

# St Vincent's Voice

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

CHRISTMAS 2015 — ISSUE 07



## St Vincent's opens new research centre

Inside this edition:

St Vincent's develops  
innovative app

Environmental Services cleans  
up at SVHA Awards

St Vincent's road  
to accreditation

## A message from Anthony Schembri



**CEO, ST VINCENT'S HEALTH NETWORK SYDNEY**

As we look back on 2015, I'm incredibly proud of what we have been able to achieve this year – some of which is captured in this edition of St Vincent's Voice.

St Vincent's has a long and proud history in HIV treatment and research. I was delighted to recently announce on World AIDS Day, in the spirit of striving for something greater, that we have been able to provide a new home for Stanford House which provides short-term residential care for people living with HIV who have complex health needs. As we head into the Christmas period, I hope you will have an opportunity to take some time to reflect on your achievements and recharge for the year ahead. 2016 is shaping up to be a challenging year offering key opportunities for all of us, including finalising our clinical services planning for St Joseph's; the important accreditation process in April, where we'll have a chance to showcase our quality improvement processes and person-centred care as well as working up our planning for the integrated St Vincent's Healthcare and Research Campus.

For all your hard work in 2015, thank you.

## Short & Sharp

### Step aside Mark Zuckerberg

Congrats to David Roffe who recently won the coveted Gold Digital Disrupter Award at the Australian Computer Society Awards. The accolade recognises David as a driver of productivity, innovation and ICT solutions delivery. Thanks to David for his significant contribution to St Vincent's ICT, particularly in the areas of electronic medication management and application development.



### Prof Fulde honoured in Australian of the Year Awards

Prof Gordian Fulde has been named 2016 NSW Senior Australian of the Year! Gordian has worked tirelessly as Director of Emergency at St Vincent's for over 30 years and during this time, has been committed to teaching and training the next generation of emergency doctors. We are so proud and thank him for his dedication to St Vincent's.



### Koori Knockout goes smoke-free with support from St Vincent's

St Vincent's was a proud supporter of this year's Koori Knockout. The rugby league knockout is a major sporting event and one of the largest gatherings of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in the country. With St Vincent's support, the event was the first smoking-free Knockout in its 44 year history.



### Go Team Vinnies!

St Vincent's Dragon Boat racers have once again taken the Gold at the Dragon's Abreast annual festival. Our unbeatable team is a collaboration between the public and private hospitals in support of breast cancer awareness. Well done team!



## SERVING SOMETHING GREATER

## St Joseph's Caring for Carers

St Joseph's Social Worker, Narelle Coote and Registered Nurse, Robyn Johnson were both providing care to patients in the community as part of the Aged Care Assessment Team, when they saw a need amongst carers of their patients, who could use a little bit of care themselves.

AUBURN CITY COUNCIL MAYORESS LEE LAM WITH CARERS, ADDIE AGATE AND JACKIE RATCLIFFE, RN/FACILITATOR ROBYN JOHNSON AND SOCIAL WORKER/FACILITATOR NARELLE COOTE.



Carers can often neglect their own needs in what can be an emotionally, physically and financially draining time in caring for a sick loved one and can find themselves physically and emotionally depleted.

That's why Narelle and Robyn initiated the St Joseph's Carers Support Group, to give carers the opportunity to share their experiences with others who know what they're going through.

Now in its sixteenth year, this important group provides education, emotional support and social events for carers in the Auburn area.

"It's a wonderful group of people and we're very committed to the Group", commented Narelle.

In recognition of this commitment and all their work, Auburn City Council recently nominated the group for a NSW Carers Award – which they won. The award celebrates the outstanding efforts of the group in making a positive difference to individuals and the community, and acknowledges the important role of carers.

Auburn City Council Mayor Le Lam recently visited St Joseph's to present this important service with their very much deserved NSW Carers Award. Congratulations to all involved.

