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Fun facts

This year's medical intern intake:





47 FUTURE DOCTORS

~25% ATTENDED GEELONG HIGH SCHOOLS

~50% FROM DEAKIN UNIVERSITY

4 INTERNS ROTATING ACROSS WARRNAMBOOL AND HAMILTON SITES, AT ANY ONE TIME.

Cover

Pictured: Anelyes Everill, who was part of the consumer group to develop the My Palliative Care Toolkit with a LGBTIOA+ focus.



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Message from the Chief Executive



With 2022 now behind us, it is a good time to reflect on the year – we are celebrating the achievements whilst acknowledging the challenges for our workforce and the broader community.

It's pleasing to see our plans being realised to expand our services to meet the growing needs of the population. Our services are rapidly evolving to ensure we can provide more contemporary models of care with many more patients now treated in community based settings or at home. There are positive stories daily about the experiences of people who access Barwon Health services delivered in the community or at home face to face or via telehealth. Designing and implementing new service models with the assistance of technology such as telehealth and remote patient monitoring means we can deliver more care and treatment to people at home removing the need for some of the disruptive and stressful visits to the hospital. This is good news for patients and their families. These at home programs have expanded over the past year to include more specialties for example phototherapy for newborn babies, rehabilitation at home, mental health care, treatment at home for young people with eating disorders.

As the regional health service for the Barwon South West region, we work closely with all services across the whole region to support local service delivery and where necessary transfer care for people who require more specialist services. Recent partnerships with Colac Area Health include the new Imaging service in Colac and the new headspace service. Both are excellent examples of how we can improve access to services locally using the combined expertise and capacity of Barwon Health and the workforce available in local services.

The Barwon South West Local Public Health Unit which was established to support our COVID response is now a permanent feature of the public health landscape. The Unit has worked tirelessly to support the community and services particularly aged care services and primary care as well as directly with the most vulnerable members of the community. Planning is well advanced to expand the role of the Public Health Unit to provide oversight for a broader range of public health programs including prevention.

Our relationship with Deakin University goes from strength to strength. The Change to Improve Mental Health (CHIME) translational research partnership has numerous initiatives underway explore evidence-based therapies to improve mental health outcomes for our community. The establishment of the Adrian Costa Clinical Trials Centre which is critical to the research taking place within Barwon Health now has a new dedicated home at the Geelong Private Medical Centre.

We are excited to see more progress on the planning and construction of Barwon Women's and Children's, and we look forward to the transformation this will bring to the University Hospital Geelong precinct. There are numerous infrastructure projects successfully completed in the past year including the new McKellar MH and Wellbeing Unit and the Youang Surgery Centre. These developments are critical to expanding services and being able to provide care in contemporary settings.

In July this year, we will be assessed against the National Safety and Quality Health Standards (NSQHS) for our three-yearly accreditation. Safety and Quality is everyone's responsibility and it is more important than ever to have a solid understanding of the Standards. I encourage staff to regularly visit the hub on the Safety and Quality One Point page to gain a better understanding of the standards and how they relate to your work.

We recently held the Barwon Best Care Awards, which annually highlight the outstanding achievements of our staff who go above and beyond to deliver our services and improve care. Each nominee was incredibly deserving of recognition and it was encouraging to see staff so excited to celebrate their colleagues.

As always, I'd like to thank you for your hard work over the busy summer period and I look forward to seeing what we can accomplish together for our community in 2023.

Frances Diver | Chief Executive





NEW UNIFORMS FOR SECURITY OFFICERS

Barwon Health's security officers are sporting a fresh blue look.

After seeking staff and consumer feedback on Security Services, there was an overwhelming response to see security team members in a brighter, more approachable uniform.

The blue uniform was introduced in September, moving away from the previous black uniform.

Pictured: Ken White

UPGRADE TO LIGHT THE WAY

A project to replace LED lights in Barwon Health facilities is predicted to achieve a total CO2 reduction of 13,000 tonnes.

In 2020, Barwon Health was successful in receiving State Government funding in the Emissions Reduction Program. The funding has allowed Barwon Health to retrofit 5800 LED lights across aged care sites at the McKellar Centre and Alan David Lodge.

This project is being completed over multiple stages, with Blakiston Lodge, Wallace Lodge, the KHERB education building, the Inpatient Rehabilitation Centre, Alan David Lodge, and the Community Rehabilitation Centre now completed.

De Forest House, Engineering, Staff Amenities, Food Services, Anglesea Community Health Centre and all external lighting.



CAFETERIA REFRESH IN 2023

University Hospital Geelong's cafeteria is transforming its menu and furniture in 2023.

This year, you can expect a more welcoming environment and healthier menu choices, as part of a cafeteria refresh.

In August 2021, the Department of Health released a policy directive with the aim to improve the availability and promotion of healthier food and drink options in health services across Victoria.

Healthy Communities Unit dietitian Aleksandra Warzel said high amounts of sugar, particularly through drinks, can increase our risk of tooth decay and developing chronic health diseases like diabetes. "With support from the Healthy Communities Unit (HCU) and Barwon Health Food Services team, we've cut back on sugar and artificial sweetener in our fridges and vending machines.

"By cutting back on drinks containing these ingredients, we are helping not only the health of our staff and visitors but also looking after the planet."

By September 2023, across four Barwon Health cafes and 12 vending machines, Barwon Health will have sold staff and visitors 270 fewer kilograms of sugar and 55,000 fewer teaspoons of sugar.

The Healthy Communities Unit Dietitian and Food Services worked together to balance the needs of the Barwon Health cafés, their customers and still met our goal for a healthier drink environment.

The power of this partnership continues to be fundamental as we move to the next phase of refreshing the food environment at Barwon Health cafes and vending machines by September 2023.



Cafeteria refresh in 2023

WHAT'S HAPPENING IN 2023?



Environment

The University Hospital Geelong and the McKellar Centre cafes are getting a refresh, from a splash of paint and new furniture to adjustments to the layout. The Barwon Health wellbeing team is aiming to make these spaces a welcoming place to take a break and connect with your colleagues.



Collaboration

Healthy Communities will continue working closely with the Food Services team to provide a variety of foods.



Better labelling

More information so customers can make informed decisions about healthy food and drink products.



Menu refresh

Refreshing how food and drinks are displayed in menus.





Focus on health, including climate

Introducing a greater variety of meals and snacks that contain less sodium, saturated fat and sugar - nutrients we know can increase the risk of chronic diseases. By reducing the availability of ultra-processed foods, we are lessening our impact on the planet.



New model of care to treat mental health in the home

Specialist support in the comfort of home is changing the way people are treated with acute mental illness, thanks to a Victoria-first Hospital in the Home (HITH) program at Barwon Health.

Since April 2021, a multi-disciplinary team has provided an alternative option to hospital admission for those experiencing an acute episode of mental illness.

With "nine beds" now available, an average of 18 people a month are receiving intensive, specialist mental health support and treatment in their home environment, alongside their family and carers. The program was recognised at the Victorian Public Healthcare Awards in October, receiving the top prize for excellence in supporting the mental health and wellbeing of Victorians.

Geelong resident Jac Kirkman avoided a second admission to hospital after a relapse of her post-partum psychosis earlier this year.

She said her initial mental health episode "really came out of the blue" after the birth of her son two years ago, with no past experience of mental ill-health and no family history to suggest any risk factors.

"At that time, I was so ill that I needed acute care in the Swanston Centre, which was the right place for me in that moment and my experience there was really positive," she said.

NEW MODEL OF CARE TO TREAT MENTAL HEALTH IN THE HOME

"However, more recently when I had a relapse of psychosis, I had a two-year-old and wasn't as critically unwell because I had been taught the warning signs that helped me know what to do.

"The psychosis presented as a lot of magical thinking, like I was getting messages from the TV and radio, but this time around I was fortunate to have insight to know that it wasn't reality.

"I was appropriate for Hospital in the Home - I hadn't quite lost full contact with reality, but I was having lot of difficulty sleeping and I knew that if I couldn't get a handle on it, I'd get worse and it would become similar to last time where I was hallucinating, hearing voices and seeing things."

As part of her HITH treatment, Ms Kirkman promptly received two daily visits from a mental health nurse and psychiatrist for several weeks, spending about two hours in total with her and her family each day.

Ms Kirkman said she felt blessed to be involved in the pilot program, receiving compassionate care at home without being separated from her two-year-old son.

"It was incredible and I really felt treated with such dignity, like they had taken on board my views and what I wanted from my care," she said.

"I would've otherwise had to go back into the ward, away from my son and my support system in the community.

"An acute mental health facility isn't necessarily a place you want young children to visit, and it would've been difficult for my husband to make time to bring my son in."

The Deakin University optometry lecturer said she believed her recovery and return to work benefited from the care she received at home.

"Acute care facilities are very important and my experience at the Swanston Centre was really good, but it's not the right place for everyone who needs care.

