

Epworth HealthCare Annual Report 2019-20

Our living history:

100

YEARS OF CARE
1920-2020



Epworth

Epworth
HealthCare
Annual Report
2019-20

Our living history:
100 years of care

Acknowledgement of Country

Epworth HealthCare acknowledges the peoples of the Kulin Nations, the Traditional Custodians of the land upon which we work and care for our patients. We honour the unique and continued spiritual connection that Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples have to land, waters and culture.

About us

Epworth HealthCare is Victoria's largest not-for-profit private hospital group, renowned for excellence in diagnosis, treatment, care and rehabilitation. Epworth is an innovator, embracing the latest in evidence-based medicine, pioneering treatments and services for our patients.

Our vision: Caring for people. Innovating for a healthy community.

Our purpose: Every patient matters. We strive to improve health outcomes and experience through compassion, collaboration, learning and innovation.

Our values: Respect, excellence, community, compassion, integrity, accountability.

Our history: This year we mark 100 years of care. Epworth was founded by a Methodist minister in 1920 as a 25-bed community intermediate hospital in Richmond, for those on moderate incomes. Today, our care is world-class, our technology is state-of-the-art and our ethos is to always put patients first.

About this report

This Annual Report details achievements and highlights of the 2019-20 financial year and reflects back on our 100 years of care (1920-2020). This special centenary edition (our final printed version) follows the pillars of the Epworth HealthCare Strategic Plan 2018-22—Connected Care, Empowered People, Innovative Practice and Sustainability.

Historical information is sourced from *Epworth: A tradition of care 1920-2010* by Janette Bomford.

This report is available online at epworth.org.au.



Epworth was established in 1920 by the Conference (organising body) of the Methodist Church. It was the idea of the Reverend William Palamountain, a Methodist minister at Long Gully in Bendigo. His drive and passion inspired leading doctors and many generous benefactors to support him. A mansion on Richmond Hill was bought. The name 'Epworth' was chosen, as it was the birthplace of John Wesley, the founder of the Methodist Church.

Epworth opened as an intermediate hospital, regarded then as a hospital for people ineligible or not wishing to be treated at public hospitals, but unable to afford the private hospitals, which were considered expensive. Despite economic depressions and World War II, Epworth succeeded as a not-for-profit private hospital. In 1980, it was incorporated under its own Act of Parliament.

Commonly used terms

Throughout this report we use these acronyms:

- ♦ **DHHS** – Department of Health and Human Services
- ♦ **EMF** – Epworth Medical Foundation
- ♦ **ICU** – Intensive Care Unit
- ♦ **PPE** – Personal Protective Equipment
- ♦ **VMO** – Visiting Medical Officer

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100 years of care



Our hospitals



Epworth Brighton—a rehabilitation hospital supporting people to rebuild their strength, restore their confidence and reclaim their independence. Epworth Brighton provides rehabilitation for a range of needs, including orthopaedic surgery and musculoskeletal injuries, ageing, pulmonary conditions, falls and balance concerns and also neurological conditions, such as stroke, multiple sclerosis (MS) and Parkinson's disease.



Epworth Camberwell—is home to rehabilitation and mental health services, as well as a specialist sleep studies unit. The rehabilitation service provides inpatient and outpatient therapy for a variety of conditions, including orthopaedics, chronic diseases such as heart failure and cancer; chronic pain, and neurological conditions including Parkinson's disease and stroke. The mental health service, known as Epworth Clinic, provides a variety of inpatient and outpatient programs to support a range of mental health needs, including a dedicated aged psychiatry service.



Epworth Cliveden—a 28-bed boutique hospital specialising in cosmetic, plastic and reconstructive surgery, gynaecology, pain management, breast surgery and maxillofacial surgery.



Epworth Freemasons—operates on two sites in East Melbourne (Albert Street and Victoria Parade). These two hospitals comprise 224 overnight beds, 44 postnatal suites, nine delivery suites, a special care nursery, 10 operating theatres, a day procedure centre and an eight-bed critical care unit (CCU). Specialising in women's health, Epworth Freemasons runs one of Victoria's best maternity hospitals. The hospital also focuses on men's health with the E.J. Whitten Foundation Prostate Cancer Research Centre onsite. It offers comprehensive cancer care and a full range of surgical services, including robotic assisted surgery.



Epworth Eastern—a 223-bed hospital in Melbourne's eastern suburbs is currently being redeveloped. Epworth Eastern provides specialty cardiology and cardiothoracic services, and has state-of-the-art digital operating theatres, including a da Vinci robotic system. Specialties include orthopaedic care, with particular expertise in knee, hip and upper and lower limb, comprehensive oncology services and an 18 chair renal dialysis unit. Vascular, urology and plastic and reconstructive surgery services are also available.



Epworth Eastern Kew—a hospital on a newly refurbished site, which began operating in September 2019 to ensure minimal disruption to Epworth Eastern patients and medical staff, while our redevelopment progresses. It features three theatres, a procedural room and a day surgery unit. We provide patients with services including general surgery, urology, plastic surgery, ear nose and throat (ENT), oral maxillofacial, orthopaedics, gynaecology, colorectal, endoscopy and vascular care.



Epworth Geelong—a 171-bed acute hospital featuring an emergency department (ED), nine-bed ICU, eight-bed complex care unit, two operating theatres, two endoscopy rooms, catheter laboratory, day oncology unit, renal dialysis unit, birthing suites and special care nursery. Specialties include cardiology, oncology, neurology, neurosurgery, gastroenterology, colorectal surgery, orthopaedics, urology, vascular surgery, obstetrics and gynaecology (O&G), and rehabilitation.



Epworth Hawthorn—is a boutique surgical centre specialising in orthopaedics, plastic surgery, urology, oral faciomaxillary, general surgery, vascular, gynaecology and assisted reproductive services via Monash IVF. Epworth Hawthorn also houses our renowned multi-trauma orthopaedic rehabilitation service, supporting people who have sustained traumatic orthopaedic injury, minor brain injuries, amputation, complex wounds and burns following an accident or injury.



Epworth Richmond—an acute 700-bed hospital with emergency care, a 26-bed ICU and a 39-bed cardiac unit. Specialties include cardiac care, neurosciences, orthopaedics, cancer, ENT, general medicine and surgery. A dedicated paediatrics emergency and ward care is available to children and adolescents. The hospital also offers rehabilitation services, specialising in orthopaedic and neurological rehabilitation with a focus on acquired and traumatic brain injuries.

Specialist centres



Epworth Specialist Centre Lilydale—specialists provide the local community with access to a range of medical, radiology, surgical and allied health services, before and after surgery.



Epworth Transitional Living Centre (TLC)—located in Thornbury, the centre provides accommodation for people with brain injuries, to help residents integrate into the local community by supporting them to relearn everyday living skills in a real life setting.

From the President



Epworth has come a long way since 1920 when the hospital was founded with a philanthropic gift to provide the highest possible standard of care to patients.

In its first year, Epworth had five employees and beds for 25 patients. Today, Epworth is Victoria's largest not-for-profit private hospital group, with more than 7,100 staff, 2,600 doctors and 264 volunteers. Its hallmark throughout these years has been a commitment to provide compassionate care.

At the end of 2019, we had many plans for the future, with intentions to focus on developing strategic projects and new innovations, as well as celebrating the remarkable 100-year history of Epworth.

This year, 2020, is our centenary year. It was meant to be a year of celebration. Instead, it has been a year where we have all been tested by a global pandemic. In March 2020, we rapidly refocused our efforts to contribute to the statewide response, caring for our Victorian community and ensuring our patients, employees and doctors were safe.

Instead of recollecting past achievements, our thoughts at this time have evolved into pride for the way our people have handled this crisis. Our partnerships with other organisations have been strengthened, as we have worked with our state government and colleagues, in both public and private health, to deliver the best care to patients. In many instances, our people have gone above and beyond, at a time when our community has felt great distress.

Research continues to grow

This year, I am once again particularly proud of the research undertaken across all our sites. Our five-year research strategy focuses on ensuring findings are translated to improve patient care and provide tangible patient outcomes.

Highlights this year include:

- ♦ our involvement in the BRACE trial, which investigates whether healthcare workers can be protected against the severity of COVID-19 by having the Bacillus Calmette-Guerin (BCG) vaccine, previously used to protect against tuberculosis (TB). This trial is being supported by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation
- ♦ a researcher at Epworth receiving a \$2.1 million National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) grant to investigate brain stimulation therapies for mental health disorders
- ♦ participation in two Australian-led international clinical trials on individualising the approach to treating bowel and rectal cancers.

Training and education

At Epworth, continuous education is something we value greatly. Our highly-trained staff deliver expert care to patients. Our education teams are kept busy ensuring Epworth employees and doctors are always learning.

A new simulation lab at Epworth Freemasons enables our clinicians to take a hands-on approach to learning, with the lab mimicking a real clinical environment.

Epworth employees have an opportunity to further their skills and knowledge through our unique scholarship program. Each year, we fund further education, upskilling, conference attendance or study tours, so staff can learn the latest, most effective and innovative ways of caring for patients.

Epworth also supports our Visiting Medical Officers (VMOs). Epworth developed an inaugural Epworth Summit 2020 VMO Leadership Program and selected 24 of our brightest medical talent to take part. Before the program was paused, due to the pandemic, this group was scheduled to travel to Harvard in the USA, to participate in an incredible opportunity to learn from others in various medical fields and expand their expertise.

While the Summit program and its projects are currently on hold, we have identified six key strategic projects looking at new ways to deliver care. They include investigating ways to respond to specialist care needs in remote areas of Victoria and using Artificial Intelligence (AI) to improve clinical practice and care delivery. I am excited to see how we can further this work and continue improving care for our community.

Strategic plan update

We have always known that our centenary year would give us a moment to reflect on the past, but it has also given us impetus to look to the future, to ensure Epworth continues to be a leader for the next 100 years.

We know the general health of people in our community can improve and we are looking for opportunities to contribute to this.

We are seeing a need for additional mental healthcare services and a community preference for different options of care, either in the hospital or at home.

We are also partnering more with our consumers, providing opportunities for them to have a stronger voice in shaping our services and how we deliver the care we provide.

Community kindness

Once again, our generous donors and community have shown great support for Epworth. This year, the Epworth Kindness Movement was formed after our community wanted to show its appreciation during the pandemic. Our employees and doctors have enjoyed treats, food and hot drinks, all donated by our extremely supportive community.

We are indeed fortunate to have such a loyal group of generous donors. This philanthropy has led to the purchase of the latest medical equipment, upgrading of facilities and expansion of services to help our patients. One of the most amazing examples of this was the purchase and renovation of a unit near Epworth Richmond—the Hope and Tony Saba Family House. Thanks to philanthropy, we can provide accommodation for patients' families from regional and interstate locations, who are experiencing financial distress.

This year, our pro bono work ranged from enabling a young woman from Papua New Guinea (PNG) to walk without pain, to assisting the people of Samoa following a devastating measles outbreak. This work is only possible with the support of our community and partners—together we're bringing about positive change in a wide range of areas.

Thank you

As Epworth has grown, the constants have remained—compassionate, individualised and evidence-based care. We look forward to continuing this legacy, building more pathways to care for patients and ensuring our employees develop to their fullest potential.

Thank you to my fellow Epworth Board members for their ongoing commitment and dedication. In particular, I thank three directors leaving our Board in November 2020. Laura Anderson has served for six years, and we are grateful for the expertise and broad experience she has contributed. Revd Emeritus Professor Christiaan Mostert has been on our Board for nine years, and in addition, was the long-time chair of our Human Research and Ethics Committee (HREC), a very exacting and time-consuming role.

Recently, Christiaan has contributed his wisdom and guidance to the Voluntary Assisted Dying Committee, and has chaired the Epworth Research and Advisory Committee. We are fortunate that he has agreed to continue in that role. Serving for nine years, Robert Macmillan has been invaluable as an expert member of the Finance Committee throughout his term and as chair of that committee for several years. As Deputy President, Robert has been a great support to me for the past three years. On behalf of myself and the rest of the Board, I warmly thank Laura, Christiaan and Robert for their generous and important contribution.

Thank you also to our Group Executive for providing strong leadership through tough times and to all our employees, doctors, volunteers and supporters who make a difference. Every day.

Ms Maryjane Crabtree

From the Group Chief Executive



Our centenary year will certainly go down as one to remember. In February, the first of many planned celebrations took place with multiple events across Epworth sites on our centenary day, 27 February 2020.

The day finished with a memorable celebration dinner at the Melbourne Town Hall where significant Epworth figures (past and present) were honoured at an event featuring a keynote speech by the Hon. Lord Mayor Sally Capp.

Little did we know how the year would unfold; 2020 has given new meaning to words such as 'unprecedented', 'furlough' and 'pivot'. It has created significant changes in how we all live, including wearing masks, physical distancing and being home before curfew.

Despite the many other challenges, the resilience of Epworth employees, doctors and supporters has enabled the organisation to continue caring for our patients with compassion and in a safe environment. The settings for this care have varied, involving Epworth nurses and other staff assisting activities such as contact tracing. I am incredibly proud of the role Epworth has played in the statewide pandemic response.

Financial year 2020 (pre-COVID) was already busy and challenging, with a focus on improvement under a 'One Epworth' operating model. The appointment of Nicole Waldron as Chief Operating Officer-Hospitals in late 2019 has been significant in standardising the approach across our 11 hospital sites, which was particularly valuable during the pandemic.

Assisted by site-based Executive General Managers and the Hospital and Group Executive teams, the One Epworth approach is critical in assisting further growth in the clinical services Epworth provides to the Victorian community, on a financially sustainable basis. A variety of strategies and initiatives are being developed as we continue to explore new ways of working, while building partnerships across the sector. This includes working closely with the public sector in Victoria to capitalise on the close collaborations made during the pandemic.

From April 2020, Epworth joined the statewide pandemic response, with Epworth Geelong assisting the Barwon regional response. At the same time, elective surgery across Victoria was greatly reduced to ensure private and public hospitals had the capacity to respond to rising numbers of COVID-19 patients. The pandemic has also resulted in new ways of working for many, with our patients, employees and doctors using digital technology to stay safe and connected. Epworth used this period to accelerate our digital strategy, with patients and clinical staff benefitting from telehealth consultations and technology enabling corporate staff to work from home.

Reduced surgical volume and patient admission numbers in the last quarter of FY20 impacted on our activity this year, with only ED presentations increasing year on year.

In the last 12 months, Epworth has provided care to patients throughout Victoria, resulting in:

- more than 191,000 patient admissions, a 5.4% decrease on last year
- surgical procedures numbering more than 116,000, a 9.4% decrease
- more than 61,000 same day procedures, a 9.7% decrease
- a 3% increase in ED presentations
- 7,300 ICU bed days, a dramatic decrease from the previous year (9,800 bed days).

COVID-19 response

While the COVID-19 response has been incredibly challenging, the emergence of a stronger partnership between private and public health services and state government bodies has been a significant step forward. The formation of a Private Hospital CEO group and a statewide Pandemic Response Committee were initiatives that assisted a coordinated response to the pandemic.

Epworth executives and staff played a key role in assisting this response, supported by hospital 'cluster' groups (public and private), aligned by geographic location. Associate Professor Luis Prado, in his role as Chief Medical Officer, worked tirelessly to ensure Epworth kept its patients, staff and doctors safe. Support for our nurses and infection control procedures was critical and Executive Director Clinical Services and Chief Nursing Officer Paula Stephenson and her team assisted contact tracing, while providing Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) expertise and advice. These initiatives would not have worked without the support of Epworth doctors, nurses, allied health and support staff, who have been both flexible and selfless in assisting our community.

The model of private and public hospitals working in close collaboration is likely to continue to develop in the future and Epworth is well-positioned to benefit from its role in 2020, supporting the pandemic response. Commonwealth Government support in the form of a Comprehensive Funding Agreement enabled Epworth, and the private hospital sector, to mobilise in April to provide staffing, expertise and bed capacity to support the pandemic response.

Education and reskilling

Clinical education has been more important than ever over the past 12 months. In particular, expertise and training in the critical area of infection prevention and control was prominent across all Epworth sites. Early in the pandemic response, Epworth established an internal contact tracing team, noting that COVID-19 testing, tracing and isolation was extremely important to control the spread of the virus.

The establishment of Staff and VMO Clinics at multiple Epworth sites was another important part of the COVID-19 response. Our staff and doctors underwent intensive training in PPE protocols, so important in controlling COVID-19.

Safety and wellbeing

Safety has always been a priority at Epworth. Our 'Speaking up for Safety' program is an important part of our culture, encouraging and supporting staff to speak up for patient safety. The challenges of the year also renewed our focus on mental health and wellbeing. We produced a range of new resources for employees, aligned with the values and behaviours of Epworth. Maree Feery, Executive Director People & Culture and Epworth People & Culture teams have done a great job supporting employees throughout the year.

This year, we introduced online training in diversity and inclusion to improve education and understanding of the importance of acceptance and respect for every member of our community.

Turning 100

For 100 years, Epworth has provided outstanding care to the Victorian community. Across a range of medical, surgical, obstetric, rehabilitation and mental health specialties, Epworth continues to research new and better ways to diagnose and treat generations of patients, from newborns to the elderly.

Our success is consistently enabled by the philanthropy of our generous donors and partners. Thank you to Scott Bulger, Executive Director, Epworth Medical Foundation & Brand and to all in the Epworth community for their generosity and support.

Looking forward

While 2020 has been incredibly challenging, Epworth will emerge from the pandemic stronger and even more committed to innovation, research and our patients.

Thank you to Epworth Board President, Maryjane Crabtree and the members of the Epworth Board for your leadership and support of the organisation in 2020. I would also like to acknowledge the Group Executive for their hard work and contribution during such a unique and challenging year. This year, we farewelled Liz Camilleri after 30 years of service to Epworth but we have been very fortunate to appoint Cameron Fuller to the Executive Director Finance role. Danny Gravell was appointed to the role of Chief Information Officer, bringing expertise to Epworth from outside the health sector.

I also extend my heartfelt thanks to all Epworth employees, doctors, volunteers and partners who continue to provide their care and support to benefit our patients, their families and carers.

Victorians have entrusted Epworth with their care for the last 100 years and we are honoured to continue this tradition.

Dr Lachlan Henderson

Epworth highlights



4,552

Children treated



2,771

Births



7,184

Employees



264

Volunteers



191,042

Patient admissions



40,892

Emergency presentations



116,691

Procedures undertaken



7,384

ICU bed days

Year at a glance

The COVID-19 pandemic has had a dramatic effect on our hospitals. There were large decreases in patient activity, as we joined the Victorian statewide response to preserve hospital capacity.

Compared to last year, Epworth Richmond Emergency Department had a very different last quarter, with a 23% decrease in the number of presentations, due to pandemic restrictions introduced in Melbourne. Epworth Geelong experienced an 18% decrease. However, overall ED presentations increased slightly.

Our top specialties in 2019-20 across all sites

Primary specialty	Episodes of care	Bed days
Medical oncology	21,270	40,809
General surgery	18,368	40,378
Gynaecology	16,549	32,300
General medicine	16,078	47,969
Gastroenterology	15,041	19,610
Orthopaedic surgery	14,269	49,363
Urology	13,149	20,301
Clinical haematology	9,920	21,509
Rehabilitation	7,963	67,013
Plastic surgery	7,685	13,107
Nephrology	7,534	8,788
Cardiology	6,963	21,781
Psychiatry	3,982	17,643

Emergency Department care (across Epworth Richmond and Epworth Geelong)

Year	Emergency presentations
2019-20	40,892
2018-19	39,708
2017-18	38,139

3% increase in emergency presentations compared to last year.

Patient admissions across all Epworth hospitals

Year	Total patient admissions
2019-20	191,042
2018-19	201,846
2017-18	186,593

5.4% decrease in patients admitted in the last year.

Children treated

Year	Total children treated
2019-20	4,552
2018-19	4,871
2017-18	4,898

6.5% decrease in number of children treated in the last year.

Surgical procedures undertaken

Year	Procedures undertaken
2019-20	116,691
2018-19	128,720
2017-18	117,757

9.4% decrease in procedures undertaken in the last year.

Same day procedures

Year	Same day procedures
2019-20	61,404
2018-19	68,053
2017-18	61,074

9.7% decrease of same day procedures in the last year.

Critical care

Year	ICU bed days
2019-20	7,384
2018-19	9,848
2017-18	9,001

25% decrease in ICU bed days in the last year.

Looking ahead

Epworth HealthCare Strategic Plan 2018–22

Our patients remain at the centre of all we do. Our strategic plan is underpinned by four pillars—Connected Care, Empowered People, Innovative Practice and Sustainability.

