

Autumn

2019

Hamilton Base Hospital
 Grange Residential Care Service
 The Birches Residential Care
 Allied Health / Hamilton House
 Frances Hewett Community Centre
 WDHS Youth Services
 National Centre for Farmer Health
 Coleraine District Health Service
 Merino Community Health Centre
 Penshurst District Health Service



Resident Olwyn MacLeod celebrating her 101st birthday at the Grange in April

Talking Health

Hospital Op Shop turns 80

The Hospital Op Shop celebrated its 80th Birthday in swinging style at the official opening of its spacious new store at 59 Brown Street.

Since opening in 1938, the shop has raised over \$900,000 for Hamilton Base Hospital, funding dozens of medical equipment items and more recently, supporting the purchase of a new Community Transport car. A yearly contribution of \$25,000 is also helping locals get to medical appointments in the city and regional centres.

The 'Community Hospital Jumble Shop' as it was originally known, was established following a public meeting in the Hamilton Town Hall. In the early days it sold farm and dairy produce as well as second-hand clothing.

For eight decades, many hundreds of volunteers have donated their time, sorting and displaying household goods, books, toys and clothing to assist people in need and those in search of a bargain.

WDHS Chief Executive (CE), Rohan Fitzgerald says the volunteers are the lifeblood of the shop and without their hard work and the support of many others it would have ceased to exist many years ago.

"This celebration is for everyone who has helped keep the doors open, including our incredible volunteers. We should acknowledge previous landlord, Bob Templeton, who generously rented the premises to WDHS for years. We are also immensely grateful to the community members who continue to bring their goods in for sale and to our all-important customers.

The Op Shop has contributed so much to the hospital and the community and continues to be an essential source of low cost goods for local families.

It is also a great option for recycling your pre-loved clothing and household items," Rohan said.



Guests were entertained with a parade showcasing eight decades of fashion at the Op Shop 80th Birthday celebrations

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From the CE

Understanding what it means to be healthy is a complex question. Even going to the supermarket can be a baffling experience for the most seasoned health professional. Health is a state of wellbeing. It reflects the complex interactions of a person's genetics, lifestyle and environment. Generally, a person's health depends on the factors that influence health, actions taken to improve health and the resources required for these interventions.

In the last four years WDHS has led a number of programs and strategies to raise awareness about some of the significant health challenges we face at a local and national level.

Through our involvement and leadership in promoting innovative health and wellbeing strategies, we have achieved world leading results. Simply put, the Southern Grampians Shire is one of very few regions across the globe to achieve a reduction in youth obesity levels.

Treating the causes of disease, not only the symptoms is difficult to achieve in a health system that is volume driven, rather than outcome focused.

Internationally the trend is shifting slowly, as the concept of value based healthcare

is recognised as supporting better results, for our 'customers'. The World Economic Forum refers to this as "health outcomes that matter to patients relative to the resources, or costs required".

When you consider that Australians are spending \$170 billion a year on healthcare, any efforts to reduce the cost and improve the health of our nation, must be good for our community.

WDHS, in partnership with Safer Care Victoria, recently established a pilot program based on the values based healthcare principles. The Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD) program is being developed to improve the health outcomes and experience of people living with COPD in Hamilton and surrounding areas. COPD is one of the leading causes of death in Australia and the rates in regional areas are too high.

System change begins at home and as an organisation we need to be prepared to constantly consider how we, as health professionals can change, to improve our health and wellbeing. WDHS employs 7.3% of the Southern Grampians Shire workforce and we are well-placed to make a significant impact on the health of the community as a whole.

Last year we surveyed 184 staff, to better understand how a range of factors influence their health. The questions looked at diet, exercise, sleep and alcohol consumption (to name a few). We are now releasing some of the survey results to our staff. Importantly we will be asking them how we can work together to create a healthier community at WDHS.

This groundbreaking work with Deakin University will measure the effectiveness of the interventions staff wish to implement over a two year period. We expect the research will also provide some insights into how we might also support the wider Southern Grampians community to enjoy better health.