"To take someone out of their comfort zone and put them into an adult psychiatric ward can be distressing compared to being treated at home, which isn't always conducive to rest and recovery.

"I'm a health professional myself and have to say I thought I understood what mental health issues were, but to actually experience it has made me a better practitioner and an insight into how we can improve the health system to improve mental illness."

Mental Health HITH nurse unit manager Emily Fryman said feedback had shown that culturally-appropriate treatment and care for the entire family promotes prompter recovery, as well as a more sustainable recovery that can strengthen family relationships.

"Feedback shows that individuals can eliminate the need for hospital admission, or significantly reduce the length of stay in hospital by engaging with the MH HITH program and receiving the intensive support that they need without having to leave home," she said.

"It is our hope that every person in our region requiring assistance with their mental health can have the option of receiving specialised, individualised care that works specifically to bring recovery and hope to their health and wellbeing, via the MH HITH initiative. It is what our community needs, and deserves.

"The ultimate goal is for people and their families to receive the right care, at the right time, in the right place for them, so that they can be on the road to recovery as soon as possible, with minimal interruption to their lives."

"It was incredible and I really felt treated with such dignity, like they had taken on board my views and what I wanted from my care."

- Jac Kirkman

Pictured opposite: Jac Kirkman - credit Alison Wynd, Geelong Advertiser



headspace delivering more mental health support for Colac youth

Young people in the Colac area have increased access to a range of specialist mental health supports and services with the opening of the community's new headspace centre in October.

headspace Colac is providing young people aged 12 to 25 and their families with access to a youth-friendly, free and confidential mental health and wellbeing service.

Western Victoria Primary Health Network (WVPHN) has commissioned Barwon Health to operate the centre in partnership with Colac Area Health and WDEA Works.

Barwon Health Mental Health, Drugs and Alcohol Services clinical director Professor Steve Moylan said Barwon Health was excited to be the lead agency for the new headspace Colac service.

Pictured: headspace Colac reception.

"We're dedicated to expanding our youth mental health services in the Colac region and implementing headspace in partnership with experienced support agencies will see a significant improvement in the care available for young people," said Professor Moylan.

"By integrating headspace Colac with our existing youth services, including our existing Jigsaw Youth Mental Health Service, young people will receive greater access and seamless care in a way that best suits them," he said.

headspace CEO Jason Trethowan said headspace Colac would play a critical role in providing much needed support to young people, families, and the broader community.

"It's critically important that any young person going through a challenging time gets help early," Mr Trethowan said.

"We know 75 per cent of mental health issues emerge before the age of 25, so it's vital that appropriate and accessible services are available for young people.

"Young people and their families have the right to safe and inclusive support available at services like headspace and I'm sure headspace Colac will be a welcome addition to the local community, providing young people and their families in the area with a space designed by them and dedicated to them that they can go to for help," he said.

headspace Colac is located at 15-17 Hart Street, Colac.

"By integrating headspace Colac with our existing youth services, including our existing Jigsaw Youth Mental Health Service, young people will receive greater access and seamless care in a way that best suits them"

New website simplifies care pathways for Mental Health, Drugs and Alcohol Services

A new website dedicated to Barwon Health's Mental Health, Drugs and Alcohol Services has been launched to provide consumers with clearer pathways for help and more detailed information about local support.

The microsite was co-designed with consumers, carers and clinicians to offer more helpful information people in our local community, including ways to find help and the available services for diverse groups and specific needs in the communitu.

Mental Health, Drugs and Alcohol Services clinical director, Professor Steve Moylan, said the new dedicated website makes information about the wide range of Barwon Health services much easier for consumers to find, removing barriers to access.

"Whether people are experiencing a crisis or interested in learning more about Geelong's support services, this website is going to make it so much simpler for people to access care and information about issues related to mental health, alcohol and other drugs," he said.

"Our lived experience project leaders have been fundamental in bringing an articulate and expert voice to the final website, which makes it easier to navigate, while also broadening the scope of what the website can be.



The MHDAS website launched in December.

"Clinicians have further strengthened and supported the viewpoints of consumers and carers, ensuring that the website is in alignment with much of the intended target audience.

"There should be no barriers to finding help when you need it and we hope the site also makes it easier for people to connect with our many partner agencies that do fantastic work around the region."

The website, which can be found at www.barwonhealth.org.au/mhdas, launched on 12 December and will be maintained to ensure information is current and relevant for the communitu.

COLAC AREA HEALTH EXPANDS MEDICAL IMAGING SERVICE

The arrival of new medical imaging equipment at Colac Area Health has increased daily appointments for the Colac community.

Since April, Barwon Health has delivered a medical imaging service from Colac Area Health in Connor Street, supporting hospital inpatients and community-based clinicians and over 7700 patients have used the service in that time.

The service operates with no-out-of-pocket costs for all Medicare reimbursable imaging, and has been renovated to incorporate new state or the art equipment, including digital X-ray, dental X-ray and second ultrasound room.

Operations manager Yasmin Verbunt said Colac's new low-dose X-ray machine, dental X-ray and ultrasound machine are the gold standard of imaging equipment.

"With the installation of new equipment, greater appointments will be available to the community," she said.

"Our new equipment allows for increased appointments, with 30 per cent more appointments available since the X-ray machine has been operational.

"Our services in Colac have been implemented in phases.

"We have developed the service with accessible change rooms, enhanced CT scanning services and room modifications to allow for better patient experience and flow through the department.

"Our vision is to provide an accessible, integrated and comprehensive imaging service for the Colac Otway region, and the developments we've seen since April have made a great difference towards this goal."



Zero emissions vehicles arrive for Barwon Health fleet

Barwon Health is accelerating zero-emission vehicles (ZEV) take-up by switching to six battery electric cars for staff use at University Hospital Geelong.

Another six battery electric cars were announced for the organisation's McKellar Centre as part of a State Government drive.

The vehicles, available to staff now through the fleet booking system, have dedicated charging stations at the multi-storey car park on Bellerine Street.

Hospital staff will use the Hyundai Kona Electric cars for community work and meetings in the Geelong community as Victoria charges towards a state-wide net zero emissions target by 2050.

Replacing existing petrol and diesel cars, the new Konas have a 480km range enabling staff to make long trips without the need to charge en route. Chief executive Frances Diver said the vehicles were the first big step in Barwon Health's target to reach zero fleet emissions by 2035.

"We are participating in the ZEV program to reduce our carbon emissions from transport and to demonstrate Barwon Health's environmental intentions to the community," she said.

"The other benefits include familiarising and myth-busting environmental issues amongst staff and providing a supply of second-hand zero-emission vehicles to the market.

"The new ZEVs will be powered via the Mount Gellibrand windfarm with the cars running on clean green electricity."

The investment backs the fleet conversion to encourage uptake of 400 ZEVs and associated charging stations over two years.

To help spark community interest in the take-up of sustainable transport, the Government will make the ZEVs available for public purchase at the end of their lease, according to Member for Geelong Christine Couzens.

"Barwon Health is an important part of our community and they should be congratulated for taking a lead role in this important initiative. Zero-emission vehicles will make a big difference in creating a healthier future for Geelong," she said.

"This is an important step towards ZEVs making up half of all light vehicle sales by 2030, part of our nation-leading climate action which will see us slash emissions by 50 per cent by the same year."

In addition to reducing emissions to make our towns, cities and regions more liveable, the ZEVs will also deliver ongoing cost savings due to having lower maintenance and running costs than their petrol or diesel predecessors.

Pictured: Building Services maintenance planner Caleb Hannam with one of the new vehicles.



The Barwon Renewable
Energy Partnership (B-REP)
of Barwon Water, Barwon
Health and GeelongPort has
collectively taken a big step
towards using 100% renewable
electricity and producing net
zero emissions having secured
a power purchase agreement
(PPA) with a local wind farm.

The B-REP recently entered a PPA with the Mount Gellibrand Wind Farm near Birregurra for the provision of 68 gigawatt hours a year of renewable electricity. ACCIONA Energia's Mount Gellibrand Wind Farm has been operating since 2018 and has 44 turbines, each with a capacity of 3 megawatts.

The 10-year agreement will see the renewable electricity produced at the farm and sent to the grid allocated to the three organisations, offsetting the energy used at their facilities.

Barwon Water managing director Tracey Slatter said she was thrilled to be working with Barwon Health and GeelongPort to support the region's transition to renewable energy.

"Barwon Health and GeelongPort play such significant roles in our region and we're proud to partner with them to enter into a long-term arrangement for the supply of renewable energy from a local provider.

Ms Slatter said the project would help contribute to Victoria's renewable energy and emissions reduction targets and contribute to creating new jobs and further developing the renewable energy sector.

Barwon Health chief executive Frances Diver said it was an exciting and innovative project that would help Barwon Health meet emission reduction targets and demonstrate the benefits of regional collaboration across the public sector.

