

# QUALITY OF CARE

**Barwon**  
Health

BARWON HEALTH ANNUAL COMMUNITY MAGAZINE / ISSUED DECEMBER 2013

Taking hospital care into the home  
Giving wider smiles to kinder kids  
Health through the consumer's eyes

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*Full Accreditation*

**Why we produce the Quality of Care magazine**

The Quality of Care magazine is produced as part of a commitment to the State Government to increase community awareness of the safety and quality of Barwon Health's services.

**Disclaimer**

This publication is intended only as a general guide to the services provided by Barwon Health. It does not substitute health advice from an individual's medical specialist, general practitioner (GP) or other health advisor.



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**WIN!** Complete our survey on page 20 for your chance to win 1 of 2 EFM gym memberships!

# Welcome

On behalf of the Barwon Health Board, staff, consumer representatives and volunteers, we are proud to present our 2012/13 Quality of Care magazine to you and we hope it provides useful information about the continued improvements in the quality and safety of services at Barwon Health.

More than ever, it is evident that Barwon Health, like the region it serves, is rapidly growing. We now have more than 6,000 staff across 21 sites, making us the largest employer in the region. In addition, we currently have over 1,000 volunteers and consumer representatives engaged with activities across the organisation. We are providing care to more than 500,000 people in the Barwon South West region and have seen growth in most areas, particularly in Emergency Department presentations and elective surgery demand. With this in mind, it is important that the services we provide reflect the needs of the community.

To find out more about the community's needs, we have introduced the Consumer Centred Care Committee and most recently the Consumer Representative Program. The function of both the committee and the program is to provide a platform to listen to consumers when making decisions that ultimately shape the future of health services in the region.

The objective of this commitment to our consumers is about making sure patients are at the heart of the health service and at the centre of care. Inside this magazine, you will read articles on areas where the consumer voice is helping to shape the way we do things and ultimately improve the satisfaction in the quality of care we provide.

In line with being a health promoting health service, we have included information and tips to help readers improve their knowledge of a broad range of health topics. The magazine also showcases areas where we are improving the already high number of safe and positive experiences within the public healthcare system, and striving to achieve superior health outcomes for our patients.

The Quality of Care magazine is distributed across the region through the *Geelong News* and *Echo* and is available to download from our website [www.barwonhealth.org.au](http://www.barwonhealth.org.au)

We're listening, so if you would like to contribute feedback about this magazine, there is a survey at the back for you to complete. We look forward to hearing from you and encourage you to tell us what you want to read about.

*David Ashbridge*

**Professor David Ashbridge**  
 CEO

*S. E. Leach*

**Dr Sarah Leach**  
 Chair, Quality and Clinical Governance Committee



# Your local health service

Barwon Health is the major regional health provider for the Barwon South West region. It is Victoria's largest regional health service with one of the busiest hospitals in the state.

We provide care at all stages of life and circumstance through a range of services from emergency and acute to mental health, primary care, community services, aged care, and sub-acute/rehabilitation.

Care is provided to the community through:

- One main public hospital (Geelong Hospital) and its associated services
- A sub-acute site for inpatient and community rehabilitation through the McKellar Centre
- Residential aged care through the McKellar Centre and its sites in North Geelong and Charlemont (Grovedale)
- A total of 16 community-based sites at key locations throughout the region
- Outreach clinics and home-based services

**16** The number of community-based sites at key locations throughout the region



# Taking hospital care to the home

Barwon Health's 'Hospital in the Home' program is bringing healthcare to the comfort of a person's own home and having a number of positive impacts in the community.

The program, commonly known as HITH, is an alternative to an admission and stay in hospital. Patients are still regarded as hospital inpatients, and remain under the care of a hospital doctor, but their care may be provided in their home or other suitable environment.

Eligible patients can be offered this option if the care type they require can be delivered safely at home by a nurse, doctor and/or allied health professional.

HITH Medical Director, Dr James Pollard, said that in 2012/13 more than 1,250 eligible patients participated in HITH and had care delivered safely in their own home.

"Most patients prefer to be treated at home, with their family or friends around them and this means they can resume normal activities and routines quickly," Dr Pollard said.

"Patients may be admitted to HITH in different ways, depending on their condition and treatment. Some patients may be directly admitted from the emergency department or the community, or may have a stay in hospital first, and can then be transferred into HITH to continue their treatment."

Participation in HITH is voluntary - patients and their carers must agree to have their care provided at home.

Dr Pollard said that research showed patients in the HITH program had improved outcomes and recovery at home with fewer complications such as infection, delirium and confusion.



HITH patient Will and Dr James Pollard.



Hospital in the Home patient Pat with community nurse Jacquie Waymouth.

# 1,250

eligible patients participated in HITH in 2012/13

### Will's experience

Will was admitted to the HITH program after receiving a laceration believed to be caused by a spider bite. The bite was badly infected and became an abscess which had a staph infection. Will's right arm was swollen, painful and doubled in size. Will's initial treatment was provided by his GP but when he didn't improve after treatment he was referred and immediately admitted to the HITH program.

Will's treatment was an intravenous antibiotic which was administered at the Geelong Hospital HITH Clinic followed by a HITH nurse visiting twice daily at his home. Will explained that there were several advantages of the HITH program.

"Being in HITH took the pressure and trouble off family only being able to visit during visiting hours; it also meant I could be in the comfort of my own bed and eat my own food. I was also able to keep track of a few important work issues via email. The nurses were very friendly and professional. Aside from its convenience, it also allowed the hospital to have a free bed and other resources available for more critical patients," Will said.

"Patients participating in the program report multiple benefits including: increased comfort and rest during recovery, by being in their own environment, less disruption to family and work life and reduced stress associated with being unwell," he said.

### Pat's experience

Eighty-year-old Pat has been a patient on the HITH program on multiple occasions over the past 15 years. He regularly requires intravenous antibiotic treatment for periods of two to four weeks. During treatment, Barwon Health HITH nurses visit Pat's home twice daily.

For Pat, HITH has meant being able to avoid dozens of trips to hospital.

"There is no comparison to being cared for at home. I can go about what I normally do and sleep in my own bed and do all the things I like to do," Pat said.

Pat's wife Verna said getting to regular hospital appointments can be troublesome but with the HITH service, it isn't an issue.

"I don't drive now so getting to hospital is hard. With HITH it is wonderful; I can have Pat home and he can get around and we can still have visitors and home-cooked meals. We know help is only a phone call away if we need it," Verna said.

### Who can access HITH?

Any patient of a public hospital:

- assessed as being clinically stable
- appropriately supported in the home, for example a carer or other supports
- living in a suitable environment, with access to a telephone
- with a medical condition suitable for HITH treatment
- willing to be treated by HITH



Ron and Irene

## Gym program lifts residents

A new gym program at Barwon Health's residential aged care mental health facility, Blakiston Lodge, is providing residents with more opportunities to stimulate their minds and bodies.

Located at the McKellar Centre in North Geelong, Blakiston Lodge offers specialised care and behaviour management to people living with dementia, Alzheimer's and acquired brain injuries, all of which can lead to behaviour management issues.

With symptoms such as memory loss, confusion, apathy, withdrawal and the loss of ability to do everyday tasks, dementia and Alzheimer's have a significant impact on residents and their families.

Staff at the facility identified an opportunity to trial an exercise program aimed to improve balance, coordination, reflexes and social interactivity in an alternate environment, and to assess the effect of exercise on residents' mood, behaviour, falls incidents and sleep patterns.

In early 2013, Blakiston Lodge teamed up with the McKellar Centre's onsite gym, EFM Health Club, and together with the club's manager Matt Jolly, created an activity plan that residents could safely and easily perform.

The residents participating in the program complete exercise circuits of various intensity involving rowing machines, exercise bikes, boxing, treadmills, weights, cross trainers and ball play. The aim is to keep residents continually moving without exhausting them. This enables them to increase their speed, resistance and endurance a little each week as their condition improves.

Currently, the program runs once a week and has up to 15 residents aged between 48 and 90 years participating. Residents are guided through the 45 minute sessions by a registered nurse, a gym instructor, lifestyle officers and trained volunteers.

Blakiston Lodge Facility Manager, Julie Fisher, explained that the program has encouraged residents to re-engage in being active and social.

"We're finding that overwhelmingly the residents participating in the program have extra coordination and balance, and it's bringing them so much happiness. It is just amazing," Julie said.

"Our observations and follow-up sessions with residents have shown improvements in a number of areas. For example, we have residents who have scored five on their Cornell depression score\*, and after a period of around 16 weeks this has improved and decreased to one. We've seen these results in a variety of areas from the participating residents.

"A resident was admitted to Blakiston in May 2012 and by July 2013 his depression score had gone from 16 to seven. His involvement in the gym program has seen him engaged in relationships that he would usually object to in the facility. He is demonstrating manoeuvres he would have previously demonstrated as a soccer player in years gone by and his balance, hand-eye coordination and reflexes have improved immensely.

"Our goal in the unit is to improve and manage the residents' behaviour and the gym program is helping us to do that, but ultimately the residents really love the gym and to me, that's what it's all about."

The program is scheduled to undergo evaluation which could see it rolled out to other aged care residents across the McKellar Centre sites.

\*The Cornell Scale for Depression in Dementia is designed for the assessment of depression in older people with dementia who can communicate basic needs. Depressive symptoms are suggested by a total score of eight or more.

### Meet Irene

Sixty-six-year-old Irene was always a healthy and active adult. Her favourite hobby is dancing and walking has always been an important part of her life.

In 2007, Irene began to show the first signs of dementia. After a few years being cared for at home by her husband Ron and in a low-care facility, Irene moved into Blakiston Lodge.

