

# ST VINCENT'S Voice

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

## ST VINCENT'S FAREWELLS SOME OF ITS FINEST

### Inside this edition:

- Papal Honours for St Vincent's Sisters
- St Joseph's launches Seniors Legal Service
- 100% of St Vincent's JMOs pass the FRACP exam!





A/PROF  
ANTHONY SCHEMBRI

CEO, St Vincent's Health  
Network Sydney

This is a special edition of St Vincent's Voice. In addition to three retiring, long serving and game-changing clinicians, Professor David Cooper's recent passing has signalled a great loss to our campus, as well as the medical community at large. His contribution to HIV Research and treatment is truly immeasurable.

At the same time, it makes me proud to see the kind of talented and compassionate people that St Vincent's attracts, and the work, inspired by our Mission of service of the poor and vulnerable, that our people strive for.

It was wonderful to see to the source of much of our inspiration as a Campus recognised for all that they do, when three Sisters of Charity were awarded Papal Honours from the Holy Father Pope Francis, in recognition of their distinguished service to the church and health service.

It really does highlight that we are blessed with passionate colleagues who go above and beyond every day, to care for our patients and the communities we service.

# + SHORT SHARP



## *Straight A's for young Docs*

We're so proud of our graduating Basic Physician Trainees, 100% of whom passed their recent FRACP exams! Well done Doctors, they are a credit to us and to the St Vincent's Medical Workforce team that supported them.



## *Secretary Elizabeth Koff visits St Vincent's*

St Vincent's recently had the pleasure of hosting Secretary for Ministry of Health, Ms Elizabeth Koff, who joined us to learn about our Aboriginal Health services and our endeavours to Close the Gap. After an informal opportunity to meet some of our Aboriginal staff, Ms Koff took the time to hear first-hand from our staff on specific departmental strategies including Pain Management and Heart Health, who have made Aboriginal Health a major part of their deliverables, and a priority for our Hospital.



## *Sold to the highest bidder!*

A Randwick apartment that was bequeathed to St Vincent's Curran Foundation was recently auctioned off for a cool \$1.405 million. Funds from the sale will go towards essential equipment purchases at St Vincent's! A huge thanks to the late Donald Stone who generously left the apartment to our Hospital in his Will, to Coco Republic who furnished the apartment ready for sale and to the Schumann Sands Team at Di Jones Real Estate for getting such a great result!

## *Novel pool car booking system introduced*

St Vincent's has recently introduced an innovative system to help streamline access to the car pool at St Joseph's and Sacred Heart service system. This includes a digital key allocation system where staff can access the keys to their designated pool car through the allocation of a digital pin number, book cars on line and record mileage electronically. The new system is regarded as the most efficient and user-friendly approach to fleet vehicle management. Furthering this streamlining process, St Vincent's staff can access and return keys from a central car park location to more efficiently and effectively manage use of our fleet cars and car bookings. A similar system for SVH Darlinghurst will be available in coming months.



SEV Inspired to serve

## Papal Honours for St Vincent's Sisters



Sr Anthea Groves OAM rsc



Sr Sesarina Bau rsc



Sr Jacinta Fong rsc

We're proud to share that Sisters Sr Sesarina Bau, Sr Anthea Groves OAM, and Sr Jacinta Fong have recently been awarded Papal Honours from the Holy Father Pope Francis, in recognition of their distinguished service to the Church in the Catholic Archdiocese of Sydney.

All three Sisters have individually devoted many decades of tireless work across our Hospital, in particular Sr Jacinta in the Emergency Department; Sr Ses in the Intensive Care Department; and Sr Anthea in her role as a patient advocate. They have all long been an inspiration to so many of us – guiding us in providing the most compassionate care.

Congratulations on this amazing achievement. We would also like to acknowledge Sr Anthea Groves for her passion and care for our patients and staff throughout her long career. A much loved part of the St Vincent's Campus, Sr Anthea played a pivotal role in serving our Mission. She is missed by staff, patients and supporters alike, and we thank her for her service to our broader community.

## Planning for the future

St Vincent's is pleased to launch a new suite of resources to help people plan ahead for the future.

Since its foundation by the Sisters of Charity, St Vincent's has been at the forefront of care for people living with serious and difficult illnesses. Our staff recognise that those encountering these illnesses often have concerns about what their personal future will hold, how their family will be cared for, and how decisions will be made for them if their illness determines that they cannot speak for themselves.

Professor Jane Ingham has led a multidisciplinary team from St Vincent's and St Joseph's to develop a suite of informative resources for all of our community, aiming to sensitively address the need for planning for future health events.

The resources address how to appoint a 'person responsible' to speak for you if needed; how to think



about advance care planning; how to ensure that your clinical team knows what is important to you; legal and practical matters that you might want to consider; and how health care teams can support you and your family. Videos are available in which family members share their experiences.

Our hope is that this information can provide people with a sense of reassurance and solace - knowing that family, carers and the health care team have a good sense of what is important to them and their 'affairs are in order'.

