

# ST VINCENT'S Voice

SUMMER 2018 - CHRISTMAS/  
NEW YEAR EDITION

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

## ST VINCENT'S PERFORMS INCISIONLESS TREATMENT FOR ESSENTIAL TREMOR

### Inside this edition

- St Vincent's welcomes Prof David Kissane AC
- Dr Jenny Stevens & Prof Niels Buus win major awards
- St Vincent's Oncology awarded best Cancer Clinical Trials Unit





A/PROF  
ANTHONY SCHEMBRI

CEO, St Vincent's Health Network Sydney

Premier Gladys Berejickian, and His Grace Archbishop Anthony Fisher in launching this year's Lights of Christmas at St Mary's Cathedral. In my opening remarks, I spoke of hope, love, joy & peace and reflected on how these are four words we strongly associate with Christmas. That when we get together with our family and loved-ones; it's a shared sense of hope, love, joy and peace that often creates a stronger bond between us.

I mentioned that at St Vincent's, Christmas is a particularly special time. We know that for many of our patients under our care, they often look to us in hope, and we are in a privileged position to provide them with a level of care that reassures them, to make them feel safe and welcome – to make their sense of hope justified.

In addressing the audience, both the Premier and Archbishop subsequently touched on my words and paid tribute to the unique role we play at St Vincent's and the difference we make to our patients.

This is my 5th Christmas in my current role at St Vincent's Health Network and I

always find that for me, this is a special time to reflect on all that we do and to a large degree, celebrate the hope that we bring to so many of our patients.

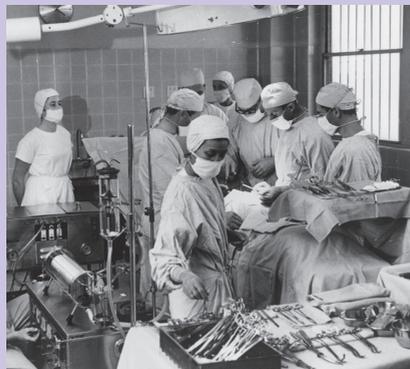
Throughout the following pages of this bumper Christmas edition of St Vincent's Voice, you will see an abundance of stories that showcase this hope that we are providing our patients such as our pioneering incisionless treatment for serious neurological conditions.

I am very proud of the way our staff engage with our patients, to go the extra mile to make our patients' sense of hope so richly deserved.

On behalf of my Senior Leadership Team colleagues, I want to thank you for your contribution throughout 2018 and wish you and your loved ones a happy and safe Christmas filled with hope, love, joy & peace.

SECTION 1

# + SHORT SHARP



## 50 years of heart transplantation

October marked the 50th anniversary of the first heart transplant in Australia, performed here at St Vincent's Hospital by Dr Harry Windsor in 1968.

We've come a long way since then, but we haven't forgotten the pioneering work of Dr Windsor who paved the way for St Vincent's to become a Cardiothoracic Centre of Excellence.



## Women in Engineering

Congratulations to Vaidehi Desai, St Vincent's Biomedical Engineer who has won the 2018 Women in Biomedical Engineering Award! Vaidehi was the first female engineer in the department 16 years ago, and she continues to be a role model for the whole team, and women everywhere. We're so proud to have her on the St Vincent's team.

**SEV** *Inspired to care*

## St Joseph's Giving Tree

**S**t Joseph's Hospital services a number of young adults living with disability or terminal illness. This includes people suffering with conditions such as Motor Neurone Disease (MND), Stroke, Cancer and Huntington's disease. Some of these patients have young children, who are significantly impacted by their parent's condition, so an extra helping hand at Christmas may help to bring smiles and happiness.

Matthew Bullen, Mission Integration Manager, said "In previous years at St Joseph's, the Christmas Giving Tree has included specific 'bring-a-gift' appeals, as well as appeals for people living with MND. However this year, we are combining the appeals for a very local cause. Our 2018 Christmas Giving Tree will include all current patients linked to St Joseph's, who have young children under the age of 15 years.

We will also include young children of those patients who passed away this year – it will be their first Christmas without their parent."

The money donated will be used to purchase gift cards for distribution amongst the families. The gift cards will be given to the patient to empower them to both purchase & provide gifts for their children. That way they can buy something that the child needs and likes.

"We welcome the local community's interest and support and thank them in advance for their generosity. St Joseph's has a proud and long-standing connection to this community and we couldn't do the work we do without the community's commitment and support," Mathew said.

