

# Auricle

EDITION 3 / 2024



## Menu overhaul enhances patient dining experience

03

Dedicated children's area opens in the Emergency Department

05

New CBD mental health hub opens



13

Medimime celebrates 50 years of theatre and charity

14

Paediatric Eating Disorders HITH wins major award

# CONTENTS

- 02** Message from the Chief Executive
- 03** **WHAT'S NEW**
  - Dedicated children's area opens in the Emergency Department
- 04** Departments go live with People Plus Rostering
  - Dying to Know Day event sparks conversation
- 05** New Geelong mental health facilities celebrated
- 07** Menu overhaul enhances patient dining experience
- 08** Post-birth debrief for parents
- 09** Study day highlights benefits of breastfeeding in infant health
- 10** Empowering young learners at Barwon Health North
- 11** **DEPARTMENT SPOTLIGHT**
  - Neuropsychology
- 13** Medimime celebrates 50 years of community theatre and charity
- 14** Paediatric Eating Disorders HITH wins major award
- 15** New role improves post-surgery outcomes
- 15** Film screening shines light on overdose awareness
- 16** Streamlining and Digitalising Employee Recognition at Barwon Health
- 17** Partnership brings comfort to palliative care patients
- 18** Dignity Therapy Program reflects on decade of memories
- 19** Carer Coaching helping prioritise self-care
- 20** Strengthening the regional approach to nicotine harm
- 21** Stroke Unit achieves Platinum status and certification
- 22** Barwon Health's ECMO service leading the way with global award
- 23** Nursing and midwifery careers in focus at hospital expo
- 24** New diabetes service launches at Barwon Health North

## News in Research

- 25** Friends of Research message
- 25** Clinical trial discovers new treatment option
- 26** Geelong study celebrates 30 years of knowledge gains in healthy ageing
- 27** Groundbreaking study reduces chemotherapy for patients
- 28** Australian Rickettsial Reference Laboratory moves into HERB
- 28** Grant awarded for allied health research project

## Barwon Health Foundation





- 29** Local heart patient shows heart
- 29** Run4Geelong wrap up
- 30** Forget Me Not Ball
- 30** Expressions of Interest

## 31 STAFF ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

- Michael Berk earns mental health prize
- Mental Health HITH team recognised
- 32** Baxter Wing 7 celebrates gastroenterology anniversary
- Vale Margaret Mahony
- 33** Length of Service



*Cover image: Executive chef Peter Fleet and food service supervisor Suzanne Nadolski show some meals from Barwon Health's new menu.*

-  [facebook.com/barwonhealth](https://facebook.com/barwonhealth)
-  [x.com/barwonhealth](https://x.com/barwonhealth)
-  [instagram.com/barwon\\_health](https://instagram.com/barwon_health)
-  [linkedin.com/company/barwon-health](https://linkedin.com/company/barwon-health)

Auricle is edited and produced by Barwon Health's Public Affairs and Communications Department.

# Message from the Chief Executive



*Dear colleagues,*

*It's been a busy year and an exciting past few months at Barwon Health, as we've watched the completion of several long-awaited projects that improve services for our community, including the new children's area of our Emergency Department (ED) and the Central Geelong Mental Health and Wellbeing Hub.*

The hub at 181 Moorabool Street provides a purpose-built environment for various Mental Health, Drugs and Alcohol teams, enabling enhanced care of consumers and the co-location of services. The ED has expanded significantly in recent years, with the new area allowing families with children to experience a more welcoming environment when accessing emergency treatment.

Congratulations to the Barwon Health Foundation on a successful Run4Geelong in early November, as well as each of the events in 2024 that have helped raise money to help fund purchases for various departments.

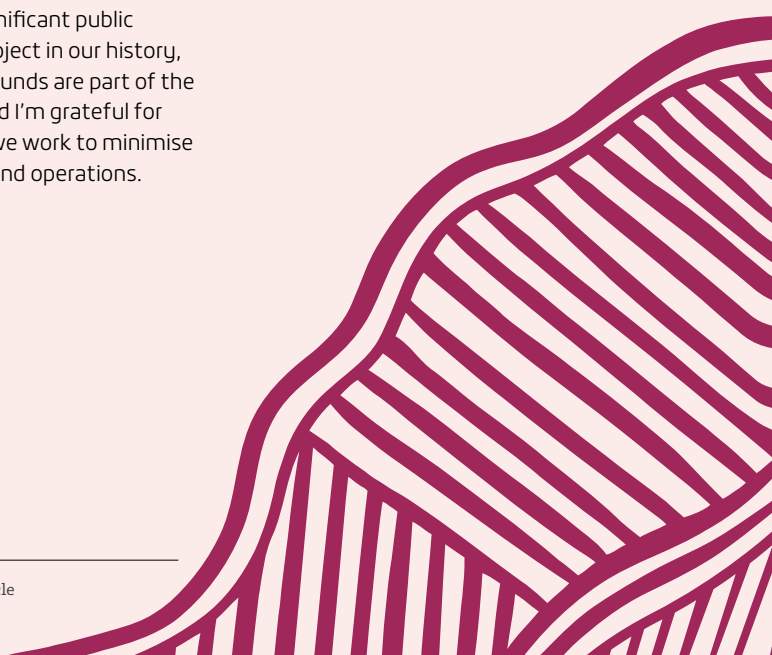
With the ongoing expansion of clinical services at University Hospital Geelong, several administrative and support teams have now relocated to our new Barwon Health Staff Hub on Thompson Road, North Geelong. This transition has taken a lot of planning and required some adjustments for some staff, and I am confident that the relocation will support Barwon Health plans to improve working environments for our staff. I'm enormously proud of the way our people have adapted to these challenges, as well as the temporary changes to parking and site access while main works get underway for Barwon Women's and Children in 2025. As the most significant public health infrastructure project in our history, disruptions and workarounds are part of the construction process and I'm grateful for your understanding as we work to minimise the impact on services and operations.

As we approach the end of the year, there is much to look forward to in 2025. Nominations for the Barwon Best Care Awards close on 10 January, so now is the time to highlight any projects or colleagues you feel are worthy of special recognition. Winners will be honoured at our staff celebration in the coming months, along with those who have reached milestones in years of service with Barwon Health. As always, we look forward to the commencement of our new cohort of graduate nurses and midwives, intern doctors, junior medical staff, and mental health graduates.

Thank you to everyone at Barwon Health for your ongoing dedication to keeping our community healthy and well.

A stylized, handwritten signature in dark blue ink, representing Frances Diver.

**Frances Diver**  
Chief Executive







# DEDICATED CHILDREN'S AREA OPENS IN THE EMERGENCY DEPARTMENT

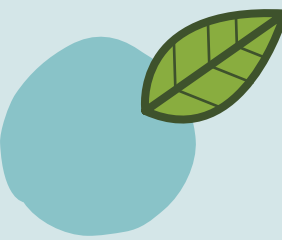
On 5 September, Victorian Health Minister Mary-Anne Thomas MP visited University Hospital Geelong to see the new children's area of the Emergency Department (ED).

This upgrade includes a paediatric triage system, assessment and waiting area, dedicated treatment rooms and support spaces to create a calming and welcoming space for families with children requiring emergency care.

ED director Dr Belinda Hibble said the new space was part of Barwon Health's effort to continue meeting the needs of our growing community.



*"We understand the hospital environment can be daunting for young patients, so our new paediatric emergency area has been specifically designed to improve the experience of families and their children," she said.*



*Pictured left: Barwon Health chief executive Frances Diver, Victorian Health Minister Mary-Anne Thomas, Member for Geelong Christine Couzens, Emergency Department Nurse Unit Manager Bec Chapman, Director of Emergency Services Belinda Hibble, Member for Bellarine Alison Marchant, Member for Lara Ella George.*



## DEPARTMENTS GO LIVE WITH PEOPLE PLUS ROSTERING

*A new electronic rostering and timesheet system has been launched, eliminating paper timesheets for more than 800 Barwon Health staff.*

People Plus Rostering, also known as Optima, and Employee Online have been implemented to standardise rostering practices, improve workforce planning, and provide greater transparency for managers and employees.