Many patients with serious illness tell us that they want to be sure that help is available for their families and carers. The new resources include important information for those who are bereaved including how to arrange a funeral, and where to seek counselling if they are

struggling with their loss.

While none of us know exactly what our future holds, serious illness is worrying and, eventually, death affects everyone. Planning for the future often means thinking about uncomfortable subjects that are rarely spoken about. We hope these new resources go some way to help prepare and provide our community with peace of mind.

Resources can be found online or you can ask our staff if you would like information printed out.

- <http://svhs.org.au/home/patients-and-visitors/being-involved-in-your-care/who-will-speak-for-me>
- <http://svhs.org.au/home/our-services/list-of-services-bereavement/bereavement>

# St Vincent's farewells three greats

The first edition of St Vincent's Voice for the year has us farewelling three major players on the St Vincent's Campus, who have individually made a profound impact on the health care landscape both here and internationally, and touched the lives of thousands of people. We thank each of them for their contribution to St Vincent's, for their leadership, dedication and expertise. We wish them the very best for very well-deserved retirement.



## Professor Gavin Andrews AO

After 33 years of service to St Vincent's, Prof Gavin Andrews retired earlier this year. As an academic staff member of the School of Psychiatry at UNSW, Gavin founded CRUfAD, the Clinical Research Unit for Anxiety and Depression in 1964. Since joining St Vincent's, Gavin designed and developed the Anxiety and Disorder Clinic in 1986, and later THIS WAY UP – an online service to treat mental health conditions, in 1998.

Gavin is recognised as one of the world's foremost experts in the diagnosis and treatment of anxiety disorders, and the research and the treatment programs he has developed are widely used by clinicians all over the world.

Last year Gavin was recognised as a leader in the field, having been nominated for the Australian Mental Health Prize which honours those who have made an outstanding contribution to the promotion, prevention or treatment of mental illness. Additionally Gavin was awarded an Order of Australia in 2006 for service to mental health care in Australia and for international contributions to psychiatric research.

Gavin made an extraordinary contribution to our Mission in improving the lives of thousands of people, particularly some of the most marginalised members of our community.

Gavin will continue to consult in research and staff supervision as an Honorary appointee of our health service.



## Professor Gordian Fulde AO

**G**ordian joined St Vincent's as the Director of Emergency in 1983 and went on to become the longest-serving director of an Australian emergency department.

His impact on emergency medicine and public health issues was recognised when he was announced Senior Australian of the Year in 2016 and was made an Officer of the Order of Australia in 2017 for "distinguished service to emergency medicine as a clinician and administrator, to medical education, and to the community as an advocate for a range of public health issues."

Gordian's contribution to our Hospital, to Emergency Medicine, to the thousands of patients he's cared for, and to the many hundreds of trainees and colleagues he's mentored over the decades, is profound.

***"He was announced Senior Australian of the Year in 2016 and was made an Officer of the Order of Australia in 2017"***



## Associate Professor Phillip Spratt AM

**A**s a young cardiothoracic surgeon, Phillip Spratt joined St Vincent's Hospital in 1984 to work alongside the likes of Victor Chang and Harry Windsor.

Phillip went on to become the Director of Heart and Lung Surgery and Transplantation at St Vincent's, and under his leadership our Heart Lung Department has pioneered a number of innovative procedures that have changed the course of heart and lung transplantation internationally, making St Vincent's one of the leading cardiothoracic surgery units worldwide.

Thanks to his years of guidance and care, the future of our Heart Lung Department is extremely bright, with exciting plans ahead to establish a world leading Heart Lung Vascular Institute on our Campus – Phillip's departure represents a major loss for our Campus and we wish him all the best.



Image courtesy of Fairfax Media.  
Professor David Cooper (Left).

## Vale Professor David Cooper AO

**David played a fundamental role internationally in shaping the national response to the HIV epidemic since the early 1980s.**

**D**avid was an internationally acclaimed HIV clinician and researcher, who was instrumental in shaping HIV care in Australia since it hit our shores in 1984. In St Vincent's 161-year history, there are few of our clinicians who have transformed the health landscape in such a significant way.

In 1986 he went on to become the inaugural director of the National Centre in HIV Epidemiology and Clinical Research at St Vincent's, which grew to the now world renowned Kirby Institute.

Having completed his doctorate at St Vincent's Hospital in Sydney through UNSW, David was working at the Dana Faber Cancer Centre in Boston in the early 1980s, when blood samples started arriving from New York for testing. The blood was from very ill gay men, and showed signs of the devastation that the HIV virus, then unknown to the world, was able to cause to the body's immune defences.

In an interview on ABC Radio National in 2015, David said: "I thought, I know where St Vincent's is. If the key risk groups are the same [in Australia], which I'm sure they are, then we were going to be seeing it at St Vincent's." Sure enough, on his return to Sydney, Professor Cooper was soon seeing the same disease patterns in the local gay community, and St Vincent's location quickly

made it the hub of efforts to care for people with this new and frightening condition.

