



Heart of What We Do



A Year in Review has been written for you – members of our community, past and present patients, consumers, families, visitors, volunteers and staff – to help tell the stories about the quality and safety of health care. This document has been designed to highlight South West Healthcare’s performance, actions and achievements against quality indicators and standards that all public health services across Victoria must report on. All data relates to the 2020/2021 Financial Year unless otherwise specified.

Unsurprisingly, our year was dominated by planning and managing impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. Yet, despite the challenges, South West Healthcare continued to provide our consumers and community with safe, effective and person-centred care. We have persistently monitored quality and safety and the consumer experience to ensure we are always working hard to improve the service we deliver.

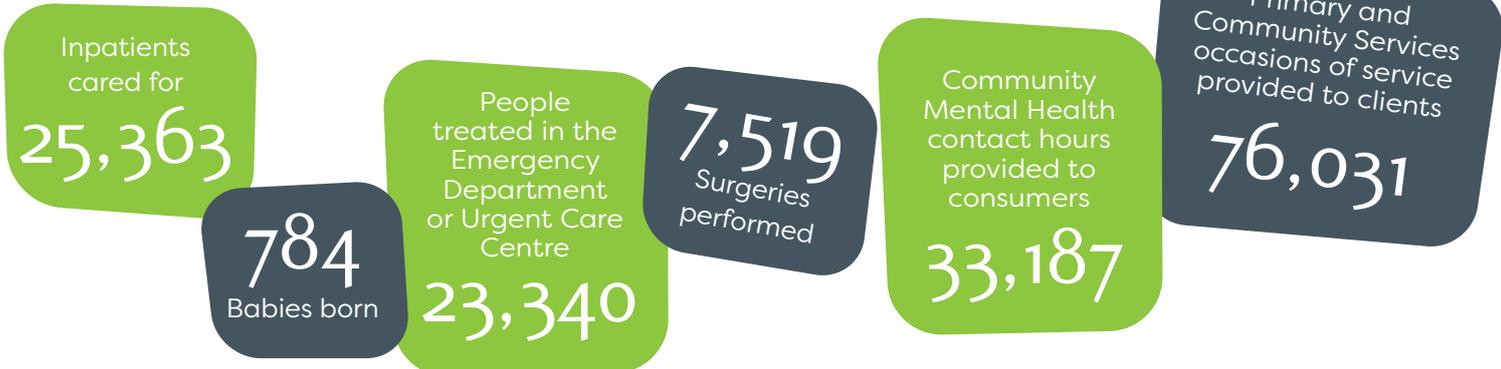
South West Healthcare thanks the staff, volunteers and consumers who have generously shared their stories, and our Consumer and Community Advisory Committee (CCAC) who have assisted with the development of this report.

Here at South West Healthcare our patients, consumers, clients, residents and communities are at the heart of everything we do. Our team of 1,850 staff, supported by 350 registered volunteers, provides a large number of medical, nursing, mental health, allied health and community health services across South West Victoria. South West Healthcare aims to provide a great health care experience.

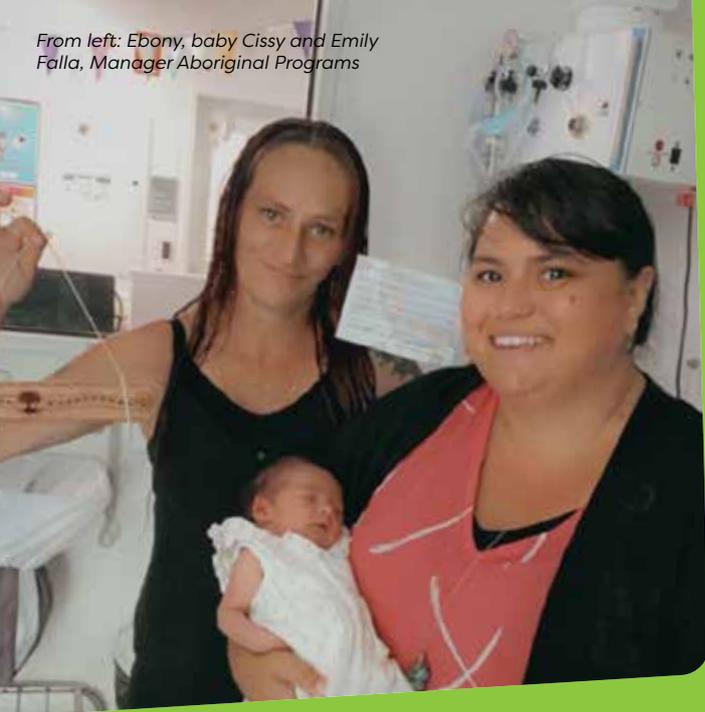
In 2020/21 some of our highlights included:

- Launch of the Strategic Plan 2020–24
- Launch of the 2020–24 Environmental Management Plan
- The ‘go live’ of our fresh look website – www.southwesthealthcare.com.au
- Successful achievement of full accreditation against the NSQHS Standards, Aged Care Quality Standards, NDIS Quality and Practice Standards and the Human Service Standards
- Establishment of the South West Healthcare Vaccination Centre in partnership with Barwon Health
- Opening of the purpose-built Portland Community Mental Health building.

We hope you enjoy reading *A Year in Review* and we look forward to receiving your feedback about the report.



From left: Ebony, baby Cissy and Emily Falla, Manager Aboriginal Programs



Birthing Sticks

In January 2021, South West Healthcare introduced birthing sticks for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander persons. “We want to welcome these babies to the world and acknowledge the country they have been born on,” explains Manager, Aboriginal Health Programs, Emily Falla.

“We also want to give babies and families a keepsake so they can always remember their journey has started here on Peek Whurrong country, on the land of the Gunditjmarra people. Having the birthing stick is something they can carry with them throughout their life and know that there is always a connection to culture surrounding them.”

Emily says new mum Ebony was proud and thankful to receive this meaningful gift that her daughter, Cissy, will be able to have as a keepsake and reminder of her connection to her country. She is our first Indigenous baby to be born on Peek Whurrong country this year.

**SOUTH WEST HEALTHCARE
ACKNOWLEDGES THE TRADITIONAL
OWNERS OF THE LAND, THE PEEK
WHURRONG PEOPLE OF THE MAAR
NATION. WE PAY OUR RESPECTS TO THE
ELDERS PAST, PRESENT AND EMERGING.**

Palliative CARE

In June 2021, our Community Palliative Care team showed the film ‘Dream Horse’ at the Capitol Theatre for patients, carers, staff and volunteers connected with South West Healthcare to enjoy. Karen Haigh, a patient undergoing chemotherapy every three weeks, had been associated with horses all her life and was keen to attend, but needed transport. Robyn Edmunds, a Palliative Care Volunteer living in the same small town, was happy to help and share in the event with Karen. The ladies made a day of it – shopping, lunch, the film, lots of talking and even a special gift-box afternoon tea!

Robyn continued to support Karen through her chemotherapy treatment and a friendship grew, based on many shared interests. When Robyn heard that Karen played the piano as a child but no longer had one at home, she could see this would provide a wonderful diversion and therapy during treatment. Robyn found an electric piano at the local Uniting Church op shop and organised for Karen’s son Peter to collect and set it up.

Every three weeks, with COVID-safe precautions in place, Karen visits Robyn to play on her upright piano so that after chemotherapy the next day, Karen can enjoy a tune when she feels up to it. The ladies have been able to combine a love of music, the piano and line-dancing tunes as an enjoyable time to re-learn skills, physiotherapy and diversional therapy.

It has been a win-win situation for them both; Karen is a star pupil and Robyn is delighted to feel useful by sharing her gifts. Karen says she is enjoying the friendship connection and the challenges of learning the piano again, “It certainly gets my brain ticking over”.

From left: Karen Haigh and Robyn Edmunds



Patient Safety

South West Healthcare captures patient safety incidents in the Victorian Health Incident Management System (VHIMS). Reporting patient safety incidents in this system provides an opportunity to identify preventable factors or themes that may be addressed to improve patient safety. Incidents can be classified as minor or not causing harm or adverse. An adverse event is a preventable error that significantly harms a patient.

