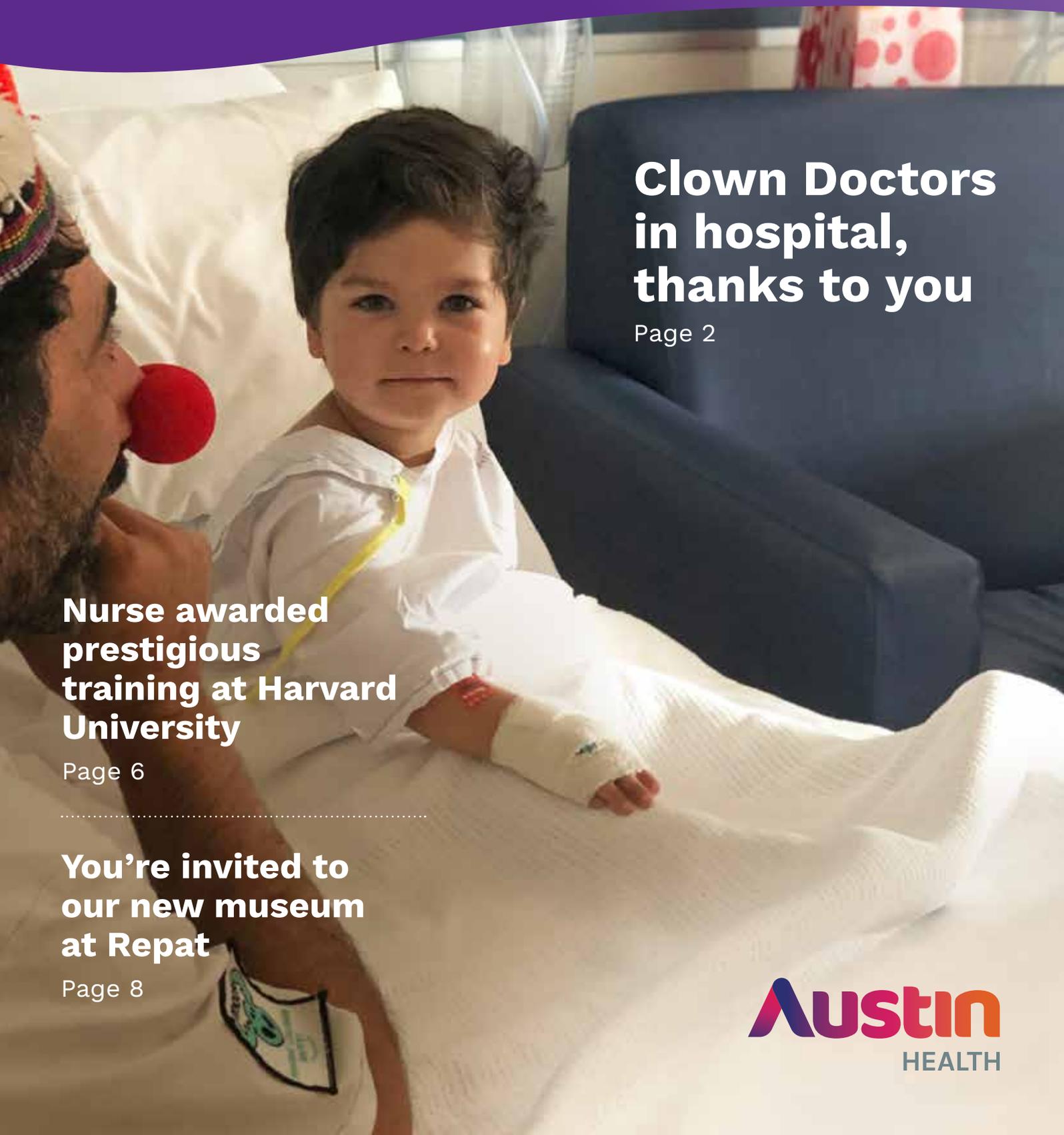


vitality

Autumn 2020



Clown Doctors in hospital, thanks to you

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Nurse awarded prestigious training at Harvard University

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You're invited to our new museum at Repat

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Austin
HEALTH



Look what you made possible!

Last Christmas we asked for your help to make time in hospital more joyful for children.

Paediatric Nurse Unit Manager Jenny Spiller explained how an MRI entertainment system would reduce stress on children and bring more accurate test results. Thanks to an outpouring of support, the MRI entertainment system has been ordered and we're excitedly awaiting its arrival!

In fact, so many of you showed your generosity that professional clowns, called Clown Doctors, will visit our paediatric patients throughout the year!

Stay tuned in the coming months for more photos of the happiness made possible, thanks to YOU.

“

I'm blown away by how many donations we received from the wonderful community. This means kids will watch their favourite movies during an MRI and Clown Doctors will visit our little patients. Thank you.”