Adapting and responding to a changed environment prompted a refresh of the Strategic Plan this year, which saw a focus on priority areas. Our focus areas include building closer partnerships with government, revenue diversification and growth, and exploring different ways of working.



1980s first mission and values formulated

In 1986, staff formulated its mission and values, which included a series of commitments based on care for patients and members of the Epworth community, and striving for excellence in all aspects of the hospital's work.

A new logo was adopted in 1995 (pictured above) to coincide with the redevelopment program and to reflect a modern image. The circle represents totality; the figure within the circle represents the people, both care givers and receivers; the outstretched arms form a cross, which symbolises the Uniting Church, with which Epworth has affiliations and the body is encircled by the lower case 'e', which represents Epworth and the focused care the hospital is committed to providing.

In 2005, as Epworth Richmond celebrated its 85th anniversary, a new theme was adopted: 'Epworth: Excellence, Everywhere, Every Day' and 'Team Epworth' was introduced, which was an initiative to involve all staff and to reward excellence.

We will continue developing the following priority areas next year:



Connected Care

- Partnering with consumers ([see page 19 for more](#))
- VMO engagement



Empowered People

- Safety and wellbeing ([see page 59](#))
- Diversity and inclusion ([see page 60](#))
- Workplace flexibility for employees



Innovative Practice

- Innovative projects such as telehealth ([see page 42](#)), Hospital in the Home and expanding our mental health services to support our community



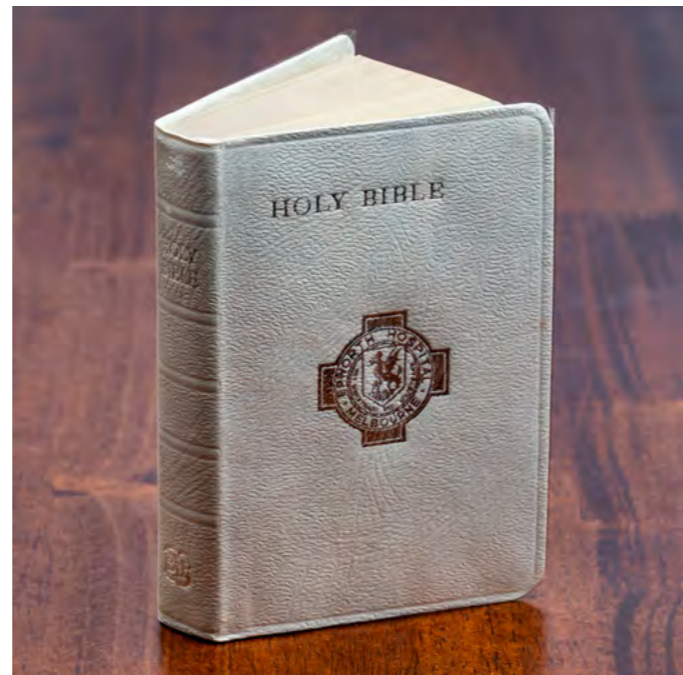
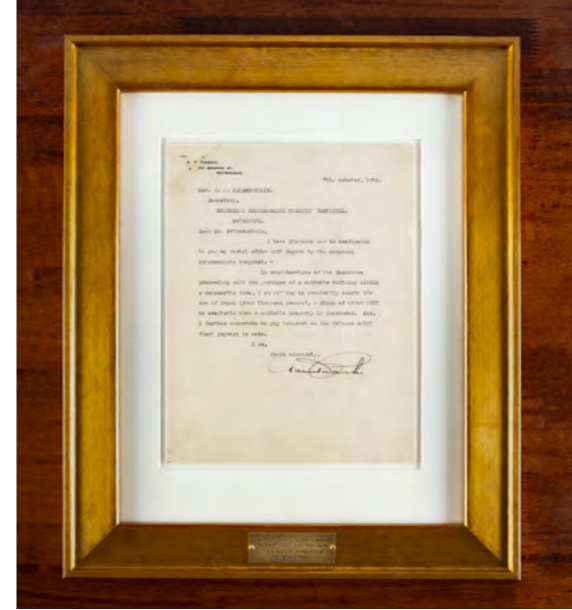
Sustainability

- 'One Epworth', maximising the benefits of our scale, to ensure sustainability and improve operational efficiencies
- Use of more digital platforms to better serve our patients, employees and community.

Artefacts over the years

As part of our centenary celebrations, a number of historical items at Epworth were pictorially catalogued, enabling us to reflect back upon the last 100 years.

These precious treasures include a traditional Epworth nurse's cloak, hat, badge and egg cup, reminiscent of a bygone time and evoking fond memories for many.





04

Connected Care

Our patients

We are committed to partnering with our patients and doctors to provide high quality care that is tailored to the choices of our patients.



28 July 1920

In his reports in the Spectator, the Reverend Palamountain stressed that the *“wards must be bright and colourful. Our patients must have the best.”*

Our patients



Epworth HealthCare Partnering with Consumers Strategy

Our patients come from varying backgrounds. In 2019-20, we had more than 191,000 admissions to Epworth hospitals and more than 40,800 presentations to our EDs. The majority of patients (77.5%) were born in Australia.

Other countries of origin are:

- ◆ England
- ◆ Italy
- ◆ United Kingdom
- ◆ China
- ◆ New Zealand
- ◆ India
- ◆ Greece

Our patients are generally aged 65-74 years, with a large number of people also aged 55-64 years and 75-84 years.

Patient satisfaction

We regularly survey our patients to gain feedback on their experiences, which allows us to continually improve our services.

In January 2020, we moved our patient experience survey from a paper-based format to an electronic option, leading to 2,321 more responses than last year. This survey, which is conducted independently by Insync/Press Ganey, is now sent to all patients with an email address.

“The Epworth Partnering with Consumers Strategy empowers us to ask... and to be heard.”

Diana Dundon Chair, Epworth Consumer Advisory Committee

The survey asks patients a wide range of questions about their hospital stay at Epworth, including the overall quality of care, the care received from doctors and nurses and the discharge process.

Epworth improved across most survey sections, compared to 2018-19. Pleasingly, our overall patient experience score continues to improve each year.

Key results:

87.5%
overall mean patient experience score

90.6%
mean satisfaction score of nurses

89.8%
mean satisfaction score of doctors

91.6%
would recommend Epworth to family and friends.

When we refer to ‘consumers’, we mean people who use, potentially will use, or have previously used Epworth services. The term includes families, carers and patients, or more broadly people and communities.

Partnering with consumers

The aim of our Partnering with Consumers Strategy is to provide a voice to members of the community we serve. This strategy was approved by the Epworth Group Executive in October 2019 and developed in consultation with our Consumer Advisory Committee (CAC). We encourage our consumers to be actively involved in making decisions about their care and treatment, including how we plan and deliver our services.

5C activities

The strategy is built around our 'five Cs':

1. **Clear communication** – to ensure consumers can understand and act upon the information we provide.
2. **Compassionate care** – we encourage employees to show sensitivity to understand other people's situation and demonstrate willingness to help and find solutions.
3. **Cultural responsiveness** – see activities on [page 58](#).
4. **Coordinated care** – working together, to ensure the health needs of our patients are met at the right time and by the right person, involving general practitioners (GPs) and patient families in our communications.
5. **Capacity building** – we're continually enhancing the knowledge and skills of our workforce, patients, caregivers and community. This includes:
 - a Consumer Advisor Register – we currently have 20 consumer advisors on our register
 - health literacy training was provided to selected employees and several consumer advisors in May 2020.

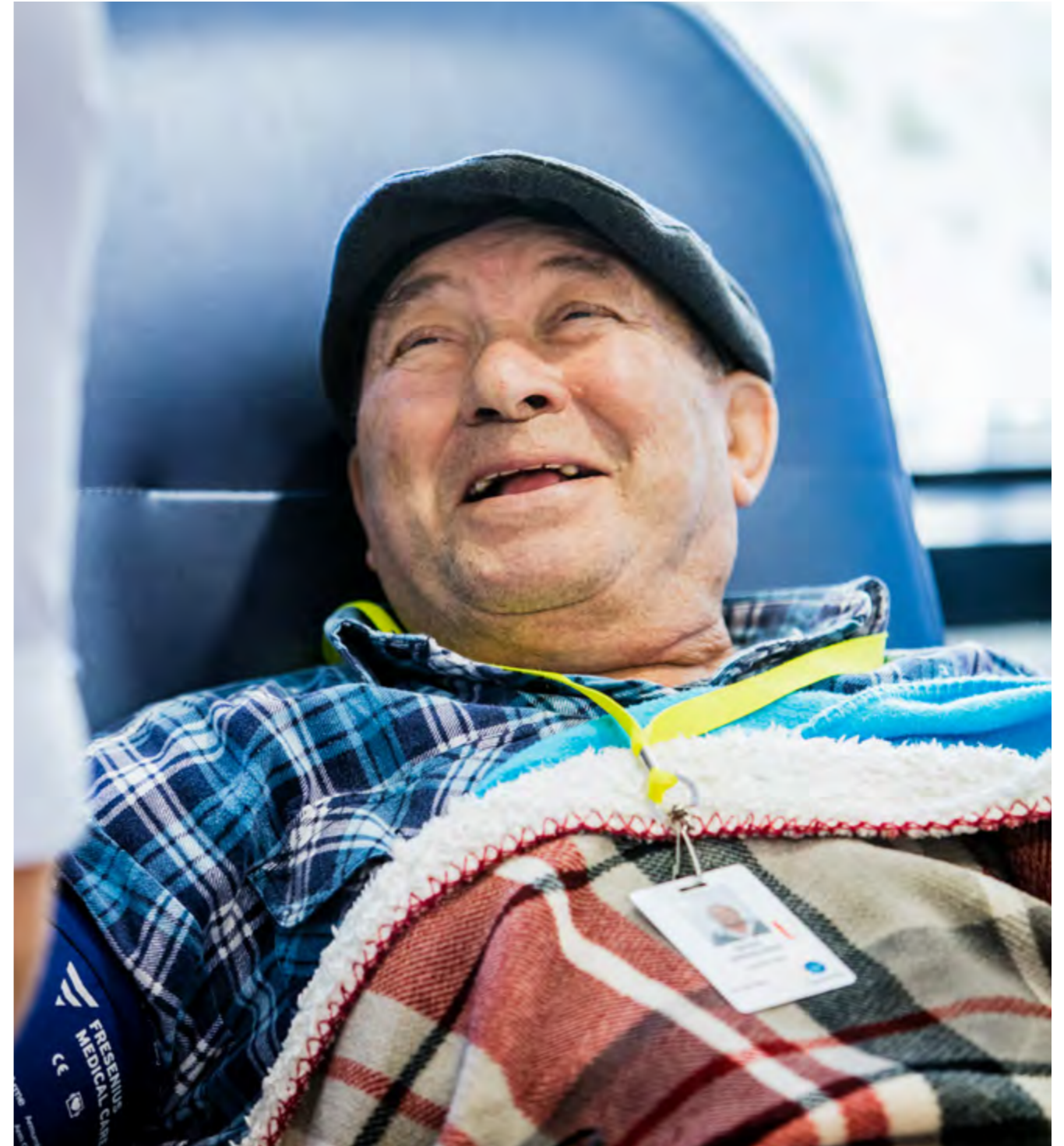


Patient numbers

By February 1931, the hospital had a record of 123 patients on one day and the next month, when the new children's ward opened, the daily average peaked at 139. Another balcony had been glassed-in and Epworth was now a 140-bed hospital, the largest by far of its type in Victoria.

Each successive year was the busiest ever, rising from a daily average of 208 patients in 1940 to almost 217 in 1943, with a peak of 237 patients treated on one day. Given that Epworth was a 200-bed hospital, its facilities were obviously strained to the limit and many patients had to be refused admission.

By August 1949 a total of 12,421 babies had been born at Epworth but despite the baby boom, the daily patient average had fallen from a peak of 216 in 1943 to 158 in 1950 because of the shortage of nurses and the forced reduction of bed numbers.



Continual improvement in clinical care

To keep our patients safe and able to return to their daily lives as soon as possible, we monitor key clinical indicators. Our aim is to perform better than benchmarks and to continually improve our care.

Avoidable harm

We have established a taskforce to identify and implement opportunities for continual improvement.

In the past 18 months, Epworth has:

- strengthened the process staff use to check and confirm patient details prior to surgery
- aligned surgical check lists to support the checking process prior to surgery
- established an auditing program to monitor our checking and confirmation process
- introduced awareness signs, such as 'Stop the Block', to remind staff that further confirmation of patient or procedure is required prior to surgery.

Influenza

At 15 July 2020, 72% (4,516) of Epworth staff were vaccinated against influenza, compared to 63% vaccinated (4,275) in 2019. Additional staff were due to be vaccinated in the remaining weeks of July 2020.

To address any misinformation about the benefits of vaccination, a local vaccination champion program was implemented this year. This new initiative, supported by the EMF, funded 22 nurses to undertake the University of South Australia Immunisation course.

Pressure injuries

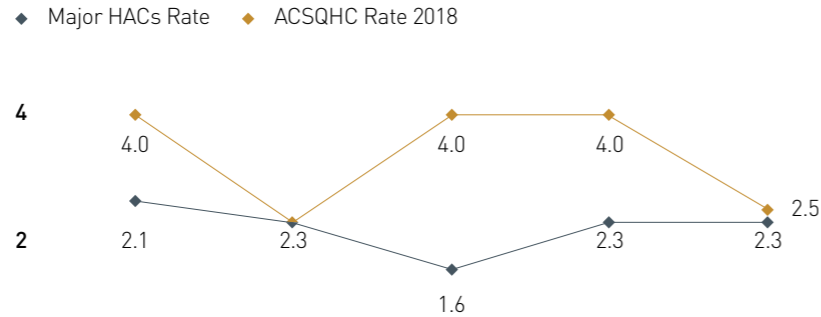
A pressure injury is a localised injury to the skin and/or underlying tissue, which occurs as a result of pressure or pressure in combination with friction.

Epworth recorded fewer pressure injuries in patients during their admission compared with industry benchmarks.

Hospital-acquired complications (HAC) include the diagnoses of stage III ulcers (full thickness skin tissue loss), stage IV

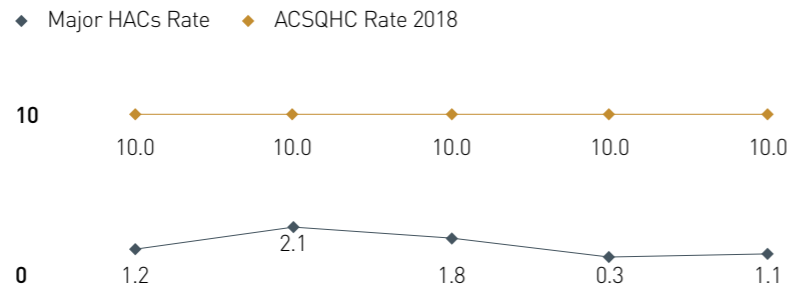
ulcers (full thickness skin tissue loss with exposed bone, tendon or muscle) and unspecified decubitus ulcer and pressure areas.

The Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Healthcare (ACSQHC) sets a target of 10 for hospital-acquired complications (which includes pressure injuries, falls and infections). Epworth was well below this target, achieving an average rate of 1.3.



Falls

Preventing falls for our inpatients remains an important focus. The number of falls at Epworth was lower than industry benchmarks. Epworth strives for zero falls, with a bench of fewer than four per month. Patient falls with serious harm (fracture/head injury/death) at Epworth hospitals were no higher than 2.5 per 10,000 bed days.



Epworth clinical services

A Victorian first: neuropsychiatry service

Epworth has established Victoria's first private neuropsychiatry assessment and management service, in partnership with the neuropsychiatry unit at the Royal Melbourne Hospital (RMH).

Neuropsychiatry is a sub-specialty, dedicated to the assessment and treatment of patients presenting with complex symptoms that cover both psychiatric disorders and neurological symptoms or disorders.

All private patients who need inpatient assessment and management were admitted to the statewide service offered by the RMH. Now, the neuropsychiatry unit, located at Epworth Richmond and administered as part of our mental health service at Epworth Clinic, provides a new pathway for people who are privately insured, compensable or self-funded, reducing the burden on public waitlists.

Patients are treated by Dr Andrew Evans, a neurologist at Epworth Richmond, who works with the neuropsychiatry team at the RMH. Our neuropsychiatrists work as part of a multidisciplinary team, to develop a treatment plan and support our patients.

Vital link between mental health and acute care

With mental health expertise well-established at Epworth Camberwell, the team wanted to ensure the availability of clinical mental health interventions for all Epworth patients.

A new role, Epworth Clinic Consultant Liaison (CL) Psychiatric Nurse, was established, with Julia Segal commencing in July 2019.

This role provides expert mental health care to acute medical and surgical patients, admitted to hospital, with pre-existing or emerging mental health concerns that need to be supported.

The CL nurse works closely with a patient, their acute medical team and consultant liaison psychiatrists to coordinate and administer clinically appropriate care, from immediate support at the bedside, to arranging a referral to a mental health program when they are discharged.

Another focus of this role is to educate our acute nurses and build their knowledge and skills in mental healthcare and management strategies, to better support patients at Epworth.

While this service is offered at Epworth Richmond, the CL nurse provides phone support across all Epworth locations. In-person assessments are also available for patients at Epworth Freemasons and all Epworth Rehabilitation sites.

Mental health provider for the AFL

Epworth has partnered with the AFL to become a preferred provider of mental health services for AFL players and their families. Dr Ranjit Menon, a specialist in sports psychiatry and part of the Epworth Rehabilitation, Mental Health and Chronic Pain Clinical Institute, has taken on this specialist role.

This signals a strengthening of our existing partnership arrangements, as we already work with the AFL in sports medicine and concussion and Epworth remains an ongoing sponsor of the AFL Doctors Association and the AFL Physiotherapists Association.

Expansion in mental health services, to provide greater support to our community, is one of the strategic priorities at Epworth.



Getting our patients moving

Our patients have a number of common questions about moving safely in hospital and after their discharge. To answer some of these queries, our Allied Health team developed a series of videos, called 'Getting moving', to guide, support and empower patients to start becoming more mobile.

Rather than specific exercises, these videos demonstrate basic movements that might be taken for granted when patients are well. These include: how get in and out of a car after surgery, how to use a walker and crutches, knee and hip exercises and how to cough after abdominal surgery.

The videos, available through our bedside Point of Care system and online, are designed to give patients confidence to move around our wards. Easy to understand instructions focus on preventing falls and returning to usual strength and stamina. With online access, these videos are also designed to support carers.

This project, supported by the EMF, includes printed brochures and a QR code, enabling patients or carers to scan the code and access the link at home.



Janelle and Steve Overall with baby Archie.

1,000th baby arrives

Epworth Geelong welcomed the hospital's 1,000th baby into the world in May 2020.

Lara couple, Janelle and Steve Overall's son Archie was delivered, weighing 3.6kg (eight pounds 13-ounces).

"When I was in labour, the midwife told us there was a good chance that Archie could be baby 1,000 at the hospital," Janelle said.

Epworth Geelong Executive General Manager Luke Edwards is proud of the milestone.

"Delivering our 1,000th baby here at Epworth Geelong is testament to the passion and dedication of our midwives, obstetricians and pediatricians; providing first-class care to local families,"

Epworth Geelong Executive General Manager Luke Edwards

Caring for the carers

Sometimes a great new initiative is born out of personal experience.

Jo Goodridge, Executive General Manager, Epworth Rehabilitation, proposed a support group for the carers of people with Parkinson's disease - as her brother, Wayne, has lived with early onset Parkinson's for more than a decade and his family were looking for a support network.

"The diagnosis has been devastating for our family. We try to focus on what he can do, rather than what he can't. He's a vibrant, active and sociable man, but he can't do all the things he used to do," Jo said.

"His wife was looking for some support, but there were only support groups where the patient went along too. She needed to talk openly about how she was feeling and she couldn't do that if he was there. We couldn't find anything in Victoria to provide the carer with support."

Jo's team discussed the idea of a group specifically for carers of Parkinson's patients, to complement the Parkinsons' program at Epworth Rehabilitation.

"Part of our strategy is community focused and this initiative really aligned with that," Jo said.

"The formation of the group was all consumer led and we came up with the values and rules of the group."

Led by a psychologist and a social worker each month, the sessions are part educational and part bonding, to give participants an opportunity for open discussion and support.

"Usually our patients with Parkinson's are men in their 70s, much older than my brother. But, the similarities amongst carers are greater than the differences."

With carers generating topics to cover, sessions have included guest speakers about the progression of the disease, how finances are affected, mood changes and treatment options.

