

MEDIA RELEASE

For immediate release

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| From:  | Bill Lane, Media Manager, Mercy Health |
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 **Golden Rise Retirement Living**

The $8-million Mercy Health Golden Rise Seniors Living project at Bendigo is nearing its final stages of construction – the development in Taylor Street, Golden Square comprises 21 units and a community hub.

Certificates of Occupancy of the first units are expected soon with residents shortly after able to commence moving in.

The seniors living community is a co-location with Mercy Health’s residential aged care home at Bendigo, Mercy Place Bethlehem. Village residents will have access to additional facilities such as the Chapel, café and hair salon which are located in the aged care home.

Golden Rise is an independent living community which will offer a quality lifestyle, social connectedness and peace of mind. With future care options available next door, the Village will provide a range of flexible home support options to help residents continue doing the things they enjoy in their own home. .

Group CEO Stephen Cornelissen says the Golden Rise development will nationally be Mercy Health’s most innovative retirement village and potentially the organisation’s largest in Australia. While 21 units is Mercy Health’s current focus, there is potential long-term for the retirement village to contain as many as 176 villas.

“The elevated location provides captivating panoramic views across the district.

It’s an enviable location and ideal for the residents as they embark on the next exciting phase of their lives,” Mr Cornelissen said.

Mercy Health has also just announced the appointment of Ms Candice Long, as the Golden Rise Village Manager.

“Candice brings a wealth of knowledge and experience in seniors living. We are thrilled to have appointed a compassionate, caring and very competent manager to guide Golden Rise through its initial years and beyond,” Mr Cornelissen said.

“We are confident that the development, coupled with the site’s history and Sisters of Mercy mission will ensure the project is a great success,” said Mr Cornelissen.

Prominent Victorian contractor H Troon is overseeing the development. Award winning builders J G King, who specialise in constructing multi-townhouses and seniors living units have also been engaged to ensure the homes are built to the highest standards.

Each working day there have been between 30-50 construction personnel working on site.

Mr Cornelissen said Mercy Health was delighted to work productively and collaboratively with the Bendigo community.

“Golden Rise is just the latest project Mercy Health has completed in a long history of the Sisters of Mercy establishing health, education and aged care in Bendigo.”

Mr Cornelissen says any decision concerning future stages is dependent on a combination of factors such as demand and economic circumstances.

“The project to date has proceeded in a very orderly manner and we are delighted with local support and co-operation,” Mr Cornelissen said.

**Additional background:**

2020 marks the 100 year milestone since the Sisters of Mercy first provided health services in Victoria. In 1920 with Melbourne expanding quickly, the Sisters saw a great need for better public health services across Melbourne and outlying areas. At that time Mercy Health’s founders opened a hospital, St Benedict’s in Malvern, adjacent to where Cabrini Hospital stands today. Across four Australian states and one territory, the Mercy Health workforce today comprises 10,000 personnel.

There are two major public hospitals in greater Melbourne - Mercy Hospital for Women at Heidelberg and Werribee Mercy Hospital. Mercy Health now operates 35 aged care homes and 10 retirement villages. It also has about 8000 Home Care Services clients. Sub-acute hospitals operate in Albury and Young in NSW. Significant other areas of responsibility include mental health services, maternity and gynaecological services, palliative care, neonatal and perinatal services.

When the Sisters first arrived in Victoria three noticeable areas of concern were the lack of health services, the number of injured servicemen who had returned from action in WW1 and the impact of the global Spanish flu.

From 1920, the Sisters became known for a pioneering spirit in care and compassion – these are qualities of Mercy which still resonate in Mercy Health today.

**ENDS**

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