Community PULSE



Children's Ward redevelopment underway at Sunshine Hospital 8

Inside this edition:



Name Change for Western Hospital





Patient Health Information Centre Opening

New Board Chair for Western Health

Together, caring for the West



Welcome to the first edition of Western Health's new quarterly community magazine, The Western Health Community Pulse.

Western Health is currently experiencing some big changes and we are excited to share with you the work we are doing to expand the services we provide.

Melbourne's West is growing at a rapid rate, with our population almost doubling since the early 1990s. We currently care for a population of 800,000, which is predicted to increase to more than one million over the next two decades.

To meet this growth, we are working hard to advocate with our key stakeholders for the capital developments required for the ageing Footscray site and the growing demands at Sunshine Hospital. The work we are doing to support this is called Changing Health for a Changing West and it revolves around seeking to secure a package of capital developments worth \$550 million to meet your health needs.

While we can assure you that services in the existing facilities are safe, components of the Footscray site are too old or dilapidated to simply be renovated and both sites will soon struggle to cope with demand.

As part of the developments needed, we are excited about the commencement of intensive care and coronary care services at Sunshine Hospital in early 2015. This is a fantastic addition to our services at Sunshine Hospital and will enable us to provide a greater level of care.

This year also marks two significant milestones, with Williamstown Hospital marking 120 years of providing health care to Melbourne's West and Western Hospital celebrating 60 years of service to the community. To tie in with the 60th anniversary celebrations, the name of Western Hospital will officially change to Footscray Hospital from 1 October. It is fitting that the hospital, which commenced as Footscray District Hospital, will return to its roots in this anniversary year.

I'm sure you will join me in welcoming The Hon Bronwyn Pike, Western Health's new Board Chair, who will lead the organisation during this progressive time.

I hope you enjoy reading about the changes, along with some of the fantastic work that is taking place right across Western Health to develop and enhance our services and improve the care we provide to you.

Associate Professor Alex Cockram Chief Executive, Western Health

Changing Health for a Changing West

Western Health is actively working with the Victorian Government to improve the capacity to provide services for the people of the West.

In recent years, a number of significant capital developments have occurred at Sunshine Hospital, supported by the Victorian Government, and now the organisation is moving to the next stage for the health service overall.

Western Health is seeking to secure commitments to support capital developments for its two major hospitals, Footscray and Sunshine, in order to meet rapidly increasing demand across the West of Melbourne, while also addressing the urgent need for new infrastructure in the 60 year old Footscray Hospital.

Western Health currently serves a region with a population of 800,000, estimated to grow to more than one million well within a decade.

" The work we are doing to support this is called Changing Health for a Changing West and it revolves around our needs for new buildings over the period from now through to 2026 and beyond," Western Health Chief Executive, Associate Professor Alex Cockram said.

"With our region including the fastest growing population zones in Australia, the Department of Health predicts that by 2026, close to 2,000 more babies will be born every year at Sunshine Hospital. This will take the annual number of births to some 7,200 and have a major flow-on effect for our paediatric services.

"In addition to the demands of a growing population of young families, we will also be responding to an extraordinary increase in the aged population, with the proportion of our patients who are over 70 to rise by 120% by the year 2026," A/Prof Cockram added.

Major new capital developments are essential for Western Health to be able to meet the needs of patients into the future. In summary:

- By 2026, more than 1,200 beds will be needed across Western Health sites
- Much of Western Hospital is beyond its useful life and cannot be upgraded
- We need to develop Sunshine Hospital to enhance our capacity to deliver services to patients with more complex conditions

"If we are unable to address these issues, in 2026 demand for beds at Western Health will outstrip supply by more than 500 beds, based on Department of Health projections," A/Prof Cockram said.

Western Health is seeking support to progress capital developments worth \$550 million.

"This is more than bricks and mortar. We need to ensure we provide services in the community outside of the hospital environment and work with our healthcare partners to ensure healthcare for everyone in the West," A/Prof Cockram said.

If you would like to learn more about Changing Health for a Changing West, please visit the Western Health website at www.westernhealth.org.au **w**

Name change for Western Hospital

In line with the celebration of its 60th birthday, Western Hospital will change its name to Footscray Hospital from 1 October this year.