Initiating ground-breaking, collaborative infectious disease research that has saved countless lives in Australia and throughout the world, David was among the first responders when the HIV epidemic reached Australia in the early 1980s.

Professor Cooper and his colleagues enrolled a number of young men who were patients at local general practices into one of Australia's first clinical HIV research studies. The results, published in *The Lancet*, led to the first description anywhere in the world of the so-called "seroconversion illness," which defines initial HIV infection in many people.

The reverence his patients and his clinical peers held for him was extraordinary. His clinical brilliance was only matched by his love and compassion for his patients. He would always go out of his way to care and support his patients regardless of day or night, whether at home or on the ward.

Without the swift response of David and his colleagues together with the determination and compassion of the Sisters of Charity in the face of profound community stigmatisation; the HIV/AIDS epidemic in Australia could have been far worse.

Go gently David. You are missed.



SVH *Inspired to care*

## St Joseph's launch Senior's Legal Service

St Vincent's Health Network is thrilled to partner with Justice Connect to establish the first NSW hospital based legal service to prevent elder abuse.



L-R: Paul Robertson AO, SVHA Chairman; Yvonne Lipianin, Resident Lawyer at SJH; Pru Goward MP, A/Prof Anthony Schembri, CEO SVNH, Chris Povey, CEO Justice Connect.

In an exciting new partnership, a Justice Connect Lawyer will be integrated directly into the health care team to identify elderly patients at risk of abuse.

Traditional methods of delivering legal services to this sector of the community have largely failed due to the multiple barriers that prohibit them from seeking help, however health professionals are well placed to identify the warning signs of elder abuse in their patients – and older people may be more likely to disclose abuse to their carers where trusting relationships have been formed.

This partnership gives way to a wonderful initiative to help protect vulnerable patients in the later stage of their lives. It has initially been launched at St Joseph's Hospital Auburn, and will soon be rolled out at St Vincent's Darlinghurst.

Special thanks to the Honourable Pru Goward MP, Minister for Family and Community Services, Minister for Social Housing and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault, who spoke passionately on this very topic as she joined us for the launch of this exciting commitment to our senior community members.

## Close the Gap 2018



Pauline Deweerd, Director of Aboriginal Health; Aunty Fay Carol; A/Prof Anthony Schembri, CEO SVNH.

This year to mark Close the Gap Day, St Vincent's showcased our dedicated teams who are working with Aboriginal communities to deliver the most culturally appropriate and respectful care.

As an organisation we are united in our commitment to addressing the disparity in health and employment outcomes of our Nation's First Peoples. At the Close the Gap Day celebrations it was encouraging to hear from St Vincent's teams including Pharmacy, Heart Lung, Stimulant Treatment Services, the Arts Committee, Pain Management, Social Work, Homeless Health and Aboriginal employment – who shared their strategies, learnings and successes in engaging with Aboriginal communities to ensure their physical, social and spiritual needs are met when they're in our care.

Close the Gap Day also provided an opportunity to officially launch the SVHA Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultural Protocol. As one of the first health care organisations nationally to develop such a protocol, the guide educates our staff on how to engage with our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander patients and residents so that they feel welcome, respected and safe within our services.

## Feature interview with

# LAUREN RUTZOU

Lauren is an Occupational Therapist at St Joseph's Hospital who specialises in providing upper limb therapy to patients experiencing a neurological condition.



### *What major breakthroughs in your field do you think/hope we will see in the future?*

That evidence based upper limb therapy will be provided as routine practice throughout hospitals.

### *What are the challenges you see now and in the coming years?*

The continuing changes in technology advancements and new evidence and ensuring we remain up to date remain a challenge in this field.

### *What do you love the most about what you do?*

I love being able to help patients achieve their goals by working on their hand and arm so it moves for them again. I love being able to offer patients hope that they will be able to return to meaningful tasks again and I love seeing their smile after achieving a difficult task that they could not do several weeks or months ago, I find that very rewarding.

### *What motivates you on a daily basis?*

Knowing that my patients need my skill set and knowledge so they can progress in their rehab and make changes to their life motivates me to, each day, be the best therapist I can be.

### *What is your proudest moment, professionally speaking?*

Setting up Constraint Induced Movement Therapy which is an evidence based rehabilitation intervention as a sustainable program in outpatients through the Student Unit. St Joseph's Hospital was one of the first hospitals in Sydney to offer this program.

### *Tell us one of your favourite stories during your time at St Joseph's...*

One of my favourite stories is when a gentleman worked really hard on his unique therapy program and as a result got movement back in his hand so he could work and potter in shed.

## FACTS + FIGURES

# 87%

Staff across SVHNS have completed Respecting the Difference Cultural Awareness Training



# 5,291

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FRONT COVER: SCIENTIA PROFESSOR DAVID COOPER