



COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER

West Wimmera Health Service | December 2021 | Issue No. 11



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OAKS DAY ENJOYED BY IONA RESIDENTS ALONG WITH A FOUR-LEGGED GUEST!

Residents at our Iona Digby Harris Nursing Home enjoyed a 'fascinating' afternoon getting into the racing spirit for Oaks Day in early November.

People were treated to a delicious afternoon tea while watching the races on television and having some fun games throughout the afternoon.

There was even a special four-legged VIP who made an appearance, when Activities Coordinator Kerry, rode in on a mighty stead!

Our CEO, Ritchie, had a wonderful time joining the Oaks Day festivities.

The ladies enjoyed dressing up in their racing finest for the occasion and they impressed in some very stylish fascinators for Iona's own Fashions on the Field!

Pictured below: CEO Ritchie enjoyed being a part of Iona's Oaks Day celebrations, along with Iona residents Shirley Moar, Noreen Croot, Fashions on the Field winner Una Bartlett and Margory Leyonjhelm, and our very own Oaks Day jockey, Kerry.



Pictured on front cover: Michael Alexander from our Engineering and Maintenance team.

INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF HEALTH AND CARE WORKERS

Thank You!

TO OUR AMAZING TEAM FOR YOUR COMPASSION, DEDICATION AND SKILLS!

2021 has been the International Year of Health and Care Workers in recognition of their dedication to providing care during and despite the COVID-19 pandemic that has challenged health systems worldwide.

We acknowledge and celebrate the critical role of health and care workers in ensuring the health and wellbeing for individuals and our communities.

Health and care workers include all those engaged in health services, public health and related areas, as well as those providing support to these activities. This varied category of workers encompasses health professionals such as doctors, nurses, midwives, pharmacists, dentists, physiotherapists and exercise physiologists, along with mental health workers, social care workers, occupational health workers, speech pathologists, dietitians, podiatrists, social workers, radiographers, and support workers.

We appreciate how much our communities value the work of all of our care teams. Below are some of the kind words you have shared this year.

"I feel really
cared for
and safe."

"The staff are lovely. They
discharged their duties
promptly and cheerfully
and were happy to spend
their time chatting and
had a real concern for my
well-being despite being
very busy."

"The nurses
always have a
positive attitude
- thank you!"

"Staff are courteous and helpful at all times,
very professional and I was made to feel
comfortable and satisfied with the care given."

"To all the wonderful
staff... I would like to
thank you for your care
and support."

"Nurses are always
cheerful!"





FARMER

GETS A SECOND SEASON!



The engaging podcast series 'Farmer Wants a Healthy Life' is back for a second season.

Following on from a successful season one launch, and feature COVID-19 episode with Dr Rob Grenfell, the podcast has gained a strong following from our local farming community and beyond.

Aimed at farming families and rural communities, the podcast was inspired by the desire to work with people living in rural settings to start a conversation about a variety of health and wellbeing issues.

Hosted by well-known Wimmera identity, and mountain climber turned storyteller, Brigitte Muir OAM, the podcast series is full of heart.

Featuring a variety of guests, from farming people sharing their stories to health professionals, genuine and open conversations have become a hallmark of the podcast.

Speaking about putting the podcast series together, Brigitte shares, "I have ended up loving the people I talked to!"

Our Health Promotion Manager, Dorothy McLaren

adds, "We want each of our podcast episodes to be conversation starters."

"Farmer Wants a Healthy Life is about hearing stories and sharing your own. Listening and mulling over how to live a healthy farming life."

Dorothy continues, "We also want to hear from you! Once you've listened to an episode, please jump onto our dedicated social pages to share how you live a healthy farming life, and any questions the episode discussions raise for you."

The most downloaded episode of the first series was an interview with ex-AFL star John 'Jumbo' Sudholz who shared his struggle with depression on returning to the farm after his AFL career. In a moving conversation, John talked candidly about the hard times he faced, and how he has learned to live with depression.

Farmer Wants a Healthy Life is about connecting people and has already had a moving impact on listeners from across the region, Victoria and beyond.

Season Two is set to continue the buzz and the hopeful start of a movement for farmers from all walks of life to make the choices for a healthy life.



“
My wife and I absolutely loved all these Podcasts. In fact, my wife was moved to tears and we found all the guests incredibly likeable and informed. Brigitte comes across brilliantly, so warm and real.

”

– Season One Listener

The newly launched episodes feature conversations with:

- Farmer John Mellings and John Darcy of the Victorian Farmer's Federation, talk about farm safety;
- Skin specialist Dr David Lester shares advice on skin checks;
- Ex-farmers Arnold and Colleen Bond on surviving two heart attacks and the importance of heart health;
- Our own West Wimmera Health Service Nurse and Quality Manager, Trish Heinrich speaks about her role conducting farmer health and lifestyle assessments with the National Centre for Farmer Health; and
- Justin Knorpp talks with Brigitte about why he started the Active Farmers Group, with group member Daniel Keam joining the conversation to share his own experience in the program.

You can listen to Farmer Wants a Healthy Life on Apple, Spotify or anywhere you listen to your podcasts.

Read more about the podcast series on our website:
www.wwhs.net.au/Farmer-wants-a-healthy-life

Share your stories, experiences, thoughts and ideas on the podcast's Facebook page
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/fwahl> or Twitter account https://twitter.com/_FWAHL.

SEASON 2 HAS ARRIVED!


FARMER

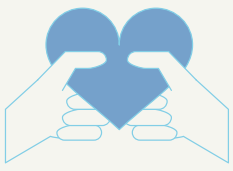
WANTS A HEALTHY LIFE

"The choice you make can
change your life"

**New
episodes
available!**

LISTEN TO US ON APPLE, SPOTIFY OR ANYWHERE YOU LISTEN TO YOUR PODCASTS!

WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU:  **@FarmerWantsaHealthyLife**  **@_FWAHL**



Our Social Workers are Here to Help

Have you ever considered engaging in counselling? Have you ever wanted to seek other resources or supports that may help you in your life? Did you know Social Workers can help? Not quite sure what to expect?