Integrated with Barwon Health's pay system PayGlobal, People Plus Rostering will gradually eliminate paper timesheets across the organisation in 2025, ensuring accuracy and consistency for rostering and payment.

Talent Acquisition manager Michelle Jolly said the system included mobile access that had simplified the process of requesting and managing leave.

***"Employee Online has been a game changer for me," she said.***

***"I love how convenient it is for me to add in my leave on my phone at any given time."***

BMI administration manager Janet McDonald said a visual representation of team roster availability improved the simplicity of replacing shifts.

"This visual helps replace shifts quickly, while team members can update their availability even within published rosters, which increases the pool of team members available at short notice," she said.

"For approving leave, being able to see all leave requests live for a period in 'diary view' makes it simpler to approve or decline leave."



## DYING TO KNOW DAY EVENT SPARKS CONVERSATION



*Pictured: A variety of panellists represented roles from across the end-of-life care spectrum at Barwon Health's Dying to Know Day event.*

*Barwon Health hosted Dying to Know Day: You Can't Ask That at the Geelong Library on 8 August.*

Dying to Know Day (D2KD) is a public health campaign designed to encourage all Australians to develop new knowledge and attitudes about how to deal with death, dying and bereavement and support each other at the end of life.

Sponsored by Western Victoria Primary Health Network and Kings Funerals, the event featured a variety of panellists representing roles from across the end-of-life care spectrum and the D2KD principles.

The Q&A session was a highlight and offered many thought-provoking scenarios and anecdotes.

Event facilitator and Barwon Health Advance Care Planning program manager Jill Man said the event was attended by close to 80 community members.

"The event was interactive and appeared to be very well received," Jill said.

***"There was a great mix of health professionals and health service consumers in the room, with many providing feedback on how much they had learned from the conversations."***

# NEW GEELONG MENTAL HEALTH FACILITIES *celebrated*

*In September, Barwon Health was joined by Minister for Mental Health Ingrid Stitt MP who officially opened the Central Geelong Mental Health and Wellbeing Hub.*



The hub, located at 181 Moorabool Street, brings together a range of mental health services under one roof in the heart of Geelong's CBD and features a multidisciplinary team of clinical and lived experience staff, offering a wide range of services, such as assessments, therapies, care planning, education, peer support, and more.

**Clinical Director of Mental Health, Drugs and Alcohol Services Professor Steve Moylan said the vision of the hub is to have 'no wrong door' approach for people accessing our service.**

**"By bringing together services people can walk through the front door and get the care they need, when they need it," he said.**

Minister for Mental Health Ingrid Stitt said the hub will see Barwon Health deliver wraparound treatment, care and support for local consumers, carers and families – including mental health and alcohol and other drug (AOD) treatment services.

"The Royal Commission told us Victorians find navigating the mental health system too hard – this mental health hub in the centre of Geelong means the community can easily access the type of care they need, when it is needed," she said.

*Pictured left: The Central Geelong Mental Health and Wellbeing Hub at 181 Moorabool Street.*





*Pictured above: Member for Bellarine Alison Marchant, Mental Health Minister the Hon. Ingrid Stitt, Member for Geelong Christine Couzens, and Barwon Health Mental Health, Drugs and Alcohol Services acting clinical director Maree Bennett.*

Ms Stitt also visited Geelong in late July to turn the first sod at the site of Barwon Health's new multi-million-dollar Youth Prevention and Recovery Care (YPARC) centre, marking the beginning of construction for the referral-based service in South Geelong.

YPARC will deliver around-the-clock support to young people aged 16-25 experiencing mental health challenges, allowing them to continue attending work or school while receiving the treatment and care they need in a safe, home-like environment.

Due to open next year, the facility at 40 Little Fyans Street will have 10 bedrooms with ensuite bathrooms, a communal kitchen, dining and living areas, breakout spaces and outdoor garden areas.

Designs for YPARC, being delivered by the Victorian Health Building Authority in partnership with Barwon Health and builder Nicholson Construction, have drawn on the insights of clinicians, carers, and young people.



# MENU OVERHAUL ENHANCES PATIENT dining experience



*A menu overhaul is expanding choice, increasing variety and upgrading food quality for inpatients and residents at Barwon Health.*

Over 18 months, Barwon Health undertook a major project to enhance food options, prompted by an extensive survey that collected feedback from almost 600 respondents regarding the existing food selections and menus at University Hospital Geelong, the McKellar Centre, and Alan David Lodge.

Environmental Services director Andrew Gibson said the new menu featured a range of innovative dishes catering to specific diet codes, preferences, and cultural needs, including new meals with modified textures for those with special dietary requirements.

"In response to feedback, we've expanded our menu to offer three main meal choices per service, substantially increasing variety and personalisation and that our biannual seasonal menu ensures we consistently provide fresh, suitable options throughout the year," he said.

**"These enhancements were not only based on valuable patient input but will also result in higher adherence to Victorian nutrition and quality standards for our patients and aged care residents."**

This initiative was a collaborative effort involving Food Services, Nutrition & Dietetics, Aged Care, Consumer Representatives, Social Support, and Speech Pathology departments.

*Pictured: Executive chef Peter Fleet and food service supervisor Suzanne Nadolski show some meals from Barwon Health's new menu.*

## Post-birth debrief for parents



Pictured: Madison Papas with 11-week-old Goldie and midwife Serena Pellizzeri. Photo - Geelong Advertiser.

*Barwon Health's maternity service has launched a new service to improve support for parents recovering from a difficult labour and birth.*

Located at the Barwon Early Parenting Centre (EPC), a midwife-led clinic has been established to offer appointments to parents who need to debrief and to give them the opportunity to understand and discuss their experience. If required, parents can also see a senior obstetrician and/or psychologist.

The debrief service recognises that some parents require additional support to recover from a difficult labour and birth, including psychological care, validating concerns and gaining a better understanding of their experience. These steps can be critical to regaining confidence to navigate their next pregnancy.

Lara mother of two Madison Papas said the clinic had been instrumental in her healing journey after her second child Goldie was born in May, with a labour and birth that didn't go as planned.

"Goldie was admitted to the Special Care Nursery at University Hospital Geelong, which was an extra layer on an already difficult time, so my initial debrief in the hospital was more focused on her health," she said.

"I hadn't quite processed what had occurred yet, so I didn't think to ask the questions that came up once we were all home together.

"After speaking to a maternal health nurse and counsellor, I learned the Barwon Early Parenting Centre was offering a new debrief service and I was able to spend two hours talking to a midwife about my experience.

"It was above and beyond what I expected – our appointment was so thorough, as we went through my medical notes in detail that was easy to understand. It was like talking to a friend in the way it provided a sounding board to validate how I was feeling.

**"I think it's such a valuable service to offer because you're typically not in the headspace to process the birth experience while you're in hospital."**

"It's helped a lot in my healing and I can see how it could be the difference between parents deciding whether or not they want to have more children."

Serena Pellizzeri, a midwife who works in the clinic, said the debrief service took a multidisciplinary approach, with senior obstetricians, midwives, and counselling support available to consumers and their impacted family members.

"The post-natal period can be a challenging time, particularly when a labour and birth doesn't go to plan," she said.

"Parents are often adjusting to caring for their newborn baby while still physically recovering from labour, so there isn't always an opportunity to fully recognise, process and address any issues that arose during the birth."

Serena said while the clinic aimed to improve post-partum support, it was also helping Barwon Health's maternity service improve care by learning from parents' perspectives.

"So far, it's been an effective way to reflect on how we care for people and make sure our care becomes more responsive," she said.

"By hearing about their experiences, we can feed it back to our colleagues and change the way we care for people by better nurturing and supporting patients and their birth partners."



# Study day highlights benefits of breastfeeding in infant health

*Barwon Health Women, Children and Families hosted its inaugural World Breastfeeding Week Study Day at Waurin Ponds Estate in August.*

The study day was an opportunity for health professionals from across the region to learn and share knowledge with the common goal of raising awareness of breastfeeding and its many benefits.

Barwon Health midwifery unit manager Marie Glover said the study was a remarkable success, thanks to the dedication and enthusiasm of everyone involved.

