

# St Vincent's Cares

FOUNDATION NEWSLETTER

SUMMER 2024

## Leadership Report

I hope you and your family enjoyed a wonderful break over the summer.

I would like to start by extending my sincere thanks to our former CEO of the St Vincent's Foundation, Sue Parkes. We would like to acknowledge Sue for her leadership and valued contribution to St Vincent's, and wish her all the best as she embarks on the next chapter in her career.

I'm delighted to take on the role of Director of the Foundation to work even closer with you and our donor community. I am looking forward to helping you achieve the impact you seek through St Vincent's.

Your demonstration of passion and love for our patients and work here at St Vincent's is what motivates me and the Foundation team to keep striving for excellence.

A clear example of your commitment is the extraordinary support you have given to our Emergency Department. Because of you, we will be able to purchase the vital equipment required to offer the best emergency care to all our patients.

Your generosity has also opened up a world of educational opportunities for our talented nurses. Thanks to you, they can be even more ambitious in developing the skills they need to stay at the forefront of patient care with the support of a nursing scholarship.

And it is your vision for a healthier future that is making it possible to bring the Aikenhead Centre for Medical Discovery (ACMD) and the new Private Hospital Tower to life.

The ACMD's completion is scheduled for the end of this year. When the ACMD opens its doors in early 2025, it will be Australia's premier hub for the translation of biomedical engineering research.

Please accept my most sincere thanks for your partnership in making the ACMD a reality.

The discoveries and breakthroughs achieved at the ACMD will have a profound impact. Philip Spry-Bailey's enclosed personal experience with research and medical



Melina Talanis,  
Director, St Vincent's Foundation (acting)

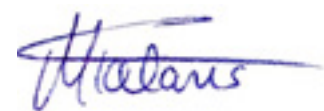
innovation provides a great example of this.

Progress on the Private Hospital Tower is equally moving ahead at a rapid rate. The build, which is expected to be finished this year, has attracted some tremendous support with six areas of the hospital tower already named.

I extend my heartfelt appreciation for your generous contributions to St Vincent's. Through your support, you ensure excellent and compassionate care for all.

Thank you.

Best wishes,



**Melina Talanis**  
**Director (acting)**  
**St Vincent's Foundation**

# Your compassion helps your Emergency Department team provide excellent care... **thank you!**

**A big thank you to everyone who gave so generously to the Christmas appeal. You've helped countless patients who were treated at our Emergency Department (ED) during the busy holiday period.**

Your kind donations have gone towards life-saving equipment such as a revolutionary Hover Mat that will allow our teams to transfer patients without lifting or straining. You've helped to alleviate pain, shorten wait times and offer comfort to distressed family members.

"No one wants to spend the holiday season in an Emergency Department. But some people need to – and their families do, too," said Dr Jonathan Karro, Emergency Department Director.

There's no such thing as low activity for the ED, but things certainly are busier over the holiday period. In fact, across Christmas 2022, St Vincent's experienced a 21% spike in admissions to the ED.

The large number of patients arriving at the ED every day of the year means our doctors and nurses work flat out to give them best care. That's why your generosity is so important.

Dr Karro said, "My team and I are happy to work hard because we care about people. We consider it a joy and a privilege to treat our patients.

"We know you are counting on us to be there for you should you or a loved one need emergency medical care."

Your generous support for our Emergency Department is already making a difference, thank you!

**There is still time to help our ED team:**  
[stvfoundation.org.au/equip](https://stvfoundation.org.au/equip)



*St Vincent's Emergency Department Director, Dr Jonty Karro and his team are so grateful to you. You have given them the support they need to do their demanding and challenging jobs.*

*Pictured from left Dino Druda, Emergency Physician, Claire Lehmann, St Vincent's ED patient and Rachael Pampanella, Clinical Nurse Specialist.*

# Your support is **changing nurses' lives**

Did you know? If you're a private hospital nurse, you can't get a government grant for training... unlike your public hospital colleagues. Yet private hospital nurses are just as committed to excellent care.

