

## Resident sparks hydrotherapy program

Kath Atwell, 91, might well be Edenhope's most successful fitness influencer.

It was her pitch to Grampians Health Edenhope that sparked plans to transport a busload of senior citizens to Horsham, for weekly hydrotherapy sessions.

"I'm determined to stay as strong as I can," Ms Atwell said. "I went backwards during COVID and needed to get back into it, and I knew there would be enough interest from others.

"It's no good sitting back and waiting for someone else to do these things, so I wrote a letter."

That letter resulted in ongoing funding for the program, delivered by staff at the Health and Wellbeing Hub in partnership with the Harrow Bush Nursing Centre.

"The reason it happened is because Kath requested it," Primary Health Coordinator Jo Grant said.



*New hydrotherapy program sparked by 91-year-old 'fitness influencer', Kath Atwell*

"We always encourage the community to engage with us and tell us what their needs are. If we know, we can try and make it happen."

The inaugural visit to Horsham Aquatic Centre attracted 10 senior citizens from Edenhope and Harrow.

"We're going to need a bigger bus," Ms Grant said.

The weekly program is open to people over the age of 65.

"It's a series of gentle exercises that covers the entire body, from your toes to the top of your head," Ms Atwell said.

"You just do as much as you can but it's exercise, we're not just paddling around."

Ms Atwell, who was about a decade older than most participants, hopes others will be motivated to join.

"It's motivating and if you can keep mobile, you'll still be functional and keep up your social life," she said.

"One lady hadn't been in a pool for 40 years, until this week, and she absolutely loved it.

"It's never too late."



*Grampians Health Rural Outreach Worker Murray McInnes and RFDS Clinical Team Leader – Mental Health and Wellbeing Cindy Condon, with RFDS psychologist Andy Golding.*

## Psychologist and family violence support for Edenhope

Edenhope community members needing mental health care now have better access to support through a new partnership with the Edenhope Health and Wellbeing Hub and the Royal Flying Doctors Service (RFDS).

Psychologist Andy Golding is providing both face-to-face services and telehealth appointments at the Hub every six weeks.

In addition to the psychology support, the HUB has also partnered with The Orange Door to create a virtual outpost for people experiencing – or at risk of experiencing – family violence.

The virtual outpost will allow community members to access specialised care and support

directly from The Orange Door without the need to travel.

Primary Health Coordinator Jo Grant said her team was dedicated to reducing the inequity experienced by Edenhope and surrounding communities in accessing vital supports and mental health services.

“We are thrilled to welcome these services and provide much needed support to those experiencing mental health issues or family violence within our community,” Jo said.

“These partnerships and initiatives aim to improve the overall health and wellbeing of Edenhope and the surrounding community.

“We are always looking at ways that we can support the

community better and would welcome suggestions of other services or needs that would be beneficial to our community.”

The Hub now stocks a range of The Orange Door emergency supplies including essential backpacks for all ages, mobile phones and fuel vouchers.

These items can be provided immediately to those seeking safety and support.

To refer into the psychologist call the RFDS intake line on 8412 0480.

### Do you have any suggestions for us?

If you have a suggestion or an issue you want to raise, please contact us at [feedback@gh.org.au](mailto:feedback@gh.org.au)

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

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Please also contact us if any changes are required to your contact details.



# Great Debate powers on amid black-out

A power outage did not stop a crowd of 50 people from attending the 'Great Debate' in Edenhope in August.

The Grampians Health event posed the question – Are Men from Mars and Women from Venus, or is that just an excuse?

Although stormy weather quashed plans for a smoke machine and disco lighting, social worker June Spencer (AKA 'Judge Junie') forged ahead with battery-operated spotlights.

"It actually created a really nice atmosphere, where people sat close together and connected at their tables," June said.

"I overheard a lot of talk about relationships and gender roles and societal change, which was absolutely our hope for the night.

"The debate aside, it was wonderful to get people out of the house to socialise and have a laugh."