**“Our study day not only highlighted the vital importance of breastfeeding but also fostered a sense of community and shared commitment to supporting breastfeeding families,” Marie said.**

“This event has reaffirmed our collective resolve to promote and protect breastfeeding as a cornerstone of infant health and wellbeing.”

Presenters Dr Rachel Cameron, Rodney Whyte OAM, Melissa Blake, Megan Torpey, Susanne Burt, Marion Wright, Julianne Cuthbert and Amanda Jones spoke at the event, while Traditional Owner Corrina Eccles performed an inspiring Welcome to Country.

The study day was supported by Medela and the Barwon Health Foundation.

*Pictured: Lactation consultant Susanne Burt speaks at the World Breastfeeding Week Study Day.*



# Empowering young learners at Barwon Health North

*A specialised school readiness group at Barwon Health North is helping local children prepare for the transition into school.*

The group is run by Child and Family Services at Barwon Health North, with occupational therapists and speech pathologists facilitating sessions to equip children with the necessary social, language, physical and cognitive skills so they can hit the ground running when starting school.

Each session is thoughtfully constructed, beginning with a group exercise with children greeting each other, discussing feelings and singing songs. Children participate in a show-and-share, helping build confidence in expressing themselves in front of peers. Sessions include table-top exercises and activities designed to challenge and develop fine motor skills that can be applied to school tasks.

Occupational therapist Rachel Mamonski facilitates the group and said she finds fulfilment in seeing the children make progress.

"Seeing the children develop these foundational skills in a supportive environment is truly fulfilling," she said.

"We focus on making learning fun and engaging, which helps the children thrive."

The group has seen positive outcomes since commencing two years ago, with families and carers sharing stories of their children becoming more confident, communicative and ready to tackle school life.

Child and Family Services coordinator Lindsay Shaw said the benefits of the group are widespread for the children, families and carers.

"Not only do the children benefit from social interactions, but parents also find support and guidance through our sessions," she said.

"It's a holistic approach that really makes a difference."

Guest speakers from the Child and Family Services multidisciplinary team, such as dietitians or paediatricians attend sessions, offering tailored advice for families and carers and address any specific concerns about their child's development.

Parents or caregivers can self-refer or obtain a referral from a health professional for their child to participate.

*"We focus on making learning fun and engaging, which helps the children thrive."*



Pictured: Barwon Health staff Rachel Mamonski, Peta Bell, Jie Ying with group participants Kit, Ashton, Ari and Jordan.



# NEURO PSYCHOLOGY

*Barwon Health's neuropsychology team is celebrating 30 years of supporting patients with brain injuries.*

Neuropsychologists work with clients with brain injuries including stroke, infection, dementia, alcohol-related brain injury (ARBI) and head trauma with a focus on understanding how different injuries or illnesses impact thinking skills, behaviour and mental health. They use the most up-to-date scientific evidence and research to develop programs that help clients, their families/carers and the treating teams best deal with the impact of brain injury.

There are now 10 neuropsychologists established across a range of programs including inpatient and community rehabilitation, Kids Rehabilitation, cancer services, dementia assessment (CDAMS), mental health, and Connected Care.



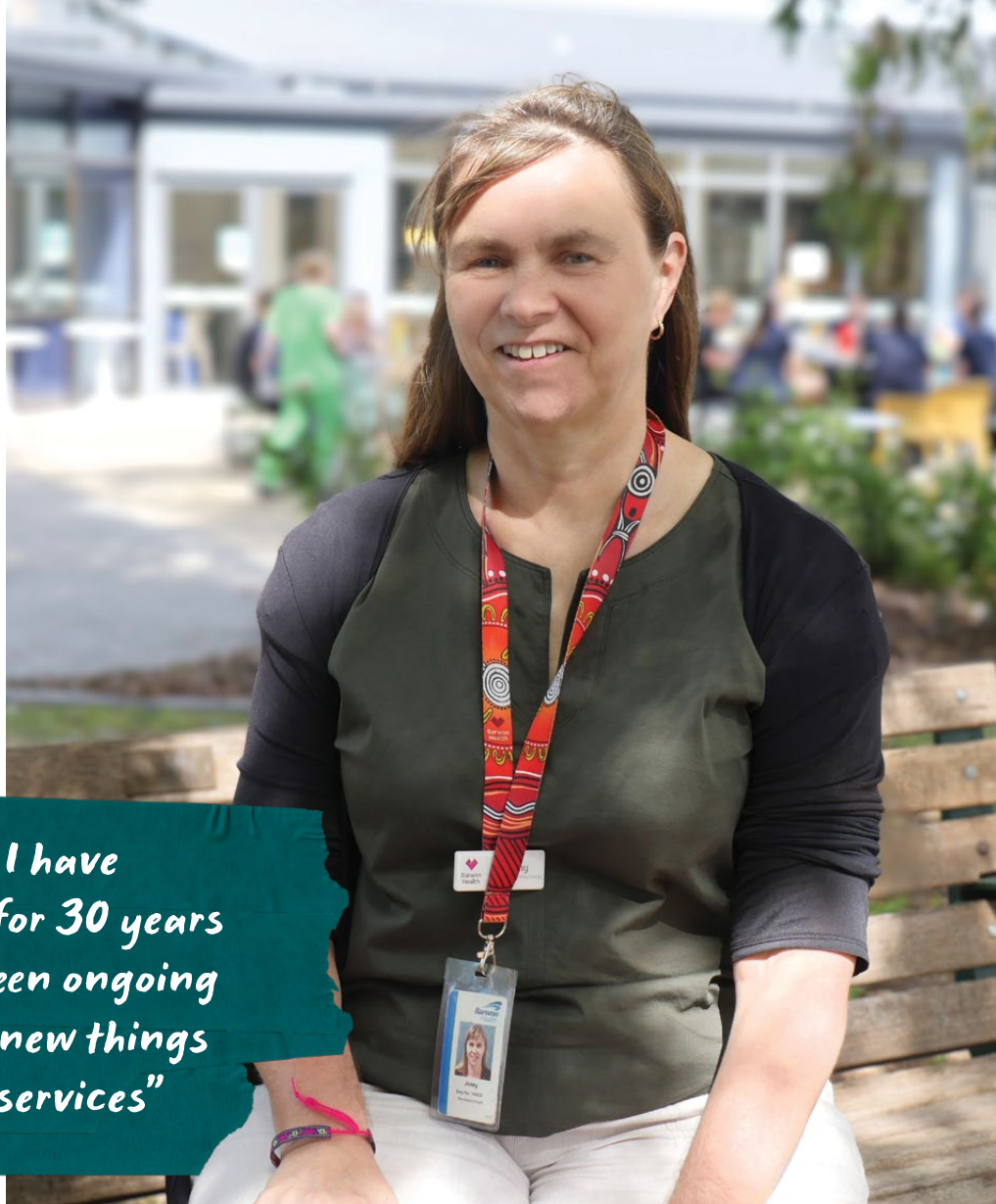
*Pictured: Members of the neuropsychology team.*



## JENNY TODD, NEURO- PSYCHOLOGIST

Neuropsychologist Jenny Todd has been part of Barwon Health's neuropsychology service since its inception in 1994 and noted there had been a significant expansion over 30 years.

*"One of the reasons I have stayed in this field for 30 years is that there have been ongoing opportunities to do new things and offer different services"*



"I was a new grad and the first neuropsychologist in public health in Geelong, starting the service at McKellar Centre from scratch. I had a desk, a chair and a phone - that was it," she said.

"It's fantastic to have the range of expertise we now have with colleagues able to focus on offering the best care for specific groups such as working with kids, people who have had a head injury/stroke or people with dementia."

With the increase in staffing, Jenny noted that neuropsychologists are now involved in more intervention rather than only assessment, with a lot more follow-up work with clients, including education around brain injuries and how the brain changes, and practical skills to compensate for changes in thinking skills, such as memory or attention problems and behaviour change.

"People experience a lot of change after a brain injury and in that early stage, we're sitting with some of that uncertainty and trying to give people the best information about how they can best adjust,"

Jenny said many new treatment programs had been developed over the years, including memory skills group, post-concussion group, the cancer services brain-fog group and the frontotemporal dementia carers group.

"One of the reasons I have stayed in this field for 30 years is that there have been ongoing opportunities to do new things and offer different services, and whether that's been projects or setting up new programs and support groups."