To help please visit <https://give.everydayhero.com/au/st-joseph-hospital-christmas-giving-tree-appeal>



Scientia Professor Greg Dore

## Greg Dore appointed UNSW Scientia Professor

**A**s recognition for high performing Professors excelling in research, education, social engagement and global impact, the University of NSW's Scientia Professor scheme is a prestigious accolade, offered to the University's top 10% of their Professoriate.

We're pleased to share, that conjoint Professor Greg Dore, St Vincent's Infectious Diseases, was recently announced as a UNSW Scientia Professor. This is wonderful recognition of his incredible work, particularly in the areas of hepatitis C; and therapy for current injecting drug users and individuals on opiate dependency pharmacotherapy. Well done!



L-R: Elaine Chui (Physio), Rose Gordon (Nurse), Matthew Bullen (Director of Mission), Fiona Barry (OT), Julie Labra (MND Service Coordinator)

# St Vincent's Award Winning Clinical Trials Unit

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**This St Vincent's Oncology Clinical Trials Unit recently won the NSW Premiers Award for best Cancer Clinical Trials Unit.**



This is an important award for the Campus, not only in that it acknowledges the extraordinary work of our Cancer team, but it highlights how effective the St Vincent's Campus Cancer Plan 2015-2020 is proving. The Cancer Plan has a heavy focus on clinical trials and we have seen a huge increase in recent years of our endeavours in Oncology and Haematology clinical research trials. In 2011, St Vincent's conducted 15 collaborative trials, in 2017 this escalated to 45. In relation to commercial trials St Vincent's increased from 13 trials in 2011 to 108 in 2017. From Phase 1 through to Phase 4 trials and we have dramatically increased our clinical research in recent years to improve treatments in a broad range of cancers.

Ensuring our Campus is at the forefront of clinical trials St Vincent's provides in Australia is crucial to ensuring that we provide St Vincent's patients with the most effective and cutting edge treatment, particularly in light of St Vincent's focus on personalised and precision medicine.

Congratulations to Professors Richard Gallagher, Anthony Joshua, Robert Kemp and your TKCC colleagues, along with SydPath, Pharmacy, Research Governance Office and all the staff supporting Cancer Clinical Trials for your tireless work and stewardship in making St Vincent's a leader in cancer clinical trials.

SEV *Inspired to care*

# Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Staff Forum



Entitled 'Walking Together, Facing our Future', the 2018 SVHA Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander staff forum is an annual event allowing our Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander staff from across SVHA facilities nationally to connect and work together to influence the national agenda for Aboriginal Health and employment across our organisations.

Now in it's third year, the gathering provided an opportunity to consider our Reconciliation Action Plan for 2019-2021, which will inform the strategies we undertake to close the gap in health and employment outcomes for our Nation's First Peoples.

We were very proud to have so many staff members representing St Vincent's Health Network Sydney at the two day event, with many wearing their Dalarinji shirts with pride.

## St Vincent's Physio Pain Day

The St Vincent's Pain Team recently hosted the first hospital-led Physiotherapy Pain Day in Australia, attracting over 50 physiotherapists, most of them working specifically with chronic pain, from around the State.

Dr Tania Gardner and the Pain team promoted academia among physios managing pain patients, with a focus on assessment, functional measures, cognitive functional movement and the management of Complex Regional Pain Syndrome.

Well done Dr Tania Gardner and the St Vincent's Pain Team.



# Welcome Professor David Kissane AC

St Vincent's in conjunction with the University of Notre Dame, welcomes Professor David Kissane AC as the inaugural Chair of Palliative Medicine Research on the St Vincent's campus.



Professor David Kissane AC

Professor Kissane, MD is an academic psychiatrist and researcher in the fields of psycho-oncology and palliative care. Prior to joining us he has served as Head of the Department of Psychiatry for Monash University, Chairman of the Department of Psychiatry and Behavioural Sciences at Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center in New York and, before that, the Foundation Chair of Palliative Medicine at the University of Melbourne.

The collaboration between the University of Notre Dame Australia and St Vincent's Cunningham Centre for Palliative Care Research provides a special opportunity to strengthen clinical research conducted towards the end-of-life. This is an important agenda for our Campus, which is committed to the optimal care of the dying through the practice of palliative care.

Looking to the future, Prof Kissane said, "I'm wanting to help early career scholars get established doing their PhDs at the Cunningham Centre and build a team of researchers that can take the discipline of palliative care forward. I'm delighted to return to the St Vincent's family as I originally trained at the St Vincent's Medical School and Hospital in Melbourne. I was their Foundation Professor of Palliative Medicine from 1996 to 2003. I feel I have returned home."

## International award for Prof Buus

Congratulations to Professor Niels Buus, who has been awarded the Nordentoft Prize 2018 for his work in suicide prevention.

