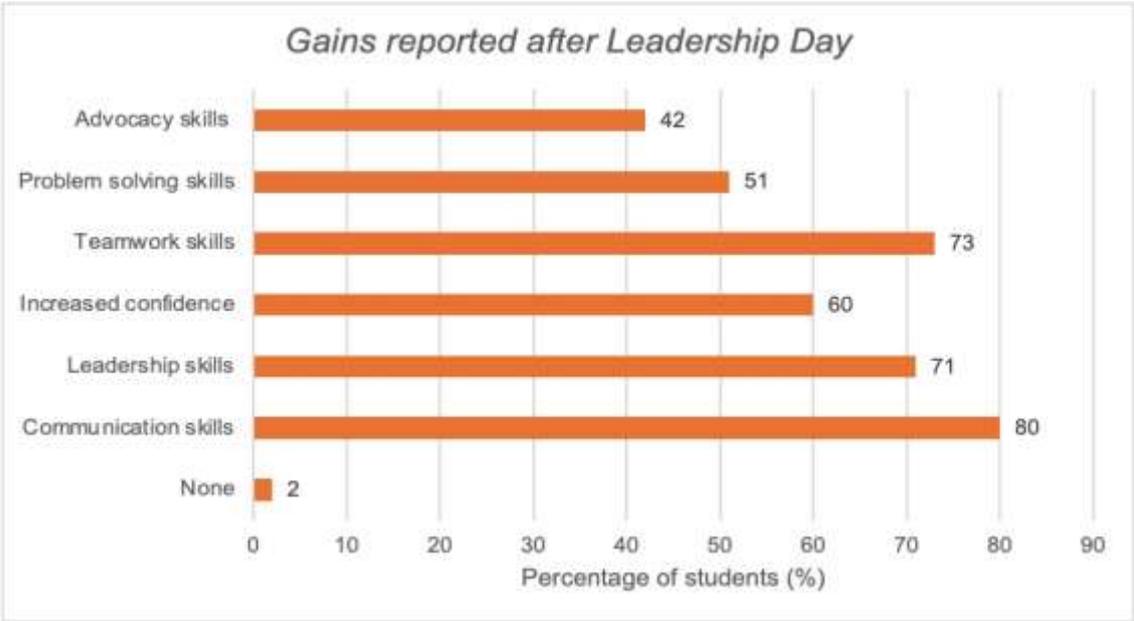
Program Outcomes

Leadership Day was a highly anticipated event among SALSA Peer Leaders, many of whom were eager to build and apply their leadership skills to deliver health-promoting actions in their school. Overall, Leadership Day lived up to peer leaders’ expectations with 84% rating it as excellent and indicating that they highly enjoyed all activities, particularly those involving games and group discussion.

“I really enjoyed doing the physical activity stuff out in the field with the coaches and working as a team”.

SALSA Peer Leader, Rooty Hill

At the conclusion of the workshop, most peer leaders reported further enhancing their skills and 98% felt confident in their ability to implement the action plans upon their return to school.



SALSA Youth Voices Action Day

The inspiring and well thought out actions and plans were presented by 28 students from four schools. The students played key roles in ensuring a successful event, from a co-MC, Acknowledgement of Country and reflections about being SALSA Peer Leaders. The students were supported by their teachers and school to advocate for physical activity.

School Action Plans:

- **Sports competition:**
Year 7-10 students
- **Pasifika Cup:**
Year 10 PDHPE class sports competition
- **SALSA Search:**
Physical activity scavenger hunt
- **Get Fit Friday:**
Recess and lunch sports



Pasifika Cup – oztag and basketball competition

“Our plan involved a range of different sports. We wanted people who weren’t as active to be more involved, giving them an opportunity to join.”

SALSA Peer Leader, Rooty Hill

Health Hackathon

The Health Hackathon was delivered in partnership with the Regional Industry Education Partnerships (RIEP), NSW Department of Education. This award-winning capacity-building program empowers students to drive change in their school communities while engaging potential future health professionals.

The two-day workshop involved 47 students from seven schools, who identified and addressed health issues relevant to high school students. Participants engaged in interactive activities, industry-led sessions on preventative health campaigns, and campaign development. The program concluded with student pitches to a live audience and judging panel, with *Legal but Lethal* and *Sports Injury Prevention* named as winning campaigns.

