You help save lives too  
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You showed great heart for our Cardiac team

Because of you, today the Cardiac team has the 3mensio software helping to analyse a patient’s heart to identify the right aortic valve size before they begin the replacement valve procedure.

They also have been able to purchase a Vascular Ultrasound Machine to help the team accurately guide placement of a long tube into the groin artery, reducing the chance of complications for patients.

"It’s a beautiful machine and I can’t thank the donors enough for supplying it" says A/Prof. Omar Farouque, Director Cardiology.

You were there for our nurses

What amazing support you gave in response to our Nurses Appeal. Our nurses were overwhelmed with your generosity and kind words of thanks and support. Over 2,000 of you generously donated $150,000.

This will support nurses with further development of their profession through scholarship opportunities to improve their practice and patient care. This support would not be available without your generosity.

You helped people with serious spinal injuries

You gave $39,000 which helped buy new teleconferencing equipment for our spinal unit. This has made a significant difference to patients who use wheelchairs who would normally have to travel from regional Victoria or interstate to be assessed for nerve and tendon transfer surgery.

These patients can now have their assessment completed via videoconference, saving them time and money.

You helped people with quadriplegia, like Rob, have access to surgical assessment for life-changing surgery without having to travel long distances.

You help save lives too
Thank you

Last year our generous community of donors contributed almost $7 million to Austin Health. Through your incredible support we’ve invested in new equipment, research, training and education for our staff.

We’ve also seen fantastic support of our appeals including our Christmas Appeal where many of you not only made a donation but sent a message of support to our staff. You overwhelmed us with your generosity and helped make it the most successful Christmas Appeal in five years.

You can find out how your donations are helping patients on page 2 and read some of the wonderful messages below.

Thank you for your ongoing support - you really do make a difference to patients, staff, families and carers. I’m thrilled to know that caring people like you will again help us as we continue to realise our vision of shaping the future through exceptional care, discovery and learning. I look forward to sharing our journey with you.

With gratitude,

Sue Shilbury
Chief Executive Officer

Thank you for sending your messages of support to our nurses

“Thank you to the wonderful staff...for turning my life around. You are angels at the hospital...”
– Annette

“Thank you for the work you do to make the lives of your patients meaningful, worthwhile, special.”
– Karen

“We will never forget your compassion. We are entirely grateful.”
– Kingsley and Janet

“After having a cardiac arrest on Christmas Eve last year the nurses told my wife I was a Christmas miracle when I regained consciousness on Christmas Day. Thank you.”
– Michael
The Victorian Poisons Information Centre (VPIC) has published its 2018 Annual Report, providing a fascinating insight into the busy statewide service based at Austin Health.

On average VPIC received 114 calls a day and a total of 41,717 calls in 2018, making it one of the services' busiest years since being established in 1962. Last January was the busiest month for VPIC, with 3760 calls received.

"The majority of our calls are received following exposures to household substances or pharmaceutical products. Additionally, in the warmer months we receive calls about bites and stings from ants, bees, wasps, red backs, huntsman, white tails, scorpions, centipedes, leeches, ticks, snakes and marine creatures such as box jellyfish. Whereas in the winter months, people call after ingesting wild mushrooms" says Dr Shaun Greene, Medical Director for VPIC.

"In 2018 we received 226 calls about mushrooms. Sometimes it's children eating mushrooms they've found in the backyard, or people finding wild mushrooms that they think look edible."

Shaun says that VPIC also get quite a few queries from people asking whether a mushroom they've found is safe to eat. VPIC's answer is a blanket no, as there is no test for whether a mushroom is safe to eat.

The majority of calls about exposure to a poison involved toddlers and adults. With toddlers aged 1-3 making up 38% of all calls and adults aged 20-74 making up 39%. Significantly, nearly 90% of exposures to poison occurred at home. VPIC aims to prevent unnecessary ambulance callouts and hospital visits by providing appropriate and prompt treatment says Shaun.

"We're proactively sharing what we know and doing our bit to inform and hopefully prevent poisonings" says Shaun.

You can call the Victorian Poisons Information Centre on 13 11 26, 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Poisons experts Mark, Jeff and the team take around 114 calls each day, helping provide appropriate and prompt treatment.

Become an Austin Health Hero at Run Melbourne this July 29!

Run with purpose by fundraising for Austin Health.

You’ll be helping us continue to provide world-class research and exceptional patient care for you and your community!

Visit: austin.org.au/runmelbourne
or email fundraising@austin.org.au
A record year for liver transplants, thanks to you

More than 100 patients underwent life-saving liver transplants at Austin Health last year, made possible in part through your generous support for the Liver Unit over many years.

This is the first time 100 transplants have been performed in a single year in the Liver Transplant unit’s 30-year history. The unit’s Director, Professor Bob Jones, has been an integral part of the service since it first opened in 1988.

"We started out performing something like 15-20 transplants per year, and we thought that was a lot," he says. "So to get to the point where we've done more than 100 transplants in a single year is an extraordinary change."

More than 700 liver transplants have been performed by the unit since the service began, including approximately 100 paediatric liver transplants, with world-class survival rates achieved.

Mother of two, Leah Hobbs, is one of the patients who received a transplant last year. She’s forever grateful for the liver that saved her life.

Leah had liver failure, triggered by a rare genetic condition. A liver transplant was the only option left. Her mother had the same condition and was saved by a liver transplant 13 years earlier.

"I actually thought I was going to die," says Leah.