Niels has several active projects in suicide prevention both nationally and internationally. At St Vincent's, he has launched the Centre for Family Based Mental Health Care in collaboration with Sydney University.

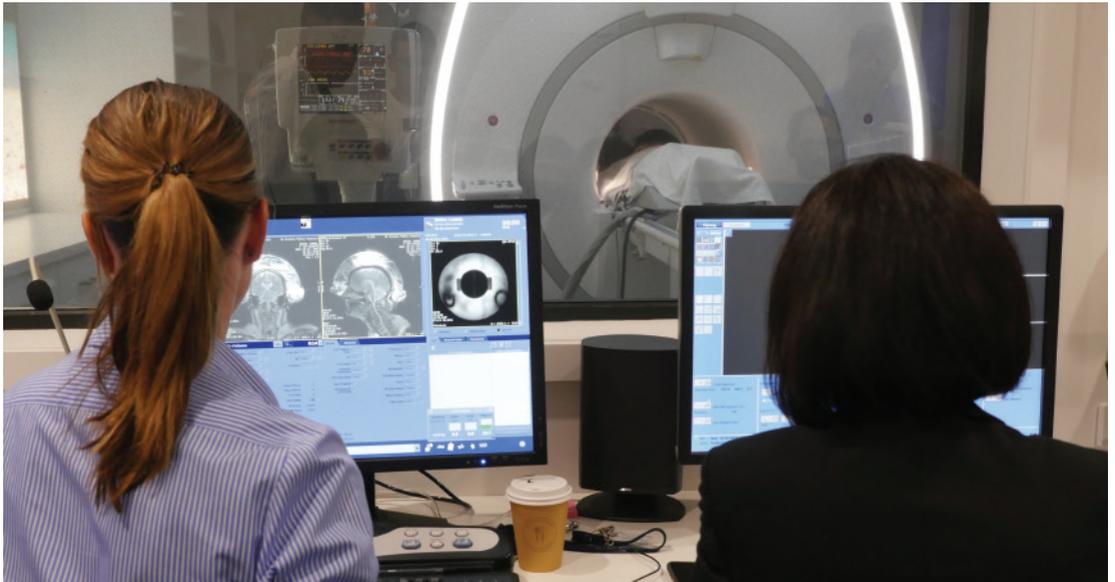
"Our suicide prevention work is about understanding how individuals, families and communities respond to suicidal actions and how to support them in creating and increasing their own psychological and social resources when life is difficult", says Niels.



Professor Niels Buus

STV *Inspired to lead*

## St Vincent's Performs First Incisionless Treatment for Essential Tremor



In a Southern Hemisphere-first, St Vincent's Hospital has successfully treated a patient with Essential Tremor, a neurological disorder that disabled the patient from performing simple tasks such as holding a glass of water, using MR-guided focussed ultrasound.

Just hours after the procedure, without a single incision, the patient is free of symptoms immediately after the non-invasive, surgery-free procedure.

The combined neuroradiology, neurology and neurosurgery team at St Vincent's used the newly acquired MR-guided Focussed Ultrasound (MRgFUS) device, which combines high intensity focussed ultrasound with Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI) to permanently interrupt the abnormal brain network causing tremor.

"In the course of the procedure, I made a lesion measuring only a few millimetres in size in the thalamus – a part of the brain involved in the 'circuit' that causes tremor. In creating this lesion the objective is to interrupt this circuit, a procedure known as thalamotomy. Previously, this would have required an opening in the skull and insertion of a probe," said St Vincent's Neurosurgeon Dr Ben Jonker.

The entire procedure is conducted inside an MRI scanner. In basic terms, the MRI effectively serves as

the 'eyes' of the treatment, enabling the team to accurately plan, guide and target the ultrasound therapy. It also enables precise measurement of the temperature in order to verify that only the intended tissue is treated. The immediate result is a significant reduction in the level of tremor.

Essential Tremor is the most common movement disorder, affecting millions of people worldwide causing shaking of the limbs, head and voice. In some patients, the severity of the tremor becomes unbearable, interfering significantly with daily activities.

"Most of my patients with Essential Tremor are over 40 but some were diagnosed in their twenties and in adolescence. For many of them, simple activities become hugely challenging and in some cases they can be embarrassed to go out in public and sometimes remain isolated in their homes," said St Vincent's Neurologist Dr Stephen Tisch.

"At present our focus at St Vincent's is on treating patients with Essential Tremor, but MRI-guided focussed ultrasound therapy is being actively investigated in clinical trials for Parkinson's disease, neuropathic pain and other conditions," added neuroradiologist Dr Yael Barnett, St Vincent's Director of MRI.

