



Great Service, Great Care, Great Community

Quality Account 2018-19



The theme of the 2018-19 Quality Account is Great Service – Great Care – Great Community

It is well documented that Rural Northwest Health has been recognised and rewarded by its peers on several occasions for the quality of its care. This is an impressive achievement for a small health service in what is classed as a rural and remote region.

As an organisation, we are very proud of the respect we have in the industry but one of our biggest issues has been making our community aware of the depth of services we are able to provide them.

Moving forward, our message will be loud and clear – “Ask before you travel”.

Our mission is to provide accessible, efficient and excellent care to our community within the Wimmera Mallee region. We are achieving our mission but we also want the community to take advantage of our extensive range of services as often as possible.

We have an extensive range of allied health services available in Warracknabeal, Beulah and Hopetoun and provided by our very own skilled professionals. However, there is still a great deal of work we can do to help educate our communities about the number of services we provide.

If you are ever in need of a health professional, ask first if the service is available in your own town or if you can access the service via Telehealth. You will save time and travel and you will be very satisfied with your local choice.

We hope you enjoy reading our Quality Account as much as we enjoy preparing it for you. You will learn much about the RNH service delivery and you will find graphic documentation to demonstrate our performance. If you wish to know more about the services we provide, you can contact our office on 5396 1200.

The team that worked on the 2018-19 Quality Account included Dalton Burns, Jo Martin, Wendy James, Kerry Seater and Peter Miller.

Photographs: Peter Miller

Editor: Peter Miller

This account is available to community members on Rural Northwest Health's website www.rnh.net.au and copies are available from our Warracknabeal, Hopetoun and Beulah campuses. Community members can contact Rural Northwest Health on 5396 1200 to request a copy of the Quality Account be mailed to them. Copies are also available at various businesses in Hopetoun, Beulah, Brim and Warracknabeal.

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Welcome

On behalf of the Rural Northwest Health Board of Directors, Executive, Team Members and Volunteers, it gives us great pleasure to present the Rural Northwest Health Quality Account for 2018/19.

The Quality Account enables us to showcase how we work together with our community to improve health and well-being for all.

Rural Northwest Health continues to engage with its community with the aim to improve safety, quality and access to care - and to achieve high levels of patient, resident and team member satisfaction. You can actively participate improving the services we provide through our feedback luncheons, surveys, research projects, community forums and reference groups. We strive to provide the best possible care close to home.

The Board and Executive team encourage everyone to find the time to participate with us and assist us to be the best that we can be, delivering the best possible services - to enable you to live the Best Life Possible.

We thank the efforts of our Rural Northwest Health team members, volunteers and partners who dedicate themselves to continually improve the well-being of our patients, residents and community. We hope you enjoy reading the stories in our Quality Account, showcasing the wonderful achievements of 2018/19.

Please let us know what you think of our Quality Account and how you would like us to partner with you into the future.

Julia Hausler
BOARD CHAIRPERSON

Kevin Mills
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

About our Organisation

Rural Northwest Health is a Victorian public sector health service created under the Health Services Act and responsible to the Minister for Health, The Honourable Jill Hennessy, MP.

The population for Yarriambiack Shire is 7088 (ABS, census 2011). Rural Northwest Health covers the northern part of the Shire and shares the southern part with West Wimmera Health Services. Between our three campuses at Warracknabeal, Beulah and Hopetoun, we provide a comprehensive range of acute, aged and primary health services to the local community.

The key focus of Rural Northwest Health is caring and supporting people to be healthy and living a full life. Our logo represents this by the carer reaching out and embracing its community over the broad horizon.

Our team members provide care and programs that offer wide-reaching community support and a warm and comforting approach. Rural Northwest Health is committed to achieving the best health for the Wimmera Mallee community.

We recognise our clients / residents' total needs in order for them to achieve optimal health and wellbeing. We believe that our clients/residents are entitled to quality health care that respects their dignity, beliefs and rights, regardless of their cultural, spiritual or socio-economic background.

MISSION

Rural Northwest Health will provide accessible, efficient and excellent care to our community within the Wimmera Mallee Region.



VISION

Moving together through change to provide innovative rural health care.

Volunteering

Please complete and return this form to Rural Northwest Health, Dimboola Rd, Warracknabeal, 3393 or contact administration on 5396 1200.

Family Name _____

Given Name _____

Address _____

Post Code _____

Phone _____

Email _____

WHAT ARE YOU INTERESTED IN?

☐

Representing consumers on hospital committees or working groups

☐

Being a voice for the community

☐

Volunteering in Aged Care

☐

Volunteering in Day Program

☐

All of the above

From Hopetoun to hell and back

Retired production manager Janice McRoe had been enjoying a nice change of pace with her husband Tom on their hobby farm at Clear Lake, west of Horsham.



