

Our Voice



Mercy Health
Care first

THE GROUPWIDE NEWSLETTER OF MERCY HEALTH
SPRING 2018

State-of- the-art care for the west

The brand new expansion of
the Catherine McAuley Centre
at Werribee Mercy Hospital is
now open



Right at home

Mercy Place Ballarat
opens with a bold new
approach to aged care

Writing her own story

How a polio survivor and
home care client mastered
independent living



Unconditional support to deliver *baby Bodhi*

Hayley Jean Wilson was a frequent visitor to Mercy Hospital for Women during her second pregnancy with son Bodhi. At just eight weeks' gestation, Hayley Jean was diagnosed with obstetric cholestasis, a liver condition that can result in extreme itching and increased risk of stillbirth.

“I had cholestasis when I was 35 weeks pregnant with my first son Bentley,” Hayley Jean says. “When I started itching again I knew I was pregnant.”

Cholestasis is commonly diagnosed in late pregnancy. Hayley Jean’s early diagnosis meant she had to be monitored closely with weekly antenatal appointments and then fetal

monitoring twice a week from 30 weeks.

“I would chat about my birth plan during my [antenatal] appointments but I did not

think any of it could happen because of the risks associated with cholestasis, including haemorrhaging,” Hayley Jean says.

Hayley Jean chose Maternity Group Practice (MGP, in which women are cared for by the same midwife throughout their pregnancy, including the birth) with the support of Mercy Hospital for Women Senior Aboriginal Hospital Liaison Officer Jo Pappas.

“Hayley Jean, Cameron and the boys are such a beautiful family,” Jo says. “It was really wonderful to be a part of their journey.”

Hayley Jean’s partner Cameron is Torres Strait Islander, which meant she had the additional support of Jo and the Nangnak Baban Murrup Clinic (meaning ‘Nurturing Mothers Spirit’) for both of her pregnancies.

The clinic provides care and support for women who are pregnant with an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander baby at Mercy Hospital for Women.

“The clinic has evolved tremendously during the past five years,” Jo says. “Most of our referrals have been accepting of the MGP pregnancy model which allows us to provide a culturally holistic, safe service.”

For Hayley Jean, the Nangnak Baban Murrup Clinic provided an opportunity to connect with other pregnant women and seek much-needed emotional support.

“I would see Jo every Tuesday,” Hayley Jean says. “Sometimes I would have a little cry and Jo would give me a cuddle and other times she would make me laugh so much that my stomach hurt.”

Hayley Jean also formed a strong connection with her MGP midwife Emily Olden, whom she fondly nicknamed ‘incredible Emily’.

“
Sometimes
I would have
a little cry and
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me a cuddle...”

“‘Incredible Emily’ gave childbirth back to me,” Hayley Jean says.

“Even though I had an induction, I still had the most natural labour and birth possible because Emily believed in not only my body but me as a woman.”

Emily listened to and respected Hayley Jean’s wishes, which included a lotus birth — the practice of leaving a baby



attached to the placenta until the umbilical cord falls off naturally.

“I will be forever grateful to Emily, who did everything in her power to honour my wishes,” Hayley Jean says.

Emily took Hayley Jean’s mind off her labour by massaging the pressure points on her feet during each contraction.

“Every birth plan and birth is unique,” Emily says. “It was a privilege to help bring baby Bodhi into the world. It is a birth that will stay with me for a long time.”

Opposite page L-R: Hayley Jean, Cameron, Bentley and Bodhi shortly after the birth; Midwife Emily Olden, Obstetrician Michelle Dunn, Hayley Jean Wilson and Bodhi. This page: Mercy Hospital for Women Senior Aboriginal Health Liaison Officer Jo Pappas meets baby Bodhi.