*"It's a wonderful group of people and we're very committed to the Group."*

## SEEING SOMETHING GREATER

## Innovative antimicrobial app helps regulate antibiotic prescriptions



A new mobile app developed by St Vincent's Hospital aims to improve appropriateness and compliance in the prescriptions of antimicrobials to patients.

Funded by an eHealth NSW grant, the app was rolled out in July 2015. Led by Pharmacist, Jessica Del Gigante, the app was developed by Emerging Systems and the St Vincent's IT team. The innovative solution to antimicrobial stewardship (AMS) is the first of its kind in Australia which aims to provide a one-stop shop for clinicians where they can document antimicrobial approvals and interventions.

The app allows clinicians to incorporate AMS into their clinical workflow and can be customised to suit their clinical needs.

Clinicians can download the free "EHS Mobile" app through the Apple App Store when they are connected to the Hospital's WiFi.



STRIVING FOR SOMETHING GREATER

# St Vincent's & Sacred Heart's accreditation journey

Every four years, the Australian Council on Healthcare Standards (ACHS) surveys each hospital in Australia to ensure they are meeting essential national standards.



In addition to the 10 standards which include medication safety, preventing and managing pressure injuries and clinical handover; St Vincent's will also be undergoing accreditation of five standards including service delivery, provision of care, information management and workforce planning. This is a great opportunity to showcase our work, highlighting the Hospital's quality improvement processes and key achievements in providing exemplary patient care.

From 18-22 April 2016, St Vincent's will be visited by a team of six independent surveyors who will have scheduled meetings with clinical leaders, visit wards and sight evidence that these standards are being met.

Although the surveyors will arrive in April, the Patient Safety and Quality Unit is already busily preparing for their visit by ensuring all of the processes from various departments are up to date to meet the 370 criteria of the standards.

SEEING SOMETHING GREATER

## Your Feedback

Our executive leadership team has been getting amongst it in recent months, with the roll-out of a new internal program – executive rounding. Executive rounding involves an informal visit to various departments, both clinical and non-clinical, from one or two of our executive members.

The visits allow all staff, at all levels



DIRECTOR OF HR, JACQUI CLARK AND DIRECTOR ALLIED HEALTH, MARGARET LAZAR GET TO KNOW THE INTERVENTIONAL CARDIOLOGY TEAM.

to give direct and honest feedback, providing the leadership team with a first-hand insight into what's working, and what could use some improvement. It also affords staff the opportunity to let the executive team know what innovations and improvement processes may have been achieved that may not necessarily be formally reported.

Executive rounding is a great opportunity for all staff to have a say, and to know they're being heard. For the execs, it's a chance to get to know what makes their colleagues tick, and give an understanding of what enhancements can be made – big or small, that would make a positive difference to the Hospital from the inside out.

## SERVING SOMETHING GREATER

## Outstanding results in cleanliness

An environmental cleaning review project, designed to provide person-centred care and reduce the risk of hospital acquired infections has achieved incredible results and won a SVHA Innovation and Quality Award for Excellence.

An external audit of hospital cleanliness in August 2015 saw Xavier 9 South (Bone Marrow Transplant ward) retain its 100% cleanliness rating which it has held since August 2014, when the project was in its infancy. This is the highest score of any hospital in NSW and a wonderful achievement, particularly for our patients with a compromised immune system.

In its last audit in April 2015, the Intensive Care Unit also achieved a rating of 100%, a rating it has held for over nine months. Moreover, results remained at a 99.25% average for the newly remodelled wards Xavier 7 and 8. The new measures implemented by the Environmental Services team also saw a decrease of hospital acquired MRSA by 50% since 2013. Importantly, patient feedback has been incredibly positive with a rating of 96.6% satisfaction for overall environmental services. Congratulations to Rob Gordon and the Environmental Services team for these wonderful results!



EMILY HEINEN & ROB GORDON REPRESENTING THE ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES TEAM AT THE SVHA AWARDS.

