

Western Wellbeing

New cancer treatment model for WDHS

Local cancer patients will have greater access to specialists, treatments and better facilities as part of a new oncology model being developed at Western District Health Service (WDHS).

The proposed model will see the redevelopment of the chemotherapy treatment area at Hamilton Base Hospital and more frequent medical oncologist visits from the Ballarat Regional Integrated Cancer Centre (BRICC), in addition to the existing oncologist visits from the Andrew Love Centre in Geelong.

An extended regional partnership to include BRICC enhances the current oncology outreach service that provides a visiting oncologist every six weeks, supported by weekly Telehealth video consults facilitated by the Cancer Care Coordinator.

BRICC Director, Steve Medwell says, Ballarat currently provides a similar oncology outreach service in Stawell and Horsham to increase local access to specialists and treatment options.

“This partnership will augment and expand on current services at WDHS maximising the number of patients treated in the region, with the key benefit of allowing patients to remain closer to home for treatment.

We will also be able to increase access and support for a range of new therapy options, which are more comprehensive



Director of Medical Services, Dr Nic van Zyl; Cancer Care Coordinator, Jane Sharp; BRICC Acting Head of Oncology, Steven Brown; Director of Nursing, Kerryn Charman and BRICC Director, Steve Medwell

and in the long term we hope to be able to support clinical drug trials in the Hamilton region as well,” Steve said.

Cancer is now 19% of the total disease burden in Australia and evidence suggests that outcomes are not as good for those living in regional areas.

WDHS Chief Executive, Rohan Fitzgerald says, ultimately the new public oncology model will provide more effective treatment regimens, increased access to specialist oncology support and give locals similar options to what is available in regional and metro areas.

“Feedback from our patients, medical staff and from a recent Consumer Forum suggests that our current facilities and services need to be enhanced to meet the growing demand for cancer services and to improve patient comfort and quality of care.

Currently we have a three chair chemotherapy unit treating up to six clients a day, but many patients travel to larger regional centres and Melbourne, because we just don’t have the capacity to support their needs at the moment,” Rohan said.

Director, Cancer Programme Barwon Health, Professor David Ashley, says the new model is exciting and he believes that regional service providers need to work

together to provide the best possible outcomes for cancer patients.

“We need to keep patients at the centre of what we do and work together to deliver more services closer to home.

We have some excellent regional specialists and resources, but we still have a lot of patients driving to metro areas for therapy, even from Geelong, who really don’t need to.

We need to create a regional network that delivers better care and outcomes for people across the southwest,” David said.

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Scope of redevelopment work:

- Introduction of new treatment options
- Additional day unit treatment spaces
- Additional clinical consultation rooms
- Appropriate waiting facilities
- Increased capacity for clinical trials with purpose designed space
- Wellness component

Chief Executive's report

WDHS is in the people business, and the staff who support the delivery of our services to the community are fundamental to our success.

A focus at WDHS over recent months has been staff health and wellbeing and we have conducted three workshops facilitated by Deakin University, to understand what we can change to create healthier, happier and more sustainable workplaces.

We are looking to create new opportunities for staff to be more active and our WDHS Rowing Challenge has been a great success. Hamilton Rowing Club has been fantastic in supporting over 40 rowers, (many of them beginners) to get out on the water and enjoy this wonderful (and as our rowers have found, quite technical) sport.

Aligned with our support for the Primary Care Partnership (PCP) and Deakin University GenR8 Change initiative, we have also made more healthy options available on the menu in our Hamilton Base Hospital (HBH) Cafeteria, to ensure we are making the healthy choice the easy choice for our staff and visitors.

It has been very rewarding to be an Ambassador for the GenR8 Change movement and a number of WDHS staff have driven this important community project to make the healthy choice the easy choice for people in our region. The community response has been excellent and we will continue to support this process over coming months, to address increasing levels of obesity in our community.