# Nursing at St Vincent's. We say you can.

St Vincent's has embarked upon an ambitious nursing recruitment campaign to attract highly driven nursing professionals. The campaign, dubbed "Nursing at St Vincent's – we say you can" aims at challenging conventional thinking about nursing opportunities, and highlights the recent thinking among St Vincent's nursing leadership to function as enablers in opening doors to career development.

The campaign involves billboards, videos and posters featuring four diverse nursing professionals at different stages in their careers who exemplify the Hospital's unique specialty areas from homeless health to transplantation as well as highlighting their own skill-sets.

For the first time, St Vincent's will utilise innovative bus-back advertising as well as new JC Decaux digital billboards around the City. Additionally, the campaign has focused heavily on social media marketing including a strong Facebook campaign that has reached 70,000 people.

Anna Thornton SVHNS Director of Nursing states "When it comes to nursing careers at St Vincent's our motto is "We say you can". That's because when you choose a nursing career at St Vincent's there are many unique specialty roles and opportunities to develop your skills. We believe in breaking down barriers to maximise these opportunities to help you reach your nursing ambitions.

We need to ensure that we offer great career progression at the same time as looking after our existing nurses by ensuring that we have a welcoming and inclusive culture that places a premium value on the contribution of our nursing professionals," she added.





**"Who says you can't provide care outside the hospital?"**

We say you can.

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

**Tim RN**  
Homeless Health





**"Who says you can't coordinate a heart transplant at 26?"**

We say you can.

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

**Monica RN**  
Transplant Coordinator

SEV *Inspired to lead*

# 7 South hosts Orthopaedic Roadshow

A national roadshow celebrating 80 years of orthopaedic surgery in Australia has spent a month exhibiting at St Vincent's.

The roadshow showcased the history, present and future of orthopaedics in Australia, and included information on sports injury prevention, the evolution of joint replacement, developments in the treatment of fractures and innovations including the use of 3D printing, robotics, computer navigation and customising implants during surgery.

Orthopaedic roadshow advisor and St Vincent's surgeon Dr Brett Courtenay said orthopaedic surgery had been a constantly evolving area of medicine.

"In my 40 years of surgery there have been major advances in

prostheses, surgical techniques, equipment and imaging. This has meant we can provide reliable life-changing procedures for our patients.

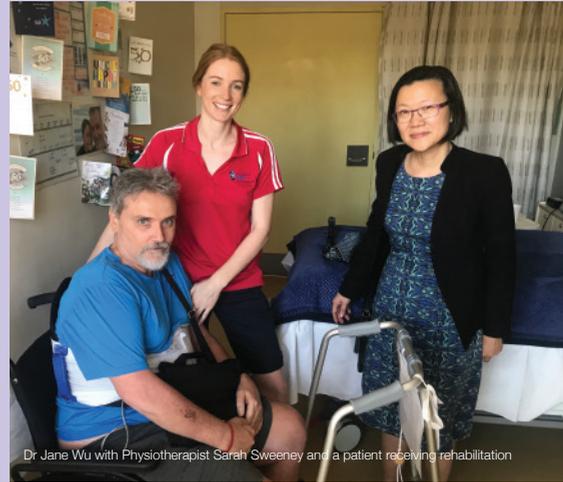
"To celebrate 80 years of the Australian Orthopaedic Association the Board voted to produce the travelling exhibition, designed for the public to showcase the diversity of orthopaedics across Australia," said Dr Courtenay.

Neighbouring Darlinghurst Public School visited St Vincent's to see the exhibition where they were given a rare insight into the work of Orthopaedic Surgery.



X7 South nurses hamming it up at the exhibition

## Highly commendable!



Dr Jane Wu with Physiotherapist Sarah Sweeney and a patient receiving rehabilitation

Dr Jane Wu and team have won a highly commended award in the 2018 Australian Council of Healthcare Standards Awards 2018, for their project PRESS (Proactive Rehab Screening) in which Dr Wu developed an algorithm for rehab referrals with a 97% specificity and 95% sensitivity.

This means that patients who need rehabilitation can be identified on day three of admission, before a referral has conventionally been considered.

In an Australian first, this project speeds up patient flow to the Mobile Rehab team and Inpatient Rehab. Additionally, early referral and action also avoids inpatient admission to Rehab in over 40% of cases.

This is an exemplary example of our staff going above and beyond in making sure our patients get the right care, in the right place, at the right time.