Thanks to you, in 2022 we were able to establish the Nursing Excellence Scholarship Fund. It is entirely funded by kind-hearted people like you, and has allowed us to give countless nurses the chance to do further training.

The more skilled our nurses are, the better care they can provide their patients including you and your loved ones. It also means they are better prepared in an emergency.

Now it's time to help even more nurses boost their skills with the most up-to-date training and innovations in patient care.

If you've already contributed to our Nursing Excellence Scholarship Fund, we can't thank you enough. Our nurses want you to know that your support is beyond anything they could imagine – it's a kind and selfless act.

**You can still give to the Nursing Excellence Scholarship Fund.**

**By supporting St Vincent's nurses, you will be playing a key role in providing them with the option to expand their knowledge and to up-skill.**

**Visit:** [stvfoundation.org.au/giveback](https://stvfoundation.org.au/giveback)

**"The better I am at my job, the better care my patients can receive. By supporting a nurse like me, you're helping the whole community."** –

St Vincent's Private nurse, Junyan.





## A true appreciation of the wonders of **engineering and medicine**

"It's because of medical research and technology that people can live longer and spend precious time with their families."

What if you could help save lives through the combined wonders of engineering and medicine?

That's what inspired Philip Spry-Bailey, former Board Chairman of St Vincent's Hospital, to support the ACMD. He listed two reasons for supporting this new collaborative research centre.

First is his own interest as a graduate of engineering.

Second, he's had the good fortune to personally benefit from the wonders of two ground-breaking medical devices.

"It's thanks to St Vincent's and its doctors that I'm alive today. I'm a recipient of several remarkable devices, a pacemaker, and an artificial sphincter.

Devices that combine both engineering and medical science."



A recent generous gift from The Patricia Spry-Bailey Charitable Foundation went towards constructing a Faraday Room within the ACMD. A Faraday Room is a special room used to conduct experiments to develop hearing and vision devices. It's fitted with a shield to block electromagnetic fields and any electrical, sound, or light interference.

"My grandfather died at the age of 60 from heart failure. He probably would have lived a lot longer had he been fitted with a pacemaker. I'm now in my 90s. It's because of medical research and technology that people can live longer, spend precious time with their families and enjoy living," Philip said.

**If you'd like to make a transformational gift, like Philip Spry-Bailey has, contact Melina Talanis at [melina.talanis@svha.org.au](mailto:melina.talanis@svha.org.au)**

***Philip Spry-Bailey's relationship with St Vincent's Hospital spans over 30 years.***

***It began in 1989 when he was invited by St Vincent's Hospital founders, the Sisters of Charity, to join the finance committee of St Vincent's Hospital Melbourne. At the time he was Chief Financial Officer of Alcoa Australia.***

***Philip then became the Chairman of the first St Vincent's Hospital Melbourne Board and later the Chairman of the national board, a role he held for seven years.***

## You're helping to build the future of healthcare

Thanks to your inspired support, significant progress is being made on the build of the new home of the ACMD.

A huge crane is a new addition on the ACMD building site. It's anticipated to perform around 10,000 lifts of materials and equipment.

ACMD Project Director Andrew Crettenden said, "The next major milestone will be the 'Topping Out Ceremony', a time-honoured tradition to signify the successful completion of the structural phase of a project. The ceremony is forecast to happen in May."

The 11-storey biomedical engineering research centre is scheduled to be completed in 2024 and planned to be operating in early 2025.





# You are providing the **best medical facilities to all Victorians**

2023 was a big year for the St Vincent's Private Hospital Tower project. Thanks to support from some of Victoria's most generous families, construction has reached a significant milestone - the building shell is now complete, including the top floor.

