

ACUTE NEWS

AUGUST 2020

healthcare™



A NOTE FROM TIM YEOH

Welcome to the August edition of Acute News. 2020 has been an unprecedented time for all of us as we continue to face one of the greatest challenges to our communities and families in our lifetimes. I wanted to focus this month on the great work our teams have been doing through these difficult times,

with a particular focus on the Victorian COVID-19 Crisis. Every day I have been inspired by the selfless efforts of our teams as they go above and beyond to do their part to help. Thanks to all of you – you're all Healthe Care heroes!

Tim Yeoh, CEO Acute Services



RESPONDING TO THE VICTORIAN COVID-19 CRISIS AT MULGRAVE AND EPPING PRIVATE HOSPITALS

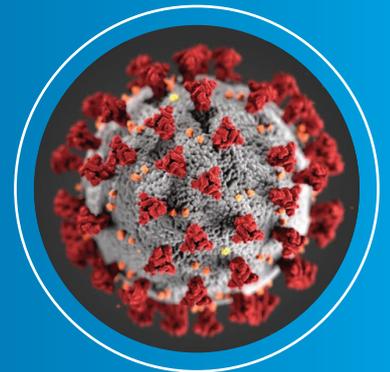
With Victoria being declared a 'state of disaster' and Stage Four restrictions introduced for metropolitan Melbourne from August 2nd, (Stage Three in regional Victoria), the state is currently battling the unprecedented challenges presented by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Stage Four restrictions for metropolitan Melbourne has meant the broad temporary closure of many businesses and industries, with only 'essential' workers and certain industries permitted to work. A curfew of 8pm, a 5km radius for exercising and shopping, and mask wearing (state-wide) is also mandated.

With Aged Care facilities in Victoria suffering the highest cumulative caseloads of COVID-19, there is a huge focus on supporting those most vulnerable in the community.

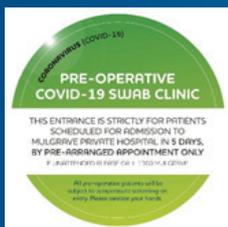
To enable the Victorian health system to support COVID-19 management, all non-urgent elective surgeries have been suspended, with only Category 1 and urgent Category 2 procedures permitted.

Like other areas of the country, Healthe Care is engaged in a Comprehensive Agreement between the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) and other private hospital operators, established to ensure the continuity of patient care, where it is needed most. As a result, Healthe Care's Victorian hospitals have in recent weeks, stepped up to support the community through these challenging times.



RESPONDING TO COMMUNITY NEED AT MULGRAVE PRIVATE

From the outset of the pandemic, Mulgrave Private Hospital formed a pandemic steering committee, chaired by Deputy CEO Maree Wilson. This committee has been instrumental in ensuring the safety of the hospital community by implementing robust processes, making important decisions and keeping the community informed of the hospital's state. There are many strict protocols in place, including:



- Temporarily ceasing Visiting Hours
- Making mask wearing mandatory across the hospital
- Thermal testing is utilised for entry screening
- Mulgrave Private Hospital is running its own on-site pre-operative COVID-19 test clinic for all patients scheduled for an upcoming admission under a general/local anaesthetic or IV sedation (on-site pre-operative COVID-19 testing is also being provided at Healthe Care's Hobson Healthcare facilities in Werribee and Sydenham).

At the end of July, at the request of the Victorian Health Department, Mulgrave Private Hospital also admitted 21 residents from Outlook Gardens Aged Care and Christian Retirement Village in response to the Aged Care facility having recorded multiple COVID-19 cases. The arrangements for medical management and care of the residents is being coordinated by a team of specialists, supported by the wonderful staff on the Mulgrave Private's Harvie Ward.

"The team's mission has been to do its utmost to ensure the patients' safety, continuity of care and comfort, as well as ensuring that their families and loved ones receive regular communication from both the patients and our staff," said Maree.

OFFERING RESPECT AND DIGNITY IN THE FACE OF UNCERTAINTY

One of Mulgrave Private's nurses, Marlies, very thoughtfully added some brightness to the rooms of the Aged Care residents as they settled into their rooms on Harvie Ward, in the form of some stunning flowers.