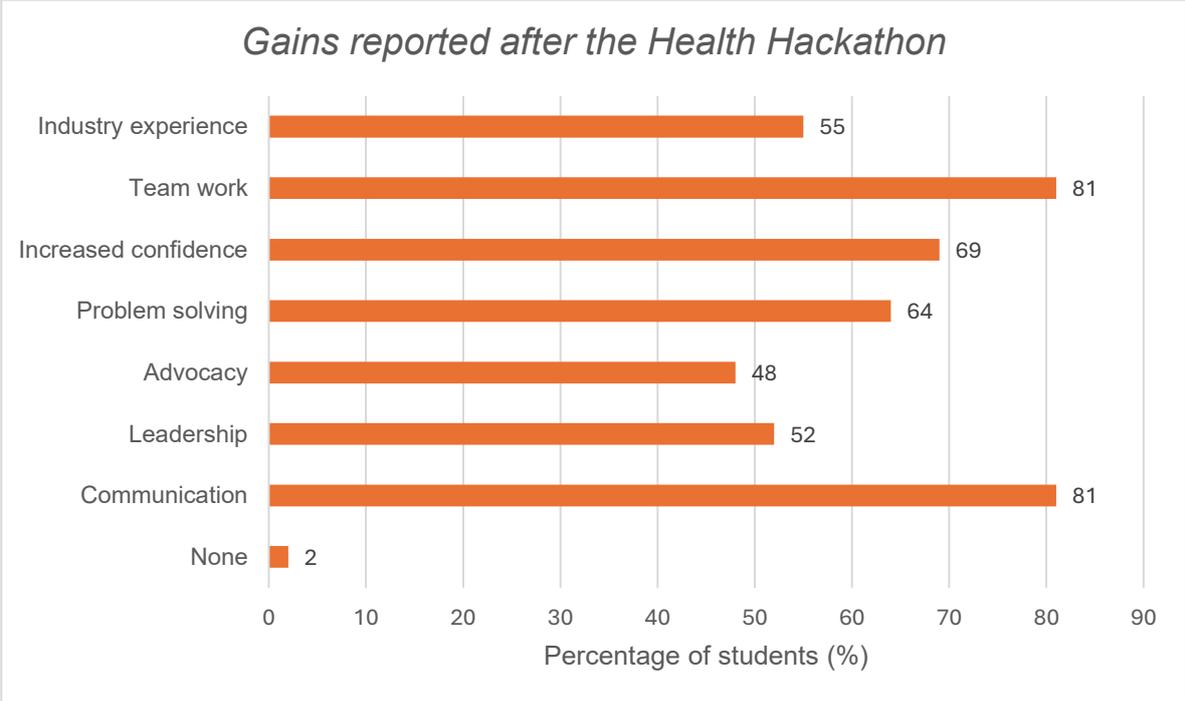
Student campaigns

Fresh Food Friday	Free fruit as an alternative to sugary drinks
Legal But Lethal	Non-medicinal alternatives to manage menstrual pain
Hobby Hunt	Lunch workshops to promote positive mental health & wellbeing
A Better Boost	Breakfast club with healthy alternatives to energy drinks
Sports Injury Prevention	Campaign to prevent & manage injuries
Sun Smart	Interactive activities to promote sun safety
Sports Injury & Mental Health	Social media campaign to raise awareness

Previous Health Hackathon participants Yonalee and Taiba had their perspective ['Fuelling our passions with the Health Hackathon'](#) published in the *British Medical Journal of Paediatrics*.

Program Outcomes

Participation in the Health Hackathon strengthened students’ technical skills in campaign development, health promotion and public speaking, while also building essential employability skills. Students reported improvements in teamwork (81%), communication (81%) and confidence (69%), reflected in the high quality of their presentations and campaigns.



Students significantly increased their understanding of the health industry, including career pathways, required skills and training. The addition of a speed-networking session with health professionals—ranging from clinicians to researchers—was particularly valued and broadened students’ awareness of opportunities in healthcare.

“I’ve gained a lot of knowledge, I feel like I came in not knowing ... what we were supposed to do here. But, I really appreciate the amount of information I’ve gotten about the health industry, about the effort that goes into making campaigns. I’m just more informed and I can use this knowledge through so many different paths in my life.”

Student, Castle Hill High School



SIP Campaign, Model Farms (l) Legal But Lethal Campaign, Blacktown Girls (r)



Health Hackathon, Day 2

“The overall experience has been beneficial for our students as they have seen and learnt from other schools, and the way they approached their campaigns and their public speaking skills. The opportunity to connect and network with health professionals who they otherwise would never have access to is a big thing for students from Bidwill.”

