

Mr Stewart Dowrick

Citation for the Conferral of Doctor of Health Studies (*honoris causa*)

For more than 25 years, Mr Stewart Dowrick has advocated for and worked towards greater access to quality health care for regional communities. Appointed the Chief Executive of the Mid North Coast Local Health District in January 2011, Mr Dowrick works closely with a range of stakeholders and the community to provide health care through strategic and transformational leadership.

Mr Dowrick began his career in health care administration at the then Children's Hospital at Camperdown in 1989. He moved to the Central Coast Area Health Service in 1993 and the Mid North Coast Area Health Service in 1999. He holds key appointments on several Government organisations and has been a board member of Regional Development Australia Mid North Coast since 2007.

Since 2000 Mr Dowrick has held Area Health Service executive positions on Mid North Coast and North Coast Area Health Services, overseeing health projects from Taree to Tweed Heads; working within a multi-partnered approach to develop future opportunities for higher education and research in the region.

Mr Dowrick holds degrees from the University of New South Wales and University of Newcastle and is a Graduate of the Australian Institute of Company Directors. He is actively involved with a range of community and sporting organisations and is a Life Member of the Tacking Point Hockey Club and patrolling member of Tacking Point Surf Lifesaving Club.

Mr Dowrick has been a leader in supporting the establishment of the Charles Sturt University Campus in Port Macquarie and in the establishment of the Shared Health Research and Education Campus which Charles Sturt shares with the University of New South Wales and New South Wales TAFE.

Mr Dowrick's commitment to engaging with, and advocating for, the University is exemplary and productive; with clear 'win-win' outcomes for all.

He has consistently provided support and advice for the University on course development and is an active member of the Port Macquarie Campus Regional Consultative Committee.

Mr Dowrick has supported growth in Charles Sturt courses by providing high quality clinical placement for our students and subsequent employment for graduates. He has utilised the expertise of the University in funding short courses to upskill Local Health District staff in leadership and research skills.

In 2018, signalling the strengthening of collaborative ties between the two institutions, Mr Dowrick initiated a conjoint professorial position between Charles Sturt Faculty of Science and the Mid North Coast Local Health District. In establishing this key position Mr Dowrick publicly noted that *“by working together in deep collaboration, we can enhance the wellbeing of individuals, families and communities through applied research and educational initiatives”*.

Further collaboration between Charles Sturt University and the Mid North Coast Local Health District, fully supported by Mr Dowrick, has been demonstrated by the appointment of seven senior Local Health District health staff to senior adjunct positions with the University in 2019. The adjunct staff represent the breadth of growing engagement between the two institutions: covering disciplines from Clinical Governance to Aboriginal Health and Primary Partnerships. Mr Dowrick, and his staff, lend their expertise to add depth to student learning in Charles Sturt courses as well as important practical and local insights for research projects.

Mr Dowrick has been instrumental in the development and operation of the Health Management Internship Program which offers committed, high-potential staff the opportunity to develop the skills, capabilities and knowledge required to start a career in managing the challenges and complexities of health service delivery across NSW.

Mr Dowrick is committed to supporting initiatives to eliminate domestic and family violence and programs vital to closing the gap in health outcomes and increasing employment opportunities for Aboriginal people.

Mr Dowrick's approach has been to work not only with Charles Sturt but with all Universities in the region, along with other government and community organisations, staff and students toward mutually achievable goals for the benefit of all.

Mr Dowrick is held in the highest regard by the health sector, Government and education institutions alike. His passion and commitment to, and leadership in, improving regional health outcomes, services and education to provide a better future for all in regional Australia is unwavering. His ethos clearly matches that of the university; to create a world worth living in and acting for the public good.

Dated this Ninth Day of December Two Thousand and Nineteen