Outside her nursing role the Flynn Ward, Marlies and her husband run Betterbuyflowers. In a wonderful display of community spirit, Marlies was able to collectively source flowers from local growers, then together with her daughter, arrange them in vases and adding special notes of care and positivity for each patient. This beautiful, heartfelt sentiment was exceptionally well received by the clients, families and staff – Love Your Work Marlies!

Each day a dedicated staff member also makes calls to the residents' families to keep them updated, while each week a 'resident of the week' from the Harvie Ward is profiled and celebrated across both the ward and broader hospital. These simple touches of kindness are helping the residents feel welcome and secure in their 'home away from home'.



RECOMMISSIONING EPPING PRIVATE HOSPITAL



While the team at Mulgrave Private Hospital have been focused on supporting Aged Care clients, the Victorian leadership team, driven by Kieron Martin, Executive Manager, has concurrently been working to recommission the former Epping Private Hospital facility, to provide capacity to assist the community in these unprecedented times.

Epping Private Hospital was closed at the end of March this year, but with the modern 24 bed facility vacant, Health Care has been working closely with DHHS to re-open the facility to meet the needs of the Victorian Aged Care community

Within weeks of being asked by the Victorian government to stand-up the facility, a high quality team led by newly appointed CEO/DCS Dean Palmbly has been recruited, with over 50 nurses, doctors and support staff from across Victoria, South Australia, Western Australia and New South Wales.

The hospital now boasts 24 beautifully furnished single bed rooms, each with an en-suite, providing a contemporary environment which meets the stringent requirements required to provide high quality healthcare during the COVID-19 pandemic environment.

The hospital currently hosts COVID Positive patients who have transferred from residential aged care facilities. Kieron says, "We are absolutely committed to do all that we can to support the Melbourne and wider Victorian community during the pandemic. Epping Private Hospital has been re-born with new a new team, new furniture and equipment and a new cohort of patients."

He went on to say that "Having started with a completely empty hospital we have been able to learn from best practice at Mulgrave Private Hospital and Brunswick Private Hospital, in developing our processes and procedures."

Although demand for access to the beds was intense, the team at Epping Private Hospital and our Health Care Risk & Quality team had to ensure that we met all required operating standards before undergoing a rigorous review from the Department of Health and Human Services.

"The main focus of attention from the outset has been the recruitment, induction and development of our team. Within two weeks we recruited and commenced orientation of over 50 staff, primarily with support from the team at Mulgrave Private Hospital and our Infection Control Consultant, Jan Weyland from HICMR, with training taking place in a dedicated Orientation Room on-site," said Dean Palmbly.



THE PERSONAL TOUCH

The team at Epping Private Hospital carefully assess the needs of each Aged Care patient to ensure that they have a safe and comfortable stay. Each patient is treated as an 'individual', whether it is the type of high backed chair that is best suited to them; the method by which they communicate to their family and loved ones using one of the hospital iPads; or any other aspect of their stay.



Wherever possible patients are encouraged to use their own personal device if they have one, but when required access to a hospital iPad is provided, which can be operated within a sealed, disposable zip-lock bag. The iPads provide valuable connectivity with friends and family, and also provide media apps such as Netflix and Foxtel Go for those who subscribe.

Another aspect of care that is recognised as being of significant importance is meeting the dietary needs of the patients, some of whom are frail and elderly. In conjunction with the on-site kitchen and Monash Health, the hospital provides a wide range of food services throughout the day. "The selection of meals is quite amazing" says Dean. "Our menu has up to 12 choices and it's possible to have a meat or chicken roast meal for lunch and dinner every day if a patient wants! Our meals are also adapted to the health and welfare needs of each individual, whether it is texture modified, gluten free, Halal or vegetarian. We tested every one of them during the staff orientation sessions."