Leah was in hospital, gravely ill with liver failure, but was lucky to receive a new liver just in time. She’s one of the incredible stories of survival due to the care of our Liver Transplant unit. The number of transplants performed is unfortunately limited by the availability of organ donors, and currently the demand for donor livers outweighs supply. Leah sees herself as one of the lucky ones.

"What can you say really?" she says. "I have a life, and that’s why it’s pretty emotional. The donor and their family have lost a life. Thank you just doesn’t seem to cut it."

Register as an organ donor - donatelifegovau

Professor Bob Jones AM gets ready to perform a complex, cutting edge liver transplant operation.

Victorian Health Minister David White (centre), with Prof Bob Jones (standing) and his team who had performed the first liver transplant at the Austin Hospital in June 1988.
World-leading research at Austin Health Intensive Care Unit (ICU)

Arguably producing the most amount of research in the world, Austin Health’s ICU has a culture of ongoing learning and always striving for the very best outcome for patients.

"There are more than 100 publications that come out of Austin Health ICU each year," says Dr Glenn Eastwood, Research Manager ICU. "That is second to none for any other unit in the world."

With internationally-awarded Prof. Rinaldo Bellomo at the helm as Research Director ICU, the world's most highly published intensive care specialist of all time, it's hardly surprising.

Attracted to this vibrant research culture, Glenn arrived at Austin Health 10 years ago, managing not only his own PhD research but the many projects and trials already being undertaken by the talented and committed team in this busy intensive care unit.

"We’re always looking for improvements in care", says Glenn. Many patients in ICU are sedated, to help them receive treatment and to recover, but this pre-disposes them to having difficulties in their ability to talk, walk, socialise and be pain-free.

"We want to understand how to better sedate people to minimise the chances of cognitive dysfunction when they awake and go home," says Glenn. "We can do this by using an electroencephalogram (EEG). This looks at the electrical brain waves and helps us to gauge the depth of sedation."

"We hope to find funding to purchase one of these specialised machines so our doctors can make clinical decisions based on evidence. In doing so, we would become a leader in Australia in this aspect of sedation management. A perfect example of how research supports practice."
Spirit of community is alive and well

There’s a special connection between Eilish and Maeve and the ONJ Centre.

Their grandfather was the late Max Campbell. Max worked hard to help secure funding for the new ONJ Centre which opened in 2012. Sadly, he passed away unexpectedly that year, and today Eilish and Maeve are continuing his legacy of giving back to the community.

"We know that every little bit of money donated to the ONJ Centre counts. I want to continue to carry on my Pa’s legacy of his community spirit."
- Eilish

"I know that my Pa would be proud that we are continuing to raise money for the ONJ Centre."
- Maeve

Since holding their first stall in 2013, the girls have raised nearly $10,000, helping people with cancer at Austin Health’s Olivia Newton-John Cancer Wellness & Research Centre.

Thank you Eilish and Maeve!

Community fundraising, like Eilish and Maeve’s cake stall, contributes important funds to Austin Health. If you’re interested in holding a community event contact our Fundraising team on (03) 9496 5753.

What matters to you, matters to us

In August 2018 we asked you to share your thoughts in our Your Opinion Matters survey. You gave us great insight, sharing why you support Austin Health, what areas of healthcare are important to you and much more.

You’ve been a patient
Your loved one was a patient too
You give because you were treated here
and it’s your local hospital

Your top FIVE healthcare areas are
Cancer, Cardiology, Emergency, Surgery, Medical Research

You enjoy reading Vitality especially stories about
Research Staff Patients

And you feel that
Your donations make a difference
We report back to you

Lastly, you want to do more to support Austin Health.

Thank you for sharing what matters to you.

austin.org.au
Yes! I will give towards exceptional patient care at Austin Health

Title: Dr / Mr / Mrs / Miss / Ms (please circle)

Name __________________________

Address __________________________

Suburb __________________________

State _____________ Postcode ________

Mobile __________________________

Email __________________________

Please accept my tax-deductible donation of:

☐ $35 ☐ $50 ☐ $75 ☐ $150  My choice _____

Payment details

☐ My cheque and/or cash gift is enclosed.

☐ VISA  ☐ Mastercard  ☐ AMEX

Card number __________________________

Name on card __________________________

Expiry date ____ / ______

Donations $2 and over are tax deductible.

I would like to find out more about

☐ leaving a gift in my Will to Austin Health OR

☐ I have already included Austin Health in my Will

Donor spotlight

For 14 years, Ken and Gerry Hamer have been making a difference for patients, families and staff at Austin Health through their regular donations. We asked them why they give.

“We’ve chosen to donate to the Austin Hospital as we feel a strong sense of responsibility to contribute to the health of the community...,” they say. “We also have connection to the hospital. One of our children works there and one of us was an inpatient some years ago.”

As long-term donors, Ken and Gerry were recently invited to a special tour of our Cardiac Catheterisation Laboratory and a chance to view an actual procedure from its viewing room. “It was just amazing to be able to view the procedure ... that was a special treat,” said Ken and Gerry. “We learned a lot. We were surprised at how many people are involved in a cardiac procedure and the digital/voice link-up between the cardiac team (in the lab) and the support staff on computers in the viewing room.”

Ken and Gerry feel that by making a donation towards new equipment, they’re helping Austin Health stay at the forefront of medical technology and, in turn, helping patients access the best care. “We’ve donated to Austin Health for many years and hope to be able to continue giving for many years to come.”

Locked Bag 25, Heidelberg VIC 3084
Ph (03) 9496 5753 Email fundraising@austin.org.au