Front cover: Werribee Mercy Hospital patient Kira Meyer and Intensive Care Unit Nurse Unit Manager Joanne Pickford

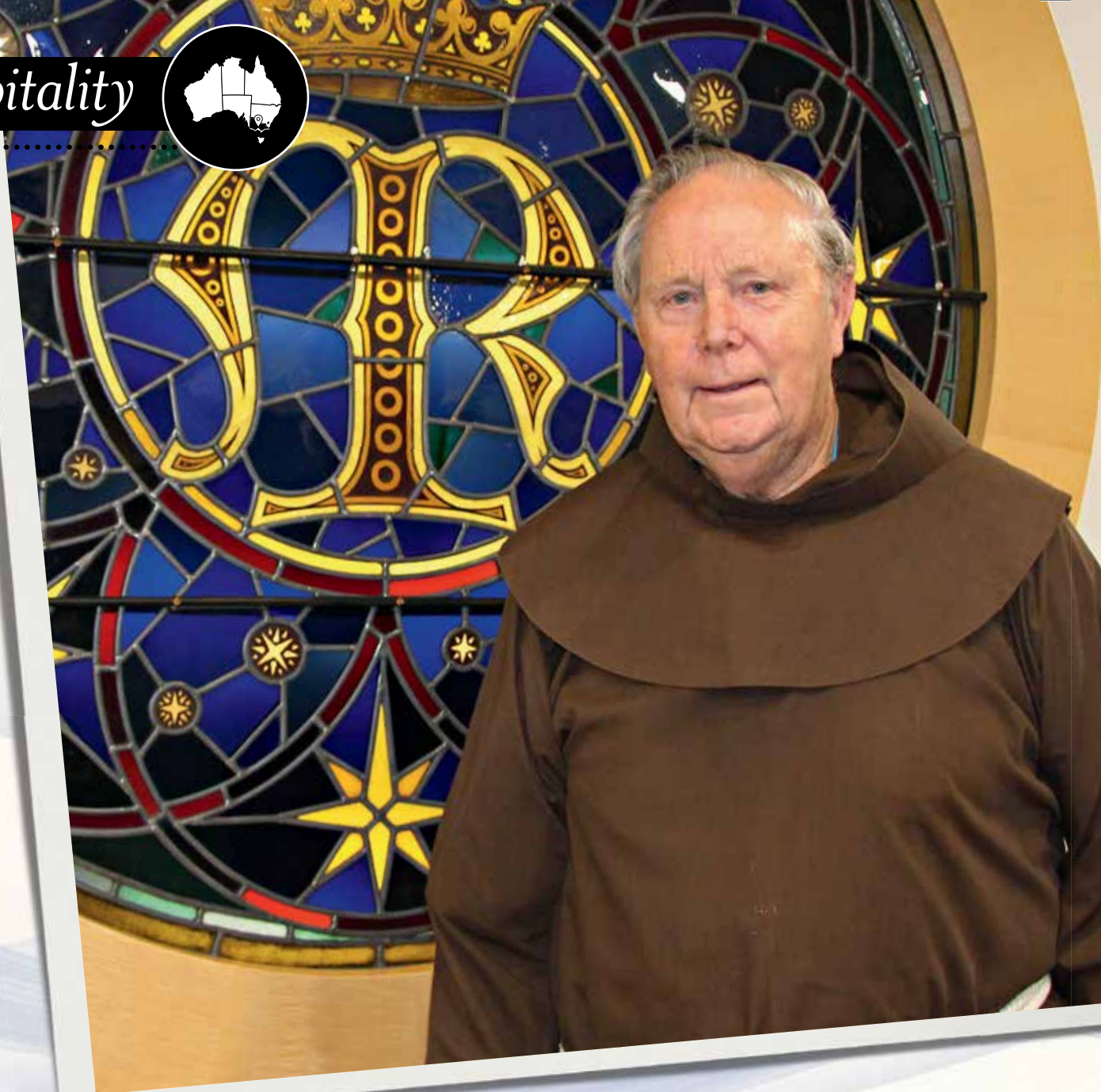
About Our Voice

Our Voice is the quarterly newsletter of Mercy Health, an Australian Catholic organisation founded by the Sisters of Mercy. Each year, we provide care for approximately 100,000 people in health services, 4,000 people in our 35 aged care homes and 4,500 people in their own homes or in the community. Each season in *Our Voice*, we share inspiring

and thought-provoking stories from the people we serve and the 8,500-plus people who work for Mercy Health. These stories demonstrate the Mercy Health values of Compassion, Hospitality, Respect, Innovation, Stewardship and Teamwork. To share your own story or provide feedback, contact:

Mercy Health: Our Voice
Level 2, 12 Shelley Street
Richmond Vic 3121
Phone: 03 8416 7816
Email: ourvoice@mercy.com.au





“They call me
*Father
Theo*”

A veteran of the priesthood — for 65 years, to be exact — 89-year-old Mercy Place East Melbourne Chaplain Father Theophane (Theo) Rush is still deeply committed to his calling, which he describes as “simply proclaiming the good news of God’s mercy and love not as a dogma but as a living reality”.

