

MEDIA RELEASE

For immediate release

From: Kasey McCulloch, Media Officer, Mercy Health

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Perinatal Pedalers dig deep for at-risk mothers and babies

Mercy Health staff have dusted off their Lycra and hit the bike paths around Melbourne in preparation for the Murray to Moyne, an annual charity bike ride from Mildura to Port Fairy.

The Mercy Health team is riding under the name *Perinatal Pedalers* and is made up of 28 cyclists from across the health service and local community, including Banyule Councillor Tom Melican.

The team is a combination of novice and experienced riders who will travel up to 520 kilometres during the weekend of Saturday 2 April and Sunday 3 April. Murray to Moyne is in its 30th year and aims to raise money for Victorian hospitals and health services, while promoting the health and social benefits of bike riding.

Mercy Health Quality Manager Fiona Nielsen is a keen cyclist and had wanted to participate in the Murray to Moyne for several years.

“From the moment I mentioned I wanted to put together a team for this charity event, Mercy Health has been right behind me,” Ms Nielsen said.

“The enthusiasm for local fundraising activities is just one of the reasons Mercy Health is such a great community to be a part of.

“I didn’t expect so many cyclists to be riding under the Mercy Health banner or so many other staff members to be supporting us with our fundraising efforts, which have included cake stalls, a movie night and a hot cross bun drive.

“The lead up to the Murray to Moyne has already exceeded all of my expectations and I would love for staff and supporters of Mercy Health to make it an annual event.”

The *Perinatal Pedalers* aided by the Mercy Health Foundation, which raises funds to develop the skills and abilities of people who care, hopes to raise \$20,000 for Mercy Perinatal. Mercy Perinatal is a bold initiative focussing on excellence in clinical care, research and education. Mercy Perinatal aims to make an impact on the global landscape in complicated pregnancies where the life and health of the mother and/or her baby are at risk.

Mercy Health Director of Perinatal Medicine Professor Sue Walker described it as an international centre of perinatal excellence, which will fast track pioneering advances in research to reduce the burden of stillbirth, preeclampsia, ectopic pregnancies and maternal mental illness.

“Investing in the care of at-risk pregnancies and providing accessible education as well as a bold, focused research strategy is an important public health investment with incalculable returns,” Prof

Walker said.

The *Perinatal Pedalers* have so far raised more than \$16,000 for Mercy Perinatal. To show your support for this important cause, visit www.mercyhealth.com.au/donate

– Ends –

For interviews and photo opportunities, please contact:

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