



*****Media release*****

Austin Health volunteers honoured in community volunteer awards

Some of Austin Health's hard working volunteers were recognised in the City of Banyule Community Volunteer Awards 2010. Congratulations to Bernadette Jackson for winning the Banyule Community Volunteer of the Year award.

Mrs Jackson, a retired school teacher, began as a volunteer canteen worker at Heidelberg Repatriation Hospital in 2001. She moved onto helping out in the Emergency Department and later the cancer wards at the Austin Hospital. The volunteers in the Emergency Department aim to improve the patient and family's experience and put them at ease by providing practical and emotional support.

Mrs Jackson said that she felt humbled by her award.

"I come into ED at eight o'clock on Saturday mornings," she said. "I pop my head around a cubical curtain to offer a chat. I meet every kind of person on the planet. I just love it."

Austin Health Life Governor, Mrs Jean MacDonald, was honoured with the Lifetime Achievement award in recognition of 50 years service to the Friends of Austin Health.

At 87 years old, Mrs MacDonald has worked tirelessly for the Greensborough community via the auxiliary; the Country Women's Association; the Red Cross; and Vision Australia. She estimates that she has raised tens of thousands of dollars for charity. Even the deterioration of her vision and her upcoming move into a residential care facility has not slowed Mrs MacDonald.

"I plan to keep doing this until I die," she said. "I love it, it keeps my mind active."

Mrs Jackson and Mrs MacDonald's many years of dedication were recognised in an awards ceremony on the evening of 12 May.