“

The celebration of religious services in our homes by visiting ministers of religion means so much to many residents for whom this has been an important part of their faith life.”



Fr Theo has been a permanent fixture at Mercy Place East Melbourne for the past nine years. He celebrates Mass every Thursday as well as the Sacrament of Anointing of the Sick every month. Residents find comfort in receiving the Eucharist (Holy Communion), as well as gathering with the praying community. “I think that is a really important part of the service,” Fr Theo says. “When the residents are praying with everyone else they experience friendship, love, support and know that they are not alone — and it is so important for older people to know that they are not alone.”

Residents living with dementia are also warmly encouraged to

come along to the weekly Mass and experience the comfort of God’s love. He particularly believes that if they have grown up in religious belief and practice, the words of the Bible, prayers and hymns are still embedded in their spirit. “It is part of their psyche, if you like, or spiritual life and I believe that they are comforted by that, so it is very important that they are invited,” he says.

Fr Theo depends on Pastoral Carer Cheryl Markham, who is at Mercy Place East Melbourne on a daily basis and has regular contact with residents. He calls her his “eyes and ears on a spiritual dimension”, and she lets him know if anyone needs particular care or is unwell and may benefit from a visit.

Fr Theo is one of a number of visiting ministers of religion and chaplains who conduct religious services and provide pastoral care in Mercy Health’s aged care homes.

“The celebration of religious services in our homes by visiting ministers of religion means so much to many residents for whom this has been an important part of their faith life,” says Mercy Health Manager Pastoral Services — Residential Aged Care Michael Taylor. “These services draw people into the larger story of God’s unfailing love and mercy for all.”

Opposite page: Mercy Place East Melbourne Chaplain Father Theo Rush. This page: Fr Theo and Mercy Place East Melbourne Pastoral Carer Cheryl Markham.



Mastering the art of independent living

Southern Cross Care (Vic) home care services client Frances Henke is all too familiar with the struggles of living with polio, having spent the past seven decades mastering valuable life skills to manage her disability. Weekly cleaning support and home modifications have made all the difference for the author, who now focusses her time supporting others living with polio.



“

Southern Cross Care is there to make the daily difficulties that little bit easier.”

ergonomic chair for my office. My leg brace has also been refurbished and I was able to purchase a new mobility scooter.”

“Southern Cross Care has enabled us to stay at home by providing home modifications,” says Frances. “As a polio survivor, the last thing I want is something that looks institutional and I am so grateful to have been able to negotiate solutions that look and feel like home.”

“It means so much to me to remain independent but where that’s not possible, accepting help is the most gracious thing to do. Southern Cross Care is there to make the daily difficulties that little bit easier. It is a real partnership and I trust them to provide the extra support we need.”

Opposite page: Tending to her garden is one of Frances’ favourite activities. This page: Frances is also a talented painter and sculptor; Frances authored Random Harvest e-library bestseller *Life Skills for Polios: a light-hearted handbook*.

Thinking back to her own diagnosis, Frances casts her mind back to her third birthday. At her birthday party, Frances walloped another child over the head with a croquet mallet during play. She came down with polio the next day and still believes it was karma. Living with the physical limitations of polio as a child, Frances would listen to her mother read to her for hours on end. As a result, she developed a love for words and reading.

That passion forged in her early years put Frances on the path to becoming a journalist, newspaper columnist, art critic and writer, in Australia and overseas. Frances has published books on gardening and progressed to writing fiction in 2013. Last year, she wrote *Life Skills for Polios: a light-hearted handbook*, which went on to become a Random Harvest e-library bestseller in several countries. She also runs a Facebook page, Post-Polio Universal, providing information and support to survivors in other countries where there is less support.

Besides writing books and educating the community, Frances is an avid photographer, artist and gardener. She also

regularly goes swimming and gets to and from the pool independently thanks to a mobility scooter organised by Southern Cross Care (Vic).