# Inspired to Lead



Dr Jenny Stevens

**Congratulations to Dr Jenny Stevens, St Vincent's Anaesthetist who was recently announced Collaborative Leader of the Year at the NSW Health Awards.**

It was noted "Dr Stevens leads numerous successful, inexpensive collaborative programs. Each program demonstrates her ability to bring together disparate groups to deliver positive clinical outcomes, enhanced patient safety and empowered staff.

Her skill lies in connecting the collection of local baseline data, drawing together the right people across departments, health agencies and pillar organisations, and organising innovative scalable programs" This is wonderful recognition of Jenny's amazing achievements, well done Jenny.

## Millennium Award for Prof Greenfield

Prof Jerry Greenfield, St Vincent's Director of Endocrinology and Diabetes Services has received the prestigious Millennium Award from Diabetes Australia. The \$150,000 grant will be used in Prof Greenfield's study which aims to understand why some people with type 1 diabetes are prone to insulin resistance, usually present in people with type 2 diabetes, and to further examine management of the condition.

"There is a need to determine the metabolic factors that contribute to insulin resistance in type 1 diabetes, as this knowledge will open up the opportunity to being able to target these abnormalities in order to reduce the risk of cardiovascular disease in the future."

Type 1 diabetes affects more than 120,000 people nationally. Diabetes Australia grants just two Millennium Awards each year for research programs that support and develop outstanding diabetes research in Australia. This is a major achievement for Prof Greenfield and the supporting research team, congratulations.



Professor Jerry Greenfield

SEV *Inspired to shine*

# Lights of Christmas

This year, for the first time St Vincent's was named as the charity partner of the Lights of Christmas – Sydney's most popular Christmas lights show, to support our Gift of Life Campaign, raising money for our Heart Lung program. "We feel honoured that St Vincent's has been chosen as the Charity Partner of the Lights of Christmas to support our Gift of Life Campaign", said A/Prof Anthony Schembri at the launch.

*"We feel honoured that St Vincent's has been chosen as the Charity Partner of the Lights of Christmas to support our Gift of Life Campaign"*

Alongside NSW Premier, the Hon. Gladys Berejiklian and Archbishop Fisher, St Vincent's CEO A/Prof Anthony Schembri spoke of hope, love, joy and peace; words which so perfectly describe that special feeling making Christmas such an extraordinary time in our lives.

Thank you to the Sydney Archdiocese, Paynter Dixon and AGB Events for providing us with this wonderful opportunity to make our Gift of Life Campaign part of this magnificent Christmas event.

The ninth annual Lights of Christmas will run nightly from December 5th to December 25th with choirs at 7.30pm and Lights On at 8.30pm to midnight.



A/Prof Anthony Schembri with Premier Berejiklian & Archbishop Fisher.



## Feature interview with

# SUSAN WEBSTER

Susan is the administration officer, Pain Service at St Vincent's public hospital.



My Name is Susan Webster I am a proud Dharawal woman.

I started working for St Vincent's Public Hospital In October 2017. I Work in the pain management clinic we provide a Telehealth service for specialist pain consultations for the rural and remote communities.

The aim is to improve the patient experience and to access specialist multidisciplinary care. Also consultation for hospital outpatients clinic, we run a Reboot programme for patients to attend with a clinical psychologist and physiotherapist.

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

For patients to be able to cope with their chronic pain and attend our Reboot programme to improve their quality of life and manage pain.

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

Being able to see people improve their chronic pain, feeling better about themselves; and being able to

go out to AMS Redfern with the Pain Clinic team. I get great satisfaction in making a small difference in someone's life.

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

Seeing patients improve, and looking forward to working in a great team. Learning new things, and feeling rewarded in doing a good job.

**Tell us one of your favourite stories during your time at St Vincent's?**

Being asked to do Acknowledgement of Country for NAIDOC Week (Because of her, we can!) for the launch of Aboriginal Health Collection and Library Guide. I feel very grateful to be given these opportunities.

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

Changing my career in my 50's and being able to attend various courses and on the job training. And being invited to attend the SVHA Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander forum being held in Melbourne this year.

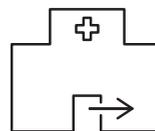
## FACTS + FIGURES

**288**  
Headcount at St Joseph's



**17,519**  
Outpatient occasions of service  
at St Joseph's FY 2018

**863**  
Separations at St Joseph's  
FY 2018



svhn.voice@svha.org.au  
JOIN THE CONVERSATION  
ON SOCIAL MEDIA



FRONT COVER: SR CARMEL SMITH WITH NEUROLOGIST STEPHEN TISCH AFTER BEING TREATED WITH THE MR-GUIDED ULTRASOUND.