In terms of our service delivery, we have formalised elements of our new partnership with the Ballarat Regional Integrated Cancer Centre (BRICC) to create a new oncology model of care for WDHS and are scoping a redevelopment of the cancer treatment area at HBH so that we can provide more treatment options, better care and outcomes for people living with cancer.

An MOU signed by Rural Bank and the National Centre for Farmer Health (NCFH) will give the Centre greater capacity to promote its services through over 400 Rural Bank branches across Australia and deliver training to Rural Bank relationship managers. The partnership will also see Rural Bank support farmer health programs and events.

We are growing our specialist services and have recruited an extra orthopaedic surgeon and a new general surgeon in recent months. We also have a full complement of GP obstetricians



Rohan with Community Arts Project Christmas figures created by Maintenance Department staff

and will secure the services of an additional part time specialist gynaecologist and obstetrician in the New Year.

Our aged care facilities achieved 100% accreditation this year and a new model for dementia care is being developed based on Montessori principles and will be integrated into our aged and residential care facilities in 2016.

We are also trialling several new ways to deliver consumer feedback across the organisation, including an iPad video interview with patients, where we discuss the care they have received.

From a fundraising and community events perspective we once again had a record final tally for the Door Knock Appeal and raised over \$50,000 for our cancer redevelopment at the Mischief with Marney Dinner. The Fun Run and Golf Tournament were also resounding successes.

During the last few months we farewelled two long serving employees, HR Manager, Hilary King and Primary and Preventative Health Director, Rosie Rowe after eight and twelve years with the Health Service respectively. Kerryn Charman also joined us as the new Director of Nursing.

As we lead into the Christmas / New Year period, I would like to take this opportunity to thank staff, volunteers, sponsors and the many other supporters of the Health Service for their efforts and achievements in 2015.

Wishing you all a safe and happy festive season.

Rohan Fitzgerald
Chief Executive

Hospital meals helping people in need

WDHS is helping people in need by providing meals and sandwiches from the hospital kitchen to support the Uniting Church Food Distribution program.

The food is prepared to provide evening meals for WDHS medical and nursing staff and when unused is collected by Uniting Church volunteers.

The Rev Peter Cook says he is grateful for the hospital support and says the food has been very well received.

"The hospital meals are really well prepared and presented and it's just another example of what a generous community

we have, it's such a thoughtful, sensible, valuable thing to do and a wonderful addition to our program," Peter said.

Peter believes the food distribution network is a beautiful story, and says if you followed him around for a day you would be amazed at the generosity he sees.

"On Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays our volunteers collect food from the supermarkets and several cafes including Pitstop, Clarabells, Coleraine Road Takeaway and Subway.

Half a tonne or more of food is also collected from Warrnambool Foodshare fortnightly and individual donors also bring in food, eggs, vegetables, and items left over from catering functions.

Church volunteers put together household size boxes with the donations and we make about 90 of these each week.

These are distributed not only in Hamilton, but in Coleraine, Peshurst, Dunkeld and Casterton as well," Peter said.



The Reverend Peter Cook with WDHS Cafeteria Supervisor, Raewyn Powlton and Uniting Church Volunteer, Julie Mason picking up meals and sandwiches as part of the Uniting Church Food Distribution program

GenR8 Change

Making the 'healthy choice the easy choice'

We are calling on the Southern Grampians community to make 'the healthy choice the easy choice' for people in the region, as part of the GenR8 Change movement.

Over 200 Community 'change makers' recently came together over a series of workshops to commit to taking actions to increase the consumption of healthy food and drinks and physical activity across education settings, business, sporting clubs and the broader community.

Southern Grampians and Glenelg Primary Care Partnership (SGGPCP) Executive Officer, Janette Lowe says GenR8 Change is a Southern Grampians community initiative to make changes to the way we do things, so the healthy choice is the easy choice, especially for children.

"Recent, highly accurate data collected across Southern Grampians established the weight status and relevant behaviours of children in Grades 2, 4 and 6 and showed a very confronting and concerning issue in our community.