"At Barwon Health, we recognise climate change is a big issue and recognise the clear link between the health and wellbeing of the environment and the health and wellbeing of Victorians, particularly the most vulnerable Victorians.

"Like all hospitals and health services, we consume a large amount of energy. Participating in the B-REP project will see us significantly reduce our carbon footprint from energy use and join Barwon Water and GeelongPort in leading the region's transition to renewable energy.

"The agreement will provide Barwon Health with 15 gigawatt hours of clean electricity annually for the next decade, reducing our total greenhouse gas emissions by around 70 per cent or 14,700 tonnes per year."

Pictured: Barwon Health chief executive Frances Diver, Barwon Water managing director Tracey Slatter, ACCIONA Energia energy markets and policy director Melanie Sutton, and GeelongPort CEO Brett Winter at the Mount Gellibrand Wind Farm.

Palliative care toolkit's inclusive focus

Barwon Health's Palliative Care Program has launched a new toolkit for LGBTIQA+ people through their end-of-life experience.

The palliative care resource was co-designed with a consumer advisor group of more than 40 LGBTIQA+ people to make thinking and talking about end-of-life decisions easier, including identifying values, support, and planning.

LGBTIQA+ inclusive practice project officer Jen Walsh said the idea for the toolkit came from conversations with a team of local Consumer Advisors that identified a lack of representation of the LGBTIQA+ community in medical brochures or documents.

"This leads people to believe that a palliative care service like ours might not be safe f or people of diverse gender identities or sexualities," she said.

"By creating this toolkit, we aimed to remove that barrier in order to help people feel more comfortable accessing palliative care.

"The process of designing this toolkit sideby-side with people with lived experience allowed us to create something by LGBTIQA+ people, for LGBTIQA+ people.

"Our Consumer Advisors stated that they got a lot of joy out of being a part of this project and it gave them the opportunity to contribute to improving care at Barwon Health by making palliative care a little safer for members of the LGBTIOA+ community.

"These little changes have a huge impact of individuals who have struggled to access mainstream health services in the past. "I have never truly seen myself in a 'medical' resource until now. This toolkit feels like it was designed for someone like me. I'd feel comfortable picking up a copy and working through it in my own time. A document like this makes me think that Barwon Health truly sees me and realises that my needs are different than other patients."

- Queer woman, 70 years old



"I believe this project has offered a framework for how to engage people from the community with lived experience in an authentic process of co-design. By coming together as a group of people with diverse gender identities, sexualities, and life experiences – we collectively created an Australian-first resource."

Consumer advisor Anelyse Everill said helping shape the document had been a rewarding experience.

"This booklet is innovative and gives respect to older LGBTIQA+ people in palliative care," she said.

"We had a great team and we really knitted together to get a lot done.

"It's got a whole lot of reference to the rainbow community and it's encouraging to see the resource has resonated with the wider palliative care community as well."



Pictured: Anelyes Everill.



Pictured: Denby Smith.

The Gender Affirming Voice Service provides assessment and management for adults seeking gender affirming voice training, that is, a voice and communication style

that is, a voice and communication style that affirms their gender. People who identify as trans or gender diverse might seek the assistance of this specialist service for support developing vocal characteristics (e.g. pitch, intonation, resonance, speech rate, phrasing patterns) and non-verbal communication patterns (e.g. gestures, posture/movement, facial expressions) that affirms their gender identity.

Speech Pathologist Natasha Curham said the service has been operating for a few months in the set up phase and has already had a significant number of clients that have been supported by the service.

"We've already had some community members who have completed their gender affirming voice training and the feedback has been overwhelmingly positive. It is so wonderful to see the impact this has had on their lives. We hope as we officially launch this new service we can provide this vital service to more people identifying as trans or gender diverse across the Barwon South West, who up until recently have had to travel to Melbourne for this support or use private health services," she said.

Gender affirming voice service launched

The six month anniversary of Barwon Health's new Gender Affirming Voice Service was celebrated as the community came together to acknowledge Transgender Awareness Week 13-19 November.

One local who has recently benefited from this service is Dianne, who said the program had a huge impact on their life already.

"Being trans means I have to feel comfortable to be me," they said.

"The gender affirmation voice training ensures that and continuous improvements in regards to how I present both physically and how I sound. This gives me the confidence to be me. This freedom to not be pigeon-holed by others is assisting me with managing my mental health issues and being comfortable in my own skin for the first time in a very long time."

Another client who has benefitted from the service is Denby who said they now have more confidence in everyday life.

"The vocal exercise techniques I learned have given me much more confidence in my daily life, particularly on the phone and solved another riddle in the puzzle of myself."

The service launch is part of Barwon Health's recognition of Transgender Awareness Week which is a week when people who identify as transgender or gender diverse and their allies take action to bring attention to the community by educating the public through sharing stories and experiences, and advancing advocacy around the issues of prejudice, discrimination, and violence that affect the transgender community.

Speech Pathology manager Rhiannon Beggs said the decision to commence this service was born out of feedback from local GPs and community members that there was a lack of services available publicly for voice training.

"The team were focussed on best meeting the needs of consumers so ensured that the service was co-designed with the Barwon Health LGBTIQA+ inclusive practice committee and a consumer from the community who was able to share their lived experience."

"Being trans means
I have to feel comfortable
to be me."

TREATING EATING DISORDERS AT HOME

A new and innovative program is helping treat young people's eating disorders from the comfort of their own home.

The Paediatric Eating Disorders Hospital in the Home program is a joint effort between staff in paediatrics, mental health and allied health, aiming to improve outcomes for patients and their families, while using less staff resources.

Since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, there has been an unprecedented increase in young patients diagnosed with eating disorders, with some being unwell enough to require inpatient care and intensive support from experienced nurses. Sometimes this care is required for many weeks or even months, according to Barwon Health paediatrician Dr Jo Centra.

"These patients are supported in hospital until their family can support them with family-based treatment (FBT), which can take a long time." she said.

"These patients often struggle when discharged and are frequently re-admitted severely unwell.



The Paediatric Eating Disorders Hospital in the Home team.

"We know that keeping young people in their home, with their family, friends and community is better for them.

"Our new program aims to provide home-based support for families to provide FBT to their children, while reducing the need for admission. "If we can support them in their family with our nursing staff going out every day, parents feel confident and competent to support their children.

"If we treat young people with an eating disorder effectively, they can return to a normal life, and avoid the risk of this becoming a chronic illness that affects the rest of their family and their community."

"The early signs are really positive and exciting, with young people who are more physically healthy after a couple of weeks and often their mental health has dramatically improved in that time, which is so good for parents who sometimes feel they've lost their children."



"My goal was to try to support those patients at home in a way that was just as effective as being in hospital."

"I did my final year of paediatric training here in 2013 and have been with Barwon Health ever since. I did a sabbatical in 2021 in adolescent medicine at the Royal Children's Hospital, which included working with young people with eating disorders and gender supportive care for gender diverse young people. Coming back to Barwon Health, I wanted to improve our care for children with eating disorders. COVID-19 was really difficult for the mental health of all people, but particularly children and young people, which we saw in the hospital with young people coming in with eating disorders.

Pictured: Jo Centra

Anorexia nervosa has the highest death rate of any mental health disorder and a lot of people were suffering through the pandemic. My goal was to try to support those patients at home in a way that was just as effective as being in hospital. We have developed a new Hospital in the Home program that hasn't been done anywhere, working closely with our nursing, mental health and allied health colleagues to upskill children's parents so they can manage the disorder at home. It's such a privilege to work with families at the hardest point in their life, helping young people get better more quickly, helping them stay out of hospital so parents can return to work and children can return to school."



BIRTH OF A NEW ERA FOR WOMEN'S & CHILDREN'S HEALTH

ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR DAVE FULLER | CLINICAL DIRECTOR WOMEN'S AND CHILDREN'S DIRECTORATE

As you look around Geelong and its surrounding suburbs, it's clear that our community is growing fast. A close look at Barwon Health's maternity services shows a very tangible side of this population growth, with approximately 2800 births in the recent financial year compared to 2400 just six years ago.

Our goal is to deliver high-quality care closer to home for as many people as possible, and Barwon Women's and Children's will greatly assist in this process by giving us new opportunities to provide care in Geelong.



Pictured: Associate Professor Dave Fuller

This increasing demand for maternity services, along with the closure of Epworth Geelong's maternity service, means we are quickly outgrowing the current facilities at University Hospital Geelong. The new Barwon Women's and Children's project now has more than \$500 million of committed funding and Barwon Health is deep into the process of preparing the University Hospital Geelong precinct for this major healthcare infrastructure project.

Our goal is to deliver high-quality care closer to home for as many people as possible, and Barwon Women's and Children's will greatly assist in this process by giving us new opportunities to provide care in Geelong. With a future focus, we will build and develop a service that will serve families across the Barwon South West region for decades to come. This development also offers an important avenue to think long-term about the future of healthcare for women and children in regional Victoria. Specialist clinics and tailored services here in Geelong will allow families to access the care they need closer to home, without worrying about traveling to Melbourne.