For Irene, this meant long walks around her local community weren't possible. So when the opportunity to become physically active again in a safe and supportive environment arose, Irene was quick to jump on board.

Irene's husband Ron has also been able to attend and observe the program and see first-hand the positives regular gym exercise has had on Irene.

"The program keeps Irene occupied and gives her something to focus on, it's really good for her and the other residents," Ron said.

### Activities you can do to improve your memory

- Regular exercise
- Cross word puzzles
- Card games
- Memory quizzes
- Conversation
- Reading





Barwon Health cardiologist Dr Martin Sebastian



Barwon Health patient David Sinclair

## New heart attack treatment saving lives

Patients experiencing heart attacks in the Geelong region are benefiting from a collaboration between Barwon Health and Ambulance Victoria, resulting in the faster delivery of life-saving treatment.

A heart attack, or myocardial infarction, occurs when a blood clot blocks one of the arteries that supplies blood to the heart.

Since the introduction of the ST Elevation Myocardial Infarction Service, commonly known as the STEMI Service, hundreds of patients have benefited. Patients experiencing a heart attack can be fast tracked, bypassing the Emergency Department and taken straight into the Cardiac Catheter Lab for urgent, lifesaving treatment.

Barwon Health Cardiologist Dr Martin Sebastian, said Barwon Health was the only regional primary angioplasty centre in Victoria providing a 24 hour STEMI Service and it is having a significant impact on how patients are being treated, as well as how quickly.

"When a patient is having a heart attack, time is of the essence. The longer the heart muscle goes without blood,

oxygen and nutrients, the more it will deteriorate and possibly die," Dr Sebastian said.

"We are now able to treat patients more efficiently as we know a lot more about the health of the patient before they even arrive. We are working more closely with the Ambulance Paramedics who provide us with more information such as ECG readings, enabling us to assemble the right treatment team. When the patient arrives, the Cardiology team will be ready to start treatment.

"If you can get to the blockage within half an hour, there is almost no residual damage to the heart muscle, which is why it is so important for anyone who thinks they are experiencing a heart attack to ring 000 immediately."

The introduction of the STEMI Service has resulted in 'door to needle' times being reduced by half, both during the day and after hours.

To treat a heart attack, the patient is taken into the Cardiac Catheterisation Lab, where the blockage is removed and a stent is inserted into the artery to keep it open. Accessing the artery is usually done either through the groin area or arm which is just as effective, yet less invasive for the patient," Dr Sebastian said.

For heart attack patient David Sinclair, the introduction of the STEMI Service and the difference it makes for patients has been very noticeable.

"I had my first heart attack in 2005 and the technology they are using now is incredible," David said.

"This time they inserted the stent through my arm which was less painful and I am more mobile than if they inserted it through my leg like they did last time. Less than 24 hours later I am up and about which is great," he said.

### Heart Attack Facts

A heart attack, or myocardial infarction, occurs when a blood clot blocks one of the arteries that supplies blood to the heart.

The underlying cause of a heart attack is coronary heart disease, which occurs when fatty deposits (called plaque or atheroma) slowly build up on the inner wall of the coronary arteries and cause the arteries to become narrow.

If a blood clot forms in the narrowed artery and completely blocks the blood supply to a part of the heart, it can cause a heart attack.

The severity of the heart attack depends on how much heart muscle is permanently damaged.

Time is critical to save the heart muscle so people who think they are having a heart attack should ring 000.

## Residents' health and safety at the heart of aged care

Barwon Health's McKellar Centre operates a total of four residential aged care facilities.

Wallace Lodge and Alan David Lodge are high-level care facilities, Blakiston Lodge is a high-level care mental health facility and Percy Baxter Lodge is a low-level care facility. Residents in high-level care facilities are generally more vulnerable and require specialised care and treatment.

For this reason, a range of focused and well-considered

strategies are in place to reduce the frequency and severity of incidents, particularly in relation to falls and pressure injuries. Expert staff create strategies forming part of a positive and proactive response to harm prevention in residential aged care and include:

✓ Clinical educators working with staff to maximise awareness of opportunities to prevent falls while respecting the rights of residents.

✓ An increased awareness of the link between continence management and falls prevention, resulting in more focus on improving continence care planning.

✓ The residents' care plans, as appropriate, include twice-daily skin checks to ensure that pressure injury prevention plans are effective, and that early intervention plans are put in place as soon as required.

✓ The severity of pressure injuries being addressed through intense staff and resident education strategies that include recognising that an otherwise active resident is very vulnerable to pressure injuries following a very short period of rest in bed.

✓ A 'Best Fit Footwear Program' being developed with the involvement of podiatrists, wound care specialists and clinical education.



Podiatrist Carol Mioduchowski

## If the shoe fits Falls safety with podiatrist Carol Mioduchowski

When we're young, shoes are often seen as fashion accessories, an obsession or important equipment for sport and exercise. As we age, these feelings don't necessarily change, but wearing the right shoes (not necessarily the most fashionable) is more important than ever.

When we're older, inappropriate footwear can be a major contributor to falls, so choosing the right footwear can play a big part in reducing the risk of a fall. Why are falls so bad when we're older? While we've all fallen over at one time or another in our lives and for various reasons, as we age the severity and harm caused by falls increases. We're more vulnerable and fragile, and what once may have caused a small graze and bump can cause a serious fracture or injury that not only takes a long time to recover but impacts on our independence and wellbeing.

Here are some of the reasons why inappropriate footwear can contribute to falls:

- **Fit** - Our feet change shape. As we get older, the fatty pads on our feet reduce and footwear which once fitted well becomes loose and can slip. So if you're walking and your shoes do not fit snugly and are riding up and down on the back of your heel, they are a tripping hazard and a falls risk.
- **Heel height** - For some fashion conscious women, heel height is a big issue. Walking around on heels can cause balance issues and while choosing a smaller heel may be a sacrifice, it is a wise choice, as the lower the heel, the more the foot surface area is in touch with the ground and the more balanced you will be.
- **Fastenings** - The fastenings on shoes are important to help with the shoe fitting snugly. Whist walking around in laced up shoes for some is not ideal, again consider what stage you are at and the function of the shoe. Fastenings such as straps can help, as can hidden Velcro fastenings and shoe laces.

If you're elderly and you're considering the shoes you own, ask yourself if your shoes can be put on with no immediate pressure on your foot. Minimal pressure is important due to difference in circulation and thinner skin as we age. A shoe shouldn't be 0.5-1 cm longer than your longest toe and if they are, the shoes are a potential tripping hazard. Your shoes should hug your foot but not feel like your foot is in a vice. They should fit well at the back of your heel and when you walk in them you shouldn't feel like you are sliding around or that your toes are squashed in.

It's a fact, inappropriate footwear contribute to falls. So when you're next shopping for shoes, take into consideration 1. Fit, 2. Heel height and 3. Fastenings - the right shoes can prevent a fall.

Carol Mioduchowski is a podiatrist with almost 20 years experience in public health. She is a past president of both the Australia Podiatry Council and Victorian Podiatry Association.

## Giving wider smiles to kinder kids

Barwon Heath's 'Kinder Wide Smiles' dental program is trialling a new approach to the treatment of tooth decay in kindergarten children in the Geelong and South West Victoria region.

Barwon Health and Colac Area Health are offering dental examinations and fluoride application to kinder children to see if a preventative approach can make a difference to the detection and treatment of tooth decay.

Two dental staff members attend the kindergartens with mobile equipment and each child is examined using a head torch, mirror and a cotton roll to thoroughly inspect their teeth. If early decay or cavitations (holes) are noticed and consent is obtained from the child's parent or guardian, a high concentration fluoride varnish is applied and referrals are given for further appointments when necessary.

So far the program has been offered at 43 kindergartens in the Geelong and Bellarine region, which is around 3,500 children aged between three and four years. A further 500 children from 17 kindergartens in Colac and surrounding towns have also been offered the program.

Of the kindergartens visited, 243 children were able to be referred to clinics for further treatment and 687 children had fluoride gel/varnish applied. Fluoride is a mineral found naturally in rock, air, soil, plants and water and helps repair any damage before it becomes serious.

Dr Michael Smith, who manages both Barwon Health and Colac Area Health dental programs, said the service provided parents and families with the opportunity to increase dental awareness for their children at an early age.

"We're giving parents information regarding their children's oral health and are reminding them of the importance of looking after their child's teeth," Michael said.

"It enriches the parent's knowledge of dental decay and provides them with the information necessary for prevention. For children, they're able to engage with dental staff in a trusting environment, decreasing the anxiety that can be experienced at the dentist.

"It also allows children to feel more comfortable about future dental experiences and familiarise themselves with items usually seen in a clinical environment such as masks and gloves," Michael added.

Below: Oral Health Therapist Lara Mayze and St Albans Park Kindergarten student Owyn Davis.

### Five tips to prevent tooth decay

1. Assist your children with brushing up until the age of 10.
2. Limit the amount of sugary/ sweet foods and drinks to special occasions.
3. Start regular dental check-ups within a year of the first baby tooth erupting.
4. Use fluoride toothpaste to brush twice daily - morning and night.
5. Stop the use of bottles from six to nine months of age - if children are left sipping from bottles of milk for long periods of time i.e. when going to sleep, damage can occur to the baby teeth from the sugars present in milk.







Peer Support Worker Ken Hawkins

## Recovery focus gives hope to mental health clients

The Barwon Health Mental Health, Drugs and Alcohol Service (MHDAS) has embarked on a culture change and is moving towards recovery-oriented practice in the treatment of people with mental health, drugs or alcohol problems.

