

Auricle

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THE FUTURE OF AURICLE

Auricle is Barwon Health's staff newsletter that aims to share important information about our organisation and staff community.





We want to deliver this news in a way that reaches staff in a convenient and enjoyable way, whether it's a digital version found in your inbox or a physical edition read during your lunch break.

To help us tailor Auricle to our growing staff base, please fill out the one-minute survey linked to this QR code link and enter the draw to win a **free coffee**.



Cover

Pictured: Mark takes out gold with new kidney.

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Message from the Chief Executive



Dear colleagues,

I want to express my gratitude to each and every one of you who contributed to the preparation and support for the Accreditation visit in July. It was a fantastic opportunity to share the great work we do and to identify opportunities for further improvement. I am pleased to say we had great feedback from the surveyors who commented on the enthusiasm, authenticity, cohesion and dedication of our staff.

Going forward, we can expect short-notice accreditations to take place every three years, with only 48 hours of preparation. So it's important we continue to work together so we are always prepared to demonstrate the high level of commitment, innovation and patient-centred care that we expect of ourselves and each other.

We have now welcomed The Hon. Lisa Neville as Barwon Health's new Board Chair. Many of you will be familiar with her extensive work as a Member of Parliament with Ministerial portfolios, including Mental Health, Aged Care, Emergency Services, Environment and Climate Change, and Police and Water. We also welcome Ms Libby Mears and Mr Shane Solomon to our Board.

I would like to extend our appreciation to Brian Cook, Jennifer Williams and Jason Trethowan for their service to Barwon Health as they step down from the Board.

Additionally, I am thrilled to announce that Tracy Gilligan, who has been serving as the Interim Chief People and Culture Officer, has accepted the position on a permanent basis. Tracy's passion for nurturing a positive work environment and her extensive leadership experience, both locally and internationally, make her an ideal fit for this role. She is already making a positive impact, and I invite you all to join me in congratulating Tracy on her appointment.

This year, we have been successful in expanding our services. In particular the recommissioning of the Youang Surgery Centre has provided the capacity to undertake more planned surgery. We are now able to treat more patients and reduce waiting times for surgery. In 2022-23, we treated 25,247 surgical patients - this is 5693 more than the previous year. We know we have more work to do to improve access to our specialist clinics but it is great to see the surgery program perform so well.

There are numerous building projects underway including the Early Parenting Centre at the McKellar Centre, and the internal fit-out phase for the Central Geelong Mental Health Hub. We are also making significant strides in the development of the Children's Emergency Department. Planning is progressing on the Barwon Women's and Children's with the concept design close to being completed.

I am also pleased to share that over 40 clinicians actively participated in shaping Barwon Health's new Digital Strategy. This work will serve as a roadmap that will guide the transition to better digital infrastructure and services in future. Over the past two years we have made enormous progress on our core network and cyber security settings creating the stable platform for us to deliver the digital systems we all need to provide services.

Looking ahead, the new Cherry Creek Youth Justice Centre, located near Little River, is set to open in August. This facility will cater for males between the ages of 15 and 17 and Barwon Health has been engaged to deliver primary healthcare services. Our team will work alongside mental health service Orygen to offer a comprehensive health care. Health website.

I want to express my sincere appreciation for your unwavering commitment to keeping our community safe and healthy. There is much to be excited about and I look forward to highlighting each milestone as we reach the rest of 2023 and beyond.

Frances Diver | Chief Executive

NEW-LOOK CAFETERIA COMPLETE

The University Hospital Geelong Cafeteria has been refurbished in recent months, with a new coffee hub, updated dining area and a staff lounge.

The works have resulted in three separate zones – general dining, general lounge, and private “staff only” lounge.

The project aimed to improve the atmosphere to enhance dining and relaxation opportunities for staff health and wellbeing, and project officer Kelly Blake said there had been incredibly positive feedback to the refurbishment so far.

“The whole cafeteria space is simply stunning and honestly would not be possible without the valuable contributions of those involved in the project,” she said.

“I hope all of the staff and visitors to Barwon Health appreciate the space as much as I do.”



SURGERY MILESTONE FOR CARDIOTHORACIC UNIT

Barwon Health’s Cardiothoracic Unit has reached a milestone of 10,000 surgeries after 26 years of operations.

The Cardiothoracic Surgery Unit commenced service on 29 July 1997 and cardiothoracic surgeon Mr Michael Seitz performed the 10,000th heart operation on 14 June, a surgical aortic valve replacement on Warrnambool resident Jenny Ashworth.

“The service has evolved since 1997 and above all the most significant change is the improvements in the safety of the cardiac surgery, with a mortality risk of less than one per cent for a valve surgery,” Mr Seitz said.

“We now perform nearly 500 major heart procedures a year. The number of patients being treated has increased and patients are also becoming more complex, but our complication rate is consistently reducing. “This is a reflection of the skills and commitment of the whole team.

“We provide outreach programs in Ballarat and Warrnambool, while also servicing communities from some metropolitan areas including Werribee, Melton and Sunshine.”

Cardiothoracic Surgery Director Mr Michael Rowland said the team was thankful to colleagues from diverse areas across Barwon Health for the support in delivering a high-quality service.

“The Cardiothoracic Surgical Unit will continue to deliver the service to the community and hopes to complete the next 10,000 operations in under 20 years,” he said.

“Bringing this service to Geelong since 1997 means 10,000 surgeries have taken place for people who previously would have had to travel and stay in Melbourne hospitals for several nights.

“Expanding our service into rural areas of the Barwon South West region allows us to make the service more accessible for patients who prefer to stay closer to home.”



Pictured: Cardiothoracic surgeon Michael Seitz performed Barwon Health’s 10,000th heart operation on Warrnambool resident Jenny Ashworth.

REVAMPED NUCLEAR MEDICINE SPACE IMPROVES PATIENT FLOW

Recent building works have paved the way to co-locate BMI’s GE SPECT/CT Gamma Cameras into one space on level 1 at University Hospital Geelong.

The works helped consolidate the Nuclear Medicine department into one space, improving the patient experience as they move from the waiting room to scanning areas.

It also brings all staff together in one working environment.

Co-location of the Nuclear Medicine department now paves the way for further building works on Level 1, facilitating the installation of a second interventional suite due for completion in August 2023.



Pictured: Members of the Nuclear Medicine team in the new space.

MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING LOCAL FACILITY TOUR



Pictured: Former service operations manager Michelle Zarafa, acting implementation officer Katie Smith, Member for Lara Ella George, CEO Frances Diver, MHDAS co-director Maree Bennett, and community engagement lead Leah Ingles.

In April, Member for Lara Ella George toured the temporary site of the Greater Geelong–Queenscliffe Mental Health and Wellbeing Local facility.

The service operating in North Geelong provides mental health and wellbeing support for those who need it and is the result of a consortium between Barwon Health, ermha365, Wellways and Wathaurong.

As one of the first six Mental Health and Wellbeing Locals in Victoria, the initiative is part of flagship reforms recommended by the Royal Commission into Victoria’s Mental Health System, which will see between 50-60 new services open by the end of 2026.

Community engagement lead Leah Ingles said each of the services was free and easily accessible, with no referrals required.

“Approximately 135 people have accessed our service since opening in late December 2022,” she said.

Later this year, the service will relocate to the completed Central Community Hub on Moorabool Street.



Mark takes out gold with new kidney

Highton resident Mark Cavanagh has a new lease on life thanks to the kidney transplant that gave him “a second chance.”

In April, Mark competed for Australia at the World Transplant Games in Perth, taking home a gold medal for single lawn bowls, less than a year after his life-changing kidney transplant. He recently returned to Barwon Health’s Home Dialysis Unit to thank staff for their support.

Mark first started dialysis at the Home Renal Unit in mid-2022 and was told it could be a four years on the waiting list for a new kidney.

“Six weeks later, I got a phone call that blew me away,” he said. “I was compatible and got very, very lucky.”

“I had a lot of fluid retention, headaches, high blood pressure, lethargy, a lot of forgetfulness as a result of my kidney failure.

“Having this transplant has given me a second lease of life. The gift of life is just enormous.”

Mark said lawn bowls had been a big part of his life and the World Transplant Games was a way to show organ donors the significance of their generosity.

“The Games are about being able to thank the donors and donor families, particularly to show what we can achieve with their support and generosity,” he said.

“The doctors and specialists have been brilliant, and everyone involved at the Home Renal Unit was superb.

