

Vitality

WORLD LEADING CARE AT YOUR DOORSTEP

SPRING 2009

Thank you to all our supporters you help us do so much more.

Never underestimate the value your partnership brings to this hospital and its many patients. Your support makes the difference and for this, we are incredibly grateful.

You'll be delighted to know that over recent months, as a direct result of your generosity we have been able to purchase equipment for our Aged Care Services Unit and our Liver Transplant Unit. This has been simply brilliant!

Thanks to you, our Aged Care Services Unit can now have an additional Refrigerated Centrifuge – to separate blood cells from plasma for research; and an ECG Machine.



The team with a refrigerated centrifuge (L-R) group shot – Study coordinator Jennifer Lowday, dementia research manager Sue Caldwell, consultant for geriatrics Dr Henry Zeimer, Aged and Residential Care Medical Director Professor Michael Woodward, study coordinators Robyn Veljanovski and Kristin Cooper.

As Professor Michael Woodward of the unit said, “This is fantastic – we are EXTREMELY appreciative. Thank you so much to everyone who made a donation.”

“We are facing a huge epidemic of people with dementia and other cognitive dysfunctions. Any advances we can make to slow down the disease, is very worthwhile. The new equipment will help our team to better analyse the effects of our research.”

And the Liver Transplant Unit now have four Surgical Instrument Trays. Each tray contains about 30 specialist surgical instruments. Here's what Catherine Devine from the Liver Transplant Unit had to say: “This is a huge bonus for our team and will help us continue saving lives. We are so very appreciative of everyone who donated. Thank you.”

Your support has also enabled us to purchase 10 additional Peripheral Nerve Stimulators which help control patients' pain and four Welsh Allyn Spot Monitors used for monitoring a liver transplant patients' vital signs.

Thanks to your generosity and kind heart we have been able to purchase this equipment, which is now being used every single day by our patients.



Catherine Devine from the Liver Transplant Unit displays trays of specialist instruments used in transplant surgery.

Moving forward

A thank you message from the CEO

Thank you to every one of our valued supporters of Austin Health. You are part of our team helping to deliver the best in patient care and treatment.



This edition of Vitality reports on the recent support we received from our wonderful donors for our Liver Transplant Unit and Aged Care Services appeals. Your support really does make a difference!

This edition also focuses on the award winning work of our neurosciences and rehabilitation teams who help patients who have suffered a stroke, to recover as best and as quickly as possible.

I am delighted to inform you that our Chairman of the Board, Tim Daly was awarded Membership of the Order of Australia during the Queen's Birthday Honours this year. This award is great recognition for his many years of outstanding service, particularly to the health system in Victoria.

I also want to acknowledge our "Friends of Austin Health". Close to 600 volunteers and auxiliary members devote their time helping Austin Health each year in various roles, including: Aged Care; Palliative Care; Fundraising; Gift Shop; Emergency; the Volunteer Driver Service and more. Their efforts and contributions generate an enormous amount of goodwill and help make a real difference to patient care.

On behalf of our staff, our volunteers and the thousands of patients and their families who need Austin Health's specialist care each year, I thank you for your ongoing support in making a real difference to patient care and treatment.

Thank you
Dr Brendan Murphy
Chief Executive Officer

Helping people survive and regain independence after stroke

As one of the top stroke units in Australia, the neurology team at Austin Health have an international reputation for the work they do in helping stop the devastating effects of stroke.

Neurologist Associate Professor Helen Dewey, who heads Austin Hospital's Stroke Care Unit in Ward "6 East", said that the team are very passionate about stroke and in providing the best of care.

Stroke is more common than heart attacks. More than 700 patients suffering stroke were treated on our 6 East ward last year – that's almost equivalent to two new patients every day.

A/Prof Dewey explained that stroke has become an urgent condition just like heart attack, whereas 20 years ago patients suffering stroke used to languish at the back of the ward. "The thinking is now like the mindset of a cardiologist," said A/Prof Dewey. "Time is brain when it comes to stroke. The longer you leave it the more damage is done."



Nurse Unit Manager Karyn Owen inspecting an older monitor.

Austin Health provides a 24/7 Acute Stroke service through our Emergency Department (ED). "We are among only a handful of hospitals that provide this rapid response to Stroke in the ED," said A/Prof Dewey. "We do this well."

Thanks to innovations in stroke, if people receive the right treatment at the right time then their chances of recovery, or at least in regaining

a greater degree of independence, are so much better.

One such innovation includes "A Very Early Rehabilitation Trial" (AVERT). This program helps stroke patients to re-learn vital movement skills after areas in the brain that once controlled motor and sensory functions would have been damaged by stroke. This trial, along with much of the unit's work, has been recognised internationally.



Patient 35 year-old Brian Kerezsi (and his dog Steadman).

Typically a stroke victim is 70 to 80 years old, but the fact is that newborns, teenagers and adults of all ages can also suffer strokes. Take Brian Kerezsi for example who we have featured in our covering letter, a fit 35 year-old male, who didn't smoke and was in good health suffered a stroke – totally out of the blue.

Within 24 hours he was bedridden. After 10 days in Austin Hospital's Ward 6 East, under close observation and specialist care Brian was transferred to Austin Health's Royal Talbot Rehabilitation Centre to continue his therapy.