There were 28 adverse events this year. None of these were sentinel events, meaning severe harm to the patient which could have resulted in death. Sentinel events are reported and reviewed by South West Healthcare's Executive team and Board of Directors, and externally by Safer Care Victoria.

Key improvements have been made following the review of reported incidents, including:

- The introduction of a Patient Safety Survey to several wards
- Improved patient identification checking
- Introduction of a post falls investigation form
- Development of an education program Safe With Us based on real patient stories and adverse events.

Safety Survey Results

In March 2021, the Patient Safety Survey was introduced to the Medical, Rehabilitation and Acute wards at South West Healthcare. The remaining wards across the health service including Camperdown will all be participating in a weekly Patient Safety Survey by the end of October 2021.

The aim of the Patient Safety Survey is to:

- Minimise the risk of harm to patients whilst in hospital, specifically targeted to the area of care provision but generally addressing falls, pressure, malnutrition, delirium and clinical communication
- Promote interdisciplinary teamwork in the management of patient risk
- Further involve the patient and family in their care
- Provide an opportunity for the patient and family to provide feedback on their experience of South West Healthcare
- Provide a hands-on education opportunity for the staff involved who are participating in the survey.

The membership of the survey team is multidisciplinary across our staff and teams.

The Patient Safety Survey is conducted at the same time each week and is led by the Nurse Unit Manager. It involves direct care staff and patients encouraged to participate and be involved in their risk and safety assessment.

In 2020/21
1,552
clinical incidents reported

compared to
1,410
in 2019/20

98.2% incidents were minor or the patient was not harmed.

1.8% incidents were adverse for the patient.

Infection Prevention and Control

South West Healthcare monitors and reports to VICNISS (Victorian Nosocomial Infection Surveillance System) on the prevention and control of healthcare-associated infections, specifically the Staphylococcus Aureus Bacteraemia (SAB) rate, which is a serious blood stream infection. We also monitor and report on the rate of central line-associated blood stream infections (CLABSI) in the Intensive Care Unit (ICU). A central line is a tube that goes into a large vein in your arm or chest to administer medicine, blood or fluids.

- South West Healthcare's SAB rate in 2020/2021, was 0.5 per 10,000 occupied bed days, the same as 2019/2020. The Victorian Department of Health target is 1.0 SAB per 10,000 occupied bed days.
- There has been no ICU CLABSI in 2020/2021, as well as 2019/2020. Victorian Department of Health target is zero infections.

We Love Feedback

South West Healthcare collects and reviews feedback, both compliments and concerns to improve the consumer experience and to provide safe, effective and high quality person-centred care. Many improvements have been made across South West Healthcare based on important input of patients and consumers.

Feedback can be lodged in many ways including:

- By email – feedback@swh.net.au
- By phone – 5563 4074
- In writing, addressed to the Quality and Risk Manager, Ryot Street, Warrnambool, Victoria, 3280
- Point of Care Terminal at the bedside (Warrnambool only)
- In person, face to face talking with a staff member
- Feedback form or card
- Cards and thank you notes
- Connections with us on social media
- Feedback boxes located around South West Healthcare sites.

In 2019 / 2020

758

compliments

compared to

178

complaints

In 2020 / 2021

1,102

compliments

compared to

292

complaints

“

“Thank you for the care and attention you gave to my sister; it gave great comfort to the family to know she was in such good hands and for the care you have shown me in the time since her passing.”

“Your care and support was truly amazing and we simply could not have done this without you. Your care and understanding was incredible.”

“Everything was professionally done by all staff members who attended to me.”

“All nurses and theatre staff introduced themselves and everything was explained well. Everyone made me feel at ease and comfortable, which was great.”

”

Food Allergens

A project commenced on improving the management of food allergies following the completion of an audit, review of the processes and delivery of meals to patients with food allergy and patient feedback.

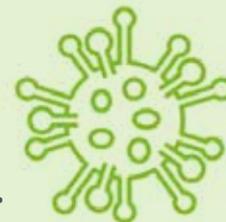
The multidisciplinary Food Allergen Working Group was formed and included staff from food service, dietetics, nursing, health information management and quality.

