

St Vincent's Voice

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



Patients vote St Vincent's best public hospital in the country

**St Vincent's provides new
hope for HIV treatment**

**Pain Service celebrates
major milestone**

**St Vincent's helps drive
inner-city homeless policy**

A message from Anthony Schembri



CEO, ST VINCENT'S HEALTH NETWORK SYDNEY

At a recent Hospital celebration for the 50th anniversary of the SVH pain management service, guests were told by former PM the Hon Bob Hawke that "there's no health institution in Sydney for which I have greater affection than St Vincent's." Not to be out-done, our Health Minister remarked that she's not surprised St Vincent's was named in a recent national patient survey as one of the best in the country. Sitting there at the event in my role as CEO, I found myself filled with tremendous pride and admiration for the work of our staff in delivering the very best patient care.

I hope you enjoy this, our second edition of St Vincent's Voice. One particular article in this edition that really resonated for me is the "HIV breakthrough" story. As many of you know, back in the early 90's, I was an eager young, recently qualified social worker. I joined St Vincent's working on what was then known as Ward 17 South, the AIDS ward. Back then, there were few treatment options. To see this profound turnaround in the course of two decades is extraordinary and a great indication of our health service's vision and determination. More reasons to make me so very proud.

Enjoy

Short & Sharp

AUSMAT Award for Dr Tim Gray



Dr Tim Gray, St Vincent's Infectious Diseases Registrar, has received an AUSMAT (Australian Medical Assistance Team) Certificate of Appreciation for his service to victims of Typhoon Haiyan in the Philippines.

Dr Gray was deployed as part of a 37 member medical and logistics team for the initial fortnight following Typhoon Haiyan. The team oversaw the operations of a 50-bed deployable hospital, which included two operating theatres, an x-ray facility, an emergency department and an inpatient unit.

In two weeks, Dr Gray and the Australian team treated 1700 outpatients, admitted 330 patients into the inpatient unit and performed 170 operations.

St Vincent's awarded National Certification of Human Research Ethics

The National Certification Scheme is a voluntary scheme that ensures that the policies and processes of an institution complies with an agreed set of national criteria for the conduct of an ethical review of multi-centre human research. The certifying body, NHMRC has conducted an independent assessment of St Vincent's research practices and we are proud to announce that we have received successful certification. Well done to Prof Terry Campbell and St Vincent's Research Precinct colleagues.



Motor Neuron Diseases Service kicks major goals



St Joseph's Motor Neuron Disease (MND) Service have recently been making major progress in the areas of research and service improvement, for people living with MND.

Two significant papers have been accepted for presentation at the *Annual Scientific Meeting of the Australian Faculty of Rehab Medicine* conference and the *National MND Conference* respectively.

The Service recently commenced a research project looking at demographics,

disease presentation and disease progression and are hoping to have results by the end of the year.

Furthermore, A/Prof Vucic has been awarded the "Sir Zelman Cowen" University Award for his contributions to MND Research, and Natalie Mohr and Julie Labra both received a Nina Buschcombe Award for their contribution and commitment to the improvement of services for people with MND. Go team!



ST VINCENT'S HOSPITAL SYDNEY

St Vincent's Hospital Sydney voted best public hospital in the nation

Australia's largest not-for-profit health fund HCF, recently released the results of its 2013 patient survey of the hospital experiences of more than 11,000 of its members across Australia.

St Vincent's Hospital Sydney was rated in the top ten of participating public and private hospitals across Australia. Of these top-ten

hospitals, St Vincent's is the only public hospital.

"This is a huge affirmation of our commitment to patient-centred care and all the hard work and commitment on the part of our staff. I hope our staff will take pride in these results as all of them have contributed in some way to ensuring that our patients

experience wonderful care," said A/Prof Anthony Schembri, CEO St Vincent's Hospital.

"It's poignant that the Hospital has done so well as we celebrate 175 years since the Sisters of Charity arrived in Australia with a mission to provide patient-centred care for the needy," Anthony added.



TAMRA LANGLEY & PENNY MORRIS

The 2 of Us



TAMRA LANGLEY & PENNY MORRIS.

Cardiology and Diabetes Programs, working together to improve patient outcomes.

Tamra Langley, CNC on Xavier 10 North works in the very busy Cardiac Rehabilitation Unit, helping patients recover after a cardiovascular episode. As part of this care, patients

are encouraged to attend a six week Cardiac Rehabilitation program, comprised of education, psychosocial support and exercise.