Amid arguments about evolution, the effects of World Wars and women's reproductive skills, opposing speakers competed in a chin-up challenge and distributed bribes to the audience.

Neither side was convincing enough to sway the crowd, with teams receiving an equal number of votes.

June, who donned a judge's wig and struggled to keep proceedings in line with her gavel, embraced the humour.

"It was a very funny exploration of some very serious topics, which is what we need sometimes," she said.

"We were never going to put an end to this age-old debate, but I think everyone left with some new insight to reflect on."

The event also presented an opportunity to promote local services, including Grampians Health Edenhope's social worker and free Rural Outreach mental health services.

"The reality is, relationship conflict has a devastating effect on people and we are here to assist," June said.

Grampians Health thanks the Edenhope Lions Club for sponsoring venue hire and supper; and to Edenhope Golf Club volunteers for friendly service in difficult conditions.

For more information about social worker and Rural Outreach services, contact the Hub on **5585 9830**.

*Debate speakers (from back left) Marnie Baker, Fred Carberry, 'Judge' June Spencer, Michelle Penrose, John Perry, Paddy Kealy and Dani Grindlay*



# Getting patients home and keeping them home

A new program at Grampians Health Edenhope is helping older patients get home from hospital quicker and ensuring they have all the support needed to prevent a return visit.

The 'Transition Care Program (TCP)' recognises that wellbeing and health outcomes are improved when patients can avoid inappropriate, extended hospital stays.

It is a notion Don Symonds heartily agrees with; after four weeks in hospital, he was desperate to get home.

"At the start I was grateful to be in there and get the pain under control, but I was definitely more grateful to get out," he said. "I come from a farm so I like the freedom of being home. If I didn't get help from all the nurses and other staff I would've been stuck for a while."

The 12-week intensive TCP program involves coordinated care, delivered in the home, by district nursing staff, allied health assistants, physiotherapists, a dietitian and a social worker.

For Don, it also meant coming home to a new walker, shower chair and raised toilet seat.

"I had nurses coming in every day to check my blood pressure and help me shower," he said.

"Someone else organised Meals on Wheels and I get picked up for appointments if I need to be somewhere. It means I can do exercise classes and get all the bills and things sorted at home."

Three patients have completed the TCP program following an acute hospital stay, and three more are in the process.

District Nurse Kallie Howard always agreed with the theory behind TCP but was shocked at just how much patients improved.

"We do regular assessments to keep track of patients' progress and the gains have been remarkable," she said.

"Their ability to complete daily activities improves and, most importantly, they've all been able to stay home. We're getting them home and keeping them home."

Because TCP staff are linked to a plethora of health services, from podiatry to dietitians and mental health support, they can identify patients' needs and facilitate appointments.

All health professionals involved in the program are based in the Health and Wellbeing Hub, which enables a coordinated approach.

"It's really unique to have so many services in one spot and that's the perk of a small town," Ms Howard said. "We all work in together, recognising and addressing patients' individual needs. It's much more than a clinical approach, we want them to be thriving and getting back into life."

*Edenhope district nurses  
Liz Smith, Tania Shepherd  
and Kallie Howard.*





# Thank you to our vital volunteers

Grampians Health leaders travelled from Ballarat and Horsham to personally thank Edenhope's volunteers for their service to the community.

A 'National Volunteers Week' morning tea was held in town in May, where the team shared stories and reflected on their contribution.

The current group of eight Edenhope-based volunteers transport aged care residents and clients to appointments, facilitate day trips or simply make the time to walk, read or chat.

"Volunteers are a vital part of our health service, and each individual brings unique character

and passion to their role," Grampians Health Chief Officer Claire Woods said.

"We are always grateful for their time, but this week presents a rare opportunity to stop, reflect and articulate our appreciation."

Volunteer Rob Kenna understands he is filling a need, but also appreciates what volunteering brings in return.

"With life, what you put out comes back to you," he said. "When I drive a resident somewhere we get ice cream and make it a day out; it's a beautiful thing."

Annie Osbourne also described a deep sense of "personal satisfaction".