A huge body of work has since been completed to improve patient safety and experience. This includes:

- Development and implementation of a new Policy “Patients with Food Allergies” based on best practice guidelines
- Implementation of an upgraded meal ordering system (Chefmax) to better accommodate an automatic menu system that identifies allergens in meals
- Improvements to the electronic health record allergy identification and work to interface directly from the health record to Chefmax
- Introduction of an online allergy learning program for staff
- Review of the allergy matrix and work to further standardise food recipes to ensure identification of allergens
- Patients with an identified food allergen are reviewed by a Dietician
- Development of an allergen menu by our Dietitians to assist with individualised meal plans when needed
- Purchase of allergen free main meals from Monash Medical Centre for patients with one of the top food allergens. These meals were taste tested by members of the Consumer and Community Advisory Committee before being introduced.

Patient feedback has also led to several new meals and menu changes being made across 2020/2021.

Our COVID-19 Response



Australia recorded the first case of COVID-19 on 25 January 2020 and, by 2 March, we saw the first case of community transmission. On 11 March, the World Health Organisation declared the virus a global pandemic. The Victorian State Government declared a state of emergency on 16 March and the state went into official lockdown. On 19 March, the first case was recorded in Warrnambool.

Since this time, South West Healthcare has continued to

lead our community in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Our teams have remained agile and made changes required by the Department of Health during the various lockdown stages in Victoria. Most proudly, partnering with our community every step of the way.

The South West Healthcare Incident Control Group appointed two key roles to manage the health service response and to support and liaise with the community. These

were the COVID Coordinator and COVID Infection Prevention Community Response Consultant.

The COVID-19 Response Guidance Roadmap details the South West Healthcare response to a COVID-19 situation or when the advice changes. This document guides managers and staff through the stages of our response – COVID Ready, COVID Alert, COVID Active and COVID Peak.

13,381

COVID-19 tests completed through the Respiratory Assessment Clinic

1098

suspected COVID-19 inpatients

6

COVID-19 positive inpatient care for at Warrnambool Base Hospital

13

COVID-19 positive patients in the community since the 1 July 2020.

17,103

COVID-19 Vaccinations

South West Healthcare has continued to guide our regional communities during the COVID-19 pandemic providing leadership, advice and education across our region, with many education sessions provided to GPs, service clubs, volunteer agencies, businesses and community leaders. Our community, in turn, have pulled together in more ways than ever to support each other during these most challenging of times.

South West Healthcare has provided support, information, and vaccine access to organisations and people living in a variety of home settings across the region. This has included residential disability facilities, supported residential services, caravan parks and people living in public housing estates. We continue to work together with the residents of our region to keep us all safe at home.

Vaccination Centre: Commencing in March 2021, South West Healthcare commenced a COVID-19 vaccination program. In just 15 weeks our

vaccination team had prepared and administered over 17,103 COVID vaccinations at two of our vaccination sites Warrnambool and Camperdown. The Warrnambool and south west community have been rolling up their sleeves wanting to play their part in creating a safer community. Thank you!

Community Vaccination Heroes: The South West Healthcare Community Hero vaccination campaign has been a great way to engage key people across our catchment area to assist us to gain confidence with the COVID-19 vaccination. We have had 28 local identities across Moyne, Corangamite and Warrnambool communities putting their face to the COVID-19 Vaccination campaign. We also led a combined health services campaign with Terang and Mortlake Health service and Timboon and District Health Service, with the aim to build vaccine awareness, support and access across the community for all of our region.

Thursday Movers Go Digital

Every Thursday, clients of the Camperdown Community Health Chronic Disease Prevention group meet for an hour of exercise.

When COVID-19 restrictions limited their capacity to meet in the centre, Simon Gaylard, Exercise Physiologist, and Tracey Heeps, Allied Health Assistant, set up to take the class online to keep clients physically and mentally active and socially engaged.