TEAM WORK THE KEY TO SUCCESS

"Our team brings together nurses from different states; from Acute, Specialty and Aged Care; and those with only a few years in nursing to those that have a lifetime of nursing behind them. Under the leadership of Dean and our Nurse Unit Manager, Melissa Fox, the team has completed a comprehensive program of training and has access to state-of-the-art technology and a wealth of support from across HealthCare Australia", said Kieron.

The medical management and care of patients is being led by a team of Specialists, who consider all aspects of health and wellbeing when providing holistic care, including the physical, emotional and psychological condition of each individual.

"Our support services team is the 'glue' in all that we are doing. Whether we are in need of food, PPE, clinical waste bags or paper for the copier – they are there with our supplies and a smile. Quite simply, never have services considered as 'back of house' been so much at the front of all that we do," said Dean.

But none of this could have happened if it weren't for the entire HealthCare team pulling together. "Turning an empty hospital and a team of one into a fully functioning, high quality hospital has been a major achievement. We could not have done it without the support of the project team comprising of Aaran Stent (IT), Eddy Joyce (Procurement), Adam Thompson (Building and Infrastructure) and Anita Woods and Bernie Lyons (Quality and Risk Management) and their colleagues. Hats off to everyone who has played a role in this major achievement!" said Kieron.

RECOGNISING A HEALTH CARE HERO: IRIS FREEMAN



On August 7th, Tim Yeoh, HealthCare CEO Acute Services, sent out a call-to-arms for anyone willing to go to Melbourne to support our hospitals with their frontline fight against the COVID-19 pandemic. Team Epping recently welcomed the first such recruit, Iris Freeman, Quality and Education Manager at Wollongong Day Surgery!

Iris has a wealth of experience in nursing, having worked in England and South Africa as well as Australia during her 40+ years in the profession. She is first and foremost an Educator with a keen interest in Patient Safety.

Iris put her hand up to join the HealthCare team in Melbourne because she just felt it was the right thing to do, to offer assistance in these extraordinary times.



Iris has made the journey to Epping to support the hospital initially until the end of September, and possibly longer if needed. She has left behind her husband, adult son & daughter and grandchildren, as well as her beloved dog Spud, in order to support the Victorian team in their response to the residential Aged Care community. Love Your Work Iris!

CONGRATULATIONS: DEBBIE RITTER CEO/DCS AT BRISBANE WATERS PRIVATE HOSPITAL

Deb Ritter was recently appointed as the Chief Executive Officer/Director of Clinical Services at Brisbane Waters Private Hospital. Part of the HealthCare team since the very beginning, Deb trained as an Anaesthetic Technician and Registered Nurse, and was most recently employed as the Chief Nurse for HealthCare before taking on this newly created role.

"I'm particularly passionate about adopting a holistic view of patient care – considering the full journey of our patients from their first appointment with their GP, and supporting them right through to their discharge and beyond. Thinking, how do we best support each patient and their family to have the best experience and receive the best possible care?"

Deb is also committed to supporting, nurturing and developing her staff. "I want to make sure our nurses have opportunities for continuing their education, developing a better understanding of the health care systems; and for all staff to be provided opportunities to upskill and grow."

Her focus at Brisbane Waters Private over the coming months is to continue delivering the excellent range of services on offer, "I want to continue supporting the local elderly population; refining the Mental Health services we provide; and meeting the changing surgical needs of our growing local community, both the young families and our older residents."

Congratulations on your appointment Deb!



SELF PAY SURGERY LAUNCHED AT HURSTVILLE PRIVATE HOSPITAL

Hurstville Private Hospital launched Self Pay Surgery in July, the first Health Care site to launch this service. Already the Self Pay platform has received a positive response from the general public and the participating surgeons.

Self Pay Surgery has been developed to address the need for patients to access quality surgeons, at affordable rates, without the need for lengthy wait times. Based on successful models from the UK and overseas, Self Pay Surgery provides a range of packaged surgery products, with procedures undertaken at first rate private hospitals by highly qualified, experienced surgeons.

The range of surgeries on offer initially include Urology, Bariatric Weight Loss, Gastrosocopy and Colonoscopy, and Wisdom Teeth Extraction. Current wait times for these services in the public sector can range up to 4 months, with other procedures facing far lengthier delays.