"A lot of the residents don't have immediate family to take them to appointments," she said.

"They show their gratitude and it's very rewarding to be able to offer that help."

Grampians Health Engagement Director Tamara Reynolds made the trip from Ballarat to extend her gratitude.

"It was wonderful to meet the friendly Edenhope team and listen to their reasons for giving back," she said. "The community is in caring hands; it was an inspiring morning."

If you're interested in joining the Edenhope volunteer team, find more information here: [edmh.org.au/volunteers](http://edmh.org.au/volunteers)

*Volunteer Services Coordinator - West Kellie McMaster and Director Engagement Tamara Reynolds with our Edenhope volunteers*



# \$8000 donation for mental health

Dimboola ski club has recognised the “life-saving” work of the Rural Outreach Program, through an \$8,000 donation.

The funding will boost the work of three Rural Outreach workers, who travel 28,000 square km across western Victoria, to deliver free mental health support in client’s homes.

“Our club has been touched by mental illness and it’s one of the biggest issues we have today, especially with young people,” club president Darren Bone said.

“The younger guys bottle everything up and get their heads pickled and sadly we’ve seen what that can lead to.”

“Rural Outreach has already helped our club members, and plenty of others in the community, and the need is only getting bigger.”

The money was raised through the annual ‘Peter Taylor Memorial Barefoot Waterski Tournament’, which attracted 3,500 people to Dimboola in February.

Rural Outreach worker Mal Coutts commended the club for de-stigmatising mental health services, through open conversations.

“The ski club has dealt with some terrible things, but good things have come out of it,” Mr Coutts said. “It’s humbling to know that our work is making a difference, and this donation will extend our reach.”

To contact the free Rural Outreach service, phone **1300 OUTREACH (1300 688 732)**

*Rural Outreach Worker Mal Coutts receives a cheque for \$8,000 from Dimboola ski club president Darren Bone.*





# Packed schedule for retirees

Foot tapping, arms waving and regular outbursts – ‘Bingo!’ – if you think retirement is relaxing, you haven’t visited Lakeside Living lately.

Residents and staff have welcomed a range of visitors, including travelling musician Paul, who sang a mix of classic Aussie songs while juggling a ukulele and the piano.

St Malachy’s students, in prep and grade one, brought in ancient farming implements found in the back of a local farmer’s shed. The props sparked conversations about how manual labour, like drilling, was done many decades ago.



*Lakeside Living residents gather around for a game of bingo.*

Amongst themselves, residents got competitive with bingo and a game of beanbag toss that morphed the best parts of cornhole, darts and tic tac toe.

Conjuring novel activities is the best part of the job for Meaningful Life coordinator Amanda Post.

“There are so many benefits when you can think of something that promotes movement or conversation or cognitive challenge,” she said.

“Often staff have just as much fun as the residents, so it’s a win-win when we come up with a fun idea.”

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## Farmer rounds up new role at Edenhope

Engagement and communications in Edenhope are in expert hands thanks to the appointment of a new Engagement Coordinator.

Local farmer Danielle Grindlay has an extensive background in journalism, working in print, radio, TV, digital media and most recently as an ABC Regional Affairs reporter based in Horsham.

Dani has completed a Bachelor of Psychological Science degree and is continuing her studies, with plans to become a registered psychologist. She has stepped into her new role

with an enthusiastic and genuine interest in the health and mental health of her community.

“This role combines my passions for community connection and regional wellbeing, so I feel like it was created for me,” Dani said.

“I’m really excited to meet all of the faces behind our incredible health service and to share their stories with the wider community.”

Dani lives on a sheep farm on the outskirts of Edenhope with her husband, four children and ‘far too many dogs’.



# Committing to environmental sustainability

Some of us talk about wanting to reduce our environmental impact and some of us are actually doing it. Edenhope's Executive Assistant Jodi Finnigan is among the latter.

"I don't do everything right but if I can change one thing at a time, I'm doing my bit."

Along with buying natural cleaning products and carefully managing waste, Jodi brought her passion for the environment to work.