They offered remotely-supervised, weekly classes via the WebEx video conference platform. The Thursday exercise group has now been running online for 18 months – all original members are still moving and new members have joined. On average, eight members attend each week, with ages ranging from 55 to 87 years. The average age is 73 years. All members have some form of chronic illness.

The old adage ‘you are never too old to learn’ has never been

truer. All member education to use the technology was done over the phone, prior to the group commencing. Many of the participants were already familiar with IT, such as email and FaceTime, which helped make the transition to the online video platform easier. Many were Zooming their family over the lockdown periods.

Lois Stacey has been involved with chronic disease prevention programs at Camperdown Community Health for many years. She tried exercise at home but finds it isn’t as good and reports the benefits have seen her ‘stay on’. Lois reports the online group has been ‘beneficial for my health but socially good as well’ and ‘has kept me flexible and fitter, making me walk the dog more.’ Other participants agree:

- ‘It has been beneficial for my health – my fitness has improved substantially with the exercises.’

- ‘I was slipping really badly before we started and this has been beneficial for my mental health... it was my only timetabled event. It nailed Thursday and therefore my week.’

Lois reports she has always been an early embracer of technology and when this group got off the ground she used her IT skills to help others access the platform more easily. Lois partnered with the local community house and together they set-up a room and computer so that she and three other participants could better access this group. Before this they had been limited to using their mobile phones.

While all agree being back in the centre would be preferable, so they can socialise more freely and use fitness equipment, going online has definitely kept them engaged in activity that is beneficial to their health and wellbeing.

Macarthur Community Health social support group

Early in 2021, between lockdowns, the members of the Macarthur Social Support group enjoyed their first COVID-safe trip in more than a year. This small group boarded the bus for a beachside lunch at beautiful Cape Bridgewater, after picking up fish ‘n chips in Portland. The view was extra special when seals and dolphins decided to get up close and put on a show. After that, everyone had coffee in a local café.



Macarthur Social Support group members, from left: Marty Dunbar, Frank Rundell, Junita Baker and Jean White

David Newman Centre - “Cuppa, Chat and Chew” program

Social connections have been a bit tricky during COVID-19 when we are physically distancing, yet staying connected with others is more important than ever. While the Social Support Groups at the David Newman Centre were not able to meet in person, the staff

were focused on staying connected with our members within the community. Staff headed out to members houses to have a ‘Cuppa, Chat and Chew’. Members and volunteers were delighted. Members also receive a weekly newsletter filled with the current

health information, cognitive challenges and messages to help reduce anxiety, as well as plenty of jokes to lift their spirits. This is supported by wellbeing phone calls from the Social Support Staff.

Fighting Stroke and Supporting Recovery

Tom Grist suffered a stroke in March 2021, he was 47 years old at the time. Tom had no movement in his left arm, minimal movement or strength in his left leg, and required two people and a machine to help him stand. He was unable to walk, he needed nursing staff to help him have a shower, get dressed and go to the toilet. Prior to this Tom was working full time at a local bakery and enjoyed spending time with his wife and teenage daughters.

Tom had daily therapy with the rehabilitation team whilst in hospital which included Occupational Therapists, Physiotherapists, Speech Therapists, Social Workers, Dieticians and Allied Health Assistants. In order to regain movement in his arm Tom worked very closely with his Occupational Therapist to complete intensive, twice daily upper limb therapy. The Physiotherapists helped Tom by increasing his leg strength and movement and started him walking. The Speech Therapy team ensured Tom was able to swallow

his food safely and improve his speech. Tom also attended group programs to increase how often he was able to complete rehab activities.

After spending ten weeks in South West Healthcare Tom was discharged home to undertake an in home based intensive rehabilitation program. This included being seen by the Physiotherapist and Occupational Therapist five times a week to complete intensive stroke rehabilitation. Home-based therapy enabled Tom to participate in meaningful occupations, including going to hockey tournaments with his daughters, helping to fold the laundry and being able to sleep in his own bed.

After requiring less intensive therapy, Tom is now supported by the community based outpatient service as well as independent

practice of his rehabilitation program at home, including over two hours of upper limb therapy per day!