After the frenzied life of Adelaide's corporate world, the composed ambience of a rural setting interrupted occasionally by bleating sheep or clucking chooks, seemed an idyllic life choice. But in 2011, their lives were to take a dramatic turn.

Janice was diagnosed with cancer in one of her kidneys. It wouldn't come as a complete shock to Janice because her family had a history of this dangerous condition, having already claimed the life of her father and two nephews.

Janice had the kidney removed and soon after the couple realised they would not be able to devote the same energy to their hobby farm. They sold the property and eventually moved with their two miniature schnauzers to their new home in Hopetoun.

In 2016, Janice's health deteriorated once more and scans revealed a tumour on her other kidney that had spread to her bladder. There was also a major infection in her bowel that resulted in the removal of her large bowel at Wimmera Health Care Group's Horsham theatre.

A few months later, she was rushed to Melbourne for major surgery to remove the kidney, her bladder and her bowel.

For Janice, life would never be the same again. She would no longer have the use of kidneys, bowel or bladder and she was fully reliant on home dialysis and the support of Tom to get through each day.

After the operation, a fistula was created in Janice's left arm so she could receive dialysis treatment at home. It took six months to mature enough that it could be operational and during this time, Tom was trained by Ballarat Health medical staff to learn how to operate the dialysis machine.

Janice said it was difficult for Tom.

"Tom had worked most of his life in Adelaide as a quality manager for a manufacturing company but by this time he was 68 years old and retired," Janice said.

"My condition was a life jolt for him as well and suddenly he was under pressure to learn how to operate this important machine that my life was dependent upon," she said.

"But he did it so I wouldn't be constantly travelling from Hopetoun to Horsham and back three or four times a week.

"We just weren't up for that."

Janice would spend the next two years on dialysis before a Royal Melbourne professor suggested that Tom should be considered as her kidney donor. Janice said the idea was met with a lot of resistance from medical staff.

"There was really only one doctor who felt sorry enough for me to take the risk and she was Royal Melbourne renal transplant surgeon Amanda Robertson," she said.

"I will be forever thankful for her resolve to make it happen."

Tom was eventually tested and while he wasn't a 100 percent match, it was considered close enough to proceed. The transplant went ahead but Janice's days of hospital stays were far from finished.

She had to stay in Royal Melbourne Hospital because of several life-threatening infections, including sepsis, which were a result of the surgery and post-operative bleeding.

There were occasions immediately after the transplant when Janice wasn't expected to survive yet a few days later she would be up and walking around.



Nurses Leo and Kylie monitor Janice's infusion in Warracknabeal acute.

Janice was given a monthly infusion to suppress her immune system.

After six months Janice had enough of hospital life and she had yearned to return home.

"While Tom had been with me, it was okay but he had to head back to Hopetoun a month earlier because the dogs had been in kennels for a long time and his accommodation in Melbourne was just an extra financial burden that we didn't need," she said.

"I wanted to return home as well so I asked if there was any chance I could get the treatment I needed closer to home.

"They rang a few hospitals in the region and had a chat to see who was willing to do it.

"Warracknabeal told them to send some information on what they had to do and they would give it a go."

And they did.

For three days of each month, Janice is confined to a hospital bed in the Warracknabeal campus acute wing. That might still seem a lot to deal with for most but Janice will tell you 'it's better than dialysis'.

"I'm extremely thankful that the Warracknabeal team was willing to help me," she said.

"Warracknabeal is a beautiful hospital with a beautiful staff they all know what they are doing.

"They look after me very well and they don't take any chances."

Janice said the Warracknabeal acute team even allowed her dogs to visit her while she was confined to her bed.

"What I love about RNH is that they employ more staff per patient so you get more care," she said.

"The Royal Melbourne team are just constantly run off their feet but here, they take the time to look after you properly.

"It makes a huge difference."





Janice and Tom
with their miniature
schnauzers.

How we helped

For Janice to receive the right clinical treatment as close to home as possible, a lot of clinical co-ordination between many different hospitals, specialists and pharmacies was necessary.

It started with Warracknabeal Acute's nurse unit manager Jason Hay contacting Royal Melbourne specialists to ensure that Janice could receive the same treatment in Warracknabeal as she did in Royal Melbourne. This also required special education to be provided to the Warracknabeal Acute team to ensure that the specific infusion, not routinely given at RNH, could be administered safely.

Jason said the next hurdle to overcome was ensuring that the specific infusion could be sourced locally.

"Unfortunately, we were unable to secure the infusion locally and required Wimmera Health Care Group's pharmacy to source the medication for us," Jason said.

