

# Community PULSE

Summer | 2014



Western Health

2014  
Premier's Health  
Service of the Year



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named 2014  
Premier's Health  
Service of the Year

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*Together, caring for the West*



## Western Health is ready for an exciting year of changes in 2015.

We have had plenty of reason to celebrate recently after being named the 2014 Premier's Health Service of the Year – the most prestigious accolade to which a health service can aspire. This is fantastic recognition for our staff and volunteers' dedication to providing great care for our community.

In 2015 our plans to add critical care services to Sunshine Hospital will come to fruition with building works soon to be completed on the new intensive care and cardiac units.

A wide range of acute specialist services are also commencing at Sunshine Hospital to support and link in with the critical care services. This will also allow us to provide the best care for our patients.

As a result of these changes, a number of our services will be moving locations and in some cases, this will mean some alterations to where our patients will receive treatment. Patients with future appointments will be notified of any changes to locations of their treatment in plenty of time. Our website will also have information on this topic closer to the time and it will be easily found via the front page of the internet site: [www.westernhealth.org.au](http://www.westernhealth.org.au) You can also ask your doctor, nurse or another Western Health staff member about this early in 2015.

There will be minimal disruption to specialist outpatient clinics, with almost all clinics to remain in the same locations.

Overall Western Health is about to embark on major changes for our health service but changes that are necessary so that we can grow with our expanding community.

Thank you for your support this year and I know that our community will continue to support us through this time of change in 2015.

Best wishes for a happy and safe holiday season and New Year. ♥♥

Associate Professor Alex Cockram  
Chief Executive, Western Health

# Western Health named 2014 Premier's Health Service of the Year

Western Health has capped off a stellar year by being crowned the 2014 Premier's Health Service of the Year.



(Left to right) Western Health Board Chair, The Hon Bronwyn Pike, Western Health Chief Executive, Alex Cockram and staff celebrate Western Health being named the 2014 Premier's Health Service of the Year.

The announcement was made at the Victorian Public Healthcare Awards on 13 October by former Minister for Health & Ageing, The Hon David Davis and it is first time in the history of the awards, which commenced 10 years ago, that Western Health has been awarded Health Service of the Year.

"Western Health is setting the standard for providing person-centred care in a diverse urban community," The Hon David Davis said following the announcement.

"The health service's focus on enhancing quality, organisational capacity and self-managed care in the community is exemplary."

Western Health Board Chair, The Hon Bronwyn Pike and Chief Executive, Associate Professor Alex Cockram were both on hand to receive the award.

"The Premier's Health Service of the Year Awards are Victoria's most prestigious accolade to which a health service can aspire. These Awards recognise leadership and excellence in the provision of publicly-funded healthcare for the Victorian community," A/Prof Cockram said.

"To me this means one thing above all – that we are providing a great service to you, our community. And while there is always more work to do to enhance our services, I believe the foundation for improving on the services we deliver is in a great place."

Western Health's submission for the Health Service of the Year Award began with an extract from a quote from one of our surgeons, Mr Julian Choi.

"The expertise, capacity and compassion we have at Western Health, combined with a strong value set, are the elements which make me so proud to work here," Mr Choi said.

"The resilience of the staff is incredible and shows a strength of character – we are not flashy, we just carry out our work, but it's time we put ourselves out there for the quality of the care and service we provide.

"We provide an incredible service to our community and it would be great to see that recognised." ♥♥



(Left to right) Western Health Board Director, Associate Professor Cassandra Szoeki, Community Engagement & Volunteers Manager, Jo Spence, Division of Subacute and Aged Care Services Clinical Lead Manager, Carol Perich, SGE Credit Union representative, Tina Ballos and Copperfield College Principal, Mary Chiodo.

## Western Health celebrates commitment and achievements

Community members joined staff and volunteers to celebrate another successful year for Western Health at the 2014 Annual General Meeting (AGM) at Flemington Racecourse on Wednesday 26 November.

Each November Western Health holds its AGM to honour the significant contribution made by long serving staff, present staff excellence and occupational health and safety awards and report on the operation of the past year.

Two of Western Health's longest serving employees, Janice Mathes and Margaritha Lang were both recognised for reaching an exceptional 40 years of service, having commenced their careers with Western Health in the mid 1970s.

Margaritha, who is now heading into retirement, has worked night duty for almost all of her working life in maternity services, while Janice is a senior Occupational Therapist at Sunshine Hospital.

Some outstanding initiatives were recognised in the 2014 SGE Credit Union/Western Health Excellence Awards, which celebrate new programs or initiatives that create value through improved outcomes for patients, staff and the Western Health community.

