Research Dinner rounds out Research Week success

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We’ve already reached the midpoint of 2015, and what an innovative and exciting few months we’ve had since the last *Epwords*. We continue to introduce and develop new medical advances, improving the lives of our patients and ensuring we remain at the forefront of technology in healthcare. Our staff have been given extraordinary opportunities to progress and develop their knowledge and experience. We’ve undertaken an Employee Value Proposition program to make Epworth a more desirable workplace for current and prospective employees and we have launched *A New Day* — a short film which is a fantastic expression of Epworth’s people, expertise and empathy in delivering excellence in care.

Winter is upon us and that means flu season has arrived. Epworth has implemented a thorough flu vaccination campaign across our sites, with the goal of attaining an 80% vaccination rate. At time of publishing, we’ve reached at least 83% overall — an all-time record. I would like to congratulate everyone involved in achieving this success. It’s imperative we maintain a safe working environment for our patients, our colleagues and ourselves.

We have just seen the close of another successful Research Week. This event is a standout in Epworth’s calendar, offering the chance for us to showcase all the exciting research projects we are involved with. We received 43 poster submissions — our biggest-ever number. This year to date Epworth research articles and reviews were featured in 233 publications, with articles appearing in many world-renowned journals, proving our interest in fostering research continues to be a priority. On Thursday 18 June the annual Epworth Research Institute Dinner was held at the MCG, where seven major grants and seven small grants were awarded. Congratulations to all.

In medical development news, we’ve had a number of significant events over the last few months. In April, Epworth Richmond performed its first deep brain stimulation case on a WA man that’s significantly reduced his essential tremor, giving him, in his own words, ‘a second lease on life’. Epworth Clinic is offering a new form of treatment for patients with depression, transcranial magnetic stimulation (TMS), which can help patients that have not found relief through antidepressants. And last month, Epworth Freemasons was the first hospital in Australia — and, we believe, possibly the world — to perform reconstruction surgery on a patient using a 3D-printed jaw.

Our redevelopment plans continue to make good progress. In May the official topping out ceremony for Epworth Geelong was held, attended by the Federal Health Minister The Hon Sussan Ley, Deakin University staff, and Epworth Board members and Epworth executives.

At Epworth Richmond, the Non-Invasive Cardiac Unit has received a new name — Cardiac Diagnostic Services — and a new location, moving into a purpose-built space on Level 1. Work on the new Lee Wing continue well with opening set for early 2016.

The new Day of Surgery Admission (DOSA) Centre and Short Stay Unit on Level 3 at Epworth Freemasons Clarendon Street opened in May, continuing with the redevelopment plan to upgrade the infrastructure and improve facilities. Construction continues on the South West Regional Cancer Centre in Warrnambool, which will open in mid-2016 offering a new radiotherapy service to the South West Victoria region.

Alan R Kinkade
Group Chief Executive
Australian-first procedure with 3D printed jaw

In an Australian-first procedure at Epworth Freemasons, oral and maxillofacial surgeon George Dimitroulis has corrected a young man’s rare congenital jaw deformity, using a 3D-printed jaw and jaw joint designed and created in Melbourne.

Patient Richard Stratton was born without a left jaw joint (TMJ — temporomandibular joint) and as he grew, his jaw became more noticeably skewed, giving him limited flexibility which restricted what he could eat.

On 2 May, Mr Dimitroulis led the surgical team in a five hour operation to reconstruct the missing jaw with a custom-made piece printed in titanium and special polymer.

The jaw and jaw joint were designed, developed and manufactured by 3D Medical Limited (3DM) using the latest CAD-CAM technology with 3D metal printing capabilities.

Mr Dimitroulis says he can envision that customised medical devices will become an integral part of healthcare in the 21st century.

“Many people suffer from jaw joint disorders such as painful clicking and jaw locking, with thousands undergoing surgery each year to treat advanced arthritic and other degenerative joint conditions,” Mr Dimitroulis says.

“I can see that this prosthesis, invented here in Melbourne, could help people around the world who require total joint replacements for advanced degenerative joint disease of the TMJ.”

Mr Dimitroulis pioneered the development of the prosthesis with input from lead researchers Dr David Ackland and Prof Peter Lee from the University of Melbourne’s Department of Biomechanical Engineering, and Ben Baxter from 3DM.

Stereotactic radiation treats multiple brain metastases

Epworth has become the first hospital in Australia to use a new technology that can irradiate up to ten brain metastases at the same time.

Epworth Radiation Oncology Director Dr Mike Dally hopes that a form of stereotactic radiosurgery called ELEMENTS Automatic Brain Metastases Planning will eventually make whole brain radiation redundant. Whole brain radiation is a treatment that has been used for the last 50 years.

“A patient with multiple brain metastases can receive radiation to their entire brain. This may control the disease within the brain for a number of months, but often has a deleterious effect on the patient’s memory and brain function, and therefore reduces the person’s quality of life,” Dr Daily says.

Every year, thousands of Australians are diagnosed with brain tumours and usually they are secondary to other cancers found in their bodies.

“Up until now, patients with brain metastases have been able to receive simultaneous irradiation to one or two spots, sometimes three. Research from Japan using the new Brainlab software has now demonstrated similar benefits for patients with up to ten metastases, after just one 40-minute session,” Dr Daily says.

Currently, the new technology is only available at Epworth, but Dr Daily hopes to offer it to more patients when he conducts a clinical study with the University of Melbourne later this year.

Stereotactic radiotherapy can treat conditions that may not be able to be addressed by conventional surgery due to their position and/or the sensitivity of surrounding tissue, including malignant and benign lesions of the brain, spine, lung, liver and prostate. It can also treat brain metastases, arteriovenous malformations and other functional conditions such as trigeminal neuralgia.
Cleveland Clinic visit brings wealth of lessons for Epworth nurses

Epworth nursing staff have returned from visiting the prestigious Cleveland Clinic in the US as part of a two-week development experience, funded by donations from the Epworth Medical Foundation.

The trip saw eight nurses from across our sites along with Sheila Daly, director of clinical and site services at Epworth Brighton, head to Cleveland to participate in a two-week leadership and observational experience specifically designed for Epworth. Each nurse learned about the Cleveland philosophy and spent time in the unit or area of their interest with the goal of delivering a comprehensive quality improvement project, once back at Epworth. The focus of the project will be based on what they learned from their experience.

“They’ve got such a world-class reputation, so we wanted to know how we could bring that back to our hospital”

Both found, however, it wasn’t so much the big picture that gave clues as to the clinic’s success, but the smaller touches in everyday patient care that really stood out.

“They had lots of little ideas that work really well,” says Amy, “especially the way they communicate with the patients. Even in the bathrooms, if the cleaner had cleaned the bathroom they left a little card with their name on it — little things like that.”

“Service recovery, that’s something that they do really well,” adds Marnie. “They teach their grads from the get-go exact wording and how to talk to a patient so a situation like a complaint doesn’t escalate. They reduce their complaints a lot by doing that, which I really like.”

After hearing from the course attendees, Cleveland Clinic staff were, in turn, impressed by Epworth’s model of care.

“By the end of the two weeks, they were saying we are quite an innovative hospital and we’re quite up to date with everything that they’re doing as well,” says Amy.

“They are Epworth, just on a bigger scale,” says Marnie. “I think that we’re definitely on par with what the Cleveland Clinic does. We don’t have the resources that it does, but in terms of moving forward and looking at what the patient experience is and how nurses deliver care, I think we should be proud of what we’ve achieved.”
TAC spotlights Epworth research projects

Research projects being undertaken by Epworth through MERRC (Monash-Epworth Rehabilitation Research Centre) are attracting attention and promising major savings to the Transport Accident Commission.

The two studies, part of the neurotrauma research program funded by ISCRR, a research institute funded by the TAC, focus on tracking and improving the outcomes of traumatic brain injury patients. The studies were selected as part of a review process, justifying the existence of ISCRR going forward, for their significant impact either in terms of worldwide recognition or in terms of reducing costs and predicting outcomes for patients.

One of the projects, a longitudinal study, has been in place since the late 1980s, with funding from the TAC for the past 20 years. Covering such a long period delivers comprehensive findings on TBI patients over a significant amount of time.

Director of MERRC Professor Jennie Ponsford, who is leading both projects, says the longitudinal study aims to identify the functional difficulties experienced by TBI patients throughout their recovery journeys. Their current database holds over 2440 patients.

“We follow up all the head injury patients at one, two, three, five, ten and now 20 years after injury,” she says. “We look at whether they’re getting back to work or study, whether they need any help with their daily activities, what sort of relationships they form and their psychological adjustment, as well.

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The second project to gain attention is an intervention study, focusing on early treatment during PTA — post-traumatic amnesia. This is a phase that affects TBI patients after injury in which they experience a period of disorientation and confusion, with the inability to lay down new memories.

The study aims to better understand the process of assessing patients in PTA and evaluate the effectiveness of therapy during this period.

“It’s the first time we’ve really worked with therapists doing experimental therapy in the context of our everyday work,” says Jennie. “At Epworth it’s quite exciting for the head injury team to have achieved that.

“It’s promoting us as a centre of excellence — that’s what all our research is designed to do.”

Keeping ourselves, our colleagues and our patients safe from the flu

Influenza is highly contagious and serious, and can even be fatal in some cases. Last year more than 1800 people were hospitalised with the flu and experts are telling us that this year will be worse.

Epworth has been undertaking a flu vaccination campaign with the goal of achieving an 80% vaccination rate overall. As of early June, we’ve reached and exceeded that, hitting over 83% site-wide — with some departments even reaching 100%. This is a significant achievement and reflects our commitment to maintaining the safest possible environment for our patients.

Community immunity, or herd immunity as it’s also known, describes a form of indirect protection from infectious disease that occurs when a large percentage of a population has become immune to an infection, thereby providing a measure of protection for individuals who are not. By encouraging all our staff to be immunised, we can work towards a level of protection that keeps all of us, especially our patients who trust us to provide complete care, safe.

Well done and thank you to all staff who’ve taken the time to have their immunisation.
Meet ... the Epworth Brighton admin team

Who are the staff members on the team?
Julie Myers, admission coordinator and patient liaison
Chris Chatfield, hospital reception
Di Boyd, outpatient coordinator
Meher Shah, outpatient coordinator
Beth Mitchell, medical reception
Karissa Keating, medical reception
Jenni Stocks, admin and outpatient support
Trudy Jones, admin and hospital reception support
Claudia Stans, hospital reception

What services does the team provide for Epworth Brighton?
Our team manages all internal and external phone calls and enquiries; we help visitors and patients with directions to the ward; we ensure new patients are welcomed and then directed to the ward they are being admitted to; and we manage enquiries and referrals from community/health professionals for possible inpatient and outpatient programs and scheduling of outpatient rehabilitation programs.