Patients wishing to access Self Pay Surgery first need to obtain a referral from their GP, with all the remaining work undertaken by the Self Pay Surgery team. The team coordinate bookings with a selection of renowned, local surgeons on a first available basis, then coordinate the hospital admission, and any follow up appointments and rehabilitation.

Patients can access and review all of the information on the Self Pay Surgery packages via the website selfpaysurgery.com.au or by speaking to a trained Self Pay product specialist on **1800 SELF PAY**.



ONLINE COVID-19 SCREENING PLATFORM TRIALED AT MAITLAND PRIVATE HOSPITAL



Maitland Private Hospital was one of the first sites to trial the new Health Care COVID-19 pre-screening platform, rolling out the QR code screening on Monday August 10. The team reported a positive experience with the first few days of using the app. Narelle Hewlett, who is managing the screening at Maitland Private, said overall the feedback had been great.

“We’ve had a few patients and visitors arrive on-site and find that they have very old phones which are not compatible with the QR code, so it’s been important to have the paper screening forms still available. Other patients have not been able to scan the code even with newer phones. Some of them have had to download the QR code reader app from the app store, while others need to go into their camera settings and turn on the ‘Scan QR Codes’ option.

One of the key benefits of the platform is that it remembers the information, so for staff or visitors entering multiple days in a row, all of their details are pre-populated and they just need to answer the screening questions each day. Although there will be visitors and patients who need assistance with the new screening process, we’re grateful that we’ll save time and paper in the long term.”

SPECIAL CARE FOR OUR NEWEST ARRIVALS AT GOSFORD PRIVATE HOSPITAL

The Maternity team at Gosford Private Hospital recently supported the birth of twins, Ava and Louis, born at just 34.5 weeks on the 7th of August. Weighing in at only 2.20kg and 1.87kg respectively, the twins have spent the past two weeks being cared for in the hospital’s Special Care Nursery.

“Pregnancy-wise it was reasonably straightforward, however being twins it was obviously a bit more challenging than a single pregnancy. In the last month of the pregnancy we found out that we needed to book in for a caesarean because little Louis had stopped growing as much as he needed to be and little Ava was taking over a bit. The safest option at that stage was to have an emergency caesarean at 34.5 weeks,” said mum Lani.

The birth itself went well thanks to the support of Obstetrician, Dr Peta Skilbeck, and the Gosford Private team, with the twins placed in the Special Care Nursery and initially supported with their breathing using the hospital’s bubble CPAP (continuous positive airway pressure) machine. The hospital’s facilities and highly trained staff enabling them to stay on the Central Coast and not be transferred down to Sydney. The babies have since gone from strength to strength, putting on weight, learning to breastfeed and beginning to thrive. “It’s been really nice to see the tubes coming out and for the equipment to be gradually taken away.”

Parents Lani and Steve chose to have their twins at Gosford Private under the care of Dr Skilbeck, who also delivered their first child in 2018. “It has been a little bit strange since the babies were born, especially in the middle of COVID times, which has been challenging in terms of family and friends and especially the twins’ older sibling not being able to visit, but the care has been amazing and I’ve felt really confident even though they were premature and have had some extra special care. I’ve been very confident in the nursing and medical staff here, I’ve been really comfortable. Becoming a ‘boarder mum’ has made life a little bit easier, as I’ve been able to go down and spend time with my other daughter in the hospital’s coffee shop, as well as spend time with my twins.” Lani and Steve are looking forward to taking the twins home to get to know their 2.5 year old big sister Amelie properly, and getting into the rhythm of life as a family of 5.



OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY ON THE LAKE

AT FORSTER PRIVATE HOSPITAL

Evelyn Holt, an Occupational Therapist at Forster Private Hospital, was delighted to hear the goals of one of her recent patients, Della Herbert. Aged in her early 70s, Della joined the hospital's Day Therapy Program after critical illness following a total knee replacement. Prior to this, Della's regular activities included kayaking, surfing, swimming and regular beach walks (about 7km with friends). With the severity of her injury, she thought her activities would never be a possibility after surgery.