Being healthy can be difficult. The modern world doesn't make it easy and while we don't have all the answers, rest assured, we are working tirelessly to realise our vision of 'creating healthier communities'.



Rohan Fitzgerald
Chief Executive

Volunteering life-changing for Josh

For 21 year old Josh Stephens, volunteering at WDHS has proven life-changing, setting him on a path to realise his career goals.

Diagnosed at the age of eight with Asperger's Syndrome, Josh's parents encouraged him to take up community work as a way to stay active and engaged when he was in his mid-teens.

Since then he has been a valued member of the 300 strong WDHS volunteer team, assisting in range of roles and activities, including the Social Support Group, the Grange aged care facility and the Hospital Op Shop.

Josh soon realised that aged care was his passion and while volunteering he actively participated in courses to help achieve his goal to one day work in this area. He completed several community service and aged care certificates to improve his understanding of the sector and his job prospects.

WDHS Social Support Group Coordinator, Brenda Uebergang says that right from the start Josh was great with aged care clients and residents.

"Josh's happy nature is infectious and when he is interacting with people you can see their spirits lift. He is very kind, hardworking, honest and genuinely interested in our clients and their wellbeing," Brenda says.

The opportunity to meet new people and build new skills through volunteering has assisted Josh to find work.

Recently he secured a placement in the aged care and disability sector, providing personal and domestic assistance to Hamilton residents.

In recognition of Josh's dedication, he was recently nominated for a 2019 Minister for Health Volunteer Award.

"It has been a privilege to have Josh working with us as a volunteer and I wish him all the very best with his career. I look forward to seeing what the future holds for this delightful young man," Brenda said.



WDHS Volunteer Josh Stephens with members of the Op Shop team

Making healthy choices easy

It's been nine years since Victoria's Healthy Eating Guidelines were first released, encouraging all public health services to revise their cafeteria meals to a minimum of 50% 'green' options.

Last year, WDHS was the first public health service in Australia to announce it was going one better, with a 100% 'green' Healthy Eating Policy.

'Green' category foods are based on the Australian Guide to Healthy Eating. They include breads, cereals, vegetables, fruit, yoghurt, lean meats, eggs, nuts and low fat milk.

They also importantly contain significantly reduced levels of saturated fat, sugar and salt.

The WDHS journey to healthier eating began in 2007, with the introduction of a healthier eating culture at the Hamilton Base Hospital Cafeteria. But many high-fat, high-salt, high-sugar items remained, with hot chips, party pies, and desserts still routinely available.

By 2015, WDHS nominated two days a week that would be 'healthy menu' days, with hot chips replaced by jacket potatoes and a range of healthier desserts and morning tea options.

Then in 2018, the Health Service drew a line in the sand by introducing a 'Green' only menu, a decision that is now being closely watched across the country.

CE, Rohan Fitzgerald says the rationale behind the change is simple, and he hopes to inspire other organisations to consider how they might support their staff and visitors to make healthier choices.

"We want to ensure that we are providing a safe and healthy workplace for our staff and it's very difficult to do that when you are actively selling foods with high levels of salt, sugar and saturated fat – all things we know contribute to chronic disease later in life.

From a community perspective, our model of care shouldn't only be about getting people back on their feet and sending them home again – it should be about helping to prevent hospitalisations in the first place.

My hope is that by making this change, we will inspire other organisations, workplaces and community groups to consider how they will make the 'healthy choice the easy choice' for their staff and customers," he said.

It wasn't that long ago that Australians were allowed to smoke on domestic flights and in pubs and Rohan says he looks forward to the day when the sight of a bag of hot chips in a hospital is equally unacceptable.

"We need to make radical changes if we are to address the frighteningly high rates of chronic disease in this country and across the globe.

Change needs to happen at all levels and at WDHS we are committed to doing what we can to make healthy choices easy and affordable for everyone," he said.



Community Liaison Officer, Gaynor Bennett making a 'healthy' selection in the new Green Bean Cafeteria, with Food Services Assistant, Teena Saunders

New aged care hub

Are you or a loved one in need of an aged care service and unsure where to start?