She started collecting used bottle tops from the campus years ago – about 7,800 every year – and personally delivers them to a Mount Gambier company, which turns them into fencing droppers.

Jodi, along with Support Services Manager Kurtis Stringer, was also among a team that developed the new Grampians Health Environmental Sustainability Plan.

Released on World Environment Day (5 June), the plan commits to energy-efficient systems, green building practices and waste reduction strategies across all five sites.

"The health sector is a big CO2 producer, because our hospitals must run 24/7 and we're constantly heating buildings," Kurtis said.

"Some of that is necessary but we can focus on purchasing sustainable options and make sure we're streaming waste for recycling."

"I'm really proud that our organisation is making the commitment and leading the way for others in our industry."

The duo's passion is contagious, with more than 20 staff members attending a voluntary workshop about improving sustainability.

Staff made their own pledges to plant trees, avoid single-use plastics and always remember their re-usable coffee cup.

"Every person does make a difference and when we band together as an organisation, it brings it front of mind," Kurtis said.

"If we're all thinking about it at work, that will flow on to what we're doing at home and inspire others around us."



*Jodi Finnigan and Kurtis Stringer leading the way in Edenhope's recycling efforts*



# Heartbreaking sacrifices pay off for our newest Australian citizens

Six Grampians Health staff, along with their children, officially became 'Australians' in an emotional citizenship ceremony, closing a chapter on years of hard work and heartbreaking sacrifice.

Darwin and Laurence De Luna; Aidan, Alvin and Chloe Velasco; and Christian, Lady Anne and Paulo Vidal accepted certificates and gifts from West Wimmera Shire Council Mayor Tim Meyer.

"We've been waiting for this day for a long time," Christian Vidal said. "The way we've struggled, to where we are now, we are very happy."

Christian's six-year-old son Paulo was just three-months old when his wife Lady Anne travelled alone, from 'Angeles City' in the Philippines to Sydney, to study nursing.

The couple planned to set themselves up in Australia before bringing their baby over.

Then COVID-19 hit. It took two heart-breaking years for Christian to secure a flight on compassionate grounds, to return for his child.

He hoped to spend "a few days" bringing the precious cargo back to Australia, but again COVID-19 thwarted plans; it was another gruelling four months before Lady Anne was reunited with Paulo, now three-years-old.

"It was a very hard time, we were very helpless," Christian said.

By then, the Vidal family owned a house in Edenhope and were settled into jobs at the hospital and care facility.



*[L-R] Darwin and Laurence De Luna with daughter Valeree; Alvin, Aidan, Chloe and Chelsea Velasco; West Wimmera Shire Council Mayor Tim Meyer; and Christian, Lady Anne and Paulo Vidal.*

The isolated farming town was a shocking contrast to their bustling home-city, famous for its shopping and night-life.

Five years on, and the family-of-three can't imagine living anywhere else.

"We love our work and the people, and we love the peaceful country life," Christian said. "Now we are encouraging and recruiting more people to come because it's really the best life here."

His efforts are working. In total, Grampians Health Edenhope employs 19 Filipino staff.

Christian never dreamed he'd end up in a rural farming town, but now he promotes Edenhope to anyone who'll listen.

"It's hard (to pitch) because we're very far from the city, but I tell them about the nice balance with workload and family time," he said.

"You don't get that in the city; you're just a number in the city. The hospital is very flexible and understanding, that's mainly why we stayed."

Grampians Health congratulates all six employees, for achieving their citizenship and for their dedicated service to their organisation and community.

"We are delighted and grateful to this cohort of staff, for making Australia and Grampians Health their home," Grampians Health Chief People Officer Claire Woods said.

# Retirement plan morphs into job opportunity for Janelle

Janelle Kirby had her sights set on Apsley as the perfect place to retire in about 15 years.

Instead she has moved to the region for work, as an administration officer at our Edenhope campus.

Janelle's move came more than a year after her husband, who started work with West Wimmera Shire Council in 2023.

"When we visited the first time, to look at the house in Apsley, we stepped out of the car and heard nothing but birds," Janelle said.