Can you describe a typical day for the team?
The admin team is integral to the overall patient experience, from an inpatient perspective through to outpatients. It is a very busy area with a high volume of patients either commencing or continuing with their inpatient or outpatient rehabilitation. The admin team builds strong relationships with our patients whether that be managing their administrative requirements or simply having a chat at the reception desk which our patients really enjoy.

Any highlights/department achievements?
Overall, providing excellent customer service, in person or over the phone, on a daily basis is an ongoing achievement. On a personal note, Sarah Cornell — one of our outpatient coordinators — is currently on maternity leave and had a little son, Finn, in late January. We’re all very happy for her.

What might people be surprised to know about the administration team?
We have some very good chefs in the admin team that keep us well supplied with tasty treats (especially Di)!

Epworth Charity Golf Day raises record funds

The Epworth Medical Foundation held its annual Corporate Charity Golf Day on 23 March at the Metropolitan Golf Club with a full field of 120 players including corporate sponsors, Epworth doctors and executive staff.

The major sponsor of the tournament was Mr PS Lee of Footscray Markets and together with other corporate sponsors a record net profit of over $100,000 was raised to purchase an image intensifier for operating theatres at Epworth Eastern.

It was a fantastic day of sport, camaraderie and networking on and off the course, where the Australian Masters took place in November 2014. Group Chief Executive Alan Kinkade watched the teams tee-off and later thanked the sponsors for their support. Multigate Medical won the trophy this year with Princes Laundry and Bidvest taking second and third place.

We are already looking forward to next year’s golf day on 7 March 2016 at Huntingdale Golf Club.
For Harrie Martens, life in retirement was starting to lose its sheen. Affected by his worsening essential tremor, Harrie’s usual leisure activities were becoming harder and harder to enjoy.

“It restricted me very badly,” explains Harrie. “I found I couldn’t do simple things like writing, using a computer, fishing, playing pool. All the things I love to do.”

The 65-year-old WA resident had been a keen traveller, touring the country in his campervan and meeting new friends on the way, but the tremor — which presented with traces of Parkinson’s disease — meant getting out was becoming a challenge.

“I tended to become a bit of a hermit, because it’s hard to go out and do things when you’re shaking all the time,” he says.

That’s when Harrie booked in to have deep brain stimulation at Epworth Richmond, under the care of Epworth surgeons Mr Andrew Evans and Mr Girish Nair. Travelling from Albury, WA to Melbourne for the treatment meant Harrie could have surgery almost right away, under his private health insurance scheme, rather than waiting up to eight months in WA through public health.

Harrie’s procedure was the first for Epworth Richmond, which involves a surgically implanted medical device — similar to a pacemaker — that delivers electrical stimulation to precisely targeted areas on each side of the brain. Once implanted, tremors are controlled by a set voltage that can be raised or lowered depending on need.

“If my tremor returns I can adjust the intensity of the settings,” explains Harrie.

A/Prof Bruce Waxman, medical director at Epworth Richmond, says DBS surgery has undergone significant changes in the past five years, reducing operating time and surgical complications.

“This new-look approach to DBS may convince the sceptics of its potential as a life-changing procedure,” he says. “DBS can improve our patients’ quality of life in one stage with a hospital stay of just two days.”

Neurologist Dr Nair says Harrie is extremely thankful for his treatment at Epworth.

“Harrie came to me with disabling symptoms impairing his ability to be independent,” says Dr Nair. “His surgery has been a resounding success and he is thrilled to have his life back in control.”

Now returned to WA, Harrie is ready to get back to a regular life unrestricted by his tremor, and hitting the road in his campervan is top of the list.

“It’s almost like getting a second lease of life,” he says.
Epworth represented at international physiotherapy conference

The 17th World Congress of Physical Therapy was held from 1-4 May in Singapore. The congress is held every four years and is considered the premier physiotherapy conference worldwide. There were over 3,500 delegates from 114 countries, and the majority of attendees were clinicians, as well as researchers, educators and students. Australia was strongly represented and had the third-largest number of attendees, ahead of the UK and the US.

Thanks to the Tony & Virginia Browne scholarship made possible through the Epworth Medical Foundation, five Epworth HealthCare physiotherapists were able to present their doctoral and master’s clinical research findings on the physiotherapy world’s largest stage. In total, we had ten presentations from our representatives which included:

- Bridget Hill presenting her PhD research on brachial plexus injuries
- Michelle Kahn presenting her PhD research on associated reactions
- Megan Hamilton presenting the results of her master’s thesis which investigated the discharged phase after brain injury
- Liz Moore presenting the effectiveness of therapy following botulinum toxin injections
- Gavin Williams presenting his research on the impact of leg spasticity on walking following brain injury.

In addition to these five representatives, Epworth Richmond physiotherapist Jessica Lees was involved in several global health initiatives. They included:

- ‘WCPT Future’ — a network for physical therapist students and early career professionals encouraging, promoting and facilitating the interchange of ideas and activities of common interest.
- The Global Learning Partnership which strives to develop a cooperative relationship and opportunity for students and academics from the Universitas 21 network.
- A sister partnership between the physiotherapy departments of Epworth and Dhulikhel Hospital in Nepal, with plans for future international professional development activities.

Gavin Williams PhD FACP
Specialist Neurological Physiotherapist and Research Fellow, Epworth

Epworth goes to Paris!

If you are intending to come along to this year’s Epworth gala ball on Saturday 1 August in the Palladium Ballroom at Crown then secure your tickets now. For the past two years the black tie gala has sold out a month prior to the event.

Titled ‘Epworth Moulin Rouge’, this year guests will be transported to the sultry nightclub in Paris with some French cabaret-style entertainment and dance music that is sure to draw you to the dance floor.

Fabulous prizes will be on offer including a trip to Paris with Singapore Airlines, a European river cruise with APT and a fabulous hospitality package at the new cellar door restaurant at Levantine Hill winery in the Yarra Valley.

Tickets are available at $260 per person or $2500 a table of ten. Discounts are available to staff with salary packaging opportunities available for further tax savings. The venue is capped at 1300 guests so to avoid disappointment, pre-book your table with Kathryn Johnston from the Epworth Medical Foundation ph: 9426 6359 or email kathryn.johnston@epworth.org.au.
Revolutionary adrenal surgery helps Epworth patients with reduced recovery time

A switch from operating through the front of the abdomen to the back has meant significant changes for surgery on adrenal tumours, benefitting patients and reducing recovery time.

Epworth Freemasons’ Associate Professor Julie Miller, an American specialist endocrine surgeon now based in Melbourne, is something of a pioneer in her field. She has introduced to Australia an updated approach to adrenal surgery that’s fast becoming standard, with surgeons worldwide now making the transition.

The technique, known as PRA (posterior retroperitoneoscopic adrenalectomy) involves removing a tumour of the adrenal gland through three small incisions in the back of the body instead of the front — a reversal of a technique that’s been de rigueur since the 1990s. It was developed by German surgeon Prof Martin Walz, who has now performed over 2000 cases. Dr. Miller travelled to learn the operation from Dr Walz, before introducing the procedure in Melbourne three years ago.

Of course, in reality it’s not as simple as flipping a patient and getting stuck in. It’s a technique that requires a surgeon to essentially relearn the anatomy from a mirrored perspective — something that can be a challenge at first, but pays off after a short learning curve, says A/Prof Miller, who has now performed more than 100 PRA procedures.

“We’re accustomed to entering the abdominal cavity from the front, but the adrenals sit right at the back,” she explains. “To expose an adrenal tumour from the front, we must first displace the bowel and the liver on the right, or the spleen and pancreas on the left. Many patients have had previous abdominal surgery, and the resulting scar tissue increases the risk of injuring the bowel or other organs.

“With PRA, however, we turn the patient face down, and access the adrenal tumour from the back. This way, there’s nothing in the way: no other organs and no scar tissue, so it’s a much more direct approach. You avoid the abdominal cavity altogether, eliminating common side effects of laparoscopy such as bloating, slowing of bowel function and shoulder-tip pain.”

The new technique requires less time under anaesthetic (average operating time is around 40 minutes), and the notable benefit of PRA is that access via three small incisions under the 12th rib results in less pain and more rapid recovery for the patient.

“Upon awakening, most patients say they have little to no pain, while some describe a bit of a dull ache,” says Dr Miller. “Just over half my adrenal surgery patients take no narcotics at all after the operation.”

On the evening ward round, patients are usually sitting up having dinner, asking when they can go home. Some patients go home the day of surgery, while others go home the next morning. “Day case adrenalectomy is something I never thought I would see in my career,” says Dr Miller. “It’s great to see how well patients recover.”

Since performing her first PRA in 2011, Dr Miller has been visited by many other surgeons wishing to learn the procedure. A highlight has been mentoring other surgeons learning PRA across Australia. “The journey has been very fulfilling on a lot of levels — to help my patients, and to help my colleagues develop skills in this new procedure, the way other surgeons have helped me.”
Epworth’s annual Research Week a success

Always a highlight in Epworth’s event calendar, this year’s Research Week was held from 15-19 June, and offered an exciting program of events to showcase Epworth’s research projects, with the annual Research Dinner held on Thursday 18 June at the MCG.

The Epworth Research Institute promotes and funds health-related research across Epworth, with the goal of discovering new and better ways to treat our patients and offer them access to leading-edge research.

Research activity at Epworth is supported by the Epworth Research Institute, the Epworth Medical Foundation and is conducted by various research groups, including the Clinical Trials and Medical Innovation Group, the Epworth Prostate Centre, the Epworth Radiation Oncology Research Centre and Professorial research groups, among others. We also have ongoing affiliations with the Cleveland Clinic, as well as partnerships with major universities.

Program of events

The Research Week program kicked off on Monday 15 June with an opening session hosted by Group Chief Executive Alan Kinkade. The first official talk of the day was lead by keynote speaker Dr Scott Johnson, director, research and strategic collaborations from Varian Medical Systems. The theme of Dr Johnson’s talk was ‘Next Generation of Research’.

Later in the day, the first poster viewing session was held, where attendees were able to view the 43 research posters that were submitted this year — our biggest number yet. Research staff were on hand to discuss their projects and answer any questions about their research.