Participants at the workshops are very motivated to be part of a movement to take big steps towards a solution," Janette said.

SGGPCP, Southern Grampians Shire Council (SGSC) and WDHS have joined forces to support the process and the community to become 'GenR8 Changers'.

An additional important partnership has formed with Professor Steven Allender and his team from the World Health Organisation Collaborating Centre for Obesity Prevention at Deakin University.

Professor Allender's team facilitated the community workshops and will continue to provide expertise, knowledge and support.

For the community, the journey started with the formation of a GenR8 Change Ambassador group, who assisted SGGPCP in bringing together over 150 community members for the first community workshops held on October 14.

During the workshop sessions Professor Allender guided participants to map the factors that cause obesity within Southern Grampians and their interrelationships.

Professor Allender also shared the best evidence in tackling the issue, with the learnings being that the solution lies with local communities making changes to the system.

There needs to be multiple actions across many areas and levels and these need to be sustainable and not funding dependent.

Several community 'change' initiatives are already off the ground, including the trialing of a 'ride to school bus' allowing children attending Dunkeld Consolidated School to ride their bikes to school in a group supervised by an adult.

WDHS has also introduced more healthy choices on its HBH Cafeteria menu so that staff and the community who eat there find it easier to make the healthy choice. It has also introduced a Wellbeing program and rowing challenge for staff, aiming to increase activity levels and wellbeing across the organisation.

GenR8 Change is seeking more passionate community members to become involved. You can search the website genr8change.com.au to link with people already working in areas of interest, or you could take on one of the 'half-baked' ideas and grow it further. Alternatively you are welcome to contact Clinton 5551 8541 clinton.thomas@wdhs.net or Ebony 5551 8475 ebony.jenkins@wdhs.net who can help link you into the GenR8 Change movement.



GenR8 Change Ambassadors: SGGPCP Executive Officer, Janette Lowe; SGSC Councillor, Dennis Dawson; WDHS Chief Executive, Rohan Fitzgerald; Deakin University Professor, Steven Allender; Surgeon, Stephen Clifforth and SGSC Councillor Paul Battista at a breakfast to discuss the GenR8 Change initiative

Harp brings joy to residents

Coleraine and District Health Service residents are delighted to have the use of a new Reverie Harp donated by the Homes for the Aged Auxiliary.

The harp is a relaxing and soothing musical therapy tool that doesn't require any musical knowledge to create beautiful sounds, says Coleraine Leisure and Lifestyle Coordinator, Marlene Lee.

"It gives our residents immense pleasure and the obvious joy on their faces when they play the harp is truly heart-warming.

It has a beautiful shape, is lightweight and comfortable to hold even for the frailest of individuals and players love feeling the vibrations through the wood," Marlene said.



Coleraine resident Neil Chenoweth enjoying the relaxing sounds of the Reverie Harp

A new Australian beginning for surgeon Richard Moore and his family

Surgeon Richard Moore was working in London when he saw a position advertised in the British Medical Journal for a general surgeon, a world away in Hamilton.

Technology made light work of the distance and within nine days he had been interviewed on Skype and notified by email that he was the preferred candidate for the job.

This set the wheels in motion for a 'continental shift' and the process began to get his qualifications recognised in Australia through the Royal Australasian College of Surgeons.

Twelve months later, Richard and his wife Harpreet and two young boys relocated to Hamilton and Richard started work at the Glenelg Surgical Clinic and WDHS.

"It's a completely different system from the UK and I'm enjoying the diversity of the practice in Hamilton.

There's a lot of 'super specialisation' in the UK and I've noticed the diversity of work immediately coming here.

I'm also really impressed with the range and quality of the equipment at Hamilton Hospital; I've been taking photos of it to send back to my colleagues in the UK.

We're also enjoying Hamilton, our house has a great view over the Grampians and last weekend my five year old son was down at Port Fairy learning to surf," Richard said.