“The nurses don’t only do their job but they become your friend because you spend so much time with them and get to know them – it’s a lot of love and care.

“I showed them the medal and they were rapt. I said this is due to your support and hard work.”

To register for the donor register, visit www.donatelife.gov.au.

Pictured: Mark Cavanagh won a gold medal for single lawn bowls at the World Transplant Games in Perth.

Reunited with those who saved his life - Ajay’s ECMO story

Early this year, Ajay Manchandani feared for his life. After contracting abdominal pains that lasted for a few days, Ajay presented himself to Werribee Mercy Hospital where he began having shortness of breath. Whilst admitted, they detected pneumonia, a bacterial infection in the bloodstream and numerous blood clots.

Ajay was transferred to Sunshine Hospital where he was put on a ventilator, but the decision was made to put Ajay on ECMO (extracorporeal membrane oxygenation) here at University Hospital Geelong.

Ajay was on ECMO for 39 days which ultimately saved his life. Ajay has no recollection of the events that transpired whilst on ECMO, but he is extremely grateful for those that helped him during his ordeal.



Pictured: Patient Ajay Manchandani.

“I’m extremely grateful. I keep thinking about everyone who looked after me here and I don’t have enough words. Each one of them were all so kind, supportive, loving and caring. It was just amazing. Even the nurses in the regular wards were so caring,” Ajay said.

“They made me feel comfortable because when I woke up, I kept thinking about what happened and if I did something wrong or if it will happen again. But all the doctors helped make me comfortable and reassure me.”

ECMO can be used for both cardiac and respiratory failure. In Ajay’s case it was used for respiratory failure.

“The blood is taken from the patient via a cannula and circulated through a pump and oxygenator where the blood is oxygenated and carbon dioxide removed. It is then returned to the patient via a separate cannula. Patients can have no respiratory function and are fully supported on VV ECMO while their lungs recover,” said ECMO coordinator Lucy Range.

Ajay and his family recently stopped by Barwon Health’s Intensive Care Unit to reunite and thank those who helped save his life. Ajay is now in full recovery and is slowly returning to work and resuming other activities he enjoys.

“I’m extremely grateful. I keep thinking about everyone who looked after me here and I don’t have enough words. Each one of them were all so kind, supportive, loving and caring. It was just amazing. Even the nurses in the regular wards were so caring.”

Tackling trauma through peer support program



Pictured: Emergency Department doctors involved in the peer support program: Megan Hamilton, Belinda Carne, Minnie Seward, Belinda Hibble, Chris McRae, Anoushka Perera.

A peer support program is offering Emergency Department (ED) staff a listening ear after potentially traumatic workplace incidents.

The Barwon Health ED Peer Support Program started in 2017 as a result of a particularly challenging event and a recognition that doctors and nurses in the ED often find benefit in talking to colleagues who understand the stress of their roles.

While research showed that staff peer support programs had been successful in areas like the military and fire departments, it had not been implemented in hospital settings, according to ED physician Dr Belinda Carne.

She said Barwon Health's goal was to contact staff after critical and potentially traumatic incidents and give them an opportunity to receive peer support without a formal counselling process.

"During the COVID-19 years, we increased our brief to include other workplace events and in recent months, we conducted Peer Support Training workshops to extend the support team to include administrative staff, along with doctors and nurses," she said.

"This recognises that all of us working in ED are exposed to potentially traumatic events on a regular basis and can benefit from contact by a peer post-event – someone who understands our role and workplace context.

"We are excited that other areas of the hospital, and potentially other health services, are now looking to implement formalised Peer Support Programs along the same lines in order to provide another option for support for staff exposed to potentially traumatic events.

The Peer Support process involves various steps as part of the process, including a combination of text messages and phone calls that allow staff members the chance to opt-out of contact or to speak confidentially about their experience.

"During the COVID-19 years, we increased our brief to include other workplace events and in recent months, we conducted Peer Support Training workshops to extend the support team to include administrative staff, along with doctors and nurses."



Survey findings have confirmed the success of the program, with 100 per cent of 30 ED doctors saying the program has been useful post-critical incidents.

BELOW ARE SOME COMMENTS FROM THE SURVEYS:

"Simply knowing that someone would make contact had a great impact on me. Just that knowledge seemed to relieve the stress of what I had witnessed. It meant I didn't feel like I had to deal with it alone if I found myself struggling post the event."

"I wish there had been this program during my training."

"The sense that there is a team at work in the ED and that others care and have ones back is always a positive and useful thing."

"I was amazed at how useful I found the discussion, in terms of the emotional support and offloading, plus thinking through clinical aspects."

If you work in an area in the hospital where a peer support program could be of help, please feel free to contact the Director of the Peer Support Program, Dr Belinda Carne, belin@barwonhealth.org.au for discussion and/or provision of peer support training.



Pictured: Lauren Bretthauer (second from left) and the Corio Community Health team.

Physical challenges raise funds for local causes

A group of dedicated health professionals at the Corio Community Health Centre have joined forces in fundraising challenges to make a meaningful impact on mental health initiatives.

Leading the charge, allied health assistant Lauren Bretthauer led the charge, highlighting the importance of the team's endeavours in promoting a healthy workplace culture and empowering the community.

The successful One Foot Forward Challenge raised over \$1700 and involved walking over 1000km, fostering team bonds through bake sales and team walks.

"Since starting with Barwon Health in June 2022, I have truly reignited my passion to help those who need it the most," she said.

"Working in the northern suburbs has been the perfect location to drive this passion to empower disadvantaged families."

Lauren took another opportunity to raise money through the Surfcoast 2023 Trek with representatives from the Allied Health and Paediatric teams, raising \$2525 for the Kids+ Foundation and Give Where You Live Foundation.

"Once the word was spread across our contacts, the donations were endless," she said.

"It was wonderful to see so many other likeminded teams giving back to the community we live and work in.

"I am proud to be working in the North, where all the allied health staff have such an incredibly noteworthy passion for patient centred care, in one of the most disadvantaged catchments in the state."



BMI Colac celebrates first birthday

Barwon Health partnered with Colac Area Health (CAH) in 2022 to bring an expanded medical imaging service to the Colac community. In April, we celebrated the one-year anniversary, marking a milestone in providing more accessible quality imaging services to Colac Area Health and the community.

With the opening of the Barwon Health service in Colac, many people no longer need to travel to Geelong to access state-of-the-art imaging technology, including CT, X-Rays, dental and ultrasound imaging.

The partnership between Colac Area Health and Barwon Health means there is immediate access to clinical images to expedite appropriate care when patients require a referral to Geelong for specialist care or an urgent transfer.

BMI operations manager Yasmin Verbunt said the service had seen more than 13,000 patients in its first 12 months and performed more than 16,000 examinations.

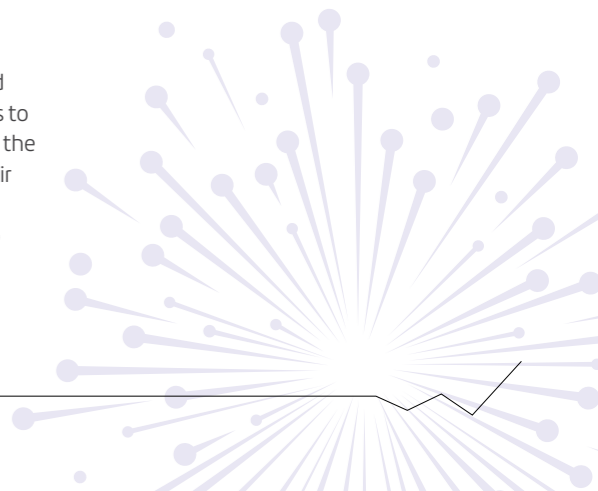
"We are thrilled to celebrate our one-year anniversary and the successful year we've had in serving the local Colac community," she said.

"We've built a team of highly trained and experienced professionals who have worked tirelessly to provide quality imaging services to our patients. We are delighted that some of the staff we recruited were able to return to their home town of Colac and this has enhanced the success of our service and enabled us to provide on-call 24/7 urgent services."

The team is supported by an onsite consultant radiologist and registrar and the broader medical imaging team from Barwon Health that assists by rotating to Colac as needed to support both day and on-call services.

The partnership with CAH has included the investment in new equipment, including a Phillips digital X-Ray machine, Carestream digital OPG, and Phillips Ultrasound unit, providing patients with cutting-edge technology to diagnose and treat a range of conditions.