South West Healthcare utilise Saebo technology. This is a wireless electrical stimulation device that is designed to prevent or reduce weakness by strengthening the affected muscle groups in both the upper and lower extremities. These unique devices position the wrist and fingers into extension in preparation for object manipulation. This is the only available technology of this type available for consumers between Geelong and Adelaide.



Tom Grist with Occupational Therapist Lucinda Watson

Mental Health



PORTLAND MENTAL HEALTH SERVICE

Victorian Minister for Mental Health, the Hon. James Merlino MP, officially opened the \$1.94M purpose-built Community Mental Health Services facility in Portland on the 8 December 2020, via an online platform due to COVID-19 restrictions. It was constructed to improve the client experience, support contemporary models of care and to be flexible, responsive and accessible to the local community. Over 100 local community members were involved in its design. The service is located in the health precinct of Portland and is near Portland District Health, health practitioners and community care providers. This location further promotes and supports collaboration and partnerships in care.



WE WIN AT SAFE WARDS

Mental health services' staff can experience high levels of conflict events such as aggression, violence and absconding. Often, in response to these events, restrictive practice may be used. Safewards is a model designed to improve the safety for everyone including mental health service staff, patients and visitors by reducing conflict and containment within mental health services. The aim of the model is to reduce and, where possible, eliminate the use of restrictive interventions by implementing an evidence-based model of care.

Staff at our Warrnambool Mental Health Acute Inpatient unit won the Victorian Consumer Collaboration Award at the 2020 Safewards Victoria Innovation Awards. Three gorgeous sensory gardens were developed for consumers and staff at both the low and high dependency outdoor areas. This is a terrific example of staff and consumer collaboration. Where once weeds roamed free now stands a tranquil women's courtyard sensory garden, a veggie patch and another garden full-to-the-brim with sensory pots and succulents.

"The inspiration, dedication and sheer hard work that's gone into the development of these gardens is now reflected and recognised through the achievement of this award. These gardens will provide pleasure and benefit to consumers on their

recovery journey with us for years to come and I congratulate our staff and consumers on achieving this statewide recognition," says South West Healthcare Mental Health Services Executive Director Richard Campion.



Some of the award-winning team: Therapeutic Recreation Worker Helen Ward (from left), Registered Nurse Barry Rawlings, Clinical Nurse Consultant Ed Aquin, Nurse Unit Manager Priscilla Makombo, Administrative Support Officer Aimee Grinter and Mental Health Service Development Project Officer Brooke Chambers.

Merindah Lodge

LIFESTYLE AND LEISURE PROGRAM

The Lifestyle and Leisure program at Merindah Lodge provides a wide range of activities and outings for the consumers.

- In April an outing for lunch at the Beac Pub was enjoyed by three consumers. This trip provided the men with some much needed time together to laugh and enjoy each other's company whilst out and about viewing the picturesque country side. This outing was enjoyed by all including Peter McCluskey who stated "how lovely the meal was."
- Resident knitter Josie Douglas enjoys knitting woollen jumpers for lambs. These jumpers are then donated, through the Country Women's Association (CWA), to local farmers.



Josie Douglas, knitting jumpers for lambs

MEDICATION SAFETY AT MERINDAH LODGE

A focus on continuous improvement and ensuring consumer safety is important to Merindah Lodge. This years' work has related to medication management, activities have included:

- Implementation of an electronic medication chart and sachet dispensing system for medications. These initiatives are designed to decrease administration errors and reduce the handling of medications
- Reviewing medication administration times to minimise the number of times across day that a consumer needs to take medication.



From left: Ray Riches, Peter McCluskey and John Gilligan



LISMORE COMMUNITY HEALTH

The South West Healthcare COVID-19 Vaccination team travelled to Lismore Community Health to provide the local community with access to the AstraZeneca vaccine.

The South West Healthcare team (from left): Bridie Halliday, Gayle Kent, Kerrie Stapleton, Bronwyn Beazley, Jenny Hirth and Amanda Castersen.

