

MEDIA RELEASE

For immediate release

From: Kasey McCulloch, Media Manager, Mercy Health

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Mercy Health Board welcomes new Chair

Ms Virginia Bourke has been appointed as the new Chair of the Mercy Health Board. Ms Bourke is a Melbourne-based lawyer and consultant who has been affiliated with the national Catholic health, aged and community care provider for the past 10 years.

“My vision is to continue the growth of Mercy Health as a dynamic, sustainable, national organisation which cares for people through all stages of their life,” Ms Bourke says.

“We have a unique capacity and responsibility to respond creatively to the needs of the communities we serve by developing new approaches to the delivery of care.”

Ms Bourke served on the Mercy Health Board from 2008–14 and was reappointed in 2016. She also worked as General Counsel for the Institute of Sisters of Mercy of Australia and Papua New Guinea from 2014–15. Ms Bourke replaces outgoing Chairman Julien O’Connell AM.

“Julien brought an unwavering focus on our mission and has been a staunch advocate for improving the way we care for our communities,” Ms Bourke says. “As people keep reminding me, these are big shoes to fill!”

Mr O’Connell joined the Mercy Health Board in 2004 and was appointed Chairman in 2008. During Mr O’Connell’s time as Chairman, Mercy Health has grown from 3,300 employees to more than 9,000. He is particularly proud of the advancement the organisation has made in the gender equality space, including having 50:50 representation on the Board — based on merit, not tokenism.

"I have been blessed with the support of an incredibly talented Board," Mr O’Connell says. "They have sustained me and lifted me. I must also thank my mentor, Barry O’Callaghan AO, for his sound advice on difficult issues, as well as (Group Chief Executive Officer Adjunct Professor) Stephen Cornelissen and the Executive."

The Mercy Health Board also farewells and thanks Ms Agnes Sheehan and Sr Joan Wilson RSM who have both served on the Board since 2009. The Board welcomes Sr Berice Livermore RSM, a Religious Sister of Mercy who is a consultant to many religious congregations, assisting them in their financial management, governance and planning of strategies for meeting the demands of caring for the elderly among them.

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For interviews and photo opportunities, please contact:

Kasey McCulloch
Media Manager
Mercy Health

Phone: 03 8416 7521
Mobile: 0477 720 337
Email: KMcCulloch@mercy.com.au