Pictured: The BMI Colac team celebrates the first anniversary of the service.





Pictured: Former chief radiographer Philip Brough.

"I leave Barwon Health knowing that I have given my all to advance the department and leave it in a strong position for the future."

Chief radiographer leaves lasting impression

Retiring chief radiographer Philip Brough has reflected on 46 years of medical imaging evolution at Barwon Health, which includes 24 years in his leadership role.

Philip, who retired in June, has enjoyed a clear view of the medical imaging service's transformation, starting with basic X-ray, angiography and ultrasound, the advent of the first CT scanner in 1989, and incredible digital advancements that have taken place over the past 20 years.

"When I commenced my career at the then named Geelong Hospital in 1977, medical imaging services were basic compared to today's standards," he said.

"The real revolution came in 2007 when we participated in the Victorian Government PACS Project, transitioning from analogue film to direct digital imaging, which allowed us to acquire and share images instantly. It was a game-changer for our department."

Under Philip's leadership, medical imaging at Barwon Health embarked on a journey toward world-class standards, with a goal to implement the world's best practices in Geelong.

"We focused on investing in state-of-the-art equipment, recruiting top talent, improving our systems and processes, and engaging the community through an extensive marketing campaign," he said.

"We integrated medical imaging services with the emergency department, resulting in a comprehensive imaging hub that operates a range of 24/7 services."

"My final act as chief radiographer has been project managing a new hybrid interventional radiology room consisting of angiography, CT and ultrasound imaging. Later this year, we will be adding an X-ray room into the new paediatric emergency department and MRI at Barwon Health North."

As retirement nears, Philip expressed gratitude toward his dedicated team and colleagues.

"Managing a large team of radiographers across multiple sites has had its challenges, particularly during the recent COVID-19 pandemic, but I have been fortunate to work with exceptional individuals who have supported the growth and success of the medical imaging department," he said.

"We have taken on many students from Deakin University, and it has been immensely rewarding to witness their professional and personal development.

"I leave Barwon Health knowing that I have given my all to advance the department and leave it in a strong position for the future.

"I am proud of what we have achieved together."

Philip described a career in medical imaging as a transformative journey.

"It teaches you about the human condition - life, death and everything in between," he said.

"I look forward to the challenge of passing on some of my experience and knowledge to the future generations of radiographers, as I take on a position of Senior Lecturer at Deakin University."

Colourful syringes target accidental sharing

Barwon Health's Harm Reduction Service has introduced distinct coloured syringes to help reduce accidental needle sharing and the transmission of blood-borne diseases.

Unisharps are a fixed needle syringe designed for self-injection, with plungers and caps that are made in 10 different colours, created by social enterprise Exchange Supplies.

Data from the Australian NSP Survey shows a rate of seven per cent of respondents reported receptive sharing of syringes.

Alcohol and drug harm reduction worker Claire Trethewey said minimising accidental sharing was particularly important to Barwon Health's Harm Reduction team, with syringes stocked in five Needle and Syringe Program services, operating from Corio, Belmont, Newcomb, Torquay and Anglesea Community Health Centres, along with a mobile delivery service and 24-hour syringe vending machines.

"The introduction of these syringes provides a significant tool in reducing the spread of blood born viruses, and offers an opportunity for enhanced engagement with consumers to learn about safer drug use and particularly safer injecting practices," she said.

"The concept of Unisharp fixed syringes was born from an ethnographic study of injecting that found most receptive syringe sharing is accidental, because all syringes look the same.

"The study strongly recommended that unique syringe appearances would be a powerful tool to reduce accidental sharing."

"Eliminating sharing decreases the risk of contracting a blood borne virus, particularly Hepatitis C, so our team hopes the increased distribution of Unisharps will significantly reduce the likelihood of accidental sharing of syringes, contributing to Australia meeting the World Health Organisations goal of eliminating Hep C by 2030."

To watch a video about how Unisharps are made, scan the QR code.



Pictured: Colourful syringes target accidental sharing.



COMMUNITY CONNECTORS

A new program is offering a beacon of hope for vulnerable individuals and communities, as a united approach from lived experience and healthcare workers offers a path toward a brighter future.



Pictured: Mana Shay: Cultura community development officer, Denise Miller: Community Connector registered nurse, Jason Brown: lived experience peer worker, Suzanne Harman: Community Connectors lead.

In a bid to enhance the health and general wellbeing of individuals residing in social housing communities, the Community Connectors program has made remarkable strides through targeted preventative and early intervention services.

Community Connectors lead Suzanne Harmon said the group of lived experience peer workers, nursing and health promotion staff aimed to link residents with vital support and services, providing a lifeline for those in need by using a proactive approach.

"We are involved in assertive outreach, including door-knocking residents and attending free community meal programs to informally connect with residents," Sue said.

"Over the course of six months, we have reached 1128 residents, with 156 individuals benefiting from 257 referrals to a wide range of critical services, encompassing allied health, mental health, dental and specialist clinics, legal and financial support, advocacy services, disability services, and more.

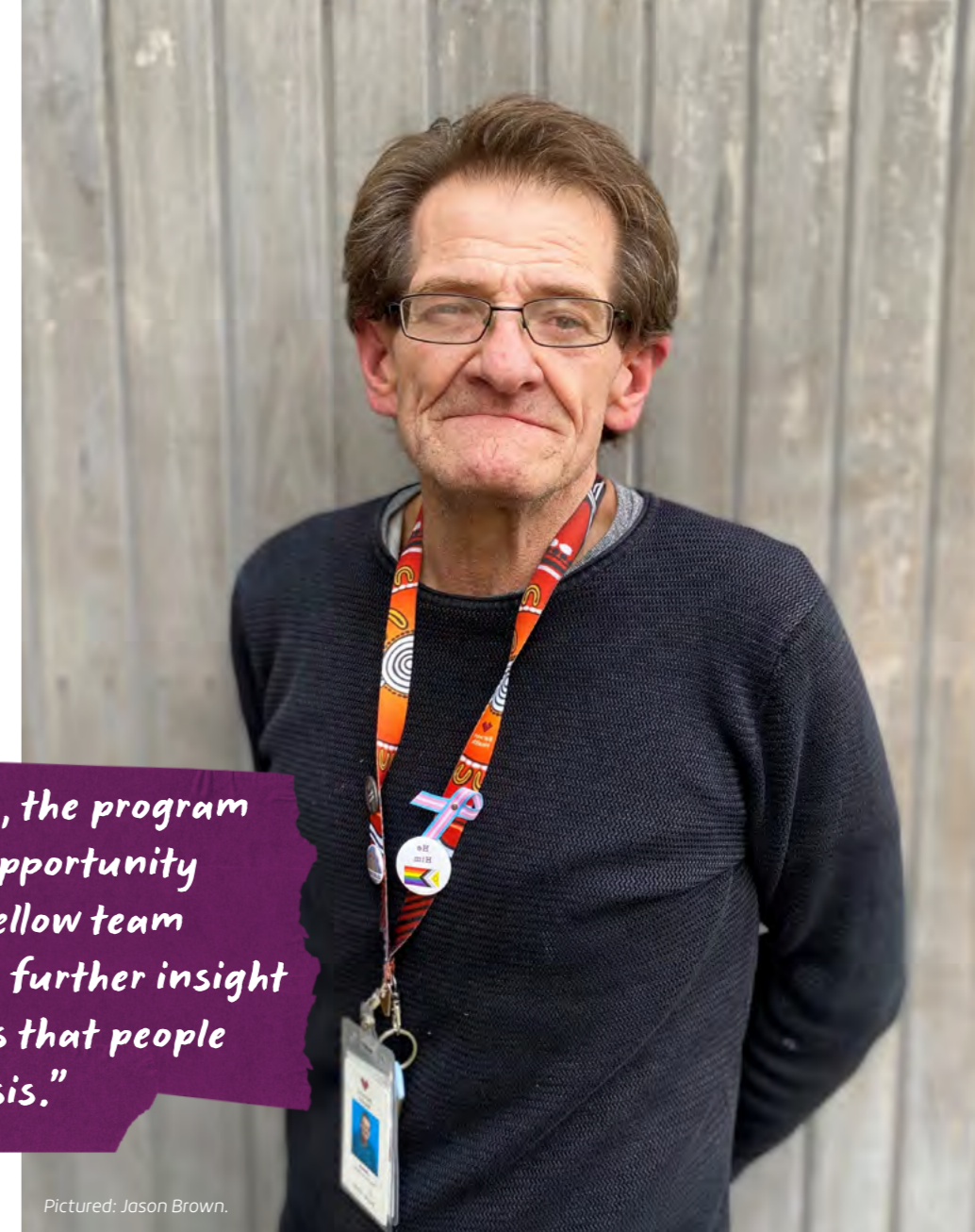
"For residents who find themselves managing complex circumstances they have said that linking into just one service that can support their health, their financial situation or their housing circumstances has been the start they needed to gradually turn their future around."