"I'm thankful for all the wonderful neuropsychologists who have contributed to the service over the past 30 years, and I look forward to seeing the ongoing development of the service in the future."

Pictured: Jenny Todd.





## Medimime celebrates 50 years of community theatre and charity

*This year, Medimime marks a significant milestone with its 50th anniversary and a string of November performances of Snow White at the Geelong Arts Centre.*

Founded in 1974, Medimime is a volunteer-based Geelong community theatre company that has brought joy to audiences through pantomime performances while raising funds for Barwon Health.

Medimime's journey began when a group of medical professionals decided to use their love for theatre to give back to the community. From humble beginnings, the group has become a cherished institution in Geelong, with an engaging mix of comedy, music, and family-friendly storytelling, featuring a talented cast of local performers of all ages.

Medimime president Scott Graham said the group had raised more than \$580,000 for Barwon Health, providing much-needed support for various hospital departments and initiatives.

**“The funds raised by Medimime have contributed to the purchase of essential medical equipment and the enhancement of patient care services, with 100 per cent of ticket sales, after production costs, going directly to the cause,” he said.**

“As we celebrate our 50th anniversary, we are excited to continue the tradition of blending theatre with philanthropy. This year’s production promises to be a special one, bringing together past and present members for a grand celebration of half a century of laughter, community, and charity.

“Medimime’s unwavering commitment to community service and entertainment ensures its legacy will endure for years to come, continuing to make a difference in the lives of Geelong residents and Barwon Health patients alike.”

*Pictured above: Cast members of Medimime’s Snow White.*

*Pictured right: Alannah Farrar played the lead role of Snow White.*



# Paediatric Eating Disorders HITH wins major award

*The Barwon Health Paediatric Eating Disorders Hospital in the Home (HITH) program won the care closer to home category at the 2024 Victorian Public Healthcare Awards.*

The innovative and novel program cares for young people with eating disorders, enabling them to receive high-quality, inpatient-level care in their home with support from skilled visiting nurses, and oversight from a paediatrician and dietitian.

Paediatrician and program co-ordinator Jo Centra said the program was developed to address the rise in eating disorder cases that occurred during the COVID-19 pandemic, aiming to reduce long hospital stays to benefit young people and their families, mitigating potential risks of inpatient care.

"Eating disorders significantly impact individuals, our community, and require high intensity healthcare," she said.

"They rank among the most impactful psychiatric disorders on health-related quality of life, with anorexia nervosa having the second highest mortality rate among mental illnesses.

"Unfortunately, children and young people requiring admission to hospital for an eating disorder can be medically unwell with complications due to severe malnutrition and may require long a long stay in hospital to restore medical stability and facilitate engagement with therapy services.

"Evidence suggests that lengthy hospital admissions for eating disorders may contribute to negative consequences for patients and their family, so it's important to be able offer alternative models of care for young people where appropriate, including hospital in the home (HITH).

"Barwon Health's Eating Disorders Service and Paediatric Unit developed the novel and innovative EDS HITH service to provide accessible and safe care, reduce need for hospital admissions, and shorten hospital stays for our young patients.



**"I am incredibly proud of the work and the achievements of our Barwon Health Paediatric Eating Disorders Hospital in the Home (EDS HITH) team, which has helped unwell young people with eating disorders to stay home and continue recovery with their families."**



*Pictured: Barwon Health's Dr Jo Centra, Kelly Virgona and A/Prof Dave Fuller with Department of Health Secretary Prof Euan Wallace.*



# New role improves post-surgery outcomes

*Elective surgery patients at Barwon Health are benefiting from a new role focused on reducing hospital stays, improving health outcomes and offering a better healthcare experience.*

The Enhanced Recovery After Surgery Coordinator (ERAS) role was introduced in early 2024 through the Planned Care Recovery and Reform Initiative, part of the Barwon South West Health Service Partnership.

Yvette Console, who shares the ERAS co-ordinator role with Matt Hall, said they had developed, implemented and evaluated evidence-based bundles of care for elective surgery patients referred to Barwon Health.

"The ERAS coordinator is the primary point of contact for select patients undergoing elective hip or knee replacement surgery and all elective major bowel operation," she said.

"Prior to surgery, we collaborate with patients using Healthdirect, a virtual care video platform to inform expectations of the surgical journey, respect and understand individual patient values with the goal of empowering them to feel in control of their healthcare experience.

"Complimenting the patient-centred care approach to elective surgery, our role supports patients to optimise their health prior to surgery through pre-operative education. This includes visiting the patient on the wards to ensure expectations are met by the hospital, and remaining in contact with patients via telehealth appointments to facilitate a safe recovery in the comfort of their home."

*"I actually felt very emotional after receiving the ERAS coordinator's phone call. The genuine care and attention taken to make sure I was totally prepared for my procedure was second-to-none. I could not fault the program. I felt prepared for my surgery and what to expect in my hospital stay.*

*The program gave me recovery goals on what to work toward to get me home. Seeing the ERAS Coordinators daily helped keep me on track to recover sooner and get me home, which is where I wanted to be. I believe the ERAS Team were an integral part to my speedy recovery."*

*- ERAS patient*

## FILM SCREENING SHINES LIGHT ON OVERDOSE AWARENESS

*Barwon Health's Harm Reduction Service recently hosted a community screening of the award-winning documentary Love in the Time of Fentanyl.*

The film, set in Vancouver, Canada, provides an intimate look at the Overdose Prevention Society - a supervised drug consumption site run by people who use drugs, both currently and in the past, who are committed to saving lives and supporting a marginalised community.

The screening, held at the Pivotonian Cinema, was part of Barwon Health's International Overdose Awareness Day activities and highlighted the crucial role that individuals with lived experience play in providing care and support within their communities.

Barwon Health Harm Reduction co-ordinator Craig Harvey emphasised the film's message that drug overdose remains a devastating, ever-present issue.

"Addressing overdose requires a united community effort to foster meaningful change and this event offered the community a glimpse into the lives of people they might otherwise never have seen," Craig said.

**"The film is a powerful reminder of the importance of tackling stigma and discrimination, which can deter individuals from seeking the healthcare services they need."**



# STREAMLINING AND DIGITISING *employee recognition* AT BARWON HEALTH

*Barwon Health's Employee Experience Team has successfully launched a digital solution to enhance the staff recognition process through the Microsoft 365 platform.*

The Living Our Values program, which began in 2019, previously relied on both physical cards and digital word nomination templates available on One Point. In September, the recognition program was officially digitalised, significantly improving the administrative process for recording and receiving nominations.

Organisational Development officers Karsha Bushell and Bronwyn Duthie collaborated with Tom Edwards from the M365 team to leverage new applications and technology. Together, they developed a fully automated solution using various apps within the Microsoft 365 suite.

Karsha said the rollout of Microsoft 365 presented a unique opportunity to relaunch the recognition program, ensuring it was aligned with the new tools and capabilities.

"A pilot phase with a small group of managers allowed us to redefine requirements and address any gaps, with valuable insights that shaped the final implementation," she said.

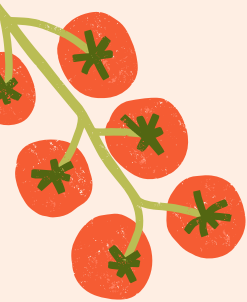
**"Building a culture of recognition is important, as acknowledging staff contributions greatly enriches our workplace environment."**

With the new system, both the nominee and their manager receive immediate email notifications upon submission of a nomination, eliminating the need for manual emails from the team.

Employees will also receive quarterly shout-outs moving forward to recognise those who embody the Barwon Health values.







## Partnership brings comfort to palliative care patients



Picture: St Joseph's year 12 student Hamish McDine.

*A partnership between Barwon Health's community palliative care service and St Joseph's College Geelong is providing nutritious home-cooked meals to local patients and their families.*

Starting in 2021, Barwon Health's Mac and Joe's Program was set up to help reduce excess food waste and provide sustenance and comfort to palliative care patients and families facing life-limiting conditions.

Community Palliative Care clinical nurse consultant Sarah Short said the partnership with St Joseph's College has helped build meaningful community connections.

