



FoundationNEWS

Spring 2021

NEW, LIFE-CHANGING EQUIPMENT FOR NORTHERN HEALTH'S OPHTHALMOLOGY DEPARTMENT



At Northern Health, while we have been busy dealing with the impact of COVID-19, we haven't lost sight of our other patients who need our care every single day.

As a Foundation, our role is to support Northern Health in their vision to create a healthier community. We do this by funding life-changing equipment, research and training.

We are currently working on a fundraising campaign which aims to improve the outcomes of patients with cataracts.

According to the World Health Organisation, cataracts is one of the world's leading causes of blindness.

A past patient, Richard O'Hea, describes it as feeling as if he was 'always in a fog.'

'I would constantly be rubbing my eyes thinking they

had dirt in them. So, when I was finally diagnosed as having cataracts, I knew I needed to be proactive about getting it seen to. I am a really active person – the last thing I wanted was to progressively go blind.'

The time has come for us to upgrade some of the equipment in our Ophthalmology Department. This equipment has served us well, performing over 1,400 operations each year. But the demand for our services is growing. The longer patients wait to be treated, the higher the risk of legal blindness, or even total blindness.

By purchasing the latest state of the art equipment, our dedicated doctors, led by Dr Suheb Ahmed, Head of Ophthalmology, can attend to even more patients sooner. Patients will have access to a specialised level of care in their own community rather than having to go elsewhere for treatment.

Can you help make a difference in the "eyes" of our community? Donations towards new equipment can be made via our website.

THANK YOU EVENT WRAP-UP



On Thursday evening, 29 April, Northern Health Foundation was delighted to host their first face-to-face event for 2021 to thank and acknowledge the generous philanthropic support from our wonderful community.

Held at Seafarers Residences Display Suite in Docklands, the event recognised the work of Northern Health Foundation's dedicated patrons, corporate partners, philanthropic supporters, and volunteers over the past 12 months.

"Here tonight, we celebrate the work of many people who give so generously in support of Northern Health," said Andrew Williamson, Executive Director Public Affairs and Foundation.

Among the guests were Jennifer Williams AM, Northern Health Board Chair, Siva Sivarajah, Northern Health Chief Executive, Northern Health Board Directors and Northern Health Foundation Board Directors, Northern Health Executive, clinicians and staff, and Northern Health Foundation Patrons, Bev Carman, Josie Minniti, and Trudi Hay.

"This event brought together donors, clinicians and grateful patients to highlight that, 'together, we make an impact'. It is so rewarding to see our staff being able to personally thank the donors who supported the health service," said Andrew.

"It is your continued support that helps us provide great care to our community."

Special thanks to Riverlee, in particular, David Lee and Northern Health Foundation Board Member, Tricia Lee, for hosting the event at their spectacular venue.

"While it has been a challenging year for fundraising, we are thrilled to contribute over \$622,000 to Northern Health, to support the areas of teaching, training and research, education, and the purchase of much needed medical equipment," said John Molnar OAM, Northern Health Foundation Board Chair.

One of our most significant achievements in 2020 was the funding of an Endobronchial Ultrasound Service (EBUS) which will reduce patient wait times for lung cancer stage diagnosis and treatment.

"I would like to extend my sincerest gratitude to all of our generous supporters, patrons, corporate partners, dedicated volunteers, Northern Health staff, and everyone who has contributed towards our fundraising efforts through donations, grants, and support at our events," said John.

"We are grateful and honoured that you have chosen us to support and make saving lives possible. I'd also like to thank my fellow Foundation Directors and community fundraisers for their tireless work in supporting the work of Northern Health."

The evening also included a presentation from Linda Romano, Divisional Director of Surgical Services. Linda spoke about Northern Health Foundation's current fundraising campaign to support the purchase of new state of the art technology in the field of ophthalmology. This will ensure the latest and most effective technology is available to patients in our community who require cataract surgery.

"We are thrilled to share that a generous family donated \$50,000 on the night to launch the campaign," Andrew explained.

"It is your continued support that helps us provide great care to our community."