With positive feedback from participants, the Epworth Rehabilitation team is now looking at establishing carers' support groups for other conditions.

Cardiology: success continues to build

Cardiac surgery peaked in 1995, with heart operations accounting for 50% of all surgery in the state.

Over the years, treatments for the heart have continued to advance. In 1981, Epworth CEO, Peter Wilson (then called Epworth Manager), invited Dr Graeme Sloman to establish a cardiac unit with cardiac surgery and intensive care. The first bypass surgery was performed at Epworth Richmond later that year by Mr George Westlake and Professor Brian Buxton.

In 2019:

- ♦ 795 cardiac surgeries cases were performed across Epworth Richmond and Epworth Eastern, compared to 798 the previous year.

Interventional cardiology

Our work in interventional cardiology continues to save lives. Percutaneous Coronary Interventions (PCI), a procedure involving pushing a wire and balloon down an artery and then dilating the artery, was first introduced at Epworth in 1982.

In 2019:

- ♦ 999 PCI (or angioplasty and stent) cases were performed, compared to 980 in 2018
 - 652 at Epworth Richmond
 - 255 at Epworth Eastern
 - 92 at Epworth Geelong

Patient mortality rates, following stent procedures, was 0.5%, comparing favourably against the Victorian benchmark of 1.69%.

Minimally invasive procedures increase

As predicted, our procedures for Transcatheter Aortic Valve Implantation (TAVI) have increased. This minimally invasive procedure, which replaces open heart surgery for a diseased aortic valve, reduces complications and Epworth has taken a leading role in these procedures.

Since 2010, Epworth has performed:

- ♦ 578 TAVI cases, including:
 - 131 in 2019
 - 64 in the first six months of 2020.

TAVI is used for older patients (the average age is 82 years) who are deemed as high risk or unsuitable for surgery. Data from Epworth, combined with data from The Alfred and Cabrini Health, gives a clear view of the long-term quality of life changes in these patients.

"The diagnosis has been devastating for our family. We try to focus on what he can do, rather than what he can't. He's a vibrant, active and sociable man, but he can't do all the things he used to do."

Jo Goodridge, Executive General Manager, Epworth Rehabilitation,

Survival rates for cardiac surgery are high, with a 1.01% mortality rate in the past year, lower than the national average.



A patient recovers in our cardiac ward at Epworth Eastern.

Expertise benefits cardiac patients

Epworth is one of the few hospital groups to perform the Ross procedure, with only a handful of surgeons in Australia trained to perform the five-hour operation. This procedure involves the replacement of a diseased aortic valve with a pulmonary valve and the replacement of the pulmonary valve with a homograft. The goal is long-term durability of the two valves, along with a reduction in the use of anticoagulation therapy in younger patients.

After 20 years, specialist cardiothoracic surgeon Peter Skillington, Deputy Director of the Cardiac Sciences Clinical Institute at Epworth, has a 99.8% survival rate (0.2% mortality rate) using this procedure. It requires no artificial material or warfarin and is used on patients who are under 60 years of age.

Ross procedures during the past three years:

- ◆ 2019 - 22
- ◆ 2018 - 21
- ◆ 2017 - 15

Robotic surgery continues to be widely practiced at Epworth, including robotic-assisted cardiac surgery performed by a team led by cardiothoracic surgeon, Aubrey Almeida. Since 2004, 495 procedures have been performed at Epworth and robots were used in 47 valve repairs in 2019.

New probe revolutionising cardiac care

Epworth cardiac surgeons are now using the MiraQ Cardiac Ultrasound for coronary artery bypass grafts (CABG), thanks to the generosity of donors and the EMF.

“The MiraQ is a hand-held ultrasound probe designed to assess blood flow in newly constructed bypass grafts,” Professor Silvana Marasco, Epworth cardiothoracic surgeon said.

The benefit of this particular ultrasound is that it provides the team with immediate feedback on the quality of the surgery and the quickest and most accurate assessment of success, all while the patient is still in the operating room.

“We really had no other way of reliably assessing graft patency in the past and we relied on the surgeon’s visualisation of the graft,” Prof Marasco explained.

“This has revolutionised our ability to check our grafts prior to chest closure. If there is any problem identified with the graft it can be revised immediately, avoiding potentially catastrophic complications in the post operative period.”





Cardiac care 1980s

By 1980, Epworth had eight specialist units and Peter Wilson (Epworth Manager 1975-1985) was convinced the next steps should be establishing a first-rate intensive care unit (ICU) followed by a cardiac unit to perform open-heart surgery.

Dr Graeme Sloman, who was a world authority in the field of cardiology and based at the RMH, was very supportive in encouraging a cardiology unit at Epworth. His decision to move to Epworth in November 1980 was crucial to the unit's success and a huge boost to our reputation. He became the first Medical Director at Epworth and set up the cardiology unit. His presence, and the initiatives the hospital was undertaking, attracted other highly regarded doctors to Epworth.

The coronary care ward was opened on 24 August 1981 and the first open heart surgery at Epworth was performed by Mr George Westlake on 8 September 1981.

Hope and Tony Saba Family House

Philanthropy has funded the purchase and renovation of a unit near Epworth Richmond. The Hope and Tony Saba Family House is used to support patient families from regional Victoria, interstate and as far away as PNG. Use of the accommodation helps ease the financial burden on patients and their families.

To date, the Hope and Tony Saba Family House has provided a home away from home for 15 families, including Sonia Paua's father Bui, while Sonia underwent pro bono surgery ([read Sonia's story on page 114](#)). By staying at the house, Bui was able to be at Sonia's side until the final minutes before her surgery and during her recovery.

Guests at the house are predominantly families of oncology patients, with two families staying up to a month to support their family member during treatment.

The EMF is grateful to our donors who supported the purchase and redevelopment of the house. In particular, thank you to the Saba family, who have directly assisted Epworth to provide support to patients and their families during the most difficult of times.

Sonia was cared for at Epworth Richmond and was able to have her father Bui nearby, staying at the Hope and Tony Saba Family House.



Mental health

A passport to wellness and recovery

In the last year, Epworth developed a **Mental Health Passport** that encourages patients to become experts in their conditions and empower them towards recovery.

The passport, a portfolio of comprehensive information, includes a recovery action plan, preferences about care, triggers that exacerbate their illness, dietician information on the impacts of food on mood and advice from exercise psychologists on movement and mood.

Suzie Hooper, Director of Clinical and Site Services at Epworth Camberwell, said her team wanted a tool that could remain with the patient beyond Epworth Clinic. With nothing available in Australia, the team created their own kit.

Associate Nurse Unit Manager Natalie Nardella from Epworth Camberwell, led the working party tasked with creating a useful patient resource that focuses on recovery goals, not medical goals.

"Patients identify impacts to their life caused by their mental health and establish goals to achieve. Goals may include returning to work, improving parenting skills or managing their anxiety," Natalie said.

"If a patient returns to hospital, the passport accompanies them so they don't have to retell their story everywhere they go. That in itself can be traumatising and triggering for people. It's designed to be a consumer-focused complementary communication tool that sits alongside information their care team may already have received."

There are also daily planners to help structure the day. When your mental health deteriorates, something as simple as showering can become difficult.

"It's about achieving small goals, taking time to document your mood and reflect on how to respond to different events," Natalie said.

"Keeping a mood calendar, self-rating your mood from 1-10, enables patients and their carers to form a clear picture of what's going on. We can track how things are going and establish any impacts from new medications and other treatments or interventions over several weeks, to identify any improvements, even if it's marginal."

This project engaged inpatients to use the passport, supported by mental health nurses who have undertaken special training in the role of a recovery coach. This ensures each patient is able to gain maximum benefit from this integrated approach to their care and recovery.

The development and implementation of the passport is part of a research study, currently underway at Epworth Clinic.

Reinforcing skills to prevent suicide

To support our patients being treated for mental health issues, over 70 staff within Epworth Clinic participated in a new Suicide Prevention Workshop.

Developed by the Mental Health Education Department, the sessions reinforce existing techniques, teach new skills and build confidence to detect any warning signs. Our team also developed a program that focuses on role-play.

"It is important to recognise suicide is often perceived as an answer to an underlying problem causing significant emotional distress," Kim Miles, Education Manager said.

"If we can recognise this and empathise with the situation, we can start to identify helpful solutions using a collaborative, recovery-focused approach."

"At Epworth Clinic, we work with our patients to empower them to identify their warning signs and seek support using strategies that keep them safe, both in hospital and at home.

"Scenario-based activities and role-play help workshop participants build confidence by developing a tangible understanding of the signs to look for and practicing techniques to identify warning signs. This can de-escalate a potential suicide situation and keep someone safe.

"We recognise that we don't have to agree or disagree with someone, we can still sit with them and support them with what they are going through."

Suicide is the leading cause of death for Australians aged between 15 and 44. For every death by suicide, it is estimated that as many as 30 people attempt to end their lives.

If you, or anyone you know, are experiencing a mental health crisis, please call Lifeline on 13 11 14. For immediate emergencies, dial 000.

Food Services receives national awards

The food served to Epworth patients regularly receives praise. This year, we also won a number of national industry accolades.

Epworth Richmond Food Services won two national prizes in the Institute for Hospitality in Healthcare (IHHC) awards in August 2019, after winning a state award.

The awards won are in the categories of:

- ◆ **Project of the Year Award** – Room Service
- ◆ **Leadership Award** – Food Services Manager Noeleen Xerri.

The national winners were also eligible for the major prize, the Rosemary Pirie Excellence Award. This was also won by Epworth Richmond Room Service Project.

Epworth Richmond Room Service is the largest room service kitchen in a healthcare setting in the western hemisphere. The kitchen produces more than 3,000 meals per day for 700 inpatients and hundreds more for day patients. With 32 theatre operating rooms at the hospital, the service also caters for surgeons' meals daily.

Five-star food rating

Our Food Services team at Epworth Eastern achieved a five-star rating in its 2019 Food Safety Assessment. This assessment evaluates the performance of food safety practices, with a five-star rating representing a grading of 'excellent', incorporating best practice.



Epworth milestones

As well as celebrating our centenary year, several key services had milestones of their own.

Unique service praised

The Transitional Living Centre (TLC) at Epworth passed accreditation with flying colours this year, while also marking 30 years of service.

The TLC provides residential and community rehabilitation for adults who have an Acquired Brain Injury (ABI). The first community-based facility of its type in Victoria, the TLC helps patients build independence and practise everyday living skills, so they are eventually able to return to normal activities.

Community Rehabilitation Manager Jeremy Buckmaster says the TLC, which comprises a four-bedroom house and three units, was set up to help ABI patients who couldn't manage by themselves at home, after hospital discharge.

"After discharge, a number of ABI patients were returning to hospital. Since the opening of the TLC, we've had over 500 people call the TLC home," Jeremy said.

"Some residents come straight from the hospital ward, others from care facilities or from home. Many of our residents are several years post-injury but were not coping at home. At the TLC, they practise skills like cooking, memory strategies, time management, budgeting or parenting."

Residents, aged 18-70, stay an average of six to nine months at the centre, which includes five TAC/WorkCover-funded beds and two funded by the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS). Another unit has been purchased this year, increasing the available beds to eight.

A successful accreditation review of the TLC was undertaken by the DHHS in October 2019.

Residents develop independence at our Transitional Living Centre.



Past and current staff members of the Hospital in the Home team.

Two decades of care for you at home

Our Hospital in the Home (HIH) service celebrated a major milestone in February of this year, 20 years of caring for patients at home.

Head of the HIH Unit, Associate Professor Michael Montalto, brought his knowledge and experience of HIH care to Epworth in 2000.

"The unit started with three part-time nurses and myself, visiting patients at home, where we often put in long hours and were on call overnight," A/Prof Montalto said.

HIH provides acute home care for patients, who would otherwise need treatment in a traditional hospital bed.

It is a clinical unit of the hospital, with its own medical, nursing and administrative staff, with full access to the technology and support services from Epworth.

HIH nurses administer a wide variety of intravenous therapies, including antibiotics, antivirals, colloid fluids, steroids, blood products and chemotherapy.

They also look after complex wounds with negative pressure dressings.

Today our HIH service attends to 10,000 patients annually, expanding to provide a:

- ◆ 24 hour on-call service
- ◆ team of four doctors, 12 nurses and a unit receptionist
- ◆ fleet of seven cars.



Staff members, past and present, gathered to share stories about the dialysis unit over the past 30 years.



First Australian private dialysis unit turns 30

The Dialysis Unit at Epworth celebrated its 30-year anniversary in October 2019.

Prior to 1989, haemodialysis was only available at major public hospitals in large cities across Australia—a great disadvantage to patients requiring dialysis in smaller towns.

In 1989, Professor Gavin Becker was asked to examine the possibility of establishing the first private dialysis unit in Australia. Several private insurance companies eagerly supported this initiative. Epworth was asked to host this project, taking several months to develop a four-bed unit in the paediatric ward.

The unit started with three staff members, each working one day a week.

In April 2019, the unit became a standalone unit and now boasts new, state-of-the-art dialysis equipment and modern and comfortable chairs, located in a light and bright space at Epworth Richmond.

Our patient numbers have steadily increased over time, now averaging 25 patients per day.

A legacy has been created by the original Epworth unit, with many other private dialysis units subsequently opened following our success.

Voluntary Assisted Dying – empowering patients to choose

Victorians were able to access Voluntary Assisted Dying (VAD) at Epworth from 19 June 2019, following a decision by the Board that the Voluntary Assisted Dying Act was consistent with our strategic Connected Care pillar. At Epworth, holistic empowering patient-centred care recognises the importance of patient choice and autonomy.

A working group, comprising Professor Emeritus John Catford (former Executive Director, Academic and Medical Services), A/Prof and Chief Medical Officer Luis Prado and Executive Sponsor VAD and Director of Clinical and Site Services, Epworth Camberwell, Suzie Hooper, was established to support the development of information, resources, procedures and protocols around services that could be offered to patients on request.

Within our hospitals, it was clearly communicated that doctors and staff who conscientiously objected would not be asked to participate.

It was important to ensure continuity of care, which provided comfort to patients, was supported by a consistent approach across all sites. Eliza Armstrong, Voluntary Assisted Dying Coordinator, and local support teams work closely together to ensure patients are seen promptly. They work closely with VAD accredited doctors and undertake education campaigns across all shifts to manage patients. Further support is provided by four of our Pastoral Care staff, who have specialised in voluntary assisted dying processes.

Dying with Dignity is an organisation of 150 volunteers. They support Epworth patients by assessing their capacity and signing their final declaration as voluntary witnesses in hospital and doctors' rooms, including during the pandemic.

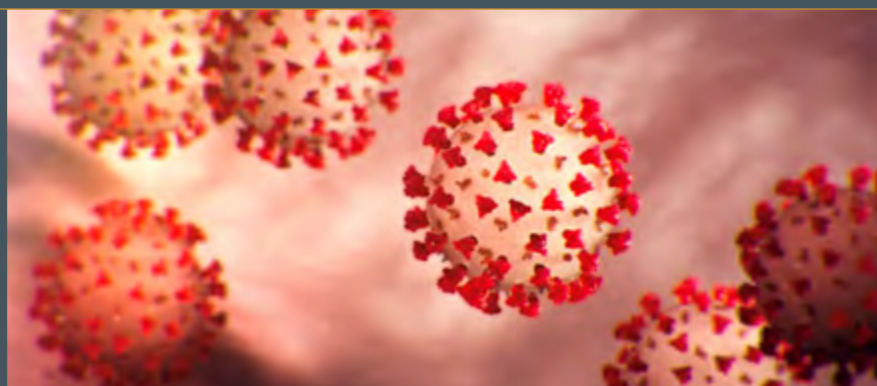


First private hospital to admit time critical patients - 1990s

Epworth had been accredited to receive time critical medical patients by ambulance during the 1994-95 financial year. In 1996, the ED was accredited by the Australasian College of Emergency Medicine for advanced vocational training of emergency medicine specialists – the first private hospital in Australia to receive this recognition.

Care in times of a pandemic

When the COVID-19 pandemic was declared in March 2020, the immediate aim of Epworth was to keep our patients, staff, doctors and community safe.



Statewide pandemic response

As part of our responsibility to our community, Epworth joined the statewide pandemic response. We signed an agreement with the Victorian State Government to ensure there was hospital capacity for potential Victorian patients, should there be a surge in infections. Epworth Group Chief Executive Dr Lachlan Henderson was nominated as Victoria's private hospital representative on the State Pandemic Response Committee, chaired by the DHHS Secretary Kym Peake.

Dedicated wards and operating theatres were designated for the response, with all Epworth hospitals joining in geographical clusters to assist our public hospital colleagues during this crisis.

All Epworth ICUs planned for an anticipated surge of patients, ensuring we have appropriate facilities, PPE, equipment and staffing models to safely care for COVID-19 patients, while continuing to treat elective surgery patients.

Planning for COVID-19 introduced many challenges, including the need to quickly upskill staff to work within a critical care environment, in particular ICU.

Our critical care educators collaborated to develop training programs across the organisation.

Pandemic modelling indicated a shortage of critical care trained nurses to meet the anticipated demand. Some of our programs were specifically designed to support critical care certificated nurses (CCRN) to manage critically unwell COVID-19 patients.

Each Epworth site developed workforce surge models of care. Our educators were integral in identifying the skills and competencies required for various workforce groups, as nursing care was customised to safely and skilfully care for COVID-19 patients. Training programs involved interactive virtual classrooms, face-to-face sessions, clinical simulation and bedside mentoring.

Epworth Richmond developed a course to upskill nurses to manage a sudden influx of critically ill people. Several hundred staff completed this training, including theatre and ward staff.

A number of retired ICU nurses volunteered their services to support any potential surge requirements. Many VMOs also volunteered to assist, for which we are incredibly thankful.

Regional response

Epworth Geelong contributed as part of the first Victorian regional cluster response planning team. The collaboration between all health services, private and public, in the south west region, has ensured a coordinated surge capacity plan was in place, to manage inpatient units, ICUs and EDs in the event of an outbreak.

Epworth Geelong converted six empty shells within its ICU into patient beds. A number of philanthropic trusts from the Geelong region, supported the conversion of three shells into ICU beds and the EMF, made an additional contribution, to convert an additional three shells into High Dependency Unit beds. The investment of over \$500,000 ensured Epworth Geelong has access to specialised equipment, including ventilators and monitors to care for our high acuity patients.

Private and public sectors collaborate

As part of the collaboration between Epworth Geelong and Barwon Health, the 'Surgical Unit 3' at University Hospital Geelong was relocated to Epworth Geelong from 30 March 2020. This move ensured essential colorectal surgeries, for both public and private patients, could continue within Geelong throughout the pandemic.

From 30 March to 15 May 2020, 160 time-critical cases were successfully performed at Epworth Geelong.

During this period:

- 18 cancer operations were performed
- Two cases of bowel cancer were detected via colonoscopy.

Epworth Geelong Professor of Surgery, Professor Glenn Guest said the crucial partnership between Epworth Geelong and Barwon Health has been invaluable.

"Through the partnership with Barwon Health, patients who were diagnosed with colon cancer received treatment in a timely manner, meaning that there were no poor outcomes related to delays in treatment. We also continued to manage diagnostic colonoscopies and screening colonoscopies and, while these diagnostics were at a lower level than normal, we are hopeful that few cancers will have been missed or delayed in their diagnosis."

University Hospital Surgical Unit 3 will remain at Epworth Geelong for the duration of the DHHS agreement, which sees the state's healthcare system working as one.

Technology helping support public health

Our Information Technology (IT) team has also been involved in enabling public health efforts by Epworth in response to COVID-19. Activities include working with our public hospital partners and staff, across multiple business units, to develop processes for referral pathways, revised administrative and billing functions and the secure exchange of clinical information to ensure seamless transitions of care.

The technical solutions deployed varied in complexity and included changes to existing systems or new solutions to support specific hospital networks, such as Alfred Health. The agility and flexibility of our IT team during this phase were critical elements to the success of this arrangement.

"Experience from around the world revealed there was morbidity and mortality, not only directly from COVID-19, but as collateral impact, when a hospital became overwhelmed and could no longer provide the normal essential surgery that was needed."

Epworth Geelong Executive General Manager Luke Edwards



Safety considerations and infection control

In line with the DHHS guidelines, we put security and screening measures in place across all entrance points. Members of the public, with any symptoms, were asked not to visit and overall visitor numbers were restricted, to minimise the chance of community transmission within our hospitals. While this was difficult for our patients, it was necessary to put their health and safety first. Our staff supported patients, as we proactively encouraged families to use video conferencing applications to connect with their loved ones.