WDHS now has an Aged Care Hub, where you can discuss the full range of aged care services available.

Respite, residential and dementia care services at the Grange, Birches, Coleraine and Penshurst facilities, as well as home care packages are now managed out of the one convenient location.

Aged care specialists are on hand to help, so call WDHS today on 03 5551 8306 to discuss your needs and what's important to you.

Birches resident Gladys Wright and Aged Care Placement Coordinator, Michelle McGrath discuss residential aged care options



Events and fundraisers



The inspirational 2019 IWD guest speakers were Businesswoman, Jo Hodges and Good Shepherd College School Captain, Belle Stickland.



CE Rohan Fitzgerald, with three generations of the Kerr family, Cocktails Committee Chair, Vicki Whyte and WDHS Board Chair, Ian Whiting

Celebrating women

The International Women's Day lunch is a celebration of women and one way WDHS actively encourages and promotes equality for all. This year's lunch featured an all 'green' menu. Guest speaker Jo Hodges spoke of her battle with depression and how women and men complement and balance each other.

Cocktails for a cause

The 2019 Cocktails in the Courtyard was a great success, raising over \$22,000 for an ICU cardiac treadmill. A big thank you to major sponsors the Kerr family, Harry and Min Youngman and the Hamilton Medical Group. Congratulations to the Committee, chaired by Vicki Whyte, for staging another hugely successful Cocktails event.



Bendigo Radiology team members, enjoy a cool night of bowls in support of the Hamilton Base Bikers Murray to Moyne team



Coles Hamilton Manager, Jess Pitman and staff members Ange Morey, Shirley Richards and Wendy Vaughan take a tour of the newly completed Cancer and Dialysis Centre with WDHS Director of Corporate Services, Nick Starkie

Barefoot bowls comp a hit

Over a hundred skilled (and not so skilled) bowlers took to the greens for the WDHS Barefoot Bowls tournament in March. This Murray to Moyne fundraiser was organised by Claire Hawker and parents Glenda and Malcolm, who also provided the impressive food for the 26 teams who took part. A fun night was had by all, with the Tonissen Tornadoes taking out the honours – just winning out over the aptly named Schultzinators.

Coles supporting our cancer patients

A big thank you to members of the Coles Hamilton 'Community Circle' who donated over \$3,500 to the WDHS Cancer and Dialysis Centre. The team worked hard to raise the funds, holding several BBQ's, online auctions and a successful party plan event to support people living with cancer in our region. Well done Coles!



Craig Richardson, Kate Coote, Laura Robinson, Anne Walter, June Rundell and Marion Starkie modelling at the Auxiliary High Tea

High tea meets high fashion

Over 100 guests enjoyed an afternoon of high fashion at the third annual Hamilton Base Hospital Ladies Auxiliary High Tea. Held at the Hamilton Golf Club, the event included a fashion parade featuring clothing and accessories from local retailer Murph's Classics. The Ladies Auxiliary were well rewarded for their efforts, raising over \$2,400 to furnish the new family room in the Hamilton Hospital Medical Unit.



Dunkeld and District Community Bank Chair, Craig Oliver, Birches Auxiliary Treasurer, Peter Tew, WDHS CE, Rohan Fitzgerald and Dunkeld and District Community Bank Manager, Anna Watson

Birches bus celebration

At the official Birches Bus Launch in May, donors were invited to view the new bus that is bringing so much joy to aged care residents. Held in 'downtown' Gray Street, the event was a celebration of the new bus and a thank you to the Birches Auxiliary and to all those who 'got on board' this successful fundraiser.



H&DACT Secretary, Cicely Hardy, with guest speakers Rob and Jane Southey, H&DACT President, Mary Rose Dean and Committee Member, Jill Aitken

Travel tales raise funds for aged care

Tales of Rob and Jane Southey's 2,200km trek through Europe inspired guests at a recent Hamilton and District Aged Care Trust (H&DACT) luncheon. Over 100 people were captivated by Rob and Jane's extraordinary adventures - from the lows of being attacked by a dog and kidnapped by an old lady, to the highs of enjoying the opening night of La Boheme, dressed in hiking clothes. The event raised an impressive \$3,000 for WDHS aged care facilities.