A FRUITFUL DRY JULY

They came together. Twenty-three individuals – staff members, our partners, a cancer patient and her daughter. Each with a different personal reason. All sharing a common goal. To make a difference to patients with cancer. To them, their sacrifice didn't compare to that of the people who would ultimately benefit from their efforts.

While they went 'Dry' for a good cause, they reaped many other rewards.

Firstly, they tripled last year's effort, raising a grand total of \$31,199. Secondly, they finished seventh (out of 100) on the overall leader board. And most importantly, they raised enough money to purchase another car for the Day Oncology Unit at Northern Health. This means more cancer and haematology patients can be administered their chemotherapy and other supportive treatments within the safety and comfort of their own homes. A service that is extremely important right now.

Melissa Gwynne, Nurse Unit Manager, Day Oncology, is thrilled at the success of the Dry July fundraising campaign and the opportunity to purchase a new car for the NOAH@Home Program (Northern Health Oncology and Haematology at Home) which was

launched last year. "Another vehicle will enable us to expand our geographical parameters to include areas such as Kilmore, Wandong, and Broadford," says Melissa.

No-one is prouder than team leader, and our very own Fundraising and Relationships Manager, Josie Verga, who cheered along her teammates every step of the way, keeping them focused on the goal. "Every team member is a winner. Giving up alcohol during July, and especially during lockdown, is an admirable achievement," says Josie.

She also acknowledges the amazing support of Aware Super, Readings Cinema, Melbourne Markets, and Quest Apartments, who provided incentives and prizes for the team.

There's nothing like some healthy competition and an inspiring vision to bring people together.

As expressed by team member and Divisional Director, Nursing and Surgical Services, Linda Romano, "I am so happy the group demonstrated our health service values of 'together' with this one."

Congratulations to the Dry July team. Thank you for showing us what can be achieved by working as a team. We are excited to see what next year will bring... Cheers!



THANK YOU

With the help of our supporters, we have been able to fund this equipment for Northern Health.

Vein finder and stand
for cancer patients

\$7,650

Vital signs monitor
(6 units)

\$18,519

Ice machine -
Children's Ward

\$5,721

Ceiling hoist

\$8,672

2 x neonatal ventilators

\$111,500

EBUS

\$484,000



Caring FOR KIDS

CARING FOR KIDS

Victorians continue to be challenged. Our COVID-19 case numbers are rising while our frontline teams work tirelessly to vaccinate the community and care for our sick patients.

The pressure on families is growing, particularly on those who are in isolation or recovering from COVID-19. Many families are having to live separately during this time to minimise the spread of the virus. This is particularly difficult when there are very young children involved.

Northern Health is currently caring for some of these young children while their parents or carers are recovering from COVID-19 and not able to care for them. You can just imagine the fear and uncertainty these children would be experiencing.

To make the children feel welcomed and comfortable during their time with us, it is important to create an environment which is safe and welcoming despite the uncertainty they may be experiencing. We felt compelled to lend a hand. Together with our staff and community partners, we have been successful in creating that environment. With toys and through play, we are brightening the days of these children. As we all know, there is no greater reward than seeing a child smile.

According to Nurse Unit Manager, Barbara Rischitelli, who has been working on this project, "I think it's a great idea to highlight how much all the donations

have assisted the kids. Some of the children told me they didn't want to leave as they were having so much fun. That's when we know we have created a safe and caring environment for them".

Our sincere gratitude to the local businesses who contributed significantly to the appeal: Turosi Giving, Moose Toys, Hinkler Books, Soxy Beast, Woolworths, Pacific Epping, Bunnings, and Rotary. Thank you also to staff at Northern Health for putting their hand up to donate without a second thought.

At times like these, when we come together to care for our community's most vulnerable, we are living the values at the heart of Northern Health.



Thank You



SOXY BEAST



PACIFICEPPING



Woolworths



VIRTUAL ED PARTNERS WITH AMBULANCE VICTORIA

Northern Health's Virtual Emergency Department (ED) has now partnered with Ambulance Victoria, allowing paramedics to use the Virtual ED service from a patient's home, without the busy waiting rooms, and receive emergency medical advice and care.