Originally from Coleraine in Northern Ireland, Richard is a graduate of one of the oldest and most prestigious colleges in Cambridge and his work has taken him all over the UK.

He was lead surgeon in two breast units and also specialised in keyhole surgery, paediatrics and intensive care at a number of hospitals.

Before coming to Australia, Richard was consulting at the internationally renowned teaching hospital St Bartholomew's (Barts) in London.

Richard's other great passion is guitar and his collection of 25 guitars was shipped out to Australia in a container recently and he says amazingly, they were all still in perfect tune!

"Its like women with shoes or handbags, one is never enough, my guitars all have different qualities and sounds," Richard said.

A regular performer of what he describes as ambient, bass guitar and alternative rock on the songwriters circuit in the UK, Richard hopes to get the occasional guitar gig in Melbourne.

But we may just rope him into the odd WDHS music session as well...all for a good cause of course!



Theatre Attendant, Darren Mulley; Theatre Unit Manager, Mark Stephenson; Theatre Nurse, Mardi Mailes with new surgeon Richard Moore in the Hamilton Base Hospital Operating Theatre



Iluka volunteers

Op Shop volunteers Margaret Burgin, Mim Jeans and Wendy Fox working with Iluka staffer, Bill Ryan

August saw the first volunteer from Iluka Resources join the ladies at the Hospital Opportunity Shop to help out for the day. Bill Ryan assisted the Op Shop ladies with all sorts of odd jobs and really brightened their day (and it wasn't just the fluoro safety shirt)!

As part of the Iluka Volunteer Leave Program, staff can volunteer two days a year to support any community group and several Iluka staffers have helped out this year with a range of tasks and events.

New partnership ‘making a difference to farmers’ lives’

A new partnership between one of Australia’s largest agribusiness lenders and the National Centre for Farmer Health (NCFH) will support farmers to focus on health and wellbeing as an important factor in running a successful farming enterprise.

Rural Bank, who currently manage around 10% of Australia’s agricultural debt and connect with farmers from more than 500 locations nationally, will support the delivery of programs and events to improve farmer health, wellbeing and safety, and promote the Centre’s internationally-recognised work through their extensive rural and regional network.

Rural Bank’s Chief Financial Officer, Will Rayner says there is a strong correlation between farmers having emotional and physical wellbeing and running successful and sustainable businesses.

“At Rural Bank we believe in a bright future for agriculture and we have an important role to play in creating a more holistic and rounded conversation about the health of farming businesses and the agricultural sector generally,” Mr Rayner said.

As part of the initiative, the NCFH will also tailor a training package for Rural Bank Relationship Managers, to assist them to identify health and wellbeing issues and make appropriate referrals.

“Our Relationship Managers are regularly having one on one conversations with farmers and in a similar way that our bankers might refer clients to an agronomist or accountant, with appropriate training our Managers can refer to health professionals, to ensure clients are getting the help they need in a timely manner and the best advice in regards to health and safety.

NCFH Director, Professor Susan Brumby says that in times of stress, farm families can neglect their health and the right approach needs to be taken to get farmers to seek help.



Rural Bank Chief Financial Officer, Will Rayner; NCFH Director, Associate Professor, Susan Brumby and WDHS Chief Executive, Rohan Fitzgerald celebrate the new partnership at the signing of an MOU in September

“I think there is a generalisation out there that farmers aren’t concerned about their health, but it’s often the context in which health, wellbeing and safety messages are delivered that is the issue.

Seeing health, wellbeing and safety in the context of a farming business’s triple bottom line can be an important catalyst for change.

We want to increase knowledge and encourage professionals to be more alert to health issues in the agricultural sector, so they can help people to make better decisions, stay well and safe,” Sue said.

Initially the partnership will focus on staff training and Rural Bank will then look at supporting the role out of NCFH programs and events such as AgriSafe™ Clinics, on-farm Occupational Health and Safety, health and lifestyle assessments in Bendigo Bank or Community Bank® branches and at community events and field days.