With high demand for PPE, such as masks, gloves and isolation gowns, we monitored our supplies closely and ensured our healthcare workers received intensive training on how to don and doff protective equipment.

Most non-urgent elective surgery was cancelled across public and private hospitals, ensuring that PPE was preserved.

Urgent elective surgery cases continued, with additional screening required for patients, with questions asked via phone, prior to their surgery and again on presentation. As elective surgery increased from April, outstanding cases were prioritised according to clinical need.

Communication materials for our community and employees focused on necessary social (physical) distancing measures and good hygiene practices.

We communicated with our community on each change via our website, social media, in our hospitals using posters and signage, cards on meal trays and through our Point of Care bedside system (POC). Visitor restriction posters were translated into Chinese, Vietnamese and Italian.



为了维护所有病患、工作和医务人员的持续安全, 所有进入医院的访客需要接受体温检测。

探访时段限早上10时半-12时半或下午5-7时。

- 每名住院病患一天仅限两名(2)访客, 且只限探访一次。访客仅限家属或住院患者之监护人或家庭照护成员。访客年龄限于16岁以上。
- 产科病人入院期间仅限一名指定的访客(仅限伴侣或亲属)。
- 新冠病毒患者或等待测试结果者在住院期间, 禁有访客探病。
- 新冠病毒患者或新冠病毒康复者或居家隔离期间者, 一概禁止探访。
- 如有特殊情况, 该部门的医务人员将慎重考虑与衡量病患的安全为首, 而实施适当的探病规定。

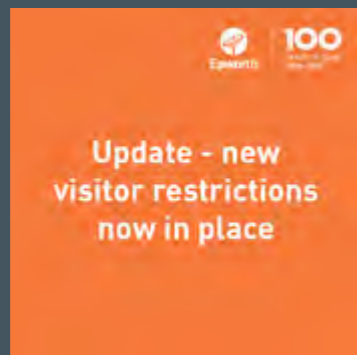
禁止进入
如在您过去的14天内, 无论您从海外返回或到过国内的其他城市, 如果您有以下任何症状:

- 发烧
- 咳嗽
- 喉咙痛
- 呼吸急促、呼吸困难或气短
- 头痛
- 其他呼吸道感染的症状

我们理解, 这对您和家人而言是一段很艰难的时期和处境。为了给予病患持续的支持与关怀, 且让病患和家人保持联系, 我们鼓励采用其他联系方式如电话、脸书和Skype。

更新: 2020年5月20日, 星期三下午5时

epworth.org.au



Dear Patient
Your safety is our priority.

Due to COVID-19, strict visitor restrictions are now in place.

Please advise your loved ones and potential visitors to check our website prior to visiting at www.epworth.org.au

We recognise that staying in contact is important and encourage this as much as possible via other means such as phone, FaceTime and Skype.

Thank you for understanding.

epworth.org.au

Our internal tracing team met virtually.



Tracing from inside our hospitals

With potential outbreaks a possibility within our hospitals, an in-house contact tracing team was established in early April 2020, to manage the tracing of any COVID-19 cases related to our patients, staff or doctors.

This service and its procedures and protocols were developed quickly to ensure

Epworth was well-prepared. By 30 June 2020, 36 nurses across Epworth sites were trained to interview those with a confirmed infection, quickly identify people they had been in close contact with and offer any required support to assist contacts to self-isolate and limit the spread of infection.

Our internal contact tracers also investigated the circumstances of infection,

to minimise further risk of transmission and to identify any breaches in infection control.

The tracers, who participated in a 24/7 on-call roster, in addition to their primary nursing roles, conducted more than 170 investigative interviews with patients, staff and doctors. This service played a vital role in minimising transmission at Epworth.



Contact tracers in the community

When the DHHS called for contact tracers, many of our dedicated staff volunteered (pictured left). Epworth had a team of 65 staff who relocated to the department's city offices, as part of a team of almost 200.

The project objectives were containment to reduce the health burden and prepare health services.

Epworth people from multiple sites, including enrolled nurses, associate unit managers, business development staff and hospital coordinators contacted individuals who were confirmed as having COVID-19 about their movements.

They then attempted to call everyone identified as a close contact, asking them to self-isolate. The team also carried out welfare and emotional checks on impacted people.

Working in a dynamic and rapidly changing environment, the team had to be flexible and responsive. Helping flatten the curve, through speedy contact tracing, has been a rewarding experience for all involved.

Pastoral Care steps in

Our Pastoral Care team has been balancing the needs of patients and families with strict physical distancing regulations.

Pastoral Care Worker Claire Davies says there has been some anxiety during this time.

“There is a lot of loneliness from patients, as they are not receiving visitors as they would normally and they are feeling isolated,” Claire said.

“We’ve been trying to support families with phone calls and let them know they have a listening ear when needed.

“We’ve also found ways of adapting for those facing end of life. It’s distressing for patients, families and staff and being able to work creatively, with all three groups, in these unprecedented circumstances has been really meaningful.”



Pastoral Care Worker Claire Davies provided emotional support.

Services move to telehealth

Flexibility and agility have become the standard, as we responded to the COVID-19 pandemic. A host of services, including mental health, rehabilitation, maternity and oncology used telehealth to connect with patients.

Mental health was a focus, with Epworth Clinic acting quickly to ensure treatment options would still be available for vulnerable members of our community.

With physical distancing guidelines all but putting a stop to traditional one-on-one psychiatric consultations, inpatient group therapies and outpatient day programs, the mental health team at Epworth Clinic set up telehealth sessions, so clients could be treated from home.

“One in five Australians already experience a mental health condition. There are also heightened feelings of depression, anxiety and stress amongst the community,

brought on by COVID-19,” said Dr Graham Wong, Epworth Medical Director of Mental Health and Psychiatry, Epworth Clinic.

“With this in mind, it was imperative for us to adjust our services so people could safely continue to receive mental healthcare, while adhering to the social distancing guidelines.”

Developing a service for telehealth delivery required teamwork, so the team worked alongside IT, our Project Management Office and health contracts staff.

“It was important that we understood how an online service model would provide appropriate clinical intervention for our patients. It would need to meet government and health fund needs, have the right resources and administrative processes, and give staff and patients an opportunity for feedback,” Dr Wong explained.

In a two-week period, the Epworth Clinic team transitioned all mental health programs and services to a telehealth phone and video conferencing model, ahead of many other mental health service providers.

Following one-on-one consultations and testing with inpatients, our programs were conducted with people attending online therapeutic group programs in their rooms via personal devices. Day programs were the final service to move to telehealth.

Patients have expressed appreciation for continued access to our mental health programs, without any compromise to their health or safety.



Telehealth sessions for mental health (March-30 June 2020):

1,527 sessions in total, including:

718
day program sessions

260
individual one-on-one sessions associated with day sessions

69
private practice sessions

480
inpatient sessions

COVID-19: our employee response

Staff at the frontline in our Staff & VMO Clinic, with Chief Medical Officer A/Prof Luis Prado at back left.



Following the declaration of a pandemic, our hospitals moved into full preparation mode to support the needs of the Victorian community and employees volunteered to help in any way they could.

Our employees and VMOs began adapting their practice, learning new skills and educating themselves in how to safely manage this pandemic together. Former ICU employees also put their hands up to return to the bedside, should they be needed.

Our people and VMOs well supported

By April 2020, we had established walk-in Staff and VMO Support Clinics at three Epworth sites to provide COVID-19 swab testing. The service was managed by our own nurses and doctors in redeployment roles. We also set up a dedicated group-wide phone hotline, available every day, and an email enquiry service that provided clinical advice, employment information and directions for additional support.

During this time, the priority was to ensure the safety of our frontline healthcare workers and to deliver a convenient and accessible means of in-house testing, clinical support, wellbeing advice and counselling.

The service was expanded to include all staff from Melbourne Pathology at Epworth Richmond, Epworth Medical Imaging (EMI) and Slade Pharmacy in late April.

Until July 2020:

- we performed 6,146 tests on staff and patients.

Pandemic preparation - training

The pandemic brought many challenges. We took stock of our facilities, equipment and staffing models to ensure we could safely care for both COVID-19 and other patients.

With a shortage of trained critical care nurses to meet expected demand, we implemented training programs.

These programs were designed to ensure nursing employees had the skills required to work in ICU, and involved interactive virtual classrooms, face-to-face sessions, clinical simulation and bedside mentoring. Each of our hospitals developed workforce surge models of care.

The team at Epworth Richmond ICU developed a short face-to-face course, to upskill nurses in other areas, starting with coronary care and theatre staff. Training was tailored to allow for multiple surge scenarios to be accommodated and saw the upskill program training completed by:

- 20 CCU nurses
- 52 Post-Anaesthesia Care Unit (PACU) nurses
- 100 ward nurses.



PPE training – protecting our people

Our Education teams have been a critical part of supporting our response to the pandemic, learning to think innovatively.

At Epworth, a new role was introduced in March 2020 - dedicated PPE spotters. This role was performed by trained staff who helped ensure correct procedures for the safety of employees and patients in COVID-19 patient areas.

Mock COVID-19 isolation rooms were created and hundreds of employees underwent intensive training to ensure our people donned and doffed correctly to avoid infection.

Many employees attended multiple sessions to improve their confidence in handling a suspected or COVID-19 positive patient.

The need for physical distancing challenged the usual way of providing essential clinical education to our people, with some sessions run virtually or via video.

Centenary celebrations

Turning 100 was a major milestone for Epworth and we celebrated with past and present staff, doctors, donors, volunteers and partners at Melbourne Town Hall.

It was a night of acknowledging our past, celebrating our achievements and pledging our commitment to excellence in patient care, into the future.





Many staff members remain at Epworth for decades, while some spent their entire working lives there. Nurses and most of the domestic and office staff lived at the hospital until the 1960s. Some patients remained at Epworth for months or years. All these factors contributed to the sense of family and concern for each other that is still apparent at Epworth today.

05

Empowered People

Our people

7,184
employees

3,862
nurses and midwives
(54% of our workforce)

709
allied health employees

333
directly employed doctors

2,600+
VMOs

264
volunteers

Our employees have an average length of service of six years.

Empowered People, a core pillar of the Epworth HealthCare Strategic Plan 2018–2022, is about enabling our people and teams to be their best and make a difference to our patient experience. The past 12 months has been an extraordinary period of change and we have continued to see high performing teams working closely together, supporting one another and rapidly adapting to new ways of working during uncertain times.

Our Board

Epworth Foundation is a body corporate established under the Epworth Foundation Act 1980 (Vic) that principally operates under the registered business name Epworth HealthCare.

Our Board of Management consists of 10 members.



Ms Maryjane Crabtree
(President) BA, LLB, FAICD

Appointed to Epworth Board of Management in 2012 and President since November 2017. A retired lawyer and executive partner, Ms Crabtree specialised in occupational health and safety, product and environmental liability, class actions and risk management, before retiring to focus on non-executive director and committee positions. Ms Crabtree is also on the Boards of Racing Analytical Services Laboratory and Rugby Victoria, is a member of Chief Executive Women, and sits on the Ethics Committee of the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare.



Robert Macmillan
(Deputy President) LLB, B Com, F Fin, GAICD

Appointed to the Board in 2011 and Deputy President since 2017. Beginning his career as a lawyer, Mr Macmillan then moved into senior roles at Foster's Group Limited, Pacific Brands Limited, BlueScope Steel Limited, Grill'd Pty Ltd and Australian Pharmaceuticals Industries Ltd. He has extensive financial, commercial, business development and legal experience at executive and Board level.



Ms Laura Anderson
FCIT, BMath, BLit

Chairman of SVI Global Pty Ltd, OneGlobalVenture Pty Ltd, LaunchVic and the Foundation for the Advancement of Science and Technology and Chair of Judges of the World EY Entrepreneur Of The Year™ Oceania, Ms Anderson is also on the Board of the Defence Science Institute, the National Basketball League and the Defence Council Victoria.



Professor Paul Douglas
BE, MEngSc, FAICD, Professorial Fellow Melb Uni, Harvard OPM24

Professor Douglas has had an extensive career in business and consulting engineering with 15 years as CEO of Sinclair Knight Merz. Prof Douglas was appointed to the University of Melbourne School of Engineering to connect with industry and introduce leadership and management into the engineering programs. Prof Douglas is a Fellow of the AICD and has served on the Boards of listed, private and not for profit companies.

Our Board continued



Associate Professor

Nerina Harley

AM MBBS, MD, FRACP, FJFIM, FCICM, PGDipEcho, AFRACMA

Associate Professor Harley is the Chair of the Group Medical Advisory Council (GMAC) and the Specialist Accreditation Committee at Epworth. She is also a Director of Intensive Care Council and Epworth ICUs at Epworth Freemasons and Epworth Geelong. A/Prof Harley works with the DHHS as a member of the Patient Measurement and Reporting Committee and the Expert Working Group; Critical Care Clinical Network, Safer Care Victoria, and internationally as a consultant with the World Health Organisation (WHO). A/Prof Harley is a physician specialising in nephrology and intensive care.

Dr Lachlan Henderson

MBBS, FRACGP, MHSM, GAICD, Cert Sports Med

Dr Henderson is the Group Chief Executive Epworth HealthCare and a medical practitioner who has 30 years of experience in the healthcare industry. He joined Epworth in January 2017 and was previously CEO St John of God (SJoG) Subiaco Hospital. Dr Henderson a Board Member of Cricket Australia.

*Previously Vice President, Dr Henderson was appointed President of the Australian Private Hospitals Association in October 2020.

Ms Janet Matton

AM BBus, GAICD

Ms Matton has extensive experience in the IT industry and in business management. She spent 34 years with IBM, including time as vice president of operations and 12 years holding key roles in Southeast Asia, the United States, Japan, China and Europe. Named the 2010 Victorian Telstra Business Woman of the Year, Ms Matton is also Chair of the Eastern Community Legal Centre and ACMI and on the Boards of Better Care Victoria and pitt&sherry (engineers). She is also a member of Chief Executive Women.

The Reverend Emeritus Professor Christiaan Mostert

BA, BD, MA, PhD

Revd Dr Mostert is an Emeritus Professor of the University of Divinity (Melbourne) and was a minister of the Presbyterian Church of Australia and then the Uniting Church in Australia for almost 50 years. He was engaged in parish ministry in Tasmania, missionary service in South Korea, and theological and ministerial education in Sydney (nine years) and Melbourne (17 years). His work has been published in books and journals and he continues his teaching, research and writing, though officially retired in December 2012. He was ordained an Anglican priest in 2016.

Ms Wendy Thorpe

BA, BBus, Grad Dip Applied Finance & Investment, GAICD, FFin, Harvard AMP 172

Ms Thorpe is Chair of Online Education Services, a Non-executive Director of Tower Ltd, Ausgrid, People's Choice Credit Union and Very Special Kids and a member of Chief Executive Women. She previously served as a Director of AMP Bank, a member of Council at Swinburne University and as a Director of AXA Business Services in India. Ms Thorpe had an extensive executive career leading technology and operations within large, listed financial services companies. This included senior executive roles at AXA (CIO and COO), ANZ (General Manager, Institutional Technology) and AMP (Group Executive, Operations).

Reverend Sue Withers

DipTeach, BTh, GradDipPsych

An ordained minister of the Uniting Church of Australia, Rev. Sue Withers is currently Secretary of the Ministry Placements Committee within the Synod of Victoria and Tasmania. She is also Co-Director of the unit responsible for overseeing relationships between Uniting Church- associated hospitals, schools and agencies (Uniting). Sue is a past Moderator (2003-2006) and has had other management roles associated with the Synod (Victoria & Tasmania) of the Uniting Church of Australia. Sue was Senior Chaplain at Methodist Ladies College from 1997-2003 following an early career in secondary teaching.

Our Executives

Epworth HealthCare is led by a Group Executive team of eight, who bring a wealth of experience and expertise to our private hospital group.



Ms Maree Feery
Executive Director, People & Culture

Maree joined Epworth as Human Resources Manager at Epworth Richmond with over 20 years extensive leadership experience in public and private health before becoming Executive Director in 2012. Prior to Epworth, her roles included national human resources manager at Healthscope, and director of organisational development at Melbourne Health.



Mr Danny Gravell
Chief Information Officer

Danny commenced his role at Epworth in April 2020, following more than 25 years of experience in leadership roles: spanning technology, product management, marketing, eCommerce and organisation-wide transformation, most recently at business supplies company WINC.



Associate Professor Dr Luis Prado
Chief Medical Officer and Executive Director Academic and Medical Services

For more than 20 years, Luis has held a number of senior medical administrator roles across Queensland Health and in the private healthcare sector. He has also served as a medical officer with the Australian Regular Army. With more than 30 years as a practising GP, Luis joined Epworth in 2016.



Dr Lachlan Henderson
Group Chief Executive Epworth HealthCare

A medical practitioner, Lachlan has 30 years of experience in the health industry and joined Epworth in January 2017. Lachlan's focus is on driving patient care, doctor and staff satisfaction, and business outcomes in a changing healthcare landscape.



Mr Scott Bulger
Executive Director, Epworth Medical Foundation and Brand

With extensive senior leadership experience in development, advancement, marketing and media across both the private and not-for-profit sectors, Scott joined Epworth in 2012. Prior to Epworth, Scott was Pro-Vice Chancellor, Development and External Relations at Bond University.



Ms Liz Camilleri
Executive Director Finance and Commercial Services

Liz joined Epworth as a pay clerk in 1990 and during her career was promoted to payroll manager, hospitality services manager at Epworth Richmond and became the inaugural business manager of the greenfield Epworth Eastern in 2004. She was appointed Executive Director, Finance in 2009 and the expanded position in 2017. Liz left Epworth after 30 years in August 2020. Her replacement is Mr Cameron Fuller.



Adjunct Professor Paula Stephenson
Executive Director, Clinical Services and Chief Nursing Officer

With more than 30 years experience in healthcare sector, Paula has a wealth of clinical, education, leadership and management experience. She has held senior operational and strategic management positions in major metropolitan public health services, a not-for-profit medical professional association and a multi-national Big Four consulting firm. Paula started at Epworth in June 2018.



Mrs Nicole Waldron
Chief Operating Officer – Hospitals

With an extensive background in healthcare management across the public and private sectors, Nicole joined Epworth in February 2011 and was appointed as Executive Director Epworth Richmond in March 2014, as Executive Director, Epworth Freemasons and Epworth Richmond in May 2018 and Chief Operating Officer – Hospitals in November 2019.

Our Hospital Executive General Managers

As Epworth grew in size and complexity, the need to benefit from this scale, while collaborating effectively across our hospitals, became critical. In November 2019, we reshaped our operating model to ensure Epworth is best placed to face the challenges that lie ahead.

In order to achieve our strategic goals as a more unified hospital group, the new role of Chief Operating Officer – Hospitals was created and Nicole Waldron was appointed to this role. Nicole’s remit covers strategic and operational leadership, management and alignment of our hospitals and services.

“Epworth has grown by more than 30% over the last five years: significant growth for any organisation. We have dedicated, passionate and experienced Executive General Managers leading our hospitals. While leading their respective hospital teams, and in partnership with other Epworth leaders, each Executive General Manager is focused on ensuring our patients receive the best care and that staff and doctors are supported and empowered to provide care.”

Mrs Nicole Waldron, Chief Operating Officer – Hospitals



Mr Simon Benedict

Epworth Freemasons (Clarendon Street, Victoria Parade and Cliveden)

“We launched into a new and exciting era of exceptional patient care and clinical innovation at Epworth Freemasons, with the completion of our \$100 million redevelopment. Beyond the bricks and mortar, our people remain committed to finding new and better ways to care, while taking into account each patient’s individual needs.”



Mr Luke Edwards

Epworth Geelong and EMI

“In 2021, Epworth Geelong will celebrate five years of service to the greater Geelong region. Since our opening in 2016, we have become a vital part of the community by introducing new services and delivering exceptional care for patients and their families. This year, our dedicated team will continue to grow the range of services available in Geelong to support the health of our local region.”



Ms Allison Evans

Epworth Richmond

“At Epworth Richmond, our dedicated teams look forward to continuing to provide exceptional health services to the community and take pride in the difference they make for every patient and family. The opening of the state-of-the-art La Trobe Financial Cardiac Catheterisation Unit this year will see us continue to be at the forefront of the latest technologies and the provision of excellence in clinical care.”



Ms Jo Goodridge

*Rehabilitation and *Mental Health (Brighton, Richmond, Camberwell, Hawthorn, Transitional Living Centre)*

“It is our role to help people lead a fulfilling life at home and in the community, whether they are living with a mental illness, recovering from a physical injury or managing a long-term chronic illness. We will continue to research, work collaboratively and deliver rehabilitation and mental health programs both in hospital and in the community, to achieve the best possible outcomes for our patients.”