This continuity of care

for patients in the Cardiac Rehabilitation Program has meant a greater understanding of some of the factors affecting the health of our patients, with Tamra and her team recognising the increasing trend in the number of patients presenting with poorly managed or newly diagnosed type 2 diabetes.

That's when they called in the expertise from St Vincent's Diabetes Centre, to ensure this increasingly apparent co-morbidity presentation was properly managed and that our patients are fully supported.

"People with diabetes are 3 to 4 times more likely to develop cardiovascular disease compared to those who don't have diabetes" explains Penny Morris, CNC, St Vincent's Diabetes Centre. "It's these kinds of statistics that highlight the importance of team work in addressing issues faced by patients with both diabetes and cardiovascular disease."

While all patients receive education regarding diet, risk

"Working together to deliver consistent messages about healthy lifestyle choices"

factor modification, medications and physical activity, Penny ensures the patients with diabetes receive specialised education through the type 2 diabetes Group Program at St Vincent's Diabetes Centre as well as the Cardiac Rehabilitation Program, meaning patients have all the knowledge they need to properly manage their diabetes, and their heart health.

"Working together to deliver consistent messages about healthy lifestyle choices, we're reducing our patients' risk of ongoing complications associated with diabetes", said Tamra. "It means they are well equipped to take better care of themselves long after they've left St Vincent's. It's a better outcome for all."

ST VINCENT'S HIV RESEARCH

St Vincent's provides new hope for HIV treatment

PROFESSOR DAVID COOPER.



In partnership with The Kirby Institute, St Vincent's researchers have found a remarkable new direction in HIV research, and new hope for HIV positive people with leukaemia and lymphoma.

Two HIV positive St Vincent's patients appear to have cleared the virus, registering undetectable levels after bone marrow transplants. The patients have had undetectable levels of HIV for more than three years post transplantation – the first successful cases of HIV being cleared in Australia without the use of bone marrow containing rare genes that afford protection against the virus. Until now, the only person world-wide considered to have been successfully cleared of HIV is an American man who underwent bone marrow transplantation from donor specimen containing the protective gene.

"We're so pleased that both patients are doing reasonably well years after the treatment for their cancers and remain free of both the original cancer and of

the virus," says Professor David Cooper, Director of The Kirby Institute and Senior St Vincent's HIV Specialist. Professor Cooper presented the findings at the 20th International AIDS Conference in July with co-author Dr Sam Milliken, Director, St Vincent's Haematology and Bone Marrow Transplantation, making the point that this research heralds a new era in HIV research.

"This is a terrific unexpected result for people with malignancy and HIV. It may well give us a whole new insight into HIV, using the principles of adult stem cell transplantation," said Dr Milliken. Whilst this collaboration between St Vincent's and The Kirby Institute has yielded exciting developments, Professor Cooper and Dr Milliken stress that bone

"We're so pleased that both patients are doing reasonably well years after the treatment for their cancers and remain free of both the original cancer and of the virus."

marrow transplantation is not a general functional 'cure' for the 38.8million people infected with HIV world-wide.

"It is very difficult to find a match for bone marrow donors and even more so to find one that affords protective immunity against HIV", says Professor Cooper. "We need more research, but for the time being, these results mean that more people are likely to be able to clear the virus in the future, and stay that way".

ST VINCENT'S PAIN SERVICE

"THERE'S NO HEALTH INSTITUTION IN SYDNEY FOR WHICH I HAVE GREATER AFFECTION THAN ST VINCENT'S" SAID BOB HAWKE, FORMER PM PICTURED HERE WITH A/PROF STEVEN FAUX, HEALTH MINISTER JILLIAN SKINNER, A/PROF ANTHONY SCHEMBRI AND DR MILTON COHEN AT THE CELEBRATION.



St Vincent's Pain Service celebrates milestone anniversary

The recent celebration of the 50th anniversary of the St Vincent's Pain Service has highlighted the significance the service has had on the broader community since its founding by Dr Brian Dwyer.

The first to establish a multidisciplinary pain service in Australia, the St Vincent's initiative influenced other hospitals to do the same and served to fast-track the development of palliative care as a medical speciality in Australia.

The St Vincent's Hospital Pain Service comprises a multidisciplinary team that offers treatment for acute pain, chronic pain and cancer pain. With one of the largest number of pain physicians attached to the department working to ensure that pain management is a core component of the Hospital's patient centred care.

