

Monday, November 3, 2025

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The Pulse

your Western Sydney health news

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Blacktown and Mount Druitt Hospitals News Top 4

Enduring partnership celebrated as two-decade milestone reached

27 Feb, 2025, 2:05 pm

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A long-standing program between Rooty Hill High School and Western Sydney Local Health District has been recognized for its excellence.

The specialised outreach unit, Prevention Education and Research Unit (PERU) was awarded the 'Outstanding Partnership Award' at the high school's 2025 Excellence Assembly.

The longevity of PERU's partnership, spanning two decades, and ongoing commitment to student development was celebrated at the ceremony.

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Podcast

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PERU's programs, Students As LifeStyle Activists (SALSA) program, SALSA Youth Voices and the Health Hackathon, provide students with opportunities to develop leadership, communication and teamwork skills while engaging in and delivering health promotion initiatives.

Past program participants were acknowledged and awarded for their excellence across a number of school measures, including academic achievement, school service, community engagement and sports excellence.

Rooty Hill High School alumni Taliyah Suitupe was awarded 'Student of the Year' for 2024.

As a co-Master of Ceremonies at the SALSA 20th anniversary celebration, she continues to contribute after graduation.

During her time in the program, Taliyah played a key role in the SALSA Peer Leaders development and implementation of the sports event 'Hoops for Hope'.

She also used her voice to advocate for cost-effective sports options for young people and families.

Taliyah will continue her passion for active lifestyles through her study and career aspirations.

Professor Smita Shah OAM is the Director of PERU and one of the founders of the SALSA program, which was initiated with Rooty Hill High School and the Mt Druitt Medical Practitioners Association.

“

'It has been an amazing partnership with Rooty Hill High School and we are incredibly honoured to be recognised for our commitment to the school community,' Smita said.

The impact of the program is profound.

75% of Year 10 students recognised for excellence had participated in one of the PERU programs.

Two award winners from the school were acknowledged for their outstanding achievement of contributing to the British Medical Journal of Paediatrics.

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Auburn Hospital's Midwifery Group Practice (MGP) has been featured on page 2 in the Sydney Morning Herald. Thank you to journalist Kate Aubusson for sharing this story. Congratulations to everyone at the MGP for what you do day in and day out. [#WSLHD](#) [#AuburnHospital](#)



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Meet the WSLHD Board Members

Featured Video

Celebrating Nurs...



Taiba Hussein and Yonalee Polwaththa Gallage had their Young Voices piece, 'Fuelling our passions with the Health Hackathon,' featured in the internationally renowned publication.

This award sits among other awards highlighting the positive impact of partnerships for student growth and achievement.

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