Western Health's Sub-Acute Care and Volunteer Services Team received top honours for their project aimed at engaging local people, particularly younger people, in the Dementia Unit at Sunshine Hospital.

This initiative involved engaging with local community groups such as Copperfield College to care for and sustain the dementia unit garden, whilst increasing community awareness of dementia throughout the community.

"Projects such as this help to build pathways for our young people to understand the concept of being a contributing citizen within their local community," Western Health Community Engagement and Volunteers Manager, Jo Spence said.

"The students are very proud to talk to their family and friends about something that they built or experienced when visiting."

Western Health's Security Services Team were recognised in the annual OHS Awards for an innovative approach to addressing occupational violence and aggression within the health service.

Last year the team implemented wearable audio video recording system, where security officers are equipped with a video recording device to assist in managing aggressive or violent incidents.



(Left to right) Western Health Board Chair, The Hon Bronwyn Pike, 40 year service award recipient Margaritha Lang and Western Health Chief Executive, Alex Cockram.

Western Health is one of the first health services in Australia to use this system and it has helped to de-escalate aggressive or violent incidents after the offender becomes aware that they are being recorded.

"Our job as security officers is to help people think well and modify their behaviour. The camera does that — it makes people understand that they are accountable," Western Health security operations and training co-ordinator, Trevor Lawson said.

"Once a person knows they are being recorded it does modify their behaviour. If things do escalate beyond words, we do have evidence to protect ourselves and the organisation."

For a full list of SGE Credit Union/Western Health Excellence Award winners and OHS Award winners, please visit [www.westernhealth.org.au](http://www.westernhealth.org.au) 



(Left to right) Julie Slobozian, Diane Leorke and Western Health Chief Executive, Alex Cockram cut the cake to celebrate 60 years of Footscray Hospital.



(Top) Current Western Health volunteer Les Mather, former Western Health volunteer Irene Stambi and community member, Laurette Mather. (Bottom) Western Health volunteer June Hansen and Western Health staff member Fran Locke.

# Celebrating 60 years of Footscray Hospital

**A sense of nostalgia and celebration swept over Footscray Hospital on Tuesday 18 November as staff, volunteers and community members gathered to mark 60 years of Footscray Hospital.**

From humble beginnings in 1920 when the Eleanor Street site was bought for 200 pounds, to the hospital's grand opening in 1953, Footscray Hospital was the result of 34 years of toil and ultimately triumph on the part of ordinary people in the district.

Western Health Chief Executive, Associate Professor Alex Cockram told those gathered how Footscray Hospital, which started as a people's hospital and has remained true to that ideal, was established.

"The idea for the hospital, the struggle to get it built, the financial support that sustained it through its early decades, all came from the people of Footscray and citizens in the surrounding suburbs," A/Prof Cockram said.

At that time, members of local industrial unions, Friendly Societies and Progress Associations held a meeting to discuss a report about the area's health needs by the Footscray City Council Medical Officer.

The meeting carried a motion strongly advocating that a new, modern and up-to-

date hospital to be known as the Footscray and District Hospital be erected in Footscray.

The Mayor of Footscray responded by holding a public meeting to endorse the motion. A committee of local citizens, later known as the "Hospital Movement", was formed to establish a hospital in Footscray.

"Over the next 15 years the movement lobbied the Charities' Board and the Victorian Government to establish the hospital. They were rebuffed each time," A/Prof Cockram said.

"By 1938 they decided to do it themselves. They teamed up with local medical practitioners and built the Footscray Outpatients and Welfare Centre on the Eleanor Street site. The Centre was opened by the then governor of Victoria, Lord Huntingfield, and the first patient was treated on 7 November 1938.

"Local medical practitioners provided four clinics of four hours each, on a weekly basis at the Centre and they were immediately

swamped by demand for their services. Five thousand patients, many of them undernourished, were treated in the first year of the Centre's operation.

"During the following years, the Centre's Board continued to press the Victorian Government for money to build inpatient beds and their lobbying eventually succeeded after World War Two ended.

"In 1953 the new hospital was officially opened – 34 years after the community first took action – and it was named Footscray and 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," A/Prof Cockram added.

On hand to celebrate and help cut the cake were Di Leorke and Julie Slobozian who have a special connection to the hospital.

Their grandfather, J Kelso Duncan, was one of the original pioneers of Footscray Hospital. He was secretary-manager of the Footscray and District Outpatient and Welfare Centre from 1920 and led the numerous campaigns to raise funds for the purchase of the land the hospital is now built on. 