*A permanent appointment to the new Executive General Manager Mental Health position will be made shortly.



Ms Kerry May

Epworth Eastern (Box Hill, Kew and Ekerah)

“Through our community partnerships, we have commenced a significant expansion and redevelopment that will deliver additional healthcare services to our region. Our new facilities will also support us to continue to attract and retain highly skilled and experienced doctors, nurses and clinicians, to provide world-class care and the best experience possible for our patients and their families.”

Our culture

Keeping our workforce engaged and part of a positive, safe, healthy and values-based culture is integral to both our patient and people experience.

In November 2019, 65% of our people completed an Epworth-wide employee experience survey.

Survey results showed:

- ◆ 77% of employees were 'engaged' – a strong result
- ◆ Key strengths included safety, pride in Epworth and growth and development opportunities.
- ◆ Improvements were needed in managing change, building trust in leadership, recognition and work processes.

Continuous improvement opportunities are always sought, and this year, we rolled out an enhanced performance development system across Epworth.

Health, safety and wellbeing

We continued to embed a safety culture, including enhanced safety leadership, awareness, capability and accountability to ensure everyone stays well and returns home safely at the end of each day.

Our aim is to ensure everyone is committed to safety expectations at Epworth and has the knowledge and skills to perform their roles safely. During 2020, this included a renewed focus on mental health and wellbeing. To further enhance safety and wellbeing, we introduced a respect and kindness campaign that aligns with our values and behaviours.

Speaking Up for Safety

Speaking Up for Safety face-to-face training continued throughout the year, including during COVID-19 restrictions, where smaller groups were trained while maintaining physical distancing.

Developed by the Cognitive Institute, Speaking Up for Safety training is mandatory for all employees and VMOs. It builds on a culture of safety, where all employees and VMOs feel safe and supported to speak up for patient safety. This is enabled by developing insights and skills to respectfully raise issues with team members when they are concerned.

During the year:

- ◆ 1,821 employees completed Speaking Up for Safety training.

The program is built on respect, mutual support and the underlying message that we are all doing our best in a fast-paced, rapidly changing workplace.

Cultural awareness

In May 2020, we launched online Cultural Awareness programs for the Indigenous, Torres Strait Islander and LGBTIQ+ communities. This training is mandatory for all employees. To date:

- ◆ 3,541 employees have completed the LGBTIQ+ training
- ◆ 3,950 employees have completed the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander training
- ◆ The remaining 45% will complete training by the end of November 2020.



A group of employees represented Epworth in our first ever Midsummar Pride March in February 2020.

Diversity and inclusion

While Epworth has a strong culture, grounded in both patient and employee experience, this is being strengthened with a renewed focus on diversity and inclusion. In our recent employee experience survey, Epworth was highly rated for having a culture of inclusion.

We know that a workplace that genuinely values diversity and inclusion enables greater employee engagement and empowerment, increases productivity and performance, boosts innovation and strengthens connection with patients and the community.

Within this program, we delivered a series of events including: International Women's Day, a number of Future Women's Forums, Men's Health breakfast, Pride March and Harmony Day.

We've also been working towards Rainbow Tick Accreditation and developing a Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) to improve support for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander patients and employees.

Our aim is to ensure everyone, from patients to employees, doctors and volunteers, feels they belong at Epworth.

Reconciliation

Epworth HealthCare operates hospitals on the traditional lands of the Wurundjeri, Wadawurrung and Boon Wurrung peoples of the Kulin Nations and acknowledges their continuing connection to the land.

Our reconciliation journey began in 2019, ahead of a formally endorsed RAP, thanks to the commitment and passion of our people and donors. With the support of the Board of Management, Group Executive and our Diversity and Inclusion Committee, Epworth's Reflect Reconciliation Action Plan will be launched in late 2020 and implemented in 2021.

In January 2020, we launched an "Asking the Question" protocol, online training (e-learn) module and posters to reinforce the importance to staff and patients of recording Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander origin information on patient

admission. As at 30 June 2020, 84% of our staff involved in the patient administration process had completed the e-learn.

In May 2020, we continued enhancing cultural competency within our organisation, with the introduction of online education on the history of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and the contemporary experience of First Nations Australians in our community and workplaces. With a target of 100% completion by end of 2020, more than half of our workforce completed the online education within six months.

In 2019, with the generous support of donors, we acquired artwork from Aboriginal artists connected to the lands upon which Epworth cares for its patients. Acquisitions made through the 2019 Koorie Art Show and through The Torch are now on display in Epworth hospitals in Melbourne and Geelong.

These art installations are one way we seek to respectfully create a welcoming environment for First Nations Australians in our hospitals.

While building our organisation's cultural consciousness within our hospitals, we have also sought to build our engagement with other organisations committed to supporting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander healthcare professionals. Epworth is an organisation member of the Australian Indigenous Doctors Association (AIDA). We sponsored two AIDA members in 2019 - a medical student and junior medical officer selected by AIDA - to attend their annual conference in Darwin.

This artwork by Dixon Patten (Aboriginal name Bitja), depicts Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders connection to Country and community. This artwork was designed for Epworth HealthCare's Reflect Reconciliation Action Plan commencing in December 2020.

This message was included in our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders e-learn, launched in May 2020:

"I'm a Wotjobaluk man, an Aboriginal man from Western Victoria on my dad's side. I'm quite proud to work at Epworth and I am also very proud of my Aboriginal heritage. The fact that Epworth has a cultural awareness package is really important to me as an Aboriginal person, but also important for staff and for our patient care."

Dr Glenn Harrison, Emergency physician at Epworth Geelong



Celebrating our women

Gender equality

Most of our employees are female (78%).

Women were well-represented in promotions, being awarded:

83%
of all promotions

62%
of manager promotions and
65% of new manager roles

85%
of non-manager promotions

International Women's Day

The many achievements of our outstanding women were celebrated at events around our sites for International Women's Day (IWD) in March 2020. A breakfast event, morning teas and activities were held to recognise the remarkable contribution of the more than 6,700 female employees, VMOs and volunteers who work across Epworth.

At our breakfast for 400 Epworth employees, Daisy Pearce, a pioneer of women's football in Australia, practicing midwife and mother, was the keynote speaker.

Events had additional significance as we celebrated the centenary of Epworth and the World Health Organisation's Year of the Nurse and Midwife.

When Epworth opened its doors in 1920, the hospital was run by five women. Nursing staff were entirely women, until male nurses were accepted into nursing schools in the 1970s. Today, women are well represented in all areas at Epworth, including senior positions. Half of Epworth's Group Executive and two-thirds of our Board are women.

Future Women's Forums

Our Future Women's Forum included two symposia events in July and October 2019 on the topics "The lies we tell ourselves" and "Financial empowerment: challenging your money story."

Guest speakers were Julia May, co-founder and director, Visibility Co. and Victoria Devine, Founder of She's on the Money podcast and co-founder and Director, Zella. Both events were attended by more than 250 of our people, both in person and via video conference.

The Future Women's Forum initiative, launched at International Women's Day 2019, was designed to support Epworth women to flourish and take advantage of every opportunity in their careers and lives. Both events were sponsored by Conquest Advisory and the EMF.



Celebrating women at our International Women's Day breakfast, where footballer and midwife Daisy Pearce was the keynote speaker.



1920s-50s: Epworth a place of women

As with other hospitals, until recent times, Epworth was predominantly the workplace of women. A hospital was a place where women, could assume responsibilities and roles not readily available to their contemporaries. The matron managed the hospital on a day-to-day basis and the nursing staff consisted entirely of women until male nurses were accepted into nursing schools in the 1970s. Nursing has undergone many changes in the past century. Nursing was considered a vocation demanding a special commitment, which also involved self-sacrifice in terms of low salaries, antisocial working hours and poor working and living conditions.

By 1950, nurses were in short supply because of poor pay and working conditions. The war had also demonstrated that women could be employed in many occupations other than the traditional ones of nursing and teaching. The post-war trend to marry young also contributed to the shortage. Studies showed that the most frequent reason for leaving the nursing profession was marriage, although about half returned to the work force in the late 1950s and the 1960s.

Celebrating our nurses and midwives

International Midwives' Day, 5 May 2020

We celebrated International Day of the Midwife and thanked our dedicated midwives at Epworth Freemasons and Epworth Geelong. These talented and dedicated professionals are key in reassuring and supporting our expectant parents to have a positive experience at a major milestone in their lives.

Paula Stephenson, Executive Director Clinical Services and Chief Nursing Officer, says our midwives play a key role in helping women bring a newborn into the world.

"Our midwives are outstanding, not just well-educated, but all passionate about their work and the women they care for. Each of them will tell you what a privilege it is to have this role and they are all so invested in making sure women having babies are well supported," Paula said.

"Nurses: A Voice to Lead – Nursing the World to Health" was the theme of International Nurses Day this year.



International Nurses Day, 12 May 2020

In the year that the WHO declared 2020 the Year of the Nurse and the Midwife, there has been much to acknowledge about the nursing profession.

The value of our nurses has been clearly defined during the COVID-19 pandemic. Epworth nurses have adapted quickly to many changes - following new guidelines, undergoing intensive training on PPE and comforting our patients in times when many were not able to have visitors.

Due to COVID-19, our planned events were postponed. However, we still acknowledged the diversity of the nursing profession across all levels of healthcare and in education, research, management and executive leadership.

Our nurses:

3,084
Registered Nurses (RN)

120
graduate RNs

390
Enrolled Nurses (EN) and

33
graduate ENs



Ethel Gray: First matron - integral to hospital's success

The appointment of a suitable matron was vital to the hospital's success. The Spectator informed readers that: 'We shall have a godly, skilful woman as matron, and our young women will find scope in the hospital for lives of usefulness as nurses, for which they will be able to train'. The sub-committee to appoint the matron met on 25 July 1919. It considered two approaches that had been made to it and Dr Wilkinson's personal recommendation of Ethel Gray. He knew her well and stated that if she could be secured, it would be unnecessary to look any further. A member of a well-known Methodist family, Ethel Gray had trained and worked at the Melbourne Hospital except for a short time when she was matron at the Queen's Memorial Infectious Diseases Hospital, Fairfield. She then went to Perth and was matron of Perth Public Hospital for two years, before joining the Australian Army Nursing Service during the war. She had served in England and France with great distinction and was expected back in Australia before Christmas 1919.

Ethel Gray accepted the position of matron on a salary of £200 and The Spectator, in announcing her appointment, noted her distinguished war service and that her competence 'will win the hearts of all who come under her care'. She took charge of the hospital on 1 June 1920. Although only 164 cm tall, Matron Gray had 'great constitutional stamina and a forceful, sometimes domineering personality'. She was a staunch Methodist and dedicated to the nursing profession. A firm disciplinarian with a strong sense of duty, she was also compassionate to her patients and staff.

Our new graduate nurses and midwives undergo orientation.



Nurse and midwife graduates – largest ever cohort

During 2019, 167 nurses and midwives completed their graduate program and first year of employment with Epworth, our largest intake of graduates in our 100-year history.

“This year has taken me to the depths of my human capacity, tested my courage, highlighted my vulnerability and extracted every possible emotion from my body... and I loved it.”

Melanie Desmond, Graduate Nurse

A special graduation ceremony was held at Richmond Town Hall in January 2020. **Abigail Hyndman** was named overall Epworth HealthCare Graduate of the Year for her dedication to excellence and safety and emerging leadership qualities.

Congratulations to our Enrolled Nurse, Registered Nurse and Registered Midwife winners:

Enrolled Nurse Graduate of the Year:

- ◆ **Epworth Freemasons** – Alycia Bradby
- ◆ **Epworth Eastern** – Belinda Paine

Registered Nurse Graduate of the Year:

- ◆ **Epworth Rehabilitation and Mental Health** – Jessica Luu
- ◆ **Epworth Eastern** – Abigail Hyndman
- ◆ **Epworth Freemasons** – Peyton Lawson
- ◆ **Epworth Richmond** – Stephanie Harper
- ◆ **Epworth Geelong** – Alanna Murnane

Registered Midwife Graduate of the Year:

- ◆ **Epworth Freemasons** – Megan Stewart

Welcome new graduates

At the beginning of 2020, we welcomed 114 graduate nurses and midwives to Epworth, as they completed their orientation and began their 12-month journey with us.

Investing in our leaders

Epworth’s significant investment in leadership development programs continues to attract extensive interest from our employees and draws external talent to Epworth. These programs focus on enhancing leadership and management skills, which leads to exceptional patient experience and future career opportunities.

In 2019, 20 employees joined our Operational Leaders Program and 40 employees took part in our Frontline Leaders Program. Upon completion, participants receive a Diploma in Leadership and Management or a Certificate IV in Leadership and Management from Swinburne University.

Senior talent programs aim to ensure we have strong capability in critical roles across our organisation, as well as creating a strong pipeline of talent.

In 2019, a targeted talent program was created for Perioperative Services, attracting and retaining talent in Perioperative Nursing for Epworth in 2020 and beyond. Ten employees are undertaking an Associate Director Clinical Services Talent Program, delivered through a group coaching method to focus on the key practical skills and competencies required in perioperative services. Participants include current and emerging talent with the potential to progress to this level in the future.

Our Nurse Unit Manager (NUM) Talent Program was shortlisted for the 2019 Australian Human Resources Institute (AHRI) Marshall Goldsmith Talent Management Award. This program, delivered in partnership with Development Dimensions International, has helped us exceed our goal of filling 50% of NUM roles internally. Introduced in 2015, the program was part of a broader strategy focused on empowerment, recognition and developing our critical NUM roles. Motivated Associate NUMs were identified and exposed to the real challenges and the essential behaviours required to operate as confident and capable NUMs.

Some of our graduating nurses and midwives at Richmond Town Hall.





Scholarship winner Hannah Riches is furthering her skills in training others.

Scholarship program

Our scholarship program continues to offer extraordinary development opportunities, with employees able to apply for a range of activities, to support education and development or take part in innovative new projects.

In 2019, scholarships were:

- ♦ awarded to more than 150 employees
- ♦ valued at over \$790,000.

For Nicky Pearson, Nurse Unit Manager at Epworth Richmond, receiving the Advantage Salary Packaging scholarship allowed her to return to study.

Undertaking her Masters in Health Administration saw Nicky blend her existing clinical experience with advanced learning in leadership, management and business disciplines. This opportunity enables Nicky to put her learning into practice at work, better lead her team and ultimately assist in ensuring patients receive the best care.

Hannah Riches, recipient of the Medtronic scholarship is completing her Certificate IV in Training and Assessment, which will help her fulfil important aspects of her role as Clinical Nurse Specialist at Epworth Geelong.

On completion, Hannah will be equipped to plan and create engaging education sessions, conduct assessments and facilitate learning in the workplace to support her colleagues. Hannah has already played a vital role in the roll-out of PPE spotter training in response to COVID-19, including a session specifically for our Environmental Services team, who had no previous PPE experience.

Our scholarship program will continue in 2020-21, with thanks to the generosity of our donors and sponsors through the EMF.

A scholarship to Nicky Pearson is allowing her to further her studies.



Group Chief Executive Dr Lachlan Henderson congratulates EpWORTHY winner Julia McKimmon.

EpWORTHY awards launched

In February 2020, our new employee recognition award program, the Group Chief Executive EpWORTHY awards was launched.

This program recognises the unique and worthy contributions of Epworth staff.

More than 200 employees have received awards. This initiative gives our people the opportunity to nominate a colleague, a direct report, or a manager for an award. Employees can nominate under three categories: safety and wellbeing first, living our values, and contributing to our strategic pillars.

Our volunteers

Hospital volunteers:



86

Epworth Richmond



40

Epworth Eastern



42

Epworth Geelong



12

Epworth Freemasons



9

Epworth Rehabilitation



60

Auxiliary volunteers



15

Consumer advisors



264

Total

Our 189 hospital volunteers, aged from 18 to their 80s, help us to improve our patient experience.

Our 60 EMF Heartbeat and auxiliary volunteers help raise funds to support our patients by selling raffle tickets, handcrafted goods and knitted items.

The recent addition of the consumer advisory register to the volunteer program has seen an additional 15 consumer volunteers welcomed. This team volunteers recognise the importance of having a consumer voice to improve our services.

Our volunteer program was suspended in mid-March 2020, due to visitor restrictions implemented during the COVID-19 pandemic. We were unable to recruit further volunteers during this period. Instead, we concentrated on ensuring our volunteers felt supported and engaged, despite not being on site to perform their roles for a number of months.



Key achievements

In the past 12 months, we have raised the profile of the Epworth Volunteer Program across our hospitals and have enjoyed national recognition.

We saw:

- ♦ a 35% increase in volunteers from 2018 to 2019
- ♦ the average turnover rate at Epworth is less than half the standard benchmark.

The renal dialysis volunteer car service at Epworth Eastern was a finalist in the APHA Awards for Excellence 2019 in the category of Comprehensive Care.



Friends and centenary

Our volunteers were a central part of our centenary celebrations. Some made gorgeous gifts for our littlest patients (pictured above).

Every baby born at Epworth Freemasons or Epworth Geelong, on 27 February 2020, our 100th birthday, received a special box of handmade treasures. Volunteers knitted, sewed and tied ribbons on booties, baby hats and teddies to ensure each baby, who shared a birthday with Epworth, received these special gifts and keepsakes.

New volunteer programs

We introduced several new initiatives this year:

- ♦ **ED support** – Epworth Geelong welcomed volunteers to its ED team. These volunteers provided extra support and comfort to patients and their families by delivering beverages, providing warm blankets or simply by sitting and chatting
- ♦ **Chinese speaking concierges** – this initiative was developed to assist patients and visitors at Epworth Eastern, who may have difficulty communicating or interpreting admission information in English
- ♦ **Ambassador Program** – this initiative was designed to provide leadership opportunities for volunteers on site and advocate for the volunteer program in the promotion of its services to patients and staff.



Volunteers through the years

Volunteers have been vital to Epworth since its earliest days. To celebrate the International Year of the Volunteer in 2001, a lemon scented gum was planted at the Erin Street entrance to honour the work of volunteers at Epworth over the years. Volunteers were also presented with certificates and medallions bearing our logo and that of the International Year of the Volunteer. While an increasing number of volunteers were involved in direct contact with patients, a substantial number continued to work behind the scenes freeing up specialist staff to focus on their primary roles. There were 34 people who had completed at least five years of voluntary service to Epworth in 2001.

2020 VMO Leadership Program

Chief Medical Officer A/Prof Luis Prado.

Far right: VMOs take part in a learning weekend as part of the VMO Leadership Program.



More than 160 of our medical practitioners applied for entry to the inaugural Epworth Summit 2020 VMO Leadership Program, with 24 successful applicants selected in 2019.

The successful candidates represented every Epworth site and a wide range of clinical specialties, including practitioners at different stages of their careers.

The Summit program is a custom designed 12-month program, developed and delivered in collaboration with Monash Business School and the Monash University Faculty of Medicine, Nursing and Health Sciences (MNHS) for our VMOs.

Successful applicants have the opportunity for a week-long trip to the United States to study at the internationally renowned Harvard Macy Institute, Boston (delayed due to COVID-19). Graduates of the Summit program will receive an Executive Graduate Certificate of Business, with the potential for extension into a Masters degree if desired.

The program is funded through the EMF and Epworth HealthCare.

New ways to deliver care

By February 2020, the Summit program was in full swing, with six key projects assigned to the 24 participants during an intensive learning weekend in the Yarra Valley. All projects are aligned with the strategic vision of Epworth and focus on new ways of delivering care.

The projects, currently on hold due to the pandemic, cover areas such as telehealth, improved patient experience and innovative clinical practices.

Our junior doctors

In 2019-20 the Junior Workforce Team accredited 299 junior doctors.

Recognition

The recently established Junior Doctor of the Year Award has seen an annual acknowledgement and recognition of outstanding patient care by Epworth's junior doctors. Dr Chia Yuen Chong was named the 2019 Junior Doctor of the Year for the high quality of care she has provided Epworth patients, with her strong focus on ensuring patient safety and her exceptional clinical knowledge. Dr Chong was nominated by multiple medical and nursing staff and highly recommended to receive this award.

The prestigious Clinical Supervisor of the Year award is given to a clinical supervisor for their outstanding support, education and advocacy to junior doctors undertaking training in their specialty.

Dr Anastasia Chrysostomou, Consultant Nephrologist and Physician, Associate Dean of Medicine received this award for her unwavering commitment, dedication and support in both the professional and personal development of junior doctors and medical students.