Recovery-oriented practice promotes a coaching or partnership relationship between people accessing mental health services and mental health professionals. Within this relationship, people who have lived experience are considered experts on their lives and experiences while mental health professionals are considered experts on treatment and services available.

A recovery-orientated approach emphasises hope, social inclusion, community participation, personal goal setting and self-management, and one of the key components for service delivery is the development of a 'lived experience workforce', which means employing staff who have personal experience with overcoming mental health or substance use issues.

Earlier this year, the Belmont Community Rehabilitation Facility (CRF) began a pilot project to explore the role of a peer support worker who has a lived experience.

The peer support worker uses knowledge from their own lived experience of overcoming the challenges of mental distress, to support and inspire hope in people living within the CRF who are preparing to re-establish themselves in the community.

Acting Nurse Unit Manager, Geoff Bridges, explained that the CRF embraces the concept of recovery and by combining clinical care with the peer support role, the service has a better ability to connect and engage with clients in their recovery journeys.

"The peer support worker coaches or walks alongside individuals not only providing empathy and understanding to their situation, but supporting them to gain confidence in the management of their mental illness," Geoff said.

"Some of the coaching involves guidance with practical living skills such as budgeting and using public transport, but it can also be working with the individual to advocate for themselves and make better informed decisions in relation to their treatment.

"The insight the peer support worker brings into the service, particularly what it is like to actually be in the service as a consumer, is invaluable," Geoff said.

The pilot project is one of many strategies Barwon Health MHDAS is employing to reach its goal of becoming a leader in recovery-oriented practice, a key component of the national mental health reform agenda.

### Sharing a lived experience - Ken's story

Ken Hawkins struggled with a mental illness for more than 20 years and left untreated, his illness affected every aspect of his life.

Up until five years ago, there was no end in sight to this struggle and with that realisation in mind, Ken made a commitment to start living a recovery journey. That meant accepting there was no quick fix and recovery would take determination and patience.

"You have to give yourself the time to get better," Ken explained, "I was a bit pig-headed about not listening to

advice and the people that did know better. I got ill thinking I was on top of things and stopped taking medication and that usually led to another hospital admission."

Now, with the support of health professionals and his family, in what seems like a twist of fate, the 48-year-old from Geelong West is inspiring clients at Barwon Health's Community Rehabilitation Facility by sharing his lived experience.

After two years volunteering at the facility, the positive impact Ken's story was having on the recovery journeys of other clients helped pave the way for him to fill the role of a peer support worker.

Ken explained that sharing his lived experience has allowed strong connections and trust to form with clients.

"We have a community meeting each morning and that strengthens the bond of not only the people who are coming through the service, but the staff that are here as well," Ken said.

"I'm able to get on a personal level with clients from having had a lived experience; people find it a bit easier to relate to someone who has actually been on the receiving end of the medications. So this role in a way helps to fill a gap that existed in the staff/client relationship.

"Recovery is very important and for me, this is somewhere that I never would have pictured myself. Your recovery journey can take you anywhere; places you never dreamt that you would end up and that is something hopefully I can show clients," he said.

*Ken Hawkins was the 2013 recipient of the Victorian Minister for Health Volunteer Award for outstanding achievement by an individual in a regional health service. He was also the 2012 winner of the Members of Parliament National Volunteer Award.*

## New mobile emergency response unit to help those in crisis

It is estimated, that each year one in five residents in Geelong and throughout the Barwon South West region are affected by mental health problems.

Emergency services agencies including police, mental health and ambulance are usually the first to respond to someone experiencing a mental health crisis.

Improving how we respond in these situations as well as our capacity to respond is of vital importance and is the reason Barwon Health's Mental Health, Drugs and Alcohol Service is teaming up with Victoria Police and Ambulance Victoria to implement the Police, Ambulance and Clinical Early Response (PACER) Program.

Barwon Health's Karen Bourke-Finn, from the Mental Health Triage Team oversaw the development and implementation of the PACER Program in Geelong and said Geelong was the first regional city in Victoria to roll out the program following successful trials in metropolitan Melbourne.

"The introduction of the PACER Program will benefit the Geelong community in a variety of ways. First and foremost, people experiencing a mental health crisis will receive the assessment and care they need more quickly," Karen said.

"The PACER unit, a mobile emergency mental health response comprising one police officer and one mental health clinician, attends the scene of a mental

health crisis where the clinician is able to make an assessment and determine the most appropriate response and care."

PACER has the potential to reduce the number of people experiencing a mental health crisis being taken to the Geelong Hospital Emergency Department as well as reducing the length of time patients may need to spend in hospital.

Karen explained that police initially responding to mental health crises will often be released more quickly, enabling them to meet other demands for emergency response in the community.

"This is a great example of how collaboration between Barwon Health, Ambulance Victoria and Victoria Police is resulting in better outcomes for the Geelong community," she said.

The PACER Program commenced in Geelong in July 2013 and will be evaluated over a 12-month period.

*Below: Senior Constable Richard Keogh, Clinical Coordinator Karen Bourke-Finn, Sergeant Megan Williams and Social Worker Mark Brant.*



## Innovation leads to new risk detection technology

Barwon Health is committed to patient safety and the improvement of patient care.

In order to fulfil these commitments, the adoption and integration of the most up-to-date technologies is applied.

As an example of this commitment, Barwon Health and Deakin University Professors Svetha Venkatesh, Michael Berk and Richard Harvey embarked on a project to better identify people at high risk of suicidal behaviour.

Geelong Hospital is one of few hospitals whose clinicians routinely perform risk assessments with mental health clients. In these risk assessments, clinicians use checklists of known factors in order to rate a person's risk. Over the past decade, this has produced a database of more than 10,000 risk assessments.

The innovation was to add computerised machine learning tools to see if a computer could automatically search for factors in Barwon Health's electronic medical records and discover if this enhanced the ability to detect patients at risk of suicidal behaviour.

Professor Michael Berk, who leads the Barwon Psychiatric Research Unit, explained that indeed it did and it was the first time machine learning had been used in such a way.

"The computerised machine learning tool, using the data in the existing electronic medical record, was better able to detect suicidal risk than clinician assessment alone," Professor Berk said.

"This allows clinicians to identify risks, be responsive and intervene appropriately. It also provides a technical foundation for the use of machine learning to detect critical information in the electronic health records for other disorders, such as heart disease, stroke and cancer."

### Research is vital to improving clinical care and practice

Barwon Health has a growing research program and the Office for Research and the Human Ethics Committee is responsible for ensuring that all research at Barwon Health meets guidelines for safety, quality and ethical conduct.

Improvements and applied research projects assist in shaping service delivery and making quality improvements.

The table below shows the number of studies that were undertaken in the 2012/13 financial year.

Research type	Number of studies
New treatments and medicines	410
Quality improvement	98
Patterns and predictors of disease (epidemiology)	55
Exploring perception/knowledge (qualitative)	30
Other	46



# A dose of medication safety

In line with Barwon Health's quality and safety standards and National Safety and Quality Health Service Standards, medication safety is a priority in ensuring a positive experience for patients within the healthcare system.

Medication safety refers to the correct prescription, dispensing and administering of medicines, and with thousands of medications dispensed and administered each day processes and systems must be in place to ensure the right medicine is given to the right person, at the right time, in the right place.

In some circumstances medication errors can and do occur. Most incidences are detected and corrected before they reach the patient and there are very few medication errors that result in a serious impact on patients.

To oversee efforts that prevent and reduce medication errors and respond to medication safety alerts, Barwon Health has a Medication Safety Committee. The committee consists of managers from all areas of Barwon Health including surgical, medical, mental health, aged care, rehabilitation, safety and quality, and education and training. The role of the committee is to provide leadership in the management of medication safety across the organisation and also provide a forum for decision making in relation to risks.

Medication Safety Pharmacist, Marissa Izzard, explained that medication errors are placed in three different categories which include administration/treatment, dispensing/receipt and prescription/order/decision.

"The committee's function is to establish and roll out processes and procedures to minimise and where possible, prevent medication errors," Marissa said.

"The committee maintains oversight of policies, procedures and guidelines, reviews organisation-wide medication incidents and advises on implementation of national and jurisdictional policies and medication safety alerts and notices."

In 2013, staff welcomed consumer representative, Darryl Towers, to the Medication Safety Committee.

"The goal of consumer involvement is to raise issues and consider things from a community and consumer perspective. Darryl ensures that when it comes to setting targets and benchmarks, we strive to meet the highest standard that we possibly can to minimise risk to patients," Marissa explained.

"Consumer involvement and particularly Darryl's, really focuses the committee's view that our ultimate goal is patient safety."

As a relatively new volunteer at Barwon Health, Darryl was impressed with the work of the pharmacy department and the many medical staff involved in multiple areas covered by Barwon Health.



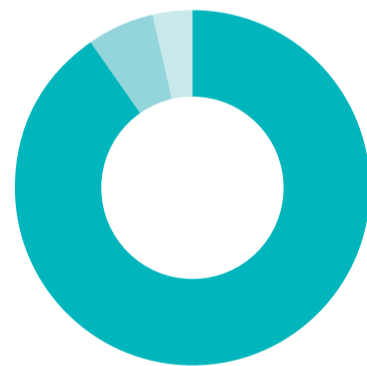
Consumer Representative Darryl Towers and Pharmacist Marissa Izzard.

"I was surprised by the number of hospital units and breadth of areas covered by the pharmacy department staff and practices," Darryl said.

"It is pleasing to notice that a professional attitude and a culture of continuous improvement is evident in striving for the highest possible standards with medicines, practices and safety.