# Besen family generosity helps support the women of the west

**The Besen Family, through Highpoint Shopping Centre, have generously donated \$300,000 to complete the development of the Maternal Fetal Medicine Unit at Sunshine Hospital.**

Marc, Daniel and Debbie Besen paid a visit to Sunshine Hospital on 27 November to tour the unit, which is the first such unit in Australia to be established outside a dedicated tertiary level hospital

"This is a significant development and a time critical one for Melbourne's West, which is experiencing an unprecedented increase in the number of births at Sunshine Hospital," Western Health Foundation Executive Director, David Jones said.

"The maternity service at Sunshine Hospital has experienced a 50% increase in births in the last five years, with a 20% increase in the last year alone.

"Over 5,300 babies will be born in the current year and Sunshine Hospital is now the second largest maternity hospital in Victoria.

"To meet this demand, Western Health recently established a specialist Maternal Fetal Medicine Unit (MFM) at Sunshine Hospital.



*Western Health Maternal Fetal Medicine Specialist, Professor Jo Said leads the Besen family on a tour of the Sunshine Hospital Maternal Fetal Medicine Unit.*

"The donation by the Besen family will enable Western Health to acquire a dedicated ultrasound system and specialist diagnostic software for the unit, which will help deliver a comprehensive service to our patients.

"We deeply appreciate the commitment and generosity of the Besen family to the community of Melbourne's west," David added. 🤝

## Crafty donation by Williamstown locals

**The Williamstown Craft Market Committee has generously donated their takings for the year to their local hospital.**

Glenda Townsend and Peter Water recently presented Williamstown Hospital Director of Nursing Doug Mills with the cheque for \$3000.

"We know it's not a lot in the scheme of things, but every little bit counts," Treasurer of the craft market, Peter Water said.

The group of Williamstown locals said that the hospital played an important part in the community and many of their members have a connection with the hospital with some of their children being born there many years ago or frequently visiting family and friends.

"It is a part of the community and is relied on by everyone so we thought, what better organisation we could choose to donate to?" Peter added. 🤝



*Williamstown Craft Market Committee Members Glenda Townsend and Peter Water with Williamstown Hospital Director of Nursing, Doug Mills.*



Twelve brave and beautiful breast cancer patients showcased the latest fashions from Myer Highpoint at the recent 2014 BreastWest Fashion Gala at Moonee Valley Racing Club.

# New Care Packs provide comfort for breast cancer patients in the West

Twelve brave and beautiful Western Health breast cancer patients took to the catwalk to strut their stuff on Thursday 13 November in the annual BreastWest Fashion Gala.



(Top) Breast cancer patient Karen Ryan hits the catwalk.  
(Bottom) Breast cancer patient Kerry O'Donovan takes part in the fashion gala.

This year's event was held in the Celebrity Room at the Moonee Valley Racing Club, with the women showcasing the latest designer fashions, kindly supplied by MYER Highpoint.

Over \$60,000 was raised on the night to provide much needed support for women diagnosed with breast cancer in Melbourne's West.

BreastWest also launched its new Care Pack Program on the night, which cater for the many personal and immediate needs of women diagnosed with breast cancer.

"A cancer diagnosis changes your world. Time stands still, yet the questions swirl around you. How will I cope? How will I care for my family?" Western Health Breast Care Nurse, Melanie Fisher said.

"A BreastWest Care Pack is one small way in which we can help women at this time. It provides the many personal care items to help them on their journey."

BreastWest Care Packs include essential items in one convenient bag, including a support pillow, a sheepskin safety belt covers, chemist vouchers, hydrating and nourishing lotions and self-care products.

"Each bag is a personal gift from BreastWest, along with a personal card from our breast cancer nurses," Melanie said.

"Each pack provides for the particular needs of women at different stages in their care - to support them at diagnosis, during chemotherapy and when facing surgery. We provide a mix of care items, recommended purchases and the vouchers to cover what is required.

"Our aim is to give every patient visiting our Breast Cancer Clinic a Care Pack," Melanie added. ❤️

# Western Health Clinic wins state award

**A Victorian first clinic aimed at helping Western Health cancer patients manage adverse side-effects and symptoms has won the 2014 Victorian Healthcare Association (VHA) Annual Award.**

The Symptom Urgent Review Clinic (SURC), which opened its doors at Footscray Hospital in August 2013, acts primarily as a phone triage centre, with patients encouraged to call as soon as they experience any symptoms and if required, patients are able to have urgent pathology and radiology diagnostic tests, surgical and palliative care reviews and also be admitted directly from the SURC.