SPEAK Project

Dawn Whitehead,
SPEAK Project
Consumer Advisor

The Specialist Education And Knowledge (SPEAK) Project was established under the Information, Linkages and Capacity (ILC) Building

Program grant from the National Disability Insurance Agency in 2020. The aim of ILC grants is to fund projects that will produce

improved practice approaches

in health service systems to enable:

- People with disability to use and benefit from the same mainstream health services as everyone else
- Improved access and use of mainstream health services by people with disability.

The SPEAK Project is focused on improving healthcare experiences for people with disability, particularly people with autism, people with an intellectual disability and people with communication disability.

South West Healthcare is working in partnership with Alfred Health to support the design and implementation of the SPEAK project objectives.

The SPEAK project aims to:

- Design and implement a secondary consult service to support staff to work with people with disability
- Build capacity in our workforces by providing disability-specific training and resources to healthcare staff
- Improve consumer feedback processes to amplify the voice of people with disabilities
- Review data systems to proactively identify, plan and support people with disabilities.

Working groups comprised of staff from both South West Healthcare and Alfred Health have been established to support the project objectives. The project team is working to design and implement as many elements of the project as possible, through the process of codesign with people who have lived experience of disability. The project team is made up of staff who are passionate about improving access to healthcare for people of all abilities. Some members of our team also have lived experience of disability. The project runs until early 2023.



Gender Equality Actions

The Victorian Government released the Equality Act 2020 and Regulations in 2020.

**GENDER EQUALITY MEANS =
ALL VICTORIANS LIVE IN A SAFE AND EQUAL
SOCIETY AND HAVE EQUAL POWER, RESOURCES
AND OPPORTUNITIES AND BE TREATED WITH
DIGNITY, RESPECT AND FAIRNESS.**

To comply with them and their important intent, South West Healthcare is currently making positive change towards gender equality:

1. Consider and promote gender equality in our work, primarily by conducting gender impact assessments. We assess how our policies, programs and services can impact people of different genders to ensure that our work does not unintentionally reinforce inequalities.
2. Conduct workplace gender audits. We plan to regularly collect and report data on gender equality in the workplace, against the workplace gender equality indicators. The results of workplace gender audits will be included in our Gender Equality Action Plans (GEAP). The first workplace audit is complete and is being used to drive evidence-based action planning in the GEAP.
3. We will develop and implement Gender Equality Action Plans. GEAPs include strategies and measures to make positive organisational change towards gender equality, based on the results of our workplace gender audit. We will to develop and implement a GEAP every four years beginning 2021. The first GEAP is to be submitted to the Victorian Gender Equality Commissioner by 1 December 2021, with work well under way.
4. Report on progress every two years beginning in 2023. We will report on the strategies and measures in our GEAP, our progress against the workplace gender equality indicators, and what gender impact assessments we've done.

Accreditation Wins

Accreditation is an evaluation process that involves assessment by qualified external peer reviewers to assess a health service's compliance with safety and quality standards. Awarding accreditation to a health service provides assurance to the community that the organisation meets expected patient safety and quality standards.

In 2021 South West Healthcare achieved successful accreditation against the following standards

- NSQHS Standards: 26 – 30 April
- Aged Care Quality Standards: 4 – 6 May
- NDIS Practice and Quality Standards: 1 February
- Human Service Standards: 29 – 30 July.

NSQHS Standards

In the executive summary of their report, the assessors made several comments about South West Healthcare overall, including:

- Processes are well developed, comprehensive and well governed, and where deficiencies exist plans are in place to manage them with appropriate workarounds.
- Staff were uniformly very proud of their organisation and what they managed to achieve. They were very prepared for assessment and assessors were warmly welcomed everywhere they visited.
- They were 'led by an enthusiastic senior leadership team, palpably committed to improving safety and quality'.

Aged Care Quality Standards

The Assessment Team observed the service to be safe, clean and comfortable with functioning equipment, furnishings and fixtures.

- The service is welcoming, and consumers can move around freely indoors and access outdoor areas to secure gardens.
- The Assessment Team observed staff interactions with consumers to be kind caring and respectful during the site audit.