"I'm very happy working with this team. I can ask questions, offer my thoughts and make suggestions for improvements. I feel I can add some value due to my work and life experiences."

The chart below shows the breakdown of medication errors for 2012/2013.



- Administration/treatment 90.4%
- Dispensing/receipt 6.0%
- Prescription/order/decision 3.6%

**Administration/treatment:** may be errors that occur during the act of medication being administered to the patient e.g. relating to medication given at wrong time or incorrect dose.

**Dispensing/receipt:** relates to the supply of medication, generally from pharmacy e.g. incorrect medication labelling.

**Prescription/order/decision:** an error in the prescription of medications. May be incorrect medication prescribed on chart.

## Medication safety in the home with pharmacist Marissa Izzard

- **Know it's a medicine.** Medicines don't just come on prescription – they include over-the-counter medicines from a pharmacy, supermarket or other store, as well as herbal remedies, vitamins and other supplements.
- **Know the active ingredient.** Active ingredients are what make your medicines work. If your pharmacist offers you an alternative brand of a prescription medicine you can be sure it will work the same way as your usual medicine.
- **Keep track of all your medicines by using a Medicines List.** Your doctor, nurse or pharmacist can help you fill it in. Keep your Medicines List with you, especially on visits to your doctor, pharmacist or to the hospital.
- **Always follow instructions** from your doctor or pharmacist and read the labels and packaging of your medicines carefully. Ask your pharmacist for Consumer Medication Information leaflets for more detailed information on your medicines.
- **Ask your pharmacist for advice on medication organisers** such as those you fill yourself each week, or blister packs. This will help you separate your medicines into the times and days you need to take them.
- **Have your medicines reviewed regularly.** Ask your pharmacist or doctor if a 'Home Medicines Review' would be useful to help you avoid problems with your medicines.
- **Store medicines away from heat and damp** because these conditions can damage most medicines. Do not store medicines in the bathroom or near a sink. Always keep them out of reach of children.
- **Take out-of-date or unused medicines to your pharmacy for safe disposal.**

For more tips on medication safety, visit [www.nps.org.au/medicinewise](http://www.nps.org.au/medicinewise)

# Health care through the consumer's eyes

In 2011, Barwon Health developed the Consumer Representative Program to establish new ways to listen to and learn from consumers.

The program recognised that while staff are experts in the technical aspects of care, the community are experts about themselves and what is important to them.

Head of Consumer Centred Care, Lisa-Jane Moody, explained that Barwon Health's consumer representatives participate in a wide variety of roles across all levels of the organisation.

"Our consumers have very powerful voices, they provide opinions on new ideas and old challenges alike by participating in strategic and business planning, in safety and quality committees and in redesigning and improving care projects," Lisa-Jane said.

"Being a consumer representative is a different way of volunteering, and many consumer representatives undertake different volunteering roles, both at Barwon Health and in the wider community.

"Our consumer representatives receive training and support to enable them to be directly involved in the planning, development and evaluation of our service."

One of the most popular consumer representative roles is the role of a WISE consumer reviewer.

WISE is the 'Written Information Suitability Evaluation' strategy at Barwon Health. Established in January 2013, the WISE strategy combines web based tools, templates and guidelines for staff with a consumer review and approval process.

"By partnering with consumers in the production of written information, Barwon Health can ensure that consumers can understand and use the information we provide to them," Lisa-Jane said.

"The process recognises our consumers and what matters to them - what helps them understand their healthcare needs and risks, and supports them in managing their health."

The hallmark of WISE is the formal review and approval of all documents by our consumer reviewers, and the formal branding of approved documents with a WISE logo.

Are you interested in becoming a consumer representative at Barwon Health? For more information, please visit [www.barwonhealth.org.au](http://www.barwonhealth.org.au) or email [consumer.rep@barwonhealth.org.au](mailto:consumer.rep@barwonhealth.org.au)



## Meet a consumer representative

**Name:** Christine Corby

**Why did you decide to become a consumer representative?**

I was invited to the workshops to look at the new National Safety and Quality Health Service Standards. The standards provide the framework for a patient focused service. I felt that I could make a contribution given my experience as a volunteer. A number of volunteers were involved with this process and most of us have continued as Consumer Representatives for Barwon Health.

**Tell us a little bit about your role and what you do?**

I have been part of the WISE (Written Information Suitability Evaluation) clinic sessions. These sessions are part of the mandated approach to the production of all written information for use by Barwon Health consumers. We meet as a group to review written information and offer suggestions or changes. As a palliative care volunteer, I am also involved in the building committee for the new palliative care ward at Geelong Hospital.

**How do you feel about the feedback you are able to provide to staff?**

As a consumer and a palliative care volunteer, I'm often in a position of listening to patients and their families at the most stressful time of their life. The feedback I am able to give to staff is most often appreciated and from this I feel there are better outcomes in health care.



# Clinical Governance

Clinical governance and quality of care is about ensuring that the right things happen to patients and that there is a system in place to monitor and evaluate the safety and quality of health care.

To ensure clinical governance is managed, the Barwon Health Board has a Quality and Clinical Governance Committee. Among its membership are four Board directors, doctors, executives, clinical managers and an expert community representative. The committee works to ensure that there is accountability for the safety and quality of health care within the organisation.

In 2012/13, Barwon Health reviewed its approach to clinical governance and quality of care, and established an accountability framework to ensure that care is effective, safe and person-centred. A review of Barwon Health's clinical governance activities against the Australian Safety and Quality Framework for Health Care and activity checklist has revealed that Barwon Health currently meets 100 per cent of the required clinical governance activities.

# 100%

of the required clinical governance activities are met by Barwon Health



# Appeal tugs at tiny heart strings

The current focus of the Geelong Hospital Appeal is the redevelopment of the Special Care Nursery at Geelong Hospital.

The redevelopment is a \$4million community-funded project that will see a total of 20 cribs added to the nursery, state-of-the-art neo-natal care equipment, two overnight rooms for parents, separate treatment rooms, and much more. The Cotton On Foundation is the major appeal partner for the project.

In 2012/13, more than 540 babies were cared for in the Special Care Nursery. In fact, 25 per cent of all babies born at the Geelong Hospital are admitted to the nursery, making it a vital part of Victoria's largest regional health service.

Special Care Nursery Manager, Alyson Smith, said the redevelopment of the facility would meet the growing needs of the community.

"Population growth and resulting urban sprawl across Victoria has shown increased need for more neonatal cots and space. As requirements for bed numbers increase, the need for more space and facilities for parents increases as well," Alyson said.

The redeveloped Special Care Nursery will provide a far more supportive environment for the dedicated clinicians and most vulnerable members of our community."

Over the past 12 months, the Barwon Health Foundation and Geelong Hospital Appeal raised \$3.4million to support various areas throughout Barwon Health.

## Special care for a special boy

One local family who knows all too well about the importance of the Special Care Nursery is the Frazer family.

Lauren and Julian Frazer's baby boy Max made an unexpected arrival into the world eight weeks premature, weighing just 2.14kg (4.7 pounds).

At just 32 weeks pregnant, Lauren was at work, with her upcoming maternity leave still a few weeks away. She had been in meetings all morning when she felt some stomach cramps. After a few hours of feeling unwell, she began to worry about the baby and called her husband Julian to let him know she was heading to Geelong Hospital.

Approaching the hospital, Lauren's pain got worse and when she arrived, the maternity service's day assessment staff examined her. Lauren was in labour; her baby was ready to make his entrance into the world.

Shortly after Julian arrived to be by Lauren's side, staff explained it was likely they would be transferred to a Melbourne hospital for care. When the ambulance arrived to transfer them, Lauren's labour had progressed to the point where it was too risky to move her.

At 12:29am on Tuesday, 4 June, Max Joseph Frazer was born at Geelong Hospital. Lauren and Julian could only spend a few tender moments with their baby directly after the birth before he was rushed to the Special Care Nursery.



Lauren Frazer and Max

Max was placed on a continuous positive airway pressure (CPAP) machine which gently inflated his lungs through a mask on his face.

Lauren admitted the first time she saw Max in the Special Care Nursery was confronting.

"He was wearing an oxygen mask to keep his lungs open and the sight of all the equipment was a little overwhelming," Lauren said.

The following day, after 18 hours on the CPAP machine, Max was moved into an incubator crib. An incubator crib is a clear plastic enclosed crib that maintains a warm environment and isolates the baby from germs.

"After he was moved, we were able to cuddle him each day and do kangaroo care, but not for too long as he needed to be kept warm in the incubator. He also had a feeding tube in his nose, as he was not strong enough to feed on his own," she said.

Kangaroo care gave the new parents the opportunity to experience and spend time holding their baby. During kangaroo care, babies are placed on the chest of either parent for skin-to-skin contact.

"This really helped us to bond with Max and helped to calm him by hearing our heartbeat and was an amazing feeling having such a tiny baby against your chest. We did this at any opportunity we got, as we heard kangaroo care had benefits to premature babies," she said.

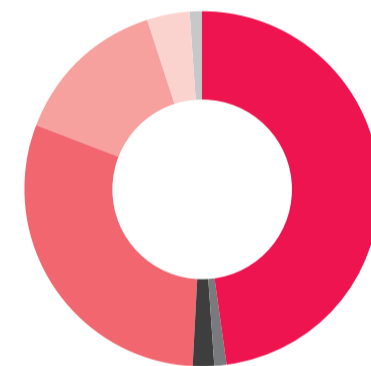
After a couple of weeks, Max was getting stronger and able to maintain his own temperature and move from the incubator into an open crib. Max had more energy and was able to breastfeed three times a day, and take bottles of expressed milk overnight.