For Evelyn, creating an Occupational Therapy program that would allow Della to reach her goals was a challenge she happily accepted. Their first goal was to return to walking on the beach. During initial sessions, which involved walking approximately 4km around the community on even and then uneven surfaces (sand, rocks, slopes), Evelyn noticed improvement and confidence and increased Della's plan to tackle more challenging routes. From there, the goal was to return to surfing and Della's first hurdle was to master balance and recovery if she came off her board.

During the last week of her program, Evelyn challenged Della to a paddle – a 30 minute kayaking session where Evelyn could paddle alongside her and really gauge her progress. In Forster, the Allied Health team is lucky enough to have lake front access at the end of the street where the hospital is. Despite the rainy day, Evelyn and Della paddled around Wallis Lake, practicing getting in and out of the kayak with ease and no discomfort. With thanks to Evelyn's program, Della now reports that she has fully returned to all her pre-operative activities!



STEPPING INTO A COMBINED LEADERSHIP ROLE

AT TUGGERAH LAKES PRIVATE HOSPITAL



Andrew Mereau has been appointed as the Chief Executive Officer/Director of Clinical Services at Tuggerah Lakes Private Hospital. With a nursing career spanning over 18 years, and having been part of Health Care team since 2007, Andrew has a wealth of experience across a range of management and clinical roles, including as a Conjoint Fellow with the School of Nursing and Midwifery at the University of Newcastle.

"I had a change in career in my late 20's after previously working in the radio industry as a producer – I had always wanted to work in the health industry as a Doctor or Nurse since leaving school, and circumstances allowed me to change. I have a passion for surgery, which led me to work in the operating theatres for most of my clinical years but now I enjoy management, in particular the ability to mentor and guide future managers in their careers."

Living on the Central Coast and having been part of the Tuggerah Lakes Private team since 2019, Andrew already has strong relationships within the local community, with local Surgeons and Doctors, and with the Hospital's staff.

"the wonderful people at Tuggerah Lakes Private is what makes this hospital stand out. Every day I see evidence of our staff's passion and commitment to ensuring that not only are our patients given the best care, but also the teamwork and relationships built behind the scenes are valued."

RETIREMENT AFTER MORE THAN A DECADE OF SERVICE TO SHELLHARBOUR PRIVATE HOSPITAL

Brian Moss has been with Shellharbour Private Hospital for over a decade, working as both a physio aid and most recently in the maintenance department. He is now off to enjoy his retirement with his partner Tracey.

What is one of your most memorable moments at Shellharbour Private Hospital?

"In maintenance, walking through theatres with all your theatre gear on and you've got a hammer and a big screwdriver in your hand, walking past patients waiting for surgery and you just give them a wink to see the look on their face."

What are your plans for retirement/what are you most looking forward to?

"I'd like to get away and go travelling. I want to go back to Thailand, visit Cambodia and Vietnam. I've got an old car I'm doing up and an old bike that I'm putting back together so that'll keep me busy."

What will you remember about Shellharbour Private Hospital?

"Mostly the staff you're working with, and a couple of the stories I mentioned to you, as every now and again you think of something in your head and it gives you a little laugh." Thank you Brian for your dedication to the hospital for over a decade, we wish you all the best.



JOINING FORCES TO FIGHT CANCER

AT FOSTER PRIVATE HOSPITAL

Dr Celli Marchett and Dr Ted Livshin together have over 35 years' experience in practising medicine. The pair have recently joined forces in the Forster Private Hospital Oncology Unit, providing specialist expertise and care to their local Great Lakes community.

Dr Livshin says that what he finds most rewarding about his work is seeing many people now living longer than before, especially with newer treatments such as immunotherapy. "I enjoy seeing newer developments in this speciality and making a difference in the quality of life."

While Dr Celli Marchett enjoys helping patients to achieve milestones on their treatment, "I celebrate their achievements as my own. Helping people that are going through difficult times is also very rewarding as they appreciate knowing they are not alone and you are always there for them." Learn more about the Oncology Unit at <https://tinyurl.com/y2gnlxhy>