There is no shame or judgement in reaching out for some extra support from our Social Work services.

Social Workers maintain a focus on improving human wellbeing. They identify and address any external or internal issues that may impact on the wellbeing of individuals, families, and communities.

Social Workers may undertake roles in casework, counselling, advocacy, and community development at both the personal and social level.

They assist people by engaging non-judgmentally and being understanding and supportive of a person's needs; providing information which is useful and relevant; and upholding the right to confidentiality and privacy.

Some of the issues our Social Workers can support you with include:

- Mild to moderate mental health issues such as Anxiety and Depression;
- Grief and loss;
- Stress;
- Unplanned changes in life, and major life events (for example a new diagnosis, decline in functioning, having to care for someone, a change in accommodation, retirement, or becoming unemployed);
- Relational difficulties;
- Financial hardship; and
- Alcohol and other drug issues.

Social Work values are:

- Being confidential and respecting privacy
- Being non-judgemental
- Accepting people where they are at
- Promoting individual strength and capacity
- Respecting individual quality of life
- Promoting equality on accessing resources and services.



What we offer:

- A comprehensive assessment to understand your needs and goals
- A range of interventions to address needs and goals
- Structured generalist counselling
- Short-term case work and support
- Psycho-education providing information and awareness about mental health
- Referrals to external agencies and services such as legal advice, housing, employment, alcohol and other drug services, family services, disability services, aged persons' services, family violence support services, and financial counselling.

Social Workers can provide counselling. They can also explore resources for you that may help, and make referrals if needed.

Who can use our Social Work service?

All inpatients and community members within our West Wimmera Health Service region are welcome to access this service.

Further support is available from:

- **Beyond Blue Support Service (24 x 7)**
Ph: 1300 22 4636
- **Lifeline**
Ph: 13 11 14
- **SuicideLine Victoria (24 x 7)**
Ph: 1300 651 251
- **Suicide Call Back Service**
Ph: 1300 659 467
- **MensLine Australia**
Ph: 1300 78 99 78
- **SANE Australia Helpline**
Ph: 1800 187 263
- **Open Arms – Veterans and Families Counselling**
Ph: 1800 011 046
- **My Aged Care**
Ph: 1800 200 422
- **Head to Health** - Can help you find digital mental health services at: <https://www.headtohealth.gov.au/>
- **The National Relay Service** - Can help callers with hearing or speech issues.
Ph: 1800 555 660

Anyone is able to refer themselves to our Social Workers. Referrals are also made by GPs, health workers, school teachers, the police, members of the community, family and friends.

Call our friendly Intake Team on (03) 5391 4292 to have a confidential talk about how we can help, or email: intake@wwhs.net.au.

"I define connection as the energy that exists between people when they feel seen, heard, and valued..."

-Brene Brown



Don't forget your health checks!

IT'S TIME TO BE SEEN AGAIN

Have you put off going to the doctor, or delayed having your annual check up during the COVID-19 pandemic? Has it been a long time since you checked-in on your health?

Don't let the guilt or worry delay you any longer - now is the perfect time to catch up with your healthcare.

We are encouraging people to catch up and keep up on health checks you may have missed since the beginning of the COVID-19 global pandemic.

Caring for your health and wellbeing is crucial, but unfortunately since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic there's been a decline in the number of people accessing regular healthcare and check-ups.

Several lockdowns and changing restrictions have resulted in delays for people getting routine tests, especially for cancer, heart disease and type 2 diabetes.

Regular health checks can help to identify early warning signs of disease or illness. Heart disease, diabetes and some cancers can often be picked up in their early stages, when treatment may be more successful.

You can perform some basic health checks in your home such as: checking your skin regularly for new or changing moles; checking your teeth when you brush and floss; being aware of changes in bowel habits; checking for breast lumps or other unexplained changes; and monitoring your alcohol consumption, weight, or smoking behaviour.

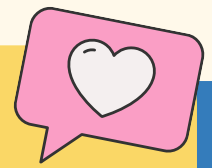
If you notice a change, you don't feel confident to do home checks, or have questions, you should visit your doctor.

Routine general health checks and common tests for you to talk with your GP or community health nurse include:

- Cholesterol check
- Diabetes screening
- Blood Pressure check
- Screening for breast cancer and being aware of any changes in your breasts or nipples
- Cervical Screening Test
- Bowel Cancer Screening Test
- Ensuring immunisation schedules are up-to-date
- Skin Cancer checks and watching for changes in, or new or unusual looking moles
- Prostate Cancer Screening
- Viral Hepatitis Screening
- Oral Health checks with your Dentist



COMMUNITY HEALTH News



HELPING HEALTHY COMMUNITIES, HEALTHY LIVES



Download your
Vaccine Passport

Have you added your COVID-19 digital certificate to the Service Victoria app?

1. Create a myGov account (<https://my.gov.au/>).
2. Link Medicare to myGov.
3. Select the 'Proof of COVID-19 vaccination' quick link, then select 'View history'.
4. Select your name to download the certificate or immunisation history statement from your Medicare account.
5. Link your COVID-19 certificate to the Service Victoria app by selecting 'Share Certificate'.
6. Tap 'share' to Service Victoria, click 'Accept and share' and then 'Add certificate'.
7. When you scan a business's QR code your check-in will reveal a green tick to prove you are vaccinated.

For more info visit:
coronavirus.vic.gov.au/get-your-covid-19-digital-certificate

Our Occupational Therapy team are seeking donations of sensory blankets to use across our Service.

A sensory blanket is a lap blanket that is made up of different materials, with a variety of textures and things to manipulate like zips, buttons, lace etc.

Sensory blankets can offer comfort for people living with advanced dementia. The blanket provides tactile information that can stimulate memories and senses, helping to keep people's hands active and their minds feeling calm.

If you would like to donate a Sensory Blanket, please drop your donation at your closest WWHS reception. If you have any questions, please contact us on (03) 5391 4267.

We look forward to seeing your creations and thank you in advance!



Donations for Sensory
Blankets



Services Australia
Agent

Want help to access Centrelink, Medicare or other government programs and services locally?

We can help as a Services Australia Agent!