- Nurse Jenny



A message from Bernadette Twomey, Chief Nursing Officer

Your support makes a difference each and every day...

Last year we asked you to support nurses at Austin Health who provide compassionate care for patients and their families. Thanks to your incredible donations, the Austin Health Nursing Alumni Scholarship was established.

But how does this help nurses and patients?

It means that our expert nurses can receive additional training in an area they are passionate about and share the new knowledge with other nurses at Austin.

In June, Robyn Purcell, one of our inaugural scholarship recipients, will travel to Harvard University in America to learn from the best simulation educators in the world. Read more on pages 6-7.

Robyn will bring this knowledge back to benefit all our nurses and patients - thanks to your heartfelt donations.

It's an honour to share this issue of *Vitality* with you. The stories within are your stories - made possible thanks to our wonderful community of supporters, including YOU.

With gratitude,



Bernadette Twomey
Chief Nursing Officer



Austin Health Scholarship Recipients -
Simone Patterson, Carolyn Cochrane, Robyn Purcell, Shirley Burke, Dr Emma Cohen, Priscilla Gates and Kat Bateman.

Profound act of kindness



Ashley on Bemm River a few years after his liver transplant.

At Austin Health, profound acts of kindness happen each day. We're delighted to share a beautiful reminder that kindness comes in many forms.

When Ashley Johnson had a liver transplant in 2002, he spent many months in our care and was in awe of how hard staff worked to aid his recovery.

One of those staff members is Social Worker Cath Bradley, who first met Ashley during his pre transplant assessment. Cath shared that during her 15+ years working with Ashley, she was incredibly inspired by his work ethic and generous spirit despite his health challenges.

“

Ash made the most of his second chance at life. He was even able to return to his love of skydiving after transplantation. He had a great sense of humour, and a bit of a mischievous spirit. Ash was always mindful of his donor family and for the gift of life he was given.”

- Cath

The care and compassion Ashley received, from Cath and many more Austin staff, had such a profound impact that when Ashley sadly passed away last year he left a gift in his Will to support liver transplant research at Austin Health.

Ashley's legacy will live on for generations, transforming the lives of others in our care.

A bequest could be the most rewarding gift you ever make. If you too would like to transform lives for future generations contact Cheyne Brudenell, Head of Philanthropy at cheyne.brudenell@austin.org.au or 03 9496 2147.



Austin Doctor tackling penicillin allergy epidemic

Hundreds of patients who thought they were allergic to penicillin have the all clear thanks to doctors at Victoria's first antibiotic allergy testing centre – right here at Austin Health.

Since opening in 2015, 85 per cent of patients have taken the “antibiotic allergy” label off their medical records, allowing them to take penicillin instead of less effective antibiotics that lead to the spread of antibiotic-resistant superbugs.

The Centre for Antibiotic & Allergy Services clinic director and infectious diseases physician Associate Professor Jason Trubiano said the allergy test has a “profound effect” on those patients.

“*I’m surprised how relieved patients are to remove a penicillin allergy from their chart and take whatever antibiotic their doctor directs without restriction.*”

– A/Prof Trubiano

So far, the clinic, the second of its kind in Australia, has tested over 1,000 patients and 50 per cent are “complex patients” with a lowered immune system, due to either cancer or organ transplants.

“*We really want to target those patients who need antibiotics frequently as they’ll be the ones who benefit most.*”

Programs like these are made possible through philanthropic support. THANK YOU!



Nurses lead the way, thanks to you

Because of your incredible donations to support nurses last year, the Austin Health Nursing Alumni Scholarship was established.



Robyn with Henry, a full sized simulation mannequin, purchased with the community's donations in 2015.

One of our inaugural scholarship recipients is Robyn Purcell, quarter century Austin Health nurse who's been a simulation educator for the past six years.

“

I help prepare nurses for the uncommon emergencies ... Austin Health already has some of the best of the best. I'm here to ensure we further refine collaboration and communication and are kept up to date on the latest advances in patient care and research.”

As an example, Robyn and her team will use volunteers acting as patients to simulate situations such as a stroke on the actual ward to best prepare nurses for real-life situations.

After the simulation exercise teams debrief on what they learned, what they did well and what they could improve on. The volunteers acting as patients also give feedback on how their communication made them feel and what they understood.

Through simulation education, staff perfect team communication, critical response times and patient care, which translates into better health outcomes, should things like an uncommon emergency ever occur.

Thanks to your support, Robyn will attend the highly competitive, world leading simulation educator program at Harvard University this June. She will then be able to bring what she learns back to Austin Health, to benefit all nurses and patients.

“

This scholarship means I'll be able to develop our simulation education program under the guidance of the world's best at Harvard. I'll be able to train additional professionals to lead as simulation educators with limitless benefits for patients in our care.”



Paying tribute to our veterans

Heidelberg Repatriation Hospital (The Repat) opened in 1941 as a hospital for returning World War II (WWII) veterans, and today cares for veterans, emergency service workers and the wider community.