Professor Mari Botti, Chair in Nursing, presented the Nursing Research Symposium on Tuesday, discussing a systematic approach to the management of postoperative pain. She was joined by Susan Hunter and Joanne McDonall, PhD students.

Wednesday saw a busy day of events, with three sessions scheduled across the morning. The Cardiac Services Research Forum was lead by Professor Andrew Tonkin, head of the Cardiovascular Research Unit at Monash University, covering the topic of ‘Frontiers in lipid management’.

Later that morning an invite-only session was held for Epworth Medical Foundation benefactors, lead by A/Professor Gavin Williams, physiotherapist at Epworth Richmond. Oncologists Dr Ross Jennens and Dr Jason Lickliter gave the Research Grand Round on ‘Translational research in oncology’.

On Thursday Dr Peter Farnbach spoke about mental health research in a session held out at Epworth Camberwell, presenting ‘Minimal invasive brain stimulation with a focus on TMS’. That evening, the Research Week Dinner was held at the MCG, with special guest speaker Sir Gustav Nossal and a presentation of the Epworth Research Grants for 2015.

Finishing off the week, ‘Resources to support your research’ saw a team of Epworth speakers present a Q&A session on how to conduct your research at Epworth and what resources are available to help facilitate the research.
1. Dr Kate Gould and Jack Lahy; 2. Prof Mari Botti; 3. Dr Kawa Haji; 4. Jo McDonall; 5. Professor David Phillips; 6. Dr Laurence Simpson, Professor Mari Botti and Alan Kinkade.
Research Dinner celebrates best and brightest

The Epworth Research Institute Dinner was held on Thursday 18 June at the MCG Olympic Room, attended by invited guests including ERI grant applicants, poster presenters, award honourees and Epworth Research Week invited speakers.

Keynote speaker for the evening was Sir Gustav Nossal, FAA Professor Emeritus, the University of Melbourne, who spoke on why it is important for Epworth to conduct research.

“Gustav absolutely stole the night and left everyone quite inspired,” says Gerlinda Amor, research governance officer at Epworth Research Institute. “The dinner was a resounding success with poster and grant winners thrilled to accept their awards.”

Epworth’s Professor John Catford started off the ceremony, introducing the Epworth Research Institute grant awards, named after influential Epworth clinicians. Two new honourees were announced this year — Dr Murray Johns and Professor Jack Cade — introduced by Professor Richard Gerraty and Dr Julian Hunt-Smith, respectively. Congratulations to the following recipients:

Large grant award winners:
The Prof Brian Buxton Research Grant: Dr Ameera Dean
The Prof Priscilla Kincaid-Smith Research Grant: A/Professor Nathan Lawrentschuk
The Mr Kingsley Mills Research Grant: Dr Nicole Tan
The Dr Graeme Sloman Research Grant: Dr Neda Haghighi
The A/Professor Joe Tjandra Research Grant: Dr Phil Smart
The Dr Murray Johns Research Grant: Prof Mark Frydenberg
The Prof Jack Cade Research Grant: Prof Mari Botti

Small grant award winners:
Ms Delia Naughton, Dr Paul Paddle, Ms Sara Aldous, Mrs Megan Banky, Dr Addie Wootten, Mr Daniel Hamilton, Dr Frances Wise

Poster award winners:
Ms Natalie Grima, A/Professor Gavin Williams

ERI Research Excellence Awards:
Epworth Early Career Researcher of the year: Dr Niki Tan.
Epworth Research Leader of the Year: Professor John Olver
Epworth Clinical Trial of the Year: Dr Tony Walton
Epworth External Research Funding of the Year: Prof Richard de Steiger
1. Jenny O’Brien, Professor Mari Botti and Tess Vawser; 2. Professor Geoffrey Metz, Natalie Grima being awarded the Early Career Researcher Poster Award by Alan Kinkade; 3. Professor Sir Gustav Nossal; 4. Dr Ameera Dean being presented with the Professor Brian Buxton Research Award from Professor Buxton; 5. The two new Epworth Honourees, Dr Murray Johns and Professor Jack Cade; 6. Scott Bulger with Alla and Mark Medownick; 7. Professor Richard de Steiger receiving the External Research Funding Award of the Year from Janet Latchford, Chair of the ERI Board; 8. Professor Andrew T onkin and Professor David Vaux; 9. Dr Murray Johns, 10. Alan Kinkade and Research Dinner guests.
Meet ... Rachael Droy, Executive Director Health Contracts and Revenue

Rachael joined Epworth as executive director health contracts and revenue in February 2015.

Rachael has an extensive background and a successful track record in healthcare management, with a specific focus on funding models and revenue cycle management within both public and private sectors.

Prior to joining Epworth, Rachael worked at Mater Health Services in Brisbane for eight and a half years where she held the position of director of revenue services, incorporating health contracting, patient financial services and revenue accounting. She has led Casemix departments and overseen the general operations of various private hospitals both in Queensland and Sydney.

What attracted you to working at Epworth, and this position in particular?
The main attraction for me was to be part of a patient-focused, dynamic, innovative, values-based organisation that is continually growing, where there is specific focus on the people it employs and the overall patient experience. What attracted me to my current position is the specific focus on the private health sector and being part of a dynamic team.

Please briefly outline the main duties in your role.
The areas of responsibility within my portfolio include patient revenue, health information services, health contracting and Casemix.

What do you hope to achieve in this role?
An enthusiastic team where the sky is the limit. A culture that embraces change and efficiencies through process improvement. Exceptional relationships with internal and external stakeholders that in turn contribute to Epworth’s financial sustainability.

What are some of your interests outside of work?
My 15-year-old son Harrison is my number one priority outside of work. He is an avid soccer player and over the years I have developed an admiration for the game which some may say has morphed me into a soccer mum! Being new to Melbourne, I spend my free time discovering new places to go whilst trying to avoid getting lost! I particularly enjoy exploring the laneways of Melbourne, eating out and walking the Tan.

Spending quality time with family and friends is what I am most passionate about. Presently this includes commuting between Melbourne and Brisbane — a plus side to this is that it provides the opportunity to regularly soak up some Queensland sun.

Men’s Health Lunch covers joint health

The Epworth Medical Foundation held its third successful Men’s Lunch in the Members’ Dining Room of the MCG on 7 May, raising a record $200,000 towards orthopaedic research and equipment.

3AW’s John Burns was a very entertaining MC with this year’s topic being joint health. More than 460 guests heard from sport and exercise physiologist Dr Peter Larkins together with orthopaedic surgeons Mr Tim Whitehead and Mr Andrew Tang. They spoke of the burden of joint disease worldwide as well as advanced methods of joint preservation and replacement.

Eight auction items were up for grabs including a dinner for ten by award-winning chef Adam D’Sylva who donated a second package when the lot was hotly contested by several bidders. Twenty guests took home hampers packed with fantastic donated goods, including a magnum of Mumm champagne, chocolates, cosmetics, cook books and movie vouchers.

Tim Ryan from major sponsor Hudson’s Coffee drew the raffle on the day and feature sponsor Stryker put on a display of joint prostheses at the information desk where guests could also have their blood pressure checked and take home information about improving their general health.

Next year’s Men’s Health Lunch is scheduled for Thursday 5 May 2016.

Pictured below: guest speakers Peter Larkins, Tim Whitehead and Andrew Tang.
Epworth doctors’ monkey business

On 16 April, Epworth doctors donated their medical expertise to operate on a different species than their usual patient base. Orthopaedic surgeon Marinis Pirpiris joined anaesthetist Kevin Moriarty at Melbourne Zoo to help treat arthritis in the zoo’s oldest orangutan.

Senior vet Dr Helen McCracken reported that Suma, also known as Kianni, turned 37 in June and has shown intermittent signs of arthritis-related pain since 2013.

“We have been closely monitoring her since then, and over the past six months we have seen more frequent episodes of her looking uncomfortable. She has been receiving daily pain relief orally, using a drug developed for human patients,” Dr McCracken said.

Arthritis is a natural accompaniment to ageing in great apes just as it is in humans. Suma has had arthritis in both ankles and her jaw. Dr Moriarty has been a volunteer at the zoo since 1978 when he attended the birth of Suma and her twin brother Bono — a traumatic birth — as twins are extremely rare in this species.

Epworth pain specialist Dr Saleem Khan, who has assisted with Suma’s pain relief, encouraged Prof Pirpiris to share his arthritis expertise with the team at the zoo.

Dr McCracken noted that while zoo veterinarians work with more than 300 species of wildlife, the gorillas and orangutans share so much with humans that medical specialists are called in to advise on procedures involving great apes.

Professor Pirpiris said he felt incredibly lucky to be invited to share the skills he practises on humans with the animal world.

“I felt a sense of exhilaration to be able to help someone of a different species stay really functional.”

Arthritis rehabilitation program now on offer at Epworth Camberwell

The arthritis rehabilitation program has just commenced at Epworth Camberwell. This program is designed for people who have been diagnosed with arthritis or other conditions affecting their muscles, bones and joints. The program includes a combination of exercise and education and covers a range of topics to help people manage their symptoms, lessening the impact of arthritis on their lives.

Patients who may benefit from this program include those with osteoarthritis, rheumatoid arthritis, osteoporosis, spondyloarthritis, ankylosing spondylitis and psoriatic arthritis.

The program is an eight-week outpatient plan incorporating a range of services which may include physiotherapy, hydrotherapy, psychology, dietetics and occupational therapy. Education topics include information on how to manage arthritis, pain and medication, diet and weight, pacing and joint protection, and relaxation techniques. As with all chronic diseases, the aim of the program is to equip each individual with information and strategies to better self manage.

For all enquiries regarding the arthritis rehabilitation program, please contact 1300 46 REHAB.
Every Epworth Medical Foundation Charity Challenge is an adventure in travel, friendship, taste, exploration, discovery, fitness and kindness.

Where do you want to go today?
Epworth Medical Foundation invites you to take part in an exciting, once-in-a-lifetime challenge to raise funds for patients at Epworth HealthCare.

Discover extraordinary cultural wonders in off-the-beaten-path destinations. Explore bustling markets and remote villages, and savour delicious traditional meals. Forge new friendships, and push yourself beyond your everyday limits.

