



Yandilla Nurse Unit Manager Michelle Coutts and Horsham Maternity Clinic Manager Jane Rentsch with the new transfer cot.

New transfer cot for Yandilla

Horsham's Yandilla ward is one of the first maternity units in Australia to receive the very latest design in neonatal transfer cots.

The cot's arrival was made possible by the generous support of the Wimmera Base Hospital Ladies Auxiliary, whose members are this year celebrating the auxiliary's 100 Years: A Centenary of Support.

A "neonatal transfer cot" is a specialised cot used for transporting critically ill or premature infants between hospitals or within a hospital.

The cots ensure safe and

comfortable transport while maintaining the infant's temperature and vital signs.

Yandilla Nurse Unit Manager Michelle Coutts said the new transfer cot was a great advancement on the previous one.

"The new one is much more compact and has a display with digital controls, making it much easier to use," Ms Coutts said.

"We would use a transfer cot on average about 10 times a year and that might not sound like much but it's extremely important

when it is needed," she said.

"It is mainly used for non-urgent transfers from Yandilla to Ballarat or Melbourne but is also utilised occasionally by our Emergency Department."

Ms Coutts said she was extremely grateful to the Ladies Auxiliary for their generosity and congratulated them on 100 years of support to the hospital.

"That's an incredible achievement and we are very lucky to have their continued support. I know they have supplied this department with a great deal of vital equipment over the time."

Celebrating service and sharing farewells

The Wimmera Linen Services team came together for a special BBQ lunch at the beginning of May, marking a heartfelt reunion for current team members and a warm farewell to colleagues who have chosen retirement following the announcement of upcoming changes to the service.

The event was a chance to reflect on the team's shared achievements and acknowledge the lasting impact of those moving on, with Chief Redevelopment and Infrastructure Officer, Veronica Furnier, also presenting long service award certificates to several team members: Darren Barnett (35 years), Mark Delahunty (22 years), Maree Whitehead (21 years), and Gayle Rabi (20 years).



Rob Knowles appointed Board Chair

We are pleased to announce that the Victorian Government has officially appointed the Hon. Rob Knowles AO as Chair of the Board of Grampians Health, following his contributions as Interim Chair.

"We are thrilled to welcome Rob as a continued member of our Grampians Health family," said Grampians Health CEO Dale Fraser.

A former Victorian Minister for Health and Aged Care, Mr Knowles brings a wealth of experience in health governance and public service to his current role.

In addition to Grampians Health, Mr Knowles also serves on the boards of Silverchain, Beyond Blue, and Great Ocean Road Health, reflecting his deep commitment to improving health outcomes across Australia.

"I'm honoured to continue serving as Board Chair of Grampians Health," said Mr Knowles.

"Since its formation, Grampians Health has made great strides in delivering more integrated and equitable healthcare across our region.

"I look forward to working with our communities, staff, and partners to build on this momentum and ensure we continue to meet the diverse needs of the people we serve."

This appointment supports our continued commitment to delivering exceptional care through robust, community-focused leadership.



New sexual and reproductive health hubs now open

Sexual and Reproductive Health (SARH) Hubs have been opened in both Horsham and Stawell, further improving access to specialised care for regional communities.

The hubs, located at the Alan Wolff Medical Centre in Horsham, and the Stawell Medical Centre, provide accessible and comprehensive sexual and reproductive health services to all people in our community, including women, girls, and gender-diverse individuals.

The clinics will provide a range of nurse-led services including sexual health education, menstrual health and menopause education, population health screening such as cervical screening tests, contraceptive counselling, prevention, testing and management of sexually transmitted infections, pregnancy options counselling, and pathways for medical and surgical abortion of pregnancy.

“Through these hubs, we aim to provide equitable, high-quality care and reduce the gaps in health and wellbeing of women, girls and all gender-diverse in the regional communities,” said Ben Kelly, Chief Operating Officer.

“We understand that there is a rising need for sexual and reproductive care options in the region and Grampians Health is committed to providing accessible and comprehensive specialist care to our communities.