The program aims to foster sustainability by developing a comprehensive Community Connectors resource pack, as well as providing lived experience workers with training and resources to facilitate future employment opportunities.

JASON BROWN - COMMUNITY CONNECTORS RESIDENT REFERENCE GROUP PARTICIPANT

"For me personally, the program has provided the opportunity to learn from my fellow team members and gain further insight into the challenges that people face on a daily basis."

Pictured: Jason Brown.



"I joined the resident reference group for Community Connectors, which I found interesting due to my work in the community of Norlane and Corio advocating for others who live in public housing from time to time. When there was a position available as a lived experience peer support worker, I decided to apply due to my work in the community. I think the high number of referrals show the program has had a positive benefit to the community.

I enjoy being part of a team that provides people with that connection to whatever services they need at the time. We're there to give people the information that they require to access these services and in some more complex cases we're advocating on their behalf. For me personally, the program has provided the opportunity to learn from my fellow team members and gain further insight into the challenges that people face on a daily basis. It's allowed my voice to be heard and accepted by my peers at Barwon Health and the Department of Families, Fairness and Housing (DFFH), which is very fulfilling.

I believe a lot can be learned from lived experience peer workers and I can see them in a lot of areas - not only health, but all aspects of community services, because not everything is taught via a book. Knowledge and understanding of people is of as much importance to gaining that trust that people want to feel when dealing with services."



THE HEART OF THE MATTER

WE'RE STRIVING FOR BETTER FOR FIRST NATIONS PEOPLES

ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR ANDREW HUGHES | ACTING CLINICAL DIRECTOR | COMMUNITY AND REHAB

It is critical that Barwon Health acknowledge the historical and cultural context of First Nations peoples in understanding the disparity in health outcomes for the local First Nations community. A group of clinicians – doctors, nurses and allied health clinicians, are working with our Aboriginal Health Unit to strengthen their cultural skills and understanding to become indigenous allies and champion better health outcomes.

Artwork by Nathan Patterson, Wagiman man from Northern Territory, who currently lives on Wadawurrung Country (Geelong, Victoria)



Our vision for reconciliation is to support local First Nations peoples to live their best lives with the best possible health and wellbeing outcomes.



Barwon Health is committed to providing culturally responsive care for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples accessing our services. Our vision for reconciliation is to support local First Nations peoples to live their best lives with the best possible health and wellbeing outcomes. We have been strengthening our services and partnerships with Wathaurong Health Service to promote understanding and respect for culture; however, we recognise that we have much more to do.

Barwon Health is creating champions who actively support and promote culturally safe healthcare for First Nations peoples. These champions will create an alliance with all areas of Barwon Health to support culturally safe care for First Nations peoples. By amplifying the voices of First Nations peoples, supporting Aboriginal leadership, and actively addressing disadvantage and racism, allies can contribute towards a more equitable and inclusive healthcare system. As a clinician, I am proud to be a champion and ally for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and to work towards improving health outcomes and promoting culturally responsive care.

Being an ally means being someone who can be relied upon and trusted by First Nations peoples to actively recognise and address inequality and commit to taking action.

Being an ally for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities is a crucial step towards promoting culturally responsive care in healthcare settings. It goes beyond acknowledging the historical and cultural context of First Nations peoples, to actively recognising and addressing racism and committing to take action against it.

One important aspect of being an ally is educating ourselves through reading, listening, and watching to learn about history, culture, and experiences of First Nations peoples. It is essential to understand the context and challenges faced by First Nations peoples to effectively advocate for their rights and needs within the healthcare system.

We also need to be aware of our own privilege and bias. Everyone has biases, both subconscious and overt, and it is important to understand how these biases may impact interactions and perceptions of First Nations peoples. It is important to reflect on our own privilege and biases, and work to challenge and change them to be a genuine and reliable ally.

Being an ally is a journey of continuous learning and growth. It is important to acknowledge that mistakes may be made along the way, but it is essential to learn from these mistakes and strive to do better.

In March, Barwon Health launched a program to encourage clinicians to be an ally for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.

An indigenous ally is a trusted person, someone who makes an effort, a champion, or as we like to call it, a friend. This level of support is what First Nations peoples can expect when they see a clinician at Barwon Health.

Pictured: Associate Professor Andrew Hughes.



Partnership gets Geelong workers moving

A new health partnership is aiming to make Geelong the most active city in Australia.

Local health collaboration Active Geelong has been working with Barwon Health's Healthy Communities Unit (HCU) since 2019 to support workplaces to increase physical activity and reduce staff's sedentary behaviour.

Health promotion officer Rowena Rittinger said the partnership would create a range of new opportunities and initiatives to improve the health of local workers.

"Facilitated consultations are being conducted with staff from local businesses, to understand the experience of local workers and what helps and hinders them being active," she said.

"These participatory workshops engage workers to understand the factors influencing how active they are, explore where action can be taken to increase their physical activity, and prioritises actions the workplace can put in place to support healthier activity levels in staff.

"A range of other innovative initiatives to increase physical activity for workers are promoted by each partner to create change in local workplaces.

"From Walk and Talk events, learning forums delivered by experts in the field, and promotion of practical Workplace Health support available, Active Geelong and the HCU are committed to improving health outcomes for local workers."



Pictured: Rowena Rittinger, Lynne Quick from Healthy Communities Unit with Michelle Hemley and Dr Hugh Seward Active Geelong.

RURAL COMMUNITY EMBRACES VIRTUAL CARE

Dartmoor residents are embracing the ease and convenience of Barwon Health's Acute Referral Service (BARS) service.

The new model of care allows patients to seek advice via telehealth from an Emergency Department physician without travelling to a regional centre, which has been particularly helpful for rural families.

When Emma's young son Harvey developed some nasty looking sores around his mouth over a weekend, she called on her local Bush Nursing Centre for help. Nurses at the centre were quick to diagnose Impetigo - infection of the skin caused by bacteria, often called school sores.

Nurses advised Emma that Harvey would need to visit his doctor as soon as possible for antibiotics to stop the sores from spreading.

Emma was unable to book a GP appointment that week but with the assistance of the staff at the Dartmoor Bush Nursing Centre, a consultation in Dartmoor's Telehealth hub took place with Barwon Health's Acute Referral Service.

The ED doctor confirmed the nurse's preliminary diagnosis and organised a prescription to be sent to Emma's closest pharmacy to begin Harvey's treatment immediately.

Much to his delight, he was able to return to kindergarten the following week and Emma was able to return to work.

Some other case uses for BARS at Dartmoor have been for early diagnoses/treatment where delayed treatment may have led to hospitalisation and worse outcomes.



Pictured: Dartmoor resident Emma with her son Harvey during a telehealth consultation.



Rostering revamp

A new rostering system is rolling out for more than 8000 Barwon Health staff and transforming the way shifts and leave are managed.

The Optima Rostering digital solution was first introduced to select pilot departments in 2022, with a wider rollout taking place this year.

By late-2024, the system will reduce the reliance on manual forms for every department, providing staff with a system to set availability for extra shifts, view rostered shifts and book leave whilst providing management greater workforce visibility.

Maxine Wren, Barwon Health Digital Projects change and communications lead, said creating a single, standardised rostering system for Barwon Health provided more equitable rostering that aligned with federal and local government strategies to digitise the Victorian health service.

"Two of our pilot groups 'People and Culture' and 'BC6N Nursing' have already rolled out Optima Rostering and Employee Online to their teams," she said.

"These teams have been so supportive and provided valuable learnings from the pilots, which has allowed us to refine our project plan to ensure the solution will meet our needs."

"In June, the project team has kicked off meetings with key directorates identified in the phase one roll out group, which will help us understand how to adapt rostering practices to the Optima solution."

The Optima Rostering digital solution was first introduced to select pilot departments in 2022, with a wider rollout taking place this year.



Pictured: The Optima system will reduce the reliance on manual forms across every Barwon Health department.



Pictured: ECMO has been used in Barwon Health's ICU since 2011.