With early works now underway, the new facilities will transform the University Hospital Geelong precinct. Locating the facilities on the existing hospital site means a seamless transition between other acute services, including the Emergency Department, Intensive Care Unit and operating theatres.

Incorporating environmental sustainability into our design and building are a priority for the project. We're excited to be able to involve consumers in the design, including Wathaurong Aboriginal Co-operative, and more broadly the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community. This will help ensure that our service model meets the diverse needs of our community.

Barwon Women's and Children's will work in tandem with developments in other areas of our health service, including Barwon Health North, a new community hospital in Torquay (Barwon Health Surf Coast), the new Early Parenting Centre at the McKellar Centre, and a new children's emergency department at University Hospital Geelong. This will offer a broader, more integrated range of services in our community, which means we can tailor our care to the specific needs of each family.

We have already started expanding services with new developments, such as our maternal fetal medicine service and paediatric specialist clinics. The new Barwon Women's and Children's facilities will allow us to further expand these and other services, such as couplet care in the Neonatal Care Unit, where mothers and babies can receive care in the same room.

A first-class facility like Barwon Women's and Children's will help realise our commitment to train and recruit medical, nursing, midwifery and allied health staff within the region, growing the workforce of the future and attracting skilled staff to move to Geelong.

There are exciting times ahead for Barwon Health and for this project. There is a real enthusiasm among our staff, and we know the community shares that same interest in watching our services evolve to provide the best possible care for our women and children.





Barwon Health put its emergency response to the test in November with a simulation exercise that measured the health system's real-time reactions to a mass casualty incident.

As part of the internationally-recognised Emergo Train system, about 80 staff responded to a scenario that simulated a train derailment in South Geelong, with involvement from local paramedics and the Department of Health.

Barwon Health's Emergency Department, ICU, surgical theatre, medical imaging, pathology services and Incident Management Centre took part, helping the health service prepare for potential mass casualty or disaster situations.

The exercise imitated realistic injuries and hazardous conditions to put staff through their paces in real-time, using magnetic symbols to represent patients, staff and resources, with movable markers indicating priority and treatment.

Work Health & Safety director James Tamblyn said one of the exercise's main purposes was to identify areas for improvement, while giving staff a simulated experience of reacting to a disaster scenario without preparation.

"The Emergo Train exercise creates a great sense of realism and brings different services together to test the way we communicate and react to a constantly evolving set of challenges," she said.

"There's a great focus on real-time management of the incident.

"By the end of the exercise, we can see that our systems for managing a mass casualty incident are very robust, but there are inevitably opportunities we can identify to refine our systems further." Mr Tamblyn said staff had enjoyed the challenge of the Emergo Train exercise again, after a five-year hiatus.

"This is the first time we've run the simulation since 2017, due to the cyberattack in 2019 and the demand of COVID each year since then," he said.

"It's fantastic to be able to conduct an exercise again, and there has been great engagement and interest from all staff who are participating."

Pictured: Emergency surgery fellow Brad Bidwell, paramedic Ewan Humphrey, and Sergeant Joel Duttman.

MRI boost announced for northern suburbs

A new MRI service at Barwon Health North will be able to treat almost 4000 additional patients each year.

The \$2.9 million fitout, which was announced as part of the State Government's Regional Health Infrastructure Fund, will improve accessibility to MRI services for the northern suburbs, which account for 45 per cent of Barwon Health's MRI outpatients.

As well as an urgent care centre, renal dialysis and specialist outpatients services, Barwon Health North (BHN) has a medical imaging service that includes X-ray, CT, ultrasound and dental X-ray (OPG).

Through Barwon Health's medical imaging department tertiary MRI services are provided to a catchment of more than 500,000 people, with patients travelling from as far as the South Australian border for scan appointments and reports.

Operations manager Yasmin Verbunt said the additional machine would increase the overall MRI capacity and reduce wait times, with modelling allowing for almost 4000 patients to be scanned in the first year of operation.

"Since we opened Barwon Health North in 2020, it's been our goal to add MRI capacity, so the site is ready for this and we're thrilled that we will soon be able to offer more services to residents in the northern suburbs, as well as those who travel from across western Victoria for treatment." she said.

"We expect we will be able to see 4000 more patients a year, which is a 27 per cent increase in service capacity, reducing wait times for everyone who needs an MRI."

Last year, more than 31,000 imaging exams completed at Barwon Health North.

ACCESS TO CARE ANYWHERE

Virtual care is reaching remote rural communities via a Community Telehealth Hubs across the Barwon South West region.

Telehealth has been around for a long time, and most people have had a telephone consultation with their doctor at least once, especially during the pandemic.

With the rapid uptake of telehealth over the last few years, virtual care, as it is now known, is being extended to rural communities to cover a wide range of technologies designed to deliver healthcare closer to home.

Telehealth support officer Tania Hahn said the community hubs included video call and telephone appointments, online support groups and take-home devices for real-time monitoring at home or in the community. "As the name suggests, virtual care does require certain equipment and internet connectivity, so if people don't have access to that technology at home, these community hubs offer close access to healthcare for people in more remote areas," she said.

"These sites across the region are ideal for people who don't have access to the required technology nor have a level of skills or the confidence to participate in virtual care.

"The Barwon South West Virtual Care team have worked closely with rural health services to establish community telehealth hubs, with 13 operational and 30 in total planned."

The aim is to improve equity and access to quality, timely healthcare, particularly for those limited by:

- lack of access to equipment
- unreliable internet connectivity
- low digital literacy
- · remote and rural locations
- family or carer responsibilities
- costs associated with travel
- physical incapacity
- · language barriers

Each hub is a private room with everything you need for a telehealth appointment, including a computer, webcam, microphone, speakers, good internet connection, and support staff to help you get set up, available for use free of charge.

To find your nearest hub, visit the Barwon Health website and search for "telehealth".

Belongings bags hold treasured memories for ICU patients



Pictured: Ashlee Lawler.

Handmade belongings bags are carrying treasured memories for families of loved ones who pass away in hospital.

ICU nurse Ashlee Lawler is coordinating the efforts to create the bags after being inspired by an article in the ANMF magazine.

"I asked my team members if they had material at home and found a group of volunteers to sew the bags," she said.

"The bags are pillowcase size, with a drawstring and inside pocket and have been a great beginner sewing project, providing meaningful conversations for the volunteers."

They have been well received by grieving families, who often need some time to process before sorting through belongings, and the bags also become a lovely keepsake.

"I hope this project inspires other areas of Barwon Health to consider doing something similar for their ward."

The bags have been well received by grieving families, who often need some time to process before sorting through belongings, and the bags also become a lovely keepsake.

RED CARPET CINEMA EXPERIENCE FOR SOCIAL SUPPORT PROGRAM

Social Support Program (SSP) consumers had a taste of Hollywood with a "Red Carpet Cinema Experience" late last year.

About 130 vulnerable and isolated people attend the program weekly, seeking social activities that help them stay connected to their community. SSP is located across three Barwon Health sites in the Geelong region - Anglesea, Belmont and Corio – as a component of the Community Health programs that aim to support people to remain in the community.

A City of Greater Geelong (COGG) Positive Aging Grant allowed the red carpet experience to take place, with 40 consumers attending an exclusive screening of the movie Ticket to Paradise at Reading Cinema's Premium theatre. SSP co-ordinator Linda Kar said consumers had a great time on the outing, which was a valuable learning experience for staff involved in the grant application and organisation.

"Through this event, the team built relationships with external agencies and gained skills required for a successful grant application," she said.

"There was an increased awareness of the benefit of external funding sources to enhance experience for consumers and the team also gained experience and success in event management.

"Consumers completed feedback surveys and the results were reported back to the funding body and used to improve the service for the future."



Participants of the Social Support Program walked the red carpet at Readings Cinema in Waurn Ponds.

VIRTUAL CARE FOR EMERGENCY SERVICE

A new telehealth model is improving access to emergency services.

Barwon Health has piloted a Virtual Emergency Care Service, primarily aimed to provide specialist consultation support across the Barwon South West region, to provide care closer to home for patients with non-life threatening emergency conditions.

Utilising the HealthDirect platform, the Virtual Emergency Care (ViEC) team seamlessly connect by video with nurses, medical staff and patients in need of specialist emergency advice & management – this is supported by the ability to remotely arrange investigations and prescriptions where required.

Managed by project lead Bill Reynolds and Emergency Services director Dr Belinda Hibble, the ViEC Service provides support seven days per week during the traditionally busy afternoon and evening period. In its first two months, the service supported more than 150 patients across the region, staffed by a dedicated ward clerk and emergency physician.

Dr Hibble said the service had provided the opportunity for the ED team to proactively support rural services across the region and enable access to specialist emergency care without the need to attend the hospital ED.