"The Mac and Joe's Program not only provides nourishment, but it serves as a bridge, fostering meaningful connections between our team and patients during a difficult time," Ms Short said.

"The goal is to alleviate the burden of meal preparation for families whilst playing a role in building trust and rapport between caregivers and patients.

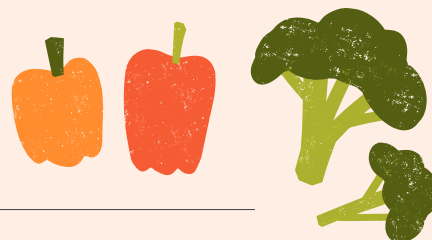
"We've received positive feedback from staff, recipients and students, highlighting the program's impact on enhancing quality of life and wellbeing."

St Joseph's College service learning co-ordinator Virginia Salkeld said the program has allowed students to gain a greater understanding of the value in connecting to the wider community.

**"Our students take immense pride in the preparation and packaging of their food items and are always genuinely interested in who it may be feeding and nourishing," she said.**

Meals are hand-made by the students under supervision in the college's kitchens as part of their community service.

Recently the Mac and Joe's Program has expanded, with Christian College Geelong students now participating.



# Dignity Therapy Program reflects on decade of memories



*Barwon Health's Dignity Therapy Program has marked a significant milestone, celebrating its 10-year anniversary in September.*

Staff and volunteers gathered to reflect on a decade of remarkable achievements and the profound impact the program has had on the community.

Dignity therapy is a form of therapy that addresses psychological, existential and spiritual challenges for palliative care patients. It invites patients to reflect upon memories of key aspects of their life and the significance to them and the messages they want to share with loved ones.

The program was first introduced at Barwon Health in 2012 by expansion and succession project manager Russell Armstrong, with the program formally commencing in 2014.

"This event was a tribute to the program's dedication to helping individuals at the end of life find meaning and create lasting legacies," Russell said.

"The celebration was filled with memorable stories and shared experiences that highlighted the enduring value of their work and the positive difference they've made over the years."

Dignity Therapy is available for patients on the palliative care program through either Community Palliative Care, Palliative Care at Home or the Palliative Care Unit.

*"This event was a tribute to the program's dedication to helping individuals at the end of life find meaning and create lasting legacies."*



*Pictured: More than 20 current and former staff and volunteers enjoyed a celebration reflecting on 10 years of Dignity Therapy at Barwon Health.*





*Carer support workers are offering free coaching to help carers reach their goals and overcome challenges.*

Barwon Health Carer Support has two experienced carer coaches, Danielle and Sue, offering access to six sessions within a 12-month period, over the phone or face-to-face.

Geelong carer Tina met with Danielle to explore her challenges and strengths in her role supporting her mother, taking time between sessions to reflect deeply on her personal goals. This reflection allowed Tina to return with a new approach, focusing on prioritising self-care and other ways she could best take care of her mother. Danielle was able to assist Tina in finding those small pockets of time each week dedicated to self-care and put in place boundaries to prevent burnout.

"Initially I was unsure about carer coaching, but with the overwhelming demands of being the sole carer it became clear that I needed help," Tina said.

**"Carer coaching has shifted the way I've been thinking.**

**"I would prioritise other people's tasks ahead of my own, which lead me to abandon my personal tasks.**

**"Now I ask Mum when she needs a task done by, so I'm putting less pressure on myself, allowing me to make time for my own tasks without feeling guilty."**



*Pictured: Local carer Tina has been more confident in her role since receiving carer coaching.*



Pictured: Public Health Unit staff Anita Thomas, Deb Kay and Dr Akhtar Hussain with Rachel Anderson and Heather O'Donnell from QUIT (centre).

## Strengthening the regional approach to nicotine harm

*The Barwon South West Public Health Unit hosted a forum in Camperdown aiming to reduce harm from nicotine.*

This was the second Camperdown forum of 2024, following the launch of Barwon South West Public Health Strategy in March, inviting key health stakeholders from across the Barwon South West to optimise health outcomes and reduce health inequities through a strengthened regional approach.

The forum's special guest, QUIT director Rachael Anderson, spoke to attendees about key smoking and vaping data and current initiatives, exploring collective opportunities to influence and prevent uptake of smoking and vaping and increase cessation across the region's diverse communities.

The event also included presentations from Colac Area Health and the City of Greater Geelong, showcasing examples of local action to reduce harm from nicotine and sharing key learnings.

Attendees then took part in a workshop aimed at collaborating within the health ecosystem with guests working together to explore and discuss ideas around policy, community, and cessation with a focus on quick wins, long term goals and wider strategies that the region could support with advocacy.



# Stroke Unit achieves Platinum status and certification



*Barwon Health's Stroke Unit has been celebrated with two awards that recognise a commitment to top-tier stroke treatment and care.*

The dedicated team at University Hospital Geelong treats approximately 500 strokes each year. The stroke service is compared against National Benchmarks to ensure they are providing high quality stroke care to the community.

This year, the World Stroke Organization (WSO) awarded the Stroke Services with 'Platinum Status' for quarter one and 'Gold Status' for quarter two. These awards recognise hospitals that have demonstrated clear commitment to quality stroke care and have established cultures and systems to support continuous improvement. Meeting Gold and Platinum status means a high percentage of eligible patients are receiving life-saving clot busting therapy within 60 minutes of arrival to hospital.

Stroke co-ordinator Michelle Hiddleston said only a handful of Australian health services have achieved platinum status, making this achievement even more significant.

"Winning the Platinum status from the World Stroke Organization is a great outcome for our stroke services and reflects the dedication from our stroke emergency response team here at Barwon Health," she said.

"This is a team effort and has been achieved through the strong collaboration the stroke team has with Ambulance Victoria, Emergency Department, CT Department and the Stroke Unit on the Acute Neurosciences Unit.

**"We have a group of stroke champions across these departments that have worked hard over the past year to reduce our treatment time for patients presenting with Stroke. We have been able to improve current process in the hyperacute setting to ensure we are meeting and exceeding the standards of larger metropolitan stroke services."**

"These various recognitions have meant a lot to our team, as they represent the tireless efforts over the past year from the multi-disciplinary team. We have had a strong focus on reducing treatment time in hyperacute stroke as well as ensuring every stroke patient receives high-quality stroke care in a dedicated Stroke Unit.

"I am proud of the team that I work alongside every day. Their passion and dedication to optimising outcomes for every stroke survivor is remarkable."

Alongside these awards, the stroke service has achieved 'Stroke Unit Certification' from the Australian Stroke Coalition. Being a certified Stroke Unit means the service is meeting highest standards in training, protocols and performance, ensuring our patients receive the best possible care. The Stroke Unit Certification is endorsed by both the World Health Organisation and the Federal Government Heart and Stroke Plan as a Quality Assurance and Improvement method.



*Pictured: Angels Initiative representatives present the award to members of the multidisciplinary Stroke Unit.*



*Pictured: Barwon Health's ECMO team*

## *Barwon Health's ECMO service leading the way with global award*

*Barwon Health's extracorporeal membrane oxygenation (ECMO) service has been recognised among the world's best ECMO programs.*

The service, which runs within the University Hospital Geelong Intensive Care Unit, was awarded the Gold Level ELSO Award for Excellence in Life Support by The Extracorporeal Life Support Organization (ELSO), an international non-profit consortium of healthcare institutions, researchers, providers, and industry partners.

The award recognises the world's best extracorporeal life support programs delivered by health services, with recipients distinguished by demonstrating the highest levels of education, performance, innovation, satisfaction and quality by means of processes, procedures and systems that promote exceptional care.

Barwon Health ECMO co-ordinator Meg Gallagher said the award reflected a dedication to advancing healthcare for our community.

"This wonderful achievement is the result of many years of collaborative pioneering and development by a committed group of professionals who have progressed the Barwon Health ECMO service from where it started over 10 years ago, to where it is today and will continue to do so into the future," she said.

The Barwon Health ECMO service will receive recognition for the award at an international conference later this year.





Picture: Senior CDE Robyn Barber and endocrinologist Dr Anna Anderson with endocrinology and diabetes admin leader Melissah Harrington at the launch of Barwon Health North's first diabetes outreach clinic.