The Pain Service includes an outpatient pain management program called 'Reboot', a 10 week program that teaches patients how to manage pain using exercise and psychological techniques without resorting to increasing medication levels.

Another key aspect of the Service is the daily acute pain rounds undertaken for the treatment of post-operative and acute pain. Additionally, a weekly general chronic pain clinic comprised of a multidisciplinary panel, allows

for individual patient cases to be presented so that a personalised, multidisciplinary treatment program can be identified and implemented. Furthermore, the Service is currently collaborating with the St Vincent's Clinical Research Unit for Anxiety and Depression to develop an innovative online program for people living with chronic pain who are unable to physically attend 'Reboot'.

"Our online project is hugely important. We are potentially opening up the expertise of the Pain Service to a far broader community especially those whose current access is compromised due to living in rural areas, family or work commitments or mental health issues which limit one's ability to engage and be involved in a social group environment. These people will now be able to participate in a detailed and thorough exercise component online," said A/Prof Steven Faux, Director of the Pain Service and Rehabilitation Medicine at St Vincent's Hospital.

DEPARTMENT PROFILE

St Joseph's Hospital Parkinson's Disease Early Intervention Program



LEFT TO RIGHT: JACLYN CHAN, BELINDA McDONALD, ELIZABETH TAYLOR, CHARLES YE, ELINOR TILMAN.

Research shows that early intervention involving physiotherapy, speech pathology and occupational therapy can improve the wellbeing of Parkinson's Disease patients as their condition progresses by

building physical skills before they become a problem. A new program implemented at St Joseph's Hospital takes a multidisciplinary approach to early intervention that compliments the work of Neurologists to prepare

newly diagnosed Parkinson's Disease patients to cope with their disease.

Head of Physiotherapy at St Joseph's, Elizabeth Taylor, said the new program aims to start improving skills such as strength, balance, coordination and communication. Working together, physiotherapists build patients' physical strength and balance and occupational therapists set up the patients' home to minimise the risk of falls. Moreover, the program includes training in dual tasking activities, such as walking and talking at the same time, which Elizabeth says can be difficult for Parkinson's Disease patients. To date, all patients referred

to the program in the early stages of their diagnosis have experienced an increase in mobility over an eight week period, allowing them to gain strength and agility, factors that assist in preventing falls as the disease progresses. While appropriate medication and care by neurologists and medical practitioners continue to be key treatments for Parkinson's Disease, Allied Health services add another dimension by providing education and addressing physical problems early to ensure strength and mobility are optimal. The program also assists carers and family members to understand Parkinson's Disease so that they can plan ahead to assist their loved one.

ROS PRICHARD IS A REGISTERED NURSE & KEEN CYCLIST

What I know about...
Ros PrichardRos Prichard is a Registered Nurse
in the St Vincent's Heart Lung Clinic

I do something that should be unremarkable every day. Like over 100 of our staff – I ride my bike to work in the morning and back home at night. My motivations are entirely selfish – it's fun, it keeps me fit and (almost) sane. My route takes me up and down Clovelly road, through Centennial Park, past the Entertainment Quarter (occasionally in for a Bavarian beer on the way home), past the Barracks and into the St Vincent's car (bike) park off Barcom avenue. It takes less time than catching the bus – and is a lot more fun.

Every time I cycle through Centennial Park is like a mental recalibration – I get all my ideas on my bike – sometimes good ones! I see my surroundings, and feel connected to where I live. One of the magical things about winter is cycling home through the park by moonlight (or starlight!).

I think some people see biking to work in Sydney as



impossible because of the constant negative media, but my experience since coming back from London in 2004 has been overwhelmingly positive. The infrastructure is improving and as it does, more people like me are realising that the benefits far outweigh the risks, and are voting with their pedals.

If you are prepared to investigate a few routes, especially as we now sit in the middle of a growing network of bike lanes, you are likely to be able to carve out a most delightful commute.

And as far as the rain goes – you're not made of sugar! (as they say in Copenhagen). Just make sure your laptop is waterproofed...

POSITION: REGISTERED NURSE AT ST VINCENT'S HEART LUNG CLINIC
LIVES: CLOVELLY
LOVES: CYCLING, BAVARIAN BEER

ST VINCENT'S VOICE ON PUBLIC HEALTH

St Vincent's helps drive inner-city homeless policy



In recent years significant efforts have gone towards helping our homeless at a Federal and State Government level and consequently, for the first time in decades, the community is seeing examples of long-term inner city homeless people moving out of homelessness and into housing.