From left: The start of Lismore solar panels installation: Camperdown/Lismore Facilities Maintenance Manager Les Harrison. Solar Project Announcement: Lismore Ladies Auxiliary Members Wendy Webster and Gwenda Shaw (in front), with Environmental Sustainability Officer Elvira Hewson and then Manager Camperdown and Lismore Community Health Sue Ryan. Hybrid fleet: CEO Craig Fraser, Environmental Sustainability Officer Elvira Hewson, Jamie Brennan Executive Director Service Development, Buildings and Infrastructure Manager Stuart Blignaut, Fleet Officer Tim Vanderstarre and Sustainability Committee member Erin Weston.

2020–24 Environmental Management Plan Announced

South West Healthcare launched the 2020–24 Environmental Management Plan to provide a roadmap to continue implementing changes that will further improve our environmental performance. The plan was developed with significant feedback and input by the South West Healthcare Sustainability Committee and other key stakeholders across the organisation and from our community. Environmental Sustainability Officer Elvira Hewson says “the plan has a strong focus on reducing emissions and minimising waste generation, with a new emphasis on commencing a process of climate change adaptation.”

One of the key strategic goals is to reduce carbon emissions across the health service.

With input from our Environmental Sustainability Committee and Buildings and Infrastructure team, eight key projects have been identified and funded. A generous \$134,000 grant will see installation of solar panels to the Macarthur Community Health, Portland Community Mental Health Services, Lismore Community Health Building, and Warrnambool's Nootyoong Prevention and Recovery Centre (PARC).

In January, Macarthur's electric hot water system was upgraded to remove the need for LPG.

The introduction of hybrid cars into the general South West Healthcare fleet is already seeing great emission reductions and less reliance on fossil fuels.



Reflection from a CCAC member

Lisa McLeod, Consumer and Community Advisory Committee member shares with South West Healthcare her reflections on being involved in this important group.

Having been born at Warrnambool Base Hospital and living most of my life in the south west, I have always felt really grateful that we have such a high quality health service in Warrnambool. It makes us all feel safer and more supported every day but also especially lucky when we need to access care for ourselves or those we love. When I realised I could get involved at South West Healthcare as a community representative on the Consumer and Community Advisory Committee (CCAC), it seemed like a great way to learn more about how the health service and the health system works, and contribute in some small way to how it could be even better in the future.

It was only when I joined CCAC

in 2018 that I saw firsthand the incredible effort that goes into continually improving the “consumer experience” at South West Healthcare. The efforts to understand the needs and experience of patients, carers, and their friends and family across every service is more of a focus for South West Healthcare than I had imagined, and I now understand that it is at the centre of informing decisions at all levels across the organisation. The consumer experience supports not only the actual care people receive every day, but also importantly how the hospital and its services are designed and will function in the future.

It has been terrific to see the increasing influence of patient feedback and stories when deciding on what is a priority for South West Healthcare.

CCAC participated in developing aspects of the Strategic Plan for 2020-2024 and I think the new plan really reflects this. We are

regularly involved in reviewing information for patients and carers to make sure it's easy to understand and jargon-free. And we discuss projects (big and small) designed to improve the facilities for consumers and opportunities for South West Healthcare to improve the way they do things, every time we meet.

The CCAC members feel proud of the contribution we make to ongoing change and it's great to feel part of a bigger South West Healthcare team who are really passionate about continuously improving the way it supports the health of individuals and the community as a whole.

There are lots of ways to get involved as a volunteer at South West Healthcare – committees are not everyone's thing but there are hands-on ways to contribute in lots of areas. I encourage you to consider it. You get more back than you are ever asked to give.

Consumer and Community Advisory Committee (CCAC)

South West Healthcare's Consumer and Community Advisory Committee (CCAC) is made up of volunteers. It is a sub-committee of the Board of Directors. The CCAC ensures that South West Healthcare consumers, carers and community members have a voice in the design, delivery and evaluation of healthcare systems and services, planning and implementing quality and safety improvements.

The Manager Quality and Risk (qualityadmin@swh.net.au) would be delighted to hear from anyone who is interested in being a member of the CCAC or participating in other consumer activities.

South West 
Healthcare

southwesthealthcare.com.au