

ST VINCENT'S Voice

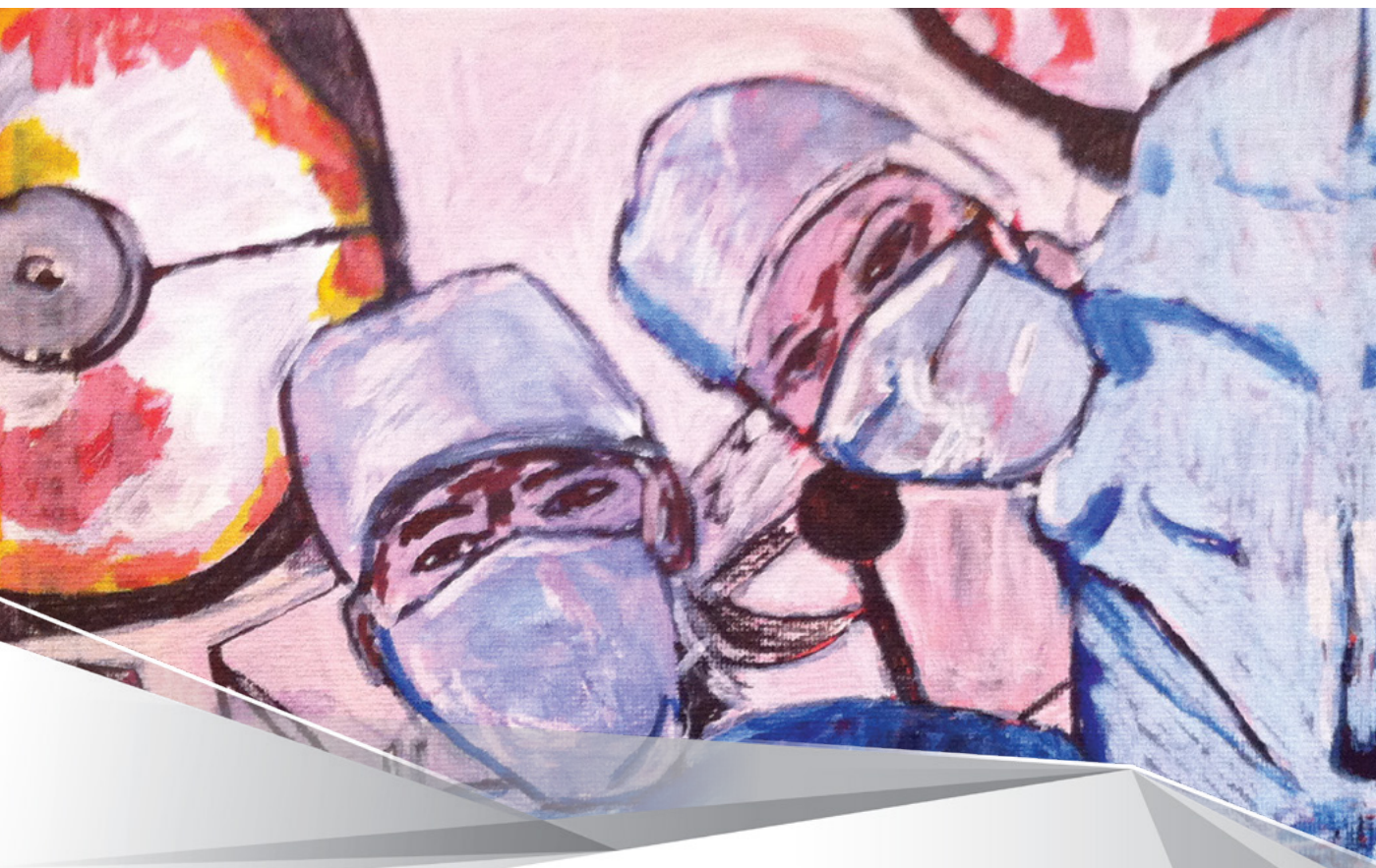
DECEMBER 2017 – ISSUE 14

The latest staff and
community news from
ST VINCENT'S HEALTH
NETWORK SYDNEY

ART HEALS CARDIOLOGIST'S HEART

Inside this edition:

- New clinical trial using VR technology
- Healthy Hospital campaign to launch
- Leading the way in negating elder abuse





A/PROF
ANTHONY SCHEMBRI

CEO, St Vincent's Health
Network Sydney

There is no doubting that 2017 has been a year of great achievements and challenges. But one thing that has been consistent throughout, has been the hard work and dedication of our staff who have been determined in serving our mission to strive for something greater.