The Board of Western Health decided it is a fitting time to return to the essence of the original name of the hospital, which officially opened in 1953 as Footscray & District Hospital.

"The hospital was founded as a result of the drive and resourcefulness of local communities, and to this day remains an integral part of the communities it serves," Chief Executive, Associate Professor Alex Cockram said.

"Over its 60 years, the hospital has seen enormous change and despite having a succession of different official names over the years, including Western General Hospital and, at one stage – briefly – Maribyrnong Medical Centre, the hospital continues to be widely known as Footscray Hospital and this is an additional reason for the change.

"While the hospital is a much bigger and more advanced place than it was 60 years ago, its community linkages remain a key part of its identity.

By changing the name, we are paying tribute to these connections," A/Prof Cockram added.

The decision was based on continuing confusion about the official name of Western Hospital, with widespread misunderstanding about whether it was in fact Footscray Hospital or Western General Hospital.

Western Health conducted a range of focus groups comprising, staff, volunteers and key community partners to understand the implications of the proposed change.

In many instances, focus group participants were not aware that the hospital was in fact Western Hospital and not Footscray Hospital.

Western Health patient Clive Pattie, who has received ongoing treatment since he was admitted to Western Hospital after a cardiac arrest in December 2008, believes the name change "makes sense."

"The hospital is an institution within the local community and it has always been known as Footscray Hospital to the people of the West, so to me, it makes sense to formalise that,"



Western Hospital will officially change its name to Footscray Hospital from 1 October 2014.

"Throughout my long association with the hospital, I have always referred to it as Footscray Hospital. That's what it was originally called and to this day, people still call it Footscray Hospital. It's a great decision by the Board and I look forward to seeing the new Footscray Hospital signage around the community."

Major changes across Sunshine and Footscray Hospitals in 2015

In early 2015, there will be some important changes occurring at both Western (Footscray) and Sunshine Hospitals, as Western Health establishes intensive care and coronary care services at Sunshine Hospital for the first time.

"Changes will occur at both Footscray and Sunshine to support the critical care, because it is important to have all the right supports in place when services of this kind commence," Chief Executive, Associate Professor Alex Cockram said.

"At the moment, many of the patients treated at Sunshine Hospital are not as seriously ill as many of the patients treated at Footscray. One of the reasons for this is that Footscray has an Intensive Care Unit and facilities for treating those who have heart problems. Sunshine Hospital does not have these services on site, despite the fact that it is a very large hospital. "The Victorian Government has supported the development of an Intensive Care Unit and Coronary Care Unit at Sunshine Hospital and the new services will allow us to provide a greater level of care to the community in the Western region of Melbourne."

Footscray will maintain its role as a significant acute hospital, with intensive and coronary care services on site. Up until now, the Intensive Care Unit at Footscray has been the only such unit in the whole of Western Melbourne.

Currently, ambulances must drive past Sunshine Hospital to take acutely ill patients to Footscray or to other hospitals, often on the other side of the city, to access critical care treatment, because the services they need are not available at Sunshine.

"Once these new services commence, patients will be able to be treated where they live. Patient care and patient service will be improved, and the need to transfer patients between hospitals will be reduced. This is a huge step forward for Western Health," A/Prof Cockram said.

As part of this project, the services patients can access at Footscray will change and some specialist services will be provided at Sunshine instead of at Footscray, but any patients affected by these changes will receive advice well before the time. For updates on the progress of Sunshine Hospital's new services, please look out for updates on our website at www.westernhealth.org.au

PLEASE NOTE THAT CHANGES AT SUNSHINE HOSPITAL WILL NOT TAKE PLACE UNTIL EARLY 2015.

New Board Chair for Western Health

Western Health recently welcomed its new Board Chair, the Hon Bronwyn Pike.

Bronwyn has a

very substantial

senior positions in

public life, having

been Victorian

Health Minister

and Victorian

from 2002-2007

Education Minister

from 2007-2010.

background in



New Western Health Board Chair, The Hon Bronwyn Pike.

She also has a long-standing commitment to supporting community interests and as an advocate for social justice, refugee health, community education, eHealth and environmental initiatives. A/Prof Cockram said she looked forward to working with Bronwyn Pike and welcomed the appointment of such a high calibre Board Chair.