We are also thrilled to welcome a vibrant and diverse group of industry leaders to our newly formed Business and Community Leadership Advisory Committee. Led by Chair and successful IT consultancy entrepreneur Carlo G Santoro, this dedicated and passionate group of individuals are committed to achieving our ambitious campaign goal of raising \$20 million.

2024 will be a huge year for the project. Each floor will be fitted out, the old and new building will be integrated and by the end of the year we expect to start moving patients into the Tower.

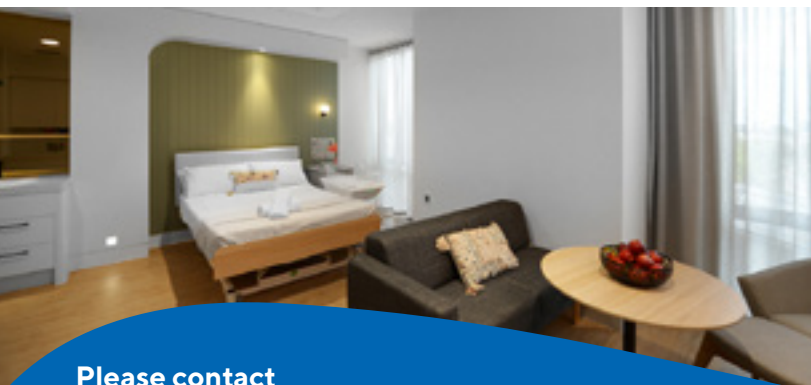
Cameron Smith, Capital Campaign Director said, "The overwhelming interest and support we've already received for this project is very inspiring. We wish to recognise and thank our visionary donor families who have committed to the project."



One family has secured the naming of the ground floor of the building. Two nursing stations, six patient rooms, a maternity room and two oncology pods have also been named by generous families.

"I'm delighted to announce that we have an exciting range of spaces available to name within the building. There are luxurious maternity suites, the Special Care Nursery where our teams do some incredible work with some of our tiniest patients, and stunning garden areas, to name a few," Cameron said.

With support from more generous donors, we can ensure St Vincent's Private can offer the best facilities and cutting-edge equipment to benefit all Victorians.



Please contact  
**Cameron Smith** on [cameron.smith@svha.org.au](mailto:cameron.smith@svha.org.au)  
if you are interested in supporting this exciting development.

SUMMER 2024



*Elaine Arrigo and her late husband, Nino, (pictured with their children Louise and John) were passionate about investing into the healthcare of your local community.*

## A loving tribute that **inspired giving**

**When the love of your life gets cancer, you want him surrounded by caring doctors and nurses.**

That's why Elaine Arrigo was so grateful to the staff at St Vincent's. Because of the wonderful care they provided to her husband, Nino, when he was diagnosed with blood cancer.

Nino spent five years undergoing treatment at St Vincent's Hospital in Fitzroy for Mantel Cell Lymphoma, an unusual blood cancer. Elaine said the staff who cared for her husband were amazing.

Nino fought hard but he succumbed to the aggressive blood cancer in November 2016.

In 2022, Elaine made a substantial donation to St Vincent's Werribee which was completed after Nino passed.

"I decided to support the hospital because we have always received great care at St Vincent's. It's the people that make it special. I know Nino would have wanted me to support St Vincent's in our local community."

Elaine still grieves for Nino today. The pair were destined to be together. They were both born in Werribee and practically grew up together. When Elaine turned 17, Nino asked her out on a date, they quickly bonded and were married for 43 beautiful years.

**You can join Elaine to become a part of the success of St Vincent's Private Hospital Werribee. To support visit:** [stvfoundation.org.au/private/svphw](https://stvfoundation.org.au/private/svphw)



# Breakthrough program to tackle **First Nations youth mental health crisis**... thanks to a **generous grant**

Nobody should have to deal with mental health problems on their own. Some of the worst affected young people in our community are First Nations youth. That's why The William Buckland Foundation chose to support the establishment of a First Nations Mental Health Wellbeing Pilot Program at St Vincent's Hospital Melbourne.

