

# MEDIA RELEASE

## For immediate release

From: Kasey McCulloch, Media Manager, Mercy Health

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## Werribee Mercy Hospital appoints new director of surgery

Werribee Mercy Hospital has appointed a new director of surgery, Mr Iain Skinner, a senior colorectal surgeon who has lived in Wyndham since 1973. Mr Skinner's family moved to the area when he was in primary school and he attended Glen Devon Primary School and Werribee High School (now Werribee Secondary College).

Mr Skinner has been practicing as a specialist colorectal surgeon, in both public and private hospitals in Melbourne's west, since he completed his surgical training and Colorectal Fellowship in 2001. He has recently resigned from a consultant appointment with Western Health to take on his new role.

"I am incredibly excited about, and honoured by, the opportunity to lead development of Werribee Mercy Hospital's surgery department," Mr Skinner said. "The Wyndham community needs access to high-quality specialist surgical services close to their homes and families."

Mr Skinner has had a public appointment at Werribee Mercy Hospital since 2001. He has seen the hospital expand from a low complexity, medical, surgical and maternity hospital to one with a state-of-the-art Intensive Care Unit (ICU). As part of the current expansion of Werribee Mercy Hospital, six new modern operating theatres and a surgical ward were also built in the Catherine McAuley Centre.

"Since the opening of the expanded services we have seen the hospital equipped with an ICU the equal of any in the state," Mr Skinner explained. "As we recruit new staff, purchase new equipment and grow our surgical services we will begin to treat patients with problems of the surgical complexity, and acuity, that the facility was designed to care for."

Mr Skinner recently hosted an advanced Colonoscopy Leaders' Update, run as part of the National Endoscopy Training Initiative, utilising the new integrated audio-visual systems built into the theatres. Six surgeons took part in the day, which involved the live streaming of colonoscopy procedures (examination of the inner lining of the bowel) into a meeting room for doctors to review, critique and help refine their techniques.

"With some colonoscopy procedures there is a risk of missing subtle polyps (small growths of tissue that have a risk of developing into bowel cancer) and in those that require polyp removal an increased risk of complications," Mr Skinner said. "We are always striving to enhance our skills and techniques to improve the short and long-term outcomes for our patients, especially to prevent the development of bowel cancer."

Mercy Health Chief Executive Health Services Adjunct Professor Linda Mellors says the health service is thrilled to welcome Mr Skinner into his new role.

"Mr Skinner is a passionate surgeon and a great advocate for the local community," Adj Prof Mellors says.

“Werribee Mercy Hospital is extremely fortunate to have Mr Skinner on board as we grow our surgical capabilities to cater for the growing needs of the local community.”

Mr Skinner has held an honorary position through the University of Melbourne at the North West Academic Centre. He is a member of the Surgical Gastrointestinal Endoscopy Committee within the Royal Australasian College of Surgeons, a member of the Conjoint Committee for the Recognition of Training in Gastrointestinal Endoscopy, the National Colonoscopy Recertification Committee and recently co-chaired the National Colonoscopy Clinical Care Standard working group for the Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care.

Mr Skinner started in his new role as Werribee Mercy Hospital Director of Surgery on Monday 12 November 2018.

**- Ends -**

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