Recently the NSW government revealed the *Going Home Staying Home Policy*, which seeks to address homelessness by caring for people in their own community – removing the need for them to come to the inner city to get the treatment they need.

In doing so, the Policy aims to bolster community homelessness services in the suburban and regional setting. By increasing this funding, the Government planned to reduce some of the inner city NGO funding, particularly women's shelters.

While St Vincent's supports the broader policy and acknowledges that the best models involve caring for people in their own community, SVHA CEO Toby Hall pointed out that "the situation is different for women fleeing violence. For this group who need our care, it is imperative that they are not left vulnerable by a reduction in inner city services.

"What we need is to ensure a plan for providing long-term support for inner city services is in place while the transition to looking after people in their own community occurs," Toby said.

Together with A/Professor Peter McGeorge, Director of St Vincent's Hospital Inner City Health Program, the two spoke out in public forums and in the Sydney media, joining forces with other key homeless NGOs.

The strength of their message resonated with the NSW Government, who, based on their recommendation as well as the recommendations of other front-line homeless agencies, agreed to reinstate the \$8.6 million for Sydney's inner city homeless shelters, demonstrating just how effective St Vincent's can be, advocating for our vulnerable community who so often have no voice where it is needed most.

ST VINCENT'S PRIVATE HOSPITAL

St Vincent's Private Hospital Redevelopment

The St Vincent's Health Australia Board recently announced funding for a \$115 million redevelopment project to reinvigorate St Vincent's Private Hospital. The project will help strengthen the entire Darlinghurst Campus.

Essentially there are two components to the redevelopment; the establishment of a \$75 million new East Wing, as well as \$40 million for a major renovation and refurbishment of the existing Private Hospital building. Combined, this redevelopment will see the Hospital provide a 20% increase in capacity to meet the needs of our community.

According to St Vincent's Private Hospital CEO Robert Cusack "This is exciting news for the Campus. We will be



CEO, ROBERT CUSACK & REDEVELOPMENT PROJECT DIRECTOR, DALE MCMAHON.

equipped not only to serve our mission of responding to community need, but to strengthen it – commencing a new chapter in our rich 105 year history."

The new East Wing will be located to

the east of the existing main building above the Campus Cafeteria and forecourt and consist of 12 additional doctors suites on levels 11 and 12, an additional 48 beds (including 12 new orthopaedic rehab beds) on levels 7 to 10, theatre support and new Central Sterile Supply Department on levels 6 and 7, 2 additional main operating theatres on level 5, a new Ambulatory Care service on level 4 and expanded support services on levels 2 and 3.

The renovations of the existing Hospital building will include completely upgraded inpatient units, and an increased percentage of single rooms – from 76% to 89% on levels 6-10, renovated operating theatres on level 5, an additional day theatre and renovated Day Surgery Unit on level 3.

Construction is planned to commence in August 2015 with completion and commissioning intended for February 2017.



FEATURE INTERVIEW

Interview with Sean Packer



Sean Packer is the Organ Donation Specialist Nurse at St Vincent's Hospital. Sean's role is to work with families before, during and after the difficult circumstances faced when considering consent to organ donation on behalf of a loved one.

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

I think we are already seeing a major breakthrough with innovations in organ donation and transplantation here at St Vincent's.

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

I guess our major challenge is maintaining sustained growth in the number of organ and tissue donors in order to make a significant impact on the number of patients awaiting transplant. And to hopefully decrease the number of people who die while waiting to receive a transplant.

What do you love the most about what you do?

I love being part of a team able to fulfil the last wishes of potential donors to give others the chance to live through their donation, which is an incredible act on the donor, and their family's part. I also love being able to care for the donor's family and help them through one of the most difficult times of their lives.

What motivates you on a daily basis?

This goes back to what I love about the role. Really being able to make a significant difference in a number of lives during the organ and tissue donation process.

What is your proudest moment, professionally speaking?

It has to be becoming the Donation Specialist Nurse here at St Vincent's. It is a newly developed role here and has allowed me to be challenged in more ways than I could imagine both professionally and personally, and has enabled me to develop skills outside of the clinical nursing arena.

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Facts & Figures



900,000

Man hours worked
to build The Kinghorn
Cancer Centre



4,000,000

Kilowatt hours saved in the
Xavier Building thanks to energy
efficiency projects in the last 2 years



596,996

Kilograms of general waste p/a
across SVHA facilities nationally



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