New initiatives

The junior medical workforce team of Academic and Medical Services (AMS) has established an Entitlement and Wellbeing Steering Committee, to ensure the development and wellbeing of junior doctors across all Epworth sites.

This is a collaborative initiative led by AMS, with representatives from People & Culture, medical directors and members from each hospital site.

As part of this work, AMS has initiated informal check-ins with each Junior Medical Officer (JMO) to identify any early concerns and to build awareness of the multiple support structures available.

AMS has ensured JMOs were involved in the safe care of COVID-19 patients, as part of our medical teams working in the dedicated COVID-19 wards at Epworth. Specific education and thorough training were provided to junior doctors by our Medical Education Team to ensure their ward readiness and safety. Epworth is proud of the contribution our JMOs have made during our pandemic response.

The future of healthcare

Our second VMO Masterclass - 'The Future of Healthcare' was held in August 2019. More than 200 Epworth doctors and VMOs gathered for thought-provoking insights from an expert panel including: Professor Chris Bain, Dr Fiona Kerr and Dr Lachlan Henderson, moderated by ABC news anchor, Beverley O'Connor.

Group Chief Executive Dr Lachlan Henderson spoke about the trends we are seeing in healthcare, noting that:

- ◆ the future patient will be actively involved in managing their health and wellbeing
- ◆ enhancing clinician experience will be facilitated by improving communications and ensuring digital clinical information is readily available
- ◆ our large and diverse workforce needs modern and integrated technology,
- ◆ forward-thinking organisations are transitioning to a data-centric approach, viewing data as a strategic asset.

Our third VMO masterclass, in November 2019, featured ABC chair Ita Buttrose as guest speaker.

More than 250 medical leaders gathered at the Park Hyatt to listen to Ita share her ideas and experiences of leading transformational change, including personal moments that showcased society's changing views on women in the workplace. She encouraged the audience to embrace change as an opportunity to learn and grow and advocated for women to strive for leadership.

The evening culminated in the announcement of the 2019 Medical Leader Award winners. Our worthy winners were:

- ◆ **Consultant emeritus** – Dr Graeme Sloman AO and Mr Michael Dobson
- ◆ **Medical researcher of the year** – Prof Paul Fitzgerald
- ◆ **Peter J Dohrmann award** – Dr Matthew Read
- ◆ **Junior doctor of the year** – Dr Chia Yuen Chong
- ◆ **Liz Morton award clinical supervisor of the year** – Dr Anastasia Chrysostomou
- ◆ **Prof Geoffrey Metz award clinical tutor of the year** – A/Prof Indhresha Rasaratnam.

Our first virtual masterclass was held in June 2020, with multi-award winning social media expert, former clinician and founder of Women in STEMM, Michelle Gallaher, presenting on the power of social media for medicine. Around 300 of our VMOs joined this event via video conference or phone.

Chief Medical Officer A/Prof Luis Prado, guest speaker Ita Buttrose, Professor Michelle Russell, Director of Executive Education, Monash Business School and Epworth Group Chief Executive Dr Lachlan Henderson.

Our third VMO masterclass included the announcement of Medical Leader Awards.



Symposia

We share our expertise by conducting Clinical Institute symposia, showcasing the expertise and thought leadership of our leading specialists and experts. In 2019, we presented four symposia, on:

- ◆ Obstetrics and gynaecology, attended by 164 and featuring international guest speaker, Professor Richard Anderson from the University of Edinburgh and 16 prominent local speakers
- ◆ The inaugural neurological rehabilitation symposium, which attracted our largest symposia audience to date, a capacity audience of 300. This program featured eight eminent local speakers, with the most popular sessions covering concussion and focal spasticity
- ◆ Neurosciences – spine and spinal disorders, with a 31% increase in registrations compared to the previous symposium in 2017. This year's event featured 16 highly regarded local speakers
- ◆ Cardiac sciences, with the most valuable sessions voted as being 'five things you don't know about cholesterol and vascular disease', 'five drugs making a difference in cardiac failure', and 'five things cardiologists need to know in neurology'.

Due to COVID-19, we had a hiatus in symposia in 2020, with our first virtual symposium delivered by the Musculoskeletal Clinical Institute in July 2020. This event was a foot and ankle masterclass, covering the Achilles, flat feet, gout and more. Around 300 GPs and specialists attended.

All weekly Grand Rounds and cardiac breakfast events continued throughout the pandemic as online Zoom events.



Doctor celebrates three decades of care

While Epworth has turned 100, Dr Bob Poulton is celebrating his 30th year at Epworth.

In 1990, when Bob first began, there was just one doctor in Emergency on every shift and two on the weekend.

"We had 30 patients a day on average, nine beds and one resuscitation cubicle," Bob remembered.

In those days, the College of Emergency Medicine was not registered by Medicare and the charge was the same as seeing a GP.

"People used to come here with a sprained ankle or minor worries. Only 10% of patients came by ambulance," Bob said.

"We were one of the first places to do urgent angiograms (to help detect clots and abnormal blood vessels) for people walking in."

As technology advanced, doctors had to learn with it.

"Medications haven't changed a lot at all – it's radiology that has brought the biggest changes.

"The new radiology testing that became available was not something we did in our training, so we had to learn how to read these new scans, which was difficult," Bob said.

As the years went by, presentation numbers tripled and care became more complex.

"Today, we see more significant illnesses and up to 25% of patients arrive by ambulance.

"We spend a lot more time with each patient as many are now older and have a more complex history. It was unusual 30 years ago to have a patient over 80, but now that is common."

Our longest serving Emergency doctor, Dr Bob Poulton.



Epworth Richmond Emergency Department

- ◆ Custom-built building, that opened in 2016
- ◆ 35 cubicles and two resuscitation bays
- ◆ Up to six doctors available during the day and five in the evening.

Epworth Geelong Emergency Department

- ◆ Servicing the Barwon community seven days a week, 8am-midnight
- ◆ Part of a new hospital that opened in 2016
- ◆ 20 private treatment spaces, including two resuscitation bays
- ◆ Piloted our first nurse practitioner at Epworth.

Foundation Day celebrations

A sense of excitement and pride permeated our 11 sites on 27 February 2020 as Epworth celebrated turning 100.

Staff, wearing our special 100 year tops or caps, took selfies at our custom photo booths and created a celebratory atmosphere for all, with BBQ lunch and gelato carts. Our patients received special mementoes, as did employees and doctors.

3AW broadcast live from Epworth Richmond, interviewing Group Chief Executive Dr Lachlan Henderson, Emergency Department Director Associate Professor Ron Sultana, Epworth Freemasons Nurse Unit Manager Colleen O'Hara and volunteer Margaret McKelvie.





06

Innovative Practice

Over the years, the medical advances at Epworth have been extraordinary.

Our Australian firsts include:

- removal of a kidney through a 2cm hole in a patient's navel in 2010
- a new technique for operating on tumours in adrenal glands
- use of a clip device to minimise the risk of stroke in atrial fibrillation patients.

In 2019, a world-first was achieved when Epworth clinicians created a fully-functioning jaw bone in a single, minimally invasive procedure, using 3D printing technology.

Epworth research

We encourage our people to continuously strive for scientific knowledge and new pathways for treatment and care.

Research will ultimately improve the care of our patients, contribute to furthering scientific knowledge and deliver better outcomes.

Our research strategy also attracts and cultivates the brightest talent and makes a difference to all.

Studies by Epworth Clinical Institutes include:

61 cancer services	26 critical care	15 cardiac sciences	15 musculoskeletal
61 rehabilitation, mental health and chronic pain	20 general surgery and gastroenterology	15 internal medicine	

At 30 June 2020, 253 research studies were in progress, a significant increase compared to the same time last year. The number of studies in the areas of cancer and rehabilitation, mental health and chronic pain have doubled. Of our total clinical studies this year:

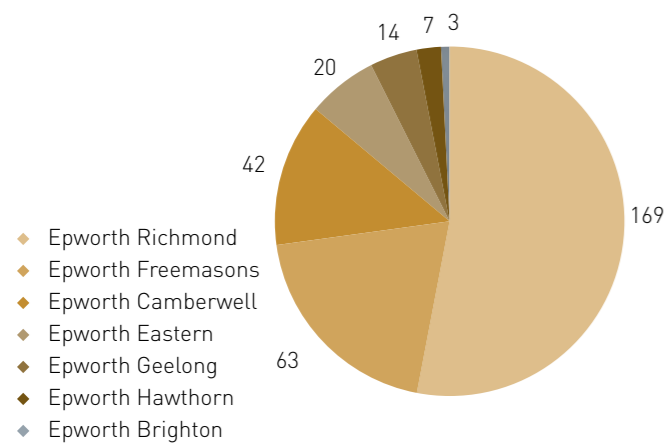
- ◆ 185 are investigator-initiated
- ◆ 44 are commercially sponsored
- ◆ 24 are research collaborations.

The research programs at Epworth span a wide range of areas, from oncology to critical care and mental health.

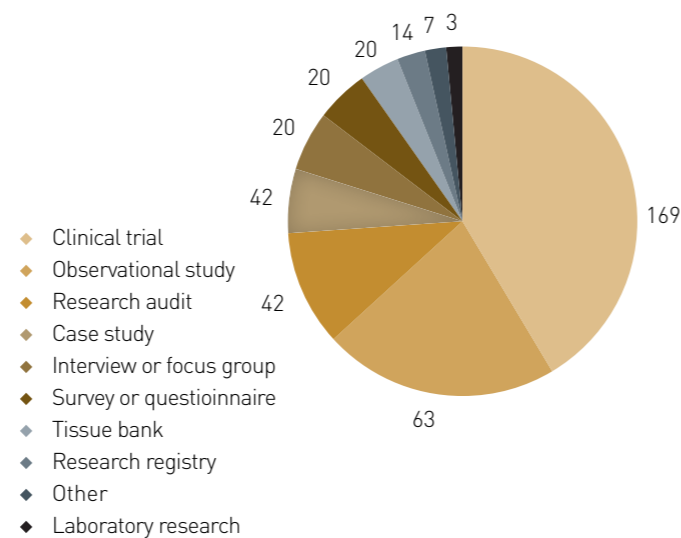
Our research is conducted at seven of our sites, with the majority at Epworth Richmond (169), followed by Epworth Freemasons (63) and Epworth Camberwell (42). There are nine different types of studies, including:

- ◆ 105 clinical trials
- ◆ 55 observational studies
- ◆ 27 research audits.

Number of studies per Epworth site



Number of studies per project type



Research and COVID-19

While standard protocols have changed, opportunities for vital research have soared since the pandemic.

Professor Nik Zeps, Epworth Director of Research and Development, said there were fears a lot of research would stall due to lockdown restrictions. Instead, researchers have found different ways to progress.

"Orthopaedics, perioperative, allied health and some nursing research all rely on elective surgery patients and our elective surgery has been restricted," Prof Zeps explained.

"These instances have necessitated the use of verbal and electronic consent. You can't put pen and paper in front of COVID-19 patients as that is a source of infection. This really has challenged some of the previous thinking we've had in ethics."

Other changes have included the need to monitor patients remotely, rather than observing in person, to ensure treatments are being administered in the right way. Medical records are also being accessed remotely to ensure those in trials meet all criteria.

With very little known about the novel coronavirus to date, Epworth researchers have had opportunities to be involved in studies related to COVID-19.

Epworth is a partner in four large studies investigating the virus:

- ◆ a biobank study that looks at why the virus affects some people differently
- ◆ the BRACE trial, which is investigating whether the BCG vaccine, previously used to protect against TB, can protect healthcare workers against COVID-19, or reduce severity of the virus
- ◆ ASCOT, which aims to generate clinical evidence about treatment for COVID-19 that can be applied to reduce mortality or the need for mechanical ventilation in hospitalised, but not yet critically ill patients
- ◆ elective surgery surveillance project, testing 3,000 people for COVID-19 on the day of surgery in June and July, to guide future policy decisions and help improve the care of patients who undergo surgery in the future.

"The project helps us compare samples of people who have been infected, to understand why different people's immune systems respond in different ways to this virus."

It's hoped the research will help identify markers in the blood and throat swabs that can be used to predict whether COVID-19 patients may have poorer outcomes. It could be possible to target existing medications or develop new drugs to use on different patients.



Dr Ron Sultana, Director of Emergency Medicine explains his research project to Group Chief Executive Dr Lachlan Henderson during Research Week.

Tuberculosis vaccine trial

Epworth has partnered with Melbourne's Murdoch Children's Research Institute (MCRI) to study whether a vaccine, normally used to protect against TB can be used to boost immunity against COVID-19 in healthcare workers.

While the BCG vaccine is designed to protect against TB, it also boosts immunity to protect against other infections. Some studies have shown people who have had a BCG vaccine have fewer viral respiratory tract infections than those without the vaccine.

Other studies have shown people who have had a BCG vaccine and then get a virus, have lower virus levels in their blood than those who haven't received the vaccine.

Dr Niki Tan, Epworth Anaesthetist and Director of Critical Care Clinical Trials said the purpose of this WHO-approved study is to find out whether BCG vaccination protects against COVID-19, or reduces the severity of the virus in Australian healthcare workers.

"Half of the people in the study will be randomly allocated to receive the BCG vaccine and half will not receive the vaccine. Everyone will have a blood test taken and be followed up for six months," Dr Tan said.

The BCG vaccine trial was conducted in parallel to the annual staff flu vaccination at Epworth, which commenced in late March 2020. Following commencement of the study, funding provided by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation enabled the trial to expand to include healthcare workers who have already had their flu vaccination.

Epworth has contributed 250 healthcare workers to the 3,000 Australian participant target.

Biobank expansion

A \$100,000 donation to Epworth could help Melbourne researchers better understand why COVID-19 affects people differently.

The research project, led by Epworth infectious diseases expert Dr James McMahon, is building a biobank of blood samples and throat swabs taken from COVID-19 patients admitted to Melbourne hospitals during the pandemic.

"The research project has been collecting samples from COVID-19 patients admitted to hospital since the pandemic began," Dr McMahon said.

Clinicians, researchers and scientists, with expertise in infectious diseases, immunology and virology perform detailed analyses on the samples.



Research Week 2019

We're committed to research that advances the health and longevity of our patients and future generations, with a focus on investing funds into areas of greatest need and with the highest potential to improve quality of life.

Research Week 2019 (5-9 August 2019) launched with the new Epworth Research Strategy 2019-23.

We announced 26 new projects to receive nearly \$500,000 in research funding, provided by supporters of the EMF.

Studies receiving grant funding included:

- ◆ a clinical quality registry for ovarian cancer at Epworth, awarded to Epworth Freemasons gynaecological oncologist Associate Professor Robert Rome. The National Gynae-Oncology Registry will adopt a national approach. It will be important in evaluating the safety and effectiveness of our treatments for women with ovarian cancer, informing new clinical trials and research aimed at improving outcomes
- ◆ 'Don't Soap the Bub', a study investigating the role soap and detergent plays in the risk of some babies developing food allergies later in life, led by paediatrician Dr John Ainsworth
- ◆ a new project established by cardiologist Associate Professor Tony Walton to test the long-term effects of TAVI on the quality of life of patients, capturing valuable local experience that can be used to improve care outcomes
- ◆ funding has been awarded to haematologist Dr Costas Yannakou and the MOCI team to identify ways to treat lymphoma, using circulating tumour DNA (ctDNA) as a biomarker of response, in aggressive B-cell non-Hodgkin lymphoma that will enable better outcomes for patients
- ◆ a project led by Kirsten Gainsford to investigate the effects of combining virtual reality and brain stimulation in order to develop an effective, efficient and accessible treatment for social cognitive impairment in schizophrenia
- ◆ a clinical services study, led by Stuart Shakespeare, to track consumers' and clinicians' satisfaction, attitudes and understanding of the 'Are you worried' escalation process, a system for identifying and reducing the risk of poor outcomes for patients.
- ◆ a range of other grants were also awarded across mental health and rehabilitation, cardiac, education, surgical and urology and analysing health systems.

Research Week by numbers:

\$477,225

in grant funding distributed

11

research symposia

51

research presentations

12

clinical specialties presentations

26

EMF grant recipients

73

research posters

22

nurse-led research posters

5

Outstanding Research Poster Award winners



Prof Paul Fitzgerald (middle) with Steven Jane, Luis Prado, Kate Hoy, Carolyn Bell and Dr Lachlan Henderson.

Funding success – mental health boost

In May 2020, Professor Paul Fitzgerald (pictured above, middle) Epworth Centre for Innovation in Mental Health Director, was awarded a NHMRC investigator grant.

This highly sought after \$2.1 million grant (over five years) funds brain stimulation therapies for mental health disorders, from concept to clinical application.

Prof Fitzgerald and his team have been using transcranial magnetic stimulation (TMS) to find better, more effective ways to treat common psychiatric disorders like clinical depression, Alzheimer's disease, fibromyalgia and obsessive-compulsive disorder.

While this non-invasive brain stimulation therapy is showing promise, there are some limitations.

This new grant will address ways to improve the clinical use of repetitive TMS: through the development of a more sophisticated version of treatment for treatment-resistant patients. It will also help with the testing of a highly accelerated version of repetitive TMS therapy for patients who need a rapid clinical response, such as those with substantial suicidal ideation.

Prof Fitzgerald also aims to develop a new therapy using closed-loop transcranial, alternating current stimulation, for use at home in a much broader spectrum of patients with major depressive disorder.

- ◆ Prof Fitzgerald is also the co-lead of a study looking at genotype-guided versus standard psychotropic therapy in moderately-to-severely depressed patients. This study received \$2.95 million from the Australian Federal Government as part of its mental health and suicide prevention research support.

Moments of mindfulness

Epworth Clinic launched Moments of Mindfulness, during Mental Health Week in October 2019, a meditation resource to help people relax their body, quiet their mind and focus on the present.

Available on CD, on Epworth Point of Care terminals and online through Spotify, iTunes and YouTube, the resource provides 16 meditation practices developed by psychologists Dr Maddy Fernando and Patch Callahan from Epworth Clinic.

Guided meditations include:

- ◆ five-minute mindful breathing
- ◆ self-compassion practice
- ◆ gratitude practise
- ◆ loving kindness meditation.

Thanks to generous supporters of the EMF, this resource has been highly successful, with the YouTube playlist listened to by more than 200,000 people.



A/Prof Rachel Wong.

New technology leading to individual cancer care

A new research study is examining DNA in the blood of bowel cancer patients to plan an individualised approach to treating cancer.

From Epworth Eastern, Associate Professor Rachel Wong is leading the DYNAMIC clinical trials research into early stage rectal cancer and stage III bowel cancer, as part of two Australian-led international studies.

Researchers are studying circulating tumour DNA (ctDNA) which is found in the bloodstream and comes from cancerous cells and tumours. A previous study of bowel cancer patients found people with ctDNA in their blood after surgery have a very high chance of the cancer coming back, compared with those with no ctDNA.

This study aims to confirm whether the presence of ctDNA after surgery is effective in determining the type and duration of chemotherapy the patient will need to prevent a reoccurrence.

"We take blood samples, which are analysed at Johns Hopkin University in Baltimore, and use that information to determine if we need to use intensive chemotherapy, or a less intensive chemotherapy, with the aim of improving outcomes and reducing the side effects for patients," A/Prof Wong explained.

"With these studies, we look for residual cancer in the bloodstream. If we find cancer DNA in the blood, those patients are given more intensive treatment. We know that chemotherapy is toxic so it is hoped this study will help us decide who needs it and how much they need.

"If we detect no cancer cells in the sample, those patients may only need three months of chemotherapy treatment, instead of six and only one drug, instead of two," A/Prof Wong said.

The trial, which involves 500 participants in the rectal cancer trial and 1,000 in the colon cancer trial, is expected to run for several years at hospitals in Australia and New Zealand. Epworth patients were enrolled in the trials from December 2019.

New form of chemotherapy

Epworth Richmond is trialling a new form of spray-on chemotherapy, developed in Germany, in a bid to lessen side effects and slow cancer growth in oncology patients.

This treatment, called Pressurised Intraperitoneal Aerosol Chemotherapy (PIPAC), uses an aerosol spray to administer drugs directly to the tumour site, instead of injections into the bloodstream for traditional chemotherapy.

Associate Professor Craig Lynch, an Epworth surgeon, said the therapy "goes in under pressure and soaks into the tumour nodule. That's why it has a significant effect."

It is most relevant for gastric and colorectal tumours. It is a palliative treatment, not a cure for peritoneal cancer. The trial, funded through the EMF, involves patients with peritoneal cancer following bowel cancer who did not respond to traditional chemotherapy.