School staff member, Chifley College Bidwill

Multicultural Health Week Youth Ambassadors

Since 2024, MHCS and PERU (WSLHD) have partnered to embed youth voice in Multicultural Health Week. In 2025, SALSA and BEAT Peer Leaders from Rooty Hill High School were trained as Youth Ambassadors, developing culturally inspired healthy ageing messages aligned with the theme *“Older people are the heart of the family and community.”*

The Youth Ambassadors were announced at the official Multicultural Health Week launch at NSW Parliament House, an experience they valued given the importance of grandparents and older relatives in their families. Reflecting on the event, Jesusa Helaratne noted that *“the young and young at heart were together in the room promoting healthy ageing.”*



Youth Ambassadors, Rooty Hill High School

“I joined this program because I love to talk to others about their culture and share my own. I'm also very passionate about teaching people about health. I love to help my older relatives make healthy meals and get active, such as going on walks and playing sports.”

Youth Ambassador, Rooty Hill

Primary School Mentoring Program

Nine Rooty Hill High School Peer Leaders co-designed and delivered a workshop to strengthen health and physical activity links between high and primary schools. Delivered to Year 5–6 students at Eastern Creek Public School, the sessions built younger students' confidence, communication skills and knowledge about refusing vaping. The workshops were well received by students, with teachers praising the program.

WSYD Moving Symposium 2025

Two former SALSA Peer Leaders presented at the WSYD Moving Symposium, speaking alongside established presenters. They represented their school and the SALSA program with distinction, demonstrating how young people actively promote health and physical activity and achieve meaningful outcomes within their school communities.



SPLs at Eastern Creek Public School



M Mantua, K Evangelia Daniel, D Burns

Outstanding Partnership Award

PERU achieved the Outstanding Partnership Award at Rooty Hill High School's Annual Excellence Assesmbly. This award recognised the ongoing 20-year partnership between our unit and the school.

Unpacking Vaping in Schools Project

In 2025, we continued the Unpacking Vaping in Schools Project, a multi-phase initiative to prevent and reduce adolescent e-cigarette use. Working with health and education partners, the project empowers young people to make informed choices and advocate for their respiratory health.

As part of our whole community approach, we sustained engagement with health and education professionals both nationally and internationally through our Unpacking Vaping Special Interest Group. At the local level, we progressed with the evaluation of the Breathe Easy All Together (BEAT) peer-led vaping prevention program across 12 high schools. To complement our actions in prevention, we conducted a Vaping Cessation Workshop to equip school staff with the knowledge, skills, and resources to support students in quitting e-cigarettes.

Together, these initiatives strengthened schools' capacity to address vaping and respond confidently to this significant public health issue.



The BEAT Program

BEAT (Breathe Easy All Together) is a peer-led leadership program designed to empower students by providing them with the knowledge, skills and confidence to make informed decisions about vaping and advocate for respiratory health.

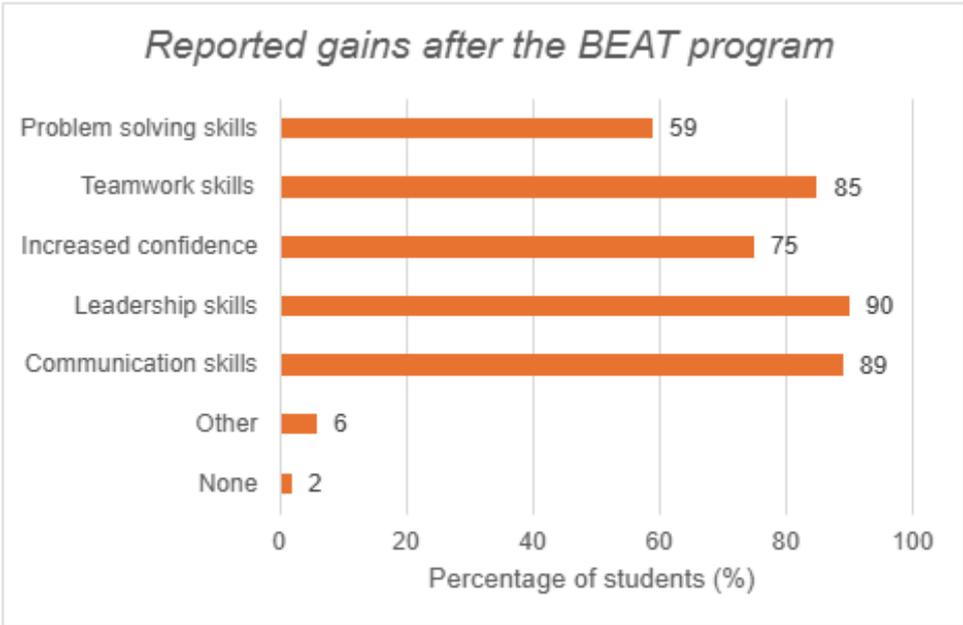
In 2025, we evaluated the BEAT program as Australia's first peer-led vaping prevention program. The research study concluded at the end of Term 4 with results to be shared in 2026. Below outlines preliminary insights from peer leaders (n=275) and key highlights.

