



100 Years Young Timeline

1920s

In 1923, the Sisters of Mercy first arrived in Young, New South Wales, when the Goulburn Congregation took over management of Mount St Joseph's Home and Sacred Heart Hospital. Mother Mary Justinian O'Neill and the seven Sisters of Mercy who arrived in Young together, settled in the community and began their service of care.

1930s

The 1930s saw a period of advancement and growth for the Sacred Heart Hospital. A new maternity complex opened with state-of-the-art facilities which supported the local community in creating a safe birthing space for mothers.

1940s

Advancement and growth continued in the 1940s when the Sacred Heart Hospital became the first regional health service outside of Melbourne to administer penicillin. Pathology and X-ray facilities were also established in the hospital which saw staff from the local community upskilled on using new technology.

1950s

By 1950, the Sisters of Mercy had helped birth 207 babies in the Young community at Sacred Heart Hospital.

1960s

In 1961, Sacred Heart Hospital was renamed Mercy Hospital. At the time, Mount St Joseph's Home offered accommodation to 114 aged care residents who were under the care and support of the Sisters of Mercy.

1970s

In 1970, Mount St Joseph's Home celebrated its Golden Jubilee, marking 50 years since it first started providing care and support to the Young community.

1980s

In 1983, Mercy Hospital and Mount St Joseph's Home were renamed to the Mercy Care Centre Young.

In 1985, Mercy Hospital established its palliative care service, providing care for community members and their families.

1990s

In 1994, Mercy Care Centre Young expanded its offering through the establishment of a speech pathology service.

In 1997, the Sisters of Mercy celebrated 75 years of continuous service to the people of the Young community.

2000s

In the early 2000s, Mount St Joseph's Home was expanded. It was blessed by His Grace Archbishop Francis Patrick Carroll and opened by the Hon. Craig Knowles, New South Wales State Minister for Health.

The expansion also saw the launch of Mount St Joseph's Home's in-home services, with Mercy Care Centre Young contracted to provide community nursing services to local war veterans by the Department of Veterans' Affairs.

2010s

In 2015, Mercy Care Centre Young fundraised \$26,379 for the refurbishment of Hennessy Recreational Therapy Centre.

In 2019, Mercy Care Centre Young continued its fundraising endeavours to raise money for the palliative care wing. A total of \$45,355 was raised which went towards supporting this service within the Young community.

2020s

In early 2020, the Mercy Care Centre Young continued its transformation by moving to electronic medical records within its community and outpatient services.

The digitisation of Mercy Care Centre Young continued in May 2023, when it commenced electronic medical records for all inpatients.

Event details

Today we gather to commemorate 100 years since the Sisters of Mercy started supporting the Young community in New South Wales. In honour of this milestone, Mercy Health is pleased to host our “100 Years Young” event on Thursday 16 November.

Acknowledgement of Country

Mercy Health acknowledges Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples as the First Australians. We respectfully acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the Ngunawal Traditional lands on which we meet, for it always was, and always will be the land of the Wiradjuri People. We pay our respects to Elders past and present. We also support the continuation of cultural, spiritual and educational practices of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples.

Recognition of Heritage and Ethos

As part of our reflection practices, we stop to consider the learnings of those who have come before us to make Mercy Health the ministry it is today. We give thanks and acknowledge the Sisters of Mercy and their Founder, the Venerable Catherine McAuley, as well as the Family Care Sisters, the Good Shepherd Sisters, the Holy Spirit Missionary Sisters and the Knights of the Southern Cross.

***“We should be shining
lamps, giving light to
all around us”***

– Catherine McAuley



For the Sisters of Mercy who have been shining the light of Mercy in Young for 100 years, we are thankful.

We are grateful for the gifts of life, love and service they have and continue to offer to this community.

We remember with gratitude the Sisters who have gone before us marked with the sign of faith.

May God continue to bless the work of Mercy in Young.

May the witness of God's mercy through the delivery of compassionate care be strengthened.

May the tradition of mercy continue to grow.

May God bless the works of Mercy throughout the world.

And may we always treasure the memory of our companions, who came before us to give witness to God's mercy.

Amen.

Mother M. Justinian O'Neill

Mother Justinian O'Neill was born into a devout Catholic family. After attending the Goulburn Convent of Mercy, she was determined her future would be focussed on serving through the Mercy Order.

On 29 January 1923, the Mercy Order and Sisters of Mercy arrived in the Young community. Mother Justinian led the Sisters of Mercy to Young where she remained devoted to supporting the community by embodying the Mercy Health values.

It was Mother Justinian's devotion to the Mercy Order and caring for others that ensured the Sacred Heart Hospital was a caring and well-run institution. This is a legacy which lives on within Mercy Health today.

Mother M. Francis Coniff

In the 1920s, the Sisters of Mercy took over the management of Mount St Joseph's Home, the first Catholic aged care home in NSW, which was led by Mother Francis Coniff. By 1923, Mother Francis led support services at the home alongside two Sisters of Mercy.

Mother Francis played a key role in continuing to expand on the care and support services provided by the Sisters of Mercy, opening a waiting list for those seeking aged care. Those on the waiting list received additional care from the Sisters which, for many, provided a new lease on life.

While under the management of the Sisters of Mercy, the home was known for the care, kindness and personal sacrifices made for the residents. This lives on within Mercy Health today.

Sister Theresa Foley

Sister Theresa Foley began her journey with the Mercy Order in January 1962, when she commenced her training alongside five trainee nurses. Over her time in the Young community, Sister Foley witnessed many periods of change.

During her first four years of training, large renovations took place to update the facilities with new theatres and emergency departments, as well as the establishment of staff and nurse education rooms.

In 1980, Sister Foley commenced in the role of Director of Nursing at Mercy Hospital.

One of the largest changes Sister Foley witnessed was the rationalisation of health care services in the Young community. For Young, rationalisation meant Mercy Hospital was established as a regional unit for care of the aged, chronically ill and palliative care



patients. When this took place in 1982, most other services including surgical, emergency and maternity care were relocated to Young District Hospital.

Sister Foley remains very grateful to the many Sisters of Mercy, trainees, trained staff, ancillary staff doctors and the community of Young who have supported Mercy Health over these past 100 years.



Mercy Health

Care first

“Inspired by the enduring legacy of the Sisters of Mercy, our commitment at Mercy Health is to carry forward their century-long tradition of compassionate service to our local communities.

For the past 100 years, the Sisters of Mercy have selflessly served the people of Young with hospitality and compassion. It is both heartening and honourable to sustain their legacy by providing the highest quality of care to the communities we serve.”

– Group Chief Executive Officer, Angela Nolan