Women’s Health Nurse, Sue Watt; Maree Roberts, Regional Director of Health, Barwon South Western Department of Health and Human Services; PPH Director, Rosie Rowe; Parliamentary Secretary, Mary-Anne Thomas; Men’s Health Educator, Stu Willder and Chief Executive, Rohan Fitzgerald tour the PPH facilities

Victorian Parliamentary Secretary for Health visit

Parliamentary Secretary for Health, Mary-Anne Thomas, visited WDHS in October to learn more about its community health model.

Mary-Anne met with staff on a tour of the Primary and Preventative Health (PPH) facilities to understand the WDHS community health models and innovations at WDHS and discussed issues related to funding, models of care and workforce retention.

Health careers in the spotlight Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Careers Day

Winda-Mara staff and students took a behind the scenes tour of Hamilton Base Hospital to discover the range of career possibilities at the Health Service.

The WDHS Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Careers Day was held to build confidence, simplify recruitment and application processes and increase awareness of job types and roles, with the hope of opening doors to real opportunities and experiences for the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community.

The group met with staff from the Kitchen, Maintenance, Allied Health and Human Resources departments and over lunch engaged in an informal discussion on application processes, interview techniques and further options for study.



Indigenous Support Officer, Greater Green Triangle University Department of Rural Health, Katie Dopheide; student Chris Saunders; Winda- Mara Chief Executive, Michael Bell; student Kyle Ellis; Winda-Mara Partnership Coordinator, Michelle Ellis and WDHS Aboriginal Employment Project Officer, Melanie Russell learn about career opportunities at Hamilton Base Hospital

Montessori enhancing delivery of dementia care

*“Everything you do for me, you take away from me”
– Dr Maria Montessori*

WDHS is partnering with Alzheimer’s Australia to develop and implement a Montessori model of dementia care throughout its aged care facilities.

The model will also provide the foundation for changes in dementia practice in residential care facilities in Heywood, Portland, Port Fairy, Terang, Camperdown and Colac.

A comprehensive staff training program will be introduced at 13 facilities in the southwest, with the on-going model to be implemented over the next six months.

Based on the Montessori educational approach developed by Italian physician and educator Maria Montessori and adapted by US psychologist Dr Cameron Camp, the new model will provide a framework for shaping a purposeful, meaningful environment in which people with dementia can live.

WDHS Leadership in Dementia Practice Project Officer, Angela Spillman says the Montessori method emphasises the importance of keeping the person living with dementia as independent as possible for as long as possible.

“It encourages the introduction of meaningful roles and routines based on what is known about the individual’s interests

and level of ability and places emphasis on an environment that supports memory loss and is respectful of the person.

A critical element for the success of the model is that care givers must find and see the person behind the dementia.

The goal is to set the person up to succeed by working with what the person can still do, not what they can’t - the focus of Montessori is on the ‘doing,’” Angela said.

While a person may be losing their declarative memory (knowing what), the Montessori program teaches that procedural memory (knowing how) is spared in dementia and is therefore still available for unconscious access.

A good example is of a woman who is looking in the mirror and is not aware that the reflection is her own, but she is still able to brush her hair.

The Montessori model of care principles are based on respecting and appreciating the uniqueness and individuality of every person with dementia, despite the level of care and support they require.



Birches Unit Manager, Eryn Cottier working through possible Montessori activities with WDHS Leadership in Dementia Practice Project Officer, Angela Spillman

Benefits of the Montessori model:

- Better care outcomes for those living with dementia
- Freedom of choice
- Maintenance or improvement of skills required for daily living
- Increased sense of importance and satisfaction for the resident when involved and contributing to their community
- Studies show a reduction in behaviours such as wandering often associated with dementia
- More meaningful family visits
- Improved sleep patterns
- Reduction in the use of anti-psychotic and sedative medications

For more information on WDHS Aged Care facilities please contact the Aged Care Placement Coordinator on 5551 8306

Retiring Surgeon Peter Tung and Physician Geoff Coggins recognised

September saw the retirement of two highly regarded medicos, Surgeon Mr Peter Tung after 16 years with WDHS and Physician Dr Geoff Coggins following a 20 year association with the Health Service.