## SEEING SOMETHING GREATER

## St Vincent's welcomes Stanford House to our Campus



Announced on World AIDS Day, a new agreement between the Committee of Stanford House, St Vincent's Health Network Sydney (SVHNS) and Sydney Local Health District will safeguard the long-term survival of the state-wide short-term supported accommodation service for people living with HIV who have complex health needs such as homelessness, drug & alcohol, and mental health issues.

With the recent closure of Stanford House's Stanmore premises, a new home will be established on the St Vincent's Campus in Darlinghurst with increased capacity for six clients. The new relocated service will also provide outreach services for clients and past residents.

St Vincent's CEO, A/Prof Anthony Schembri noted "As we celebrate World AIDS Day, it is very encouraging that our health services have worked so effectively together in

partnership to provide a new home for Stanford House at St Vincent's. This is a natural home for this valuable service, a place where I know clients will get the best care and effectively link with the vital supports within our community."

The partnership with SVHNS is consistent with Stanford House's Catholic history with shared values, and a commitment to providing compassionate care.

SERVING SOMETHING GREATER



## Aboriginal Quitline finalists in the NSW Health Awards

With two of every five deaths in the Indigenous community related to smoking, and rates of smoking up to five times higher than the non-Indigenous Australian population, St Vincent's along with other partners, developed the Aboriginal Quitline in 2011 to provide a tailored service to Indigenous populations who are seeking support to quit smoking.

The Aboriginal Quitline uses a range of community development, training, direct service and promotions to engage with Aboriginal people. It is a service for Aboriginal people, by Aboriginal people, which has been a key component of their success. To date the service has seen an increase of 35% of Aboriginal people seeking support since inception. Recently the Aboriginal

Quitline was selected as a finalist at the NSW Health Awards, amid more than 300 nominations state-wide - a fitting tribute to the outstanding work of the team in engaging Aboriginal communities across NSW and providing a culturally appropriate service to help Aboriginal people cease using tobacco. Congratulations to all involved.

SEEING SOMETHING GREATER

## St Vincent's Opens New Translational Research Centre

The Hon Pru Goward, NSW Minister for Medical Research recently opened the Translational Research Centre of St Vincent's Centre for Applied Medical Research which will serve as a major research and treatment centre for HIV and other infectious diseases.

St Vincent's started treating Australia's first patients with HIV over 30 years ago and today has treated well over half the country's patients for this disease. During this time, the Hospital has worked closely with researchers from UNSW's Kirby Institute and other leading research affiliates to develop a reputation as a world leader in clinical research into HIV/AIDS as well as other infectious diseases.

"The partnership between St Vincent's and the Kirby has generated an extraordinary body of research which has been published in the world's most high-impact journals, including many watershed studies which have

transformed clinical practice," said Minister Goward.

"In many respects this building epitomises what St Vincent's does so well, which is to ensure a swift transition from the laboratory benchtop to the patient bedside," she added.

The St Vincent's Centre for Applied Medical Research building will serve as a translational research centre where Kirby Institute staff will interface with St Vincent's clinicians including speciality HIV inpatient and ambulatory services and the NSW State Reference Laboratory for HIV. The Centre will conduct several multi-centered clinical research projects in

clinical specialties such as HIV infection, viral hepatitis, anal cancer, immunology, rehabilitation medicine and neurology.

"St Vincent's has long excelled in engaging their clinical leaders to envisage a project and to partner with community supporters and Government to bring the project to fruition. I want to pay tribute here to the Late Peter Ikin and the wishes of his Estate to support HIV clinical research.

"I am confident that the the next 30 years of clinical research undertaken here will yield as many exceptional achievements as the last three decades on this Campus," the Minister said.

## SEEING SOMETHING GREATER

# Malcolm Turnbull visits SydPath

In his capacity as Local Member, Malcolm Turnbull recently visited St Vincent's SydPath, St Vincent's Pathology department to learn about pathology and its vital role in health care.