Program Outcomes

Peer leaders were highly receptive to the BEAT program, with 74% of students rating the program as excellent. Aspects of the program that were identified as working well included:

- Interactive games and activities
- Having a combination of theory & practical work
- Year 10 students teaching & connecting with their younger peers
- Creating a supportive learning environment
- Being patient, prepared & working as a team

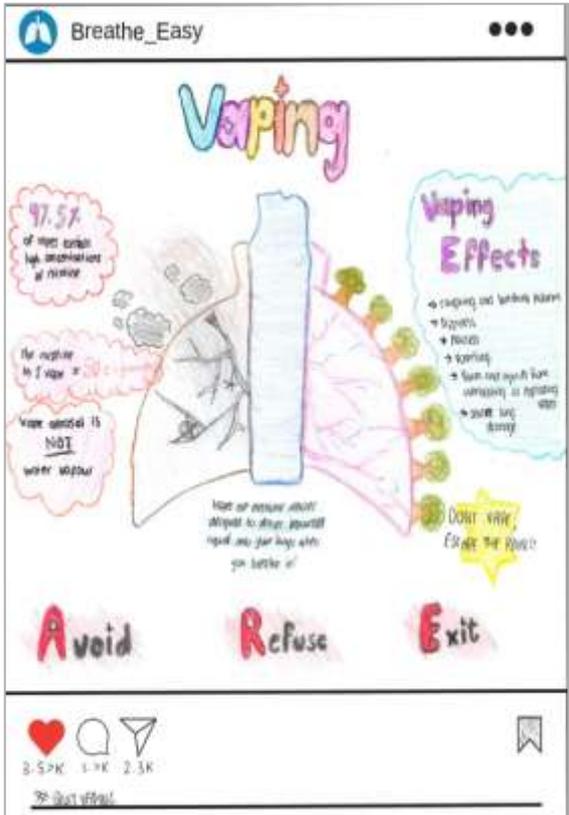
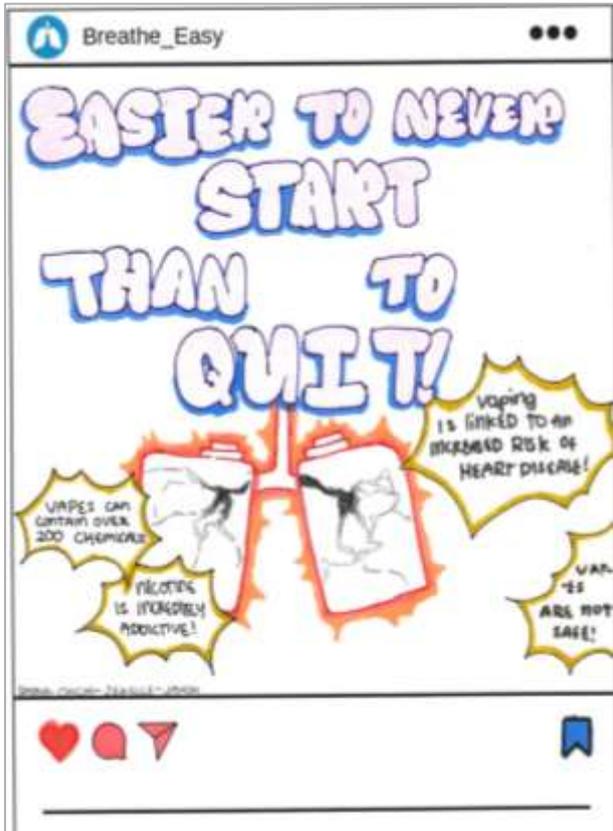
After completing the program, most peer leaders reported gaining critical soft skills, such as leadership (90%), communication (89%) and teamwork (85%) skills.



Additionally, students reported a range of benefits gained from their experience as BEAT Peer Leaders including an improved understanding of smoking and vaping harms, self-confidence, social connection, resilience and empathy.

BEAT Peer Leaders created posters to communicate their key messages developed during the program to be shared with their school community.

Below exemplifies two of these posters.



“It assisted with me in gaining the skills above, such as leadership and confidence which I find is important entering senior years. Additionally, I also learnt new information and facts about vapes, asthma and cigarettes that I was unsure of before, which assisted with me extending my knowledge to younger students.”