Brian was able to go home after spending one and a half months in our care – he has now returned to work part-time and doctors expect him to make a full recovery.

A/Prof Dewey said, "If you suspect you are having a stroke, don't wait, call an ambulance and act fast. I do hope you will never need us but if you do we are here to help."

Leaving a legacy

Sandra had worked in hospitals for most of her life as a nurse and midwife, including time as an agency nurse at Heidelberg Repatriation Hospital.

"I now enjoy volunteering at Austin Health's Emergency Department," explained Sandra. She said that the "incredible care here" inspired her to want to continue helping other people and to give something back.

"I decided I could continue to help others in the future and also leave behind a legacy, through including Austin Health in my Will," Sandra said.

The gift of a bequest in a Will to Austin Health provides valuable support.

By remembering Austin Health in your Will, as a token of our appreciation you will be welcomed as a special Austin Bequest Ambassador. You will receive a Certificate of Appreciation and an ambassador lapel pin. However, if you wish to remain anonymous your wishes will be respected.

For more information on leaving a legacy by adding Austin Health as a beneficiary in your Will, contact the Fundraising Department's Bequest Manager, Maria Longo on 03 9496 5361.

Sandra has left a Bequest in her Will to help Austin Health. She is pictured (left) with our Bequest Manager, Maria Longo (right).



Thank you!

A Big Thank You to ... Dulux Paints and Bunnings for donating \$4,908 to Austin Health. Bunnings stores and Dulux held a special national promotion last Easter, where 5 percent of sales from Dulux paints were allocated to local charities near each store.

The Eltham store presented the donation on behalf of Bunnings. "It's a Bunnings' culture to do what we can to help the community," said the store's Lifestyle Coordinator, Glen Fieldew. Thank you Dulux and Bunnings!



Bunnings Eltham store Paint Expert Helen Metcalfe, Orica (Dulux Paint) Account Manager Barry Nolen, Austin Health Fundraising Director Sharon Hillman, Bunnings Eltham store Lifestyle Coordinator Glen Fieldew.

A Big Thank You to ... the generous hardworking staff and students from Whitefriars College, Donvale. The students have raised more than \$8,000 for Austin Hospital's Acute Spinal Ward. One of the students, Jacob Battista was a recent winner of Manningham's Young Volunteer of the Year Award and donated his \$500 award prize money to the Spinal Ward. Whitefriars' Principal, Fr Paul Cahill, notes that the students' involvement in supporting patients of the Spinal Ward has helped them appreciate their own good fortune, the courage of the patients and how quickly and simply an accident can happen. Thank you Whitefriars College for your support!

Also a Big Thank You to ... The 'Friends of Austin Health' who devote thousands of hours each year raising funds for Austin Health through retail activities, special events, opportunity shops and other activities. The Friends raised \$198,073 for additional patient care equipment items in the last financial year. Thank you 'Friends'!



Friends of Austin Health – CEO, Dr Brendan Murphy and patron of the Friends of Austin Health, the Governor of Victoria's wife Mrs de Krester, join with volunteers who received their 35 years of service medals and certificates at the Friends of Austin Health Annual General Meeting.

If you have a fundraising idea that you would like to organise to help Austin Health, please contact our Community Fundraising Projects Officer, Sevi Skaleris on 03 9496 5753. Previous fundraising initiatives included in-lieu of birthday or anniversary gifts and donations in-memory of a loved one.

All donations over \$2 are tax deductible and help Austin Health to purchase extra patient care equipment items, support research and patient programs, which help our patients to receive the highest level of quality care and comfort available.

Christmas Greeting Cards and hampers to help Austin Health

You can purchase Christmas greeting cards and hampers through a dedicated website that will donate 10 percent of the retail price to Austin Health. There are many designs to choose from, or you can personalise your own. Visit the "Charity Greeting Cards" website, or telephone Sharon Wishart on 02 9779 1533 and find out how you can organise your Christmas cards and hampers in support of Austin Health.

And if you place your order before the 2nd of October, you'll receive a 10% early bird discount.

http://www.charitygreetingcards.com.au/vic/austin_health/default

Olivia Newton-John TV Special

Early October (quite possibly the 4th of October at 2.00pm), Channel 10 will be airing a television special which shares the inside story of Olivia's 23 day trek across 228 kilometres of the Great Wall of China; to raise funds and awareness for a dedicated Cancer and Wellness Centre at Austin Health.



Official charity for Melbourne Cup Carnival 2009

The Victoria Racing Club has named the Olivia Newton-John Cancer and Wellness Centre Appeal as official charity for the Melbourne Cup Carnival 2009! The Melbourne Cup Carnival is a great way to celebrate life while raising money for the Olivia Newton-John Cancer and Wellness Centre Appeal. You can hold your own Melbourne Cup party and order a box of fundraising Pin and Win lapel pins for your guests. Everyone has the chance to win some great prizes - while raising funds for our Appeal.

'Giddy up' with the Melbourne Cup and order your Pin and Win lapel pins for your chance to win more than \$50,000 worth of prizes, while helping raise money for our Appeal. Purchase via email at OliviaAppeal@austin.org.au or phone: 03 9496 5160