In 2022, over 130 First Nations youth visited the St Vincent's Emergency Department (ED) because they were suffering a mental health crisis.

The Program, which is the first of its kind in Australia, will create a position for a First Nations Mental Health Nurse to address this crisis by assisting youth presenting at ED. This will have a great impact in our community.

Project Lead and Manager of the Aboriginal Hospital Liaison Service, Nicole Watt said, "This pilot program was designed in collaboration with the Victorian Aboriginal Health Service who were pivotal in the consultation and support of this role.

"We are so thankful to be given the opportunity to complete our vision to improve the lives of First Nations youth. It wouldn't have been possible

without the incredibly generous support we've received from The William Buckland Foundation."

The pilot project will operate for two years. The First Nations Mental Health Nurse will support First Nations youth in mental health crisis. They will empower the patient to identify their care goals, bridge gaps to involve their family and community and make referrals to counselling and other services such as housing and job placement, if needed.

Former St Vincent's Foundation CEO, Sue Parkes said, "**We are so grateful to The William Buckland Foundation for their visionary support. Thanks to this very generous grant, St Vincent's will be able to pave the way towards a viable solution to improving the lives and futures of First Nations youth in our community.**"



Thanks to a generous grant from The William Buckland Foundation, Project Lead, Nicole Watt, and her team will be helping to address the mental health needs of First Nations Youth. From L to R: Lily Mercer (Wilam Ngarrang Registered Psychiatric Nurse), Nicole Watt (Manager AHL Service), John Egan (Victorian Aboriginal Health Service - Social and Emotional Wellbeing Team Leader) and Jo Clayton (Director of Nursing AIS).



# Celebrate St Vincent's babies with a **Special Moments Heart**



Welcoming a child is one of the most special moments in a family's life. We can offer you a unique way to mark the arrival of your baby, your grandchild, your niece or nephew, or your good friend's little one, with a Special Moments Heart.

A minimum donation of \$100 will see a personalised heart, featuring your baby's name and date of birth, displayed for twelve months on the Special Moments Wall in the maternity ward for all to see.

Your gift will support the purchase of equipment, provide training and deliver advancements in treatments to ensure we continue to provide the best care to new parents and their babies.

**Order your Special Moments Heart today at** [stvfoundation.org.au/special-moments](http://stvfoundation.org.au/special-moments)



*Whether your baby is thriving or has had a hard start to life, you can give your little one a special place on the Special Moments Wall! Pictured, Abbey Luckhurst with baby Ruby in front of the Maternity Wall. Ruby spent the first 10 days of her life in the St Vincent's Private Special Care Nursery and Abbey said, "Every day we wake up with Ruby, we are reminded of how incredibly lucky we are as a family to have received such incredible care from the St Vincent's maternity team."*

# Fighting Blood Cancer at St Vincent's – finding a cure together with enduring legacies

Imagine being told you have an incurable cancer.

St Vincent's patient, Kath Rutherford received this devastating news in 2020. Thankfully, although her blood cancer called Light Chain Multiple Myeloma is incurable, it is treatable.

"My instant reaction to the diagnosis was disbelief. I said to myself, they've got the wrong person this can't be happening to me!" Kath said.

Shortly after her diagnosis, Kath was referred to Director of Clinical Hematology Service and Clinical Hematology Research at St Vincent's, Oncologist and Professor Hang Quach. Luckily, she determined that Kath was an excellent candidate for a life-changing clinical trial.

Professor Quach and her team are quite literally leading the way in cancer clinical trials for patients with blood cancers – notably leukaemia, lymphoma, and multiple myeloma, by providing patients with access to cutting-edge therapies. Patients are not only living longer, but they're also enjoying an excellent quality of life.

Despite the amazing work the team are doing with clinical trial patients, there is still a big gap in funding.

It's thanks to people like you that the gap is starting to close. It's your kind support that makes the difference to the more than 750 new patients who are referred to St Vincent's Oncology team every year.