Our dedicated Kiosk in Nhill is available on the following days, so you can get things done on the spot:

- Monday to Friday from 8.30am - 5pm

We have an Agent available to assist on:

- Monday to Wednesday from 10am - 12pm
- Thursday from 10am - 11.30am

So next time you need to do some government business, drop in to see us at our Nhill Allied Health Reception.

Message FROM THE CEO

This month we hear from Acting CEO, Darren Welsh

COVID-19 Vaccinations

Congratulations to our communities for rolling up their sleeves and receiving their COVID -19 vaccinations; your actions protect not only yourselves, your loved ones but also the greater community and the healthcare workers that you may come in contact with – well done.

A huge thank you to all the doctors and nurses working in General Practice for their tireless work in vaccinating our community – they have been the mainstay of vaccination efforts in our communities and we are grateful for their work.



West Wimmera Health Service successfully partnered with the Royal Flying Doctor Service in September and October to deliver thirteen public COVID-19 Vaccination Clinics. Overall 705 first doses and 428 second doses were administered in three townships.

To those, who are yet to get your COVID-19 vaccine, it is never too late. Please reach out to your General Practitioner or Pharmacist to discuss and book a vaccination.

X-Ray Marks the Spot! Fundraising Campaign

To assist in raising funds for new Digital X-ray Equipment, West Wimmera Health Service conducted a virtual auction and clearance sale.

Community members had the opportunity to bid on a range of building materials and furniture, to office storage equipment and garden goods, plus much, much more.

At the time of publication, a total of \$47,862 has been raised, including the winning auction bids.

Donations for our fundraising effort can also be made via the West Wimmera Health Service web page at <https://wwhsdonate.net.au/>.

Health Workforce Orthopaedics

With COVID-19 border closures our ability to conduct orthopaedic surgery in 2021 has been severely hampered.

However, with double vaccination rates for COVID-19 to reach 80% in late November 2021, South Australia has declared that it will open its border to Victorians who are double vaccinated. This is excellent news as Dr Chi Gooi will then be able to consult his patients, reassessing their needs in January 2022 and recommence surgery at the Nhill Hospital in February 2022.

Ophthalmology

We have been extremely fortunate that Dr Mark Chehade has been able to continue providing macular injections and eye surgery in 2021. A special thanks to Mark, his team in Adelaide and our staff in Nhill for providing an outstanding service retaining and improving the sight of our community members.

A YEAR AT A GLANCE...

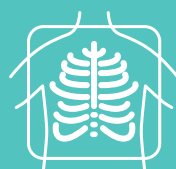
2020/21
statistics from
our Annual
Report

10



1,507

Urgent Care
Presentations



4,864

Diagnostic
Images
Captured



195

Operations
Performed



44,775

Residential Aged
Care Bed Days

Cardiology

Regrettably, Dr Andrew Markwick has advised us that he will no longer be able to provide cardiology clinics in Nhill.

Dr Markwick will still be able to see his current patients in Naracoorte or Adelaide if they wish to see him.

We have commenced our search for a replacement Cardiologist and have several leads that are being pursued.

General Surgery

We remain without a General Surgeon to undertake surgery work in our theatres. We are committed to reactivating this Service and are following up on several options at present.

Health Support Staff

West Wimmera Health Service is seeking to grow its Health Support Worker numbers to expand the social support and home assistance for the elderly and those people with disabilities.

This is a growing area for the Service and we are actively recruiting now. If you are interested please contact us on 53914222 or examine our webpage at:

https://www.wwhs.net.au/about_us/employment

Infrastructure Projects

Solar Panels

In a bid to do our bit for the environment and reduce our carbon foot print, West Wimmera Health Service is installing solar panels to buildings.

Panels have been installed at Rainbow and Jeparit and work will shortly commence at Kaniva and Nhill.

The Service has sought additional grants from Government to expand the Solar Panel footprint to other sites over the next 12 months.

New Generator installed at Nhill Hospital precinct

A new 720 kVA Generator and Electrical Switch Board have been installed between the Nhill Hospital and the Hydrotherapy Pool.

The new generator provides enough electricity for the whole site in the event that mains power ceases for any reason.

Each of the Hospital / Residential Aged Care sites of West Wimmera Health Service have a generator that will run for several hours on a tank of diesel.

The Service has a portable diesel replenishment unit that can keep the generators going 24 hours a day if needed.

Resident Gardens

Kitchen gardens are being created at each of our Residential Aged Care Facilities. Such gardens will provide our aged residents with the opportunity to provide garden produce to our kitchens.

We are at the start of these projects with designs underway in consultation with our care staff, residents and families. Initial gardening equipment is being purchased that will assist residents garden in raised beds.

The project will be assisted by staff from the Maintenance and Engineering department.

Darren Welsh
Acting Chief
Executive Officer

“As the year draws to a close, we extend our gratitude to all our community members for your continued support of our health service.

We wish you and your loved ones a safe and festive holiday season, and a happy and healthy start to 2022.”



6,049

Community Nursing
Appointments



15,302

Allied Health
Appointments



1,269

Acute
Separations



174,809

Meals Prepared



558

Staff Head
Count 11

A look across our Service

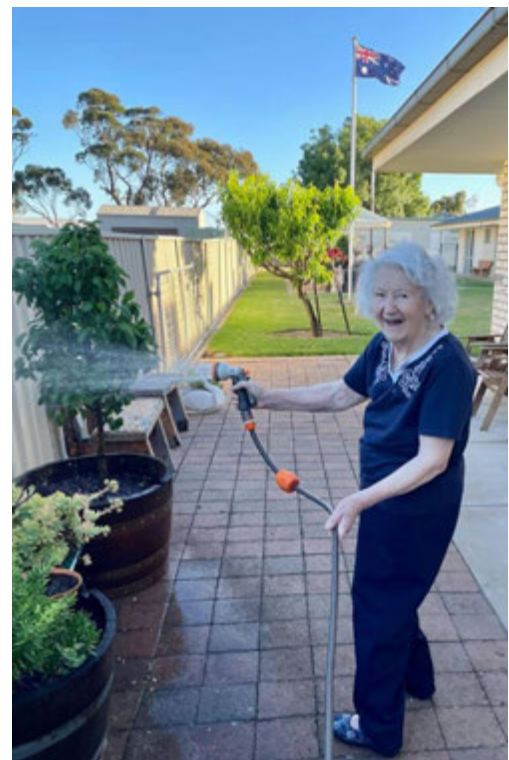
West Wimmera Health Service



Carl - Man of the day winner.