Indeed as you read through these articles, you get a very strong sense of this determination; clinicians disrupting conventional thinking to innovate new parameters using virtual reality, researchers establishing new partnerships to conduct exciting clinical trials – no-one could say we've been sitting on our hands.

I know that for all of you, this dedication to our patients involves a huge amount of investment of your energy, passion and time and I truly hope as we head into the Christmas-New Year period that you will have a chance to be with loved ones and enjoy this special time together to recharge and reflect on all that you have contributed.

+ SHORT SHARP

The only way is up for Prof Andrews



Professor Gavin Andrews

Professor Gavin Andrews has been named as a finalist in the Australian Mental Health Prize, recognising his career in mental health research spanning 60 years. The prize, in its second year, celebrates Australians who have made outstanding contributions to the promotion of mental health, or the prevention and treatment of mental illness. An innovative clinician and researcher, Prof Andrews has led the way in anxiety and depression research, founding CRUfAD (Clinical Research Unit for Anxiety and Depression) in 1964. During his career, he has published more than 600 papers and books, and has inspired and trained hundreds of young scientists and medical students. He is also responsible for designing and developing THISWAYUP, a series of online courses to treat people for anxiety and depression. Congratulations on this wonderful honour Prof Andrews!



Lisa-Jayne (right) with Patricia O'Rourke at the SVHA Awards.

Multiple award winning Lisa-Jayne

Congratulations to Lisa-Jayne Ferguson, CNC, St Vincent's Alcohol and Drug Service who was recently a finalist for Staff Member of the Year at the 2017 NSW Health Awards. This prestigious nod to Lisa-Jayne follows her receiving the Group & Divisional CEO's Excellence Award for Individuals at the SVHA Awards, as well as being awarded the Australasian Professional Society on Alcohol and other Drugs Clinician of the Year for her contributions to Alcohol and Drug Nursing. Well done Lisa-Jayne!



St Joseph's leading the way

Congratulations to Nerissa Baptisma, Food Services; Sudhir Bhattaria, Environmental Services; Amal Owaimrin, Dietetics Department and Vicki Ward, Aged care Psychiatry & Neurosciences Unit at St Joseph's who were singled out on their exceptional results as a team leaders in the 2017 Gallup Survey. As a team leader, they have been ranked in the top 15 team leaders across SVHA. This ranking places St Joseph's team leaders at the 92 percentile of all teams that Gallup surveys.

 *Inspired to serve*

Prof Peter Macdonald nominated for Australian of the Year 2018



Professor Peter Macdonald

Congratulations to St Vincent's cardiologist and medical director Professor Peter Macdonald who was recently named one of the NSW nominees for 2018 Australian of the Year.

Peter is part of the team behind what has been described as the most important global advancement in heart transplantation since the early 1980s. In a world first, Peter and his research team discovered how to successfully transplant a 'dead' heart that had stopped beating – using preservation fluid developed in the laboratory and a machine that allows the heart to beat outside the body. Peter's 'heart in a box' will spare countless lives around the world by increasing the number of transplants that can be performed by at least 30%.

Peter has mentored dozens of postgraduate students, published over 300 research papers and is actively striving to close the gap in health inequality by providing outreach services to remote Indigenous communities.

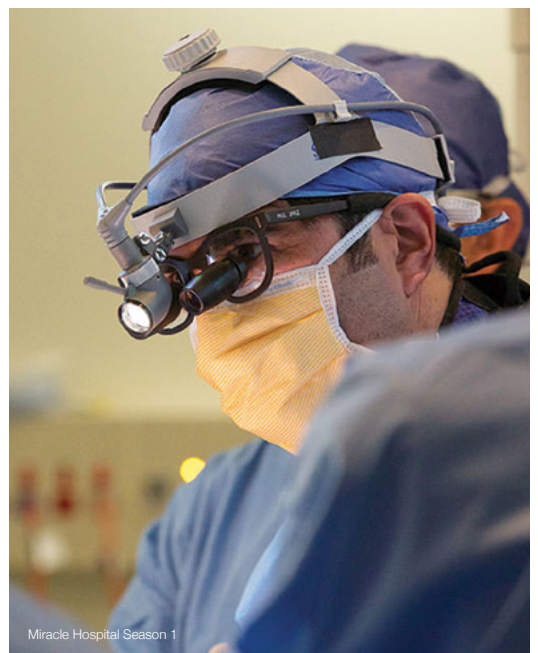
Congratulations Peter, we are so proud of you!

St Vincent's to feature in Series 2 of Miracle Hospital

Following the success of Miracle Hospital's first season screened in 171 countries, the National Geographic observational documentary on St Vincent's, a second season was commissioned, due for release in early 2018.