Peer Leader, Model Farms

“The very essence of the BEAT model is to empower young people to become advocated for one another. I have witnessed firsthand the conviction of the students who have led this education program within our school community – they are passionate advocates, and they are deeply committed to making a positive difference in our school community.”

Tania Irons, Principal, Nepean CAPA

Vaping Cessation Workshop for School Staff

Following on from last year's successful partnership with Illawarra Shoalhaven LHD, we held a vaping cessation training workshop for (n=21) wellbeing school staff, including Year Advisers and Student Support Officers. These workshops sought to empower staff with the knowledge, skills and resources to assist students to quit vaping within a supportive school environment. The workshop involved interactive activities, case study roleplays, group discussions and vaping information, tools and resources.

Program Outcomes

The training workshop was well received by wellbeing staff, with 90% rating the workshop as excellent. Participants particularly enjoyed the workshop's interactive format, like roleplaying Dovetail's Vape Check Tool and sharing experiences with their peers, which supported practical skill development and fostered a strong sense of community among attendees.

By participating in the workshop, all participants agreed they improved their:

- ↑ Awareness of the actual prevalence of vaping among young people
- ↑ Knowledge of vaping harms, laws, policies & alternatives to use.
- ↑ Awareness of available referral pathways to support students to quit.
- ↑ Capacity to use a screening tool with students
- ↑ Confidence to support a student to quit.

“The workshop was really informative, and information was delivered in a way that was not exhausting for a full day workshop. I loved how experts and leaders in the field came and sat among everyone bridging a gap and having conversations.”

Student Support Officer

Unpacking Vaping Special Interest Groups

We convened monthly meetings for the Unpacking Vaping Special Interest Group. These meetings are open to community members, health and education professionals, and researchers interested in addressing adolescent e-cigarette use.

The purpose of the SIGs is to:

1. Share and discuss information, strategies and what is needed to support the prevention and cessation of e-cigarette use in adolescents, particularly in schools
2. Identify opportunities for collaboration
3. Provide a safe space for open discussion

Reach

In 2025, we hosted 11 meetings for the SIG which reached over 340 attendees. Through these meetings we received over 33 presentations from a diverse range of speakers across local health districts, universities, and organisations like the Matilda Centre, Cancer Institute and Tackling Indigenous Smoking.

Topics covered:

- **Tobacco control policy and regulation:** Latest reforms, wins, and ongoing challenges of industry interference.
- **Clinical practice:** Evolving guidelines and treatment options to support young people who vape.
- **Tailored interventions:** Programs designed for priority populations, including young people at risk of vaping and those in custody.
- **Community-led action:** Local initiatives such as BEAT, Beyond the Habit and Prep to Quit.
- **Population-level services:** Insights from Quit, Cancer Institute NSW, Cancer Council and Dovetail on available resources and supports.
- **Emerging research:** New findings from the Woolcock Institute, the Matilda Centre and the Houd Research Group.

“I have really valued the space you have created for sharing and collaboration through the Special Interest Group. Thank you for bringing together so many passionate advocates.”

Lisa Moorehouse, South-Eastern Sydney LHD

Teaching

Faculty of Medicine & Health, The University of Sydney

- 'Health promotion initiatives in Western Sydney – a case study', 4th Year Pharmacy
- Year 2 Medical Student Multi Modal Clinical Assessments (MMCA)
- Year 1 Medical Student Multi Modal Clinical Assessments
- Master of Public Health Professional Placement Students
 - Nyoka R. Barriers and facilitators to upscale school-based peer-led interventions. A Rapid review. Master of Public Health.
 - Salembier E. SALSA 101: The integration of a SALSA train-the-trainer program into a university curriculum. Master of Public Health.
- Graduation of Caitlin Betts, Master of Public Health



Prof. S Shah, C Betts



Profs T Driscoll, S Shah, J Miranda

Higher Degree Research Students

- **Lockett C.** Unpacking Vaping in Schools: Engaging Peer Influence to Prevent Adolescent E-cigarette Use in High School Students. *PhD Candidate, The University of Sydney, 2024-ongoing.*
- Nimmi N. Survey knowledge, attitudes, practices, self-efficacy and perceived barriers of GPs and paediatricians on adolescent vaping support. *PhD Candidate, Federation University, thesis submitted.*
- Le D. Vaping health implications and awareness amongst pharmacists. *Master of Philosophy, The University of Sydney, thesis submitted.*
- Grammatopoulos T. Producing evidence about the effectiveness and acceptability of vaping cessation interventions to inform development and enhancement of quit-support tools. *PhD Candidate, The University of Adelaide, 2023-ongoing.*

Research Collaborations

Local

- McIntyre R, **Shah S**, Seale H, Chughtai A. Bushfire Impact on asthma and COPD. Does the use of masks, P2 respirators or outdoor air avoidance reduce the exacerbation of asthma and COPD during prolonged smoke exposure? MRFF.