"Bronwyn's understanding of the Victorian health and education systems will be most beneficial as we work with the Board in the coming years to address the challenges of providing the best care for our community, seeking the infrastructure we need and achieving our research and education objectives," A/Prof Cockram said.

"I am sure Bronwyn will be pleased to meet many patients and families, community partners and Western Health staff and volunteers."

The Hon Ralph Willis concluded his term as Board Chair on 30 June after ten years in the role, in line with statewide provisions for a designated maximum period as the Chair of a health service. "I would like to express my sincere appreciation for the support I have received during the past 10 years from the community of the West of Melbourne. It has been an honour to hold the position of Board Chair and see the development of Western Health over a decade, " Mr Willis said.

A/Prof Cockram said Mr Willis had made an extraordinary contribution to Western Health during his period as Chair, showed great strength of leadership and supported the health service's transition to become a much larger and more advanced health service in response to community need.

"Western Health has been in good hands under the Board leadership of Ralph Willis and we thank him for his time and dedication to achieving the best outcomes for our patients and the community," A/Prof Cockram said. **W**

Patient Health Information Centre now open at Sunshine Hospital

Patients and their families will now have all of their health information needs in the one place with the opening of the Patient Health Information Centre at Sunshine Hospital.

The Centre, which was funded through the hard work and dedication of the Sunshine Hospital Auxiliary volunteers, opened its doors to the public on Monday 8 September.

"This facility will enhance the care Western Health provides its diverse population. Our consumers need to be well informed about health issues and patient care before and after time in hospital," Executive Director Community Integration, Allied Health & Service Planning, Dr Arlene Wake said.

"The centre will provide a purpose-designed space for patients and carers to access bookmarked health information websites, language specific brochures and books, and locate resources, such as support groups and community services."

"The amount of information available is often overwhelming for patients. Their families can often struggle to access accurate health information, especially when it's not in a central and accessible area.

"As the centre will be staffed by specially trained volunteers, patients and consumers will also be assisted to navigate reliable sites to find information that is relevant and accurate."



Western Health Chief Executive, A/Prof Alex Cockram and Sunshine Hospital Auxiliary President, Pauline Murphy at the opening of the Patient Health Information Centre at Sunshine Hospital.

approaches to engage the diverse communities of the west, which this centre will deliver," Dr Wake said.

The establishment of this centre is connected to The Better Health Plan for the West, a partnership of over 20 agencies across primary care, acute health, government, social support and other sectors delivering services in the Western Region of Melbourne.

The ten year plan aims to shape the way local health services respond to the complex needs of one of Australia's fastest growing and most diverse regions to support the goal of healthy and engaged communities in the West.

The Centre will provide a central place for patients and visitors of the hospital to access health literature from sources such as Diabetes Victoria, BreastScreen Victoria, Breast Cancer Network Australia, Beyond Blue, Alzheimer's Victoria, Heart Foundation, Cancer Council and more.

Western Health partners with Remote Area Health Corps

Five senior Western Hospital Emergency Department nurses are embarking on exciting secondments to the Northern Territory this year as part of a partnership program between Remote Area Health Corps (RAHC) and Western Health.

During the course of their secondments, the nurses will spend six weeks in remote Indigenous communities providing health care.

RAHC was established under the Expanding Health Service Delivery Initiative, which was part of the Closing the Gap in the Northern Territory measure. It aims to address critical health workforce shortages in remote Indigenous communities by attracting and recruiting urban-based health practitioners and placing them in short-term placements in those communities where there is demand.

"The partnership offers Western Health nursing staff the opportunity to experience the cultural and health issues of the Indigenous people who are living in traditional environments," said Divisional Director Emergency, Medicine & Cancer Services, Rhonda Beattie-Manning.

"This program is a fantastic opportunity for Western Health to strengthen its ability to respond to the needs of our culturally diverse community. During the course of their secondments, our nursing staff will gain a deeper understanding of the unique needs of Indigenous people living in our local community, and develop their interpersonal and communication skills. "According to program evaluation conducted by RAHC, the level of satisfaction expressed by staff in their feedback confirms that health professionals find the remote placements to be rewarding experiences, and these opportunities significantly contribute to the expansion of their scope of practice.