Horsham Sexual and Reproductive Health Clinical Nurse Consultant Angela Morgan (right) pictured with Alan Wolff Medical Centre Women's Health Nurse Romy Brennan (left).

“This initiative is also a testament to our ongoing efforts to improve care options in regional Victoria, ensuring that all individuals have access to the health services they need, close to home.”

Referrals are not required to access the free and confidential services offered at the sexual and reproductive health hubs.

Each hub will also deliver LGBTQIA+ and First Nations friendly care, along with telehealth consults.

Horsham's hub operates at Alan Wolff Medical Centre, 6-12 Read St, on every Wednesday and Thursday from 9am to 4.30pm.

To book an appointment in Horsham, please call 5381 9062 between 8:30am and 4:30pm, Monday to Friday.

Grampians Health has employment opportunities across each of our campuses

Discover employee benefits and career opportunities



grampianshealth.org.au/careers



Surgical team talks operations with fundraisers

Grampians Health surgeon Dr James Gallagher and Horsham Operating Suite Nurse Unit Manager Jennifer Thomson were guest speakers at a special event for fundraisers in March.

The event, held at Horsham Golf Club, was the inspiration of Horsham philanthropists Robyn and Des Lardner who wanted to provide a setting where Horsham's big hospital fundraising organisations could learn first hand about the important contribution their donations had provided for the Wimmera Base Hospital.

The Lardners, with the support of Wimmera Health Care Group Foundation, organised the event and covered all costs including catering.

Directors of the Foundation, Foundation 500 members, Friends of the Foundation, Wimmera Base Hospital Ladies Auxiliary and Wimmera Base Hospital Past Trainees Association were all in attendance to hear Dr Gallagher and Ms Thomson talk about the difference made thanks to the donations of important equipment used in the operating suite.

Foundation director David Johns was MC for the evening and Grampians Health Public Relations Manager Peter Miller entertained the crowd with live music.

The successful event was also attended by Grampians Health CEO Dale Fraser and board directors Rhian Jones, Marie Aitken and Anthony Schache.

Dr James Gallagher addresses the guests at the event.



Positive feedback for Women's Wellbeing Day

We have received plenty of positive feedback from participants who attended the April wellbeing day for women with cancer, in Horsham. The event, organised by Counterpart with the support of Grampians Health, included a yoga session guided by Lisa Cosson from Planet Feelgood, and a nutrition talk from Grampians Health Dietitian Olivia Dunstan.



There was also an art therapy session facilitated by former Wimmera Cancer Centre patient Michelle Watson.

Wimmera Cancer Centre Manager Carmel O'Kane said all facilitators did a wonderful job with their presentations and the audience enjoyed getting involved and asking lots of questions.

Participants from the Wellbeing Day for women with cancer show off their artwork created during the art therapy session.

MAPS to show the way for expectant mums

Access to a dedicated midwife through the antenatal and postnatal periods of childbirth is an innovative new option available to all mothers birthing at our Horsham campus, under a new maternity model of care.

The new model, to be released soon, will provide three options for continuity of care.

Horsham Maternity Services Manager Jane Rentsch said the new program would ensure an enhanced local service providing extra support to Wimmera parents.

"The new Midwifery Antenatal Postnatal Service (MAPS) is a continuity of care model that allocates a specific midwife for every woman booking into Grampians Health Horsham," Ms Rentsch said.

Under the MAPS model of care, you will be introduced to a midwife who will provide antenatal care and education, postnatal home support and care for up to 10 days post birth.

You will also meet other midwives who will provide back up support if

your primary midwife is unavailable. Under the MAPS model, you will still have some visits with the Obstetric team or a GP.

The MAPS model of care has a focus on outpatient services, that being pregnancy and postpartum.

All inpatient care including birth or unplanned visits will be with midwives who work within the standard unit/maternity ward.

Chief Nursing and Midwifery Officer Leanne Shea said that MAPS provided a continuity of care model that focused on pregnancy, labour and birth, and the postnatal period as a normal life event.

"It promotes a service that provides quality maternal and neonatal outcomes based on best practice," she said.

Horsham Maternity Services Manager Jane Rentsch (left) with Grampians Health Program Director of Women and Childrens Services Nicole Keogh (right).