"A weight just lifted and we knew we'd love it here.

"We had long-term plans for a tree-change but when job opportunities came up, it was too good to ignore."



The couple has already taken in a local – a Kelpie-cross stray that needed a new home.

"We planned to look after him for a short time, but fell in love with him instantly," she said.

Janelle has experience in the care sector, after nine years in a Ballarat veterinary clinic, and

describes feeling very comfortable in the new setting.

When she's not welcoming people into Edenhope Hospital or Lakeside Living, Janelle is likely to be baking, reading or outside digging.

"I love my garden but it's definitely a work in progress," she said.

## Trio bike tours for Lakeside Living residents



Lakeside Living residents will be chaperoned to the parkrun finish line every Saturday, following a trio bike tour of Lake Wallace.

Edenhope College principal Trevor McClure will pick up a different passenger each week; he timed the tours to coincide with parkrun so residents could socialise with the community of participants and volunteers.

Trevor was part of the Murray to Moyne team that raised funds for Grampians Health Edenhope's trio bike.

"I thought this was a good way to put it to use," Trevor said. "It gives me some exercise and it's good for the residents to have a chat, so it's awesome."

Don Dixon was first to take up the opportunity on a frosty May morning.

"I'm a hardy old farmer so I didn't notice the cold," Mr Dixon said. "It's good to see the lake and get some air."

Mr McClure has also lined up trio bike training for senior college students, so they too will be able to take residents on regular outings.



# Native Garden in full winter bloom

What a difference a year makes! Lakeside Living's First Nations Garden is in full winter bloom, filling the outdoor corridor with bursts of colour.

The garden, which was carefully designed to celebrate native plant species, has changed dramatically since its planting in winter 2023.

It is a source of great pride for the maintenance and engineering staff behind its creation, Chad Eastwood and Adam Dunstan.

"It's just amazing to look at photos from one year ago and appreciate how far it's come," Acting Maintenance Lead Hand Chad said.

"A lot of thought and effort went into the landscaping design and sourcing native seedlings, so it's really rewarding to see the fruits of everyone's labour."

The garden design is symbolic living art, depicting the connections created through the five Grampians Health sites.



## Ballarat OT moonlights in Edenhope

When Occupational Therapist Rhiana Collins was offered the opportunity to split her work week between Ballarat and Edenhope, she jumped on it.

"I always wanted to work in a rural setting but still love my role in Ballarat, so this was a way to travel without having to leave my job," she said.

"I've lived in Ballarat my whole life so I'm really excited to get to know a different population and be a bit more innovative about my approach in a smaller team."

Rhiana will live and work in Edenhope every Monday to Wednesday, before returning to her Ballarat role on Thursdays and Fridays.

"These resource-sharing arrangements are exactly what we envisioned when we came together as Grampians Health," said Claire Woods, Chief People Officer at Grampians Health.

"We have a pool of world-class professionals that can collaborate as one team, to ensure every community receives the best possible care.

Variety is what attracted Rhiana to occupational therapy, which "brings something different every day".

From rehabilitation to disability support, oncology assistance and transitioning people from acute hospital stays, Rhiana is packing a wealth of experience for her stint in Edenhope.

"It's so rewarding to improve people's quality of life, even when it's a small win like being able to put their socks on.

"In more profound cases we can assist people to live in their home, rather than moving into a care facility; it's such a rewarding job."

For information about OT services, contact the **Health and Wellbeing HUB** on 5585 9830.



*Grampians Health Edenhope staff Kendall Pickering, Jo Grant, Amber McClure and Daniella Macolino are delighted with the arrival of a catalogue of toys for paediatric therapy appointments.*



## Access to 'toy library' for therapy homework

Edenhope's Health and Wellbeing Hub looks a bit like Santa's workshop, following a delivery of a huge bundle of toys.

The strategically selected toys will be used in paediatric appointments, including speech and occupational therapy, to assist with assessment and program development. Parents can then take the toys home for repetition of learnings.