"There are currently no formal partnerships between RAHC and another health service, and the RAHC/Western Health partnership will be the first to be successfully established in Australia."

Western Hospital Emergency Department nurse Michelle Robinson, who was the first staff member to take part in the program, spent six weeks in Areyonga, a community of just 230 people, located approximately 220km west of Alice Springs. Michelle said the local community was very reliant on the services provided by the community health centre for both preventative and primary care.

"One of the big learning curves for me was earning the trust of the local residents to build relationships, which enabled them to open up and receive treatment, in contrast to the pace of working in an ED," Michelle said.

"Overall, the experience has given me a much better sense of cultural awareness and it has made me more aware of the need to slow down and take the time to understand and overcome language and cultural barriers.

"In ED, you don't always get to follow-up on your patients, as they go off to the ward and you don't always know what happens. In this setting, I was able to treat the patient and then follow-up when I would see them in the community and it was great to be able to see that the work I was doing was making a difference," Michelle added. **w**



From left to right - Back row: Western Health Clinical Nurse Educator, Julie-Ann Martin, Western Health Manager Aboriginal Health, Jacqueline Watkins, Western Health Chief Executive, Associate Professor Alex Cockram, Aspen Medical, Managing Director, Glenn Keys, Western Health Divisional Director Emergency Medicine & Cancer Services, Rhonda Beattie-Manning, General Manager, Remote Area Health Corps, Phillip Roberts. Front row: Western Hospital Emergency Department Nurses, Ruth Coleman, Michelle Robinson, Mark Kohler, Gladis Rodriguez-Lopez, and Kimberly Nini.

Celebrating two significant milestones

This year Western Health is celebrating the 120th anniversary of Williamstown Hospital and 60th anniversary of Western Hospital, Footscray.

Both hospitals were founded as a result of the drive and resourcefulness of local communities and to this day both remain integral parts of the communities they serve.

The communities which founded Western Hospital, in particular, faced real challenges in achieving their goal.

After fundraising and purchasing the site, the Charities' Board refused permission to establish the hospital in 1924. Undeterred, the committee instead decided to build an Outpatients' Clinic, Dispensary and Casualty Station to treat the needy and poor of Footscray, until in 1941, the Charities' Board granted permission for a 30-bed community hospital.

However, it wasn't long after the funds to build the hospital were raised, that the next hurdle cropped up. The war situation in 1942 resulted in the hospital being put on hold, until construction began in 1947. In 1953 the Footscray & District Hospital finally opened, after 34 years of hard work and commitment to the cause. 110,000 patients had been treated by the Outpatients' Centre in that time.

To coincide with its anniversary year, Western Hospital will change its name to Footscray Hospital from 1 October.

In 1889 a group of Williamstown residents held a meeting and identified a need for a local hospital.

The increasing risk of accidents from a busy port, the railway workshops and the growing industrial area of Newport, Spotswood and Footscray led to the community establishing Melbourne's first suburban public general hospital.

After five years the hospital was built and the first patient was admitted in July 1894. The Hospital's first Annual report was published in June 1895, and its first

Continue pg. 6 >

> Continued from pg. 5



(Left to right) Former Western Health Board Chair, The Hon Ralph Willis, Victorian Minister for Health & Ageing, The Hon David Davis and Carol Willis.

year running costs were subsided by a 100 pound grant from the Government and 104 pounds raised by local churches and factories

"Over the years it has continued to grow and adapt, and Western Health is proud to have played a part in its great tradition," Western Health Chief Executive, Associate Professor Alex Cockram said.

"Towards the end of last year Williamstown Hospital re-opened its theatres, after several months of capital development work. As Melbourne's West continues to expand, we are faced with numerous health challenges, including the rising demand for elective surgery. "The redevelopment of the operating suite includes an additional operating room and recovery rooms. With a total of four theatres, the Williamstown Hospital is now an elective surgery centre for Western Health."

Now with over 90 beds and ambulatory services, Williamstown Hospital continues to evolve to meet the need of its community and is an integral part of Western Health.