ARE YOU OUR NEXT VOLUNTEER?

Grampians Health Horsham is looking for people to volunteer in the following areas:

- ~ Drivers ~ Palliative Care
- ~ Community Friendship Program ~ Emergency
- ~ Care Community ~ Cancer Centre

If you, or someone you know, is interested in volunteering with Grampians Health Horsham, please contact Kellie.McMaster@gh.org.au or 5381 9347

Scan to fill out an Expression of Interest form.

Trade pioneer to cancer nurse

Catherine Olston has one of Australia's most unique career journeys, marked by dedication in every role she's taken on — from firefighter and stock transport driver to tree pruner, cleaner, and even onion farmer.

Now a respected Cancer Resource Nurse at Wimmera Cancer Centre, her path to healthcare was anything but typical.

Growing up, Catherine loved working outdoors with her father and dreamed of becoming a mechanic. Despite limited trades opportunities for girls at the time, she pursued her passion, and in 1980 became Australia's first fully qualified female fitter and turner.

Later, encouraged by her grandmother, Catherine eventually turned to nursing, training as an enrolled nurse at Warracknabeal Hospital, then working in aged care and the Operating Suite at Wimmera Base Hospital.

Seeking deeper patient connection, she transitioned to the newly opened Wimmera Cancer Centre, where her husband Ian also works.



As a Cancer Resource Nurse, Catherine provides emotional support, practical guidance, and a listening ear to people living with cancer and their families.

She spends time with patients during assessments, helps them navigate appointments, and offers a space to talk — sometimes long after treatment ends. "People think it's a sad job, but it's incredibly rewarding," she says. "Patients are my best educators, providing me with knowledge I use for future support".

The patients and family can talk to Catherine as much or as little as they want

"There are some patients who choose to have their treatment in a centre outside the region. It might be for family reasons, or they might need a different type of treatment such as radiation. They can still contact me or Wimmera Cancer Centre for guidance or to help navigate them through medical appointments."

Celebrating a remarkable milestone



The Wyuna team marked International Nurses Day with a special afternoon tea to honour the incredible dedication and care our nurses provide every day. Held on May 12—Florence Nightingale's birthday—this day is a tribute to the vital role nurses play in our communities.

But behind every great nursing team is a network of support that helps keep everything running smoothly. At Wyuna, one of those key people is our much-loved Ward Clerk, Jenny Lawes.

This year's celebration was extra special as we also recognised Ms Lawes for her extraordinary 40 years of service with the Wimmera Health Care Group and now Grampians Health.

She has recently begun a well-deserved period of long service leave, and while she's undecided about what comes next, we are incredibly grateful for her unwavering commitment and care over the decades.

Physiotherapy team boost in Horsham

Six new physiotherapists have joined Horsham's Allied Health team, helping to continue the high level of care for clients and patients at Horsham and Dimboola campuses.

Grade 2 clinician Amber Bowers has returned to the region after gaining invaluable experience at Royal Hobart Hospital, enhancing the team's paediatric capacity.

Lana Vydelingum, Kate Oleinikov, Zack Eastwell, Siddhi Vyas and Shravani Gopadi are all graduates from a range of universities including The University of Melbourne, Australian Catholic University and La Trobe University.

The new members have all slipped into their new roles comfortably and are providing service in several settings including Acute Inpatients, Rehabilitation and Outpatients.

Deputy Manager Physiotherapy West, Ben Wiessner, said the new team members had hit the ground running.

"They are excited to join the Allied Health team which is known far and wide for its highly supportive, inclusive culture," Mr Wiessner said.

"They are keen to develop their skills so they can serve the Horsham community to the best of their abilities.

"We look forward to a fantastic year of supporting our new people and partnering with the Horsham

community to deliver high quality care."

Chief Operating Officer Ben Kelly welcomed the new physiotherapists to the Allied Health team.

"We are committed to growing our workforce and enhancing skills and knowledge to support a high performing culture at each of our campuses," Mr Kelly said.

"The new team will help provide greater local access to our services."