The toys are key to engaging with the young clients, as a way to surreptitiously assess

the way they speak and interact, as well as introducing fun activities that will build relevant skills.

Primary Health Coordinator Jo Grant said the toy library epitomised her team's innovative approach to rural healthcare.

"This was a unique idea developed by speech pathologist Joy Harwood and occupational therapist Ashleigh Maybery, who noticed a gap in access for Edenhope children," Ms Grant said.

"They identified the need, designed a program, carefully chose appropriate toys and assisted with a grant application; it was an ingenious solution that I haven't seen implemented anywhere else."

Speech pathologists visit Edenhope every Thursday and children below school age do not require a referral. For appointment or more information, contact the Health & Wellbeing Hub on 5585 9830.

## Welcoming our new speech therapist

"Even within one of those areas, like acute, there is so much variability – you can see stroke victims or trauma patients, people with nasal gastric tubes or accident-acquired brain injuries."

Stephanie, who grew up in the rural town of Kerang, feels at home in Edenhope.

"Kerang isn't as small as Edenhope but it has a similar feel," she said. "I understand small communities so I know it will be a really enjoyable place to work and connect with clients."

A fresh face has joined the Grampians Health Edenhope team, tagging in as the new visiting speech pathologist.

Stephanie Runciman is based in Horsham but makes weekly visits to Edenhope, offering paediatric therapy sessions for pre-school children and adult outpatient services. She also assists in the acute hospital ward and Lakeside Living care facility.

"It's such diverse work because I'm assessing people across the lifespan," she said.

Stephanie will visit the Health & Wellbeing Hub every Thursday; referrals are not required. For more information, or to make an appointment, contact our team on (03) 5585 9830.

*Speech pathologist Daniella Macolino (left) has passed the Edenhope baton to Stephanie Runciman, who will visit the Health and Wellbeing Hub every Thursday.*





# Merilyn is 'dying to know'

Merilyn Simpson knows how she wants to die. She has written clear legally-binding directives, for doctors and relatives to follow in the event she can no longer communicate her wishes.

Merilyn has shared her story and is urging others to complete an 'Advance Care Directive'.

Directives document a person's preferences for future medical treatment, from general values to specific instructions around treatment options.

"The main thing for me is, I don't want to linger about in pain with no quality of life," Merilyn said.

"I saw my sister suffer in great pain and watched my friend visit her mother, kept alive as a vegetable, for years; I want to die on my own terms."

When she filled out her form, Merilyn could not imagine how soon a life-threatening illness would bring it to the fore.

"I had an infection in my heart and an abscess on the aorta burst," she said.

"Surgeons had to take my heart out, clean it, and keep me on life support while they gave me a new valve.

"I died and came back – they didn't have room for me!"

Despite the "harrowing" experience, she was comforted by the knowledge her wishes were documented.

"The doctors had something to go by, my family weren't left to make decisions they didn't want to, and I could relax knowing my wishes would be met," she said.

"These directives aren't something to be feared, they're about taking control of your own life. I'm not afraid of dying now."

Merilyn's message is to consider your options while in good health.

"When I filled mine out, I was clear-headed and could take time to think things through," she said.

"Making those decisions while under pressure, in hospital or while you're really sick, is not something you need.

"People avoid talking about death but I promise you, it's such a relief and now I can get on with living."

For access and assistance with Advance Care Directives, make an appointment with staff at the Health and Wellbeing Hub on **5585 9830**.

*Merilyn Simpson with a sample of advanced care documents.*



## Tropical vibes at Lakeside Living

They say change is as good as a holiday and new furniture throughout Lakeside Living suggests a tropical destination!

The Edenhope care community has been transformed with new armchairs and re-upholstered dining chairs throughout open living areas.

"It is so bright and colourful in here now, we have a whole new environment," she said. "They are happy colours and it makes us feel happy."