## New diabetes service launches at Barwon Health North

*A new diabetes outreach service has been launched at Barwon Health North to tackle the growing needs of the local community.*

With the northern suburbs experiencing diabetes rates almost twice the national average, the initiative extends the capabilities of Barwon Health's existing diabetes referral centre.

The new service operates two mornings a week and is supported by a dedicated team, including two endocrinologists, a diabetes educator, and skilled administrative staff.

Endocrinologist Dr Anna Anderson said the specialist team was delighted to launch the clinic and provide better care to those who need it.

"It is an area of high need and cultural diversity, which is better served locally," Dr Anderson said.

"Our diabetes educator provides a wealth of experience in this area already and with clinical support we aim to grow this service to improve health and wellbeing for the future."

Endocrinologist Dr Kate Flentje said accessibility was a key focus of the new clinic.

"Clients love the convenience of being able to walk or drive a short distance to their appointments with ample parking making specialist consultations more convenient and less burdensome," Dr Flentje said.

Senior diabetes educator Robyn Barber said the service had quickly made a difference in the community.

"We're providing personalised care and education and introducing technology such as glucose monitoring devices to clients, some who have lived with diabetes for more than 20 years. The devices can be life-changing to their diabetes management," Robyn said.

**"Clients love the convenience of being able to walk or drive a short distance to their appointments with ample parking making specialist consultations more convenient and less burdensome," Dr Flentje said.**



## Nursing and midwifery careers in focus at hospital expo



*Barwon Health hosted the 2024 Nursing and Midwifery Careers Expo at University Hospital Geelong in September.*

The expo was an opportunity to meet nursing and midwifery representatives from a range of clinical specialties and learn about the supported programs available across Barwon Health.

Staff from services including paediatrics, perioperative, intensive care, mental health, emergency and community gave attendees insight into career opportunities, pathways to career advancement and specialised post graduate opportunities.

Nursing and Midwifery Workforce Unit acting director Gabrielle Peacock said the expo was a great success, with planning already underway for next year.

"The expo was a collaborative effort between the Nursing and Midwifery Recruitment Team (NMRT) and Centre for Education and Training to bring departments together to showcase what they offer nurses and midwives to grow their career at Barwon Health," she said.

**"The night had a positive energy with people able to ask questions directly to educators and department teams, and link in with NMRT to find out how to apply for opportunities."**

*Pictured: Clinical nurse educator and ED associate nurse unit manager Michelle Rennie and ED nurse unit manager Bec Chapman.*



### FRIENDS OF RESEARCH MESSAGE

*Our Friends of Barwon Health Research community has passed a milestone with its 300th member taking part.*

Friends of Barwon Health Research receive a regular newsletter to hear about opportunities to partner with researchers in the design and delivery of research at Barwon Health, take part in clinical trials or participate in community events.

Email [research@barwonhealth.org.au](mailto:research@barwonhealth.org.au) if you'd like to become a Friend of Barwon Health Research.

## Clinical trial discovers new treatment option

*Smokers seeking to conquer their addiction may have a new treatment option thanks to a clinical trial conducted at Barwon Health and other public hospitals.*

The VANISH Trial surveyed 320 adult daily smokers across five Australian public hospitals and found a combination of varenicline and nicotine lozenges significantly improved smoking abstinence when compared with varenicline alone.

Both varenicline and nicotine lozenges (a form of nicotine replacement therapy) are medications commonly used for smoking cessation. Varenicline, marketed in Australia as Champix, is the most effective single therapy currently available for smoking cessation.

Dr Greg Weeks, Barwon Health Pharmacy director and first author of the study, said the VANISH Trial found participants treated with both varenicline and nicotine lozenges had 84 per cent greater chance to abstain from smoking when self-reporting their progress at a 12-month follow up, compared with those taking varenicline alone.

"Pharmacists at Barwon Health played a major role in the VANISH study, including randomising participants, providing logistical support to hospitals and recruiting 104 of the 320 participants," he said.

"While smoking is the leading cause of preventable disease and death in Australia, a new generation of nicotine addiction has escalated due to the introduction of e-cigarettes and vaping.

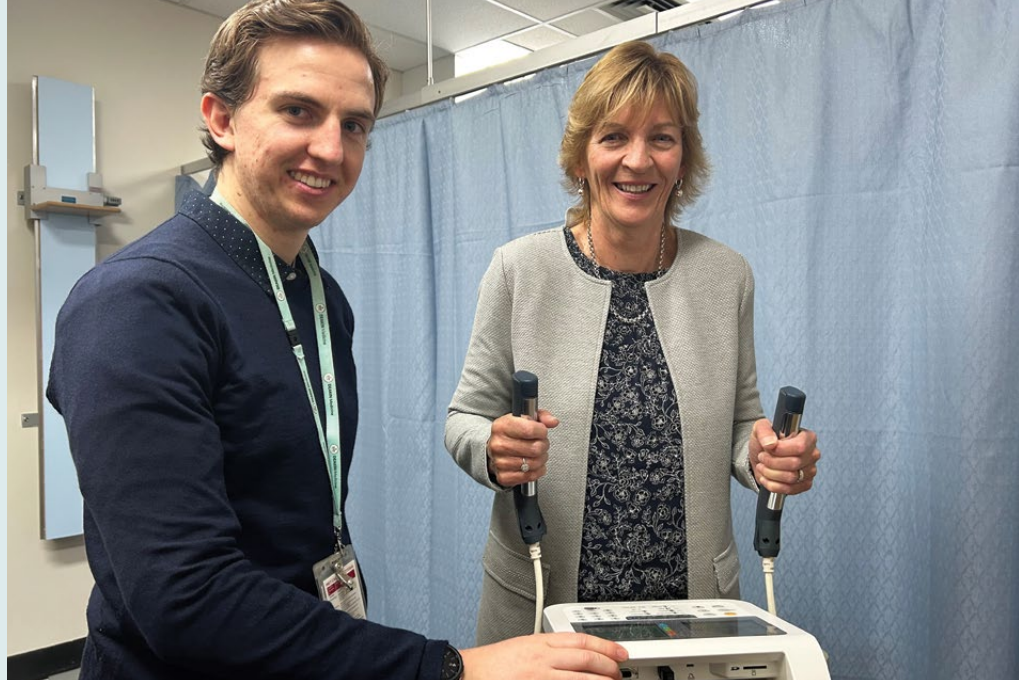


**"The more alternative options we can provide smokers that do not involve vaping, the better."**

*Pictured: Dr Greg Weeks*



# Geelong study celebrates 30 years of knowledge gains in healthy ageing



Pictured: IMPACT PhD candidate Jacob Harland and GOS participant Rhonda Gambetta the 300th person in the 25-year check-up for women.

*A Geelong-based study looking at bone health in the broader population has reached a significant scientific milestone, notching up 30 years of data collection that is helping build a better understanding of how our bodies age.*

The Geelong Osteoporosis Study (GOS), a partnership between Barwon Health and Deakin University, is one of only a few large population-based cohort studies in Australia documenting changes to the health and wellbeing of young, middle-aged and older women and men over the decades.

Initially designed to focus on osteoporosis and bone health more generally, the study has grown to include data related to the onset and progression of disorders including obesity, diabetes, cardiovascular disease, arthritis, sarcopenia, cognitive decline, and the links between physical and mental health.

Professor Julie Pasco, GOS lead investigator, is a Professor of Epidemiology at IMPACT and said the continuous nature of the study was only possible thanks to the thousands of Geelong-based participants willing to undergo the detailed and rigorous testing required to capture the range of physical and mental health data necessary for the study.

“With an ageing population in Australia it is really important we identify ways to promote practical ways to stay healthy and share that information with the community,” Professor Pasco said.

**“Our data is used by scientists both here and internationally as the evidence base for national health campaigns as well as health modelling and further research.**

“We couldn’t have achieved this without the commitment and enthusiasm of our participants, many who joined the study in their 20s and are now in their 50s.”

Professor Pasco said data collected throughout the life of the study had helped build a better understanding of how our minds and bodies age and the lifestyle factors that promote healthy ageing.