"This is fostering stronger relationships across the Barwon South West and supporting admission pathways into acute services where appropriate, with the safety net of video-based assessment to make informed decisions about patient transfer when required," she said.

Referring services include urgent care centres and rural emergency departments across the Barwon South West, general practitioner clinics, McKellar Centre services, community nursing programs and a large range of residential aged care facilities across the region.

Support for Pacific surgeon trainees

Barwon Health surgeon
Professor Glenn Guest was
among the medical professionals
who recently travelled to Fiji
to support trainees preparing
for surgical exams.

The Fiji National University (FNU) Surgical Training Programme at the Colonial War Memorial Hospital (CWMH) provides opportunities for doctors from around the Pacific and East Timor to receive training on the important practice of surgery.

Professor Guest said the Victorian team of medical professionals had assisted in the teaching of more 100 doctors and had been involved in the training examinations of close to 50 surgeons across the Pacific for 13 years.

"We always feel it is a privilege to come to Fiji and help in some small way," Prof Guest said.



Pictured: Group of travelling doctors with trainees in Fiji.

"Over the last four years, the teachings were assisted by regular online tutorials conducted through Zoom leading up to the exams for about eight to 12 weeks each year."

"Each year, we leave feeling excited and optimistic that substantial progress is being made. After seeing the calibre of trainees and how hard working and dedicated they are, I feel that the country's future is in good hands.

"Fiji should be proud of the fact that they not only train their own surgeons but help the other Pacific Island nations in the process."

Prof Guest said his team looked forward to working with FNU to strengthen and build on existing partnerships.





PROFESSOR PETE VUILLERMIN | DIRECTOR OF RESEARCH

As the last few years have shown, we live in highly dynamic times. Now more than ever, our choices must be informed by science.

Barwon Health is delighted to launch our 10-year Research Strategic Plan, which can be found online. We have defined a series of investments required to create a ecosystem that can deliver a cohesive and coordinated suite of research programs, including:

- Enhancing synergy between research, safety and quality to drive continuous improvements in care;
- Improving health outcomes for our most disadvantaged populations through public health research and translation;

- Developing allied health research capacity to drive innovation in digital health;
- Building the capacity and capability of cancer services research to drive improvements in person centred outcomes:
- Building the exemplar listening and learning mental healthcare system;
- Improving person-centred care for people with Motor Neurone Disease;
- Improving outcomes for people with infectious diseases:

- Preventing childhood allergic disease and asthma;
- Improving shared decision making and goal concordant care;
- Improving outcomes for people who require surgery;
- Improving the physical and mental health of the frail and ageing; and
- Improving outcomes for people with musculoskeletal disease or injury.



Barwon Health, in partnership with Deakin University, is home to one of the most renowned mental health research programs in the world (IMPACT). Over the coming decade, the Change to Improve Mental Health (CHIME) initiative will integrate research and clinical services to drive a continuous cycle of improvements in person-centred care.

Provision of cradle-to-grave care to a large and engaged community has enabled us to establish some of the most important cohort studies in the world. Projects such as the Barwon Infant Study (BIS) and the Geelong Osteoporosis Study (GOS) combine 'people power' with cutting-edge laboratory science to identify new targets for prevention and treatment of childhood allergic diseases through to frailty among the aging.

Similarly, our infectious diseases program leverages our setting to address population health responses to challenges including Mycobacterium Ulcerans, Hepatitis C, and SARSCov-2, as well as in-hospital conditions such as Staphulococcus infections.

An exciting development in this space is the establishment of the Centre for Innovation in Infectious Diseases and Immunology Research (CIIDIR).

Barwon Health's established clinical trials groups drive a culture of enquiry and evidence-based care. The generous support of the Costa family has enabled establishment of the Adrian Costa Clinical Trials Centre that will expand and diversify access to cutting edge treatments. Appointing Alison Hutchinson as our Professor of Nursing was an early priority and she is being supported to develop a nursing research program that is in synergy with the overarching Research Strategy.

Partnership with our community is crucial. Barwon Health will invest in systems that enable consumer input across the research journey. Our research goes beyond scientific insights, to inform how we partner with people to improve their health and wellbeing – a philosophy embodied by our iValidate program, which drives innovations and excellence in person-centred end-of-life care.

Barwon Health's vision for research is about being sufficiently ambitious and deliberate to ensure our efforts are both locally relevant and internationally important. We will be measured not only by the evidence we produce, but the impact we have on people's lives.



Pictured: Professor Peter Vuillermin.



New adjuvant therapy testing cancer return

The Barwon Health Cancer Services Trials Unit (CSTU) has run a successful clinical trial that saw a significant reduction in the return of melanoma after its surgical removal.

Testing immunotherapy agent (Opdivo) as a treatment, the trial was given to patients after Stage II melanoma surgeries to stimulate the body's immune system and fight any remaining cancer cells.

Stage II melanoma is a skin cancer that can be treated via surgery but there is a risk of microscopic cancer cells remaining in the body, causing a higher risk of the melanoma returning.

Dr Anna Lomax and the CSTU team were key investigators in the global phase 3 trial of adjuvant Opdivo, developed by Bristol Myers Squibb. The trial found that Opdivo as an adjuvant therapy in patients with completely removed stage IIB/C melanoma demonstrated a statistically significant and clinically meaningful benefit in recurrence-free survival.

Dr Lomax said preventing cancer recurrence was a vital part of cancer treatment.

"Our aim is to provide opportunities to access therapies in the clinical trial setting at Barwon Health that may benefit our patients," Dr Lomax said.

"We sincerely thank our participants in the study."

The Barwon Health CSTU is currently involved in 40 active trials featuring 150 patients, with more than 20 more now open for recruitment and more to commence soon. These trials span a range of cancer types including lymphoma, leukaemia, myeloma, breast, melanoma, lung, prostate, and urology.



Pictured: Dr Anna Lomax.

DEAKIN AND BARWON HEALTH PARTNER IN NEW CENTRE FOR DISEASE RESEARCH

A new Geelong-based research centre will contribute to global efforts to prevent, control and treat infectious and immune-related diseases, including COVID-19, Buruli Ulcer, malaria and asthma.

The Centre for Innovation in Infectious Disease and Immunology Research (CIIDIR) is an initiative of Deakin University and Barwon Health's partnership that will build on existing strengths in human infectious disease, microbiome and immunology research.

The partnership will link to a national network to enhance the response to emerging and existing infectious disease threats locally and globally.

CIIDIR will be led by Professor of Systems Epidemiology of Infection, Alyssa Barry, and Barwon Health Clinical Director of the Public Health and Health Service Partnerships Directorate and Professor of Infectious Diseases, Eugene Athan.

Professor Barry said CIIDIR would improve cross-disciplinary collaboration on locally relevant and internationally important research.

"CIIDIR will harness collective capabilities to strengthen and build links with external partners as a 'Hub of Research Excellence' in population-based infectious disease, microbiome and immunology research," Professor Barry said.

"It will link previously disparate research areas, leveraging laboratory, population-based and clinical research strengths and provide new opportunities for transdisciplinary collaborations."

Professor Athan said the COVID-19 pandemic highlighted the enormous risk infectious diseases pose to global health and stability.

"As the pandemic took hold in 2020, initiatives such as the Deakin-Barwon Health COVID-19 Research Taskforce highlighted the collective power of infectious diseases expertise in Geelong," he said.

"Several high-profile infectious diseases researchers, clinicians and public health practitioners rapidly mobilised to establish a COVID-19 Observational Cohort Study and to develop transdisciplinary research projects.

"Throughout the same period, Deakin and Barwon Health have increased capacity in microbiome and immunology research. There is an opportunity to capitalise on the population health and laboratory capacity to strengthen these areas further and to complement nutrition and mental health research in the building."

CIIDIR's major areas of research include COVID-19, Buruli ulcer, malaria, and childhood allergy and asthma.



University Hospital Geelong's Building B was officially renamed the Youang Surgery Centre in September.

The name was selected by the Wadawurrung Traditional Owners Corporation, inspired by the building's views of the iconic You Yangs across Corio Bay. The name "You Yang" comes from the Wadawurrung language "Ude Youang".

The site was formerly leased for the Geelong Private Hospital and since 2021 has been gradually recommissioned to support the pandemic response and more recently to increase Barwon Health's surgical capacity.

In August, short stay surgical and medical beds opened, bringing overnight patients back to the site for the first time since the Geelong Private Hospital closed in 2018. Refurbishments at the Youang Surgery Centre have added four new operating theatres, 13 specialist consulting rooms and 40 new beds.

The initial refurbishment of this facility was made possible by a Percy Baxter Trust donation of almost \$350,000 to fund the purchase of 55 hospital beds and 100 mattresses, as well as \$22 million funding from the State Government as part of a pandemic response plan.

Barwon Health chief executive Frances Diver said the Youang Surgery Centre was key part of responding to the need to "catch up" elective surgery.