With filming now complete, you can look forward to seeing your favourite colleagues, including Drs Tim Steele, Ravi Huilgol, Paul Jansz, David Muller, Mark Winder, Emily Granger and Jacob Fairhall, as well as all of the vital staff that support and care for their patients throughout their journey here at St Vincent's.

Watch this space for details on screening dates...



Miracle Hospital Season 1

St Joseph's lays down the law in elder abuse

“One in 20 older people experience abuse every year, but only one in five cases are identified and reported. Unfortunately, it's an all too common issue”.

A first in NSW, St Joseph's Hospital has recently rolled out a new model to help patients experiencing elder abuse. Joey's is the only hospital in the state to have a lawyer embedded within its staff structure as an access point specifically for vulnerable older patients experiencing or at risk of abuse.



Following an agreement between SVHN and Justice Connect (a community legal centre) to form a Health Justice Partnership (HJP), Yvonne Lipianin joined the St Joseph's team in September 2017 where she is based three days a week to offer legal assistance to older patients. Alongside social work, she also provides training to frontline doctors, nurses and allied health staff on how to spot the warning signs of elder abuse and to refer any cases to her that need legal help. “Patients might not think the problem they have is a legal issue, they might not even be able to recognise it as abuse, but they may well talk about the problem with their nurse, doctor or physio” she says. “Being in hospital might also be their only chance to get away from the perpetrator, when they have the opportunity to talk to someone about their issues”.

The new model is also about helping prevent elder abuse. Yvonne gives patients legal advice at an early stage, about power of attorney rights, guardianship and family agreements. “An example might be a ‘granny flat agreement’, where an elderly patient plans to sell their house and give the proceeds of sale to their adult child on the understanding the child will provide them with ongoing care and accommodation.

I’d encourage them to make sure they put their agreement in writing – this could help prevent financial abuse later down the track”.

She says a feature of elder abuse is that it occurs in the context of trusting relationships – most commonly, perpetrators are adult children, spouses, or carers. It can take on many forms – physical, psychological, financial, sexual abuse, or simply neglect.

Additionally, staff at St Joseph's are being trained how to detect elder abuse within the hospital. Detection might occur via disclosure of abuse by the victim, or by the staff member witnessing an incident of abuse or observing behaviour that could indicate abuse, such as an older patient displaying fear or anxiety around particular family members, expressing concern or worry about money, or bearing physical injuries that may have no reasonable explanation.

“Legal intervention is one tool we can use to help stop elder abuse, but I work closely with the social workers and other hospital staff to help patients with any other issues they might have – crisis housing, assistance with Centrelink, or advocating for them in other areas”.

The model will roll out across the St Vincent's Health Network Sydney in the coming year.

SVV Inspired to care

St Vincent's Cardiologist uses art to heal his heart

St Vincent's Cardiologist of 35 years, Dr Dennis Kuchar had spent so long looking after other peoples' hearts, he didn't make time to look after his own. After experiencing what he knew was angina, he brushed it aside, not wanting to face the reality that faced his patients on a daily basis.

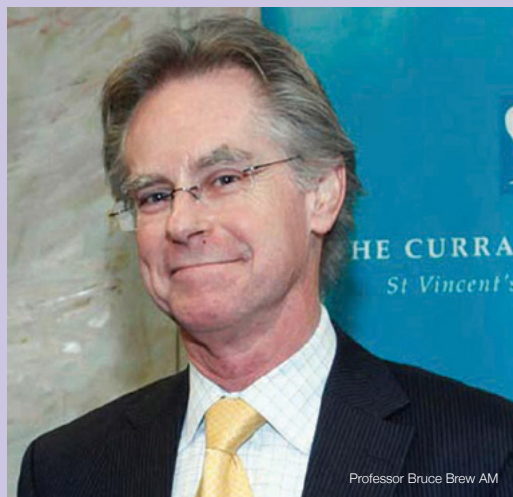


Eventually, after reaching crisis point, Dr Kuchar was convinced to get treatment, becoming a patient in his own unit here at St Vincent's. But after a failed stent, Dr Kuchar had a heart attack and needed to undergo bypass surgery. "It was a big deal. The first four days in intensive care were hell", he said.

By his own admission, he was not a gracious patient, often attempting to intervene in his own treatment and recovery. His state of mind was such that he thought he'd never be the same again, and he had difficulty dealing with the experience of being a cardiac patient, rather than doctor.

As an avid painter, he'd always taken solace in the act of expressing himself on canvas rather than words, so he asked for his paints to be brought to his hospital room.