Amanda Thornton Acting Regional Improvement Lead, Ambulance Victoria, said this partnership will help connect patients with the services that best meet their health needs.

"Our aim is to minimise exposure to COVID-19, by spending less time at the hospital, and keeping care at home or closer to home. We are essentially going to bring the Emergency Department to their home," she said.

The new partnership means that once paramedics arrive on scene, they can determine if the patient would be suitable for Virtual Emergency and, once confirmed, a dedicated pathway is set up for paramedics to access the service. The Virtual ED and Ambulance Victoria partnership will cover the north-eastern hospital catchment area.

"To be able to use the technology to support our work will have a greater impact on the wider



community, making us more available to more cases," Amanda added.

Currently, Northern Health's Virtual ED sees close to 90 patients a day, showing a significant increase since the recent wave of COVID-19 started.

For Northern Health, this is another step towards bringing care to patients, keeping them well at home and making sure they can readily access emergency care.

Virtual ED is open 8 am – 11.30 pm, every day, including weekends. Interpreters are available. Patients with COVID-19 can access the service 24/7. To connect to the Virtual ED, please head to nh.org.au/ed.

EXCELLENCE IN RESEARCH

The 2021 Annual Scientific Meeting of the International Society on Thrombosis and Haemostasis brought together thousands of the world's leading experts on thrombosis, haemostasis and vascular biology. Held online in mid-July, the conference saw presentations from all over the world, with two of Northern Health's presentations recognised as "Top 5 Australian Research" by 'The Limbic'.

Dr Brandon Lui, a resident at Northern Health, was one of the participants at the conference. He started here as a student in 2017 and, in his final year, commenced research with the Haematology Department.

Dr Yin Lim, Head of Diagnostic Haematology and Thrombosis Research Lead, said her research team submitted six abstracts and all six got accepted. Three were accepted with a presentation webinar, and one of them was her presentation on global coagulation assays.

"These assays allow us to look at a more holistic picture of clot assessment including clot formation and dissolution, which we can't assess from other

standard coagulation tests. I am planning to finish my PhD in the next couple of months and we are expanding our research and hoping to validate more assays by the end of the year," she added.

Both Brandon and Yin didn't expect for their presentations to be recognised as "Top 5" and were pleasantly surprised to hear about the recognition.



VALE

John 'The Gentleman' Macwhirter



Recently, we farewelled one of our much-loved volunteers. John made a huge impact at Northern Health, particularly at our Broadmeadows campus.

Here is part of a moving tribute by Volunteer Co-ordinator Monica Polimeni...

"We ask all our new volunteers to bring their 'backpack of qualities' needed to get through their first day of volunteering. John's backpack was overflowing from the very first day he started. He brought his compassion, a great sense of understanding, an infectious laugh, an amazing amount of empathy, his generosity, an ability to listen in silence, to have an open mind, and simply be whatever the patients needed him to be.

With his beloved dogs, Tilly and Hugo, always by his side, 'our John' came to us with a desire to help the patients. Little did he know that he would have such a big impact on the staff and his fellow volunteers."

Volunteers are woven into the fabric of Northern Health. The time they give to our health service is beyond measure. On behalf of everyone at Northern Health, we extend our deepest sympathy to John's family, to his fellow volunteers, and to anyone whose life was touched by John.

WAYS TO SUPPORT US

INCLUDE A GIFT IN YOUR WILL



A Will is a legal document that ensures your assets are distributed according to your wishes. By leaving a gift to Northern Health Foundation in your Will, the Northern community will benefit both now and in the future. Your generosity will enable us to continue to fund the purchase of medical equipment, research and training, and continually help to improve our healthcare service in response to increasing demand in the Northern community.

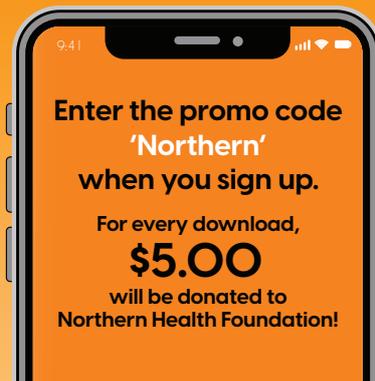
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