

## Media Statement

### For immediate release

From: Bill Lane, Media Manager, Mercy Health

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#### Heroes of COVID-19

Werribee Mercy Hospital's Emergency Department, which stared COVID-19 in the face throughout the year, is the first recipient of the Lalor Hero Award for 2020, an award that recognises local heroes' service and contribution to the Lalor electorate community in Melbourne's West.

Accepting the award, Emergency Department Nurse Unit Manager Lynn O'Neil said that while the award was a tremendous honour, every Mercy Health staff member deserved the recognition, not just those who work within ED.

"We stepped up to the plate, and we know that, but equally we are proud and humbled by the response and gratitude we received from the community," she said.

Presenting the award, Federal Member for Lalor Joanne Ryan MP said Werribee Mercy Hospital had built a great rapport with Melbourne's West and was a worthy recipient.

"Given the year we've endured, and the significance of the hospital's role, it was not difficult to choose the Emergency Department as the award's first recipient," Ms Ryan said.

"It's well documented that Melbourne's West was a hotspot during the peak of COVID-19 but the community was protected by WMH.

"From all reports the treatment was well above par and was everything it was meant to be," Ms Ryan said.

"The hospital has a wonderful compassionate, caring and professional team," she said.

"I spent time in the ED during the year with a broken wrist. My mother has also been hospitalised. I consider it my hospital and you do a marvellous job," she told WMH staff.

The Director of WMH's Emergency Department Dr John Pasco said COVID-19 generated an outstanding cohesion amongst staff.

“We understood the battle we faced and appreciated how important it was to work as a team. It was a tremendous team effort,” he said.

**(ENDS)**