

Media Release

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Santos Awards Honour Locally Led Cervical Cancer Program in PNG

A locally led cervical cancer screening & treatment program has been named Santos Foundation Project/Program of the Year at the 2026 Santos Directors' Environment, Health, Safety and Sustainability (EHSS) Awards, recognising its contribution to improving women's health in Papua New Guinea.

The program, led by the Southern Highlands Provincial Health Authority with clinic set-up support from the Western Highlands Provincial Health Authority and backed by Santos Foundation through technical expertise from the Kirby Institute at the University of New South Wales, established Papua New Guinea's first cervical cancer screening and treatment clinic at Mendi General Hospital. The clinic has expanded access to screening and same-day treatment for women and girls, bringing life-saving prevention and care closer to communities.

Since opening in 2024 in Mendi, Southern Highlands Province, more than 6,000 women have been screened for the Human Papillomavirus (HPV), which can lead to cervical cancer. Of those testing HPV-positive, 92 per cent received same-day treatment delivered by locally trained nurses.

The EHSS Santos Foundation Project/Program of the Year Award recognises the strength of locally led collaboration in addressing critical health challenges.

Accepting the Award, Santos Foundation Health Pillar Manager Nancy Aloitch-Yawiro dedicated the recognition to the women and health workers at the heart of the program.

"This award belongs to the women and girls who trusted the program, and to the local nurses who lead this care every day," Ms Aloitch-Yawiro said.

As part of the awards, Santos donates AUD\$2,000 on behalf of each award winner to a charity of their choice, with Ms Aloitch-Yawiro nominating St Francis Care Home, an orphanage and safe house in Mendi, Southern Highlands Province.

Santos Foundation Chief Executive Officer Jodie Hatherly said the recognition reflected strong local leadership and partnership.

"We acknowledge our local partners who are addressing a global health challenge in ways that are culturally grounded and community led. Their leadership has been instrumental in bringing life-saving treatment closer to women and communities who need it most," Ms Hatherly said.

Through the initiative, local nurses have been trained and certified, helping ensure the service continues and remains locally led. The program reflects the Santos Foundation's commitment to supporting resilient communities through trusted partnerships in Papua New Guinea and Australia.

The program was among a strong field of finalists for the Award including the Pimaga Flexible Open and Distance Education (FODE) program, Tari Family Support Centre and the Aboriginal Health Practitioner training program, all of which are contributing to community wellbeing.

The Santos Directors' EHSS Awards recognise the people, teams and initiatives that demonstrate what it means to work safely while delivering meaningful, lasting results for communities.

The full list of award winners can be found [here](https://www.santos.com/news/cooper-basin-major-flood-response-team-honoured-at-santos-directors-ehss-awards/). [<https://www.santos.com/news/cooper-basin-major-flood-response-team-honoured-at-santos-directors-ehss-awards/>]

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