Pictured from left; Zack, Kate, Lana, Amber, Siddhi and Shravani have joined the physiotherapy department at Horsham.

DONATE ❤️

Help us improve healthcare and bring services closer to home

Financial donations to Grampians Health Horsham help us implement innovative projects and build on existing programs, to ensure our service-delivery is matched to unique community needs.

You can donate to a specific program, department or contribute to our 'Most Urgent Need' campaign reserved for projects that are our highest need.

With ongoing support, we can

continue to lead the way in rural healthcare and collaborate with our community on exciting new developments.

We've recently introduced digital giving, making it easier for our community to donate.

People support Grampians Health Horsham to help us improve patient care, acknowledge the care they - or a loved one - received, or to honour a loved one as an in memoriam gift.

To donate online, [scan the QR code](#) or contact Peter Miller, Public Relations Manager - West, on **5381 9309**.

All donations of \$2 and over are tax-deductible.



New glasses a lifesaver for Pat

The purchase of new glasses has likely saved the life of a Horsham business owner and now she has a very strong message for others.

Pat Kennett upgraded her prescription glasses earlier this year and soon after, she started experiencing headaches. Assuming the pain was caused by her new glasses, Ms Kennett returned to her optometrist who performed another eye check.

During the check, the optometrist noticed a bleed behind Ms Kennett's right eye and told her she should 'get to a doctor immediately'.

"I did that and when the GP took my blood pressure, he told me it was so high that I should have already had a heart attack or stroke by now," she said.

"Thank goodness I hadn't, but it set the ball rolling for a series of blood tests as well as an ECG and an MRI which included a few trips to Ballarat.

"The blood tests revealed a few other medical problems which needed to be fixed before I could have any heart surgery. Initially they thought I would need stents but after all the testing, the cardiologist said I would need a triple bypass."

Ms Kennett's surgeon visited her after the operation to confirm she in fact had quadruple bypass surgery.

"He told me I was a very lucky woman and from the condition of my arteries, he can't believe that I hadn't already had a heart attack."

The road to recovery for Ms Kennett was longer than anticipated.

"I thought I would be back at work in a few weeks but that's not how it works because I was very tired and struggled to achieve much at all."

Ms Kennett is now participating in the cardiac rehabilitation program at Grampians Health Horsham where she is meeting others in her group with heart health issues.

The more she learns the more she realises how lucky she has been and now she wants to get a message to others - women in particular.

"I was aware that I was at some risk of heart disease because it was already in my family. My father died of a heart attack," she said.

"But because I've generally been in good health, I just thought I was going to be one of those people that nothing happens to them.

"I was just very lucky things played out the way they did and now I just really want everyone to have a heart health check done. I especially want women to get themselves checked because apparently their symptoms of heart disease are generally not as obvious as that of men."

Grampians Health Cardiac Nurse Jo Carroll said once people turned 45, they should get a heart health check.

"People with diabetes should get checked once they turn 35 and First Nations people from age 30," Ms Carroll said.

"It's generally a 20-minute check-up with your GP and it will help you understand if you are at risk of a heart attack or stroke in the next five years. Your doctor will then work with you on ways that you can reduce your risk."



Pat Kennett walks the treadmill under the watchful eye of Cardiac Rehab Nurse Jo Carroll, Allied Health Assistant student Kayla Jewson, Allied Health Assistant Erin Slater and Exercise Physiologist Liam Atkins.

Student Day for Deakin

Horsham team members provided some insight into the life of a medical student during a tour of the campus for students from Horsham College, St Brigids College and Wimmera Lutheran College, who are interested in following a medical career path.

Deakin University coordinator of Pathways to Medicine Program (Gariwerd/Grampians) School of Medicine, Rachael Cooper organised the tour and was supported by Grampians Health Deakin Medical Student coordinator Deidre Rennick and Deakin Regional Supervisor Dr Pieter Pretorius.



Students Ella, Maddie, Eden and Blessing at the Wimmera Base Hospital.

Students from years 11 and 12 took part in the 'A Day in the Life of a Medical Student' program and said they had a wonderful experience.