Director of Nursing, Penshurst and Coleraine, Bronwyn Roberts, with Pat and Nanette Stanes and Penshurst Nurse Unit Manager, Catherine Loria

Penhurst market thank you

Over the last four years, Pat and Nanette Stanes have held a biannual market in Penhurst and raised a whopping \$12,450 for Penhurst and District Health Service. The funds have provided additional activities and equipment for residents, including visits by the Mobile Zoo, Museum Victoria and Rock and Roll evenings. They have also supported the building of the new BBQ pavilion and the installation of blinds for the resident dining area. We wish Pat and Nanette all the best and thank them for their extraordinary support of the hospital.

Sharing the music, not the flu

With the flu season hitting hard again in 2019, the Hospital Harmonies Choir stepped up to showcase their vocal and (to a lesser extent), acting talents in a video to promote the flu jab.

This year's rendition of Morris Albert's 1975 hit, 'Feelings', prompts staff and community members to "bare their arm to get their yearly quick sting".

For the past three years the Choir has created memorable videos, with important flu messages for social media, each racking up many thousands of views.

Infection Control Coordinator, Lesley Stewart says it's a bit of fun and a different way to communicate a vital message.

"The flu can hit quickly, last for weeks and have devastating outcomes for some people.

The best way for people to protect themselves and others is to get the flu shot. We are trying to communicate that, using a fun message," she said.

Vaccinations are available at local GP Clinics and some pharmacies.



The Hospital Harmonies Choir performs their latest tune to raise awareness of the importance of the flu vaccination

WDHS goes solar

WDHS has installed over 1,900 solar panels at its facilities, as part of a regional project to reduce greenhouse emissions and save on power costs.

The \$1million spend will allow WDHS to substitute around 20% of its current electricity needs with solar, saving an estimated \$200,000 on its annual electricity bills.

A small percentage of the electricity generated will also be returned to the grid, but the Health Service anticipates it will consume around 98% of the power produced.

With energy bills on the rise, and a desire to improve sustainability, Health Services across the southwest developed a plan to fit solar panels to 21 facilities in 2017.

Thousands of panels, totaling about 2.5 megawatts, have since been installed at healthcare facilities across the Southwest, to deliver substantial financial and environmental savings.

Director of Corporate Services, Nick Starkie says the Health Service is committed to exploring opportunities to reduce its environmental footprint.

"We expect the solar project to reduce our carbon emissions by 834 tonnes a year and we have also replaced all fluorescent lighting at our facilities with LEDs.

Late last year we also established a new wellbeing and environment workgroup to look at other ways to reduce our impact on the environment," Nick said.

The solar project was funded thanks to an interest-free loan package from the Government's 'Greener Government Buildings Program'.



Facility Manager, Trevor Wathen inspects new solar panels installed at the Hamilton campus

COPD on the rise

WDHS is working with Safer Care Victoria (SCV) and local healthcare professionals to better diagnose and support people with Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD).

One in seven Australians over the age of 40 suffer from COPD and hundreds of thousands of people across the country have COPD and don't know it.

Research suggests that the number of people living with COPD in our region is greater than in other parts of Victoria and people are becoming sicker, with more Emergency visits and hospital admissions.

COPD is an umbrella term for a group of progressive lung conditions, including emphysema, chronic bronchitis and chronic asthma. Onset is generally in mid-life, with symptoms including shortness of breath and coughing.

SCV are funding a regional collaborative based at WDHS and over 70 local health workers recently attended a workshop to discuss strategies to better support people living with the disease.

WDHS Respiratory Nurse Specialist, Meg Watson, COPD Workshop Guest Speaker, Dr Eduardo Gaio, COPD Project Coordinator, Liz McCourt and CE Rohan Fitzgerald





Hamilton Hospital Emergency / ICU nurses, celebrating International Nurses Day

Celebrating our nurses

On International Nurses Day in May WDHS celebrated its wonderful nursing staff, who deliver the very best in patient care, making a difference to the lives of others every day.