Thanks to financial support from Repat patient and Vietnam War veteran, Wayne Carswell, the Corps of Commissionaires and the Victoria Remembers Grant Program, the Colour Patch Museum located at the Repat is set to open next month after decades of careful planning and collaboration.

With the community's financial support, artefact donations and diligence of Veteran Liaison Officer Robert Winther (who's worked at the Repat for 54 years!), the specially curated museum will display an impressive revolving collection of our shared history.

With its name paying homage to the identification process of units in the military, the Colour Patch Museum houses many historically significant pieces in its collection. This includes the original invitation for the visit of Queen Elizabeth to the Repat in 1954, when she also lit the flame at the Shrine of Remembrance.

To schedule a visit to the Colour Patch Museum and see many incredible pieces of our history, email Rebekah Trachsel, Head of Donor Relations at rebekah.trachsel@austin.org.au.



Veteran Liaison Officer Robert Winther in the Repat's original boardroom chair from 1941, amongst important artefacts of history.

ICU patient receives special birthday visit

Last year we asked you to support research in our Intensive Care Unit. With your help, we raised more than \$95,000!

Professor Rinaldo Bellomo, Intensive Care Research Director, and his team purchased a number of state of the art monitors including one that assesses kidney oxygenation data in patients with severe infection and during major surgery.

Our ICU team are world leaders in research and they're also exceptional at caring for the whole person.

In September, Michael, an ICU patient who has sadly passed away, was brought to tears when staff, together with Spiritual Care and Allied Health professionals, went above and beyond to have him reunited with his beloved dogs for his birthday.

“

For patients and their families, the ICU stay is one of the most difficult times in their life. These extra acts of kindness really make a difference, especially to one's emotional wellbeing.”

– Abbey Littlepage,
ICU Associate Nurse Unit Manager



Michael, pictured on his birthday, with his dogs, family and Austin staff.

Run Melbourne participant shows extraordinary dedication



Salvatore Dema, Sue Harverson, Georgina Fiorentino and Debbie Munro at the finish line of Run Melbourne 2019.

Past patient Georgina Fiorentino conquered Run Melbourne to raise funds for the incredible work undertaken at Austin Health's Royal Talbot Rehabilitation Centre.

In 2003 Georgina's life turned upside down. After sustaining a spinal cord injury leaving her in a wheelchair, she thought life would never be the same.

Through the incredibly dedicated staff at Royal Talbot, Georgina quickly discovered leading a fulfilling life was completely possible. Sixteen years on, Georgina competed in her third endurance event, completing the 10km Run Melbourne course.

“Taking part in Run Melbourne was just another reminder of how far I've come. It was an amazing experience being amongst so many people participating. I felt very proud to have finished the 10km course, which was quite tough in some parts. Nothing stops me now.”

- Georgina

Part of Team Royal Talbot, Georgina helped raise over \$3,000 for creative therapy programs which includes art, music and horticultural therapy.

The programs work with patients who receive services within the areas of brain injury, amputee, neurology, spinal cord injuries, orthopaedics, orthotics and prosthetics. The program objectives address the physical, neurological, psychological and emotional needs of patients undergoing rehabilitation.

“The creative therapy programs were such a great diversion to the enormity of my spinal cord injury. It was important to do something fun whilst also being able to socialise with other patients.”

In the last year, Royal Talbot's Creative Therapies Programs worked with 186 patients, translating into more than 1,000 program sessions that aid in improving physical and cognitive function and patient morale.

The survival of these programs is reliant on support from our community - amazing people like you!

Like Georgina, you too can raise awareness and funds with Team Austin. Create a lasting impact for your health and our patients, sign up now at austin.org.au/runmelbourne.



Airport West resident Julian (right) raised money for Austin's Spinal Unit.



Be our Hero.

**At this year's
Run Melbourne —
do it for your
health and your
hospital!**

Fundraise for an Austin Health Department
or Ward of your choice

5K, 10K or 21.1K options | Walk or Run

Sunday 26 July

**Sign up now and join
Team Austin Health,
austin.org.au/runmelbourne**

Austin
HEALTH

RM
RUN MELBOURNE

Yes, exceptional patient care at Austin Health matters to me!

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 _____

One Time **or** Monthly

Payment details

My cheque and/or cash gift is enclosed.

VISA Mastercard AMEX

Card number _____

Name on card _____

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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



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Austin Health at a glance

The 2018–2019 financial year was an exciting time, filled with extraordinary accomplishments, made possible together with YOU.



114,379

inpatients



1,300

research projects/
clinical trials underway



159

liver & kidney transplants



7,309

emergency surgeries



14,445

donors



\$300k

raised by Friends of
Austin Health



8,939

employees



450

volunteers

\$2.5m

bequests received

\$8.1m

philanthropic revenue