**HEARTSMART CYCLING CHALLENGE, THAILAND**
*What:* Cycle through Thailand from Bangkok to Koh Samui
*When:* 6 to 15 February 2016
*Cost:* $6090 (can be fundraised)
*Benefits:* Cardiac patients at Epworth HealthCare

*Highlights:*
- Cycling tour of the little-known ‘old Bangkok’
- Ride along stunning deserted coastlines and pristine beaches
- Visit a langur monkey colony and the amazing Waghor Aquarium
- Ride through plantations and take a tour of a rubber plantation
- Resort accommodation and delicious Thai food.

**HEARTSMART CYCLING CHALLENGE, SRI LANKA**
*What:* Walk and cycle through Sri Lanka, from the highlands to the tropics
*When:* 20 February to 2 March 2016
*Cost:* $6450 (can be fundraised)
*Benefits:* Cardiac patients at Epworth HealthCare

*Highlights:*
- Galle Fort walking tour
- Rail journey through tea plantations and spice gardens, tea-factory visit
- Climb to the summit of the exquisitely beautiful ancient ruins of Sigiriya Rock
- Cycle to Pinnewala Elephant Orphanage for an afternoon safari
- Bustling market visits, exotic spices, farm-cooked meals and (of course) tea.

**HIKE AND HILL-TRIBE, VIETNAM**
*What:* Visit remote hill-tribes of Northern Vietnam
*When:* 2 to 10 March 2016 (for Orthosport Victoria)
4 to 14 March 2016 (for Epworth Freemasons)
11 to 21 March 2016 (for Epworth HealthCare)
15 to 25 April 2016 (for Epworth Eastern)
*Cost:* $6090 (can be fundraised)
*Benefits:* Patients at Epworth HealthCare (see above)

*Highlights:*
- Breezy cyclo tour through Old Hanoi, with bustling markets and water puppets
- Trek to mist-shrouded mountains with hill-tribe villages and local markets
- Homestay in SinChai Village with Red Dao ethnic hosts and traditional meals
• Visit a village school over Silver Stone Mount, with Red Dao and Hmong children
• Cycle around the breathtaking Mai Chau Valley, visit a former munitions cave.

► KUMANO KODO TREK, JAPAN
What: Trek the ancient Kumano Kodo pilgrimage of Japan
When: 1 to 10 April or 15 to 24 April 2016
Cost: $6150 (can be fundraised)
Benefits: Cancer patients at Epworth HealthCare
Highlights:
• Walking tour of Kyoto: Japanese gardens, temples and shrines, the extraordinary sights and sounds of the Nishiki market
• Cobbled pathways and stairs, ancient forests, seaside cliff-tops, 1000-year-old shrines, statues and highway markers
• Traditionally prepared meals, made with local ingredients
• Traditional onsen (hot spring) baths
• Spectacular and unforgettable Nachi-no-Otaki waterfalls, the highest in Japan.

► WALK FOR WELLNESS, AUSTRALIA
What: Explore the coastal wilderness of the Great Ocean Walk
When: 13 to 15 November 2015
Cost: $2500 (can be fundraised)
Benefits: Rural and regional cancer patients
Highlights:
• Stunning natural wilderness, through forests, along oceans and over cliff-tops
• Australian history, from shipwrecks to graveyards, and the site of dinosaur fossils
• Numerous wildlife sightings, including echidnas, wallabies and koalas
• Hearty and delicious meals, picnics and shared home-cooked pizza.

► GREAT HIKE FOR HEALTH, CHINA
What: Hike the Great Wall of China
When: 16 to 27 September 2016
Cost: $6790 (can be fundraised)
Benefits: Cancer patients at Epworth Freemasons
Highlights:
• Hike both restored and remote, seldom-visited sections of the Great Wall
• The Street of the Eight Diagrams, an architectural wonder of the Ming Dynasty
• Traditionally prepared meals, made with local ingredients
• Ancient temples and watchtowers, discovered along steep mountain paths
• Dense forests, spectacular sunsets, picnics on the Wall, mountain lakes.

How it works
Each Epworth Charity Challenge is hosted by Epworth Medical Foundation, and all funds raised are used to support patients at Epworth HealthCare, by funding important services, new equipment, and facility upgrades.

There is a minimum fundraising target to participate in an Epworth Charity Challenge which will cover the cost of your adventure and ensure that funds are raised for our patients. However, you are always welcome to contribute more than the minimum, and can rest assured that all funds will directly help patients.

To participate, you may:
• Choose to pay for part or all of your adventure yourself
• Raise the funds at events like markets and sausage sizzles
• Seek sponsorship from friends and family.

If you decide to go down the fundraising or sponsorship paths, Epworth Medical Foundation will help you with a number of resources and ideas to make sure that this is easy and stress-free.

To get involved or seek more information, simply visit www.emf.org.au, email emfevents@epworth.org.au or call our friendly staff ph: 9426 6359.
Epworth Clinic introduces new depression treatment

For some patients suffering from clinical depression, antidepressant medications are not effective, due to undesirable side effects, a reduced efficacy over time — or a combination of both. But a new treatment available at Epworth Clinic is offering a promising form of relief.

Transcranial magnetic stimulation (TMS) uses the application of a pulsed magnetic field, via a coil placed on the scalp, which alters the excitability and blood flow in specific areas of the brain. Repeated treatment (rTMS) has shown to be most effective, with patients receiving a course of treatment over a period of time.

Sessions typically last 30 minutes and treatment is supervised by a specialist psychiatrist and TMS-qualified nurse.

“Initial treatment is 21 treatments over three weeks,” says Epworth Clinic’s Dr Peter Farnbach. Because Epworth offers the treatment over weekends, that means a consecutive treatment period resulting in a shortened hospital stay for patients, says Peter.

Patients returning for treatment undergo the maintenance program, which is five sessions over a weekend, repeated every three to six months.

“We are also looking at doing some treatments twice a day, rather than daily, which will again shorten the length of stay,” says Peter.

Currently, four patients are being treated at Epworth Clinic, with one patient in for maintenance, who has responded well to the service.

“We are very pleased with her progress,” says Peter. “She has kept well with a brief course of treatment — five treatments every few months.”

Though it’s not fully understood how rTMS works so effectively in treating depression, results speak for themselves.

“The patients are doing very well. The treatment is unobtrusive and has a very favourable side effect profile,” says Peter.

To refer a patient, contact the intake clinician — ph: 9805 4338, fax 9805 4233 or email ERC.intakeclinician@epworth.org.au.

Varian agreement to provide funding for cancer research

On Friday 24 April, Epworth HealthCare and Varian Medical Systems signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU), solidifying the relationship between the two parties and recognising Epworth’s international standing as a research group.

The agreement sees Varian committing funding for the next five years to be used exclusively by Epworth in conducting research in cancer and other non-malignant conditions where radiation therapy can be beneficial. The research applications will be administered by Varian’s Global Research group, and a competitive review process will be undertaken for their approval to fund the work.

The fund will underwrite some of the future research to be performed at Epworth, including Epworth Radiation Oncology Research Centre, where high-end technologies used in clinical trials are hoped to have a material impact on patient outcomes. The global support of a vendor such as Varian Medical Systems provides the patients of Epworth early and preferred access to new technology, international collaboration opportunities and now funding to support this critical research work.

Paul Fenton
Director of Operations — Radiation Oncology

Pictured left: Chris Cowley, Managing Director Varian Medical Systems Australasia, and Group Chief Executive Alan Kinkade sign the Memorandum of Understanding.
Who are the staff members of the OT department and how long have they all been part of the team?
We are a department of 11 (ten occupational therapists and an allied health assistant). Our team is a mix of oldies and newies! Our longest serving occupational therapist at Epworth Brighton is Rosaura Miranda who has been with us for an impressive 20 years. And our newest staff members have been with us for three weeks — two of our new graduates, Emma Ho and Georgia Flanagan.

What are the main services the team provides for Epworth Brighton?
As occupational therapists, we facilitate patients’ return to their daily activities — this may include retraining in activities such as showering and dressing, meal preparation, providing memory strategies, assisting with return to work, recommending adaptive equipment and home modifications, retraining in the community (e.g. practising use of public transport or using money in a shop), upper limb therapy and relaxation therapy. The list goes on!

What kind of patients do you see?
We treat all the inpatients at Epworth Brighton and we also offer an outpatient service covering neurological, pain management, cardiac/respiratory musculoskeletal/multi-trauma, chronic fatigue, return-to-work and hand therapy patients. We complete a significant number of home assessments and run education sessions for various outpatient groups.

What might a typical day for the team involve?
One of the fantastic things about being an occupational therapist is that every day is really different ... there is no typical day.

“As occupational therapists, we facilitate patients’ return to their daily activities”

What are some of the challenges the team faces?
Everyone thinks we are physios! Or occasionally nurses! As a department across the rehabilitation division, we are working on improving the understanding of what we do as occupational therapists.

What might people be surprised to know about the OT department?
The department is obsessed with food ... talking about it, eating it, making it or watching reality TV shows about it.

Pictured above (back row): Megan Fordyce, Kerryn Searle, Jessica Tuck, Llarni Coppens, Jane Blair, (front row): Emma Ho, Georgia Flanagan, Stephanie Cunnan (undergraduate student), Rosaura Miranda.
Optical coherence tomography at Epworth Richmond

In April, Epworth Richmond became the first private hospital in Victoria to use optical coherence tomography (OCT) for clinical application in coronary arteries. OCT is an emerging technology for performing high-resolution cross-sectional imaging, using near infrared light instead of sound.

Used by cardiologists, the OCT technology allows for a much more detailed image of coronary vessels, achieved in 2-3 seconds. Intravascular imaging with OCT requires the use of a catheter containing a single-mode optical fibre that emits and receives light. The optical echoes are then translated into a high-resolution, two-dimensional tomographic image.

Associate Professor Peter Barlis, who introduced the technology into Australia, worked with Epworth’s Associate Professors Ron Dick and Naylin Bissessor to use OCT to follow up on patients treated with a bioabsorbable stent more than two years ago. Associate Professor Barlis says the high level of imaging provides clearer results for doctors to work with.

“It gives us an unprecedented view of what’s going on in the coronary artery, and very clear images of how the artery is performing,” he says.

OCT helps cardiologists differentiate tissue characteristics and the type of plaque present in arteries, helping doctors decide on the best treatment for a patient.

“We use the technology on a case by case basis,” says Associate Professor Barlis. “It’s for select patients — best suited to those with complex blockages or complex-to-fit stents.

“It’s also useful in patients whose stents may have developed complications — which unfortunately still happens — and this is by far the most useful test to be done, in addition to the angiogram, to give clues as to why the stent has failed.”