At one-month-old, Lauren and Julian were finally able to take Max home.

"The staff at the Special Care Nursery did an amazing job looking after Max, and we can't thank them enough for what they did for him," Lauren said.

"I urge the community to get behind this amazing redevelopment that will ensure we have the best facilities here in Geelong for babies like Max."

## Barwon Health Foundation Income Distribution 2012/2013



- Cotton On Foundation Children's Ward Redevelopment
- Other Barwon Health Services
- Andrew Love & Cancer Services
- Research
- Emergency department
- Community & Mental Health Services
- McKellar Centre & Aged Care Services

>540 babies were cared for in the Special Care Nursery in 2012/13

## How you can help

If you would like to support the redevelopment of the Special Care Nursery, visit [www.geelonghospitalappeal.org.au](http://www.geelonghospitalappeal.org.au) or phone (03) 4215 8900.



Jack Butterworth

# Community Kitchens – a recipe for success

A Community Kitchen is a group of people who come together, often weekly, to cook, socialise and share a meal. Community Kitchens are a great way for anyone interested in gaining knowledge and skills about nutritious food and how to prepare it in a fun and affordable way.

Mums from local primary schools who love to try new recipes, people living with diabetes wanting to learn more about nutrition and a group of blokes from Men's Shed are just some of the people trying their hand at cooking in Barwon Health's Community Kitchen program.

The men from the Geelong East Men's Shed all agreed that they had never really had an interest in cooking, however they all thought it could be a great skill to learn.

Jack Butterworth, one of the members of the group, said he wanted to learn how to cook to help his wife who has cooked for him for many years.

"My main job is to drive the sink - otherwise known as doing the washing up. We work as a team and everyone has a job to do," Jack said.

"Some of the blokes who come to the Men's Shed are now living on their own, so it has been terrific for them to learn about how to plan and prepare meals.

"We have a great time together and have a few laughs while we talk about recipes we'd like to try, what the ingredients are and how to put them all together. Then we either enjoy the food together or take it home."

Sue Harman, Barwon Health's Community Kitchen Coordinator said the Community Kitchens program operates across the region in Corio, Norlane,

Whittington, Hamlyn Heights, St Leonards, Portarlington, Grovedale and Highton/Waurn Ponds.

"Community Kitchens aren't just about cooking; teamwork is the key and the reason so many of the Community Kitchens are so successful. Participants are involved in all stages of the cooking process from planning the menu, budgeting, shopping, cooking and of course eating," Sue said.

"Some of the Community Kitchens will focus on a specific dietary requirement, such as diabetes while others will focus on meals suitable for small children or teenagers. Cooking on a budget is a skill everyone can benefit from and through buying and cooking in bulk, participants can enjoy affordable and nutritious meals, at a lower cost.

"Many of the participants said that they feel their cooking skills have improved and that they are also cooking more meals at home. A large number have also reported that they now have a better understanding of nutrition, different foods and how to make better food choices as well as eating more fruits and vegetables," she said.

**For more information about joining a Community Kitchen or creating your own Community Kitchen group, contact the Health Promotion Unit at Barwon Health on (03) 4215 3476 or email [populationhealth@barwonhealth.org.au](mailto:populationhealth@barwonhealth.org.au)**

# Talking about incontinence

In the past 12 months, Barwon Health's Continence Service has helped treat and educate more than 1,000 people with incontinence issues across the region. It is estimated that one in 20 people of all ages suffer from incontinence.

Incontinence is a word to describe accidental or involuntary loss of urine from the bladder or bowel motion. It can interfere with everyday life and enjoyable activities such as sports, walking, gardening, dancing or sleeping.

Incontinence can have a multitude of causes ranging from poor bladder and bowel habits, childbirth, menopause through to surgical procedures.

The clinic has a multi-disciplinary team including clinical nurse consultants, physiotherapists and medical specialists. The team is now increasing staff education of incontinence across the health service.

Continence Service Coordinator, Shani Hill, explained that incontinence is socially difficult to accept and that any issues to do with bladder or bowel health can be sensitive.

"Continence is what we all strive for, but sometimes our bodies don't cooperate. In young children, learning to use the toilet is one of the most important skills to master, and the pressure to be socially continent lasts a lifetime," Shani said.

"Symptoms of incontinence can include leaking or dribbling urine, wetting when exercising, wetting when coughing, laughing or sneezing, going to the toilet frequently, day or night wetting and excessive leakage of wind from the back passage.

"The important thing to remember is that bladder and bowel control problems can be improved, and cured."

"Once people make the first step by seeking assistance, a GP can refer you to Barwon Health Continence Clinic where clients are provided with a full assessment, management plan and support that will help with their continence problems," she said.

*Continence Service Coordinator Shani Hill was recently awarded Best Practice Award in Nursing 2013 Continence Care for her outstanding contribution to Continence nursing.*

## Continence tips

1. Keep your pelvic floor toned - practice pelvic floor exercises for better bladder and bowel control
2. Eat well - avoid constipation and keep your weight within a healthy range
3. Drink well - make water your first choice. Cut down on irritants such as coffee, tea, fizzy drinks and alcohol
4. Exercise regularly - this helps in toning pelvic floor, weight control and preventing constipation
5. Practice good toilet habits - go when your bladder feels full, don't go to the toilet. "Just in case"





Staffcare Manager Dr Rudi Gasser

## Immunisation: A healthy workforce – a healthy community

At Barwon Health, staff immunisation plays an important role in protecting vulnerable patients and preventing the spread of illness and disease.

For this reason, Barwon Health's Staffcare and Infection Prevention Service introduced a new e-database system to boost and monitor staff immunisations. The system is based on the established patient record system and is fully integrated with staff members' confidential medical record, a function that few hospitals possess.

Optimising uptake of flu vaccinations by staff has been an ongoing priority at Barwon Health and aided by the introduction of the e-database, monitoring of vaccination uptake across the organisation and timely communication to managers about the overall level of immunisation in their area is possible.

This monitoring and feedback, together with roving immunisation services to all departments, has been effective in increasing flu vaccination uptake, which in 2013 stands at 63.7% of Barwon Health staff.

Staffcare Manager, Dr Rudi Gasser, explained that exposure of patients to infectious diseases such as flu is a serious concern, in particular for patients facing complex health problems.

"Of course, protection of our staff from infectious diseases is also a concern, and immunisation is just as important from that point of view," Dr Gasser said.

"The StaffCare e-database provides a definitive record regarding their immune system (immune or not), on site vaccinations and a roving service.

"The immunisation status of new staff is recorded at their pre-employment health check, and is updated throughout their employment. With each staff member having an individual immunisation record, reminders about boosters can be sent when required and outbreaks can be managed more effectively," he said.

The e-database also supports monitoring of a wide range of other immunisations that are recommended for health care workers by the Department of Health.

### How immune are we?

3,681 (63.7 per cent) staff received their influenza flu shot in 2013. (Source VICNISS Healthcare Associated Infection Surveillance System)

### How immune are you?

Phone the Barwon Health Immunisation Service on (03) 4215 6970 to talk to someone about your immunisation requirements.

### Things to remember about flu...

- **Flu is highly contagious** - it is spread by respiratory droplets as well as by touching objects contaminated with flu virus and then touching eyes, nose or mouth.
- **Immunisation is the best protection** - it takes about two weeks for immunity to develop and you need to have a shot every year.
- **You can't get flu from a flu shot** - the vaccine does not contain any active virus.
- **Other conditions can cause flu** - like symptoms (common cold, other viruses, bacterial infections) - the vaccine will not prevent these so it is important to use other preventive measures such as good hand hygiene which includes washing your hands with soap and water or using alcohol hand rubs and covering your mouth when coughing or sneezing.

**3,681** (63.7 per cent) of staff received their influenza flu shot in 2013.

## Hand hygiene in the hospital

Hand hygiene is one of the single most effective ways to prevent the spread of infection in hospital.

For this reason, hand hygiene compliance audits are completed regularly on all Geelong Hospital wards.

Everyone visiting hospital or any other healthcare service has a role to play in stopping the spread of infection. Performing hand hygiene involves using the pink alcohol hand rubs located across all Barwon Health sites.

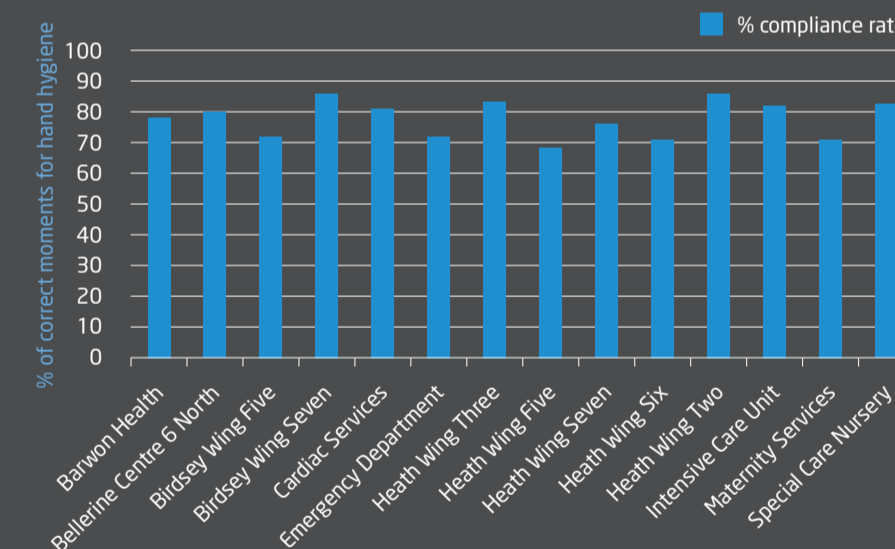
For staff, there are 'Five Moments for Hand Hygiene' recommended by Hand Hygiene Australia, measured by direct observation of healthcare workers.