An Intensive Care Unit (ICU) Quality Improvement Project is using in-depth interviews to debunk myths and get to the heart of what matters most to ICU patients.

Over three months, 30 adult inpatients were interviewed face-to-face after spending 48 hours in ICU, aiming to determine details of their experience, including what the ICU did well and how it could do better.

ICU director Claire Cattigan said measuring patient experience was an important part of improving intensive care delivery.

"This feedback enables ICU to celebrate the things that are done well, while also identifying and subsequently working on the things that need to be done better," Dr Cattigan said.

"Globally there has been a body of work published about ICU patients' families and friends' experiences but the ICU patient voice has not been well represented in the literature.

"The ICU is committed to exploring what patients remember and what they experience during their critical illness.

"The ability to also give timely positive feedback to the staff in ICU, while also highlighting and reinforcing best practice was also an important constituent of this project."

The interviews were supported by both the Aboriginal Health Unit and Language Services, conducted by a senior project coordinator with consent from the patient, using the Office of the Public Advocate (OPA) 'Decision Making Capacity' guide. Collected data was de-identified and patients were also reminded of the organisations 'Suggestions, Complaints and Compliments' process through the Consumer Liaison Office.

Through this quality improvement work, the ICU aims to demonstrate a strong commitment to the Australian Charter of Healthcare Rights and National Safety and Quality Health Service (NSQHS) Standard 2 Partnering with Consumers.

Taking ICU patient feedback to heart

"This feedback enables ICU to celebrate the things that are done well, while also identifying and subsequently working on the things that need to be done better."

- Dr Cattigan



SOME QUOTES FROM OUR PATIENTS:

"I would have left this hospital with a much different view if I had not had an opportunity to talk and ask questions about my time in ICU."

"Explanations were given and I felt included."

"Huge acknowledgment to the nurses, they were all great."

"I did suffer from hallucinations which was seriously terrifying."

"This interview has allowed me to get some things off my chest and I am leaving the hospital feeling better about the overall ICU care."

"Lack of awareness of the perspective of time was hard."

"I felt very safe in ICU."

 THE HEART OF THE MATTER

VOLUNTEERS' + CRUCIAL ROLE IN HEALTHCARE



SAM SOGEE | DEPUTY CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER

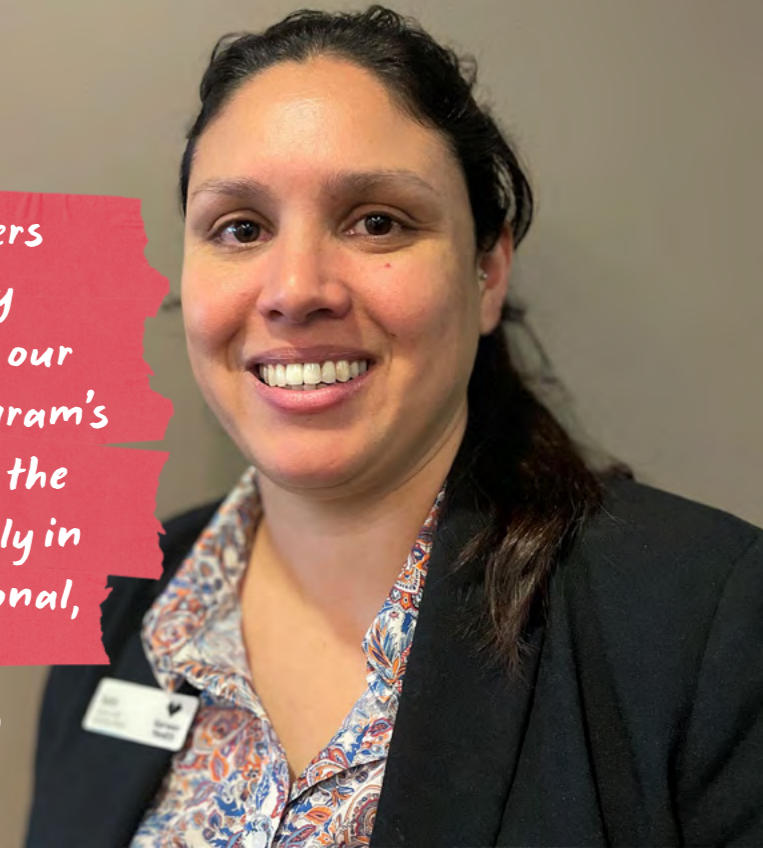
Volunteers play a crucial role in the fast-paced world of healthcare, silently contributing their time and effort to support consumers in our health services. Throughout the challenging times of the COVID-19 pandemic, Barwon Health was forced to hit pause on our volunteer programs for three long years. However, we are now delighted to welcome back volunteers to some areas of our organisation.



We are now offering our volunteers a more diverse experience as they contribute their valuable time to our organisation. Our volunteer program's primary focus will be to enhance the consumer experience, particularly in areas that support social, emotional, and recreational well-being.



Pictured: Deputy Chief Operating Officer, Sam Sogee.



As we adapt to the new environment, the role of volunteers has evolved. We are now offering our volunteers a more diverse experience as they contribute their valuable time to our organisation. Our volunteer program's primary focus will be to enhance the consumer experience, particularly in areas that support social, emotional, and recreational well-being. Accessing healthcare services can be emotionally overwhelming for many people, and our volunteers can serve as beacons of companionship, offering solace and support during these difficult times. By engaging in conversations, reading to patients, or simply providing a comforting presence, a volunteer's reach and relationship with consumers can be part of alleviating anxiety, loneliness, and fear.

Volunteers also play a vital role in assisting our organisation's paid workforce by lightening the non-clinical demands on healthcare workers, enhancing the consumer experience whilst the clinical experts deliver care. They are the now part of the makeup of successful contemporary healthcare provision.

At University Hospital Geelong, we are thrilled to welcome back our Main Entrance Concierge Volunteer Team members, who warmly greet the thousands of people who pass through our doors each year. In the coming months, we plan to offer a volunteer support team at University Hospital Geelong that will respond to requests across various ward and clinic settings. We also have a growing team of volunteers focused on providing meaningful support opportunities for residents, their families, and service users in Aged Care, Palliative Care, and Rehabilitation Services.

Amidst the whirlwind of modern healthcare, the unwavering dedication of our volunteers' uplifts patients and enables healthcare professionals to focus on their important work.

The presence of volunteers enriches the healthcare system, and we want to acknowledge and support these unsung heroes, especially those who patiently waited while the pandemic prevented them from pursuing their passion to help and give back to our community.

In a world where selflessness often goes unnoticed, volunteers serve as a reminder that each of us can make a difference in our free time, contributing to the building of a healthier community and more compassionate society.

Every May, we celebrate National Volunteer Week to recognise the vital support that millions of volunteers provide to their local communities. This celebration acknowledges our power to drive change and ensure volunteering is inclusive of all members of the Australian community. Through service, everyday people can make an extraordinary difference.



Pictured: Associate Professor Olivia Dean.

Associate Professor Olivia Dean from Deakin University and Barwon Health is involved with the Tina Trial, investigating whether the antidepressant drug mirtazapine can help people stop using ice. Currently there are no medications available to treat methamphetamine dependence.

Funded by the Medical Research Future Fund, NDARC is leading the randomised controlled trial in collaboration with Deakin University, Monash University, the University of Wollongong, and the University of Sydney, together with health services including Barwon Health.

A/Prof. Dean said reusing existing medications for new applications fast tracks new treatments.

"If proven effective, it would provide a relatively cheap treatment option that could be quickly put into clinical practice," she said.

The lack of treatment options is a significant barrier for people who use methamphetamine.

This study signals an important step towards ensuring people with methamphetamine dependence also have access to effective, evidence-informed treatment if they seek it.

World-first trial studies new drug for ice dependence

Barwon Health is among a group of research sites trialling a new medication to help people who want to stop using crystal methamphetamine or 'ice'.

The Tina Trial is the largest trial of its kind ever attempted in Australia. Mirtazapine (sold as Avanza) is an antidepressant drug that is already available in Australia.

"If proven effective, it would provide a relatively cheap treatment option that could be quickly put into clinical practice."



Pictured: Margaret Lourey, Research operations manager Bree Sarah, clinical trial manager Kate Ellis. Image: Alan Barber, Geelong Advertiser.

RSV vaccine trialled at Barwon Health

As researchers across the world united to recognise International Clinical Trials Day (20 May 2023), Barwon Health's Adrian Costa Clinical Trials Centre (ACCTC) celebrated a recent announcement of a new vaccine set to make a big impact across the globe.