He continued to paint throughout his months of rehabilitation and his spirits lifted - Dr Kuchar made a full recovery. Now back at work and on the 'right' side of the desk, Dr Kuchar recently exhibited the paintings that helped heal his heart in the Xavier Art Space. Monies raised will be donated to St Vincent's Cardiac Rehab Unit.



Prof Bruce Brew achieves highest level of accreditation

Congratulations to St Vincent's Neurologist Professor Bruce Brew AM, who recently received his DSc accreditation from the University of NSW. A DSc is of higher standing than a master's degree or a PhD and has only been awarded to a total of 38 recipients in the last 24 years.

This outstanding level of accreditation was awarded to Prof Brew for his years of work in relation to how HIV causes brain damage and how disturbance in a particular biochemical pathway contributes to brain damage in multiple sclerosis and Alzheimer's disease, and how correction of that alteration can occur.

Clinical Trials Soar on St Vincent's Campus

Owing to the huge impact biomedical research can have in transforming patient treatments, the Sisters have long ensured that research plays an integral role in the Campus' endeavours and over the years St Vincent's, along with its research partners including the Garvan and Victor Chang research institutes have developed a strong global reputation in translational research. In relation to clinical trials, St Vincent's went from conducting 147 clinical trials in 2013 to 247 clinical trials in 2017. In terms of phase 1 trials, that figure went from 2-15 trials in the same years, phase 2 clinical trials surged from 32-57, phase 3 trials increased 74-100 and phase 4 trials activity went from 14-21 trials. One of the greatest surges in clinical trials has occurred within St Vincent's Medical Oncology which is fast becoming a major centre for phase 1 trials.

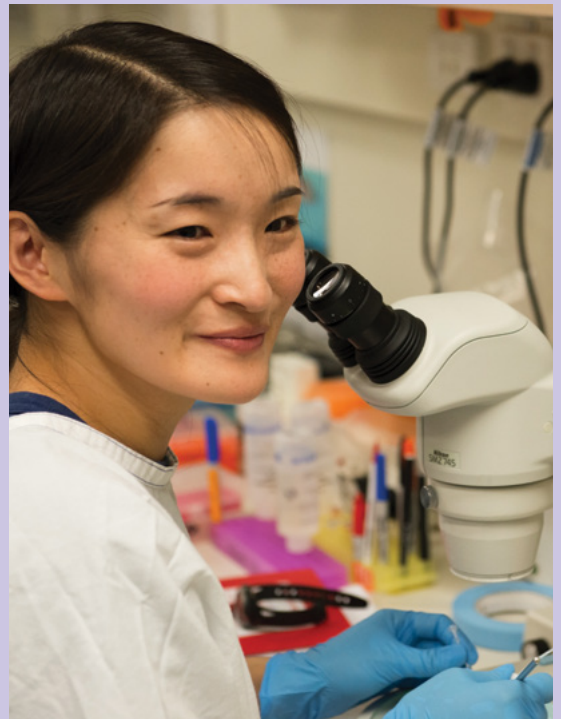
Drug trials accounted for the vast majority of clinical trials making up 82% of all clinical trial activity.

Non industry-sponsored clinical trials witnessed the biggest increase – more than doubling since 2013.

St Vincent's Director of Research, Professor Terry Campbell, attributes this major growth in clinical trial activity not only to our dedicated and research-active clinicians, but also to a variety of support factors including more efficient approval and funding processes for researchers, greater collaboration between departments and research entities with improved cross-pollination of ideas, and better sharing of resources from data management to bio-banking.

"It is gratifying to see that the increases apply to both Industry-sponsored Trials and to local, Investigator-initiated studies and we are particularly pleased to see a steep rise in the number of early-phase studies showing rapid access for our patients, particularly our Cancer patients, to emerging new treatments," says Prof Campbell.

Research activity across the St Vincent's Research campus has been increasing rapidly in the past two to three years particularly in relation to clinical trials activity which has more than doubled since 2013.



Healthy hospital, happy hospital

St Vincent's is proud to support the NSW Health Healthy Hospitals initiative, and will be increasing the availability of healthier beverages across our Hospitals from 31st December, 2017.

Ministry of Health reports that the strongest evidence for a link between sugar intake and obesity is in the consumption of sugary drinks, so we're leading by example and from the new year we will see increased availability of less sugary options such as coconut water, 100% fruit juice and non-sugar carbonated drinks, while high sugar drinks will be removed from the Campus.

St Vincent's Professor of Medicine Dr Katherine Samaras says the decision mirrors the advice doctors are giving their patients and the community. "Healthy food is some of the best medicine we can have," she said.