A home care client of Southern Cross Care (Vic) since 2011, Frances has been able to continue her much-loved writing and community work, confident that her home care package can provide much-needed support to keep her living independently at home with her husband, Ian.

“We have been so lucky to have Southern Cross Care — it has just been astonishing,” Frances says. “We don’t need personal care at this stage, so our home care package has enabled us to purchase recliners and an





Mercy Place East Melbourne resident Maurice Quincey sat on a motorbike for the first time in 30 years thanks to the Imagine Fund.

Never too old to dream

Helping its aged care residents and clients to pursue their dreams is one of the many ways that Mercy Health upholds and achieves one of the keystones of its mission — to value the dignity and inherent worth of every life from conception to death.

The focus of this year's Mercy Health Foundation Ball was to raise awareness and funds for the Imagine Fund — a program established by the Knights of the Southern Cross which seeks to enhance

the lives of older Australians by supporting projects and programs that help people age well.

Held in May at the Sofitel Melbourne on Collins, the ball hosted more than 400 guests,

who enjoyed an evening of fine dining and entertainment.

The Master of Ceremonies for this year's ball was Naomi Simson, founder of online experience gift company Red Balloon, and one of Australia's

Below and bottom right: Guests enjoyed a night of fine dining and entertainment in aid of the Imagine Fund. Right: At the top of Mercy Place Keon Park resident Margaret Vears' wish list was to go to another St Kilda football game.



most prominent entrepreneurs and business leaders. Naomi is a strong believer in a sense of purpose and dreaming at every stage of life.

"Having a vision for the things we would like to achieve in a day, a year, or through our lives, is great. I try to tick at least one or two things off my own bucket list every year," Naomi says.

While a number of our aged care residents and clients have aspirations and dreams to fulfil, they sometimes don't have the family or support to help them accomplish these dreams. More than \$120,000 was raised on the night and this generous contribution will enable them to do something they have always dreamed of — something really special — that otherwise would not have been possible.

The Imagine Fund has already helped many Mercy Health residents tick off items on their bucket list, including Tiger Moth flights, Harley Davidson motorcycle joy rides, a scenic helicopter flight, and a trip to the Frankston Sand Sculpture Festival.

Mercy Place Keon Park* resident Margaret Vears had been a huge

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fan of the St Kilda Football Club for many years and had not seen a live game for the past 10 years. Watching her team play one last time was at the top of her wish list.

"Watching the game on TV is the highlight of my week. Everyone knows not to panic if I have no voice after a win," Margaret says.

"I would love, for one last time, to see my boys play at a live game and maybe even give one or two of them a sneaky kiss on the cheek for good luck."

Group CEO Adjunct Professor Stephen Cornelissen says watching peoples' faces light up and hearing their bucket list stories — days, weeks, even months after the experience — is priceless. "If we can help our residents and clients to follow their dreams and continue to live life to the fullest, then we have achieved what we set out to do," he says.

Mercy Health Foundation is deeply grateful to its platinum partner Catholic Super and 14 sponsors for the 2018 Mercy Health Foundation Ball. It would also like to thank everyone who attended in support of the Imagine Fund.

*Formerly known as Southern Cross Care Keon Park.

To see media coverage of the Imagine Fund, visit www.mercyhealth.com.au/news/margarets-wish/



An exciting new era for Werribee Mercy Hospital

The much-anticipated expansion of the Catherine McAuley Centre at Werribee Mercy Hospital opened to patients in August after three years of planning and construction.



The expansion includes 56 new inpatient beds, six new operating theatres, a Central Sterilising Department, a state-of-the-art Intensive Care Unit (ICU) with eight beds and a wellness room and gardens to give patients and families a break from the clinical environment. A new 370-space multi-level car park has also been built to improve parking access for patients, visitors and staff.

This impressive redevelopment was made possible by an \$85 million commitment from the Victorian Government, a \$6 million contribution from Mercy Health towards the construction of the multi-storey car park, and \$2 million from Mercy Health Foundation, Werribee Hospital Foundation, community and corporate supporters.