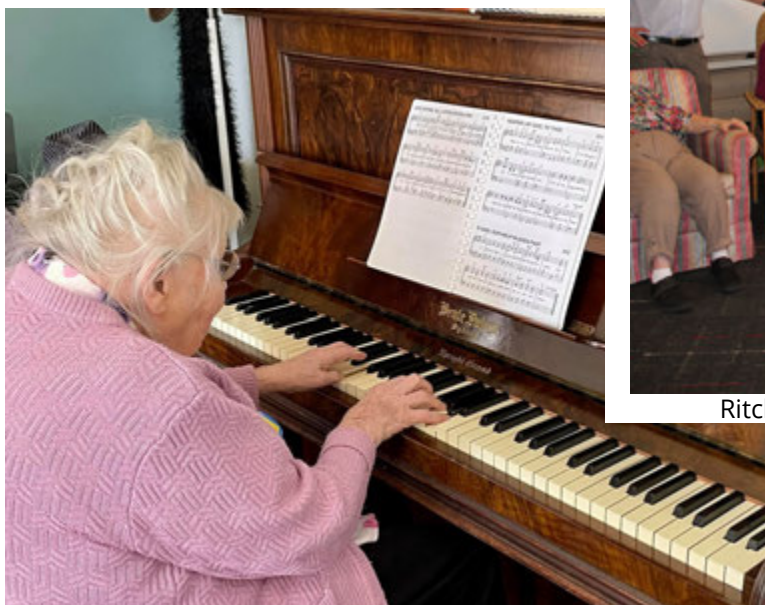
Natimuk Oak's Day!



Cynthia enjoying watering the plants.



Ritchie with the Iona residents on Melbourne Cup day.



Dolly from Kaniva playing the piano.

Residents enjoying Oaks
Day at Rupanyup-->



Kevin taking care of the tomato plants.



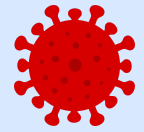
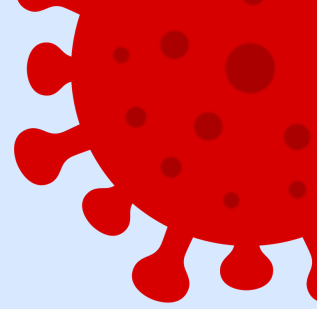
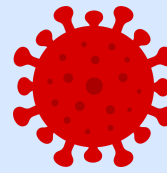
Megan and Linda celebrating Jeparit Hospitals
20th birthday.

Goroke Day Centre Social
Support Group-->





Royal Flying Doctor Service



PROTECTING RURAL COMMUNITIES TOGETHER

Last month, we proudly teamed up with Royal Flying Doctor Service Victoria to host COVID-19 vaccination clinics in Nhill, Kaniva and Goroke. Here you can read a wonderful article from RFDS about the week spent in Nhill and the vital impact the clinics have had for many people.

“

Right across rural and remote Victoria, accessing a COVID-19 vaccination these past few months has come with a few challenges. The triple threat that is vaccine availability, rolling lockdowns and yo-yoing travel restrictions has made things hard enough, but when you throw in the excessive distances many people are required to travel in order to reach their nearest vaccination centre, it's understandable why vaccination rates in rural Victoria have been well behind those of the state's metropolitan areas.

Wimmera Health Care Group (WWHG), West Wimmera Health Service (WWHS), Rural Northwest Health and the Bush Nursing Centres from Woomelang and Harrow are aware of this disparity, and have been working hard to close the gap.

“We are always short of doctors out here in the regional parts of Victoria, and [some towns] don't have a dedicated vaccine clinic,” says Genevieve Lilley, the Western Sub-Hub Project Officer with WHCG.

As a result, Ballarat Health Service, along with the Western Sub-Hub partners, have been coordinating a number of pop-up clinics across the region to ensure all locals – especially high priority groups – can more easily access a vaccination. And with vaccination eligibilities recently opening up to include everyone aged 12 and up, these clinics have been wholeheartedly welcomed by locals.

RFDS Victoria was chosen to support these pop-up clinics in western Victoria due to our long history serving rural communities, and our extensive experience in mobile patient care. Our agile teams are adept at responding to rapidly changing environments, and we have a reputation for working effectively and cohesively with local service providers to provide excellent health outcomes – all of which made us the perfect partner for this program.

From Monday 13 to Friday 17 September, one of these clinics took place in the Wimmera town of Nhill. Infection Control Nurse Christine Dufty co-ordinated the site and the community engagement for the clinic, and Ambulance Transport Attendant Jiddo Schaaf was one of the RFDS Victoria team members who was on site to help out.

“It's been so good here,” says Jiddo. “Christine has done an amazing job setting up and managing the clinic, which was built in the community hall, and she has been supported by a small but highly dedicated team of nurses from across WWHS. These nurses share Christine's passion and enthusiasm, welcoming in a rotating roster of staff from all over RFDS every day, warmly offering their support, exceptional clinic skills and knowledge with a good dose of humour.”

This partnership saw a total of 566 first doses of Pfizer and 21 second doses administered throughout the week, and considering the population of the town is only 2,200, this marks a great effort by all involved. As a result, 50.3% of people within the Hindmarsh Shire, into which Nhill falls, are now fully vaccinated, with 82.5% having received their first dose.

One such local who made good use of the clinic was farmer Tom Cook, who received his first Pfizer jab on the very first day.

“Having the vaccination clinic come to Nhill has made it much more accessible for many locals to get the vaccine. Until this clinic, we'd have to either travel an hour away to Horsham or stay on a waiting list for the doctors in town, which was a slow roll out.