SVV Inspired to lead

St Vincent's joins forces with Samsung to pursue clinical innovation

In recent years St Vincent's Director of Rehabilitation A/Prof Steven Faux has established an innovative partnership with UNSW Art and Design to deliver a state-of-the-art Virtual Reality (VR) experience for stroke rehabilitation patients – using the technology to enable them to see inside their own body to better understand their condition.

After seeing the benefits of the technology to our patients, it was clear that this concept could be translated into other health applications, such as Pain Management. To facilitate this, St Vincent's has partnered with Samsung Electronics to conduct a new research project that will see patients take part in a clinical trial to investigate the use of Virtual Reality for acute pain management. The trial will use Samsung's smart-phones and Gear VR technology to evaluate their potential use as a treatment for acute pain. The study will also investigate



potential side effects, cost-efficiency, toxicity, and ability to reduce risk of opioid dependency.

"We're thrilled to partner with Samsung on this innovative study," said A/Prof Anthony Schembri, CEO, SVHNS. "By harnessing the power of Samsung's virtual reality technology, we're proud to possibly uncover the potential of a pain management program that looks at new ways of helping our patients in their recovery."

The trial is due to commence in 2018.

Women in NSW Health and Well-being

Director of Aboriginal Health, Pauline Deweerd was asked to participate in the recent launch of the Women in NSW Health and Well-being Report, a NSW Government initiative aiming to improve the lives of women in NSW through justice and equality for women.



Speaking on an expert health panel discussing women's health issues, Pauline spoke on the current challenges faced by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women, stating "We know that the disparity between Aboriginal people and non-Aboriginal people is greater today than in the past". Highlighting the need for Aboriginal patients to feel safe when seeking health care, Pauline described the historical trauma Aboriginal people faced when engaging with hospitals. "Hospitals were a place of dying for Aboriginal people in the past. They said goodbyes at the hospital doors".

While at St Vincent's, 86% of staff have undertaken Aboriginal cultural awareness training, Pauline said "there's a long way to go in training Australia's doctors to provide a culturally safe service to Aboriginal patients".

Feature interview with

A/Prof JOHN GEOGHEGAN

John is the Director of Nursing & Operations
at St Joseph's Hospital



What inspires you most about your work?

I have previously worked in health organisations owned by religious communities, this is what interested me about applying to St Joseph's Hospital. I have been inspired by what we do. SJH cares for the most poor and vulnerable; the older person who has no one close to them made more complex with a psychiatric illness or disability; the people with a neurological disease that devastates their life and that of their families including the people who require our palliative care services. I'm inspired by the people who I work with who keep me going on a daily basis. I trained as a nurse and see the many comforting interactions all our staff from the many departments provide. Over the years many people from other health services have visited and I have been so proud when they said to me, 'You know John, there's something about coming to SJH that's different'. I agree with them wholeheartedly.

What might someone be surprised to know about you?

I chuckle to myself about this. I have always loved being in a garden. Fortunately, we have staff who are passionate about our gardens which keeps me on notice about ensuring the place is managed well. I do enjoy getting 'dirty'; digging, cutting, pruning and then sitting back and admiring with a little refreshment!

Also, I love spending time in the kitchen, in fact, I'm the weekend cook in our house!

What do you do when you aren't working?

I'm currently enrolled in a Doctor of Health program through UTas that takes a lot of my spare time. Being in the kitchen with the radio playing is really relaxing, even when I have several dishes on the boil! A great battery charger for me is a walk on the beach, anytime of the year.

If you could invite any five people in the world to dinner (living or not), who would they be and what would you cook?

1. Lady Diana (formerly Princess of Wales)
2. Cat Stevens (Singer, musician)
3. Sandra Bullock (Actress)
4. Sir David Attenborough (Broadcaster, naturalist)
5. Carole King (Singer, song writer)

A combination of Bruschetta, Pizza Giovanni, Juanito's Paella and Rhubarb and Pear Tartlets.

What super power do you wish you had and how would you use it?

I wish I could go back in time. So many practices and ways of doing 'things' have changed making our lifestyle more convenient and better. However, I'd like to experience some of the former practices which may help me, and others appreciate and improve how we practice and operate today.

FACTS + FIGURES

ANNUAL SEPARATION FIGURES

AS AT 30 JUNE 2017



42,086
St Vincent's Hospital

2,034
Sacred Heart Health Service

870
St Joseph's Hospital

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ON SOCIAL MEDIA



FRONT COVER: ST VINCENT'S CARDIOLOGIST, DR DENNIS KUCHAR USES ART TO HEAL HIS HEART.