"Recommissioning the building as the Youang Surgery Centre means we now have extra dedicated surgical and medical beds and theatres, which has a flow-on effect to create more capacity throughout the whole hospital," she said.

"Activating the Youang Surgery Centre will provide for approximately 5500 theatre procedures and 10,000 outpatient appointments each year and will significantly improve access to services at the hospital.

"This is the first time overnight patients have been admitted to the Youang Surgery Centre since the site was occupied by the former Geelong Private Hospital, and it's taken a lot of innovative planning to refurbish the building for this purpose."

Pictured: Barwon Health chief executive Frances Diver and Wadawurrung Traditional Owner Ash Skinner. Credit - Geelong Advertiser, Alan Barber.

THE HEART OF THE MATTER



ROBYN MATHESON | PAL AT HOME REGISTERED NURSE

It is well established that most Australians wish to die at home, but this is a reality for just less than half of people receiving palliative care. We are reversing that trend with Barwon Health's Pal at Home palliative care program, giving patients and their families the best possible end-of-life experience for their physical and emotional needs.

Earlier this month, our Pal at Home team was celebrated with a 2022 Victorian Public Healthcare Award for "improving integration of care for patients with chronic and complex conditions", and we hope this well-earned recognition will help people develop a greater understanding about the importance of palliative care in our community.

The Barwon Health Pal at Home service is unique in Australia and was implemented in December 2019 to enable more patients to receive care with their wish to die at home.

Admitted patients and carers are supported in their transition from hospital to home, and our team helps to manage the complicated changes required to ensure the best outcome for the patient, encouraging carers and assisting to manage new needs. Over two-and-a-half years, Pal at Home has cared for more than 350 patients in their home environment, when previously these patients would have required hospital admission to meet their care needs. This has extended out into the region as far as Lorne, Meredith and Winchelsea, at times visiting families on their farm, coastal or rural homes.

We're grateful to have the resources to offer this treatment outside of the hospital setting and the feedback from patients and their carers has been overwhelmingly positive.

I came to palliative care as a speciality after spending 18 years in a small Mallee town. The credo of "it takes a town to raise a child" was proudly reiterated at every end-of-year school assembly, and I came to realise it takes a caring community to support someone dying. This small town took the message to heart, with everyone supporting patients and carers through end-of-life journeys in palliative care.

For me, Pal at Home is the best job I could have wished for. I look forward to every day, working with an amazing team of excellent, adaptive and caring nurses, and equally excellent and supportive doctors. The diversitu of patients and the care needs is continually challenging and in equal parts rewarding. One of the jous of the model of care is the need to adapt every time we have a new patient, to work with the family to best fit the patient and carer needs. There's a welcome relief felt when the nurse team arrives for a visit and we delight in having meaningful and responsive conversations at home, putting health changes and concerns in perspective for both patients and carers.

We're often told that caring for a patient's physical needs in the home allows carers to focus on emotional and spiritual needs, and that our service takes pressure off the family to look after their loved one during this difficult process. We're able to offer care around the clock through scheduled visits and on-call to a dedicated phone number.

The transference of trust and belief across the journey is so special to experience. While our first visits can be confronting, with some families reluctant to accept our help, after a few visits we're able to build trust and understanding.

On some occasions, families have provided front door keys for night staff to visit and check on a patient, without waking the carer, which shows the trust that we treasure.

The role we provide goes so far beyond clinical nursing needs. Over the past two and a half years, we've collected drive-through thickshakes for a patient, and provided respite so carers can catch just a few hours of sleep, or so they can go for their daily walk at 5am during the peak of COVID restrictions. We've learned the names and personalities of significant pets in homes, and their quirks. We've even picked up a meal ordered for a dying relative just so they could smell fried onions and steak for the last time, even though it wouldn't be eaten.

Our recognition with a Victorian Public Healthcare Award will further drive our commitment to provide options for those in our community who need added palliative care and support in the home. There is no doubt our service will continue to change and our team will work with those challenges. It is a privilege to be part of Barwon Health and to represent healthcare options for those who need that extra support. Our team is deservedly proud and protective of the care we provide, and we welcome whoever next needs our support at home.







A Barwon Health Carer Support initiative is creating a meaningful tool for people experiencing memory loss to share details about their lives when they attend hospital or respite.

Held over four sessions, a group supports participants to create a 'life book', compiling special memories and photos to provide an insight into a person's life. With help from carers when needed, participants also complete a questionnaire to assess their needs and what matters most when they are entering hospital or respite.

Barwon Health carer support worker Linda Verhoeven said a life book could help reduce the confusion and anxiety created around memory loss for carers, care recipients and staff, while also acting as a great conversation starter with family and friends. "People can include anything in the book that gives insight into a person's journey through life, to help remember significant events and to prompt discussions on topics of interest," Linda said.

"Participants can include certificates, awards, photos of family and pets, poetry, funny quotes and drawings.

"Carers and their loved ones often take a lot of pride in their life book and we have wonderful feedback of them being shared with grandchildren and the lovely conversations that follow."

Retired builder Ray, 84, was diagnosed with dementia two years ago and entered residential aged care last year.

His wife of 26 years Judy described participating in the Life Book Group as an enjoyable experience for both of them.

"We photocopied photos and stuck in memories about Ray's life including pictures of our family, the truck he used to drive when he had a business, photos of our dog Derek and other important things in our life," Judy said.

"Ray carries the book with him every day in the seat of his walker and it means people caring for him can see a snapshot into the kind of life he had before he became unwell – he has been the most wonderful husband to me."

The Life Book Group offers a nurturing and relaxed environment for carers and their loved one to talk and share experiences.

Barwon Health Carer Support hosts two groups per year, often with the support of Dementia Australia.

Pictured: Ray and Jody Hogan.

Forum focus on family violence

Two recent events were held to improve clinicians' understanding of family violence and their conversations with victim/survivors.

On 24 November, the Barwon Health Strengthening Health Service Response to Family Violence (SHRFV) team held the inaugural Family Violence Forum, along with Mental Health, Drugs and Alcohol Services family violence advisor Vida Luimaite.

The forum covered the topic of 'Adults Using Family Violence – Barwon Area Service Response', while a Grand Rounds event in October aimed at improving conversations with victims of family violence.

Almost 100 Barwon Health and Deakin University staff and students joined the presentation coordinated by the Healthy Communities Unit, with local health care specialists and women from Cultura as speakers.

Barwon Health SHRFV project manager Karen Todd said the health service was continually working to improve the way it delivers care to people who experience family violence.



Pictured: SHRFV team members Vida Luimaite, Rhiannon Wernert, Celeste Morath, Narelle Goodland, Eliza Arbaci, Erin Parker, Karen Todd.

"In 2020-21, there were 4315 family violence incidents where police were called in our region," she said.

Karen spoke further about a framework mandatory for health organisations, the Family Violence Multi-Agency Risk Assessment and Management Framework (MARAM), which ensures our services are effectively identifying, assessing and managing family violence risk, and supports clearer channels of communication between families, health services and other agencies.

The presentation encouraged clinicians to make sure what they ask and how they ask is culturally inclusive. According to the post event survey, this presentation had a profound impact on those attending.



"In 2020-21, there were 4315 family violence incidents where police were called in our region,"

- Karen Todd



Positive message for World AIDS Day

Barwon Health staff worked up a sweat to showcase the importance of a healthy lifestyle for people living with HIV.



As part of recognising World AIDS Day, Barwon Health pharmacist Kate Mackie took a group of clinicians and community members through a fun dance-exercise class to show the community that those living with HIV can live a happy healthy lifestyle.

"We wanted to break down stigma and show the community that people with HIV can live a long and happy life, all whilst having a bit of fun," she said.

The event's theme for World AIDS Day was "Boldly Positive", which aims to encourage Australians to educate themselves and others about HIV, to take action to reduce the transmission of HIV by promoting prevention strategies, and to ensure that people living with HIV can participate fully in the life of the community, free from stigma and discrimination.

Public Health Unit director Professor Eugene Athan OAM said people with HIV can now manage the disease by taking medication, living a healthy lifestyle and seeking support.

"These days we have medications and treatment that mean people with HIV can live a relatively normal life," he said.

"Our team at the Barwon South West Public Health Unit and the Barwon Reproductive and Sexual Health (BRaSH) clinic can support people across the region to manage their health and wellbeing."

Pictured: HIV pharmacist Kate Mackie, Prof Eugene Athan and care co-ordinator Helen Fay. Photo credit Geelong Advertiser.

Medical staff celebrated during final Grand Round

In late November, the following awards were proudly presented by the Medical Education and Training team and the Barwon Health Senior Medical Staff Group as part of the organisation's final Grand Round for 2022.



Pictured: Inpatient Rehabiliation Centre & Palliative Care manager Chris McCormick represents the McKellar IRC Therapy Garden project, which was selected as joint winner of the SMSG Charitable Award for 2022.