Associate Professor Bissessor says:

“OCT is an excellent diagnostic tool that provides detail near field imaging of stents, coronary plaques and vessel architecture. It helps improve long-term outcomes by detecting disease early, so that treatment can be implemented timeously.”
NUM program of work now underway

Supporting our nurse unit managers (NUMs) to be their best and give their best is a top priority for Epworth and central to our continued success. A significant program of work has been developed to ensure that Epworth continues to attract, recruit and retain top nursing leaders.

In late 2014 PricewaterhouseCoopers (PWC) was engaged to work with Epworth HealthCare to identify the factors that make being a NUM at Epworth great, as well as the barriers we face in training our NUMs for success. From the PWC recommendations four key themes of work were developed. Each theme has an executive project sponsor who is responsible for delivering a number of projects within their theme.

The project themes and executive sponsors are:

• Give NUMs more consistent expectations, sufficient time and enable the NUM role for success
  Sponsor: Nicole Waldron (Executive Director Epworth Richmond)

• Strengthen NUMs’ business acumen and management skills to support their effectiveness
  Sponsor: Louise O’Connor (Executive Director Epworth Eastern)

• Ensure the NUM workforce is aligned to the Epworth NUM success profile through targeted workforce development and the development of a strong NUM value proposition
  Sponsor: Maree Feery (Executive Director Human Resources)

• Show NUMs you value them
  Sponsor: Vincent Borg (Executive Director Rehabilitation and Mental Health)

In February, a forum was held with all Epworth NUMs to update them on the program of work. Feedback indicates that we are on the right track to address the key priorities for our NUMs. Good progress has been made on a number of projects, including:

Advanced planning to update the NUM position description and KPIs to clearly articulate performance priorities. This includes reviewing the role of the ANUM and ward clerk to ensure all roles are aligned to support optimum ward operations and an exceptional patient experience.

Designing a comprehensive development offering for all NUMs over the next two years. The first component of the development journey will see NUMs participate in a 360-degree feedback survey in July. Also in July, the first in a series of purpose-built development workshops for NUMs to increase capability in financial management will be rolled out.

The first Epworth Future NUM Talent Program has been launched. This will ensure a pipeline of high-performing NUMs to meet workforce needs and demonstrates Epworth’s commitment to investing in its current and future leaders.

An action plan will be developed to ensure we follow through on the actions considered most important to make NUMs feel valued.

Executing this program of work will ensure Epworth remains an employer of choice for top nursing leaders.

Pictured above: Nicole Waldron (Executive Director Epworth Richmond) presenting at the February NUM forum.

Epworth at the Nursing Expo

On Saturday 18 April, the Nursing Expo was held at the Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Centre. More than 3,500 people attended to learn about what Epworth HealthCare has to offer — registered nurse, enrolled nurse and midwifery graduate programs, post graduate programs and general employment opportunities.

The Epworth stand was busy throughout the day, with excited visitors taking the time to stop and talk to staff and current graduates to gain a feel for the excellent opportunities we have to offer.

The success of the day would not have been possible without the tremendous work of the education teams and graduates from across all divisions who generously gave their time and enthusiasm to proudly promote Epworth — thank you and well done!
My Roster pilot project

Epworth HealthCare has commenced the My Roster pilot project which will introduce an online rostering and timesheet system to the Epworth Richmond operating rooms, DOSA and CSSD as well as rehabilitation ward 3ERH at Epworth Hawthorn.

The implementation will fully streamline the rostering, labour database and timesheet processes, providing 24/7, real-time access to rosters for staff using the new system from TimeTarget.

A few of the many benefits of this initiative are:
- Electronic rostering and timesheet system
- Enhanced employee self-service
- Improved reporting
- Automation of the labour database data entry

TimeTarget will enable employees to:
- Record shift preferences and availability
- Submit online leave applications for approval
- View and print rosters
- View and apply for vacant shifts

Having completed a series of key user training sessions, the project team is currently performing detailed system testing and developing user-training materials in readiness to train staff. To find out more, please email MyRoster@epworth.org.au.

Patient satisfaction a priority

At Epworth, our success is founded on a patient-first culture, where every interaction is based on a personalised experience that delivers quality care. As part of our ongoing commitment to this, we undertake many strategies to uphold this standard.

We are in the process of building a body of dedicated staff focusing on the patient experience. Isobel Smith was appointed as Group Epworth Excellence Coach in late 2013 and we currently have two staff job-sharing a position in rehab and a part-time coach at Epworth Eastern.

As well, Epworth commits to measuring patient satisfaction by participating in monthly benchmarked inpatient surveys conducted by Press Ganey Associates. Surveys are sent to recently hospitalised patients who were admitted for at least one night to provide feedback about numerous aspects of their hospital stay.

Patient satisfaction surveys enable Epworth to listen to patients’ experiences. Benchmarked reports are received every three months and these compare Epworth to 270 other organisations within the Press Ganey database, of which 153 are private organisations.

Results show Epworth patient satisfaction rates have been steadily increasing, reflecting the success of our commitment to putting the patients at the centre of everything we do.
Meet ... the Epworth Freemasons Intensive Care Unit (ICU)

Who are the staff members of the ICU and how long have they all been part of the team?
Epworth Freemasons is fortunate to have many staff members who have been here since the unit opened in 2000. A/Prof Nerina Harley is the ICU director and has been here since the beginning. Together with a team of experienced intensivists, who work here on a rotating roster, they provided support for the full range of critically ill patients. We have highly skilled ICU registrars who are on-site 24/7. The nurse unit manager of ICU is Kristy Greene. She leads a team of very experienced ICU nurses of which 87% have post-graduate ICU qualifications. We are supported by a wonderful team of PSAs and ward clerks.

What are the main services the team provides for Epworth Freemasons?
Epworth Freemasons ICU is responsible for the management of critically ill patients at Epworth Freemasons. We care for patients of all age groups from young adults to the elderly. The average age of our patients is 65. We offer invasive and non-invasive ventilation, haemofiltration and invasive monitoring within our unit. Patients from a variety of specialties are cared for in the ICU, primarily surgical patients. These specialties include but are not limited to gynaecology, general surgery, thoracic surgery, urology, ENT, orthopaedics, respiratory, general medical, oncology and obstetric. The Medical Emergency Team and Code Blue team at Epworth Freemasons (Clarendon St) also comprises medical and nursing staff from ICU.

What might a typical day for the team involve?
Our day starts at 7am with handover occurring at the bedside for all nursing staff. After handover, the first task that all ICU nurses complete is a bedside safety check and patient assessment. Following on from this the ICU ward round will occur, which can take anywhere from one to a few hours depending on the acuity of the patients, and the number of patients that need to be seen. Our plan for the day is set at this time and any patients that are to be discharged to the ward are identified at this point. Patient discharge from ICU can occur at any time during the day depending on ward activity. Elective patient admissions can vary from one to six or more on any given day. In addition to the elective admissions we receive patients from the wards post MET call or code blue, the Epworth Freemasons maternity unit and the Epworth Richmond emergency department.

What are some of the challenges the team faces?
The greatest challenge for our ICU is fluctuating activity and acuity.

Any highlights/department achievements?
We celebrate excellent patient outcomes on a daily basis. We find it very rewarding when long-term patients who have been critically unwell are discharged home. We have not had any central line associated bacteraemias for more than 1000 days!

“We find it very rewarding when long-term patients who have been critically unwell are discharged home. We have not had any central line associated bacteraemias for more than 1000 days!”

We find it very rewarding when long-term patients who have been critically unwell are discharged home. We have not had any central line associated bacteraemias for more than 1000 days!

What might people be surprised to know about the ICU department?
The Epworth Freemasons ICU is lucky to enjoy large amounts of natural light from floor to ceiling windows in all patient rooms, park views and large open bed areas. Many people who walk into Epworth Freemasons ICU comment how fortunate we are to have such a wonderful environment!

Epworth in the media
We make headlines across the media for advancements in technology, medical firsts and our ability to change patients’ lives. See our media coverage on the staff intranet homepage and the Epworth website under ‘latest news’.

The Age, 26 May
A new form of radiation treatment for brain tumours that’s only available at Epworth reduces the debilitating side effects from current techniques. Epworth’s Dr Michael Daily discusses the groundbreaking treatment.

774 ABC Melbourne Radio, 17 May
On Libbi Gorr’s Sunday morning program, Director of Epworth Radiation Oncology Dr Patrick Bowden talks about the latest prostate cancer trials taking place at Epworth and takes calls from listeners from metropolitan and regional Victoria.

Channel 7, 7 May
Channel 7 interviews Lou Silluzio, an Ivanhoe grandfather who is generously donating 10% of all proceeds from the sale of his first book to the Epworth Medical Foundation, after undergoing oncology radiation at Epworth for prostate cancer. He has recently published three books about his grandchildren.

Channel 9, 4 May
Epworth rehab patient Jasmine Vuong talks to Channel 9 about her recovery since a hit-and-run accident in January, and Epworth physiotherapist Bernadette Dornom discusses Jasmine’s progress.

SBS Insight, 21 April
Mr Daniel Moon, director of robotic surgery at Epworth, discusses the advanced technology used in robotic surgery and its benefits.
It has been a busy few months at Epworth Geelong. There are now more than 500 workers on site every day and construction is moving along well with Brookfield Multiplex about a week ahead of program.

Construction of Epworth Geelong has provided a great opportunity for local manufacturing and construction trades and suppliers to gain work, with Epworth Geelong awarding more than $21 million to local contracts. Through offering more work locally, we have enabled six new apprenticeships to commence with our suppliers which will give up-and-coming building and manufacturing employees the chance to learn their trade on an exciting local project.

Construction of the main building structure reached its highest point of Level 7 in April and Epworth celebrated with a symbolic ‘topping out’ ceremony on Wednesday 20 May, attended by friends and partners of Epworth.

Guests of honour were Federal Health Minister, The Hon Sussan Ley and Member for Corangamite, The Hon Sarah Henderson MP, who toured the site and participated in a ceremony that celebrated the project’s achievements so far.

The topping out tradition began in the northern hemisphere more than a thousand years ago. The story goes that when people in Scandinavian countries were building their homes, they would celebrate the setting of the last and highest wood beam by tying an evergreen fir tree from the surrounding land to the highest point of the building.

With help from the team at Brookfield Multiplex, Epworth was able to honour the topping out tradition in Geelong with an acacia tree, native to the local land.

Planning is underway to prepare for the opening of the Lee Wing and we are on target for our new wing to be in operation by early 2016. Recruitment will commence in the coming months to fill positions required. If you know of anyone who may be interested in working at Epworth Richmond, please let them know they can express interest now at Epworth.org.au/careers.

