Thanks to all those who participated in our first ever Ride and Stride week!

During the week we saw lots of activity with people cycling, walking or catching public transport to work at Westmead. We received massive amounts of valuable feedback on your experiences and are in the process of compiling the data.

We’ll be forwarding all of the feedback on to our key local partners to help inform the future planning for the Westmead precinct. City of Parramatta Council, Transport for NSW, Parramatta Light Rail and Roads and Maritime services will receive feedback from the week.

“Ride and Stride week has been a successful endeavour in getting staff to trial the services that currently exist at Westmead and then suggest how they could be improved for the future,” project director Peter Lawless said.

“The feedback we received; whether it be suggestions to improve footpaths and roads, ideas about better end of trip facilities, or improving the links between Parramatta Park and Westmead are all important in helping to realise the future vision of the precinct.”

All Westmead precinct partners are working together to create a vision for Westmead as a workable, liveable and accessible health city.
Acknowledgement for those who are striding (as well as riding) - there was a breakfast for cyclists only. It would be nice to acknowledge those who take public transport regularly, and choose to do so actively for the environment and to improve parking options for patients and families.

Prizes for people who did it but from the hardest place to get from

Guest visit from Transport Police

Free umbrellas!

Cycle groups that could ride together and help out those who are nervous

More awareness and better information about the week the week

More participants!

Maybe have bicycles available to loan for the week to provide employees the opportunity to trial riding and encourage them to purchase their own bikes?

Encourage car pooling

WSLHD branded cycling jerseys

Bike maintenance advice

Perhaps getting an award for the greatest number of people per department who can participate.

Perhaps the hospital could partner with a bike company to get special deals for Westmead staff

What would you like to see added to Ride and Stride Week for next year?

Better litter collection - it is not a nice sight between the station and the hospital

Better protection from the sun along the pathways—perhaps we could plant some trees?

A stop sign at the crossing at Hawkesbury road coming into ED

Clear distinct signage showing that the precinct area is a ‘shared zone' between motorists, pedestrians and cyclists

New footpaths around the back of the precinct

Wider footpaths from the station down to the hospital

More frequent buses

Better lighting for the evenings

More frequent buses

A free regular shuttle bus from the hospital to train station so that when I leave work late there is less chance of missing the train.

‘Watch out for pedestrians’ signs near the entry and exit points of all facilities on the precinct.

There is lots of evidence from Europe that segregated cycle lanes massively increase the uptake of cycling and reduce traffic in urban areas. Having these would be a huge boost for Westmead’s sustainable transport options

My department has strict starting times, which need to be more flexible for people using public transport

What short-term improvements could be made to the Westmead precinct to improve your journey?

Some of last week’s best suggestions..

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Our pop-up’s from last week

Left (above and below): The Parramatta Light Rail project team visit The Children’s Hospital at Westmead. Right (above): The Transport for NSW Opal card team visit Westmead Hospital and The Children’s Hospital at Westmead (pictured below with Debbie Nicolas (mother) and Denise Nicolas (daughter)).

Left: Even Batman left the Batmobile at home during ride and stride week! Right: Transport for NSW Opal card team with clinical nurse consultant Earle Durheim.
We chatted to Jenny Rose and Bronwyn Thomas at The Children’s Hospital at Westmead about BUGs!

What’s a BUG?
The Bicycle User Group (BUG) is a common name for a social group with members who love bicycles! The Westmead BUG was formed at The Children’s Hospital at Westmead over eight years ago.

How many members are there?
About 150. Members include staff and students at The Children’s Hospital at Westmead, Westmead Hospital and Cumberland Hospitals as well as the neighbouring MRIs, CMRI and WIMR.

What role does the BUG play and how does it support/promote active transport?
We encourage and support staff to ride, and also advocate for improvements for cyclists on campus and on route to campus, from small things like getting the boom gates shortened to allow cyclists to safely pass, too much bigger and harder things like new end-of-trip facilities and work with local councils on route improvements and new cycle maps.

In the past we’ve done regular meetings, workshops and other things. We ran a successful series of practical learn to ride plus ride to work workshops that ran over several weekends, organised bike buddies to show new riders the best routes to work and bike buses to help build cyclists confidence on the roads. We have a page on the Sydney Children’s Hospitals Network intranet that promotes riding to work. We respond to individual requests for advice from students/staff for routes and other questions.

We’ve done lots of advocacy and fundraising. For example, a Starbucks grant paid for the bike racks in the Chinese garden and out the front of the hospital. We’ve had teams in the Spring Cycle and Gear Up Girl and Sydney to Gong events.

Can people join the BUG? If so, how?
Contact the BUG team on CHWBUG@chw.edu.au or 9845 2515 or 9845 1204 to find out more.

Anything you would like to add about cycling, and the benefits of events like Ride2Work Day?
Some staff are very passionate about Ride to Work Day, as it promotes a sense of community in the hospitals, particular for staff who work in isolation. Some staff are very passionate about Ride to Work Day, as it promotes a sense of community in the hospitals, particularly for staff who work in isolation. Cycling to work is often better, and quicker than driving, and it sure beats sitting in traffic or searching for a car park. Cycling is an inexpensive, low impact, environmentally friendly form of transport and a fun way to keep fit and healthy. As Health and medical researchers we feel we should be the ones leading the charge, advocating and supporting active transport options.
Scott Schofield rode to work today, along with 50 of his colleagues

For Scott Schofield, a staff specialist in the Emergency Department at The Children’s Hospital at Westmead, every day is Ride2Work Day. He cycles to his local train station from his home in Glebe, jumps on a train to Westmead Station and then cycles down Hawkesbury Road.

“My short daily cycle is reliable to the minute. It allows me a small amount of fresh air and physical activity every day. Instead of wrestling with traffic on Parramatta Rd and the M4 I can read or get some work done en route and have some me-time listening to music on the way home after a hectic day in Emergency.”

Wednesday was Ride2Work Day. More than 50 people rode to the Hospital in the morning and refuelled at the free breakfast outside the main entrance.

From later this year, there will be even more capacity for people to ride to work. As part of the changes, a new bike cage will be installed with swipe card access and CCTV security cameras. Construction is expected to commence next month.

In addition to the current 20 spaces in the existing bike cage, there will be more than 40 new spaces for bikes in the new unit.

For many people, the idea of riding to work is very daunting, to them Scott says, “Just try it. It is easier than you think and low impact as far as physical activity goes. My number one tip is to ensure you can plan a safe journey that is off main roads using the city’s cycle network. Always wear a helmet and bright, reflective clothing with lights at dawn, dusk and when it’s dark. You’ll be amazed that you haven’t done it sooner.”

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Works On Site

- Car parking construction. Access to Oval is closed until the new car park is opened in November 2016.
- Construction works continuing in this location. Please follow the instructions of traffic wardens.
- New Children’s Hospital at Westmead car park access works underway. Works to be complete early November.
- Construction of the new helipad.
- Area closed for site preparation.