National

- Carson-Chahhoud KV, Tai A, Sandford D, **Shah S**, Mayer W, Segal L, Perveen S, O'Connor A, Tingey-Holyoak J, Sharrad K, Esterman A, Crutzen R, Hamari J, Cao J, Smith R, Gwilt I, Chong A, Henderson M. Clinical trial to evaluate a digital self-management and mental health intervention for young people with asthma and their families. WCH Foundation 2023 Bloom Grant Round.
- Sharrad K, Perveen S, Philips J, Ahmed M, Kaiser A, Greenslade S, Tai A, Tingey-Holyoak J, Perry R, Esterman A, Gwilt I, Crutzen R, Cao Z, Mayer W, Segal L, Hamari J, **Shah S**, Carson-Chahhoud K 'Developing a digital self-management and mental health intervention for young people with asthma using the Intervention Mapping approach.'
- Schultz A et al , "A Stepped-Wedge Implementation Science Randomised Controlled Clinical Trial to Improve the Long-Term Health of Indigenous Children with Chronic Wet Cough" - 2024 MRFF Clinical Trials Activity- Grant Proposal.

International

- Empowering students to create a smoke free culture in schools, IPCRG

Conferences, Publications and Media



V So, A/Prof. E Stockings, Prof. S Shah, Prof. R Bittoun, C Lockett, A/Prof. J Mooney-Somers, TSANZ Education Hub meeting



Prof. S Shah, Prof T Calma, C Lockett, PHAA



Prof. S Shah, T Grammatopolous, A/Prof. K Carson Chahhoud, TSANZ ASM

Conference Presentations

1. **Lockett C, Rizzo Liu, Shah S**, Lawson T. Upskilling school staff to provide e-cigarette cessation support to students. TSANZ Annual Scientific Meeting, Adelaide, March 2025. Oral presentation.
2. **Lockett C, Shah S**. The role of social media in adolescent vaping. TSANZ Annual Scientific Meeting, Adelaide, March 2025. Oral presentation.
3. **Lockett C, Shah S, Rizzo Liu K**, Stockings E, Sunderland M, Mooney-Somers J. Study Protocol for the BEAT E-cigarette Prevention Program. TSANZ Annual Scientific meeting, Adelaide, March 2025. Poster presentation.
4. Barnard A, **Shah S**. Empowering students to create a smoke free culture in schools. IPCRG Scientific Meeting, Brasov Romania, April 2025
5. **Lockett C, Rizzo Liu K**, Jongenelis M, Bittoun R, **Shah S**. Whole of community approach to address adolescent e-cigarette use. PHAA Preventive Health Conference, Canberra, May 2025. Oral presentation.
6. **Lockett C, Shah S, Rizzo Liu K**, Stockings E, Sunderland M, Mooney-Somers J. 'Study Protocol for the BEAT E-cigarette Prevention Program: A RE-AIM Framework-Based Evaluation.' PHAA Preventive Health Conference, Canberra, May 2025. Oral presentation.
7. **Shah S, Rizzo Liu K, Lockett C**. Sustaining a program for 20+ years: Learnings from the SALSA program. WSyd Moving Community of Practice, online, June 2025
8. **Lockett C, Shah S**. Whole of community approach to address adolescent e-cigarette use. Woolcock Friday Seminar Series, July 2025. Oral presentation.
9. **Shah S, Lockett C, Betts C**. Whole of community approach to address adolescent e-cigarette use. Blacktown Medical Practitioners Association Professional Education Lunch Time Meeting. July 2025. Oral presentation.
10. **Shah S**. Consumers in Health Research - A collaboration with Sydney Health Partners, July 2025.
11. **Lockett C**. School-based prevention: Fostering student agency for healthier futures. Youth Drug and Alcohol Symposium, Westmead Hospital Week, August 2025. Oral presentation.
12. **Shah S, Marshall H**. Managing Nicotine Addiction and Tobacco in Priority Populations. TSANZ Education Hub, September 2025. Co-chair.