ACCTC researchers have collaborated with GSK on the world's first respiratory syncytial virus (RSV) vaccine for older adults, with the US FDA approving GSK's new Arexvy vaccine. The ground-breaking approval enables adults aged 60 years and older to be protected from RSV disease for the first time.

The vaccine launched to coincide with the North American 2023/24 RSV season.

RSV is a common contagious virus affecting the lungs and breathing passages. Older adults are at high risk for severe disease due in part to age-related decline in immunity, and older adults with underlying conditions are at even greater risk for severe disease.

RSV can exacerbate conditions, including chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), asthma, and chronic heart failure and can lead to severe outcomes, such as pneumonia, hospitalisation, and death.

As part of the trial, 26 local volunteers participated over the past two years.

Local participant Margaret Lourey, pictured with Research operations manager Bree Sarah and clinical trial manager Kate Ellis, was pleased knowing she had been a part of a study that would save lives across the globe.

"Knowing I've been a part of helping to produce a vaccine that would help people across Australia and the world is really exciting. The team here at the clinical trials centre have been wonderful and I've found it to be such a rewarding experience," she said.

According to GSK, each year approximately 177,000 adults 65 years and older are hospitalised in the US due to RSV; an estimated 14,000 cases result in death. This vaccine will help this group of people at higher risk of severe illness.

Public Health Unit director Professor Eugene Athan OAM said RSV was a common illness across the community, and having local people involved in the study has been a positive outcome,

"There have been 2384 recorded cases of RSV over the past 12 months in the Barwon South West region. Our community's participation was integral to this trial's success and our 26 local participants should feel proud about what they have been a part of."

Barwon Health's clinical trial manager Kate Ellis says that International Clinical Trials Day is a celebration of the achievements of modern medicine.

"The research teams here at Barwon Health have a long history of running successful clinical trials, and this latest vaccine is just another example of how important clinical trials are in the discovery of new vaccines and other treatments. Over the past 20 years, our teams have led many clinical trials that have gone on to save many lives."

Buruli ulcer study reaches world stage

Representatives from the Barwon South West Public Health Unit (BSWPHU) have hosted a presentation on Buruli Ulcer at the World Health Organization (WHO).

The April meeting in Geneva brought together experts in skin neglected tropical diseases (NTDs), and representatives from WHO, ministries of health, government agencies, academic and research institutions, people affected by skin NTDs and more.

Epidemiologist Dr Bridgette McNamara presented research led by Barwon Health and CSIRO researchers that examined environmental risk factors associated with presence of Mycobacterium ulcerans (the pathogen responsible for Buruli Ulcer) in Victoria in environmental field surveys at properties across endemic areas of the state.

This study examined residential properties the bacterium is most likely to be found and the features associated with acquisition of the condition.

The findings suggest an important role of possums as a reservoir host with high amounts of bacteria found in their faeces.

The team also presented the identified preventive measures suggesting a combination of skin hygiene and protection measure such as cleaning wounds, using insect repellent and using clothing coverage is likely to mitigate risk of Buruli Ulcer.

Associate Professor Daniel O'Brien also presented new research that explores vaccination in possums as a way to reduce Mycobacterium ulcerans infection in this species, improving the health of possums and reducing bacteria in the environments and risk of infection in humans.

This study examined residential properties the bacterium is most likely to be found and the features associated with acquisition of the condition.



Changes in Research

SAY GOODBYE TO REGI, AND HELLO TO RDU!

The Barwon Health Research Ethics, Governance and Integrity (REGI) Unit is changing its name to the Research Development Unit (RDU).

The change better reflects the Unit's role in developing and supporting researchers across all elements of their research including guidance on design and conduct.

In coming weeks, you'll see the new name appearing across the Barwon Health research website as well as in research documents and guidelines.

The RDU team remains ready to help you with all of your research questions and needs. **Contact RDU at RDU@barwonhealth.org.au and they'll get back to you within 24 hours. The REGI email address will remain active during this transition period.**

WELCOME TO BREE SARAH, RESEARCH OPERATIONS MANAGER

We are delighted to congratulate Bree Sarah for her appointment as the Research operations manager at Barwon Health.

Bree has been a Clinical Trials Manager at Barwon Health for more than 20 years working in epidemiological, investigator initiated clinical trials and commercially sponsored clinical trials.

In this newly created position, Bree will work across Barwon Health and with external partners to increase the profile of clinical trials and the Adrian Costa Clinical Trials Centre across the region, and to develop a research ready workforce to increase the number of trials available for regional/ remote Victorians. Bree will also work to further embed a culture of research at Barwon Health.

WELCOME ERICA GRUNDELL, CO-DIRECTOR, RESEARCH

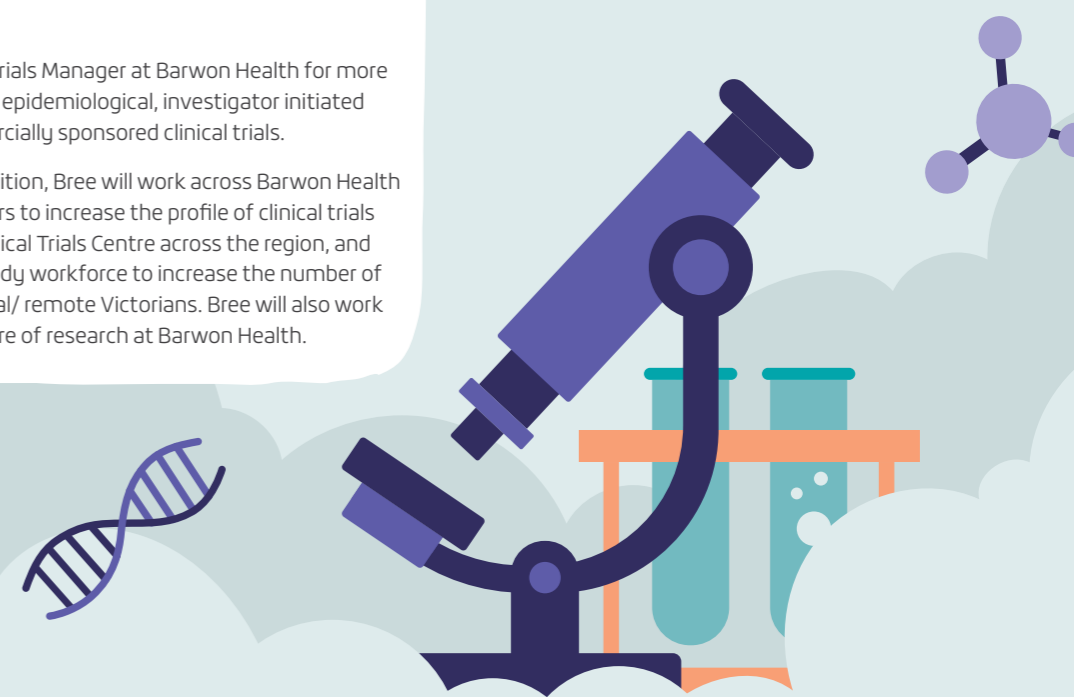
Erica Grundell has been appointed to the newly created position of co-director, Research.

This is a key leadership appointment that will support the crystallisation of the Research Directorate as well as the delivery of the Research Strategic Plan launched last year.

Many will know Erica from her current role as Director of Partnerships at Barwon Health, where she has been instrumental in supporting key strategic priorities, including relationships with key partners such as Deakin University.

WELCOME TO NATASHA SAVVIDES, RESEARCH QUALITY MANAGER

We're delighted to announce that Nat Savvides has been appointed as the Barwon Health Research quality manager, to guide us through the NCTGF accreditation process and beyond.





World-first online mental health check for new mums

A world-first online screening program is supporting the mental health of new and expectant mums across the Geelong region.

To rollout the new initiative, Barwon Health has partnered with the Centre of Perinatal Excellence (COPE), Australia's peak body for reducing the impacts of perinatal anxiety and depression.

COPE has developed the iCOPE digital application to identify mums at risk and facilitate faster and more effective mental health screening in the perinatal period (pregnancy and year following birth). The app, now being used at Barwon Health, enables perinatal mental health screening to be undertaken across all clinical settings, from in-person to remote screening via the patient's mobile phone.

Barwon Health Women's & Children's co-director Rachel O'Keeffe said perinatal anxiety and depression was a serious issue facing the community.