A/Professor Graham Jones led Mr Turnbull through pathology specialties – Bloodbank; Haematology; HIV Lab; Clinical Pharmacology; Cytogenetics and Microbiology to get a first-hand insight into what goes on behind the lab walls. "Without this vital service, hospitals would grind to a halt", Mr Turnbull said.



## STAFF FEATURE

## What I know about... Dr Margot Whitfeld

St Vincent's dermatologist Dr Margot Whitfeld's interest in albinism led her to Fiji, where albinism awareness is growing.

I've been interested in the field of albinism for a while and through my connections with the Albinism Fellowship of Australia, I was asked to hold a workshop on albinism at the Fijian School for the Blind. This workshop was for parents and teachers who had little knowledge or understanding of albinism or how to best protect their children's skin and vision. In Fiji it is estimated that 1/700 people have albinism, with skin cancer as a major health problem.

The interest in the workshop was overwhelming, with 35 people attending from community health workers to nurses, doctors, educators and parents. What I heard during the workshop was that the

albinism community wants to see social inclusion, better health and educational opportunities and ongoing support for their children and all people with albinism in Fiji.

Since the workshop, the Fijian School for the Blind has implemented strategies for reducing the children's exposure to sun during the hottest part of the day, providing shaded areas for play and having policies around hats and sunglasses. The school reported that at the start of the school year, the children with albinism arrived ready for school, proudly wearing their new hats, sunglasses and sun-shirts that had been generously donated by the Cancer

Council NSW. Seeing the children and the school adopting these small changes are very positive outcomes to stem from such a small intervention.







## FEATURE INTERVIEW

## KNOW YOUR PRODUCT

## Interview with Dr Tim Soutphommasane



Race Discrimination Commissioner with the Australian Human Rights Commission, Dr Tim Soutphommasane recently joined St Vincent's for Diversity Day, where St Vincent's Voice was fortunate enough to interview him.

### *What's your definition of racism?*

Racism can mean different things to different people, but quite often people confuse it to be a belief in racial superiority or supremacy, but you don't need to believe in such things to do or say things that have a discriminatory impact on others. So when we're talking about racism it's important to remember that it's as much about impact as it is about intention. This includes anything that has the effect of disadvantaging another person because of their race or ethnicity and extend to not only acts and behaviour but also to attitudes, and to the assumptions people make about others.

### *How do we change racist attitudes?*

It's about having an open mind and being willing to accept that you may not know everything about a situation until you have the opportunity to hear the perspectives of others and reflect on what that means. In the area of race, unfortunately people of certain backgrounds will experience it much more than others. For those who do experience it, it can be something that affects someone's freedom. It can make them feel like a second class citizen and we know from research it can also contribute to making them sick.

### *What's your hope for the future, for our nation's future?*

Australia is a successful multicultural society, and we're only going to grow more diverse so the challenge in combatting racism will remain. For me the challenge is really about achieving some cultural change. A change in attitudes, a change in the way we have conversations about race. Too often, people think of racism in its dictionary definition sense, but racism can be more subtle and insidious and it would be a big step if as a country, we could have conversations about those forms of racism in a mature way.

### *What's the greatest challenge you see in the coming years?*

Well, concerns for our national security, terrorism - we have to make sure that those anxieties don't lead to a corrosion of our social cohesion and community harmony. There is also a challenge in ensuring we do better in the treatment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who continue to experience systemic forms of discrimination. This is reflected in the rates of incarceration; in the disadvantage that exists in health, education and employment, so I hope we can do more to address that disadvantage.

## Facts & Figures



# 93%

Likelihood of patients  
recommending St Vincent's\*



# 98%

of consumer feedback  
acknowledged within 5 days over  
the last 12 months



# 100%

Targets met on elective  
surgery waiting times

\*Press Ganey Patient Experience Survey  
Jul-Sep 2015



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