Looking to the future, work has commenced on the inpatient rehabilitation gym area, allowing the Williamstown Hospital to continue to grow and serve the community.

Sunshine leads the way in MUM SIZE Study

Improving patient care for obese pregnant women giving birth by caesarian and hospital resources for them, is the focus of a new University of Melbourne-led study.

Maternal obesity is associated with increased hospital care and has important operating room planning and resource implications for hospitals with maternity services.

The MUM SIZE Study is a collaboration between seven Victorian hospitals affiliated with the University: Sunshine Hospital, the Royal Women's Hospital, Mercy Hospital for Women, the Northern Hospital, Northeast Health Wangaratta, Ballarat Base Hospital and Shepparton Regional Hospital.

A total of 1500 patients have been recruited across the seven hospitals, with Sunshine Hospital recruiting almost 500 women for the study.

The study's fundamental aim is to increase understanding of the best ways to care and plan for obese women giving birth by Caesarean, in both metropolitan and regional areas, as women with increased body size are twice as likely to have a Caesarian delivery.

Clinical teams must consider numerous preexisting medical conditions such as gestational diabetes and pre-eclampsia, a type of high blood pressure during pregnancy. The project will look at the duration of Caesarian section operations, using the patients across the seven hospitals and how this affects hospital planning and patient care.

This study will also investigate if maternal obesity is associated with increased difficulty with regional anaesthesia due to reduced ability to locate anatomical landmarks, increased operative time, increased length of hospital stay and increased use of neonatal services.

As anaesthesia care is required during the procedure, the anaesthetist becomes an important part of the collaborative care team to ensure both mum and baby are healthy.

Western Health Chief Executive, A/Prof Alex Cockram congratulated Western Health's Deputy Director, Department of Anaesthesia and Pain Management, Dr Elizabeth Hessian, who is a key lead in the research, along with her team.

"Our staff recruited these 500 Western Health patients in their own time, a wonderful example of their commitment to collaborative, investigator-led research and to seeking a better, healthier future for the women in their care," A/Prof Cockram said.



Melissa Cain and her son Wyatt, who was born at Sunshine Hospital earlier this year. Melissa took part in the MUM Size Study.

"Obesity with its health complications, is an urgent and growing problem in our region.

"The MUM SIZE Study will not only meet the specific health needs of our local patients, it will benefit all families and health services grappling with this difficult problem of maternal obesity."

Dialysis patients get bright new unit at Sunshine Hospital

Staff and patients recently celebrated the opening of the relocated Dialysis Unit at Sunshine Hospital.

The new purpose built facility, in a separate building located behind the Sunshine Hospital main campus, has given renal patients a comfortable space of their own for their treatment.

The Dialysis unit now has five 'pods' that house the haemodialysis amenities with plenty of natural light for the patients who visit the centre each week to enjoy. Forty patients are able to use the unit to dialyze each day with around 50 patients seeing the Home Therapies Service for their in-home dialysis checkups.

The facility means that Western Health was able to bring together all of the outpatient renal services in one complex. Patients now have a 'one-stop-shop' with Home Therapy Services for renal patients now in the same complex.

"It is fantastic to hear positive feedback from our patients about the new facility," said Sunshine Hospital Director of Nursing, Wendy Watson.

"It is important for us that we make our patients' visit to the dialysis unit as comfortable as possible. Having the centre separate from the main hospital building means that patients have much easier access to car parking facilities.



Sunshine Hospital Dialysis Unit patients and staff are enjoying the new purpose built facility.

"We are now looking forward to expanding the renal service at Sunshine Hospital even further, to incorporate acute services, so we look forward to the next phase of Renal Services at Sunshine Hospital," she added.

All renal areas are supported by a dedicated team of allied health professionals, including dietetics and nutrition, psychology and social work who work closely with both medical and nursing teams for the best outcomes for all patients.

Award winning clinic a SMART solution for patients

A Symptom Management Assessment and Referral Team (SMART) Clinic at Western Hospital has claimed top honours at this year's Palliative Care Victoria Quality Initiative Awards.

Palliative Care Consultant, Dr Adrian Dabscheck, together with Mercy Palliative Care – identified a need for palliative care input for patients being seen by oncologists in outpatient clinics and the idea for the SMART clinic grew from there.