The new ICU boasts the latest generation equipment, floor-to-

ceiling windows in every cubicle and abundant natural light. It also has a balcony that can manage a fully ventilated patient.

Medical Director Dr Mainak Majumdar and Nurse Unit Manager Joanne Pickford head the ICU and bring a wealth of experience in intensive care to Werribee Mercy Hospital. Mainak and Joanne will lead a team of specialist doctors,

“... most of the staff are locals who want to give back to the Wyndham community by working here.

”

nurses and allied health staff including physiotherapists, dietitians, speech pathologists, social workers and pastoral care workers.

“The ICU provides essential critical care services to the local community,” Mainak says. “This is an exciting opportunity to set up an intensive care service in Melbourne’s fastest growing area that is currently under-serviced in terms of access to acute healthcare. To be able to develop a service from scratch and customise it to the region’s health needs in a supportive healthcare service is an absolute privilege.”

Joanne is particularly excited to be working with so many like-minded nurses who are specially trained for ICU. “Having a team of like-minded staff will translate to improved patient care outcomes,” she says. “And most of the staff are locals who want to give back to the Wyndham community by working here.”

The ICU is also set up for supporting and educating staff and will be running a postgraduate course in intensive care next year in partnership with the University of Melbourne.



Mercy Health Chief Executive — Health Services Adjunct Professor Linda Mellors says, “We are so thrilled that the expansion of the Catherine McAuley Centre is now open and we can meet the health needs of the growing Wyndham community. This means that more patients will be able to stay within their local area and be served

within their local area — that makes a huge difference to families”.

Clockwise from left: Entrance to the newly expanded Catherine McAuley Centre; Werribee Mercy Hospital Nurse Unit Manager Joanne Pickford and Intensive Care Unit Medical Director Dr Mainak Majumdar; Werribee Mercy Hospital’s state-of-the-art ICU; Oliver Mordaunt (centre) was the first patient to undergo surgery in one of the six new operating theatres.



Community at the *heart* of new approach to aged care

After four years of research, planning and construction, Mercy Place Ballarat opened in September, launching an innovative approach to aged care.



“**T**his new community-centred approach to aged care is based on one of Mercy Health’s founding principles — that people, no matter what stage in life they are at, are relational and need others and community to flourish,” explains Mercy Health Group CEO Adjunct Professor Stephen Cornelissen.

“Mercy Place Ballarat is our first aged care home purpose-built for this approach to aged care and we are really excited about how this inclusive and connected community will enhance resident wellbeing.”

This innovative approach is all about community, relationships, enablement and choice. We started by thinking of it as small household living. It is designed to promote meaningful living and alleviate the loneliness, isolation and boredom often felt by people living in nursing homes.

Mercy Place Ballarat will cater for 112 residents, who will live in



14 smaller households with seven other like-minded people. Each resident will enjoy the privacy of their own room (with ensuite), a personal laundry, home-cooked meals, familiar home spaces and outdoor areas — all with the security and peace of mind that help is at hand when they need it.

There are also shared areas that the wider community of residents can enjoy with their families and friends, including a pub, landscaped and activity gardens, a café, grocer, chapel and wellness centre.

A passionate team of staff has come on board to run this vibrant community, including Retail Assistant Lesley Sapstead, who takes care of the grocery store. With each household planning their weekly meals, Lesley ensures that all the ingredients are in stock for the residents when they come to shop. She also orders in other items to give residents additional choice and variety in their meals. “I really want to encourage residents to maintain their independence as much as possible and give them lots of fresh, seasonal products to choose from,” she says.

This community-centred approach is already in place at Mercy Place Edgewater and Mercy Place Mont Clare in Western Australia and, so far,

the results are very encouraging. At Mont Clare, there has been a 24 per cent reduction in the number of falls and a 35 per cent reduction in the number of residents who were underweight. At Edgewater, there has been a 70 per cent decrease in the number of antipsychotic

“This bold new approach to residential aged care is all about community relationships, enablement and choice.

”

medications prescribed, a 15.7 per cent reduction in the number of residents taking antidepressants, and an 89 per cent increase in lifestyle activities reflecting residents’ choice.

Mercy Place Ballarat is expected to help ease the growing demand for residential aged care in the region. The Victorian Government’s *Victoria in Future 2016* report predicts Ballarat’s

over-65 population will increase by 143 per cent by 2031, the fourth-biggest rise after greater Melbourne, Bendigo and Geelong.