Installation of the facade panels of the Lee Wing is now underway, bringing the exterior to life. This design will form the entire frontage of Erin Street once the redevelopment of
Epworth Richmond is complete.

In April 2015, the Epworth Richmond executive team invited Epworth Richmond staff to a BBQ event in the courtyard to celebrate the topping out milestone for the new wing, after construction reached the top level. The Lee Wing will collocate our critical care services and open a new and larger emergency department, a 26-bed ICU, a 39-bed acute and high-dependency cardiac inpatient unit, six new theatres and three new levels of private inpatient accommodation.

In other works, the Bridge Road entrance is getting a makeover which will create a more inviting entrance and will build a new reception space to greet and guide visitors who come to the hospital via Bridge Road. As a result, we have closed off the Bridge Road air lock while we undertake these works.

While the air lock is closed, Kane Constructions is taking this opportunity to access the Level 2 shell space located above the port-cochere, to fit out the rooms that will be used by Epworth Medical Imaging when it opens at our Richmond campus on 25 September 2015. Undertaking these works simultaneously ensures there is minimal disruption to the hospital.

Entry to Epworth Richmond is still possible from Bridge Road. All patients, visitors and staff are being redirected through the Slade Pharmacy entrance through to the hospital while these works take place.

Lastly, we are pleased to announce Epworth Richmond Cardiac Diagnostic Services has moved to a new, purpose-built space on Level 1 — across from the courtyard.

Previously called the Non-Invasive Cardiac Unit (NICU), which was located on Level 9, this expert team of cardiologists, technologists, sonographers and specialist nurses has been involved in the planning and development of the new space over a long period of time and we are glad to hear they have settled in and are enjoying their new location.

New theatres at Epworth Freemasons Clarendon Street

Epworth Freemasons is undergoing a $59 million redevelopment which commenced in 2014 and is anticipated to be completed in 2016. In addition to the upgrade of the Clarendon Street building infrastructure, two brand new theatres, a new Day of Surgery Admissions centre, a new Short Stay Unit and six interview rooms are all being built on Level 3.

This development will improve patient privacy and patient flow, and enhance the patient experience.

Surgeon Marcus Carey and his team were delighted to use the facilities in one of the new theatres that has been operational since 2 March this year. Many Epworth staff and doctors provided input into the design which has proven very successful.

The second theatre opened one month ahead of schedule on 11 May and Epworth Freemasons Perioperative Services Manager Jenny Gozdzik and her team have been actively advising Epworth specialists of the earlier theatre opening date in anticipation of welcoming new surgeons.

The new Day of Surgery Admissions Centre and Short Stay Unit opened at Clarendon Street on Friday 22 May 2015 and in early July the refurbished wards 1 and 2 West will open to their first patients since they were closed following the flooding event in December 2014.

The nurses, doctors and support staff have put in an enormous amount of effort to continue providing comprehensive and compassionate care for patients throughout periods of redevelopment works and temporary relocations, all of which would not be possible without their support.

South West Regional Cancer Centre

There has been some great progress on the Ryot Street site, with the floors and walls of South West Regional Cancer Centre’s radiotherapy bunker installed in late May.

The radiotherapy bunker requires a specialised design and construction method in which the size, layout and materials are developed through a series of calculations to ensure that it provides the necessary radiation shielding. Everything from the relationship to the control room, the thickness of the walls, lighting level and the patient experience are all thoroughly considered in the development of a radiotherapy treatment space.

Civil and piling works and underground services are complete and concrete pours will commence to the ground floor of the remaining building in early July.

Construction Engineering Australia has committed to procuring local trades where possible and has so far enlisted trades and suppliers including temporary fencing, traffic management, carpentry, plumbing, civil works and hydraulics locally.

The project is currently on schedule for completion in mid 2016.
Epworth Medical Imaging to open at Epworth Richmond

Planning for the commencement of Epworth Medical Imaging at Epworth Richmond on 25 September 2015 is well underway. The newest Epworth Medical Imaging location will offer a comprehensive imaging service, drawing on the expertise of an experienced team and equipped with the latest in advanced technology.

Available services will include 3T MRI, CT, ultrasound, nuclear medicine, digital 3D mammography, BMD (bone mineral density) and x-rays together with a range of diagnostic and therapeutic interventional procedures for both inpatients and outpatients.

Associate Professor Pramit Phal (previously deputy director of radiology at The Royal Melbourne Hospital) has been appointed as clinical director of imaging to lead a team of experienced and highly skilled radiologists — including Dr Anthony Felber, Dr Nick Trost, Dr Mike Holt, Dr Michelle Thong and Dr Greg Compton.

Sandy Chamberlin, director of operations — radiology, says through the new service Epworth Medical Imaging will continue to provide a patient-centred approach and ensure high-quality patient care.

“Epworth Medical Imaging at Epworth Richmond will be home to the latest technology and newest imaging equipment available, allowing us to produce clearer images and provide diagnoses with greater accuracy. We’re excited about the progress we’re making and are looking forward to welcoming new referrers and patients at Epworth Richmond.”

Epworth Medical Imaging has continued to invest in advanced equipment and technology, offering patients new benefits. A new 640-volume slice Toshiba Aquilion CT enables organs to be scanned in one CT rotation. As a result, organs can be imaged dynamically to provide 4D reconstructions. The technology is well suited for all patients and in particular cardiac or orthopaedic patients, those with language barriers and patients with shortness of breath.

The extensive list of equipment and technology also includes a new Siemens Skyra 3T MRI, a 160-slice Toshiba Aquilion PRIME CT scanner, five new digital x-ray machines and three new mobile machines, five new ultrasounds, upgraded Hologic 3D mammography (tomosynthesis) technology which offers stereotactic biopsy and vacuum-assisted biopsy, a Siemens Artis angiography suite, body composition, BDM (bone mineral density) and OPG (orthopantomogram).

Epworth Medical Imaging’s improved offerings for Epworth Richmond will also include 24-hour interventional procedures (in partnership with Melbourne Institute of Vascular and Interventional Radiology) and a dedicated senior theatre coordinator, Mr Paolo Navarro, appointed to streamline the imaging needs of doctors and ensure the priority of service is met.

Regular updates on the transition progress are being provided in eNews and communicated directly to staff groups.

Epworth Medical Imaging currently operates at Epworth Camberwell and Epworth Freemasons — Victoria Pde and Albert St locations.

Men’s Health in General Practice 2015

On Saturday 30 May GP Liaison held its second Men’s Health in General Practice Symposium for GPs. It was a fantastic day with 40 GPs attending and over a dozen Epworth consultants presenting. A variety of topics were covered including erectile dysfunction by Justin Chee, liver health by Suresh Sivanesan and bariatric surgery by Salena Ward.

The attending GPs enjoyed the day with many commenting that they were extremely happy with the structure of the day and the quality of the presentations. The only negative feedback was that they wanted more time! A huge thank you to all the presenters for their hard work and time in preparing for the day. Presentations will be up at www.epworthgp.org.au for viewing over the next couple of months.
Caring for paediatric patients at Epworth

At Epworth, paediatric services are provided at multiple divisions, including Epworth Richmond, Epworth Eastern, Epworth Freemasons and Epworth Cliveden. Across the sites most paediatric presentations are for elective surgical procedures. Epworth Richmond also admits paediatric patients to the Allergy Clinic for food challenges and provides paediatric medical services in the emergency department.

Libby White has recently commenced as the group paediatric program coordinator to work collaboratively with the divisions and strive towards standardisation and optimal paediatric and family-friendly care.

This April, a paediatric focus fortnight was held across all divisions to raise staff awareness of the unique, age-appropriate care requirements for paediatric patients and their families. This involved educating staff on many new initiatives, such as the implementation of the Victorian Children’s Tool for Observation and Response. This Victorian Department of Health initiative has specifically been designed to facilitate early identification and appropriate escalation of care for paediatric patients.

Staff were provided with educational resources, such as paediatric nursing care guides, videos and library resources to enhance their knowledge of best practice in paediatric care. They participated in practical training sessions, including clinical scenarios involving paediatric basic life support. Staff were also introduced to a new paediatric medication chart specifically designed to facilitate weight-appropriate medication prescribing and administration. Collectively these paediatric patient safety and quality initiatives should ultimately minimise clinical risk and facilitate optimal clinical outcomes.

To enhance the paediatric patient’s hospital journey, an Epworth hospital activity book and a stationery kit for admitted children were also launched. The activity book has been specifically designed for young children to provide diversional activities, such as colouring and word games. These books have assisted to allay children’s anxiety about being in hospital, entertain them and make their hospital experience more enjoyable.

Epworth Brighton celebrates ten years

On 1 June 2005, Epworth Eastern opened its doors with much anticipation for what the future would hold. Two days later, the operating suite welcomed its first patient for surgery.

Happy birthday Epworth Eastern!

Some of the achievements of Epworth Eastern over the last ten years include being the first to perform the following clinical procedures:

- Robotic gynaecology surgery — Mr Tom Manolitsas
- First bone anchored hearing aid implant — Dr Sherryl Wagstaff
- Robotic bariatric surgery — Mr Patrick Moore and Mr Anthony Clough
- Thoracic robotic surgery — Dr Siven Seevanayagam

Epworth Eastern has grown from a staff of 250 in 2005 to employing 768 staff today. Many of our dedicated staff have been here since the hospital opened and constantly demonstrate their adaptability to change with the demands of such a dynamic organisation. Our staff pride themselves on delivering the Epworth Experience — caring with compassion, dignity and excellence — to our patients and their families.

Since 2009, hospital staff have volunteered to assist the Salvation Army with its dinners for those in need, and have been involved in the Winter Appeal. Staff have generously donated blankets, jumpers, coats and non-perishable food in the winter months and then lend their generosity to the annual Christmas Appeal in early December. This always results in boxes full of toys, toiletries and other special Christmas items that are gratefully accepted by UnitingCare and the Boorondara Community Outreach Program to assist their work with the homeless and those with mental health issues and disabilities.

For the last two years Epworth Eastern has also donated Easter eggs to Mirabel Foundation, a not-for-profit organisation that supports children who have been orphaned or abandoned due to parental drug use.

Epworth Eastern continues to offer exceptional care and support our community. Let’s take the time to reflect and celebrate the amazing things that we have achieved over the past ten years.

We look forward to the next ten years!

