



Media Release

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INTERNATIONAL PANEL RECOGNISES EXCELLENCE IN AUSTRALASIAN AMBULANCE SECTOR

With more than fifty submissions across six categories from all over Australasia, the 16th annual Council of Ambulance Authorities (CAA) Awards for Excellence have once again showcased the creativity and hard work within the ambulance sector.

CAA Chief Executive David Waters said the awards were developed to encourage and acknowledge innovations from Ambulance Services throughout Australia, New Zealand, and Papua New Guinea.

“The level of transformative thinking and creativity that has gone into these projects and initiatives is truly astounding,” Mr Waters said. “Some of these projects have the potential to change the landscape for ambulance, not just amongst our 11 member services, but worldwide.”

The six category winners for 2023 are:

- Excellence in Technology – Ambulance Victoria for their project, ‘*2021 Clinical Response Model*’
- Excellence in Clinical Practice – St John WA for their project, ‘*Leave behind Nalaxone*’
- Excellence in Staff Development – St John WA for their project, ‘*Critical Care Paramedic Internship*’
- Excellence in Patient Care – Wellington Free Ambulance for their project, ‘*The Case for Prehospital Telestroke*’
- Excellence in Leadership – Queensland Ambulance Service, for their project, ‘*Development of the QAS Strategy 2022-2027*’



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- Excellence in Mental Health and Wellbeing – Wellington Free Ambulance for their project, *'Review of Shift Pattern and Fatigue at Wellington Free Ambulance'*

The highlight of the night was undoubtedly the Star Award, which is selected from amongst the six category winners by the panel of international judges. The Star Award is given to the most innovative and ground-breaking initiative, and this year was taken home by Wellington Free Ambulance (WFA) for their project, *'Review of Shift Pattern and Fatigue at Wellington Free Ambulance'*.

This project, recognising the impact that shift work has many implications not only for staff and their families, but also for patients and the wider community, explored options that reduce the burden of fatigue in the long term.

The project aimed to explore and evaluate the impact of differing shift patterns on fatigue, using robust evidence-based research, including if ways to explore and quantify, if possible, a causal link between shift pattern and levels of fatigue amongst frontline Emergency Ambulance Staff (EAS) in Wellington. This link would allow WFA to consider options for change to their existing shift pattern and/or the introduction of a new shift pattern to reduce the burden of fatigue on staff.

“This initiative by WFA is another example of the innovative thinking, collaboration and capability on display in the ambulance sector,” said Mr Waters. “The care and long-term welfare of our highly skilled people in each member service is one of the key strategic pillars of the CAA, and initiatives like WFA’s prize-winning project is a great example of new thinking to tackle what we all know is an increase in demand for our services and on our people.”

Quotes attributable to David Waters - Chief Executive, Council of Ambulance Authorities

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