Mercy Place Ballarat will also give a boost to the local job market by creating more than 100 new jobs for the area. Most importantly, Mercy Health will continue the rich heritage of the Sisters of Mercy who have served the Ballarat community for more than 135 years.



Clockwise from opposite left: Mercy Place Ballarat Retail Assistant Lesley Sapstead orders in lots of seasonal foods for the residents; Mercy Place Ballarat is surrounded by beautifully landscaped gardens; each of the 14 households feature homely, comfortable spaces; Mercy Place Ballarat will cater for 112 residents, who will live in 14 smaller households.



workplaces. For example, one group spoke about how, like Catherine, Southern Cross Care (Vic) Community Services teams seek to enable those for whom they care rather than create dependency.

Gavan recalls a discussion led by Home Care Services National Director Amanda Bowe, which brought to life the Mercy Health values of Compassion, Hospitality, Respect, Innovation, Stewardship and Teamwork.

“Amanda took the words of the values off the paper and gave some real insight into our roles and responsibilities and how these values help build a culture that is strong, healthy and dynamic,” Gavan says.

“It is not just lip service — we need to lead by example and we can make a difference.”

The Spirit of Mercy Leadership and Values Program was developed to assist the cultural alignment process of Southern Cross Care (Vic) staff who officially joined Mercy Health in July 2018. Group Manager Leadership and Mission Karan Smith says that, “these sessions are providing staff with the opportunity to hear the story of Mercy and to reflect on the values of Mercy in action, ensuring that staff are supported and provided with the knowledge and tools they need to lead the mission of Mercy in their workplace.”

L-R: Southern Cross Care (Vic) leaders at the Mission and Values Leadership Day; Southern Cross Care (Vic) Community Services North West General Manager Gavan Leonard.

Catherine: continuing to inspire

A dynamic and thought-provoking Mission and Values Leadership Day in April proved the perfect platform to bring together senior staff from Mercy Health and Southern Cross Care (Vic). The Spirit of Mercy Program covers a range of topics — from the history of the Sisters of Mercy, to the Mercy Health values our people live every day — and is set to be rolled out to more leaders in coming months.

For Southern Cross Care (Vic) Community Services North West General Manager

Gavan Leonard, the day served to highlight the many similarities between the two organisations. One such likeness was the notion of seeking ways to help those in need, which the Knights of the Southern Cross (Victoria) did when they launched Southern Cross Homes to support the financially disadvantaged.

“To hear the story of [Sisters of Mercy Foundress] Catherine McAuley and understand the genesis of the organisation was really important,” says Gavan, whose father served on the

Southern Cross Homes Board throughout the 1970s and ‘80s.

“It took great courage for Catherine to reach out to the poor and neglected; she could have gone another way but she chose to do something.

“The genesis of our organisations are similarly aligned; they are both driven by the heart.”

On the day, Southern Cross Care (Vic) leaders expressed admiration for Catherine’s courage, determination and compassion for those in need. They identified how Catherine’s vision and values could be found in their own



We value your ideas and feedback

Mercy Health is recruiting new Community Advisory Group members for:

- *Mercy Hospital for Women Heidelberg*
- *Mercy Mental Health*
- *Mercy Health Albury*
- *Werribee Mercy Hospital*
- *Mercy Care Centre Young*

Do you want to be **more involved** in our care?

Do you have **ideas to help** improve our services?

What is a Community Advisory Group (CAG)?

The CAG provides our hospitals and health services with advice and feedback on the experiences of those we care for.

Members of the CAG are current or past patients and clients. They can also be family members and friends, carers or members of the local community.

If you want to make a difference and help us to improve the care and services we provide, please contact our Consumer Participation and Experience team at getinvolved@mercy.com.au or phone (03) 8416 7872.

Mercy Health acknowledges Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples as the first Australians. We acknowledge the diversity of Indigenous Australia. We respectfully recognise Elders past, present and emerging. This report was produced on Wurundjeri Country.



Our Voice will be back in December with our summer edition. In the meantime, you can keep up-to-date with current Mercy Health news at mercyhealth.com.au/news

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