Epworth Brighton Mother’s Day surprise

The catering staff at Epworth Brighton placed a rose and some chocolate on each female patient’s tray to acknowledge Mothers Day this past May. Staff reported that patients loved the idea and were touched by the gesture.
Hospital herb garden flavours patients’ plates

Epworth Cliveden chef Bevan Vahland has a vision for Epworth’s smallest hospital kitchen, focusing on locally grown produce and a program of sustainability — something he hopes could eventually reach across all Epworth sites.

It began with the idea of starting a herb garden. Tucked away in an interior courtyard of Epworth Cliveden’s buildings, an assortment of terracotta pots reveals fresh herbs and plants — three types of mint, birds-eye chillies, thyme, lemongrass and more — that get used as ingredients and garnishes in the hospital’s dishes. Though somewhat dormant during the winter months, in spring it bursts to life, and chef Bevan is already well underway planning his next season’s planting.

“Stage one was our basic herbs. Stage two through spring we’ll start looking at our more ornate herbs that get us fragrance and colour on the plate,” Bevan explains. “We’re looking at strawberries and how we can utilise the fruit and the flowers, and we’re also looking at tomatoes and capsicums — easy-to-grow food that we can use in the space we’ve got out there.”

It’s an extra touch that’s certainly been noticed by patients at the hospital. Feedback has been positive with patients appreciating the element of freshness on their plates, as well as knowing it hasn’t travelled far to reach them. For Bevan, this focus on food source is what drives him in his work at Epworth Cliveden.

“If as chefs and apprentices we aren’t connected to where food comes from, how can we then say to our customers that we know its source? If we say, ‘Look, we grew this here for you’, it improves the patient experience,” says Bevan.

“If we can create something amazing for them that changes their perspective from the moment they come in, that’s really important.”

Bevan says Epworth Cliveden’s menu is seasonal, changing approximately every three months. “I’ve just introduced our autumn/winter menu,” he says. “Our lunch is really very modern Australian and our dinner tends to be a bit more comfort food. The patients love it, and the surgeons do as well.”

With plans to expand the garden to Epworth Cliveden’s other usable spaces, Bevan also wants to look into the idea of composting.

“I haven’t worked out the details yet, but somehow taking our food waste and converting that into compost and then putting that straight back into the garden. It’s about being part of the solution, not the problem — do we want that to go to landfill or do we want it to go back and replenish our patients of the future?”

Being a boutique site, Epworth Cliveden makes a perfect testing ground for projects like this, says Bevan, with the goal of expanding ideas further into the bigger healthcare network.

“We’re quite unique,” he admits. “But in a kitchen that cares about where their food comes from, the end product is going to be a much higher quality.”
Epworth surgeon offers insights to balancing spiritual and material

Meditation is fast becoming common practice among the general population, with particular attention given to its health-promoting benefits. Epworth urologist Dr Ranjit Rao discusses finding the balance between being spiritually centred and living a busy, modern life in his recently published book, *Meditation & Martini*.

As a surgeon at Epworth Richmond, urologist Ranjit has worked with a number of patients with varying prognoses. Turning to his foundation of meditation practice, he’s been able to deal with the stresses of daily life and offer insights to his patients as well.

“I’ve found meditation very useful,” says Ranjit, who’s been practising since his medical school days in the early 1990s, after being inspired by a close friend at the time who developed bone cancer.

“During his treatment I used to go and see him and ask ‘how are you dealing with this?’, because he had a partial amputation, he was going through chemotherapy, there was a bucket by the bed — it was just a really bad situation,” explains Ranjit. “But during that time he learned meditation and he told me, ‘look, this is really helping’. So, I thought, if I’m going to be a doctor I should learn a little bit about this.”

What followed was a meditation course in India and a dedication to the practice over the years that now sees Ranjit use his teachings in his personal life and at work, inspiring him to write a book and share his thoughts with others.

“It’s a matter of bringing awareness to your work life and family life and making sure that everything is getting the appropriate amount of attention”

The book was published in May and has received a positive response from friends, colleagues and the general public — reflecting the growing acceptance of meditation as a valid and valuable tool in everyday life, particularly in the medical world.

“It’s becoming more mainstream, accepted and integrated nowadays,” says Ranjit.

“Most of the big hospitals in America — whether it’s Mayo Clinic, Harvard, Johns Hopkins — all have integrated medical departments, so within the mainstream hospitals they have people who teach meditation. It’s part of all the oncology wards,” he adds.

For his patients, meditation can offer a form of therapy to supplement traditional treatment, “where appropriate”, says Ranjit. The practice of meditation whilst in hospital makes sense because often patients are confined to bed. The key, says Ranjit, is finding a balance of what works for the individual — a lesson that resonates throughout his book.

“It’s a matter of bringing awareness to your work life and family life and making sure that everything is getting the appropriate amount of attention.”

Clinical trials for cancer treatment

Epworth’s Clinical Trials and Research Centre (CTRC) assists with the design, implementation and evaluation of Epworth research studies. A number of clinical trials in the area of cancer treatment are currently underway.

In April, the CTRC celebrated a significant milestone with confirmation of our selection to take part in the NuVox trial, a study of NVX-108 — a high-capacity oxygen carrier — and its efficacy in treating glioblastoma, grade IV brain tumours. This will be our first Phase 1 oncology drug study and will involve close collaboration between the day oncology unit, medical imaging and pathology.

We are also being considered for a second Phase 1 study of a novel breast cancer agent in individuals with differing levels of Her2 gene expression. Both of these studies are recognition of the capability, skill and experience we offer in clinical trials and provide a springboard for Phase 1 studies in disciplines in addition to oncology. Study coordinators Wendie Hopkins and Felicity Osmond are to be congratulated on their efforts in securing both these trials.

“Epworth is committed to the delivery of translational research,” says A/Prof Genie Pedagogos, director clinical trials and medical innovation for Epworth. “This research allows for the effective translation of the new knowledge, mechanisms and techniques generated by advances in basic science research into new approaches for the prevention, diagnosis and treatment of disease.”
Meet the ... staff from the Medical Wards at Epworth Freemasons at Box Hill Hospital

Who are the staff members of the Medical Wards and how long have they all been part of the team?
There are 50 members of staff comprising after-hours nurse coordinators, nurse unit managers, assistant nurse unit managers, staff nurses, graduate nurses, our allied health team of physiotherapist, dietician, discharge planner and patient services assistants, HMO, registrar and VMOs. We are spread over two wards in Eastern Health’s new public Box Hill Hospital opposite Epworth Eastern. Many of our staff have come from the Epworth Freemasons GE medical ward, but we have some staff that have come from other Epworth sites as far afield as Richmond, Brighton and Camberwell or our neighbour Epworth Eastern.

What are the main services the team provides for Epworth Freemasons?
We are the medical ward for Epworth Freemasons, providing care for many specialties including geriatrics, respiratory, and infectious diseases.

How has relocating to the temporary premises affected work?
The main issue has been the increase to our daily commute, which has lead to earlier mornings for some staff. But it has improved our working day as we came out to a bright, purpose-built unit. It was an easy transfer to such a well-built ward.

What might a typical day for the team involve?
Our day runs very similar to our working day at Epworth Freemasons. We still continue to hold a high standard of care for all our patients. Some of the differences between here and Epworth Freemasons are that we now work with new systems in regards to imaging and our emergency responses. It has been exciting working with Eastern Health who respond to our Codes and Mets and so patient safety has been a big focus from both sites. Otherwise our working day still comprises patient care, team nursing and facilitating requests in regards to their care.

What are some of the challenges the team faces?
Initially it was a challenge moving out to a new ward and getting to know the new systems and the new protocols for emergencies. But after getting to know the area and new staff we were working with on a daily basis it became very pleasant to work here. We have also had a few challenges in regards to the food with the patients — they miss the Epworth Freemasons food!

“\textit{It has improved our working day as we came out to a bright, purpose-built unit. It was an easy transfer to such a well-built ward}”

Any highlights/department achievements?
One of the greatest things about coming out here was the fact that all our team from Epworth Freemasons came out except one staff member. We have also developed a new team and opened a new ward from scratch. Both achievements are testament to the NUMs and staff.

What might people be surprised to know about the Medical Wards team?
We all work really well with each other and spend a lot of time outside work with each other. We also all have a great sense of humour.

Pictured above (back row) : Emma Cameron, Gillian Carmichael, Aoife Ryan, Jenelyn Barredo, Mag Whelan, Sarah Byrne; (front row): Alison Humphreys, Nico Pabulayan, Ritz Laxamana, Harwinda Saini, Kate Elphick, Andre D’Mello.
Sounds of classical guitar soothes patients

It’s the little things that often have the biggest impact. For a patient in hospital, that can be as simple as listening to the soothing sounds of music drifting through a ward to distract from a stressful situation. That’s why John Hughes, one of Epworth’s volunteers, is excited to be part of the recently launched music soiree program currently in place at Epworth Richmond.

John, who’s been with the program for six months, says patients have responded well to his classical guitar playing and appreciate the chance to focus on something other than being unwell.

“They don’t want to talk about their illness, they want their minds to be taken off that,” says John. “My wife’s had cancer, I know what cancer’s about — the chemo, the radiation — so I can relate a bit that way.”

John works his way around various wards, playing in patient lounges, common rooms and corridors. He’s been a particular hit in the ICU department, where Marnie Price, nurse unit manager, says he’s become a popular addition to the team.

“The staff of ICU love having John play on Tuesdays. His music brings a sense of calm to an otherwise busy and stressful unit,” says Marnie.

“It’s also lovely for the patients to hear and certainly a change from all the noisy machines. The feedback has been very positive, and we welcome John as part of our ICU team.”

For John, playing at the hospital not only gives him the satisfaction of helping improve the patient experience, it provides a personal goal to work towards, too.

“The patients and staff motivate me to work on new music. It forces me to practise and learn new material,” he says. And it’s the patients that get to enjoy the fruits of John’s labour.

“I don’t play when I’m at home — not for my family, my friends or my wife. They’re not special enough,” he laughs.

“Anything you can give to these people to help them through their days is worthwhile.”

Volunteers thanked and awarded at ceremony

National Volunteer Week was held this year from 11-17 May. During this time we officially recognise the outstanding commitment and support that volunteers provide worldwide. Here at Epworth, more than 200 volunteers contribute to the smooth running of our hospitals on a day-to-day basis.

We thank all Epworth volunteers for committing their time and helping to give our patients the best possible experience, in all facets of our operations.

The theme of this year’s volunteer week was ‘Give Happy, Live Happy’, to highlight how volunteering improves the health and happiness of all.