Participants received three rounds of aerosol chemotherapy during laparoscopic surgery under anaesthetic, six weeks apart.

The treatment provides patients with another option to intravenous chemotherapy, which often causes nausea, vomiting and hair loss.

It is hoped the aerosol treatment could shrink tumours, allowing surgery to reduce the burden of disease and extend life.



First IVF baby: 1984

The Epworth-Monash Fertility Clinic achieved two world firsts in 1984. Professor Carl Wood announced the first pregnancy from a donor ovum at a news conference at Epworth on 12 January 1983. A team from Epworth and the Queen Victoria Medical Centre worked on this development. The pregnancy was normal and the healthy baby boy was born at the Queen Victoria Medical Centre in November 1983. At the same time, Dr Linda Mohr was developing a technique for freezing embryos in liquid nitrogen. A woman had become pregnant after the implantation of an embryo that had been frozen, but developed an infection and miscarried at 24 weeks in 1983. The world's first baby born as a result of this frozen embryo technique, Zoe Leyland, was born on 28 March 1984. The procedure offered another avenue of hope to infertile couples and meant that embryos could be stored for future implantation.

The new simulation lab at Epworth Freemasons

Simulating the real world

Students, newly graduated nurses, midwives and doctors at Epworth are constantly building their skills and knowledge. They can often be found practising their skills in our simulation labs, equipped with the latest technology.

A new simulation lab, opened in September 2019, at the renovated Epworth Freemasons, mimics a clinical environment and provides a wealth of education opportunities for employees.

The lab's mannequins include a baby who can be 'born' and a high-fidelity simulation mannequin who can mimic critical distress, allowing staff to gain real time feedback on their care, including measuring the depth of compressions and heart rate.

The high-tech equipment, funded by donors to the EMF, enables employees to undertake all their core competencies and advanced life support training.

The simulation lab also has a mannequin for basic life support training, a crash trolley (where staff can use a real defibrillator), catheter and cannula trainers and a paediatric resuscitation mannequin.

Environmental and food services staff also practice their Safe Moves training in the lab to reduce personal injuries.



Road to developing the first private ICU: 1981

In 1981, Epworth introduced medical resident fellows and became the first private, not-for-profit hospital in Victoria to have a fully equipped ICU and a team of resident medical fellows on duty around the clock. The medical fellows managed the ICU under the supervision of intensive care specialists, attended emergencies in the hospital and performed other elective work referred to them by accredited doctors. The role proved to be extremely attractive to a wide range of highly qualified and experienced doctors. In the first nine months of operation, there were 200 admissions to the ICU. By 1982, the hospital was receiving a steady stream of enquiries about this scheme from throughout Australia.

Further education advancing nursing care

In July 2019, Epworth introduced its first endorsed nurse practitioner, critical care nurse Michael Hardie (pictured above), who works at Epworth Geelong Emergency Department.

Michael was involved in the establishment of this program, which involved the comprehensive documentation of clinical governance and patient safety.

"We were able to adjust our program to support the needs of the private system," Michael said.

Working closely with senior consultants in the ED, together, they formulated a patient care plan.

Research showed the busiest time for patients requiring a nurse practitioner was 10am-8pm, particularly on weekends. This includes patients with less serious illnesses and injuries, who are cared for in a 'fast track' process. This typically includes patients with cuts, sprains, fractures, soft tissue injuries, minor burns, eye irritations and minor paediatric issues.

The nurse practitioner pilot has been an outstanding success. In Michael's first month in the role, he treated 16% of the department's presentations between 10am-6pm, growing to 28% in the past year.

Positive results include:

- ♦ fast track patients are discharged home or to the ward after an average of 61 minutes when seen by the nurse practitioner, resulting in a 42% improvement in workflow
- ♦ complex patients, requiring treatment by emergency medical staff, can be discharged home or to the ward 34 minutes sooner, with a nurse practitioner involved in their care.

Surveys were sent to 174 patients over a three-month period (December 2019-March 2020) and the respondents praised the initiative, with all rating the experience 'very good' or 'good'.

Cardiac rehabilitation goes digital

The COVID-19 pandemic impacted our ability to deliver our cardiac rehabilitation program, which helps people recovering from cardiac events learn to live a fulfilling life, reduce the risk of future cardiac episodes and build a support network.

To ensure our cardiac rehabilitation services could continue, the team introduced the 'Cardihab' mobile app, with support from the EMF. Currently, Epworth is the only private hospital in Victoria using Cardihab - a digital and interactive exercise and education program that participants can safely complete at home.

Suzie Hooper, Director of Clinical and Site Services, Epworth Camberwell said they have been able to tailor the app to our rehab programs, providing content and activities developed by Epworth clinicians.

"Importantly, our patients are not left alone throughout the digital program. They have weekly contact with our cardiac rehabilitation nurse to check on their progress and can also contact us at any time."

The app has made cardiac rehabilitation more accessible to the wider community. Patients unable to regularly travel to Epworth Camberwell to participate in the in-person program are now able to participate, at a time that suits them.

Expanding Rehabilitation in the Home

Rehabilitation in the Home (RITH), an Epworth program, began in 2014, as a service for people who had hip or knee replacement surgery at Epworth Richmond and Epworth Eastern.

Over the past 12 months, the program has evolved from a physiotherapy-only service to a holistic home-based rehabilitation service, supported by a rehabilitation specialist, rehabilitation nurse and occupational therapist.

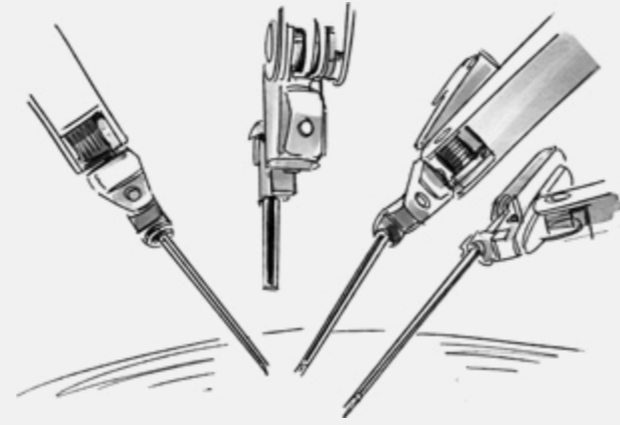
One of the contributing factors to this growth has been a new partnership formed between WorkSafe Victoria and Epworth Rehabilitation. We are now able to offer an in-home rehabilitation service for people who have had workplace accidents or injuries.

This partnership has also expanded the case mix for RITH, adding neurology and trauma treatment, in addition to orthopaedics.

The addition of a rehabilitation physician to our RITH service contributes to medical oversight and, as the key liaison with acute specialists, improves communication with doctors to enhance patient care.

Undertaking rehabilitation at home can:

- ♦ reduce inpatient length of stay and decrease risk of complications after surgery
- ♦ help patients transition home easier, alleviating worries or concerns with a clinician visiting their home soon after discharge
- ♦ enable people to recover at home and regain their place within their community faster.



Robotic surgery arrives: 2003

In late 2003, Epworth acquired a \$3 million da Vinci robotic surgical system, a totally intuitive, minimally-invasive robot. The system provides full colour 3D vision, up to 15 times magnification and both intuitive and dextrous manipulation. Key surgeons and operating theatre staff underwent extensive training in the use of the robot at two university hospitals in the United States of America. Two of those who trained overseas were prominent urologists: Professor Anthony Costello, who was also a director of the Prostate Cancer Foundation of Australia, and Mr Justin Peters. The early operations at Epworth were supervised by senior American proctors. The first surgery, a radical prostatectomy, was performed in December 2003 and the first heart surgery was performed in March 2004 when cardiac surgeons undertook a mitral valve repair.



Patient Paul De Candia was urologist Associate Professor Laurence Harewood's 1,000th robotic surgical case.

1,000th robot partnering

Associate Professor Laurence Harewood has completed his 1,000th surgical case with robotic assistance at Epworth, surgical technology he describes as a "game changer."

His patient, Paul De Candia, had been diagnosed with prostate cancer and travelled to Epworth from Tasmania to have his prostate removed. A/Prof Harewood performed a Robotic Radical Prostatectomy, removing the cancerous prostate and joining the bladder and urethra back together using the da Vinci robot.

"Robotic surgery is enhanced keyhole surgery, which allows me to have binocular vision, a three-dimensional view, magnification and greater precision.

"Robotic prostate surgery is minimally invasive, blood loss is usually minor, blood transfusions are uncommon and post-operative discomfort is minimal. Patients are normally discharged on the second post-operative day.

The results, in terms of continence and the positive margin rate, which is an indication of the possibility of leaving cancer behind, are dramatically less."

The da Vinci robot is also used in kidney and bladder surgery, and recently has been used in cardiac, gynaecological, colorectal and thoracic surgery.

Epworth performs a large number of robotic procedures, with a total of six da Vinci robots.

Maternity goes digital

Innovating the way we work has resulted in Epworth Maternity delivering content differently during the pandemic.

Our maternity patients usually attend antenatal evening or weekend classes at either Epworth Freemasons or Epworth Geelong, but physical distancing guidelines made this impossible. Our maternity team reoriented our content and these classes were moved online.

Knowing new parents are often anxious and desperate for information, all usual classes were filmed, with these videos available on our website, enabling participants to digest the information at their own pace. A live Q&A session, via Zoom, with an Epworth midwife was also offered.

A breastfeeding service was provided via telephone consultation or via Microsoft Teams, giving our mothers one-on-one time with a lactation consultant after they left hospital.

With hospital tours cancelled, we provided virtual tour videos, so patients could see the hospital before they gave birth. The only class that was not available was our

grandparents' program, as they are not encouraged to look after babies during the pandemic. Feedback regarding our online resources has been consistently positive, with patients feeling reassured.

These new resources are not only useful during COVID-19. Our maternity units are planning to continue offering online options to patients who can't attend classes.



Our expectant parents can now attend their antenatal information evenings from home.

Home-based sleep studies introduced

Sleep studies, to assess and diagnose obstructive sleep apnoea, are now more accessible following the introduction of at-home sleep studies at Epworth Camberwell and Epworth Geelong.

In August 2019, an at-home sleep service was introduced to complement the existing in-hospital service.

Darrel Wicks, Sleep Unit Manager and Sleep Scientist, said two portable devices enabled seven people to be tested at home each week, across both sites.

"The in-hospital service runs across all our sites and, prior to COVID-19, we were seeing 60 patients a week, testing for sleep apnoea, narcolepsy, nocturnal epilepsy and movement disorders.

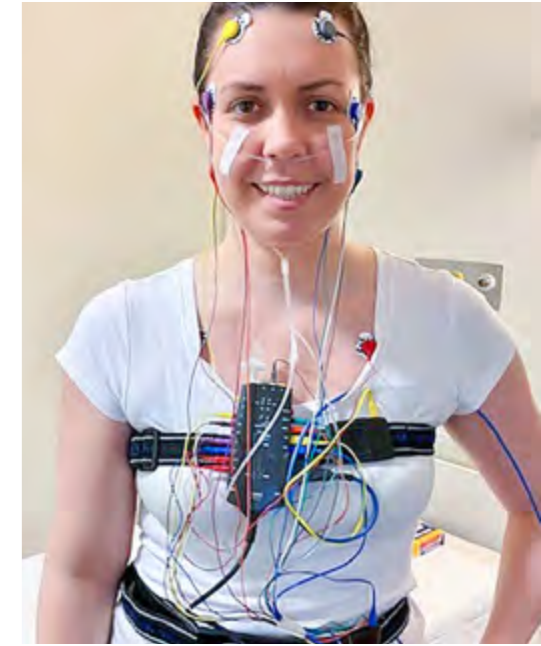
"During the pandemic, we have some people not wanting to come into hospital, so this at-home service has been welcomed; we've been booked out every night," he said.

Patients attend the clinic to get connected to the device and receive instructions on how to remove it the next morning. On return to Epworth, the data is analysed, with results sent to the referring doctor within 48 hours, as it would normally occur if the test was completed on-site.

The at-home testing, which is a scaled down version of hospital testing, is restricted to those with suspected obstructive sleep apnoea and no other health complications.

Planning is underway to expand the at-home service, enabling further partnerships with GPs.

Senior Sleep Scientist, Natalie Swaby, demonstrates the portable device.



New blood donation technique in the face of HIV crisis: 1980s

During the early 1980s, it took three months to determine if a person had HIV/AIDS, but blood could not be preserved for this length of time. HIV-affected blood had infiltrated the Red Cross Blood Bank and people were reluctant to use this source. A system was developed so that patients could donate their own blood prior to surgery. Kingsley Mills (Director of Orthopaedics and Medical Director of Care Centre One) got to know Jim Picken, a perfusionist at Epworth, and quizzed him about how he could help, given that they could not rely on the Blood Bank for blood supplies. Jim collected blood, which would otherwise be wasted down the sucker machine, and using a cell saving machine to separate the red blood cells, he then resuspended them in saline so that they could be given back to the patient. Kingsley recognised the value of this technology and by using it with the patient's own stored blood, he could undertake complicated surgery without having to use donated blood.

Technology projects

During the year, we upgraded technology and delivered new solutions to improve patient care and efficiency across the organisation.

Enabling a mobile workforce

Throughout the pandemic, many non-clinical employees were required to work remotely. To enable this, IT:

- ♦ deployed Microsoft Office 365 and Teams across Epworth, ensuring collaboration and connectivity regardless of where staff were working
- ♦ upgraded remote access infrastructure capacity to cater for greater requirements for remote access
- ♦ piloted VPN technology, rolling this out to more than 70 people for seamless and secure remote connectivity
- ♦ managed an increase of almost 250% in remote system access from an average of 250 people per day to a peak of over 700 per day.

Website refreshed

Following two years of development, the new website for Epworth was launched in February 2020.

The website brings together multiple standalone sites adopting a One Epworth approach. It has increased functional capability, including a comprehensive search capacity, an up-to-date design and is mobile and tablet responsive.

This project, which is part of our Digital Vision and aligns to the Epworth HealthCare Strategic Plan 2018–22, has involved consultation with a range of stakeholders from within our hospitals and our wider community to ensure our new website meets the needs of our audience.

The design focuses on creating a website that responds to the changing expectations of our patients, clinicians, workforce, GPs and partners. With increased use of mobile devices, more of our information is available digitally.

During Victoria's pandemic restrictions, our website was crucial in updating our community about evolving public health measures, such as:

- ♦ visitor restrictions
- ♦ pre-surgery screening
- ♦ mandatory masks
- ♦ physical distancing.

Point of Care platform strengthens

During the COVID-19 pandemic, with visitor restrictions in place, our bedside Point of Care (POC) system has provided a telehealth platform for patients to communicate with their families, clinicians and allied health teams.

Since POC was implemented five years ago, usage has accelerated. Our bedside technology provides clinicians with access to critical information about each patient and their treatment. It is used by patients to access entertainment channels and to order their meals.

In the past year, POC has been used:

- ♦ by clinical staff more than seven million times
- ♦ by VMOs more than 100,000 times
- ♦ by patients for entertainment for more than four million hours
- ♦ by patients to order more than one million meals.

Meal management

Delegate, a new meal management system, was launched at Epworth Camberwell to streamline the processes related to meal preparation and ordering. Working with Food Services, IT implemented the new system to improve the way:

- ♦ patients order their meals, using the POC screen at their bedside
- ♦ Food Services creates meals, manages patient orders and keeps track of supplies
- ♦ ingredients, diet codes and allergies are managed, keeping patients safe.

Delegate software is already in use at Epworth Richmond and Epworth Geelong and it will streamline meal management at Epworth Camberwell.

This new system has paved the way for a wider range of menu choices, with patients ordering one day in advance for set meal times.

The Delegate software and new meal management systems will roll out at other sites over coming months, enabling our hospitals to use a consistent model to manage meals.

Cardiac technology upgrade

Standardising and upgrading our cardiac technology has remained a focus. This work, including consolidating cardiac imaging storage enabled cardiologists at Epworth to access, view and write cardiac diagnostic reports remotely.

The relocation of Epworth Richmond Cath Lab will enable new integrated catheterisation systems at Epworth Richmond Cardiac Services.

Behind the scenes support

Each of our site redevelopments requires IT support. This year, technology was critical to ensure the success of:

- ♦ Epworth Freemasons Day Oncology, consulting suites and carpark
- ♦ Epworth Freemasons/EMI PET CT installation
- ♦ Epworth Eastern site redevelopment and the deployment of Epworth Eastern Kew.

IT has also been important in the:

- ♦ migration of approximately 100 applications and database servers from Windows 2008 to Windows 2016, providing ongoing service and support
- ♦ strengthening of our disaster recovery capability, including the implementation of a standby datacentre that can support critical technology services
- ♦ replacement of 30 network switches and the upgrade of many WIFI access points to provide better coverage, faster speeds and higher levels of security. This program was completed with no business disruption.

MyRoster

The My Roster project, which involves a transition from paper-based to electronic rostering of time and attendance, continued across Epworth. Epworth Richmond and Epworth Medical Imaging roll outs were completed, with Epworth Freemasons implementation underway.

Social media success

Using social media to connect and engage our community has been particularly important in the past year, as people looked for trusted sources during the pandemic.

62,000 followers across Instagram, Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn,
19.5 million people reached in 2019-20, an increase of **6% on the previous year.**

During Victoria's lockdowns, our community was looking to us for support and answers about the pandemic. We successfully used social media to provide relevant, current and trusted information rapidly and we've built communities such as the Epworth Maternity Group, a safe place for new and expecting mums to connect, ask questions and provide feedback.

Mobile Midwife, our free educational maternity videos, were also a popular resource. From January-June 2020, we saw a 405% increase in visitors to the site compared to the previous six months.

We expanded our reach by creating more video content:

Epworth YouTube

- ♦ 21.3k subscribers
- ♦ 23.6 million impressions (519% increase from the previous year)
- ♦ 30.5k hours of video watched.

Connecting with staff over social media has also been a focus, especially during the pandemic. We introduced regular videos from our Group Chief Executive provided to employees via SMS, with significant open rates. We launched an Epworth Team Facebook page and an Epworth TikTok account to share staff-generated content and encourage connection across our social media channels.

During the April 2020-July 2020 lockdown, we saw more engagement across our social media channels:

35% increase in our Facebook engagement rate: comments increasing by 144%

219% increase in Epworth Maternity Group posts, with the group growing by 32% and engagement increasing 138%

2,000+ video views on Epworth Iso-Mums Facebook live series



07

Sustainability

One of our strategic pillars is sustainability. It encompasses not only sound environmental and financial choices, but collaborations and partnerships that are mutually aligned and beneficial.

Redevelopments

The new entrance at Epworth Freemasons.



This year, we completed the redevelopment of Epworth Freemasons, expanded cardiac care at Epworth Richmond and made great progress on construction at Epworth Eastern.

Epworth Freemasons redevelopment

The \$100 million redevelopment of Epworth Freemasons was completed in March 2020. The new facilities, within the historic Clarendon Street site, allow the hospital to care for even more patients.

The new radiation oncology and day oncology units were completed first, with patients accepted into new areas from September 2019.

The new features, which are fully integrated into the existing buildings, include:

- ◆ Albert Street hospital entrance refurbishment to improve patient access
- ◆ a dedicated drop off and pick up area at the main entrance
- ◆ a redesigned and upgraded main reception area
- ◆ a new Day Oncology Unit
- ◆ onsite parking for more than 300 vehicles
- ◆ new research facilities
- ◆ an upgraded simulation and education centre
- ◆ new consulting suites
- ◆ four additional operating theatres (to complement the eight existing theatres at Clarendon Street)
- ◆ 12 additional inpatient beds
- ◆ a new pharmacy.

Epworth Freemasons Executive General Manager, Simon Benedict, said many years of planning and construction have resulted in a direct impact on patient care and experience, with internal and external designs sympathetic to the original heritage-listed hospital and neighbouring terrace buildings.

“Our new state-of-the-art operating theatres, combined with the impressive robotics program ensure we will deliver world-class clinical care,” Mr Benedict said.

“Our team feels a sense of pride in our new-look hospital and rightly so. It’s their passion and professionalism that has helped make it possible.

“Our new Day Oncology Unit (DOU) has made treatment days more comfortable, in a light and spacious environment. We also know that it’s the people behind that care who ultimately make the difference.”



Redevelopment works continue at Epworth Eastern.

Better connected cancer care

The relocation of the hospital’s DOU from a stand-alone facility at the Victoria Parade site, into the new Grey Street building, has enabled us to deliver even better care to our patients.