“As a farmer, I found it hard to justify taking two hours out of my day for the round trip to Horsham,” says Tom. “So the Nhill clinic was perfect for me and many others, being a farming district.”

However, it wasn't just locals who made good use of the clinic: Nhill is situated halfway between Melbourne and Adelaide, and possesses a large truck interchange due to the town's proximity to the Victoria/SA border. As such, a number of truck drivers also stopped by the clinic, which was of particular importance due to their industry's vaccination mandate: in order to keep travelling over the border, truck drivers had a strict deadline by which to get the vaccine, so the clinic was exceedingly well received by this transient community.

Another group for whom the clinic was absolutely essential was the town's large Karen community. Karen refugees from Myanmar make up about 10% of Nhill's population, and predominantly work for one of the town's poultry processing factories. As the government has identified those working in the country's meat processing industries as a high priority, locals and WWHS had to work together to ensure translators were on hand during these large group bookings.

“The response from the community has been really good, and the translators have been absolutely fantastic to work with,” says Genevieve.

All in all, the clinic consisted of a number of moving parts, which all needed to work seamlessly together to achieve a positive, COVID-safe outcome.

“We managed to get people through really quickly, both walk-ins and bookings,” says Jiddo, who notes the importance of partnering with trusted local services to run such clinics. “The WWHS nurses are pillars of their community, with strong ties to local community groups, and were therefore able to reach out to members of the community to fill appointments in the clinic so that no vaccine was wasted.

“You could not find a better group of nurses to work with.”

These sentiments were shared by the team at WWHS.

“I went up to Nhill on Monday, the first day, and I was working with a couple of Flying Doctor fellows,” says Genevieve. “They were really keen, really smart, really quick to learn. It was just very refreshing and fantastic. Their help was really appreciated.”

“I think, like any town, there would have been widespread lockdown [if the virus had got into Nhill prior to the vaccination push],” says Genevieve. “There's very limited acute care capacity out here, even in Horsham, let alone Nhill. So if people became acutely unwell, they'd be transferred to Horsham, but Horsham is always stretched and is currently not a COVID treating hospital. So, if somebody did get very sick, it would be a really difficult situation.

“The clinics are a huge boon for the future of how the pandemic can play out up here,” Genevieve concludes, before jokingly referencing the earthquake felt across Victoria last week: “And it happened just in the nick of time too, because it really feels like Armageddon is breathing down our necks!”

”

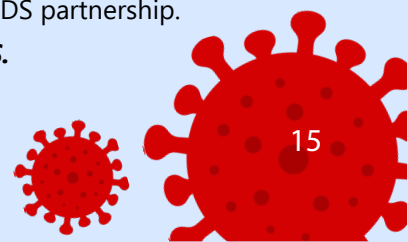


To find out more about RFDS Victoria's involvement in the state-wide vaccination push, visit: <https://www.flyingdoctor.org.au/vic/about/covid-19-clinics/>

Pictured:

Tom Cook is happy to have the opportunity to receive his COVID-19 vaccinations locally, thanks to the WWHS and RFDS partnership.

Photo contributed by RFDS.



IS IT REALLY URGENT?

Paul and Jay have been friends for over twenty years, attending the same university. Recently, Paul has become more distant from his friend. He has stopped attending their monthly poker nights or answering Jay's phone calls.

After the fourth missed event, Jay thinks he had better go over and see his friend. He arrives at his home to find Paul's wife there. She explains that she and Paul had decided to separate a few months ago and Paul had moved into a new apartment down the road. Jay immediately goes over to the new apartment and knocks loudly on the door.

After a long period, Paul finally comes to the door. He looks exhausted and dishevelled and Jay can clearly tell he is not coping with the changes in his life. Paul apologises for his appearance and the mess in the apartment and invites Jay inside.

As Paul begins to explain the situation he starts to lose control of his breathing and begins to cry uncontrollably. Jay is extremely worried about his mate and thinks he better get him to Urgent Care.

Before suggesting this to Paul, Jay rings Beyond Blue on 1300 22 4636 to get their advice. Alyssa, a counsellor at Beyond Blue, speaks to Jay to better assess the situation and identifies that Paul may be experiencing a panic attack.

She asks to speak with Paul and although he is hesitant, Paul begins to explain how he is feeling. As he does this he is able to regain control of his breathing and emotions. Alyssa explains to Paul that he may be suffering with anxiety or depression and it would benefit him to see his GP and discuss this further.

With the help of Jay, he arranges this appointment and visits his local GP who refers him to a counsellor to help him through this difficult time.

I am so grateful for the support of **Beyond Blue**, I just didn't know how to get help.



KERRY'S INSPIRING JOURNEY

We had the pleasure of sitting down and chatting to Kerry, Activities Coordinator in Iona, about her inspiring career journey at West Wimmera Health Service.

Kerry began her career in health as a General Service Assistant in 2015. She was in that role for 3-4 years and enjoyed her time in this position. Her role involved working across multiple departments in Nhill. **Kerry's experience working in Iona and developing relationships with residents sparked her interest in a career in health care and drive to provide engaging, quality care.**

This interest led Kerry to volunteer her time providing a Saturday exercise class to the Iona residents. Kerry expressed her interest in growing her career in this area to a fellow staff member, who put her in contact with Jess Pilgrim, the Service's Training Officer & Careers Advisor.

Kerry openly advised Jess of her struggles with reading and writing, but she did not let this hold her back. With the support of Jess and her own determination, Kerry commenced a Certificate III in Individual Support.

Kerry felt supported the entire time she was completing her studies. Jess and other staff members would assist Kerry in her assignments by reading the questions aloud and transcribing her responses.

"The support I received was fantastic and allowed me to do a job I love."

Through Kerry's further education she now gets to enjoy supporting the residents who first sparked her interest in her dream career.

"I am a very hands on person and love working with the residents. I like seeing the residents smile, if they are happy I am happy."

Don't let your fears hold you back!

If you are looking to grow your career in health in a supportive work environment, contact us on 5391 4222.



Why do staff keep asking WHO YOU ARE?

Various healthcare professionals may be involved in your care. While you might find these questions repetitive, it's important they are asked to make sure you're the right person getting the right care, test or treatment.



We will ask you your:

- ✓ full name
- ✓ date of birth
- ✓ address (if not an inpatient)

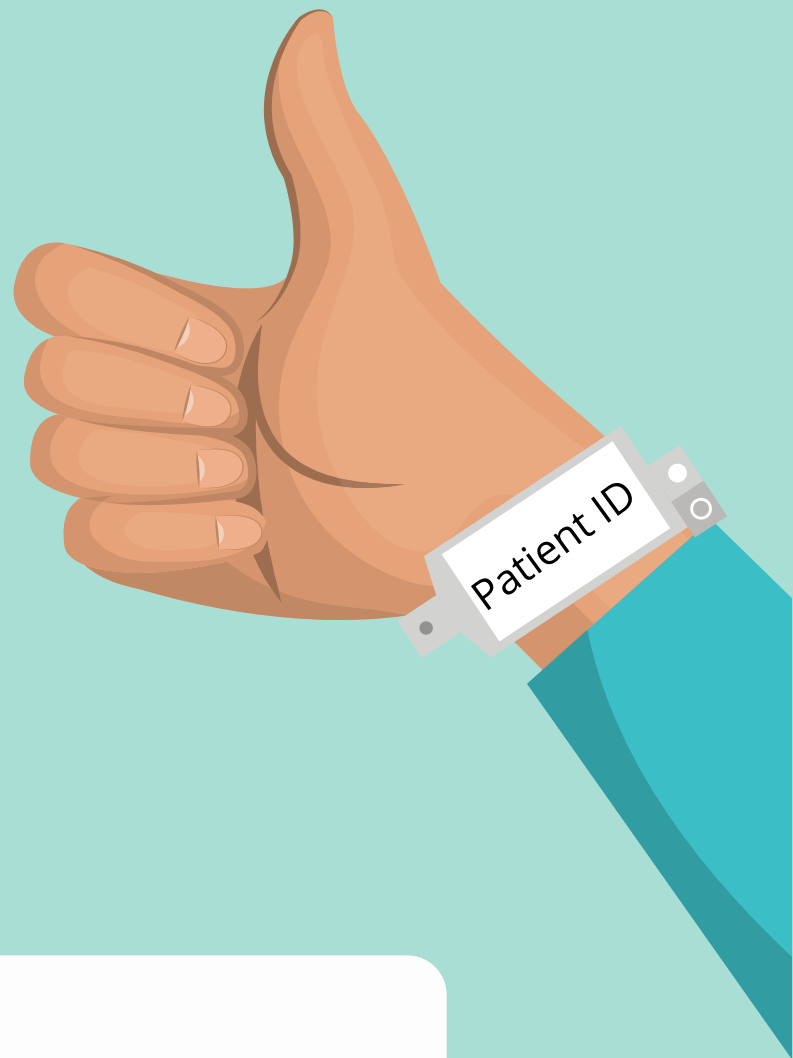


If you are an inpatient we will cross-check your wristband with your ✓ patient ID number



Staff will ask when you are:

- making and/or attending an appointment
- receiving medication or treatment
- having a procedure (e.g. X-ray, blood test)
- being visited in your own home
- at staff shift change (handover)



PLAY A ROLE IN SHAPING OUR FUTURE

What happens on our Community Advisory Committees?

Your voice is powerful in creating strategic change in your community.

Community Advisory Committees (CACs) give you, our consumers, carers and the community, a voice in the running of our Health Service. The Committees provide a collaborative forum for us to work in partnership with you to lead positive change at West Wimmera Health Service, and to ensure that your views are taken into account in our decision making processes.

We are delighted to have three established Committees representing the communities of Minyip, Murtoa and Rupanyup; Kaniva; and Nhill. In 2022, we will be reaching out to form two further committees for the communities of Jeparit and Rainbow; and Gorokey and Natimuk.

Each CAC has a range of focuses, including helping to review the information we provide; monitoring how we are performing with feedback, safety and occupancy data; advising on priorities from the community; and much more.

Marie Milgate, a member of our Minyip, Murtoa and Rupanyup CAC shares why she volunteered to join her local Committee. Marie says, "I am a relatively new member of the CAC, only joining 12 months ago. Having a nursing background, I have a genuine interest in our health services and what they can bring to our local communities."

Marie speaks about the things that she has most enjoyed in her time on the committee; she shares, "I enjoy the networking, keeping up with the availability of new services and the performance of all campuses."

When asked for her advice to anyone who may be considering joining a CAC, Marie passionately says, "I strongly encourage our locals to 'use it or lose it; when it comes to our local health services."

Kaniva CAC member, Harvey Champness, joined his local committee when it was re-formed in 2019. He was also the convenor of the original committee from 2009.

Harvey shares that he was inspired to be a part of the new Kaniva committee "in the belief that community ideas and aspirations need to be brought to the Health Service."

Harvey has most enjoyed "the diverse representation of the community and the interest and energy found within the group."

He tells us that he is most proud of his work gathering signatures to support the case for funding for the Kaniva Hostel development, a project of strong interest for the local community.

Fellow Kaniva CAC member, Carolyn Howe, shares Harvey's enthusiasm for the aged care redevelopment project, along with a desire to retain health services for her community and attract important roles such as a Dentist.

Carolyn's advice for people who have an interest in their local advisory committee is to "jump on board and have a say in our local health services!"

We extend our grateful thanks to members across our CACs – your time and your voice make a vital difference to improving our services for all of our users.

If you are interested to learn more about our CACs, please contact our Communications and Customer Partner, for a friendly chat on (03) 5391 4293 or email mysay@wwhs.net.au.



WHEN CAN I START PALLIATIVE CARE?



Palliative care helps people live as fully and as comfortably as possible with a life-limiting or terminal illness. Palliative care aims to ease the suffering of patients and their families through treatment, care and support, including physical, emotional, social and spiritual care.

Once you know your life-limiting illness is advanced, it is a good idea to start exploring the options provided by palliative care. Talk to your care team about a referral to palliative care. You can find out what the different team members do and which services might be relevant now or in the future.

