

## CAA Awards



### **St John Ambulance NT honoured with national awards from the Council of Ambulance Authorities**

At the recent Council of Ambulance Authorities Annual conference held at Sky City in Darwin, St John Ambulance Northern Territory was presented with two national awards. The Management Practice Award was presented to St John Ambulance NT for achievements in the implementation of their Extended Care Paramedic (ECP) Pilot Project.

Utilising funding from Health Workforce Australia, four highly experienced and established St John Ambulance paramedic professionals were selected to undertake training through the Masters of Community Paramedic course at Edith Cowen University allowing them to practice with an expanded scope.

Working under strict clinical protocols and in collaboration with a medical director and with the patients' own GP, an extended care paramedic (ECP) identifies patients who can most appropriately be provided care in their own usual place of residence, whether this is at home, an aged care facility or in the Aboriginal community setting. The initiative demonstrated a reduction in emergency department presentations and inter-facility transfers whilst increasing patient satisfaction and the quality of care options available. Having ECPs as part of this pre-hospital workforce, provides patients, through their own informed decision making, the ability to improve their medical experience by choosing other healthcare pathways and an alternative to a transfer to the emergency department.

This two year project supported the implementation of this innovative ECP model at five sites around the country and has proved successful in engaging key community stakeholders and addressing identified gaps in local health care needs.

While the absolute core function of St John Ambulance NT is, and will always be, to provide pre-hospital clinical care and hospital transport to those in need, these well trained Extended Care Paramedics have filled service gaps in the non-acute primary care setting and are set to improve the level of service available to those in the Greater Darwin region. The ECP role provides greater job satisfaction by increasing career pathways and retention strategies for Paramedic professionals through the provision of expanded roles. This Council of Ambulance Authorities Management Award encourages ambulance services to showcase their achievements and be recognised for an exceptional project, quality or performance in any area of their organisation.

Additionally, St John Ambulance NT also received the principal national Star Award for having successfully developed, implemented and evaluated a project that is considered most valuable for national adoption by all CAA members.