1. Before touching a patient
2. Before a procedure
3. After a procedure or body fluid exposure
4. After touching a patient
5. After touching a patient's surroundings

The observation is conducted by trained and validated observers to monitor compliance with the Five Moments for Hand Hygiene.

Below, the graph shows the results of the March-June 2013 Hand Hygiene Compliance Audit at Geelong Hospital. The compliance benchmark is 70% and nearly all wards achieved in excess of this benchmark.

Hand hygiene compliance audit / March-June 2013



Stroke Services Coordinator Heather Smith

## Activities connect dots for stroke patients

A new activity trolley on Geelong Hospital's stroke ward is helping to enrich the hospital experience for stroke patients.

Each year, more than 650 people are admitted to Geelong Hospital after having a stroke.

A stroke occurs when the blood supply to the brain is interrupted. When brain cells do not get enough oxygen or nutrients, they die. There are different types of stroke and survivors can have a range of different problems afterwards. Some of these problems include poor coordination, weakness, slurred speech, communication difficulties and reduced sensations.

The stroke ward activity trolley commenced in 2012, after research revealed patients spend up to 60 per cent of their time in hospital inactive.

Stroke Services Coordinator, Heather Smith, explained that the brain can learn new ways to achieve function and if stimulated, old pathways will remain active.

"The activity trolley contains board games, dominos, puzzles, playing cards and crosswords; we've worked with allied health to look at day-to-day activities that are stimulating and that complement clinical rehabilitation," Heather said.

"Patients who are involved with these activities are provided with a point of conversation which facilitates language/speech. This encourages communication and increases engagement with the environment."

Volunteer Services provide volunteers to facilitate the activity trolley three days a week and activities are available to patients at any time.

"We find that volunteers have the time to provide patients with the opportunity to chat beyond discussions with the clinicians. They are also great at encouraging patients to keep their mind active and providing useful feedback about the activities," Heather said.

### Signs of stroke FAST

#### Signs of Stroke FAST - National Stroke Foundation

Using the FAST test involves asking three simple questions:

**FACE:** Check their face. Has their mouth drooped?

**ARMS:** Can they lift both arms?

**SPEECH:** Is their speech slurred? Do they understand you?

**TIME:** Time is critical. If you see any of these signs call 000 straight away.

Recognise the signs of stroke. Call 000. A stroke is always a medical emergency.





Aboriginal Maternity Pathway Program Coordinator Christine Goonan

## Supporting Aboriginal mothers and babies

*(Throughout this article, the term Aboriginal refers to and is inclusive of both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People)*

Barwon Health is committed to *Closing the Gap* in order to improve the lives of Indigenous Australians and to provide a better future for Indigenous children.

It is working to achieve the six key priorities set out in *Koolin Ballit*, the Victorian Government's strategic directions for Aboriginal Health 2012-2022.

Supporting Aboriginal mothers and families to access culturally appropriate health services is a key priority for Barwon Health and has led to the development of the Aboriginal Maternity Pathways Program.

Christine Goonan, Project Coordinator of the Aboriginal Maternity Pathways Program, said a gap currently exists in the health outcomes between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal babies and believes that the program objectives would help to reduce this difference.

"In Victoria, the rate of low-birth weight babies and the perinatal mortality rate is almost double for babies with Aboriginal mothers compared to non-Aboriginal mothers, and infant and child morbidity and illness is also double for Aboriginal children," Christine said.

"This program will work in two ways: to create culturally sensitive and appropriate care pathways for Aboriginal women and their families throughout their maternity journey; and to educate maternity services staff on Aboriginal culture, health and wellbeing, and to improve the identification of Aboriginal women and babies and their needs.

"All pregnant women attending Barwon Health are offered various models of care for their pregnancy and birthing experience. One such model of care, specifically offered for Aboriginal women and families is the Victorian Koori Maternity Service (KMS) program, provided by Wathaurong Health Service," she said.

Barwon Health works closely with Wathaurong Health Service to deliver maternity services and promotes the Koori Maternity Service as a first choice option of care to women who identify as Aboriginal or whose baby will be identified as Aboriginal.

"This project has really strengthened the partnership between Barwon Health and Wathaurong and helped define both the roles and linkages between both services," Christine said.

Barwon Health's Aboriginal Maternity Support Worker, a role developed as part of the Aboriginal Maternity Pathways Program, provides cultural support, advocacy and liaison with Aboriginal women and families receiving maternity care via any Barwon Health model of care.

Aboriginal Maternity Support Worker Shai McAlear said this new service for Aboriginal families is an opportunity to

provide cultural support for women during appointments, birthing and the postnatal period, as well as supporting and educating staff to have greater knowledge and understanding of Aboriginal health and wellbeing.

To achieve the second objective of the Program an e-learning education tool for maternity staff has been developed.

The key learning areas of the tool include:

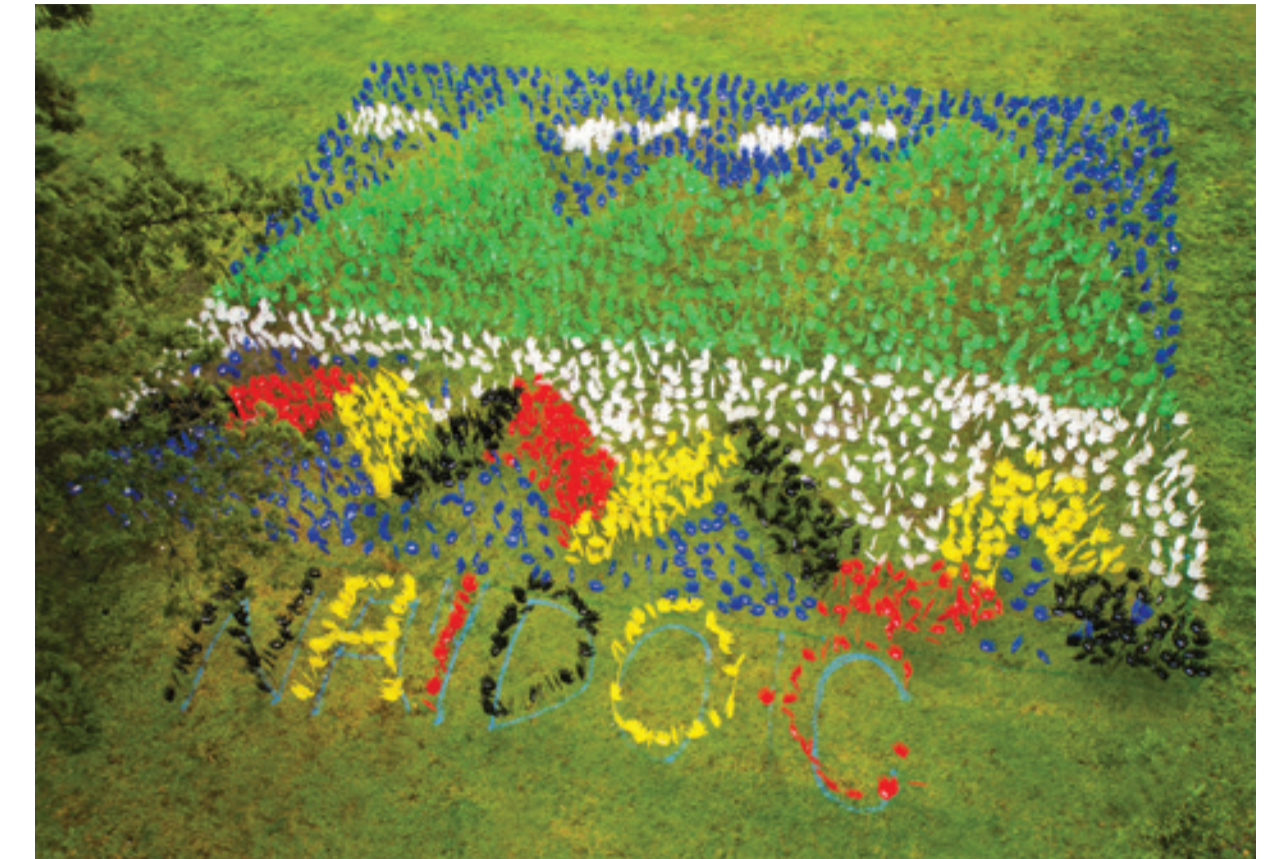
- defining Aboriginal culture;
- understanding the current health of Victorian Aboriginal people;
- acknowledging the vital importance of Identity and asking all clients if they are of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander origin;
- the importance of knowing what Aboriginal services exist both within Barwon Health and within the local community and how to refer people to them.

"In developing the education tool for maternity services staff, it is anticipated that staff will identify Aboriginal women and babies more frequently," Chris said. "If clients of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander origin are correctly identified, Barwon Health will be able to offer services specifically available for them such as the Aboriginal Health Liaison Service and the Aboriginal Maternity Support Worker service. Linkages can also be made to other external services such as Wathaurong Aboriginal Health Service," Christine said.

## Sea of hands for NAIDOC Week

As part of National Aboriginal and Islanders Day Observance Committee (NAIDOC) Week, Barwon Health's Aboriginal Health Liaison Officers collaborated with City of Greater Geelong in a community arts project at the McKellar Centre.