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE FOLLOWING AWARD WINNERS AND RUNNERS-UP:

BARWON HEALTH SENIOR MEDICAL STAFF GROUP RESEARCH HMO PRIZE



Winner:

Dr Jessica O'Keefe

Runner-up:

Dr Amy Wombwell

THE RICHARD. C. HALLOWES PRIZE FOR THE BEST SENIOR MEDICAL STAFF TEACHER AND MENTOR



Winner:Dr Malcolm Forbes

THE HASAN AL-KHAYYAT AWARD



Winner:

Dr Mohamed Mohideen Nathar Bava

BARWON HEALTH SMSG CHARITABLE FUND AWARD WINNERS:



Winner:

Dr Sajeewani Silva and McKellar Centre Rehabilitation Garden Project BARWON HEALTH INTERN OF THE YEAR AWARD



Winner:

Dr Jeremy Taylor

Runner-up:Dr Sneha Kommidi

The Barwon Health Senior Medical Staff Group includes all senior medical staff appointed at Barwon Health as members. The purpose of the group is to support medical education, training and research, collaboration and communication amongst senior medical staff and the hospital executive as well as to advocate for staff welfare, service quality and service improvement.

The Senior Medical Staff Group supports medical education and research by funding awards and prizes via Barwon Health's collaborative work with Deakin University.

Self-service analytics provide easy access to data insights

A self-service analytics focus is changing the way Barwon Health staff access patient data and statistics to confirm trends and investigate specific patient activities.

The Barwon Health Business Intelligence (BI) team has made considerable inroads towards progressing the organisational self-service analytics capability, allowing staff to derive insights from data without requesting a custom data extract or report.

Access to analysis reports and common accessible datasets allows staff to search data to find trends, validate a hypothesis or investigate certain activity, which enables the BI team to spend more time on more complex activities.

Barwon Health information and analytics director Matt Morris said the self-service capabilities covered referrals, wait lists, admission activity, admission occupancy, ED activity, ED occupancy, appointments/contacts, pathology and imaging, as well as several other areas.

"This access has enabled both clinical and corporate users to 'self-serve' and gain insights about clinical and operational activity," he said.



The Business Intelligence team creates useful reports of patient data and statistics.

"Over the last 12 months, the analysis reports have been run more than 6500 times by around 450 users, including include administration, directorate data analysts, NUMs, operations managers and clinical directors.

"The breadth of users accessing these reports is a testament of the flexibility of the reports developed by the BI team – as they allow different users to gain insights relevant to them from the same data sets."

ED director Belinda Hibble said she is able to use the reports to gain further insight into the types of factors influencing increased presentations.

"Having direct access to our data in a way that can be easily consumed has enabled us to understand our service in ways that were previously unavailable and has become an important part of understanding what has happened and driving our future service planning," she said.



Sensory aids make idle hands busy

A Lara woman is donating knitted sensory aids for Barwon Health aged care residents at risk of cognitive decline.

Francina Postuma, whose daughter Donna and son-in-law Ray work at Barwon North, has made about 50 of the knitted "twiddle muffs" to be distributed around aged care facilities in February in preparation for the cooler months ahead.

The fun multi-coloured sensory aids are covered in buttons, buckles, beads, bits and bobs, and have been compared to fidget spinners, offering people a soft object to occupy their hands, as well as providing warmth and comfort.

"I chose to knit twiddle muffs after hearing about them from my daughter who is a lifestyle assistant and how much people benefit from these items," the 86-year-old said.

"Previously I had crocheted knee rugs for people in aged care, but this project offered something more interesting and creative. I also needed a meaningful project to occupy my time.



Pictured: Francina Postumo

"We had a big box of very old and interesting buttons at home that desperately needed something done with them and this was the perfect opportunity to bring this all together.

"I get a lot of pleasure from making them and knowing that they will be put to good use and give someone else pleasure gives me a great sense of purpose and achievement. "So far, we have donated twiddle muffs to people that we know with dementia and cognitive decline, and some have been sent over to the UK to family friends.

"The feedback has been very positive and people have shared their stories about their relatives and loved ones who live with dementia. To see the faces of their relatives light up when they first receive their twiddle muff is heart-warming."

COLLABORATIVE EFFORT TO IMPROVE BIRTH OUTCOMES

Barwon Health's maternity service is joining hospitals across Victoria in an effort to reduce postpartum haemorrhage (PPH).

The PPH collaborative is taking place over 12 months along with 18 other hospitals to half the rate of PPH more than 1500mls from an intended vaginal birth.

Michelle Harding said the project had led to a great increase in consumer engagement and conversations with women with the experiences they're aiming to reduce. "Our PPH rate is showing signs of slowing," she said.

"We are using our risk assessment tool more and more to assess a woman's risk of a PPH, and putting in place measures that will potential reduce the chance of having a PPH in the first place.

"We are refining our medication management and we're able to use scales in every room to ensure weighing of loss is occurring quickly, which drives early management." She said there was work taking place to improve awareness and understanding of PPH among both staff and patients, including a consumer video and fact sheet, quizzes to improve staff knowledge, and an updated PPH response tool that can be used by staff during birth.

BARWON HEALTH FOUNDATION

It was a busy and successful end to 2022 for the Barwon Health Foundation, seeing the welcome return of three popular in person events: Catwalk4Cancer, Run4Geelong and the Gala Christmas Concert & Markets.

Catwalk4Cancer

On Saturday August 20, the Barwon Health Foundation's annual night of fashion and fundraising generated \$57,000 to support cancer patients across the region.

The event, which marked Andrew Love Cancer Centre's 30th anniversary, saw Geelong Arts Centre welcome over 250 guests for an immersive fashion experience. The night featured a runway show by naming rights sponsor Ena Pelly and themed fashion installations by local brands, Tinky, Chez Ma Belle, Birdskin, Pearls & Roses and Salt & Soda.

Hosted by fashion stylists Renee Enright and Deni Todorovic, attendees heard from a local cancer patient, Diana Ojajune, enjoyed roving entertainment and embraced opportunities to give back.

Funds raised will contribute to the Foundation's Andrew Love Cancer Centre Lasting Legacy Fund, which was established in recognition of the 30-year milestone to support the next chapter of local cancer care.



Fashion installation by local designer Bird Skin at the Ena Pelly Catwalk4Cancer.

RUN4GEELONG

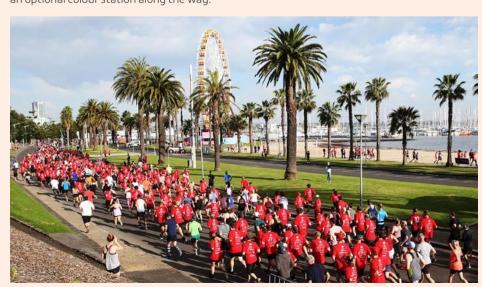
A sea of red Run4Geelong t-shirts took over Geelong's iconic waterfront on Sunday November 13 as the popular community event returned to raise over \$133,000 in support of Barwon Health Foundation.

The sun made a welcome appearance as 2800 participants of all ages and abilities tackled the 10km, 5.5km and 1km kids courses at the first in-person Run4Geelong event since 2019.

Among them was a number of grateful patients, healthcare workers, Geelong Cats stars and acting Prime Minister Richard Marles.

The event, supported by the Geelong Advertiser, saw 100 per cent of every registration fee donated to an area of the participant's choice within Barwon Health. An electric community atmosphere could be felt out on the course, which took in the Eastern Beach sights, the city centre and the Geelong Botanic Gardens with live music and an optional colour station along the way.

Post-race, Richie Boulevard was abuzz with free family friendly activities including face painting, entertainment, smoothies, massages and food to refuel.



Run4Geelong participants took off from the iconic Eastern Beach waterfront.

Wish Upon A Star Christmas Appeal

Local kids health received a \$196,546 boost at the end of 2023 thanks to the Barwon Health Foundation's annual Wish Upon A Star Christmas Appeal.

The successful six-week campaign included several barbeques and tin shakes, as well as a moving letter from Appeal Ambassador Abel McArthur and dad Aaron explaining the significance of community support for kids health.

The Foundation was proud to collaborate with The Culinary Collective at The Gordon to serve up traditional Christmas puddings, with all proceeds supporting the cause.

The single biggest donation of the appeal came from the Geelong Building and Construction Industry who presented a cheque for \$109,430, raised at an industry Night of Night's event at GMHBA in August.

Then the community came together on Saturday December 10 when Johnstone Park was transformed into a festive wonderland for the Geelong Connected Communities Gala Christmas Concert and Markets.

The free community event raised \$24,952 to help local sick kids get the care they need, close to home.



Pictured: Mik Maks

Crowds took advantage of the many free things to do and see before the performances kicked off later in the evening, taking part in activities by Kelly Sports, face painting, caricatures and access to the 2022 AFL Premiership Cup.

Roving stilt walkers, jugglers and food trucks enhanced the carnival feel, and a Santa Selfie Station allowed kids to have a special moment with the man of the month.