“Chronic diseases are the leading cause of illness, disability and death in Australia and up to half of older Australians suffer physical or psychological characteristics of frailty which can lead to falls and other injuries,” Professor Pasco said.

“We know that regular weight bearing exercise or resistance training is important for maintaining bone and muscle strength and that sedentary lifestyles, excessive weight and high alcohol use accelerate bone and muscle wasting.

“We are also developing a better understanding of the relationship between mental and physical health and its links to the ageing process, so it is not just a matter of eating a healthy diet and getting the right amount of exercise but also managing stress levels and mental health in a comprehensive way.

“Getting adequate sleep, not smoking, managing existing health conditions, avoiding unnecessary and overuse of medications and maintaining social connections are all important factors to optimise health and wellbeing into older age.”

Data from the study is now linked to the Australian Institute for Health and Welfare, the Victorian Cancer Registry, the Australian Joint Replacement Registry, Medicare and the PBS, and the Department of Health and Ageing among others.



# GROUNDBREAKING STUDY *reduces* *chemotherapy* FOR PATIENTS

*The Barwon Health Cancer Services Trials Unit was involved in a ground-breaking study using a biomarker test to de-escalate the use of chemotherapy treatment in patients with Stage II Colon Cancer.*

Most people with stage II bowel cancer can be cured by surgery alone, yet one in five will have a cancer recurrence. Fewer than one in 20 people with stage II bowel cancer benefit from adjuvant chemotherapy (adjchemo), which is given after surgery to destroy any microscopic cancer cells that might be left behind. However, it is unknown who is most likely to benefit from this treatment.

A blood test called circulating tumour DNA (ctDNA) can detect microscopic cancer that remains after surgery. Initial research found that a positive test predicts a very high chance of cancer recurrence.

The DYNAMIC study from the Walter and Eliza Hall Institute of Medical Research, led at Barwon Health by Dr Madhu Singh, tested whether using the ctDNA blood test to guide adjchemo in stage II bowel cancer would reduce chemotherapy use, yet not increase cancer recurrence risk.

Chemotherapy was prescribed for 15 per cent of patients whose treatment was guided by their ctDNA results, compared with 28 per cent of patients under standard management. Although less chemotherapy was used in the ctDNA guided group, the recurrence free survival at two years was above 92 per cent for both groups.

Dr Singh said the results were significant because they showed some patients with stage II colon cancer would not receive unnecessary chemotherapy treatment, resulting in fewer trips to outpatients clinics; fewer missed days of work; less money spent on parking, meals and transport associated with attending treatment visits; fewer experience of negative treatment side effects such as nausea, pain, fatigue, and neuropathies.

**“This will have a major positive impact of the quality of life of many patients who will not be burdened with the physical and financial toxicity brought on by unnecessary treatment,” Dr Singh said.**



## GRANT AWARDED FOR ALLIED HEALTH RESEARCH PROJECT

*Congratulations to Dr Paula Harding MACP, allied health director at Barwon Health, who has received a \$30,000 grant from the Pat Cosh Trust for her research project.*

The project, titled 'Development of a career pathway for physiotherapy clinical educators', stemmed from Paula's observation of the increasing demands placed on physiotherapists to provide clinical education in the workplace, both for students and for physiotherapists in the early stages of their careers.

"I saw a need to support the many qualified physiotherapists who are asked to provide clinical education to students and other physiotherapists they are supervising without receiving formal training on the theoretical principles that underpin education, particularly adult learning principles," she said.

"Supporting physiotherapists to be better educators will ensure that our physiotherapy students and junior workforce can develop to their full potential and continue to grow and learn throughout all stages of their career."

*Pictured: Dr Paula Harding.*

The research project is likely to take around 18 months to complete and its path will be guided by the results obtained during the earlier stages.



## Australian Rickettsial Reference Laboratory moves into HERB

*The Australian Rickettsial Reference Laboratory (ARRL) has a new home within the Health Education & Research Building (HERB) research laboratory.*

The HERB laboratory, managed by Dr Jason Hodge, provides laboratory science management and clinical trial support to a range of research programs and departments within Barwon Health, as well as significant collaborations with co-located Deakin University research staff. The team works to help with the translation of clinical needs into research investigations, while providing support for staff in research design, data analysis and research publications.

The HERB laboratory also houses the Centre for Innovation in Infectious Diseases and Immunology Research (CIIDIR), as well as contributing to the implementation of the Secure Health data and Biobank platform (SHeBa) and management of the Barwon Infant Study (BIS) biobank and database. In addition, ongoing support is provided to various research teams within the Institute for Mental and Physical Health and Clinical Translation (IMPACT) including the Epi-Centre for Healthy Ageing (Geelong Osteoporosis Study), Food and Mood Centre, B-CORE and Conexus.

The Australian Rickettsial Reference Laboratory, led by Prof John Stenos and Prof Stephen Graves, brings additional expertise to the HERB laboratory in pathology testing, vaccine development and research.



*Pictured: ARRL medical director Professor Stephen Graves.*

# Local heart patient shows heart

*Local artist Murray Chenery has turned his gratitude towards Barwon Health into the inspiration behind a painting that raised \$3000 for the health service.*

Murray had bypass heart surgery at Barwon Health in 2023 and then turned the life-defining event into a positive by creating paintings that captured his feelings of his illness and recovery journey.

The result was a 22-painting series that Murray named *The Heart In Me*, which was showcased at contemporary Geelong art gallery Hue and Cry.

The largest of the exhibition paintings was auctioned, with all proceeds making up the generous donation that Murray provided in support of Barwon Health's cardiac services.

"I am so grateful to the medical teams at Barwon Health for they gave me a wondrous gift – the gift of a prolonged and enriched life," Murray said.

"Cardiac disease is a big killer in Australia. You have one life, and getting a check-up at your GP and being tested is a great step to identifying and even preventing a major heart event," said Murray.

Barwon Health Foundation executive director Zoe Waters expressed her gratitude to both Murray and the Hue and Cry Gallery, which contributed its sale commission towards the donation.

"Our Foundation team were amazed that not only could Murray cover his heart surgery recovery journey in such impressive visual form, but also turn it into generous support for future cardiac patients at Barwon Health," Zoe said.

"A heartfelt thank you to Murray, Hue and Cry Gallery and the local couple who purchased the artwork."

Murray now acts as a Geelong's peer group leader for Heart Support Australia and speaks to other heart patients at Barwon Health's cardiac rehabilitation service about his recovery journey.



The Barwon Health Foundation encourages Barwon Health staff to share the support of grateful patients like Murray.

**When patients or families, grateful for care received at Barwon Health, ask 'how can I thank you?' please feel empowered to inform them about the work of Barwon Health Foundation.**

**Contributions can be put aside for a specific Barwon Health department or program of the donor's choice. Please don't hesitate to contact the Barwon Health Foundation team for any support 03 4215 8900, [foundation@barwonhealth.org.au](mailto:foundation@barwonhealth.org.au) or visit 192 Myers Street.**

*Pictured: Murray Chenery with his painting that was sold at auction.*

## GEELONG SHINES RED FOR RECORD BREAKING RUN4GEELONG

Geelong's streets were awash with red on Sunday November 10, as more than 4500 participants took part in the sold out 2024 Geelong Advertiser Run4Geelong.

\$250,000 was raised to support the life-changing work of Barwon Health - another record-breaking total.

Barwon Health Foundation executive director Zoe Waters said participants donned the signature red Run4Geelong t-shirts and set off across a range of courses, designed to suit all ages and abilities.

"We're absolutely blown away by the generosity and spirit of the Greater Geelong community," she said.

"To sell out and see a quarter of a million dollars raised for Barwon Health is beyond incredible, and it speaks volumes about the heart of this town. We couldn't be more grateful for the sponsors, volunteers, and supporters who make Run4Geelong possible."





# Forget Me Not Ball



*Did you know approximately one in four Australians over the age of 70 are likely to be diagnosed with some form of dementia? Or that dementia, including Alzheimer's disease is the second leading cause of death in Australia, accounting for 9.1 per cent of all deaths?*



*Pictured above: The Forget Me Not Ball Committee: Kate Ward, Lizzie Larcey, Edwina Hanneysee, Ebony Ogilvie, Matt O'Kane, Jeannette Schreuders, Peta Baldaccino, Penny Whitehead. Absent: Alexandra Boston, Matthew Elder. Credit: Sarah Anderson.*

A team of passionate Geelong individuals, each having a loved one living with or recently passed from dementia, bonded together in October to hold the inaugural Forget Me Not Ball.