The purpose-built space, named the Helen Hains Day Oncology Unit, is filled with natural light and is spacious for patient comfort and privacy, while supporting our clinical teams in the care they provide each day. A key investment for Epworth Freemasons, the new DOU directly links to the existing inpatient oncology ward.

This new space enables us to provide better individualised care for each patient and an easier access to radiotherapy, radiology, ICU and the inpatient unit, enabling smoother transitions for patients, our doctors and specialist nurses.

The support of donors to the EMF has facilitated the purchase of extra medical equipment and furnishings.

New state-of-the-art scanner

As part of the redevelopment of Epworth Freemasons, donors to Epworth helped purchase a new state-of-the-art PET/CT Scanner to support cancer patients at diagnosis and throughout their care.

The PET/CT can reveal a tumour that is not visible on other types of scans. It can help with the detection of unknown disease and map the spread of diagnosed cancer, to ensure the most appropriate treatment is provided.

PET/CT scans are also routinely used in clinical trials. They provide the most accurate assessment of the patient’s disease and the impact of treatment.

The addition of this technology ensures patients will receive the gold standard in cancer care.

Epworth Eastern redevelopment progresses

Work to expand Epworth Eastern, including a new ED, additional operating theatres and three new clinical floors has progressed, with completion expected in late 2021.

Several months of excavation created three levels of basement car parking. In April 2020, the site’s main crane arrived and construction of the 14-storey East Wing Tower commenced.

More than 50 of our doctors were relocated to new consulting suites at Epworth Eastern Specialist Centre. Purpose-built, the new facility enabled a decant strategy and refurbishment works to commence in a timely manner.

Epworth Eastern staff enjoy an open day for the community at Epworth Eastern Kew.



Building healthy communities together

To ensure our patients have the best experience possible during the construction phase, we launched the 'Building healthy communities together' campaign. Staff acting as brand advocates, wore branded t-shirts with the tagline, 'Ask us about Epworth Eastern's redevelopment' and were given key information to impart. The campaign was successful in reminding patients, families and the broader community why this important redevelopment was taking place.

Epworth Eastern Kew opens

While construction is ongoing, we leased a former hospital in Kew to treat some of our surgical patients.

Epworth Eastern Kew opened its doors following a Community Open Day in August 2019. More than 150 visitors enjoyed a tour of the facility and a barbecue lunch.

A number of specialties are delivered at this site, including general surgery, plastic surgery, maxillo-facial, orthopaedics, gynaecology /uro-gynaecology, urology, ENT, endoscopy, colorectal and vascular.



The Epworth Eastern team was joined by our partners and community representatives including City of Whitehorse Mayor, Cr Bill Bennett, Box Hill Institute CEO Vivienne King and Major Alwyn Robinson of The Salvation Army Box Hill to celebrate a sod turning ceremony.

Sod turning ceremony with the Salvos

As part of the broader redevelopment of Epworth Eastern, we are building a new place of worship for The Salvation Army Box Hill on Whitehorse Road, Box Hill.

Following its opening, Epworth Eastern will acquire the The Salvation Army Box Hill site at Nelson Road.

Both organisations are part of a unique landmark agreement, known as the Box Hill Health and Education Precinct, which also includes Box Hill Institute (BHI).

The partnership facilitates the expansion of Epworth Eastern and allows BHI to develop a state of the art nurse training facility. BHI will become the sole enrolled nursing training provider for Epworth Eastern, with opportunities for a new generation of patient care assistants, allied health assistants, theatre technicians and students from other fields including food handling, environmental services, maintenance and ward management.

New world-class cardiac catheterisation unit

Epworth Richmond first opened a fit for purpose, leading edge cardiac catheterisation laboratory unit 30 years ago. The establishment of the lab has enabled over 50,000 cardiac patients to receive care in the past 10 years alone. With continued demand for cardiac services, there was a need for an extensive upgrade and refurbishment.

In March 2020, construction began to create the new La Trobe Financial Cardiac Catheterisation Unit, a state of the art facility. It was made possible by La Trobe Financial and the EMF.

The new unit will enable Epworth to continue providing patients with the best care and meet growing patient needs.

The La Trobe Financial Cardiac Catheterisation Unit includes three new cardiac catheterisation laboratories, which will be integrated with the new Cardiac Diagnostic Services Unit to improve efficiency and patient care. This unit will provide diagnostic services for cardiovascular disease, including exercise stress testing and electrophysiology capabilities to observe heart rhythm and activity. It will offer advanced monitoring, mapping, and diagnostic and interventional equipment to support cardiac care.

Each of the new expanded laboratories ensures that surgeons can perform all procedures, unrestricted by room size. Each lab will be equipped with the latest equipment and technologies, including new x ray machines, CT scanning, ultrasound and cardiac imaging technology.



Facilities in 1920s-30s – problems

It was reported (in the Annual Report of 1921) that the medical men had expressed the “greatest satisfaction” with the facilities provided at Epworth Hospital and in particular the up-to-date operating theatre.⁽¹⁾ The scrub up bowls were brass and oval in shape. The Brasso to clean them was provided by the nursing staff. No masks were worn and surgical gloves were placed in a perforated brass glove box and plunged into the steriliser.⁽²⁾ The new hospital faced several problems, because it was not purpose-built. The first baby was born on 15 June, but the labour room was found to be unsatisfactory because the “patients in the maternity ward were distressed by sounds from the room”. A detached room with a duty room was recommended.⁽³⁾ Another difficulty that soon became apparent was the lack of a lift. The bulk of the work was surgical and the operating theatres were on the first floor. The nurses had to carry patients downstairs after the operations. Another onerous task was tending ‘White Rose’, the trade name of the boiler. The night nurse was expected to stoke ‘White Rose’ at night, but it was not the most obliging of boilers. (Matron Gray was known to dry her long hair in the boiler room).

Sources:

- (1) *Annual Report, 1921*
- (2) *Gwen Summers and Marjorie Holding, Recollections, c. 1980,*
- (3) *Methodist Intermediate Hospital Committee, Minutes Book, 15 June 1920.*

Refurbishment of maternity suites

The Maternity Unit at Epworth Freemasons has a proud history of helping welcome approximately 3,000 babies each year. It has been refurbished in a number of key areas.

The \$2 million project saw the refurbishment of birth suites, postnatal rooms, new lobby area, reception and nurses’ station. The Susan Harris Learning Hub was also created, following a generous donation to the EMF.

The birth suites now feature a floral design across one wall, which was chosen to help create a calm, nurturing environment. The refresh of the postnatal rooms includes new colours, lighting and soft furnishings.

To minimise the impact on patients and their families, refurbishment works were carried out gradually.

These projects make up phase one of our maternity refurbishment, which was almost completed before COVID-19 restrictions led to pausing hospital construction work. Phase two refurbishment works, within other areas of the unit, are being planned.

First private radiation oncology in the Barwon region

The Barwon region’s first private radiation oncology facility, Icon Cancer Centre, opened at Epworth Geelong in January 2020, giving locals access to expert treatment close to home.

The centre uses the latest technology and techniques, previously unavailable in the region. These include Stereotactic Radiation Therapy – an advanced technique used to treat small tumours with well-defined edges, commonly located in the brain, spine or lung.

This centre complements existing services at Epworth Geelong, including diagnostics, surgical and medical treatments and a dedicated day oncology unit.

Icon Cancer Centre already has radiation oncology facilities at Epworth Richmond and Epworth Freemasons.



New private IVF day procedure unit

In October 2019, Epworth Eastern opened a new private IVF day procedure unit, operating alongside independent IVF specialists, Newlife IVF.

Epworth Eastern Ekeru, staffed by highly skilled and experienced patient services staff, nurses and clinical personnel from Epworth Eastern, welcomed its first patients in November 2019.

Treatment available includes fertility testing, early fertility treatment, IVF treatment (including egg retrieval, sperm preparation, insemination, embryo development and embryo transfer) preimplantation genetic testing (PGT), egg and sperm freezing, and donor and surrogacy services.



Our donors generously provided funds to help us respond to the pandemic.

Epworth Medical Foundation (EMF)

Each year, the generosity of our donors makes a big difference to the care we provide. This year, it was even more important in helping us respond to the pandemic.

COVID-19 and donor support

When the COVID -19 pandemic reached Australia, Epworth responded immediately. We rapidly created measures to protect and care for our patients and healthcare workers. We also reached out to the Victorian community to help keep our community safe.

Thanks to the generosity of our supporters, volunteers and donors, we were able to:

- ◆ purchase more than \$1.6 million in critical and life-saving equipment including ventilators, ICU beds and glidescopes to manage difficult airways and air respirators
- ◆ purchase PPE to keep our staff safe
- ◆ expand telehealth services to ensure patients could continue to receive mental healthcare in their own homes
- ◆ expand the ICU at Epworth Geelong by 50% and fit out three new ICU rooms. This included the purchase of new ceiling pendants, ventilators, ICU beds and high dependency unit beds, to ensure we can support our community during the pandemic.



Philanthropy: Epworth began with benefactor Aaron Danks: 1919

Sir Aaron Danks (1861-1928) was the son of Anne and John Danks. His father founded a hardware manufacturing business with his two brothers. After they retired, Aaron Danks became a partner in the business. From 1871 to 1900, the company expanded from 35 to 200 employees. Aaron led the company after his father's death in 1902, until his own death in 1928. He was a generous benefactor who financed the purchase of 'Yalcowinna' (in 1919) to establish Epworth Hospital in Richmond. Active in many philanthropic pursuits, he was knighted in 1925. Sir Aaron's widow, Jane, and their daughter, Annie, continued to be generous supporters of Epworth.



Left: Sonia with her father, Bui and healthcare workers.

Right: Sonia with Professor Minoo Patel.

Partnerships

Providing care beyond our borders

Sonia Paua, from PNG, has chronic osteomyelitis, an infection in the bone, that has left her with poor mobility and daily pain.

Epworth, in partnership with the Children First Foundation, is changing Sonia's life by providing pro bono surgery.

"Sonia's deformity is the result of surgeries in PNG when she was younger to remove the diseased bone and related scarring and skin contracture," said Professor Minoo Patel, Epworth orthopaedic surgeon.

"Unfortunately, this all happened while she was still growing, so her limb is deformed both at the bone and the joint, and it is shorter as well."

Sonia said having the chance to be treated in Australia was "a dream come true."

"Soon, I will be walking straight, without a crutch, and I won't be embarrassed anymore. My family will be really happy and proud of me when I arrive home, standing up straight," Sonia said.

The teenager requires multiple surgeries, the first was in February 2020 when she underwent a three-and-a-half hour operation to re-align her leg. This included the insertion of a cutting-edge device to gradually lengthen and regenerate the bone by millimetres each day.

The procedures, Sonia's hospital stay, Professor Patel's fees, as well as the equipment and prosthesis were all provided at no cost to Sonia's family.

Since the operation, Sonia has regained an incredible 12cm in length. Sonia has two further surgeries and extensive rehabilitation ahead of her, but she's excited at the prospect of walking with ease.

Epworth Kindness Movement

The Epworth Kindness Movement was formed during the COVID-19 pandemic, after many loyal Epworth supporters, donors and organisations contacted EMF with offers to support Epworth employees and thank our frontline healthcare workers.

With #kindnesspanedemic becoming a movement in the community, we harnessed this sentiment to create the Epworth Kindness Movement, giving employees and doctors some much needed support during a stressful time.



Activities included:

- ♦ local businesses delivering food and other perishables to our hospital sites
- ♦ treats like Easter eggs, hot drinks and muesli bars for employees and doctors
- ♦ promoting positive stories on our media channels, connecting our people to each other and to the community they serve.

Monash Partners Academic Health Science Centre

Epworth is a member of Monash Partners, a partnership between leading health services, teaching and research organisations, focused on innovating for better health.

This year, the partnership:

- ♦ funded 11 new priority initiatives from mental health in new mothers to improving lung cancer care
- ♦ attracted State Government investment in research systems and processes to ensure more Victorians benefit from health data research and cutting-edge clinical trials
- ♦ provided leadership and funding for the inaugural national network (in women's health) across centres, and
- ♦ formed a strategic partnership with the Monash Institute of Medical Engineering to turn clinical problems into real world solutions, expanding into digital health, health service impact and workforce capacity building.

Capacity building

This alliance brings strengthened national collaboration, shared learning and advanced research.

The partnership has enabled Epworth staff to access clinical research training and Women in Leadership and Healthcare Improvement masterclasses. A Fellowship program, in areas such as data-driven health care improvement and community and consumer involvement, is also offered.

Advancing Women in Healthcare Leadership

An Advancing Women in Healthcare Leadership initiative was established, involving Monash Partners, State and Federal governments and professional colleges nationally. Through research and translational resources, programs and tools for national implementation, this initiative will support women in healthcare to attain their career goals and enable a health system with greater leadership diversity.

Collaborations

Working with government and public hospitals

The COVID-19 pandemic prompted Epworth to work collaboratively with the State Government and public hospital operators, to ensure Victorians received urgent care.

On 30 April 2020, Epworth Group Chief Executive Dr Lachlan Henderson announced Epworth had finalised a new Private Hospital Funding Agreement (COVID-19) with the state of Victoria. It provided funding support to ensure our hospital workforce and facilities were ready to assist in the statewide COVID-19 Hospital Response Plan. This was in conjunction with the Commonwealth's funding support for operational continuity of healthcare systems nationally.

Epworth established relationships to receive public patients from Barwon Health and the RMH. During the pandemic, Epworth also worked with Alfred Health, Eastern Health, Djerriwarrh Health and St Vincent's Health to treat urgent and semi-urgent patients from the public elective surgery waiting list. Epworth was also available to treat public emergency patients presenting to Epworth Richmond and Epworth Geelong.

As part of the agreement, Epworth is prepared to care for:

- ◆ COVID-19 patients within our EDs, medical wards and ICUs
- ◆ non-COVID public medical patients
- ◆ urgent/acute public surgical cases.

The aim was to ensure equitable and coordinated clinical care was provided to patients in our community.



Medical materials were packed up by staff at Epworth Geelong.

Far left: medical supplies helped people in Samoa.



Helping our neighbours in Samoa

The disastrous consequences of a measles outbreak on the small island of Samoa in December 2019 prompted Epworth Geelong gastroenterologist Associate Professor Chris Hair to rally Epworth medical supply distributors for help.

Samoa was in desperate need of medical supplies, with the outbreak resulting in 4,500 measles cases in a country of just 200,000 people, exacerbated by a steep decline in vaccination rates.

A/Prof Hair organised several pallets of medical items to be shipped to measles-infected patients to stem the spread of the disease. This included thousands of facemasks and gowns, hand sanitiser, and disposable cups and plates.

A/Prof Hair, a director of the Australia and New Zealand Gastroenterology International Training Association (A.N.Z.G.I.T.A.) and regional leader for South Pacific programs, is passionate about supporting education and training programs in the Pacific Islands.

Epworth Group Director Procurement and Supply, Melinda Tippett said Epworth and our supply partners were pleased to coordinate the donations, which assisted medical and nursing teams in Samoa.

"We're proud to have our medical experts acting as global citizens for better health outcomes in a time of crisis," Melinda said.

Epworth continues to donate medical and operating equipment, and other materials, to aid hospitals, health services and communities in developing countries.

Environmental sustainability

Becoming more sustainable is essential to our operations, to protect the environment and ensure resources are used responsibly. This year, we introduced new initiatives to progress our Epworth Environment Policy.

Reducing waste

We started a food waste reduction program at Epworth Richmond in late 2019, following a grant from the City of Yarra and Sustainability Victoria, to trial a WasteMaster machine.

With the use of a WasteMaster machine from late 2019-30 June 2020:

- ◆ 18 tonnes of food waste have been diverted from landfill
- ◆ 72% of food waste has been evaporated, leaving a residue weighing 2.7 tonnes
- ◆ using this residue, 4,867kWh of green electricity was created at the Yarra Valley Water Anaerobic Digester in Wollert
- ◆ the amount of green electricity fed back into the grid powered the equivalent of 356 homes for a day.

Waste and redevelopment

While great care was taken in creating appealing patient spaces in the new Epworth Freemasons redevelopment, the hospital's sustainability was also a key component of its blueprint and is already reaping rewards.

We found a new way to dispose of general waste that didn't involve using regular bins that cost \$10 each to empty.

Environmental Services and Patient Transport Manager, Maria Stokes said when the new loading dock was being designed the waste systems were also overhauled.

"We decided to lease a compactor, which was a game changer for our hospital. Like a big corkscrew, it turns, grinds and compacts waste into a cube. The smaller space in landfill also means less money wasted on rubbish disposal," Ms Stokes said.

Epworth also saved cardboard removal costs by using a baler. The cost of removing each bin was reduced from \$10 per bin, to \$5 for nearly a dozen bins. It is also a better use of labor.

We are investigating options for disposing of food waste and co-mingled recycling at Epworth Freemasons.

Epworth Freemasons Executive General Manager, Simon Benedict said our new facilities were improving the way we work and helping reduce our environmental footprint.

"These initiatives have already saved us time and money. Innovation isn't always about medical advancements; something as day-to-day as how we get rid of our rubbish can have a real impact."

Recycling

We implemented single-use metal recycling across three sites and from October 2019 to 30 June 2020. We recycled more than a quarter of a tonne of metal comprising:

- ◆ 126.25kg single use steel items, such as scissors
- ◆ 97kg aluminum (82kg suture packaging and 15kg oxygen mask clips) and 9.5kg diathermy cables.

Our Polyvinyl Chloride (PVC) recycling campaign prevented 8,056kg of PVC going to landfill. Instead, it was recycled by Epworth through the Baxter Healthcare and the Vinyl Council of Victoria PVC Recycling Program. This amount of PVC could be used to build 10 playgrounds or 56.4km of garden hose and equates to a potential saving of more than \$6,034.

Recycling at Epworth also extends to uniforms, to keep as much textile waste out of landfill as possible. In the past six months, we collected more than 121kg of staff uniforms. These textiles are recycled and used to make products, such as carpet underlay and gym equipment.



“We are being systematic and committed in our approach to environmental sustainability and this is showing results.”

Simon Mikedis, Group Sustainability Manager, Epworth HealthCare

Staff initiatives: our sustainability win

In 2019, Epworth Eastern recycled 1.376 metric tonnes of PVC. That's more than 100kg per month. Two years ago, the hospital wasn't recycling PVC at all.

PVC is used in our fluid bags, oxygen tubing and facemasks. It is a plastic that makes up a significant percentage of our general waste and goes straight to landfill. The Sustainability Committee at Epworth Eastern prevents tonnes of PVC going to landfill. Instead, the rubbish is recycled into items including garden hoses, play mats, playground equipment and floor coverings.

Water savings

Our reverse osmosis capture imitative project diverts reject water produced in dialysis, saving water and funds at Epworth Geelong. Water for dialysis needs to be ultra-pure so for every litre produced, five litres is wasted. Instead, this water is now used to fill onsite tanks, previously supplemented by millions of litres of water, for ongoing use in gardens and for flushing toilets.

This year, Epworth Geelong was able to save more than 4.7 million litres of water (and \$16,000) through this initiative.

Social sustainability

In January 2020, we gathered expired and surplus supplies to assist injured and displaced wildlife affected by the Victorian bushfires.

Three trailer loads of supplies were sent to wildlife shelters. This included biscuits, bandages, sutures, bowl sets, kidney dishes, dressings, gloves, IV solutions, blankets, towels, catheters, syringes, oxygen masks, steri-straps and breathing circuits.

Energy

LED lighting upgrades at the Pelaco corporate office and Epworth Richmond, through the Victorian Energy Upgrades program, resulted in:

- ♦ 23% immediate reduced consumption
- ♦ more than \$180,000 in savings.

Greenhouse performance

While our greenhouse emissions decreased last year, this year's results were impacted by several significant factors:

- ♦ COVID-19 resulted in atypical results (e.g. elective surgery stoppages) and with lower patient bed days, emissions intensity increased, as lights, heating and cooling facilities were required throughout our hospitals
- ♦ the new tower at Epworth Freemasons and the new facility at Epworth Eastern Kew didn't exist in 2018-19 and accounted for 4,849MWh

- ♦ In the previous data, the energy consumption of our corporate office (at Pelaco) wasn't included in our overall emissions and yet (with the inclusion) our emissions are almost identical to last year
- ♦ LED replacement program results for Epworth Richmond and Epworth Eastern are not yet reflected in the results below.

Year	CO2e (tonnes)	Patient Bed Days (PD)	Emissions Intensity (kg/PD)
2019-20	60,228	502,936	120
2018-19	56,096	534,940	105
2017-18	57,280	514,727	111

Being environmentally conscious brings multiple benefits.







and now