# Early Parenting Centre to benefit regional parents



*Chief Operating Officer Ben Kelly, Member for Ripon Martha Haylett, Minister for Children Lizzie Brandthorn, Chief Redevelopment and Infrastructure Officer Veronica Furnier, Board Chair Bill Brown and EPC Nurse Unit Manager Vikki Doddamani.*

Grampians Health has recently opened a new Early Parenting Centre (EPC) in Lucas. The EPC will provide specialist care closer to home for parents with children aged 0-4, and help address common issues such as sleep routines, child behaviour challenges, parental fatigue, and the general transition to parenthood.

The new purpose-built facility provides a range of programs designed to improve the health, wellbeing, and developmental outcomes for children.

Chief Operating Officer Ben Kelly said Grampians Health was thrilled to provide essential support to new parents, eliminating the need for lengthy trips to Melbourne which often added to additional parental stress.

“Our specialised team will deliver several programs to meet the needs of individual cases including a home stay program, a day stay program, one-on-one appointments, video appointments, and group sessions.”

Chief Redevelopment and Infrastructure Officer Veronica Furnier said “The new facility has been designed to create a safe and serene environment with natural light and rooms suitable for various family arrangements to help allow families to feel at home. The design of the centre also ensures that it is inclusive to all.”

Parents can self-refer or be referred by a GP or health care professional to the EPC.

The Early Parenting Centre has been delivered in partnership with the Victorian Health Building Authority.

The Early Parenting Centre works alongside Grampians Health’s Parent & Infant Unit, which focuses on assessing and treating the mental health and wellbeing of parents, whilst strengthening the attachment relationship between parent and infant within an inpatient setting.

For further information on these services please visit:  
[www.bhs.org.au/parenting](http://www.bhs.org.au/parenting)



# Lifelong farmer embraces social side of new role

After three and a half decades of farming, Sam Shepherd was ready for a change.

He once thrived on working out in the elements, but surprisingly Sam finds his new role, as a Grampians Health Edenhope Hotel Services Assistant, more physically demanding.

"Getting up at 5.30am has been the hardest bit; people think farmers get up early but I never went crutching at 5.30am!"

It's the social side of his new role, delivering meals and cleaning residents' rooms, that Sam finds most rewarding.

"Someone said to me, and it's so true, you can make this job as happy as you want it to be," he said.

"I'm not obligated to talk to people but it makes it enjoyable, getting residents' stories and building rapport."

It was only through sharing yarns that Sam discovered connections with many of the residents.

"I grew up in Adelaide but have been around here most of my life, mainly at Minimay," he said.



"There's a lady in here that used to drive me to Scouts when I was 11 years old and I shored alpacas for one of the other guys."

Sam can be seen moving between the acute ward and Lakeside Living aged care facility, with imminent plans to learn the ropes in the kitchen.

## JOIN OUR VOLUNTEER COMMUNITY

**Would you like to make a positive impact in your community, share life skills, meet great people and be part of a wonderful team?**

We are seeking new volunteers to fill a variety of roles across our many volunteer programs.

Your passion and commitment are what matter most to us; a healthcare background is not necessary.

We welcome conversations relating to how volunteering can best work for you!

Scan the QR code to fill out an expression of interest form or contact Volunteer Services for more information.

**E: [volunteers-west@gh.org.au](mailto:volunteers-west@gh.org.au)**

**P: 5381 9347**



“Volunteering isn't just a task; it's a way of life that nourishes my soul and gives me purpose. I find immense joy in knowing that my efforts positively impact the lives of others”

**Annie Osborne**

“My main aim in life is to make people laugh - I've cracked some hard people through telling stories and jokes. I just wait for the smirk and I know I've gotten through.”

**Fred Carberry**

# URGENT CARE

When it can't wait,  
but it's not an emergency



When you need medical attention that can't wait, consider urgent care (if your condition is not life-threatening).

Urgent care – in person, online or on the telephone – is a well equipped medical service which health professionals have used for some time. It is now available to you, too.

Keep this page handy, so when you need care you know where to go. And remember, keep yourself well with routine visits to your GP, and by following health advice.



## Routine care

When you have a medical issue, but it's not urgent or life-threatening, you can make an appointment with your GP / doctor. Many GPs now have same-day appointments.