They work across a diverse range of disciplines, supporting people in their homes, in aged care facilities in our hospital and the community.

A very big thank you to our nursing team!

NCFH kidney disease study

The National Centre for Farmer Health (NCFH) is conducting a study to understand the prevalence of chronic kidney disease in rural communities in Western Victoria.

Researchers are seeking to identify risk factors, to better understand why the disease is becoming an increasing problem in rural areas.

Nephrologist assisting with the study, Professor Karen Dwyer, says many people may be unaware they have the disease because 90 per cent of kidney function can be lost without experiencing any symptoms.

However, she says screening is relatively simple, with blood and urine samples establishing the presence and stage of the disease.

The risk factors for kidney disease include being over the age of 60, having high blood pressure, obesity, diabetes, smoking, heart problems or stroke, family history of kidney disease, history of acute kidney injury and being of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander descent.

The findings of the study will be released in late 2019.



Nephrologist Karen Dwyer, with study participants David and Mary Currie and NCFH Researcher, Jessie Adams

Your voice is important

Become a Consumer Representative and help WDHS shape its future healthcare delivery.

Several vacancies exist on our committees, where consumer input is highly valued.

WDHS is committed to ensuring diverse perspectives and views are heard.

For more information contact Community Liaison on:

03 5551 8540 or community.liaison@wdhs.net

Charlie Watt Volunteer of the Month



October '18
Helen Walker
– Community Transport and Op Shop



November '18
Kay Hadden
– Ward and Hospital Harmonies



December '18
Peter Moore
– Community Transport



January '19
Ian McIntyre
– Social Support Group, Op Shop & Consumer Working Groups



February '19
Margaret Burgin
– Op Shop



March '19
Joshua Stephens
– Social Support Group

Patients get dressed to get better

WDHS is reminding patients and their families to not only pack their pyjamas, but appropriate day wear for their hospital stay. It's all part of the worldwide #EndPJparalysis movement, to get patients out of their pyjamas and out of bed, to speed recovery and help minimise the risks of prolonged immobility.

#EndPJparalysis
Project Lead, Sarah Baker says 'Pyjama Paralysis' is a term used to describe a state in which a patient might stay in their pyjamas throughout their entire hospital stay.

"Research shows that staying in bed for too long, not getting up and doing

activities such as washing and dressing, may mean that patients struggle to get back to their normal activity levels.

This doesn't help with recovery and can lead to longer hospital stays and significantly lower mobility and independence," she said.

#endpjparalysis

If you are visiting a relative, please help by bringing the following items to hospital

- Day clothes
- Well fitting shoes or slippers
- Glasses, hearing aids, mobility aids and/or other items used at home

Our 'gorilla' appeal

WDHS is raising funds for a new 'gorilla' steriliser valued at \$135,000 for the Hamilton Base Hospital Operating Theatres. The 'gorilla' is used to sterilise equipment used in the 3,000

plus operations performed each year at the hospital. Please support this cause, by donating online at www.wdhs.net or complete the form below and return to: WDHS, PO Box 283, Hamilton 3300

Employee of the Month



November '18
John Hedley
Group Manager
Support Services



December '18
Fenella Campbell
Executive Assistant



January '19
Jack Parfey
Gardener / Handyman



February '19
Monique Sobey
Wellbeing Officer



March '19
Claire Hawker
Executive Assistant



April '19
Amy Holmes
Clinical Nurse
Specialist / Stomal
Nurse Coordinator



First Name _____ Surname _____ Title _____

Address _____ Postcode _____

Donation Amount (\$) _____ Please charge to my Visa Mastercard

Name on card _____

Card No. _____ Expiry Date _____ CCV _____

Signed _____ Email address for receipt _____

Please make cheques payable to **Western District Health Service**

For direct deposit **Bank details BSB 083 663 Account 51 581 1574 include reference DK and your surname**

Email EFT remittance to **community.liaison@wdhs.net**

ALL DONATIONS OVER \$2 ARE FULLY TAX DEDUCTIBLE - THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT