

## FLAGSHIP CENTRE FOR BRAIN INJURY OPENS

Victoria's first purpose-built centre of excellence for brain injury rehabilitation has opened at Caulfield Hospital – heralding a new era of specialist care for patients with acquired brain injury.

Alfred Health's \$36m Acquired Brain Injury (ABI) Rehabilitation Centre will see eligible patients able to leave acute hospitals sooner to continue treatment in this specialist setting and commence rehabilitation early.

Alfred Health chief executive, A/Prof Andrew Way said the service will ensure Victorian patients are given every opportunity to return to independent lives, working with their families and other providers.

The centre's clinical lead for acquired brain injury rehabilitation, Dr Mithu Palit explained that the ABI centre brings together rehabilitation, intensive care and neurological specialists, working with expert nursing and allied health staff.

"Together, they will focus on rehabilitation over an extended period, in an environment designed for their patients' ongoing needs," Mithu said.

*Continued on page 2.*



*At the launch: guest speaker Anj Barker with the centre's clinical lead for acquired brain injury rehabilitation, Dr Mithu Palit.*

## GOLD WINNING PERFORMANCES

Alfred Health has been named the gold winner of the Excellence in Quality Healthcare Award in the 2014 Victorian Public Healthcare Awards. The award was for our ICU team's life-saving work in developing the rapid deployment of extra-corporeal membrane oxygenation treatment (ECMO) for patients in cardiac arrest. This program has resulted in a 48 per cent survival rate among a group of patients who previously had close to 100 per cent mortality.

Alfred Health also received the Secretary's Award for Improving Patient Outcomes and Patient Experience for the unique partnership between Barwon Health, Alfred Health and The Royal Children's Hospital, bringing world-class intensive care services to the Barwon South West Region.

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INSIDE

# EXECUTIVE CORNER



Andrew Way  
Chief Executive, Alfred Health

## GETTING ACTIVE ON HEALTH

**As chief executive of a large public health service, I am in a privileged position to have a birds-eye view of the health of our community.**

While our patient numbers increase each year, it's clear that their needs are also becoming more complex. While the ageing population is undoubtedly a factor in this change, there are other characteristics that are common to those we care for as well.

It may come as no surprise that our patients are getting heavier (on average), and many are therefore predisposed to diabetes, heart disease and other chronic conditions.

In response, Alfred Health is proud to be supporting initiatives that promise to

make a difference to the health of Victorians.

In 2014, we spearheaded a campaign that encourages health professionals to speak with their patients about smoking cessation (*Start the Conversation*); we partnered with organisations to promote healthy eating (*Liveliighter*); and launched programs encouraging active travel and lifestyle improvements among our own workforce through initiatives such as *Get on ya bike*, *Break4Life* and *Break4Health*.

While promoting good health is important – and we continue to evaluate and refine these efforts – there will always be those who need our care.

As we continue to foster good health, our effort to put patients at the centre of

service delivery has not wavered. We recognise 'accessible' services are more likely to encourage individuals to address their health issues – removing barriers that can make it challenging to maintain other important commitments such as family and work.

It's with these ideas and approaches in mind, in addition to several others, that we come to the end of our current five year strategic plan.

Achievements, like the examples I have outlined, will no doubt infuse our new strategic cycle as we begin to engage and involve staff, stakeholders and community on the future of health that lies ahead.

## FLAGSHIP CENTRE FOR BRAIN INJURY OPENS

*From page 1*

The centre features a 42-bed inpatient rehabilitation service, four-bed transitional living service, and an ABI community rehabilitation service. It provides advanced care and treatment for patients with moderate to severe brain injury resulting from traumatic accidents, illness or stroke.

One woman who survived a domestic violence incident that, at age 16, left her with a severe brain injury congratulated Alfred Health.

"I am overwhelmed by how much thought and planning has gone into this rehabilitation service," said Anj Barker, who spoke at the official centre opening.

Anj and her mother provided invaluable information about care needs through their involvement in a Caulfield Hospital consumer focus group, which helped develop the centre's model of care. Her personal account at the opening offered a unique insight into a young person's experiences living with an acquired brain injury.

The ABI Rehabilitation Centre was jointly funded by the Australian Government and the Victorian Transport Accident Commission with the support of the Victorian Government through the Department of Health.



**Specialist care: New ABI Rehabilitation Centre to provide early rehabilitation.**

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For more on Alfred Health visit [www.alfredhealth.org.au](http://www.alfredhealth.org.au)

# NHMRC FUNDING SUCCESS

Congratulations to Alfred staff who were successful in the 2014 National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) funding round. Four Early Career Fellowships, one Career Development Fellowship and three Project Grants were awarded.

Deputy director of the Monash Alfred Psychiatry research Centre, (MAPrc), Professor Paul Fitzgerald, was awarded almost \$1 million over five years to further his research in deep brain stimulation in the treatment of severe depression.

Clinical haematologist, A/ Prof David Curtis, at the Australian Centre of Blood Diseases, was awarded a Project Grant of \$742,353 over four years to investigate targeted stem cells therapy for patients with acute leukaemia.

Developing a new and effective treatment for prostate cancer saw the radiology director Professor Ken Thomson awarded \$281,746 over three years.

Senior researcher at MAPrc, Dr Kate Hoy, was awarded a Career Development Fellowship worth \$411,768 over four years to investigate the effects of non-invasive brain stimulation in patients with schizophrenia.

## The following Alfred staff received Early Career Fellowships:

- Dr Eric Chow, Melbourne Sexual Health Centre, \$309,436
- Dr Christina Change, Infectious Diseases, \$369,436
- Dr Tim Read, Melbourne Sexual Health Centre, \$369,436
- Dr Sashendra Senthil, Radiation Oncology, \$184,718.

Congratulations to all involved in securing these impressive research grants and to our AMREP colleagues at Baker IDI, Burnet and Monash, who also achieved outstanding success with NHMRC funding grants this year.



*Prof Ken Thomson, Director Radiology.*

## Leading the way on Alzheimer's research

**Caulfield Hospital has been chosen as the lead site for a clinical trial testing a new treatment for Alzheimer's disease that hopes to provide a good therapeutic response with low toxicity.**

Lead investigator is Associate Professor Steve Macfarlane, head of Caulfield Hospital's Aged Psychiatry Service. His clinical trials unit has been dedicated to conducting treatment trials for Alzheimer's disease for some years.

"The latest trial we are about to start – the Anavex2-73 Study – will involve patients with mild to moderate Alzheimer's disease.

"We're hoping to find a treatment that can prevent, halt or reverse the course of Alzheimer's disease. There are currently limited treatment options for this disease, which is becoming more common as our population ages," Steve said.

"The key is to find treatment early, before major brain damage has occurred. We

know we can achieve substantially better outcomes with an early diagnosis."

In this new trial, outcomes will be measured through computerised cognitive tests and with an EEG (a medical test used to measure the electrical activity of the brain).

The trial will involve up to seven experienced Alzheimer's disease clinical trial sites in Melbourne. If you would like to know more about the trial, please call the clinical trials coordinator on 9076 6110.

## Gold winning performances *From page 1*

This partnership enabled Barwon Health ICU to expand its model to include a regional paediatric ICU (supported by RCH), and a regional ECMO service supported by The Alfred's ICU.

Professor Carlos Scheinkestel, director, intensive care & hyperbaric medicine accepted the awards on behalf of his team.

"Alfred Health is a great place to work with a culture of high quality patient-centred care. I am proud of our ICU team, who always strive for better outcomes," Carlos said.

Alfred Health was highly commended in the Premier's Metropolitan Health Service of the Year award.



*Director ICU & hyperbaric medicine Professor Carlos Scheinkestel, Alfred Health Board chair Helen Sharkey, ICU intensivists Dr Vince Pellegrino and Professor Stephen Bernard accept the award from The Hon David Davis MP, Minister for Health.*

# CELEBRATING NURSE PRACTITIONERS

Nurse practitioners will gather in November to celebrate their achievements since the project was introduced at Alfred Health 10 years ago.

The project was adopted by Alfred Health in 2004 to explore options around reducing wait times in the emergency department. In 2006 we became the first Victorian health service to support an endorsed emergency nurse practitioner at The Alfred.

More than 20 Alfred Health nurses have completed the advanced nursing education program, with some among the first in Australia to be fully endorsed in aged care, sexual health, psychiatry, pain management and renal dialysis.

Alfred Health executive director of nursing Janet Weir-Phyland hailed the nurse practitioner program a success, saying it continues to provide an avenue for those keen on pursuing a clinical nursing career.

“We have seen the program go from strength to strength and expanding into key clinical areas of the organisation and I am proud that some of our nurse practitioners are among of the first in Australia to achieve this,” Janet said.

“The role incorporates core nursing components including advanced clinical assessment and treatment approaches. It’s predominantly a clinical role involving collaborative relationships with other disciplines. The nurse is performing some clinical tasks that would have traditionally been in the medical domain, but the role retains a nursing perspective”.

Nurse practitioner roles are built on advanced nursing knowledge and skill, and involve extensions to practice which may include limited prescribing, diagnostic and laboratory testing, formal referral to specialists and admitting and discharging patients.

To learn more visit [www.health.vic.gov.au/nursing/furthering/practitioner](http://www.health.vic.gov.au/nursing/furthering/practitioner)



*Connie Brune was the first endorsed Mental Health Nurse Practitioner to be working in Aged Psychiatry at Alfred Health.*

## WINDOW TO BRAIN ACTIVITY DISCOVERED

Researchers have identified brain wave patterns that can be used to diagnose specific illnesses such as depression, bipolar disorder and other conditions.



*Professor Jayashri Kulkarni.*

The research results are made possible by a diagnostic device called EVestG, which measures brain activity.

Using EVestG, researchers at Monash Alfred Psychiatry Research Centre (MAPrc) found that the vestibular (balance) system, is closely linked to the emotional centres of the brain.

EVestG works by placing sensors within each ear canal while a patient sits on a tilt chair. The chair moves in various directions and clinicians measure patterns of signals from the vestibular system. The non-invasive procedure takes 45 minutes.

A clinical trial revealed that the vestibular system patterns were linked to psychiatric disorders such as depression, schizophrenia, bipolar disorder, Alzheimer’s disease and ADHD. Results were recently published in the Archives of Neuroscience.

MAPrc director Professor Jayashri Kulkarni says EVestG promises to be an innovative, objective technique to accurately diagnose common mental illnesses.

*“The diagnosis of mental disorders can be difficult because currently there are no specific diagnostic tests available,” Jayashri said.*

“Some mental illnesses can traditionally take years to diagnose. Currently, it can take 12 years to diagnose a mental illness such bipolar disorder and it can be very difficult to distinguish between psychiatric illnesses.

“In the future, EVestG could play a key role in assisting clinicians to fast track the diagnosis of common mental illnesses so people can access accurate treatment and interventions sooner,” Jayashri added.

# THREE-PRONGED APPROACH 5

The “sky’s the limit” when you triple your approach, combining medicine, engineering and industry. So says Professor Jeffrey Rosenfeld, director Alfred neurosurgery and director of the recently established Monash Institute Medical Engineering (MIME), who holds a strong collaborative vision for the future.

A recent forum, organised by MIME, brought together clinicians, engineers and IT experts in a spirit of fostering innovation and collaboration, to develop new medical devices and technologies.

“It can take about 20 years to get a new drug developed and into use. With new technology, you can develop it to a commercial stage within five years and the outcomes can be tremendous,” Jeffrey said.

“The interface between medicine, science and engineering is one of the most exciting areas of medical research today.”

The forum discussion could have been mistaken for science fiction, with possibilities on the agenda including implanted bionic devices, 4D micro-

imaging, nanotechnology, artificial skin for burns and wearable biosensors. Alfred participants were from areas as diverse as plastic surgery, anaesthesia, respiratory physiology, cardiothoracic surgery, haematology and psychiatry.

“Many technologies at The Alfred are in early development, but there is so much potential,” Jeffrey said.

“We have several wearable devices that are being worked on – including a stick-on skin device that has nanofibres in it to measure pulse and muscle strength. Also, Prof Paul Fitzgerald and his team are developing an implantable device for magnetic stimulation of the brain to treat depression.

**“For the last five years I have been working with Monash engineers on a bionic vision device, which is one of the flagship projects for MIME.”**

The collaborative work also extends to surgical equipment and operating theatre design.

“We have robots now that can perform precise movements, operated by a surgeon. But the robot can’t feel – there is no feedback from the robot. In the



*Professor Jeffrey Rosenfeld.*

future we may be able to receive sensory feedback from the instruments so we can feel what the tension is in the tissues. Also 3D plastic models of parts of the human body are being produced at Monash University, which in the future will be used to train surgeons using simulated surgery.

“MIME is all about developing innovative medical technology to help the wellbeing of people with disability and illness,” Jeffrey added.

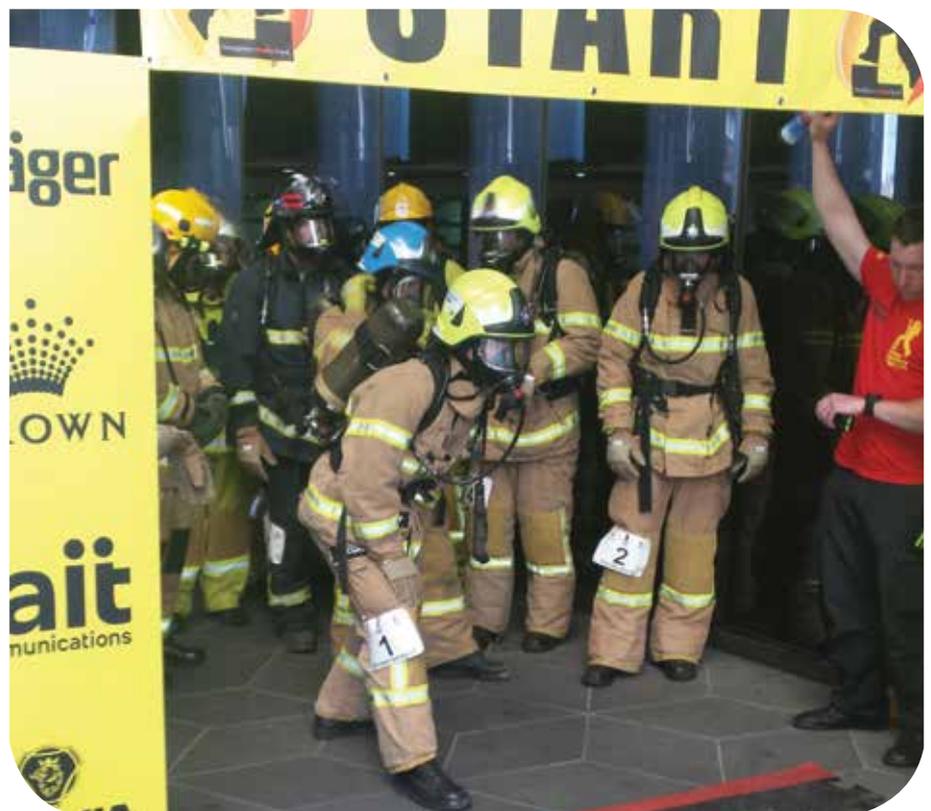
## RACING TO THE TOP

The inaugural Melbourne Firefighter Stair Climb saw almost 200 firefighters race up 28 floors, wearing 25kg of turnout gear and breathing equipment, to raise funds for The Alfred’s burns unit. The winner completed the event in just over three minutes.

Organised by the Firefighters Charity Fund, the successful event raised over \$120,000 for The Alfred. Many outdid their aim of raising \$343 each, to honour the 343 firefighters who died while trying to save people in New York on 911.

Proceeds will be used to upgrade essential equipment for the burns unit such as a laser doppler imager for burn depth analysis and hypothermia system to manage a patient’s body temperature during surgery and in recovery.

The Firefighter Stair Climb is expected to become an annual event.



# PROSTATE CANCER THERAPY LAUNCHED ABROAD

Alfred Health's radiation oncology team has helped the Malaysian National Cancer Institute (MNCI) to successfully introduce a proven treatment for men with prostate cancer.

After years of planning—including specialists flying over from Malaysia to The Alfred to learn about brachytherapy — men in the South East Asian country now have more treatment options for this increasingly common disease.

Under the guidance and direction of our prostate cancer experts, Malaysian MNCI doctors recently implanted brachytherapy seeds in two patients for the first time. Brachytherapy involves radioactive seeds placed permanently within the prostate to kill the tumour.

Director of the William Buckland Radiotherapy Centre at The Alfred, Associate Professor Jeremy Millar says the brachytherapy program at the Kuala Lumpur-based hospital is progressing well.



*The Alfred Health Radiation Oncology team with the Malaysian National Cancer Institute (MNCI) Brachytherapy Team: . L-R: Alfred physicist Ryan Smith, MNCI oncologist Dr Suhana Binti Yusak), MNCI director radiotherapy and oncology Dr Gerard Lim, Alfred director radiation oncology A/Prof Jeremy Millar, MNCI urologist Dr Selva Selvalingam and The Alfred's assistant radiation therapy manager Cath Beaufort.*

"All went well with successful prostate seed implants for two patients, who left hospital after a single night's stay, without side-effects and confident we had cured their cancers. The follow up scans looked encouraging," Jeremy said.

"We look forward to continuing our relationship with our colleagues in KL. It has been a fantastic opportunity and experience to teach a team who are just as passionate about this form of therapy as we are. They are very grateful for our help," Jeremy added.

## Start that Conversation

**Start the Conversation – the groundbreaking Alfred-led campaign featuring stories of life-changing conversations between health professionals and patients, inspiring them to quit smoking – has won a major award.**

Apart from winning gold in the 2014 Melbourne Design Awards, the videos have aired at national and international conferences and have been widely viewed by clinicians, the target audience.

The campaign, part of the Department of Health's Supporting Patients to be Smokefree push, has changed the narrative on giving up smoking, said Kirstan Corben, who managed the project.

"The short films ask clinicians to change their behaviour – by initiating the conversation - not the smoking patient, reversing the traditional approach," said Kirstan, Alfred Health's lead for population health and health promotion.



*Patient involved in campaign.*

Research shows advice from a health professional is one of the most effective ways to encourage people to stop smoking - the largest preventable cause of death and disease in Australia.

"We have had nothing but positive feedback. Response has been phenomenal," Kirstan said.



*Prof Paul Myles, Director, Anaesthesia.*

"I think the reason it has had such huge cut through has been they are real people and clinicians telling real stories. It's not scripted so it's authentic."

To date more than 3,500 clinicians have viewed the video, which launched in September.

# TRAUMA CARE BOOST FOR INDIA

Improving trauma outcomes in India is the focus of a new collaboration that will see Victorian expertise exported to the densely populated sub-continent.

An agreement between the National Trauma Research Institute (NTRI) and the largest emergency service provider in India (GVK EMRI), promises to save thousands of lives each year by introducing features of the highly successful Victorian State Trauma System.

NTRI director, and Alfred trauma surgeon, Prof Russell Gruen said India has more road deaths than any other country, with estimates placing the impact at more than 140,000 lives lost each year – the equivalent of a plane load of people every day.

**“Injury is fast becoming recognised as the third-leading cause of death on the planet,” Russell said. “This is an opportunity to share what we have learned here in Victoria, to export our expertise, and to enjoy the value of partnering with a highly motivated neighbour.”**

Russell said that the project, which will require a five-to-10 year commitment, will focus on developing an effective pre-hospital system that can work in with specialist trauma centres.

“Much of India lacks good ambulance coverage, but we know the critical



*Supporting trauma outcomes: Prime Minister of Australia, Mr Tony Abbott met with Dr GVK Reddy and Prof Russell Gruen during a recent trip to India.*

decisions that lead to good outcomes are often made before a patient gets to hospital,” Russell said.

“Delivering patients to designated hospitals in the shortest possible time – often by air – has underpinned Victoria’s achievement of halving the likelihood of dying from injury in just a decade.

“Our Indian colleagues are highly intelligent and very talented, but they are facing a big problem. Fortunately The Alfred and Monash University – together with the Victorian community – are very good at embracing and tackling vast problems.”

## Psychosis and family planning

**An overlooked area of women’s mental health was tackled in a new study by researchers of the Monash Alfred Psychiatry Research Centre (MAPrc).**

The study – *Contraceptive use, attitude and experiences of women with psychosis* – examined the effect of psychotic illnesses on a woman’s contraceptive choices and experiences.

Study investigator and biomedicine honours student Georgia Walter looked at the impact of factors associated with psychosis, such as increased

disorganisation and compliance issues, on how effectively a woman uses contraceptives and her attitude towards them.

**“Preliminary analysis is showing promising results indicating disparities between the psychosis and healthy groups regarding contraceptive choice, and the number of negative experiences with contraception use,” Georgia said.**

“Although final conclusions are still to be drawn, it is hoped the findings from this research will contribute to understanding the challenges faced by women suffering

psychotic illnesses regarding family planning and assist in improving current services.”

MAPrc director Professor Jayashri Kulkarni says about seven per cent of the population suffer from psychosis (which includes conditions like bipolar disorder).

“It is a significant group because the onset of psychosis is in the younger, reproductive age group. So family planning is important and often overlooked by mental health professionals,” Jayashri said.

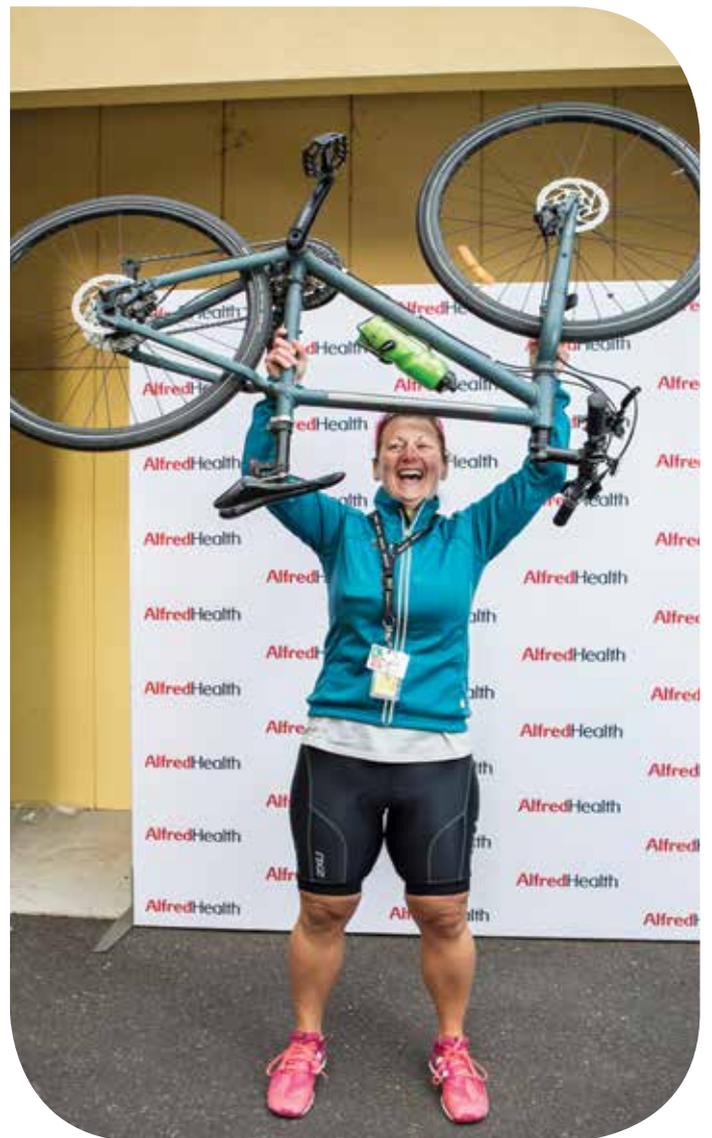
# ONYA BIKE AND RIDE



The annual Bicycle Network, Ride2Work Day, event celebrated the organisation's strong bicycle culture and highlighted the many health benefits involved in this activity.

Lead for population health and health promotion Kirstan Corben said more than 300 Alfred Health staff participated in the event, which included free breakfast for the riders and a 'me and my bike' photo project. Alfred participants also had free access to bike mechanics provided by Drapac Professional Cycling.

"We have riders from near and far who cycle to work, including one who rides the 30km from Eltham daily and others who ride from closer destinations like Port Melbourne or Ormond. We have serious, almost elite, riders and those who ride short distances in their work clothes," Kirstan said.



*A commitment behind active travel led to a celebration of Ride2Work Day at all three Alfred Health campuses.*

“We know there are many health benefits. In fact those who ride regularly experience one less sick day a year than those who don’t ride.”

The aim is to increase the number of staff riding to work. Bike facilities have been audited, riders counted and 700 staff consulted about riding to and from Alfred Health campuses. As a result, bike facilities at The Alfred will soon be improved to support the largest bike riding group.

Meanwhile, Alfred Health’s efforts in active travel are being recognised nationally, with Bicycle Network writing up The Alfred as an organisation with an excellent bike culture and Kirstan Corben speaking at the recent Bike Futures Conference at the MCG.

*Participants were asked to create their own hashtag about why they ride.*



# NEW EMERGENCY DEPARTMENT OPENS

Modern and spacious treatment areas, and a dedicated zone for children, are among the many improvements achieved through the redevelopment of Sandringham Hospital's emergency department.

Officially opened by the Minister for Health, The Hon. David Davis, the \$6.8 million emergency department expansion also introduces six short stay beds for people needing extended medical observation and establishes an 'urgent care centre' for those who can benefit from GP-like care.

Alfred Health Chief Executive A/Prof Andrew Way said the increased size of the new department, together with the introduction of an urgent care centre operated by GP-specialists, brings a new level of access to emergency care for the Bayside community.

*"Establishing an urgent care centre - located next to our busy emergency department - is an innovative model," Andrew said.*

"It's about providing timely care for the Bayside community, and supports greater access to support for the 30,000-plus patients who visit our emergency department each year.

"Patients with less urgent, and more



*New Sandringham Hospital Emergency Department.*

minor, illnesses and injuries are now directed into the urgent care centre to receive care from a general practitioner. This keeps our emergency care teams free to deliver true emergency medicine for patients identified as having more complex needs.

"We have also included a dedicated paediatric zone within the emergency

department to offer a more supportive environment for the 5,000 children who are treated in our emergency department annually.

"Together, these changes have positioned the hospital to deliver long-term local hospital care, and further realise our commitment to improving care for our community."

## Happy birthday Women's @ Sandringham!

October marked one year since the Women's commenced its maternity and gynaecology services at Sandringham Hospital.

In that time 2000 patients have accessed the services and 1247 babies have been born.

Sandringham Hospital's director of nursing Judy Reeves says that success is about sustainability and one year down the track this innovative model of care is thriving.

"Looking back, it was a really smooth transition to the Women's, and I want to congratulate both the Women's staff and Alfred Health staff for that success.

"We are looking forward to an ongoing partnership to provide quality maternity services to our community."

*First baby born at the Women's at Sandringham: baby Eliya with her parents Guy Becker and Maya Lerman.*



# NEW RESIDENTIAL AGED CARE ERA

A landmark agreement has been reached with HammondCare to provide residential aged care services and build a new \$30 million residential aged care village at Caulfield Hospital.

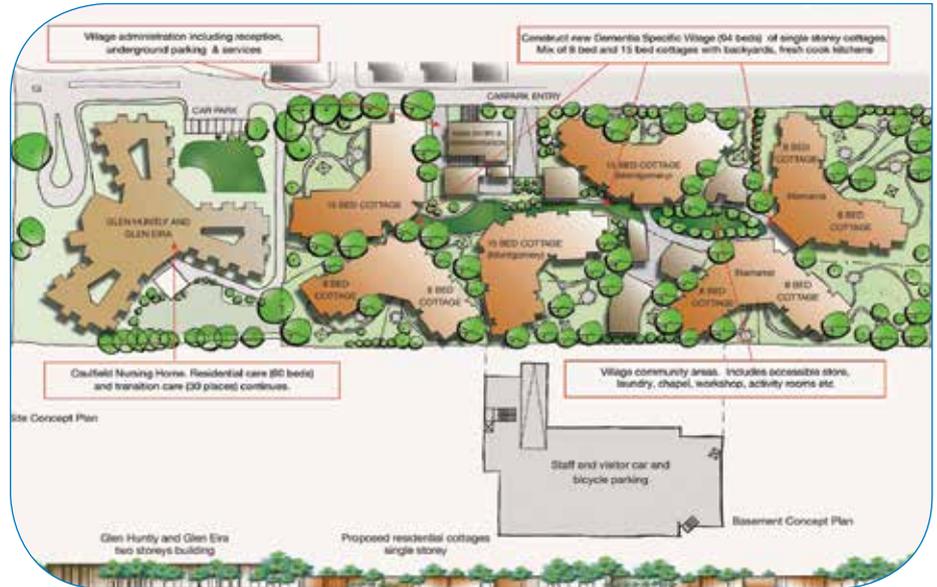
Alfred Health's Chief Executive Andrew Way said the agreement signals a new, sustainable era for quality residential care at Caulfield Hospital.

"This agreement follows a comprehensive selection process conducted over 10 months," Andrew said.

"Caulfield Hospital's residential aged care facilities and infrastructure are ageing and soon will be no longer fit for purpose. The agreement with HammondCare aims to create a blueprint for the future of residential aged care services at Caulfield for the next three to four decades.

"We believe this decision will benefit residents and the local community alike – its purpose is to provide excellent care supported through a residential aged care village designed for the future."

HammondCare operate extensive residential and sub-acute services in NSW, caring for more than 3,000 people every day. They are also leaders



in dementia care, providing numerous services such as their international Dementia Centre and Dementia Research Program.

As a result of this agreement, it is intended that HammondCare will:

- acquire 150 residential aged care places at Caulfield Hospital
- provide day-to-day residential care services on site
- recruit for 139 new jobs including 26 registered nurses and up to 100 specialised and dementia carers (Alfred Health intends to retain and

redeploy our residential aged care employees)

- develop a \$30-million new purpose-built residential aged care village over the next three to four years.

The transition between services will take place from March 2015.

The transfer of services from Alfred Health to HammondCare is subject to the approval of the Commonwealth Department of Social Services, while the development of the new village is dependent on successfully obtaining planning and other statutory approvals.

## TRANSPLANT GAMES: FULL OF SPIRIT

Alfred Health was the major healthcare partner at the recent 2014 Australian Transplant Games held at the Melbourne Sports and Aquatic Centre.

More than 800 participants, made up of transplant recipients, those awaiting transplantation, living donors, surviving family members of deceased donors and supporters of organ donors and recipients, were involved.

This year, 53 people volunteered in the role of healthcare provider, of whom 37 were Alfred Health staff, including nurses, physiotherapists and doctors.

Alfred ICU specialist Dr Steve Philpot says it was a privilege and an honour to be in the role of Transplant Games Medical Officer at the "inspiring event".

"The games were a chance for me to realise what an extraordinary opportunity some are given through organ transplantation. I was struck not only by the energy and abilities of participants, but also by the tremendous spirit in which they competed," Steve said.



# FAMILIAR FACE IS ONE IN A MILLION

**Katherine Nalder is not your average 26 year old. Her very rare disorder makes her life markedly different from her peers.**

To Katherine's dismay she's become a familiar face over the years to many Alfred staff, across a wide variety of departments.

Each week Katherine unwillingly drags herself into The Alfred's Haemophilia Centre to receive lifesaving medication, spending more than two hours on a drip each time. She has the rare blood disorder Factor V deficiency.

"It means my blood doesn't clot like everyone else's. My level of Factor V is less than one per cent of normal," Katherine explained.

"I can be sitting and out of nowhere just start bleeding, just because my body feels like it."

Haemophilia Centre director Associate Professor Huyen Tran said looking after Katherine is certainly a challenge.

"Katherine's condition is one in a million, and up until recently, she has been the only patient with this blood disorder in the country."

While blood disorders can be inherited, no one else in Katherine's family is affected.

Diagnosed at six days old, Katherine began bleeding when her mother changed her nappy and could not stop the blood flow.

Among all the medical emergencies, Katherine lists the major ones as several bleeds to the brain, at least five admissions to ICU (two in the last year alone), two or three surgeries to stop life-threatening bleeding, a liver bleed, joint and muscle bleeds and bleeds to the head.

"At one stage I couldn't eat or drink for six months without vomiting," Katherine recalled.

"At my worst point I was coming to the Haemophilia Centre four times a week."

Katherine isn't exaggerating when she

says practically the whole hospital knows her. Other than the Haemophilia Centre, Alfred departments who have treated her include ophthalmology (after a bleed last year she went blind for two months), neurology, neurosurgery, the pain management team, rheumatology (for arthritis caused by the bleeds), psychiatry, ICU and E&TC. She also relies on the continued generosity of blood donors.

Katherine is well aware of the complexities of her condition, but also just wants to be a young woman living life.

"I know I do frustrate my medical team. It's a constant fight. I try my hardest not to have a disability ruling my life. The hospital has got its work cut out trying to slow me down."

## Alfred's Haemophilia Centre

- is the statewide centre for adult haemophilia care and rare blood disorders
- has almost 1000 patients receiving ongoing care
- is the largest in the southern hemisphere

## Alfred and Grand Prix links

Dr Brent May, a specialist anaesthetist with The Alfred, has been appointed the Chief Medical Officer for the Australian Formula 1 Grand Prix from 2015.

Stepping into the role recently vacated by Professor Stephen Bernard, Brent is also the Chief Medical Officer for the Australian Motorcycle Grand Prix and the World Superbike international events.

With an interest in trauma and medical education, Brent is honoured to have this opportunity.

"To recruit, train, coordinate and govern a team of more than 40 doctors, nurses and paramedics takes considerable effort and time but it will be very rewarding," Brent said.



# ACTION PACKED WEEK

# 13

For the first time, staff celebrated the achievements of all three hospitals at once during Alfred Health Week. Events acknowledged groundbreaking research, dedicated staff and encouraged some thought-provoking discussion.



*Accountability winners cardiology registrar Shane Nanayakkara and data manager, infectious diseases Kerrie Watson with Ron Steiner from Maxxia (left) and chief executive Andrew Way.*

The week started with Alfred Health's own Q&A, hosted by ABC journalist Virginia Trioli in a discussion about what will drive the future of healthcare.

This year's Length of Service Awards celebrated around 500 staff members across Alfred Health. Notable recipients included Jack Federman, Eljas Laufer and Gillian Tickall, who all celebrated 40 years and astoundingly clinical product adviser Karen Flett marked 45 years with The Alfred.

The inaugural 2014 Alfred Health Staff Performance Awards saw over 100 nominations received across the three sites, with winners receiving a prize from sponsor Maxxia.

## **Congratulations to the winners:**

- Integrity – medical HMO Laura Selkrig
- Accountability – data manager, infectious diseases Kerrie Watson and cardiology registrar Shane Nanayakkara
- Knowledge – senior radiation therapist William Buckland Radiotherapy Centre – Catherine Beaufort.
- Collaboration – F2 ward clerk Fiona Moschitz and aged care assessment service manager Maureen Smith.
- Team award – 4GMU.

The week also included a nursing forum and the Kathleen A B Smith Memorial Award in Nursing. Winners were:

- Carly Firman, from 7 West – graduate nurse.
- Lesley Ross, from Sandringham dialysis - supporting clinical development
- Gabby Burdeu from ICU – publication winner
- Carley Slate, Sally Haines and the 4B Nursing Team - Chief Nursing Officer Award for patient safety & quality improvement.

Multiple winners were announced on Alfred Health Week Research Day, following a keynote address by Professor Garry Jennings, Director Baker IDI.

The AMREP Research Prize for original basic research went to Professor Fabienne Mackay (Department of



*Kathleen A B Smith Memorial Award graduate nurse winner Carly Firman with colleague Elizabeth Hope.*

Immunology, Monash University) for “the TAC1 receptor regulates T-cell-independent marginal zone B cell responses through innate activation-induced cell death”.

The AMREP research prize for original clinical research went to Dr Anna Ahimastos (Baker IDI) for “effect of ramipril on walking times and quality of life among patients with peripheral artery disease and intermittent claudication: a randomized controlled trial”.

Poster Prize Winners came from a range of areas including respiratory medicine, cancer and cardiovascular research. For a full list of Research Day winners, visit : <http://alfredresearch.org/alfredweek/resprize.htm>

The week was rounded out with the annual meeting and community forum, plus a medical grand round.



*Chief executive Andrew Way with Collaboration winner Fiona Moschitz.*



*Alfred Health Q&A host Virginia Trioli*



*Q&A panellists Judy Reeves, Prof Mark Fitzgerald and patient advocate Catherine Bennett*

# SKIN DEEP AND RICHLY REWARDED

It's becoming something of a tradition for The Alfred's Dermatology Department to take out top national awards.



*Clinical nurse consultant Kath Frowen in charge of patch testing.*

For the past two years Alfred registrars have finished first nationally in the Australasian College of Dermatologists final exams. Registrar Ann Boyapati has just been awarded the college's Travelling Fellowship as top candidate in 2014, also winning medical and procedural prizes.

This follows on from 2013 Alfred registrar Lauren Young, who was awarded the 2013 prize. In fact, since the fellowship has been awarded, 14 of the 26 recipients were Victorian and seven of those were Alfred registrars. All of the Victorian recipients spent at least a year rotating through The Alfred's outpatient clinics.

Ann's fellowship will take her to San Francisco, where the American Association of Dermatology will hold its next scientific meeting. She will then take on a fellowship in the UK.

*"After that I plan to work in regional or rural dermatology – there is a lot to be done in these areas. There is only one dermatologist for Mildura and one for Albury, where we have done rotations. The number one problem is skin cancer," Ann said.*

Head of the department, Associate Professor Douglas Gin, says The Alfred has been fortunate in being the hospital of choice for so many good registrars over the years.

"The Alfred dermatology department strives to prepare their registrars to do well in both their final examinations and in their life in this speciality," he explained.

The Alfred unit runs three outpatient clinics weekly, seeing a broad range of patients with dermatological problems including those with skin cancers, severe eczema, psoriasis, skin infections, disorders of the nails and hair, male and female pattern baldness, alopecia areata (patchy hair loss) and sweating disorders. The dermatology clinic also performs allergy patch testing for patients with possible contact allergic dermatitis.

Much of the team's work is collaborative, working together with multiple other units. They see inpatients with skin infections and drug reactions and work in conjunction with the burns unit and intensive care to look after patients with Toxic Epidermal Necrolysis (TEN) - a potentially life-threatening dermatologic disorder.



*Fellowship winner Ann Boyapati.*

With skin cancer patients making up a large component of their work, the dermatology team works alongside the Victorian Melanoma Service (VMS) at The Alfred, seeing VMS patients for ongoing care and surgery. And, increasingly, the dermatology unit also sees many transplant patients who require constant dermatological surveillance for skin cancers, skin infections and other skin conditions.



*Dermatology team members: Head dermatology Associate Professor Douglas Gin, dermatology nurse Erin Senior, VMO Dr Lauren Young and registrar Dr Christopher Heyes.*

# ALFRED ICU WINS APP AWARD

# 15



ICU team: Prof David Pilcher, Dr. Steve McGloughlin and Prof Jamie Cooper.

**The Alfred Intensive Care Unit's waiting room iPad app – believed to be an Australian first – has won a national design award.**

The interactive communication tool, which tells people what to expect in ICU, recently won the 2014 Australian Mobile & App Design Award in the medical category, beating some serious competition.

The app provides information about the ICU, staffing, procedures and therapies, 24 hours-a-day in an accessible, interactive and innovative way.

The app took five months to develop after extensive consultation with staff, former patients and their families. It gives access to information which can be printed wirelessly within the waiting room, including local eateries, accommodation and public transport.

Links to the roster allow the families to know at any time who is caring for their loved one and allows families to request



a meeting by relaying the request via SMS or e-mail to the intensivist rostered on.

Prof Carlos Scheinkestel, the director of The Alfred's intensive care & hyperbaric service, said the app includes a virtual video tour of the unit.

*"The procedures and therapies section, which describes common ICU interventions and their risks, is one of the significant innovations," Carlos said.*

"The award is an acknowledgment of Alfred Health's culture of continuous improvement.

"Our clever, creative team has developed an innovation to make a real difference for the loved ones of our ICU patients."

The ICU team is also a finalist in the 2014 Australian Human Resources Institute Awards in the Wayne Cascio Award for organisational change and development.

## High prevalence of diabetes

Alfred experts say the prevalence of diabetes in Melbourne hospitals is higher than previously thought, as an Australian-first study finds as many as one in four inpatients are affected by the chronic condition.

Study lead and deputy director of endocrinology and diabetes at The Alfred, Professor Leon Bach, says the results highlight an increasing problem in our community.

"We are seeing an extraordinary number of patients come in with diabetes," Leon said.

"The findings show these patients are heavier, remain in hospital longer than

those without diabetes, and more than 80 per cent already have at least one complication of the condition.

"These complications typically include damage to the heart, circulation, kidneys, eyes and nerves."

The findings highlight the need to help patients actively manage their diabetes, which has reached epidemic proportions.

"Optimising assistance for these complex patients has the potential to decrease length of stay in hospitals, as well as prevent or delay future complications," Leon added.

The study, published in the *Medical Journal of Australia*, surveyed 2308 adult inpatients throughout 11 hospitals in metropolitan Melbourne – each on a single day between November 2010 and November 2012.

### Did you know?

- More than two million Australians have pre-diabetes.
- Up to 60 per cent of type 2 diabetes can be prevented by implementing simple lifestyle measures.

# Our community

Alfred Health is fortunate to have the support of many community groups. Recently this has included a number of events.

## FATHER'S DAY APPEAL 2014

The 2014 Father's Day Appeal successfully raised funds for The Alfred's Emergency & Trauma Centre (E&TC) redevelopment.

Once again 3AW broadcast live from Alf's Café, Channel 9's *The Today Show* did its weather forecasts live from The Alfred and the annual tinshake was held at the MCG during a Hawthorn vs Collingwood match.

The 2014 men's health booklet: *Healthy Men: From the bottom up* focused on gastrointestinal complaints and can now be downloaded from

[fathersdayappeal.org.au](http://fathersdayappeal.org.au)



Sailors collecting at the MCG tinshake.



Alfred dads and their kids enjoy a teddy bears picnic.

## KIDS BRIGHTEN SANDY HOSPITAL

The young winners of Sandringham Hospital's primary school art competition have been announced, with their paintings now displayed in the main foyer for patients and visitors to see.

Young artists in the local community were asked to participate in an art competition, to celebrate the hospital's 50th birthday.

Sandringham Hospital's director of nursing Judy Reeves said the competition aimed to teach local children more about Sandringham Hospital and what it means to live in our community.

• Thank you to local framer Nic Pitman from Frame Harbour in Mentone for donating the frames.



Art winners Sasha and Keira from Mentone Girls Grammar.

Pic courtesy of Chris Eastman, Bayside Leader.

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