Deakin Rural Community Clinical School medical students from Horsham, Stawell and Ararat spoke to the students and talked about their pathways and experience as a medical student and allowed the students to join in their tutorial in the afternoon.

Student feedback

"It has made me less worried about the future and given me important information."

"(It has) assured me that there is always a pathway into becoming a doctor."

"I found it really interesting to hear about all of their (medical students) different experiences and pathways and also to see how much they enjoy what they do."

Stop the spread!

This winter, we know what to do to stay well against the flu. Help stop the spread!

The flu can be serious – but there are simple ways we can all help to protect ourselves and others:

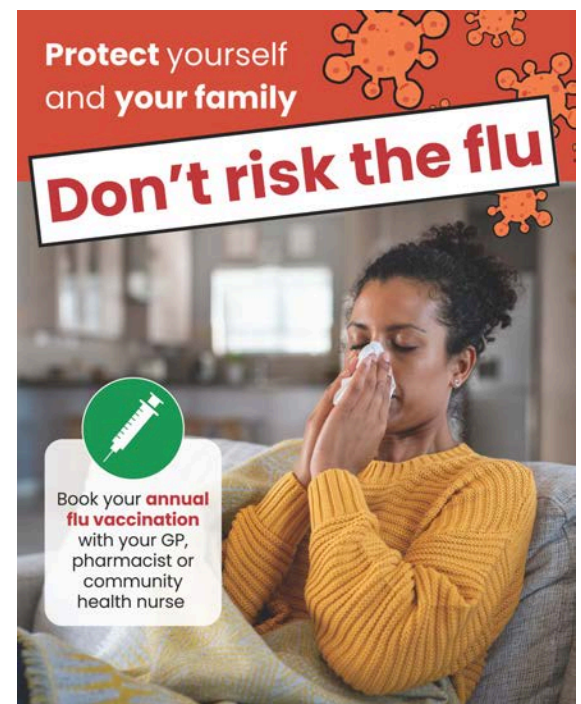
- Stay home if you're feeling unwell
- Wash and sanitise your hands regularly
- Cover coughs and sneezes
- Get your annual flu vaccine – it's recommended for everyone aged 6 months and over, and the vaccine is free for eligible groups.

The flu shot is free if you're:

- aged 65 and over
- pregnant
- an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander over 6 months old
- a person with medical conditions that put you at increased risk of severe flu.

Let's look after each other this flu season.

Book your flu shot today with your local immunisation provider.



my.gh.org.au/flu

Grampians Health
Grampians Public Health Unit

*McGrath Cancer Care
Nurse Leah Adams,
located at Horsham.*



Increased cancer care nursing

Grampians Health's cancer care nursing team has expanded, significantly enhancing support for individuals and families affected by cancer within the community.

We have welcomed McGrath Cancer Care Nurses Leah Adams in Horsham and Melanie Alford in Ballarat, who will add on to an existing McGrath Cancer Nurse supporting people experiencing breast cancer at the health service.

Cancer care nurses play a crucial role in the multidisciplinary team, offering emotional support, education, and coordination of care. Their presence ensures that patients and their families have access to the necessary resources and support throughout their cancer journey.

"At Grampians Health, we are dedicated to enhancing cancer care through the expertise and compassion of our nursing staff," said Ben Kelly, Chief Operating Officer.

"The addition of Leah and Melanie to our team allows us to provide more wholesome support to our patients who are going through a difficult phase of their lives."

In regional Victoria, approximately 34,000 new cancer cases are diagnosed annually, according to the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare. This highlights the critical need for specialised nursing support to manage the growing number of cancer cases and improve patient outcomes.

To further support those affected with cancer in the region, nursing cover has been improved across several areas.

An oncology nursing practitioner role was established in 2023 to manage complex patient cases and provide advanced clinical care; complemented by specialist oncology nurses across our Symptom and Urgent Review Clinic in Ballarat to support patients experiencing side effects during their cancer treatment.

We have also increased nursing support within the chemotherapy day unit to ensure that patients undergoing chemotherapy receive timely and personalised care, improving their overall treatment experience and outcomes.