Both Peter and Geoff touched the lives of many people through their careers and have given so much to the Hamilton and district community.

Not only have patients and their families benefitted from their skills and professionalism, but WDHS staff and medical students have also gained enormously from their expertise, wisdom and generous spirit.

Peter retires after a distinguished career at Glenelg Surgical Clinic and WDHS, during which time he served the community as a general surgeon, specialising in breast reduction and reconstruction surgery.

Geoff has provided exceptional professional service to WDHS over many years, particularly in the area of Oncology. Geoff was credentialed in 1995 commencing his career at WDHS as a Physician, and by August he was handed the oncology portfolio. Geoff continued to train and specialise in the field of oncology medicine and without his deep commitment and interest, the WDHS Oncology service would not be what it is today.

We wish Peter and Geoff all the best with their retirement.



Retired physician Dr Geoff Coggins with daughter Caroline



Retired surgeon Mr Peter Tung with wife Lynette

Teaching kids about our hospital



WDHS Midwife, Nancy Jones introduced children from the Good Shepherd Kindergarten to baby Isaac on a recent tour of the Hamilton Base Hospital. The kids were lucky enough to see one day old Isaac have his first bath, after exploring the Operating Theatre to find out what it's like to visit the hospital for an operation. Each year several kindergarten groups tour Hamilton Base Hospital and learn more about a range of experiences they might have in hospital.

Children and parents from Good Shepherd Kindergarten meet baby Isaac and Midwife, Nancy Jones

Charlie Watt Volunteer of the Month



April – Heather Wilkinson
Grange Residential Care Service Volunteer



May – Rosalie Howard
Ward, Community Transport, Birches Volunteer



June – Chris Phillips
Community Advisory Committee (CAC) Member



July – Bill Edge
Community Transport Volunteer



August – Hermine Schaa-Russeller
Coleraine Planned Activity Group Volunteer



September – Des King
Community Transport Volunteer

Employee of the Month



May – David McCabe
Personal Services Assistant



June – Dr Jan Slabbert
Medical Officer



July – Lorraine Northcott
Bed Manager, Health Information



August – Melanie Russell
Aboriginal Employment Project Officer



September – Eleni (Helen) Guy
Patient Service Assistant, Birches



October – Fay Picken
Personal Care Worker, Coleraine

A night of mischief with Marney

Over 200 guests enjoyed a night of not only mischief but mayhem at the 'Mischief with Marney' Dinner in August, raising \$50,000 for WDHS.

Guests were invaded by bikies, held a wedding, had to call the fire brigade and were then raided by Border Security and the Drug Squad to raise funds for the redevelopment of cancer treatment facilities at the Hamilton Base Hospital.

Performer Marney McQueen introduced the audience to three of her hilarious characters – Carbon Neutral Bride, Annabel

Sarah Jessica Winters Smythe, Border Security Officer, Karen Barnes and Rosa Waxoffski, Russian Beautician to the stars.

Four local chefs, Georgie Sevier (Candied Lime), Lindsay Fush (Rococo Events), Tony MacGillivray (Hamilton District Skills Centre) and Michael Hillsdon (Café Catalpa) produced a creative menu complete with edible vegetable gardens and a dessert train.

Thank you to the committee, sponsors and volunteers for their efforts in making the evening such a resounding success.



L to R: 'Bride' Marney McQueen with the Hon. Dan Tehan MP; chefs and their helpers preparing the elaborate dessert train creations and 'Rosa Waxoffski' serenading farmer Bill Crawford at the event

Calendar of Events

Xmas Appeal - December

Xmas Community Arts Project celebration - December 8

Cocktails in the Courtyard - February 12