The committee set out to support one another and the broader community by raising awareness and much needed funds for dementia research.

Touting itself as "not your standard fundraising event", the event saw more than 200 people gather at Geelong's 1915 restaurant, with DJ entertainment and a Casino Royale theme.

## EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST

*The Barwon Health Foundation is taking expressions of interest for two exciting fundraising campaigns set to take place in 2025.*

If you're looking for a feel-good way to connect to your community, please reach out to the Barwon Health Foundation to express your interest for either of these exciting opportunities at [foundation@barwonhealth.org.au](mailto:foundation@barwonhealth.org.au) or 03 4215 8900.

### An adventure of a lifetime

Travel for good in 2025! We're scoping expressions of interest for individuals keen to join us for a charity challenge. The destination is still to be confirmed, but picture yourself hiking in an inspiring location with a like-minded group that is keen to take on a bucket-list challenge, whilst fundraising in support of Barwon Health. If you have interest in a life-changing adventure and would like more details, please contact Sherryn Bennett at the Foundation on 4215 8900 or [sherryn.bennett@barwonhealth.org.au](mailto:sherryn.bennett@barwonhealth.org.au).

### Dry July

For four straight years, the Barwon Health Foundation has held the title of the Dry July number one fundraising team for Australia, raising money to support the care and comfort of local cancer patients and Barwon Health's cancer services.

We're looking to create another team of wonderful individuals with supportive communities of family, friends and colleagues, to keep that winning title by going alcohol free for the month of July. If you or someone you love has been affected by cancer or you just want to show your support of local cancer services, join our winning Dry July 2025 team! For more information, please contact Steph O'Dowd on 4215 8900 or [steph.o'dowd@barwonhealth.org.au](mailto:steph.o'dowd@barwonhealth.org.au).

*Pictured left: 2024 Barwon Health Foundation Dry July ambassador, Pete Murrihy.*



## STAFF ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

### MICHAEL BERK EARNS MENTAL HEALTH PRIZE



*Congratulations to Professor Michael Berk, Chair of Psychiatry at Deakin University and Barwon Health, on being awarded the 2024 Australian Mental Health Prize in the Professional category.*

Professor Berk is a distinguished mental health researcher and the head of the Institute for Innovation in Mental and Physical Health and Clinical Translation (IMPACT).

This award recognised his research, which has reshaped the treatment landscape for bipolar disorder and opened up new treatment avenues for conditions such as chronic fatigue syndrome. With more than 1600 papers published, his work has significantly influenced the treatment landscape of psychiatric disorders both in Australia and globally.

The Australian Mental Health Prize was established in 2016 by UNSW Sydney to recognise Australians who have made outstanding contributions to promoting mental health or preventing and treating mental illness.

*Pictured: Professor Michael Berk.*

### BAXTER WING 7 CELEBRATES GASTROENTEROLOGY ANNIVERSARY

*Baxter Wing 7 celebrated its one-year anniversary as a gastroenterology unit in August.*

Staff were invited to participate in gastroenterology education throughout the month, with an afternoon tea to celebrate the milestone.

Nurse unit manager Nicole McCallum thanked staff and said the team had grown together over the previous year.

**“It has been amazing to see them develop both individually and as a team, and I can’t wait to see what our future holds,” she said.**



*Pictured: Staff celebrate their one-year anniversary as a gastroenterology unit on Baxter Wing 7.*



## Mental Health HITH team recognised



*Pictured: Barwon Health's Mental Health HITH team was recognised at the annual Tandem Awards in July.*

*The Barwon Health Mental Health Hospital in the Home (HITH) team has been recognised for exceptional service to the community at the annual Tandem Awards.*

The team received the Service Clinical award for its work alongside family, carers and supporters in mental health.

The ceremony was hosted by Tandem, the peak body representing Victorian family, carers and supporters of people living with mental health challenges.

Mental Health HITH at Barwon Health is a service that provides intensive mental health support and treatment to the community in their own home, where they would otherwise require admission to an inpatient unit.

The team comprises of psychiatrists, mental health nurses, peer workers, social workers, occupational therapists and an exercise physiologist.

Support includes medication supervision, emotional support, social and physical activities, developing daily routines and coping skills and help with linking into local community supports and services.

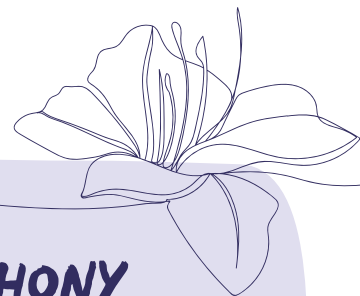


## VALE MARGARET MAHONY

*Outpatients staff have paid tribute to their colleague Margaret Mahony, who passed away in late-August after more than 40 years with Barwon Health.*

Marg joined the Geelong hospital in September 1979, working in various areas including general nursing, surgical/vascular, geriatric and rehabilitation wards, and outpatients where she was appointed to ANUM and clinical nurse specialist roles.

Marg will be dearly missed by her family, friends and colleagues in Outpatients.





# Length of Service

*Congratulations to the following staff who celebrated Length of Service milestones between September and December 2024!*



- |                   |                   |
|-------------------|-------------------|
| Ali Alobaidy      | Tom Langman       |
| Adriana Andrevska | Elena Linic       |
| Di Barnes         | Fiona Lonergan    |
| Alexandra Cain    | Patricia Manuwere |
| Ashleigh Chapman  | Emily McTaggart   |
| Ying Chen         | Aggie Miller      |
| Andrew Chin       | Rohini Narula     |
| Adam Chipperfield | Libby Newman      |
| Sally Chirnside   | Paul Robertson    |
| Kristen Cook      | Raminder Sharma   |
| Margaret Geason   | Anu Siby          |
| Tracey Gordon     | Steve Tanic       |
| Kel Heard         | Loren Tomas       |
| Cathy Jaworski    | Kate Uren         |
| Amber Jeffreys    | Amy Warner        |
| Emma Jones        | Paul Warren       |
| Ganjes Jose       | Emily Watson      |
| Bianca Keys       | Julie Wiffen      |
| Sheeja Kuriakose  |                   |

*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](mailto:workforcerelations@barwonhealth.org.au).*





20  
years

Izabela Anderson  
Lucille Andrews  
Georgia Bush  
Kylie Casey  
Nicole Churchill  
Therese Clark  
Kim Eedy

Rhonda Evans  
Karen Giuffre  
Janelle Gough  
Annette Grinter  
Jennifer Grundill  
Rachael Hart  
Fiona Hewat

Debra Hoiles  
Claire Jones  
Sue Loffler  
Lydia Mezei  
Helen Sampson  
Jacqueline Van Krieken  
Melinda Yacoub

30  
years

Lorrae Ferrier  
Maria Hull  
Jackie Krastins  
Simone Meara  
Julie Owens

Deanne Stevens  
Michelle Tayler  
Tania Tomaszewski  
Alison Wakeling  
Erika Bush

40  
years

Audrey Abock  
Pamela Whitworth

# Wish Upon a Star

## CHRISTMAS APPEAL

# Wish big for little ones

Help us to fund vital  
medical equipment to  
support local sick children  
in hospital this Christmas.

### Our 2024 Christmas Wish List...

**1x**

Emergency  
Infant  
Resuscitation  
Warmer

**1x**

Paediatric  
Patient Central  
Monitoring  
System

**4x**

Birthing Suite  
Fetal Monitors

**15x**

Birthing Suite  
epidural  
infusion pumps

**1x**

Maternity  
Colposcope

**Donate now**

[barwonhealthfoundation.org.au](https://barwonhealthfoundation.org.au)

03 4215 8900

192 Myers Street, Geelong VIC 3220

[foundation@barwonhealth.org.au](mailto:foundation@barwonhealth.org.au)



*The Christmas spirit is  
a spirit of giving. Help us  
save lives just as they begin.*



**Barwon Health**  
Foundation



**Barwon**  
Health