The artwork measured 14m<sup>2</sup> and was displayed on the grass area outside Wallace Lodge throughout NAIDOC Week, creating a striking visual for motorists on Ballarat Road, while also reflecting Barwon Health's commitment to reconciliation and to recognising the importance of aboriginal health.



The artwork design was created by local Aboriginal artist and community member Michelle Robinson and Natalie Potter, and represented the culturally significant site of the You Yangs with a snake in the foreground symbolising the community coming together.

Local school students also contributed to the artwork, which featured hundreds of coloured hands containing messages of support from Barwon Health staff.

The six colours of the Sea of Hands represent the colours of the Aboriginal flag, the Torres Strait Islander flag, and the Australian flag.

NAIDOC Week runs each year from 1-8 July and is an opportunity for every Australian to celebrate and learn about the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island cultures.

## Closing the gap in indigenous health

In 2013, Barwon Health joined a number of health services in committing as a signatory to the *Victorian Statement of Intent to close the gap on Aboriginal Health Inequality*.

In this statement, Barwon Health commits to:

- Develop a comprehensive, long-term plan of action that is targeted at addressing the existing inequities in health services, in order to achieve equality of health status and life expectancy between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and non-Indigenous Australians by 2030.
- Ensure primary health care services and health infrastructure for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples are capable of bridging the gap in health standards by 2018.
- Ensure the full participation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and their representative bodies in all aspects of addressing their health needs.
- Work collectively to address the social determinants that impact on achieving health equality for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.
- Achieve improved access to, and outcomes from, mainstream services for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

To ensure Barwon Health is on track to meet these commitments, the Aboriginal Health team works across the organisation to provide education and support to staff and patients.

Barwon Health's Aboriginal Health Liaison Officers (AHLO) provide support to people who come to Barwon Health and identify as being of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander origin.

The AHLOs ensure patients are comfortable in the health service environment and that their treating medical teams are aware of any cultural needs. The Aboriginal Health team supports Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander patients to attend medical appointments and to participate more fully in their own health care.

One of the aims of the Aboriginal Health team is to improve the identification of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people across the health service. The team work with Barwon Health staff, providing them with support and encouraging them to ask patients if they identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander to ensure they receive the health support they require.

The AHLOs work closely with the Wathaurong Community Health Service, and Barwon Medicare Local to ensure Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people's health care needs are addressed.

The Aboriginal Health team continues to grow with a new Aboriginal Maternity Services Project Officer and Support Worker, and most recently an Aboriginal Health Team Leader.



# Improving education in the use of blood and blood products

The Barwon Health Transfusion Service supports patients with blood products during cancer treatment, major surgery such as cardiac, and orthopaedic, intensive care admissions and renal patients.

During 2012/13, Barwon Health developed a project for junior medical staff to improve their knowledge of blood transfusions when informing patients of their requirement for blood and blood products.

The project, known as 'Three Rules of Transfusion Prescription', aims to improve the information provided to patients prior to non-urgent blood transfusion treatment as well as improve the experience for the patient by transfusing during the day and by providing only the minimum amount required.

Led by Barwon Health's Chair of the Blood Committee, Dr Claire Cattigan, the project was awarded a grant from the Australian Red Cross Blood Service, who also assisted with the design and production of support tools for doctors.

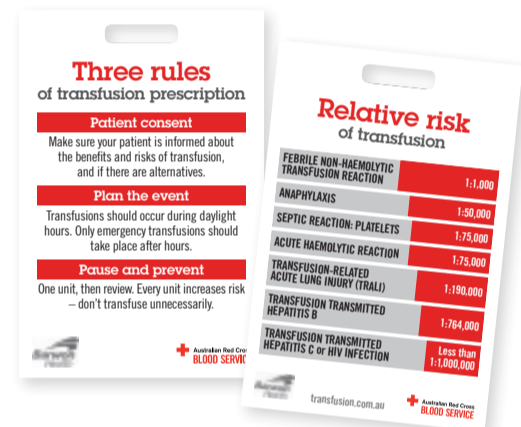
Barwon Health transfusion nurse, Lisa Stevenson, explained that patients who are actively involved in their transfusion and have a better understanding of the process are more likely to consent.

"We developed lanyards for the three rules project for medical staff to wear, with a particular focus on junior doctors. The lanyards act as a guide for doctors to ensure patients receive consistent and accurate information about blood transfusions," Lisa said.

"Informed consent for non-urgent transfusions is a process where the risks and benefits of the blood product treatment must be discussed and made clear to patients, so ensuring that medical staff do this well is very important.

"As a result of the project, we have shown an overall increase in non-urgent transfusion consent rate from an average 40 per cent in 2012 to 80 per cent in 2013," she said.

The project will continue for new junior doctors in 2014, with an evaluation to follow that intake.



'Three Rules of Transfusion Prescription' lanyards for junior doctors.

## Blood facts

### What is a blood transfusion?

A blood transfusion is the transfer of blood components from one person (the donor) into the bloodstream of another person (the patient).

### How is a blood transfusion given?

A transfusion is given through an IV, also known as a drip, through a soft plastic tube in either a person's arm or hand.

### How donated blood is used?

The majority of donated blood goes to people with cancer, as well as people who have suffered traumatic accidents, burns or those undergoing surgery.

### Where do blood products come from?

All blood components in Australia come from voluntary, unpaid donors attending the Australian Red Cross Blood Service. Donors undergo a careful screening process to ensure it is appropriate for them to donate blood.

For more information, visit [www.transfusion.org.au](http://www.transfusion.org.au)



Lauren Farnsworth and interpreter Plawpotoe Ganemy-Kunoo

# Improving access to health services for refugees

Geelong is a vibrant city made up of people from all walks of life. Geelong is now home to a number of people who came to Australia as refugees and is one of the most preferred and largest regional resettlement areas in Victoria.

Barwon Health has been working with four refugee communities – Karen, Afghan, Congolese and Sudanese, to gain a more in-depth understanding of the health and social issues these communities are facing and to identify and address barriers that may prevent access to health services.

Lauren Farnsworth, from Barwon Health's Refugee Health Program, led the research project and said it was important to involve consumers in the development of the Refugee Health Plan.

"To do this, research was conducted with consumers from each of these four refugee groups who participated in focus groups and one on one interviews during a three month period," Lauren said.

"We knew that the experiences of refugees both prior to and on arrival in Australia can lead to the development of a range of unique physical, psychological and social issues, however until now Barwon Health had not conducted any formal community consultation involving refugees resettled in Geelong."

Barwon Health is committed to patient centred care, meaning it supports active involvement of patients and their families in the design of new care models.

# >6,300

requests for interpreters in 2012/13

Through talking to consumers, information was collected which would be used to develop culturally acceptable health services for clients who come from a refugee background.

"The questions we asked focused on finding out what were the concerns and wishes within each community, their knowledge of services and ideas on how services may be improved or better delivered," Lauren explained.

"We have been able to identify the health needs of each of the four refugee communities which has led to the development of more culturally-competent service delivery, appropriate training for healthcare staff and the enhanced health of the local refugee population.

"Cultural competency training sessions have been developed and delivered to medical, nursing and allied health staff, while new health education sessions are being developed for refugee communities with the content to be delivered by bilingual peer educators in the participants' first language," she said.

Work is also commencing which will see the most commonly used patient letters and brochures translated into a range of languages for use throughout community health.

### Interpreting care

Our region is culturally diverse with one of the highest refugee populations in the state. This brings challenges in how we communicate with communities who have English as a second language. The diversity of our population is reflected in the number of requests for interpreters we receive, particularly for new and emerging languages. In 2012/13, we had more than 6,300 requests for interpreters.

### Number of interpreter bookings for new and emerging languages

NEW LANGUAGE	INTERPRETERS 12/13	INTERPRETERS 11/12	INTERPRETERS 10/11
Karen (Burmese)	912	1175	1077
Mandarin	181	238	193
Nuer	217	101	200
Arabic	176	95	144
Dinka	84	72	66
Albanian	26	25	36

## Life-saving blood Michael's story

In May 2013, 57-year-old grandfather Michael was diagnosed with a blood cancer. With a long journey ahead, Michael began treatment at Barwon Health's Andrew Love Cancer Centre and haematology unit the following month.

The chemotherapy treatment Michael was having not only destroyed the cancer cells, but also his red and white blood cells and platelets. During his six stages of chemotherapy, Michael required multiple red blood cell transfusions and platelet transfusions.

Michael, who is a former blood donor himself, said he is very grateful and thankful to people who donate blood.

"Without blood transfusions, the treatment I'm having wouldn't be available. The red and white blood cells would get so low that they wouldn't be able to replace themselves and you wouldn't survive," Michael said.

Michael is one of more than 3,500 patients across Barwon health to receive blood products in the past year.





# Compliments & complaints Tell us about your experience

At Barwon Health, we have a dedicated team that receives and investigates compliments and complaints from the community. In 2012/13, Barwon Health received 721 compliments, up from 382 in 2011/12, and 545 complaints, also up from 477 in 2011/12.

Community feedback is recorded, reported and used to help shape changes in our service and to provide feedback to staff. This feedback is received through several avenues including phone, mail, fax, email surveys, through the Barwon Health website and via social media.

## Managing complaints

We always hope that your experience at Barwon Health will be positive, but if your experience has not met your expectations, we will work with you to investigate the circumstances and find an outcome.

We want to hear about your experience because we know that listening to you helps find new ways to make our services better. We also enjoy hearing about your positive experiences, or new ideas.

You can make a complaint or raise a concern with our Consumer Liaison Officer at any time, but we encourage you to raise any concerns you have with the staff involved and at the time the issue arises. Reporting your concerns when the problem occurs provides the best chance for your concerns to be addressed quickly, and prevent any ongoing problems.