In the first nine months, 439 patients were treated and 942 episodes of care were provided at the SURC – averaging more than 100 episodes per month. A review after six months showed:

- A nine per cent reduction in chemotherapy day unit patients presenting for ED care
- A 10 per cent reduction in patients admitted for 24 hours or less
- 75 per cent of patients being confident in their symptom management
- 75 per cent of patients say they would have attended the Emergency Department had the SURC not existed.

"When I was sick, I used to wait until my next chemo appointment and there was such a fuss, but now I just call the SURC and they give me advice," one patient said about the Clinic.



*Cancer patient Poppy Kintakas discusses her symptoms with oncology nurse, Jayne Watson.*

The Clinic has also helped carers seek the support they need when caring for a loved one with cancer.

"Until the SURC opened, I used to call an ambulance when my mother looked unwell, but now I just call the girls and they tell me what to do before she gets really bad," one carer said.

Cancer Services Projects Manager, Ilana Hornung said plans are in place to expand the SURC to manage all Western Health cancer patients.

"The SURC has resulted in fewer chemotherapy patients attending the ED and patients and their families have praised the SURC since it opened," Ilana said. "This has been a very successful project with excellent outcomes for Western Health patients." 🌟

## Mental health consumers help to improve services

**A research project led by Western Health is looking at ways to improve the experiences of mental health consumers as they transition across different services.**



*(Left to right) Project Lead Kate Cranwell, Project Manager Meg Polacsek and consumer participant Susan Adams.*

Funded by the Australian Primary Health Care Research Institute, the project is focussing on Western Health's Mental Health Hospital Admission Reduction Program (MH HARP), a specialist service that helps people to better understand and manage their mental health and social needs.

Typically, its clients have presented to an emergency department more than twice within 12 months and have complex or multiple health care and psychosocial needs.

The methodology being used for this project is Experience-Based Co-Design (EBCD), whereby staff and consumers work together to share their experiences and identify opportunities for service improvements.

EBCD goes beyond traditional satisfaction surveys or audits by giving consumers the opportunity to share their actual experiences.

Sixteen MH HARP consumers agreed to participate in filmed interviews, which were made into a short film that captured their key 'touch points'.

The film was viewed at a joint consumer and staff workshop, in which participants worked together to identify aspects of the service that were highly valued, as well as priorities for improvement.

"The project team is continuing to work closely with consumers and the MH HARP team to develop and implement these improvements," Project Manager Meg Polacsek said.

"But the benefits to the consumers of being part of this project go beyond the service-level improvements that were identified.

"All 16 of the consumers who participated in the interviews have reported how much they appreciated the opportunity to share their experiences."

Meg said they felt that face-to-face interviews would make more of a difference than a survey "that would just be stuck in a drawer."

"It was so good to chat to someone who was interested in hearing what I'd been through," Susan Adams, a consumer participant who has also attended a meeting of the project's steering group said. "It made me feel like I have a voice." 🌟

# We're growing with our community.

In 2015 Western Health will be undergoing some big changes to introduce critical care services at Sunshine Hospital. Intensive care and cardiac units will be added and many other services will be moving into new or refurbished wards.

In order to care for our patients in the best possible environment many of our services at Footscray Hospital and Sunshine Hospital will be changing locations.

You can find out more at [www.westernhealth.org.au](http://www.westernhealth.org.au) or speak to staff at one of our sites.

## Supporting the Critical Care Changes

*Together, caring for the West*

[www.westernhealth.org.au](http://www.westernhealth.org.au)

### Footscray Hospital

Gordon Street  
Footscray VIC 3011  
Locked Bag 2  
Footscray VIC 3011  
8345 6666

### Sunshine Hospital

Furlong Road  
St Albans VIC 3021  
PO Box 294  
St Albans VIC 3021  
8345 1333

### Sunshine Hospital Radiation Therapy Centre

176 Furlong Road  
St Albans VIC 3021  
8395 9999

### Western Centre for Health Research & Education

Sunshine Hospital  
Furlong Road  
St Albans VIC 3021  
8345 1333

### Sunbury Day Hospital

7 Macedon Road  
Sunbury VIC 3429  
9732 8600

### Williamstown Hospital

Railway Crescent  
Williamstown VIC 3016  
9393 0100

### Drug Health Services

3-7 Eleanor Street  
Footscray VIC 3011  
8345 6682

### Hazeldean Transition Care

211-215 Osborne Street  
Williamstown VIC 3016  
9397 3167