Epworth executives hosted a special celebratory lunch at Epworth Richmond on Friday 15 May to thank our volunteers and showcase some of the outstanding work achieved through volunteering. Liz Camilleri, executive director, finance, presented at the lunch, and executive directors from Epworth Richmond, Epworth Eastern and Epworth Freemasons presented the length of service awards to volunteers celebrating five, ten, 15 and 20 years of service.

The event attracted a great turnout and included a delicious celebratory lunch that was enjoyed by all.

A special mention went to long-time volunteer Tan Clingan who officially retired on the day after an amazing 15 years of service at Epworth Richmond.
Kumano Kodo walk for cancer

Two groups hiked the Kumano Kodo pilgrimage trail in Japan earlier this year, raising over $100,000 for cancer services at Epworth. The first group left in March with the Epworth Medical Foundation’s Kathryn Johnston and the second left in April with the executive director of the foundation, Scott Bulger, together with oncologist Dr Allan Zimet and 89-year-old cardiologist Dr Graeme Sloman.

The Kumano Kodo is listed with UNESCO as a world heritage trail which has been taken by thousands of pilgrims over the centuries in a spiritual journey of nature worship. The trail starts near the village of Tanabe, stretches over mountains and creeks on the Kii peninsula and finishes at the magnificent Nachi Taisha shrine, overlooking the spectacular Nachi-No-Otaki waterfall.

Along the way is evidence of a thousand years of Buddhist history including the three sacred shrines of Kumano, the Kumano Sanzan. Used for centuries as a rigorous training ground by Buddhist monks because of its steep mountains and isolated surroundings, it later became popular from the 11th century onwards as a pilgrimage by emperors and noblemen from the then-capital of Kyoto.

All participants were mesmerised by the beauty of the natural landscape of camphor forests, expansive mountain views, hot thermal springs and magnificent waterfalls. Each took on the challenge raising a minimum of $2500 in tax-deductible donations on top of the trip cost with many raising much more. The $100,000 raised from the trips will be used to purchase advanced medical equipment for cancer services at Epworth.

Two further troupes will embark next year from 1-10 April and 15-24 April 2016. For further information on these or any of the ten challenges planned for 2016 go to www.emf.org.au or ph: 9426 6131.
Leadership program graduation

At the end of March, 23 individuals who participated in the Epworth Emerging and Operational Leadership Program graduated with a Swinburne University Diploma of Management.

Epworth’s Leadership Development opportunities focus on enhancing the capabilities of each individual to ensure they effectively lead and manage their staff and to prepare them for future career opportunities. Some of the comments and feedback from our graduates about the program include:

“The course has increased my self confidence and also my knowledge about the ANUM role. It is easier now to discuss little issues [in daily business] straight away.”

“I ask my staff more open questions to gain their buy into fixing problems that they come across and develop strategies to manage situations themselves.”

“Assisted in resolving conflict, maintaining and building esteem and to have challenging conversations.”

All of the individuals who graduated have worked extremely hard and should be proud of their achievement.

Applications will open for our next groups in July.

For more information, visit the Leadership Development intranet page.

Pictured above: corporate and radiation oncology graduates 2015.

Twilight Leadership Series event

On Thursday 11 June Epworth held its 11th Twilight Leadership Series event. The Twilight Leadership Series provides a unique opportunity for our leaders to hear and learn from high-performing leaders from other sectors outside of healthcare. On this occasion we were very fortunate to host Colin Carter, (AM) Member of the Order of Australia, who has led a distinguished career in both the private and public sector and who continues to make a significant contribution to the community in his role as the Chairman of Geelong Football club, non executive director of Seek and Lend Lease, director of World Vision and Ladder and adviser to the Boston Consulting Group.

We had over 100 leaders attend this event. Our interviewer for the evening was Dr Peter Larkins, who asked a range of engaging questions that allowed our leaders to understand and be inspired by Colin’s career journey, leadership wisdom and how a particular mentor impacted his career.

Colin shared compelling arguments on the importance of an authentic values-based culture and organisation, the significance of developing future leaders, the need for work-life balance and volunteering/working in the community to create a diverse and inclusive organisational culture.

It was a highly informative and entertaining evening. Thank you to all who contributed to the successful evening, especially Dr Peter Larkins who carried out the interview and the Richmond Functions Team.

Pictured left: Group Chief Executive Alan Kinkade, Board Vice President Maryjane Crabtree, guest speaker Colin Carter and Dr Peter Larkins.
Dear Mr Kinkade,

This is a good news note regarding Epworth’s Hospital in the Home service. Recently Barbara was a patient for three weeks. A nurse came daily, plus regular visits by doctors including praiseworthy Michael Montalto.

The total service “package” was first class. Nevertheless, special praise is warranted for both the nurse unit manager, Ric Farvis, and collectively for the nurses as a group. With daily visits we had the benefit of interfacing with several nurses. Each was technically savvy, professional and respectful whilst retaining their individual personalities. This was noteworthy and refreshing.

In an age when new technology often seems to capture the limelight, we hope that this note will focus attention on this group of nurses who surely are a credit to brand Epworth.

Sincerely,

Noel Bennett (full name printed with permission)

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18 April

To the manager,

I was sent to Epworth Brighton Rehabilitation approximately ten days after a right knee replacement about 17 June 2014 (the operation was at Cabrini Brighton on 10 June). After being sent home I ended up back in the hospital for a further week. When not an in-patient I attended as an out-patient to the physiotherapy department and Dr Tan.

I would like to commend and sincerely thank all staff and all departments at the hospital. Nursing, kitchen staff, orderlies, occupational therapy, rehab out-patients, medical out-patients, the wonderful physiotherapists, of course Dr Tan (I hope I haven’t missed anyone because all staff were fantastic). Nothing was ever too much trouble. Everyone tried to help me always with a smile in whatever way they could, everyone helped that extra bit.

After a very long, slow recovery and much pain and sleepless nights I had my last visit on 18 March to Dr Tan, having made a wonderful recovery — something I thought I would never see. I am without pain, sleeping at night, walking freely, building my stamina with excellent mobility of the knee.

All staff of the hospital were always smiling, helpful, accommodating, never impatient and always positive. I was given many helpful hints and aids to help my recovery. This attitude filtered to me and I have in the main stayed positive, always working to one end. It was always a pleasure to walk into the hospital and see smiling faces especially when I was feeling so down.

I had a different experience when I had my left knee replaced so I know how good, caring and helpful Brighton Epworth staff actually are.

Kind regards,

Irene

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9th May 2015

I was admitted to your hospital on Thursday morning, 23rd April, to have an open radical prostatectomy, conducted by Mr David Angus.

I am almost 64 years old and my hospital experience is a one-night stay prior to minor surgery in Adelaide 40 years ago. I guess you could say that I was proud of this record, and certainly not looking forward to any treatment which would require hospitalisation.

Can I say that my stay in Epworth, with discharge on Monday 27th April, has greatly changed my attitude. From the time I checked in, through to tagging and testing, preparation for surgery and care in recovery was first class. I spent the evening of 23rd in intensive care and moved to 5 North the following afternoon.

I want to say a big thank you to the nursing staff who cared for me — I can recall James in ICU and Julie, Tim and Stacey in 5 North, although there were others too. Their care and courtesy was matched by catering and domestic staff. The meals were great as well. In fact, I have commented that I felt like a guest in a five-star hotel, with all staff striving to ensure that my stay was pleasant.

I am recovering well from successful surgery, but wanted to write to you to say thank you for the care of your exceptional staff members. The hospital too, is well equipped and comfortable.

Whilst I hope that I will not require further hospitalisation in the near future, I would not hesitate in returning to Epworth.

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Dear Epworth Specialist Centre Berwick,

I have been attending the Super Clinic in Berwick for routine blood tests and reported my issue with gradual reduced urine flow thinking that it was probably part of getting older. The doctor referred me to urologist Mr Paul Anderson at your centre.

After some tests, he concluded I would require a TURP procedure to open the urinary tract and cancer cells were found (low level Glasson 3). A further biopsy was performed by Mr Anderson with more cancer cells in my prostate. These were of a
more serious nature (Glasson 7). After much discussion and consideration I decided to have a radical prostatectomy via robotic surgery through A/Prof Declan Murphy. As a result, I am now recovering well at home from successful surgery. Thank you for the early intervention and the amazing skills of the urology specialists at Epworth. Stephen (aged 59)

To Kristy Greene and the team at ICU Freemasons, Please know that you were praised at my Dad’s funeral for all your dedication and hard work. A special thank you to the following people: Dr Christopher MacIsaac, a man who has such an incredible way with people. You were so aware and considerate, especially in a room jam packed full of Dad’s relatives and friends. You heard my tiny voice amidst the others when I had a question. That meant so much to me. You are truly unique and caring. Dr PD and Dr ‘Graham’ (I only remembered that your given name was Graham, I tried hard to remember but cannot recall your surname, I’m so sorry). You both showed such respect and kindness. Nurse Katie (dark curly hair, blue eyes, attentive), Nurse Stephen (glasses, had a lovely accent, approachable), Nurse Tracey (sweet, gentle lady), the pleasant lady that served us refreshments and was always so thoughtful (I never caught your name), and the compassionate nurses who prepared Dad for our final goodbye (in the midst of our grief, I also did not know your names).

Whenever you are having a trying day, I want you to read this letter and remember; you make such a difference during a time of so much uncertainty, grief and sadness.

I wish to record my gratitude and acknowledge one of your nursing staff. Presently my father John is a patient at Epworth Richmond. While we have been happy with the care he has been receiving from the nurses, one in particular by the name of Kelly has been exceptional in the care she has given him. Kelly always greets him with a smile and demonstrates compassion and understanding when she is helping and caring for him. My congratulations to Kelly for a totally professional approach to her patient and his daughter.

Kerry

I have been so impressed with the standard of care I have received on this short admission (13/4 - 16/4). Even in this short time the nurses have taken the time to recognise me as an individual and support and encourage me in the stage of recovery that I am at. I should also mention that the catering and cleaning staff have all been exceptionally friendly and polite which can be so important when you’re feeling vulnerable due to illness or the disorienting experience of an unfamiliar inpatient environment. Thank you for providing such great care!

Relax, refresh, renew initiative is wonderful. The earphones (and choices provided) have ensured an opportunity to rest without the constant noise of TV, which I endured last stay. Thank you. Just need a strategy to keep my Mum and Dad from visiting twice a day ...
www.epworth.org.au