You can also speak to the manager of the area who can investigate the problem and work with you to resolve the issue. Making a complaint will not affect the care you receive in any way.

## The Consumer Liaison Officer

Complaints are best reported, addressed and resolved at the time and place they occur. But when an issue cannot be resolved by the area manager, or when the issue is particularly complex for some other reason, we begin an important process to collect and review all the information we need to understand your concerns.

The Consumer Liaison Officer (CLO) role is a very varied one. The CLO can help you lodge a complaint, and they can also help provide support to staff in the management of routine or involved complaints. One of the most important parts of the CLO role is to coordinate the management of complex and highly complex complaint issues. This makes sure that the right people are involved in addressing your complaint and preventing future problems.

## Tracking and improving performance

The details about compliments and complaints are entered into a register. The register allows us to track what happens in response to feedback and importantly allows us to identify common concerns or suggestions. We aim to acknowledge your complaint within five working days and to resolve the issue within 35 days. Most complaints are resolved much sooner than this, and occasionally very



complex issues take longer, but we will keep you informed about what we are doing to resolve it.

## Tips for giving feedback:

- If you have a complaint or concern, the best option is to first speak to the staff member who provided the service, or to the manager of the area.
- Report your feedback as early as possible to the area the feedback is about.
- Try to provide as much detail as you can - this helps the review and investigation process.
- Think about the outcome you are seeking and talk about this when you lodge the complaint.

## Victorian Patient Satisfaction Monitor

The Victorian Patient Satisfaction Monitor (VPSM) is a formal survey sponsored by the Department of Health and results are provided twice a year. This survey benchmarks Geelong Hospital against the State's metropolitan hospitals. The following table outlines Geelong Hospital's VPSM results for 2012, with Geelong Hospital recording higher levels of patient satisfaction than its peer hospitals.

## 2012 VPSM results

REPORTING PERIOD	JAN - JUNE 2012		JUL - DEC 2012	
	Geelong Hospital	Peer Hospitals	Geelong Hospital	Peer Hospitals
<b>Overall satisfaction with care</b> Indicates the level of satisfaction with the hospital stay	77.6%	76%	77%	76%
<b>Consumer participation</b> Indicates the level of satisfaction with involvement in making decision making about care and treatment	81%	79%	80%	79%

721  
compliments received  
in 2012/13

# Young volunteers give back to health

There are more than 1,000 volunteers across Barwon Health's sites and services.

From former police officers and school teachers to truck drivers and musicians, each volunteer brings with them broad and unique skills that contribute to making Barwon Health's Volunteer Services Department one of the most comprehensive of all the health services in Australia.

In early 2013, the department began engaging with youth in the region to ensure the concept of volunteerism continues to be instilled in future generations. The service established several partnerships with local high schools and expanded the development of youth-focused volunteer roles.

One person who is leading the way for young volunteers is year 11 Saint Ignatius College student Josh Smith. The 16-year-old became a volunteer in early 2013 and joined the service's award-winning Emergency Department volunteer team at Geelong Hospital.

While many of his peers would be celebrating the end of the school week, Josh is in the Geelong Hospital Emergency Department providing valued support as a volunteer.

For Josh, who has aspirations to become a health professional, his volunteer role has given him great insight into the hospital system.



Barwon Health volunteer Josh Smith

"To help out at a place like Barwon Health gives you a real insight into the world of health care and the amazing work that nurses and doctors do every day."

"I want to give back to my community and the hospital for what they have done for me as a child, and when I finish school I wish to study medicine, so I wanted to start early," Josh said.

"Volunteering has really impacted on my life; it has helped me deepen my people skills and taught me that when people are sick they need someone to talk to, and the fact that this someone is me has made me feel really special."

While the contribution Josh makes helps improve the overall patient experience, Josh explained that volunteering has also helped him personally in a number of ways.

"The most rewarding aspect of volunteering is how much the people and the staff appreciate me, I love it. Especially when I get to talk to the patients, I get to learn about them and their lives and I really feel privileged that they trust me enough," Josh said.

"To help out at a place like Barwon Health gives you a real insight into the world of health care and the amazing work that nurses and doctors do every day," he added.



## How to become a volunteer

Volunteers of all ages and backgrounds support our organisation in a variety of positions, including:

- Consumer representation
- Companionship
- Recreational activities
- Peer support
- Mentoring
- Information and enquiries
- Patient transport
- Projects

To view a list of volunteer roles available at Barwon Health visit [www.barwonhealth.org.au](http://www.barwonhealth.org.au) or phone (03) 4215 8901





# QUALITY OF CARE

Readers' survey  
Tell us what you think

## WIN!

Complete our survey for your chance to win 1 of 2 EFM gym memberships!



**1. What did you think of the information in this report?**

Poor  1  2  3  4  5 Excellent

Comment \_\_\_\_\_

**2. What did you think of the presentation of the report?**

Poor  1  2  3  4  5 Excellent

Comment \_\_\_\_\_

**3. Did you like the magazine format?**

Yes  No  Indifferent

Comment \_\_\_\_\_

**4. Did you find the articles to be ... ?**

1  2  3  4  5  
Too technical Very interesting

Comment \_\_\_\_\_

**5. The report gave me a better understanding about the services Barwon Health provides:**

1  2  3  4  5  
Strongly disagree Strongly agree

Comment \_\_\_\_\_

**6. Did you like the magazine being distributed inside the Geelong News/Echo?**

Yes  No

**7. Please tell us about yourself, I am a:**

Patient of Barwon Health

Relative/Carer

Health professional

Other

**8. Please tick the age range that applies to you:**

<20  21-30  31-40  
 41-50  51-60  60+

**9. Can you please tell us which suburb/town you live in?**

\_\_\_\_\_

**10. Do you have any suggestions for improving this magazine?**

Comment \_\_\_\_\_

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Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

**Please remember to include your name and telephone number to be eligible to win one of two EFM gym memberships located at the McKellar Centre in North Geelong.**

**\*Memberships are for 12 months.**

Post to:

Communications & Marketing Department  
Barwon Health  
Reply Paid 281  
Geelong, VIC 3220

## Thank you.

# Directory

## Hospital Services

**GEELONG HOSPITAL - Bellerine Street, Geelong**

General enquiries	4215 0000
Emergency Department	4215 0100
Aboriginal Health	4215 0769
Admissions	4215 1298
Andrew Love Cancer Centre	4215 2700
Barwon Medical Imaging	4215 0300
Barwon Paediatric Bereavement	4215 3352
Consumer Liaison	4215 1250
Cardiology (Geelong)	4215 0000
Diabetes Referral Centre	4215 1383
Dialysis Unit	4215 3600
Gretta Volum Centre	4215 2841
Home Referral Service	4215 1530
Hospital in the Home	4215 1530
Maternity Services	4215 2060
Outpatients	4215 1390
Palliative Care	4215 5700
Perioperative Service	4215 1627
Pharmacy	4215 1582
Pregnancy Advice	4215 0777
Social Work	4215 0777
Waiting List Service	4215 1624
Veterans Liaison	4215 0000

## Aged Care

General enquiries	4215 5200
Alan David Lodge	4215 6500
Blakiston Lodge	4215 5241
Percy Baxter Lodges	4215 5892
Wallace Lodge	4215 6190
Barwon Regional Aged Care Assessment Services	4215 5610



## Rehabilitation Services

**McKellar Centre, 45-95 Ballarat Road, North Geelong**

General enquiries	4215 5200
McKellar Inpatient Rehabilitation Centre	4215 5200
McKellar Community Rehabilitation Centre	4215 5301
McKellar Hydrotherapy Centre	4215 5851
Belmont Community Rehabilitation Centre	4215 7000
Continence Service	4215 5292

## Community Health Centres

Anglesea - 11 McMillan Street	4215 6700
Belmont - 1-17 Reynolds Road	4215 6800
Corio - 2 Gellibrand Street	4215 7100
Newcomb - 104-108 Bellarine Highway	4215 7520
Torquay - 100 Surfcoast Highway	4215 7800

## Community Health Services

Carer Respite & Carelink Services	1800 052 222
Hospital Admission Risk Program	4215 7401
Immisation Service	4215 6962
Paediatric & Adolescent Support	4215 8600

## Day programs

Anglesea	4215 6720
Belmont	4215 7049
Norlane	4215 7300
Torquay	4215 7935

## Dental services

Belmont	4215 6972
Corio	4215 7240
Newcomb	4215 7620

## Community Nursing

Belmont	1300 715 673
Corio	
Newcomb	

## Mental Health, Drug & Alcohol Services

24 Hour Crisis Line	1300 094 187
Aged Care Psychiatry	4215 5720
Community Rehabilitation Facility Barwon Heads Road, Belmont	4215 8101
Drug & Alcohol Services	4215 8700
Needle & Syringe Program (Freecall)	1800 196 850
Prevention & Recovery Care Program	4215 8101
Swanston Centre	4215 2531
Youth Mental Health, Drug & Alcohol Services	1300 094 187

## Community Mental Health Teams

Corio	4215 7201
Surfcoast	4215 7850
Bellarine	4215 7661
Colac Clinic	1300 763 254 or 5260 3260
Child & Adolescent Mental Health	1300 094 187
Geelong West Clinic	4215 6881
headspace Barwon @ Jigsaw	4215 8301
Families where a parent has a mental illness	5222 6911

**Barwon Health Foundation** 4215 8900  
**Barwon Health Volunteer Services** 4215 8919

[www.barwonhealth.org.au](http://www.barwonhealth.org.au)

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