Palliative care affirms life and regards dying as a normal process, and intends neither to hasten nor postpone death. Terminology varies according to where palliative care may be provided, the patient's illness and how they are at a particular time and the role a palliative care service may have in the patient's care. Care can be provided at home, in hospital, in a hospice or a residential aged care facility.

How are you feeling - Palliative care aims to maintain quality of life for people with a life-limiting illness. It is about living in a way that is meaningful to you, within the constraints of your illness. It's not simply about dying.

One reason that some people don't access palliative care services early – or at all – is because they fear that it means they have given up hope or are going to die soon. This is certainly not

the case for everyone referred to palliative care. Sorting out care earlier rather than later will reduce stress on you and your family. It will allow time to better understand and manage any physical symptoms (such as pain or nausea), and to consider your practical, emotional and spiritual needs.

Next steps...

Talk to friends - Some people take pleasure in completing projects, spending time with friends, or exploring new hobbies. Others make sense of their situation through a creative activity, such as writing, music or art. You may find that you focus your hopes on the things that are most important to you, e.g. feeling valued, having meaningful relationships or receiving effective pain relief. For many people, maintaining control over day-to-day decisions is important – the team will respect your wishes if you don't want to take up their suggestions.

Sexuality and palliative care - People with advanced cancer usually experience major physical and psychological changes. These can have an enormous impact on how they feel sexually, but do not mean that intimacy needs to end.

We are all sexual beings, and intimacy can provide comfort and maintain connection. Even if sexual intercourse is no longer possible or desired, you may gain physical closeness through cuddling, stroking or massage.



Talk with your partner about your feelings and concerns about the sexual changes in your relationship, and ways to maintain intimacy.

See your doctor - Depending on your needs, you may use palliative care services occasionally or you may use them continuously for a few weeks or months. The number of people receiving palliative care for several years is increasing. You can have palliative care while still having active treatment for your illness. There is no need to wait until the end of life.

Adapt to your environment - Some people live comfortably for months or years after a diagnosis of a life-limiting illness and they can be supported by palliative care services as needed throughout this time. For others, the illness advances quickly so that their care is focused on end-of-life needs soon after their referral to a palliative care service. Whatever stage you're at, your palliative care team will continually assess your changing needs and adjust your care.

Plan for future - You can have palliative care in different settings depending on your situation, where you live, and whether you have family or friends who can help. An important role for the palliative care team is to assess the best place for your care. Many people prefer to receive care at home. The team will respect your wishes where possible.

Palliative care sees death and dying as a normal part of life. It does not try to shorten life, nor does it try to make life longer. Instead, the palliative care team provides services to improve your quality of life. This may include managing pain and other symptoms. Some studies show that if symptoms, such as pain, are controlled, people will feel better and may live longer.

For example, cancer treatments such as surgery, chemotherapy, immunotherapy, targeted therapy and radiotherapy may also be used as part of palliative treatment. In this case, the aim is not to control the cancer but to relieve symptoms.

Other services that can help with palliative care include, the Rural Outreach Program, RFDS Flying Doctor Wellbeing, Grampians Palliative Care and Wimmera Hospice Care.

Contact our Community Health Intake Team to talk about how we can support you and your loved ones with palliative care. Phone us on (03) 5391 4267.

SEEK SERVICES TO SUPPORT YOUR SYMPTOMS:

Your palliative care team is there to make life easier for you, your family and carers in a variety of ways.

Your palliative care team may include:

Doctors and specialists – provide care and support, concentrating on preventing and alleviating suffering and improving your quality of life by prescribing medication and referring you to other services that will help you live comfortable and well.

Nurses – in a hospital setting, nurses do most of the caring, helping patients adhere to their medication schedules, keeping patients comfortable and maintaining a direct line of communication between you and your doctor. In a community nursing setting, nurses may visit you at home to provide these services.

Social workers – for basic counselling and grief support and assistance for families to talk about sensitive or complex issues. They can also help link to other services such as home help and financial support.

Pharmacists – will help manage your medication and assist you to deal with any side effects from treatment such as nausea or vomiting.

Physiotherapists – can help to relieve pain and any movement issues.

Occupational therapists – can help provide equipment to aid care at home, such as wheelchairs or special beds.

Speech pathologists – will be able to help you with any swallowing difficulties or pain associated with any mouth, tongue and throat problems.

Psychologists – can provide counselling and grief support.

Dietitians – can help ensure you get the nutrition you need when you might be struggling with loss of appetite and nausea.

Residential aged care facilities – can provide accommodation if it's not possible to remain living at home or if your carer needs respite.

CHSP flexible respite – can give your carer some respite by caring for you or simply being there with you while your carer goes out or takes a break.

Trained volunteers – can provide you with practical assistance as well as emotional and social support and companionship when you don't have friends and family close by or in addition to support from friends and family.

OUR SERVICES

AGED CARE SERVICES

- Commonwealth Home Support
- Home Care Packages
- Residential Aged Care

CLINICAL SERVICES

- Acute Hospital Care
- Audiology
- General Surgery
- Geriatrician
- Immunisations
- Infection Control
- Medical Imaging (CT Scanning, X-Ray, Ultrasound, Dental Orthopantomogram)
- Ophthalmic Surgery
- Optometry
- Oral Surgery
- Orthopaedic Surgery
- Palliative Care
- Pathology
- Urgent Care

DENTAL SERVICES

- General Dentistry
- Mobile Clinic
- Oral Health Education and Promotion
- Oral Health and Hygiene Therapy
- Oral Surgery

COMMUNITY SERVICES

- Cancer Resource Nurse
- Cancer Support Group
- Cardiac Rehabilitation
- Community Health
- Continence Education
- Diabetes Education
- Dietetics
- District Nursing
- Specialist Telehealth Clinics
- Falls and Balance Groups
- Gentle Exercise Groups
- Health Promotion
- Healthy Lifestyle Groups
- Initial Needs Coordination
- Occupational Therapy
- Physiotherapy
- Podiatry
- Refugee Health Nurse
- Services Australia
- Social Work
- Social Support Groups
- Speech Pathology
- Well Women's Health Clinic

MATERNAL & CHILD HEALTH

- Antenatal Care
- Domiciliary Care
- Hindmarsh Day Stay Program
- Immunisations
- Key Stages Visits

COMMUNITY PROGRAMS

- GP Management Care Plan
- Hospital in the Home (HITH)
- National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS)
- Post-Acute Care (PAC)
- Transport Accident Commission (TAC)
- Transition Care Program (TCP)



X-RAY MARKS THE SPOT!