## Urgent care

When you need care that needs immediate attention before your next GP appointment. This can include:

### Skin allergies & insect bites

- A rash without pain, vomiting or fever
- Swelling of limbs, fingers, toes, etc (oedema)
- Insect stings
- Spider bites

### Infections

- Teeth / toothache
- Sinus
- Respiratory (coughs and colds)
- Small skin wounds (red and inflamed)

### Injuries

- Sprains, strains
- Small bones (toes, fingers, ankles, wrists)
- Minor burns (not deep but is red & irritated)

### Ear, nose, throat & eye

- Small things stuck in the ear, nose or eye
- Nose bleeds
- Suspected tonsillitis
- Sinus issues



## Emergency care

Emergency or life-threatening illnesses and injuries require immediate medical attention and management by an emergency department or hospital. Call triple zero (000) if this applies to you.

Sometimes it is difficult to know if your condition is life-threatening, in which case you should call triple zero (000) or go to your nearest emergency department.

### Always access emergency care, not urgent care, for:

- Chest pain or tightness
- Breathing difficulties
- Uncontrollable bleeding
- Severe burns
- Poisoning
- Numbness or paralysis
- Unconsciousness
- Unresponsiveness
- Seizures
- Ongoing fever in infants

Source: <https://www.health.gov.au/find-a-medicare-ucc/when-to-visit>

## Urgent Care Options

When you need immediate care, but it isn't life-threatening

### Virtual Emergency Department

(Online service – smart phone or computer with camera required)  
No appointment necessary | Free service  
24 hours, 7 days  
Interpreter services available  
[vved.org.au](http://vved.org.au)

### Health Direct (Nurse on call)

(Telephone service)  
No appointment necessary | Free service  
24 hours, 7 days  
1300 60 60 24

### Grampians Health Edenhope Urgent Care Centre

In-person services | No fee | No appointment necessary  
24 hours, 7 days  
Ph: 5585 9800  
128-134 Elizabeth Street, Edenhope

### National Home Doctor (Health Direct)

(Telephone service) After hours GP clinic  
Bulk-billed for eligible Medicare card holders | Booking lines open:  
6pm weekdays, 12 noon Saturday, all day Sunday and public holidays  
13SICK (137 425)

### Doctors on Demand

(Online service – smart phone or computer with camera required)  
An out-of-pocket fee applies to most appointments.  
Book online 24 hours, 7 days  
[doctorsondemand.com.au](http://doctorsondemand.com.au)

## Helplines

- Pregnancy Birth and Baby Hotline 1800 882 436
- Victorian Poisons Information Centre 131 126
- Lifeline 13 11 14
- Beyond Blue 1300 224 636
- Sexual Assault Crisis Line 1800 806 292
- Safe Steps Family Violence Centre 1800 015 188
- Rainbow Door (LGBTIQ+) 1800 729 367
- Kids Helpline 1800 551 800
- 13YARN 13 92 76

## GPs and Medical Centres

Find your closest medical service at [healthdirect.gov.au](http://healthdirect.gov.au)

### Edenhope Medical Clinic

No fee/Appointment required  
9am – 5pm, Monday to Friday  
Ph: 5585 9888  
Lake Street, Edenhope

### Harrow Bush Nursing Centre

No appointment required for Urgent Care/\$25 non-member fee, \$10 member fee  
8.30am – 4.30pm, Monday to Friday  
Ph: 5588 2000  
24 Blair Street, Harrow

## Emergency Departments

For life-threatening emergencies, chest pain or uncertainty

Call Triple Zero (000) or proceed to your nearest Emergency Dept.

Your nearest Emergency Department is:

### Wimmera Base Hospital

No fee  
24 hours, 7 days  
Ph: 5381 9111  
Access from Baillie Street



Emergency: call Triple Zero (000)  
Urgent but not life threatening: see options at top of page  
Not urgent: see your regular GP

[my.gh.org.au/emergency](http://my.gh.org.au/emergency)