"With more than 2800 births at Barwon Health each year, the iCOPE screening tool will make a real difference for our community, allowing us to provide improved mental health support to more new mums and mums-to-be than ever before," she said.

"We're proud to be one of the first hospitals in Victoria to use this world-first tool, as it gives to regular mental health checks to every new mum in our care, which is an essential part of our maternity service.

"The iCOPE screening can be conducted on an iPad in the waiting room or the patient's mobile phone at home before their health consultation, saving time and increasing privacy, which we know is important to women."

iCOPE is available in 25 languages, allowing patients from culturally diverse backgrounds to undertake the screen and receive their personal report explaining the results in their preferred language.

"With more than 2800 births at Barwon Health each year, the iCOPE screening tool will make a real difference for our community, allowing us to provide improved mental health support to more new mums and mums-to-be than ever before."

Pictured: Leopold resident Sienna Beasley talks through responses she recorded in her iCOPE app during a maternity checkup.

Victorian government funding accelerates new hearing test for babies



Pictured: Ashleigh and baby Charlie.

Geelong newborns will be part of a trial researching new hearing technology at Barwon Health, aiming to improve speech development.

Babies born with hearing impairment will benefit from a \$500,000 grant from the Victorian Government's Victorian Medical Research Acceleration Fund (VMRAF), which will accelerate development of a new hearing test for babies.

EarGenie is a revolutionary technology from the Bionics Institute that uses near-infrared light to measure the brain's response to sound in infants, allowing audiologists to confidently select the best treatment for the first time.

Barwon Health Audiology will be a key regional collaborator with the Bionics Institute, recruiting participants and using a prototype EarGenie device to collect data and provide clinician feedback on the system design.

Audiology manager Rachael Hyder said while the current newborn hearing tests could indicate the severity of hearing loss, future developments could offer key information about discrimination between sounds.

"Currently babies need to be nine months old before we can determine if treatment is helping them develop language," she said.

"The early years are critical for childhood language and development, and this technology will help parents make informed decisions about supporting children with permanent with hearing loss.

"Audiologists, paediatricians and early childhood intervention teams will work together to assess the infant's ability to detect and understand important sounds such as family members' voices at a much earlier age.

"Choosing the right treatment at the earliest time will give hearing impaired babies the ability to hear and distinguish between the sounds that teach them to speak and give them the best chance to succeed in life.

"We are very excited to partner with Bionics Institute to offer this innovation to families in the Geelong region."

The EarGenie technology comprises a soft band containing near-infrared light sources and light detectors, which is wrapped around the baby's head while asleep.

When a sound is played, specialised software records the brain's response through changes in the reflected light, which can help audiologists to select an appropriate hearing aid or know when to refer the baby for a cochlear implant.

The Bionics Institute is seeking infants under the age of 24 months to participate in clinical trials, so the technology can be developed for use in clinics as quickly as possible.

More information about participation in the trial can be found on the Bionics Institute website, www.bionicsinstitute.org/our-research.

NATIONAL ADVANCE CARE PLANNING WEEK

Advance Care Planning (ACP) Week was promoted at Barwon Health with activities across the organisation that aimed to raise awareness among staff and the community.

With the assistance of Palliative Care staff, four events were hosted at the University Hospital Geelong and McKellar Centre cafeterias between 20-26 March, with quizzes, flyers, posters and handouts promoting good questions and discussion with staff and visitors about ACP.

Information packs were provided to most Barwon Health sites for units to provide to staff, clients and patients.

National ACP Week encourages people, regardless of age or health status, to make their future health care preferences known. The campaign challenges everyone to discuss what living well means to them and to consider who they would want to speak for them, if they could no longer communicate or make their own healthcare decisions.



Pictured: Supportive Care social worker Kristy Plenter and Deakin University social work student Jeff Mann.

Haematology event brings nurses together

Nurses from across the state attended Barwon Health's inaugural Haematology Nursing Education Day in Geelong on 29 May.

The event was organised to educate and support nurses caring for patients with haematological malignancies in a variety of clinical areas, such as inpatient, outpatient and the community.

Almost 70 nurses from both public and private health services in Geelong, Colac, Warrnambool, Portland, Ballarat and Bendigo attended the day coordinated by myeloma nurse consultant Erin Hamilton and haematology nurse consultant Anita Edwards.

Anita said the education day enabled nurses from across the Barwon and Grampians regions to gain new and interesting insights into care and treatment for patients with blood cancers, as well as a greater understanding of the patient experience.

"This was an opportunity to connect with other nurses working regionally in Victoria, which has become more important than ever now post COVID," she said.

"We wanted to acknowledge that caring for patients with blood cancers can be really challenging, especially for nurses; therefore, sharing our knowledge and experience from the Barwon Health Cancer Services Haematology Team was invaluable.

"We provide treatment and care to patients across the Barwon South West and Grampians regions, so this day was also an opportunity to meet face-to-face with the nurses, often taking over the care of patients closer to home."

Guest presenters covered topics that included clinical trials in haematology, autologous stem cell transplantation and patient case studies, while Cancer Services director A/Professor Philip Campbell spoke about Chimeric Antigen Receptor (CAR) T-cell therapy and implications for regional patients.

According to the post event survey, the education day was an amazing success with those attending suggesting the Haematology Nursing Education Day be an annual event for all nurses working in cancer services throughout the region.



Pictured: Anita Edwards and Erin Hamilton.

Vale Cindy Bishop

Cindy Bishop was a much beloved associate unit manager in Barwon Health's Maternity Services, where she worked for the final 22 years of her life. After a three-year battle with cancer, Cindy passed away on 24 December. The following is an excerpt from a piece she wrote for her colleagues, outlining her career in midwifery and experiences at Barwon Health.



Pictured: Cindy Bishop.

My career began at St John of God Hospital in Ballarat in 1971. This nursing training set me up with 11 lifelong best friends who still meet every year after 50 years. On completion of my training I had my own midwifery experience by giving birth to a little girl, Lainie.

After that one year break, I worked in a small country hospital in Mortlake after relocating to the country. I worked night duty in this 18-bed hospital, which included some maternity beds. It was there that the midwifery seed was planted for me, as the RN would help with the births. In those days in the mid-70s, the GPs did the breech births with their eyes closed and minimal fuss.

In 1985, another relocation saw us settle onto a farm near Wallan and I started work with an agency in Melbourne and surrounding areas, but soon realised country healthcare was totally different from city healthcare.

A refresher course at St Vincent's Hospital sharpened my skills eventually and I commenced employment at the Royal Melbourne Hospital orthopaedic surgical ward. This was interesting work with spinal fusions and hip replacements galore, but the midwifery curiosity got the better of me and I completed my midwifery training at the Royal Women's Hospital in Grattan Street in 1990.

There were more family relocations that took me to work at Hamilton Base Hospital and Goulburn Valley Hospital for the next 10 years, which was a valuable experience in all midwifery care including antenatal education sessions.

Another relocation with my husband's work resulted in us settling in Geelong and employment for me at University Hospital Geelong in 2000. My work at Geelong Hospital has been very rewarding, spending two years with the Family Birthing Unit, then worked as an ANUM in Birth Suite. My first love with midwifery was Birth Suite and always has been.

My career has seen some variations, but these have always been occasions where I have grown as a person and developed professionally. My retirement from Barwon Health has happened recently and I have very much appreciated all the opportunities that the institution has offered me.

Staff acknowledgements

Vale Phil Emery OAM

The Barwon Health research community is saddened by the passing of Phil Emery.

Phil was a valued member of the Barwon Health Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC), providing a respected voice from his prior experience in science and education.

Phil was an integral member of the community, receiving an Order of Australia Medal in 2021 for his contributions to the Greater Geelong community. Barwon Health extends its deepest condolences to Phil's family and friends.

Finance success

Congratulations to the commercial division of our finance team, who received two awards at the Healthcare Financial Management Association Australia conference!

This week, they took home both Team of the Year and an innovation award, which recognises the approach Barwon Health has taken with health finance, driving change, and collaboration, resulting in improved service delivery.



Pictured: The Barwon Health Finance team.

From school students and senior citizens, to sporting, social and special interest groups, the Barwon Health Foundation team is continuously encouraged by the Geelong community's passion for supporting the work of Barwon Health.

We hope sharing some of the ways they have been raising funds to enhance patient comfort and care will serve as a reminder that Barwon Health staff inspire our region to give and there is incredible gratitude for their hard work.