13. Lipovic A, **Shah S, Lockett C**, Burke M. GP Western Sydney Research Network meeting, GP Resources for e-cigarettes in Australia: A scoping review. 16th Sept
14. **Shah S, Rizzo Liu K**. Prevention Education and Research Unit, WSLHD Consumer Council Annual Showcase. Oct 2025. Oral presentation.
15. **Shah S**. Celebrating Community Child Health, Oct 2025. Oral presentation.
16. Jongenelis M, Marshall H, Vandeleur M, Williams J, Peters M, Luxton N, **Shah S**. TSANZ Guidance for the Management of Electronic Cigarette Use (Vaping) in Adolescents and Adults. TSANZ Webinar Series, Oct 2025.
17. Mantua M, Daniel KE, Short, K. Project Spotlight – Students As LifeStyle Activists (SALSA). Western Sydney Moving Symposium, Oct 2025. Oral presentation.

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1. **Rizzo Liu K, Lockett C and Shah S**. When students are empowered: advocacy in action. Abstract submitted for the 13th IAAH World Congress on Adolescent Health conference Jamaica, November 2025.
2. Barnard A, Carvalho L, Attar-Zadeh D, **Rizzo Liu K, Shah S**, Wareing H, Welch L, Williams S 'Assessing the impact of the FRESHAIR4Life Teach the Teacher programme on trainer competence, confidence, and fidelity in low- and middle-income contexts. Abstract submitted for the IPCRG conference in Romania, April 2025.
3. **Shah S, Lockett C, Rizzo Liu K**, Bittoun R, Jongenelis M, Meizes J. 'Empowering students to create a smoke free culture in schools. Abstract submitted for the IPCRG conference in Romania, April 2025.
4. **Lockett C, Rizzo Liu K, Betts C, Shah S**. Students as agents of change for respiratory health. Abstract submitted for the AAAH Youth Health Conference in Sydney, April 2025
5. **Lockett C, Rizzo Liu K, Betts C, Shah S**. Whole of community approach to address adolescent e-cigarette use. Abstract submitted for the AAAH Youth Health Conference in Sydney, April 2025

Publications and Reports

1. Hussain T, Gallage YP, **Shah S**. Fuelling our passions with the Health Hackathon. *BMJ Paediatrics Open*. 2025; 9(1), <https://doi.org/10.1136/bmjpo-2024-003270>
2. Le D, Saba M, Bhurawala H, Rahman MA, **Shah S**, and Saini B, 2025. Pharmacists' Perspectives on Nicotine Vaping Products (NVPs) for Smoking Cessation in Australia: A Qualitative Analysis. *Pharmacy*, 13(1), p.11.
3. **Shah S**, **Rizzo Liu K**, Short K and **Lockett C**, 'Health Hackathon: empowering students as tomorrow's leaders in health' *BMJ Paediatrics Open*. 2025; (9)1, <https://doi.org/10.1136/bmjpo-2024-003271>
4. Nimmi N, Joseph B, Bhurawala H, **Shah S**, Munoz A, Aziz Rahman M, Vaping cessation support to adolescents by healthcare providers: scoping review *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*
5. **Lockett C**, **Rizzo Liu K**, **Shah S**. 'SALSA Regional Evaluation Report 2023-2024.' HealthWISE. 2025
6. Marshall H, Vandeleur M, Dean E, Barton C, Luxton N, Carson-Chanhoud K, Schultz A, Williams J, Grammatopoulos T, Stone E, **Shah S**, Jones S, F.McDonald C, Peters M. 2025. Thoracic Society of Australia and New Zealand (TSANZ) Guidance for the Management of Electronic Cigarette Use (Vaping) in Adolescents and Adults. *Wiley Online Library*. 2025, 30(7), RES-24-1028.R2. <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/resp.70066>
7. Nimmi N, Bindu J, Bhurawala H, **Shah S**, Munoz A, & Rahman A.M. What Strategies Do Healthcare Providers Use to Promote Adolescents' Vaping Cessation? A Scoping Review" *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*. 2025, 22(6) 839. <https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph22060839>
8. **Lockett C**, Thorpe A, Stockings E, Jongenelis M, Vandeleur M, **Shah S**. E-cigarette use in adolescents: perspectives on prevention and cessation from an Australian community of practice. *Australian & New Zealand Journal of Public Health*, 2025, 49(4). <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.anzjph.2025.100264>
9. Naima N, **Shah S**. Paediatricians' support for adolescent vaping cessation in Australia: A national cross-sectional study. *Journal of Paediatrics and Child Health* [in press]