Shoppers browsed 28 local market stalls offering a range of products to help locals tick off their Christmas purchases by supporting small businesses.

Opening act of the night and hosts, The Mik Maks, had children up and dancing with delight when the show began and their enthusiasm for local talent continued through performances by adored local singing teachers Kim Cooper and Imogen Brough.

Traditional Gala acts Karen Feldman's Dance Studio, With One Voice Choir, Pitch Perfect Singing School, Geelong Concert Band and Geelong Highland Pipe Band wowed audiences with performances showcasing skills they had been practising throughout the year.

Kings of Christmas Rob Mills and Bobby Fox provided an exclusive preview of their upcoming Costa Hall show of the same name and singing sensation Stellar Perry closed the night with an upbeat rendition of Joy To The World.



Pictured: Millsy performs at the Gala.

Staff check-in for R U OK? Day

Teams across Barwon Health made imaginative and innovative efforts to ask R U OK?, and spread positive mental health messages.

Splashes of yellow, the theme colour for R U OK?, were seen on 8 September as people took the opportunity to support the day and each other.

From simply wearing an R U OK? badge or sticker, to organising morning teas or team walk and talks, our people spread the message that a simple but meaningful conversation can make a difference to anyone who's struggling.

Clinical support nurse Linda Holzgrefe helped organise a team event for the cardiac services team at Bellerine Centre 5.

"We had a really positive day sharing the R U OK? message with our team and patients," she said.

"We set up a hallway display with some posters that complemented the touches of yellow and R U OK? badges that the team wore. This helped to explain to patients and families what the R U OK? message was all about."

Behind the scenes, Linda organised a yellow themed afternoon tea and the team took a moment to check in with each other.

"Our team really got on board by adding a personal message to an R U OK? display encouraging people to leave a quote, thought or encouragement for each other, or take a conversation card to give to someone else."

The Andrew Love Cancer Centre radiotherapy team, led by self-proclaimed "wellness warrior" Jo Gitsham, had a similarly successful event.

"We engaged our whole team and our patients to promote the event and many patients commented to say 'Yes, I am OK, thanks' after reading my RUOK? branded t-shirt and badges," she said.

"Several of them stated they were "OK" due to the fantastic care they receive during their hard journeys here at the ALCC. " Jo and her team enjoyed home baked cupcakes and cookies and ran a "guess the lolly" jar, raising more than \$200 to donate to the R U OK Day Foundation.

"It was a team effort from our leaders supporting us to bring awareness to this day; to reception staff being the faces of our event and our team mates baking and dressing up. We are all much more aware of checking in with family, friends, work colleagues and patients all the time - not just today."

Every day presents a chance to ask R U OK?

For those who answer "no", our support services include access to free confidential counselling through our Employee Assistance Program (EAP) where support is available 24/7 on 1800 571 199.



Andrew Love Cancer Centre staff on R U OK? Day.



Staff from Bellerine Centre 5 held a morning tea on R U OK? Day.

Staff acknowledgements

2022 Peter Foyster Award



Pictured: Linda Cooke.

Congratulations to Barwon Health mental health clinician Linda Cooke who was recently named this year's recipient of the Peter Foyster Award.

The award is designed to honour the coaching, mentoring and development of others for the provision of better care and service, with staff of all disciplines and professions eligible.

Linda has over 20 years of service with Barwon Health and has worked in a variety of settings, currently supporting people in a community mental health team.

Linda was nominated by a number of her colleagues who emphasised her kindness, compassion and generosity in her approaches to everyone, consumers and colleagues alike.

The award was established as a tribute to the memory of Peter Foyster who tragically died in 2018. The mental health nurse was passionate about the provision of safe and high-quality mental health care and was seen as a role model who believed in imparting his knowledge, skills and values to help carry the banner for mental health and mental health nursing.

Vale beloved midwife Cindy Bishop

Jacinta (Cindy) started her career in nursing in 1971, becoming a midwife in 1985 and joined Maternity Services at Barwon Health in 2000.

She spent two years with the Family Birthing Unit, then worked as an AMUM in Birth Suite. She described working at the hospital as "very rewarding" and said working as a midwife in Birth Suite was her first love.

Cindy was diagnosed with gallbladder cancer nearly three years ago and has defied the odds to live with the disease and even returned to work for a period. She sadly passed away on 24 December and will be dearly missed by her colleagues.

Training recognition

Barwon Health's Children's
Ward would like to congratulate
Courtney Smale and Amelia Porte
on successfully completing their
Post Graduate Certificate in Nursing
Practice (Paediatrics).

The nurses have recently finished the 12-month course through the University of Melbourne in collaboration with the Royal Children's Hospital. After caring high dependency and complex unwell infants and children during this time, they will now continue working on the ward as paediatric nurses in 2023.

Farewell to Joy Pettig after incredible career

After hours hospital manager Joy Pettig retired in October after more than 50 years with Barwon Health.

Joy joined the hospital in 1970 and worked as a surgical ward nurse unit manager before joining the hospital co-ordination team. Her final shift ended with a memorable farewell from staff around the hospital, as bagpipes played and a quard of honour.



Pictured: Joy Pettig.



Length of Service

Congratulations to the following staff who celebrated Length of Service milestones between September 2022 and January 2023!



vears

Margot Afford Chloe Bamford Tonu Beasant Lia Bell Emma Bell Rosamund Branigan Stacie Butcher Mary Butters Malyce Cahill Emily Cookson Eduardo Cortez Jane Cousins Kell Craig Fiona Crapp Diana Dalton Donna Devlin Jane Dowling Cameron Duff Mark Duggan Peta Dunstan Jane Edwards Kevin Eng Jacinta Evans Dale Fisher Serena Griffin Alex Hebbard Alison Heywood Phuong-dung Hoang Maureen Hobbs Barb Hodder

Saleh Abbas

Jeremy Horsburgh Tania Hughes Jackie James Hayley Johnston Sally Jones Cheyenne Jones Ruzica Josipovic Lisha Kuruvilla Penny Lalor Rebekah Lamb Rose Lamb-Jenkins Michelle Larkins Jon Le Duc Joanne Linden Tindara Lo Presti Stacey Lowe Sharon Marles Bridget Martin Benjamin Martin Ashlinn Mason Shari Maver Sian McBride Kylie McGiffin Judith McKenzie Zlata Medakovic Emily Mitchell Michael Mok Bridget Morris Joanna Morrissy Cheryle Murphy Francine Ogle

Mireya Pardo Anoushka Perera Sharmilla Perinpanathan Mark Perrin Sharon Pickering Frank Preiato Jessica Rhodes Kerrin Rintoul Melanie Robin Karen Robins-Browne Maria Russell Belinda Ryan Donna Sellars Gerard Simpson Valentina Spahic Elissa Sullivan Ingrid Swain Craig Thomas Riya Thomas Josie Tomolo Vicky Tran Jody Tsaikos Bec Vallelonga Sarah Varghese Jugbogdan Vuksa Mansoor Wahab Andrew Ward Andrew Way Kriss Whistance

Gemma Willey

Natasha Zaffarese

Please note, names and employment commencement dates are taken from official Barwon Health records.
Please contact People and Culture to check or update your details - workforcerelations@barwonhealth.org.au.





years

Tracey Alderding Sharon Anderson Timothy Antonio Simone Armistead Bruce Bartley Kylie Begg Boja Bojanic Allison Bone Nicole Branch Susan Brereton Brooke Caldwell Ross Carne Donna Cloke Justin Coleiro Brooke Deans Seetal Dodd Jayne Grapsas Rosamund Green

Richard Grills Rebekah Grinter Carley Harper Susan Hill Reyna Hudgell Elizabeth Jankovski Shirley Jennings Claire Klaus Donna Kunz Nicholas Latimore Melissa MacMillan Cindy McLeish Renee Owens Jenny Peric Carolyn Pickard Rameen Razmara Rowena Rittinger Jennifer Robbins

Elizabeth Ryan Jenita Savell Linda Siketa Leanne Simkin Desiree Slotegraaf Andrea Sullivan Nicole Tarka Nicole Thompson Sylvia Vacirca Nikki Watson Belinda Wild Kelly Williams Melinda Williams Alison Williamson Lynn Wright Glenis Young



vears

Natalie Anderson Amanda Best Helen Biscan Lynda Brayton Elizabeth Drever Anita Fitzgerald Julie Gordon Michelle Jones Kellie Marsh Brent McDonald Margi McKeown Carol Mioduchowski Jane Moloney Carolyn O'Dwyer Narelle Trevena Jennifer Trezise



Wendy Flintoff Anne Jamieson Rafael Kucic Theresa Parker Lena Stefanovski





17
MAR

Geelong's Longest Lunch 23-25 JUN

> Giving Weekend

DRY JULY

O2
SEP
Catwalk4Cancer

12 NOV Run4Geelong

DEC Christmas Gala