"While our cancer care nursing team – spread across our sites in Horsham, Stawell and Ballarat – provide invaluable support to our patients and their families, they are also integral to the oncology care team as they help coordinate care, manage symptoms, and provide critical insights into patient needs and progress," said Catherine Heywood, Director of Ambulatory Care and Outpatient Services.

We remain committed to advancing cancer care and supporting patients and their families through every step of their journey.

The expansion of the cancer care nursing team is a vital part of this mission, ensuring that the community receives the highest quality of care and support.



Expressions of interest now open

Applications close at 5pm on 20 June 2025.

Join our Quality Care Advisory Group

We are seeking consumers and carers who use either our Residential or Community Aged Care Services to provide insights into the consumer experience of these services.

This Advisory Group will meet four times a year with the opportunity to collaborate and contribute your lived experiences, knowledge and insights.

Your input will play a vital role in informing, shaping and improving the delivery of Residential and Community Aged Care Programs.

Key responsibilities:

- Offer insights from a lived experience and / or cultural perspective on current and emerging services and workforce challenges
- Share ideas based on your experience with Grampians Health Aged Care Services, proposing potential solutions and identifying key priorities for service delivery
- Provide reflective feedback on proposed solutions and priorities
- Engage in collaborative discussions with fellow group members, invited stakeholders, and Grampians Health team members on strategic priorities and matters related to service delivery to shape the future of Grampians Health Aged Care programs

For more information, and to complete your application scan the QR Code



SCAN HERE



myagedcare

Aged Care Reforms – Putting Older Australians First

The Australian Government is introducing important reforms to ensure aged care services better support the rights, choices, and wellbeing of older Australians.

Whether remaining at home or moving into residential aged care, the reforms aim to provide high-quality, person-centred care when and where it's needed.

As a provider of aged care services, Grampians Health is committed to delivering care that supports dignity, independence, and safety.

To learn more, visit www.myagedcare.gov.au or call 1800 200 422.

important
update

Contact us

Grampians Health strives to deliver quality care for all our communities through safe, accessible and connected health services.

Emergency Department

For emergencies arising from accident or illness. Services are available 24 hours, 7 days a week.

If your condition is serious, or you are experiencing chest pains, you need to call 000 (Triple Zero) for an ambulance.

Acute Care

24 hour care, managed by our experienced nursing staff and visiting medical officers.

Care Communities

Kurrajong Lodge

5381 9271

Wimmera Nursing Home

5381 9307

Horsham Maternity Clinic

5381 9010

Community Options

5381 9336

Assisting people and their carers to live independently in their own homes.

Allied Health

5381 9333

Allied Health resources are based in the Arapiles Building. Services available include:

- Dietetics
- Occupational Therapy
- Physiotherapy
- Podiatry
- Speech Pathology
- Social Work
- Dental and Prosthetic Clinic

Alan Wolff Medical Clinic

5581 9167

A specialist medical clinic servicing the needs of patients in Horsham and the surrounding districts.

Primary Health

Community based services which are delivered to the wider community.

- District Nursing 5381 9391
- Hospital in the Home 5381 9311
- Continence Service 5381 9333
- Memory Support Service 5381 9333
- Post Acute Care 5381 9115
- Residential in Reach 5381 9115
- Complex Care (HARP) 5381 9115

Day Centre

5381 9285

Offers a welcoming, supportive environment for our older community and for people with dementia and/or disabilities to maintain personal independence and provide support for their carers.

Dental Clinic

5381 9248

Treats patients who hold a Health Care Card or Pensioner Concession Card and children under 13 without a concession.

Radiology

5381 9236

Lumus Imaging, a private company provides medical imaging for the hospital and the Wimmera region. Services include Radiography, Computer Tomography, Mammography, Ultrasound, MRI, Echocardiography, DEXA and OPG (Orthopanthomogram).

Wimmera Cancer Centre

5381 9169

Oncology service, incorporating Dialysis and Palliative Care.



If you have a suggestion or an issue you want to raise, please contact us at feedback@gh.org.au

We are committed to working with the communities in which we live and we value your feedback.

For the full range of services and more detail on accessing the services please visit www.whcg.org.au



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Health
Horsham**