**To learn more about how leaving a Gift in your Will can support people undergoing treatment for cancer, contact Ralf Sternad at [ralf.sternad@svha.org.au](mailto:ralf.sternad@svha.org.au)**



## Sobering statistics about Blood Cancer

- One of Australia's biggest cancer killers.
- Claims more lives than breast cancer and melanoma combined
- 16 Australians per day die from blood cancer or related blood disorders – that's 6000 people in 2022.

Late in 2023 our Gift in Will supporters, including Peter Hui pictured with Professor Quach and Kath Rutherford joined us to learn more about the clinical cancer trials being undertaken to save patients' lives.

***"The trial has quite simply changed my life. I feel so very fortunate to have been referred to Hang and to be on this clinical trial at St Vincent's with its wonderful staff."***  
St Vincent's patient – Kath Rutherford





## Congratulations to the **Bank First Nursing Scholarship Recipients**

St Vincent's nurses are some of the kindest and most selfless people you'll ever meet. If you are one of their patients, they will go above and beyond to look after you.

2023 marks the second year Bank First is supporting St Vincent's nurses by providing scholarships to three very worthy recipients. Adrian Wilson, Head of Bank First Partnership Development, said, "We are proud to provide financial support for nursing professionals to undertake additional study."

### The recipients of this year's nursing scholarships are:

- **Bhavithrai Dhushyanthakumar** – a Clinical Nurse Specialist (CNS) in Emergency who is undertaking a Master of Advanced Nursing – Emergency.

- **Rakshya Kunwar** – a Surgical Nurse working on 7 West, undertaking a Master of Advanced Nursing – Acute Care.
- **Georgina Hodgson** – a CNS in Emergency and a Clinical Simulation Instructor in Education and Learning, undertaking a Graduate Certificate in Health Professions Education.

**If your business wishes to support St Vincent's Foundation, please contact Richard Thayer, Corporate and Community Partnerships Manager at [richard.thayer@svha.org.au](mailto:richard.thayer@svha.org.au) or call 0413 199 875.**

*Image above: L to R: Scholarship recipients Bhavithrai Dhushyanthakumar, Rakshya Kunwar Georgina Hodgson. Bank First were proud to support St Vincent's nurses with scholarships for these three deserving recipients.*

## Upcoming Events

### Sisterhood Lunch

Friday 31 May 2024

The Glasshouse, Olympic Boulevard Melbourne

12:00 pm to 4:00 pm

### Early Bird tickets on sale April 2024 – \$185

3 course lunch and drinks, live music, and a raffle.

Raising funds for Addiction Medicine Department at St Vincent's Hospital Melbourne for over 10 years.



### A step-by-step guide to making your Will

Thursday 18 July 2024

12.00 pm to 1.00 pm

Webinar – via Zoom

*For event enquiries please contact:*

**Rebecca Martin, Events Manager, St Vincent's Foundation Victoria on (03) 9231 3365**  
or email [rebecca.martin@svha.org.au](mailto:rebecca.martin@svha.org.au)

**To find out more about our upcoming events visit: [stvfoundation.org.au/events](https://stvfoundation.org.au/events)**

**St Vincent's Foundation supports the following hospitals and capital campaigns in Victoria:**

**St Vincent's Public Hospitals:** Melbourne, St George's Hospital and Caritas Christi

**St Vincent's Private Hospitals:** Fitzroy, East Melbourne, Kew and Werribee

**Aikenhead Centre for Medical Discovery (ACMD)**

**Fitzroy Private Hospital Redevelopment**

### St Vincent's Foundation Victoria

Ground floor, rear 55 Victoria Pde, Fitzroy, Victoria 3065

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*We acknowledge the people of the Kulin Nation, the traditional custodians, and pay our respects to their culture and their Elders past, present and future. We welcome all cultures, nationalities and religions. Being inclusive and providing equitable healthcare is our commitment.*