Help West Wimmera put our x-ray equipment on the map!

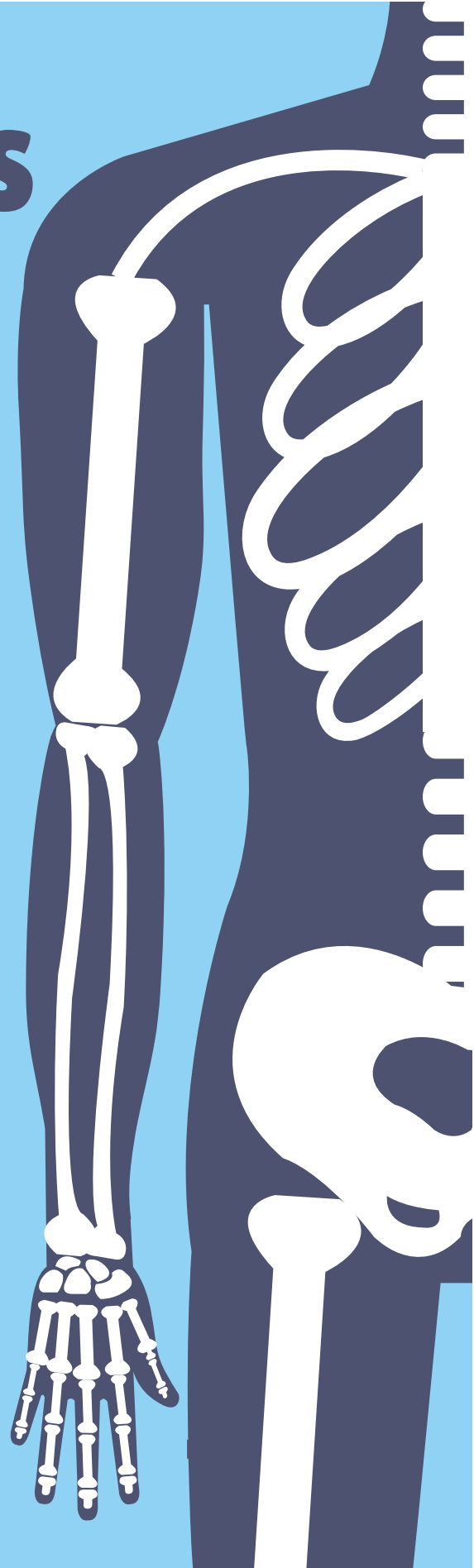
Our Radiology department provides a critical service to have a timely x-ray close to home.

Our x-ray equipment needs to be updated to go digital but we need your help!

Updating our outdated equipment costs \$112,000! Currently we have raised **\$47,862**.

Please help us raise money for this important equipment.

Your donor support will help to advance our diagnostic capabilities for you, with a faster, higher quality and safer service.



DONATE

Donations
are 100%
tax deductible



Visit www.wwhsdonate.net.au to
learn more or get in touch to discuss
how you can support us
please call **(03) 5391 4222**.



WWHS



Quick Quiz



1. In Home Alone, where are the McCallisters going on holiday when they leave Kevin behind? _____
2. What year did Mariah Carey's 'All I Want for Christmas Is You' come out? _____
3. In which Christmas movie does Tom Hanks play 6 of the characters? _____
4. If you are born on Christmas day, what is your star sign? _____
5. In the episode of Friends 'The One with the Holiday Armadillo', who dresses up as an armadillo? _____
6. Which country started the tradition of putting up a Christmas tree? _____
7. Miracle on 34th Street centres on what real-life department store? _____
8. Which country does St. Nicholas originally belong to? _____
9. In the carol, Jingle Bells, what kind of sleigh is mentioned? _____
10. What colour was the Christmas that Elvis Presley had? _____

Who am I?

1. I am a famous pop singer and fashion model. I starred in **Dreamgirls**. Who am I? _____
2. I was a contemporary of Leonardo Da Vinci. I painted the Sistine Chapels in the Vatican. Who am I? _____
3. I was a famous German composer. I became deaf but continued composing. Who am I? _____
4. I was a famous US general during WWII and also the 34th President of the US afterwards. Who am I? _____

S E R T F I M L M D W L U N K
S U M M E R L C P S E I W G H
J O L L Y P R E S E N T S J Z
Q N O I T A R B E L E C N W Y
U S X X Q F J X O P K Q S C L
E N A S D N E I R F K U B J K
B E D N B S B M A N G E L O R
T C R F T O F Z A E C L E S P
P R M T C A R O L S H R I E C
R L Y O M T B V H B J F S V X
W K Z I H Y A C G B L M S L M
L C L J Y I R A S I H I G E E
D Y A G G U F R E I N D E E R
H W S C H R I S T M A S P F R
Z S V C E L O V O N Z Z Z R Y

ANGEL
CAROLS
CELEBRATION
CHRISTMAS
CHURCH
ELVES
FAMILY
FRIENDS
JOLLY
MERRY
PRESENTS
REINDEER
SANTA
SUMMER
TREE



- | QUIZ ANSWERS | |
|--------------|-------------------------|
| 10. | Blue Christmas |
| 9. | A one-horse open sleigh |
| 8. | Turkey |
| 7. | Macy's |
| 6. | Germany |
| 5. | Ross Geller |
| 4. | Capricorn |
| 3. | The Polar Express |
| 2. | 1994 |
| 1. | Paris |
-
- | WHO AM I ANSWERS | |
|------------------|----------------------|
| 4. | Dwight Eisenhower |
| 3. | Ludwig van Beethoven |
| 2. | Michelangelo |
| 1. | Beyoncé Knowles |