A feel-good story

The Rotary Club of Geelong West is halfway to its goal of raising \$100,000 in support of Project North.

Most of the funds have been generated by two of the Club's biannual Book Fair events at Geelong West Town Hall.



Pictured: Kasia Quail club secretary Rotary Geelong West. Image: Geelong Advertiser.

Cancer After Care Group celebrates 45 years

Geelong's Cancer After Care Group celebrated its 45th anniversary in April.

The collective, which initially began as a patient support group, was among those that lobbied for regional Victoria's first dedicated cancer centre, Barwon Health's Andrew Love Cancer Centre, in 1992. Since the group was formed in 1978, it has raised more than \$4 million dollars for cancer services at Barwon Health. The members continue to raise money any chance they get, including with a raffle at their anniversary luncheon in April.



Pictured: Cancer After Care Group member Thelma.

HEARTFELT HEARTS FOR SPECIAL CARE NURSERY

Sacred Heart College students Ella, Allegra, Caroline and Charlie hand-stitched hearts for parents and babies of the Special Care Nursery to help them form a bond through scent when they are apart.

The parent wears the scent heart for 6-8 hours on their skin while the baby has another scent heart at a safe distance for 12-24 hours. They can then switch hearts and develop their loving bond through scent, even when separated.



Blankets for bubs

The Barwon Health Foundation was recently treated to another delivery of blankets from Eileen, a resident of Barwon Health's Alan David Lodge, who has generously stitched 88 blankets for University Hospital Geelong's youngest patients.

Eileen started the project more than 18 months ago after incurring troubles with her vision, which left her near blind. When her vision returned, she wanted to give back and keep busy. Each blanket can take anywhere between three days and a week.



Pictured: Eileen crochets one of many blankets for Barwon Health patients.



Pictured: Jeanette Dragt of the Mereburn CWA Branch and her granddaughter, Emily Foot.

GROUP RALLIES FOR RENAL SERVICE

The Royal Antediluvian Order of Buffaloes has continued its support for Barwon Health's renal services.

The group visited the Newcomb Dialysis Unit at the beginning of the year to make a donation of \$2601 collected by Lodge members throughout 2022 and since then, has made a further \$8000 commitment to be shared among renal and maternity services at Barwon Health.

These generous gifts are not the first made by the group and will help to improve the comfort and care of patients in need.



Pictured: Renal Operations manager Richard Knight.

Handmade and heartfelt

Members of the Mereburn CWA Branch have hand-made and donated more than 90 cushions for cardiac patients.

Patients hold the pillows tightly against their chest to provide an extra layer of pressure and comfort, and help counteract any jolting from a cough, sneeze or movement.

IN THE KITCHEN FOR A CAUSE

As part of the Mac and Joe's program, established in 2021, students, staff and parents from St Joseph's College Geelong cook meals to be home delivered by Barwon Health's McKellar Centre nurses and volunteers to palliative care patients, their families and carers.

The Foundation was pleased to donate a freezer to the program to aid its mission to ease the burden on palliative care patients and their families across the region.

DID YOU KNOW?

Accommodation support available for patients doing it tough

Thanks to the generosity of a local donor, the Barwon Health Foundation is able to fund emergency accommodation for patients, or their carers, who need to stay close to University Hospital Geelong throughout 2023.

A maximum of three nights' accommodation is available and a voucher must be provided to access this support. Accommodation will be based on availability.

To access this support for a patient or family in need, please call the Social Work Department on 4215 0777.

When patients or families are grateful for care received at Barwon Health and 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 department or program of the donor's choice and made available to that team when needed. The Barwon Health Foundation grants under \$2500 are open year-round and assessed by the Foundation Grants Committee on a monthly basis. To apply for funding, please find and complete the form available on One Point.



Our annual event is being planned for December to celebrate the staff who achieved 20, 30 and 40 years of service in the 2023 calendar year.

Length of Service

Congratulations to the following staff who celebrated Length of Service milestones between February and June 2023!



- | | | |
|---------------------------------|----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Nicholas John Macdonald
Agar | Deirdre Gillick | Boon Lung Ng |
| Ahmed Al-Amin | Josephine Goonan | Joo Hee Oh |
| Kim Aston | Cynthia Louise Hall | Abbey O'Neil |
| Madeline Baak-Coppe | Katie Higgins | Rochelle Pegg |
| Christine Barclay | Megan Beth Howard | Skye Pilven |
| James Bender | Katrina Maree Humphryis | Roshan Pius |
| Jessica Bender | David Francis Jeffery | Rebecca Anne Power |
| Leonie Bisset | Janice Jeffries | Diane Rea |
| Danielle Blair | Christopher Jung | Sharon Maree Reeves |
| Bronwyn Bohan | Kate Kent | Alicia Anne Roberts |
| Louise Kathleen Brennan | Carla Kentish | Margaret Mary Ryan |
| Timothy Brown | Michelle Kiebert | Jonneka Audene Schwarz |
| Jane Louise Burns | David Kipp | Kevin Shaw |
| Heather Maree Butler | Kristy Lea Kitto | Jessica Smith |
| Hollie Rae Callahan | Mayur Krishnaswamy | Jessie Smith |
| Shannan Campbell | Sanjeev Kumar | Dharamraj Sohawon |
| Kim Stella Carey | Carol Anne Lawler | Ashleigh Lauren Stepins |
| Hannah Carroll | Jodie Loth | Charity Stewart |
| Johanna Catherine Centra | Elizabeth Ann Maclean | Rhiannon Clair Sykes |
| Teigan Maree Day | Mary Magee | Catriona Margaret Tate |
| Alanna Gabrielle Dempsey | Abhishek Malhotra | Usbi Taujale-Karanjeet |
| Katherine Drew | Rhonda Gwyneth Mathieson | Timothy Tronc |
| Nicola Ebbels | Megan Matthies | Kate Van Berkel |
| Ashlea Elliott | Deborah Kay McDonald | Shane Edward Wansink |
| Linda Emonson | Jessica Mary McDonald | Melissa Catherine Warburton |
| Erin Rose Farquharson | Brigid McGinniskin | Jayne Wentworth |
| Mark Farrugia | Rosemary Victoria McKerlie | Shu Fen Wong |
| Angelika Fewtrell | Kathryn Felicity McLeod | Brad Wood |
| Adam Friebe | Sabine Miller | Marita Woodhouse |
| Kate Fritsch | Bridget Morcom | Sarah Briony Wynne |
| Emma Fyfield | Emily Moriarty | Shi -Jynn Yong |



- | | | |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------|------------------------|
| Kate Louise Archbold | Jane Michelle Hunt | Bernadette Lee Seabert |
| Jacqueline Elizabeth Arnott | Lisa Susan Kenny | Darren Bernard Smith |
| Nicole Lynn Baker | Patrick Brian Laffy | Paul Stuart Talman |
| Susanne Maria Burt | Jane Maree McKenna | Amanda Louise Thomas |
| Angela Louise Carlon | Jane Caroline Meier | Karen Lee Todd |
| Emma Jane Crocker | Amanda Joy Morgan | Kathryn Mary Vick |
| Richard Michael De Groot | Michael John Newton | Kenneth John Vincent |
| Daniel Digman | Alexandria Ogilvie | Janice Anne Ware |
| Lois Mary Digman | Janine Joy Osborne | Andrew Bruce Whan |
| Melissa Carol Ellery | Richard Samuel Page | Myra Siu Luan Yeo |
| Lee Stefania Fatone | Renee Margaret Palmer | |
| Susan Lee Fernando | Jodie Megan Reid | |
| Corinne Louise Francis | Nicole Ann Reid | |
| Michelle Kylie Harding | Kerri Susan Ryan | |



- | | | |
|---------------------|----------------------|--------------------|
| John Benedict Clark | Lily Medved | Jennifer Lyn Casey |
| Janet Anne Couchman | Susan Mary Parker | Karen Irvine |
| Paul Michael Hantz | Damian Gerard Pender | Karen Lee Smith |
| Sharon Lee Hockley | Teresa Smilovic | |
| Luciana Kiss | Ivanka Starcevic | |
| Tracey Ann Mandic | Debbie Verikios | |
| Fiona Mary Markovic | Anne Katherine Welsh | |

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 - workforrelations@barwonhealth.org.au.

How do I begin to say **THANK YOU?**



Many patients and their families choose to give thanks for the wonderful care they have received by making a donation to the Barwon Health Foundation, supporting patient comfort and care now and into the future.

Scan the
QR code to
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