"The aim of the clinic is to provide support for issues with pain and symptom management, medication support and education, and also psychological and spiritual support and linking to community palliative care" said Dr Dabscheck.

"If palliative care is implemented earlier we can greatly improve the quality of life for patients, some of whom may live for some considerable time despite having a malignant diagnosis."

The SMART clinic, which opened in May 2012, is the only symptom management clinic in Victoria to have both Pharmacy and Community Palliative Care involvement in an adult outpatient setting. The clinic has the potential to see around 400 patients each year. Most palliative care patients who are admitted to a palliative care inpatient unit have had an average of three inpatient admissions. By working closely with patients to ensure pain and symptoms are well managed, and establishing links between the SMART clinic pharmacists and community pharmacists it is hoped that more patients can be spared from needing to visit Emergency Departments and enjoy more quality of life in the community.

In addition to seeing patients at the SMART clinic at Western Hospital, Dr Dabscheck also sees Western Health palliative care patients at a community clinic in Sunshine at Mercy Palliative Care, and at the Sunshine Hospital Radiation Therapy Centre.

The SMART Clinic is a joint venture between Western Health and Mercy Palliative Care and is funded as a project by Western Central Melbourne Integrated Cancer Services. The Palliative Care Victoria Quality Initiative Awards recognise and celebrate excellence in quality improvement within specialist palliative care and aged care services. The initiative won in the category of 'Terminally ill people (patients/clients) - Metro palliative care consortium region / state-wide service'.

The judges were particularly impressed with the clear conception, implementation and evaluation of the project and with the significant improvements the initiative has delivered for patients and carers. Dr Adrian Dabscheck and Fran Gore from Mercy Health jointly accepted the award in August.

"It is great to see this fantastic initiative rewarded ," Western Health Operations Manager Cancer, Neurology/Stroke, Respiratory & Sub Specialty Medicine Adele Mollo said.

"Congratulations to the project team and particularly Kathy Hendry Cancer Services Project Officer. And a big thank-you again to WCMICS for the initial funding to support this project." **w**

New Children's Ward set to brighten up Sunshine Hospital

Sunshine Hospital will soon open the doors to its redeveloped Children's Ward.

The upgrades will see additional facilities for young patients and extra comforts for their families.

Each year, the Children's Ward at Sunshine cares for more than 7,300 kids – from toddlers to adolescents – providing specialist paediatric care in Ear, Nose and Throat, Orthopedics, Plastics, Neonatology, Endocrinology as well general care for adolescents.

The ward will house a state of the art negative pressure, isolation room so that children with infections can be cared for in the best environment and with their families close by.





New additions will also include a five bed day procedure recovery unit and a high care nursery for young respiratory patients. The new monitored beds will remove the need for children with breathing problems to be referred back to emergency.

Over the past 18 months the Western Health Foundation has conducted a major public appeal to fund the re-development of the ward.

Western Health Foundation Executive Director, David Jones, said that the development focused on the best way to improve care for young patients and comfort for their families.

"The addition of a dedicated family room to the ward is a most significant development as it provides much needed space for family members to rest and relax whilst helping care for a child in hospital," Mr Jones said.

"The rooms will be equipped with lounge, study, kitchen and laundry facilities as well as quiet resting room and plenty of play areas for young patients and their siblings. "We are very grateful to Ronald McDonald House Charities for supporting this and in particular to our local McDonalds franchisee for supporting the development of the family room.

"Our sincere thanks also to Dr Susan Alberti AM, the Watergardens Hotel and to the Zouki Group for their most generous support of this new centre," said Mr. Jones.

Reclining couches will be a welcome addition to every room of the 24 bed ward for parents to spend the night.

"The new recliner couches generously supplied by Fiona and Mark Bacash of Bacash Restaurants will provide a comfortable night's rest for parents who stay with their child overnight," Mr Jones added.

Works are well underway and the redeveloped ward is scheduled to reopen in October.

If you would like to make a donation to the Western Health Foundation, please visit www.westernhealth.org.au/foundation **v**

Together, caring for the West

www.westernhealth.org.a



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