10. Naima N, **Shah S**. Vaping among adolescents and the role of General Practitioners (GPs) in Australia. *Nicotine & Tobacco Research* [In press].
11. **Lockett C, Shah S, Rizzo Liu K**, Stockings E, Sunderland M, & Mooney-Somers J. 2025. Study Protocol for the Breathe Easy All Together e-cigarette prevention program: A RE-AIM framework-based experimental process and impact evaluation. *BMC Public Health* [In press].
12. Nimmi N, Joseph B, Bhurawala H, **Shah S**, Munoz A, Rahman MA. Beyond the Vape: Experiences and Challenges of Australian GPs and Paediatricians in Addressing Adolescent E-Cigarette Use. [manuscript submitted]
13. Chughtai A, Seale H, Marks G, Kpozehouen E, **Shah S**, MacIntyre R. 2025. Facemask and Respirator Use for Bushfire Smoke Protection: A Cross-Country Comparison of Public Health Policies in Australia, Canada, India, and the United States. *Health Policy Journal* [In press]. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.healthpol.2025.105510>
14. **Lockett C**, Stockings E, Jongenelis M, Kaip D, Andrews S, **Shah S**. 2025. Prevention and harm minimisation in Youth Drug and Alcohol Care. *BMJ Paediatrics Open* [submitted].

Media Articles

1. “Enduring partnership celebrated as two-decade milestone reached”, [The Pulse, 27 Feb 2025](#)
2. “Health Hackathon empowers western Sydney high school students to create a healthier future”, [The Pulse, 19 June 2025](#)
3. “Multicultural Health Week 2025: How youth ambassadors are inspiring intergenerational health in Western Sydney”, [The Pulse, 05 Sep 2025](#)
4. “WSLHD and GWS Giants join forces to empower youth to drive change”, [The Pulse, 19 Sep 2025](#)
5. “Western Sydney public health leader honoured for transforming teen health”, [The Pulse, 24 Oct 2025](#)
6. “Western Sydney public health leader honoured for transforming teen health”, [Nepean News, 14 Nov 2025](#)
7. “Youth voices in motion: When young people lead and act, real change happens”, [News, NSW government and agencies, 2 Dec 2025](#)

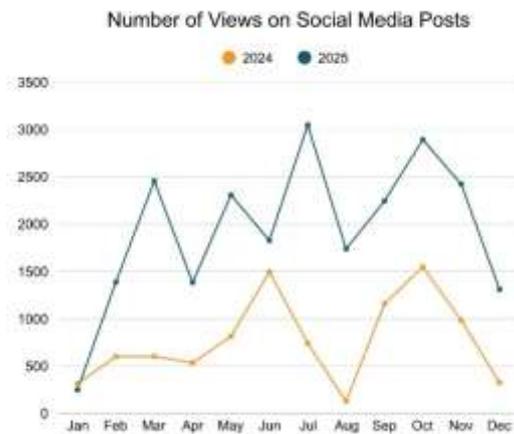
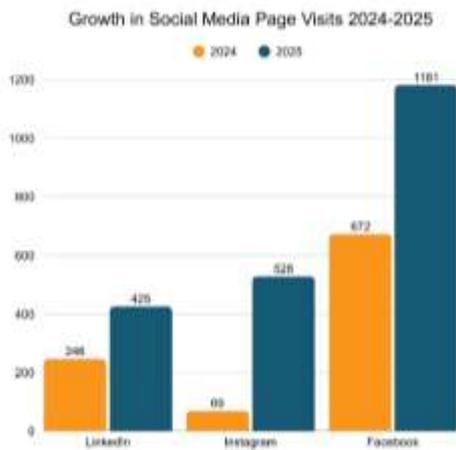
Videos

1. “Health Hackathon 2025”, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LgnYmVO6Yj8>

Making Waves on the Web

Social Media

Our social media presence saw strong growth this year, with more people visiting our pages and viewing our posts than in 2024. Increased content output contributed to higher viewership and improved engagement across our platforms. Our social media channels continue to focus on promoting our work and partnerships.



Website Update



In 2025, we redesigned our website to improve access to information and enhance the overall experience for visitors. The site now features clearer navigation and updated content, providing a single, comprehensive platform for information about PERU’s programs and research.

See website and social media details on the back cover.



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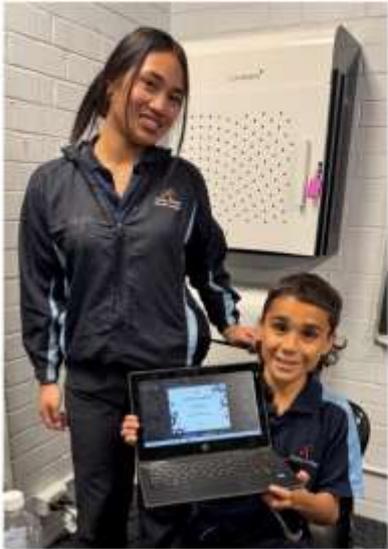


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