"There was a significant cost for this medication and after I spoke with our executive manager of Clinical Services Wendy James, we gained approval to purchase the expensive infusion from WHCG," he said.

"This was made more complicated because there was a shortage of the medication in Australia so the medication had to be sourced from overseas – at even more cost!

"Our stance on this was 'what price can you put on receiving the right medication, close to home?'"

"So there was a lot of co-ordination and clinical conversations and many phone calls to make this work."

Jason said he was 'particularly proud' that his team were able to make the right professional connections with the team at Royal Melbourne to treat Janice closer to home.

"This huge amount of time-consuming work was driven by the values and vision of RNH which is moving together through change to provide innovative rural health care and to provide accessible, efficient and excellent care to our community within the Wimmera Mallee Region," he said.

"It has been a very satisfying achievement all round."

Blue Ribbon Baby

This is the incredible story that made national news in August, 2018

A Rural Northwest Health nurse delivered her colleague's baby on the side of a bitumen road in the early hours of August 21.

Rural Northwest Health enrolled nurse Bronwyn McIntyre was driving to work along the Blue Ribbon Road from Horsham to Warracknabeal when she was flagged down by a frantic father just after 7am.

Bronwyn said she stopped because she recognised the driver was Ashish Sahi, a personal carer with whom she worked at RNH's Warracknabeal campus. Ashish's partner is Mahima Atwal, a registered nurse, who also works with Bronwyn.

"I knew Mahima was ready to give birth because I worked with her a few weeks ago and she went home early because she was having contractions," Bronwyn said.

When Bronwyn arrived, Mahima was on the front seat of their Toyota Rav 4 and their 5yo daughter Archisha was in the back seat. Ashish was on the phone to emergency services.

"Mahima had crowned because I could see the baby's head so I took the phone from Ashish and the Triple Zero operator guided me, telling me where to place my hands to help her push," Bronwyn said.

"The birth happened within five minutes or so. Ashish caught the baby," she said.

"They told me to place the baby on Mahima's chest and we covered her with baby blankets that were in the car."

As a nurse and former lieutenant of Warracknabeal Fire Brigade, Bronwyn was well trained at remaining calm in a crisis situation. Bronwyn said she remained calm throughout the birth and kept talking to Mahima and to Archisha because she was frightened by the experience.

"The only time I got a little unsure was when I was trying to give the emergency controller our location," she said.

"I knew the district was Murra Warra but couldn't think of the name at the time so I just said we were 100 metres south of the Wimmera Fire Shed and Sailor's Home Hall."

The ambulance arrived 15 minutes after the birth and commuted Mahima and the baby to Wimmera Base Hospital's Yandilla ward. Bronwyn continued her drive to work where she had a big story to tell her colleagues.

"It was only when I got to work and everyone was congratulating me that it started to sink in what had happened," she said.

"It was an overwhelming experience and it did shock me a bit when I think of what could have gone wrong.

"I'm just so glad it was me coming along at that time because I don't normally start that early. I went over early because I knew I



Bronwyn visited Mahima a few hours after the birth.



had a meeting later on and I was trying to make up the time.

"As it turned out, I ended up being a little late to work."

Bronwyn said it was the first time she had delivered a baby and was in no hurry to do it again.

"I have no desire to take up midwifery. I prefer being involved at the other end of life."

Mahima said she was so grateful for Bronwyn's appearance.

She was concerned when she realised she wasn't going to make it to the hospital.

"I told Ashish to pull over because I felt the baby coming," Mahima

said.

"I saw the car coming and told Ashish to 'stop that car' because he was going to need help," Mahima said.

"We were so lucky it was Bronwyn. I think God must have intervened to help us."

Ashish said he named their baby girl Arshika because it meant 'happiness'.

"Archisha wanted to call her 'Rose' so that will be a nickname for her," Ashish said.



Registered nurses Amanjit, Han and Leo celebrate the completion of their grad year.

Nursing numbers bolstered by new grads

A wealth of new nursing staff has bolstered clinical numbers at Rural Northwest Health and helped to ensure the organisation continues to meet high industry standards.

A dozen new nurses chose RNH for the completion of their graduate year. RNH manager of Education and Research Dr Kaye Knight said the January intake was the highest in the organisation's recent history.

"We have welcomed both registered nurses and enrolled nurses which is also a major boost to the qualification levels at RNH," Dr Knight said.

"We are very pleased to have these sorts of numbers in our nursing fraternity and to have highly trained people is even better," she said.

Dr Knight said most of the new nurses who had signed on, had completed clinical placement with RNH last year.

"They enjoyed their time at RNH so much that they chose us for their grad year," she said. "That means they clearly enjoy the working environment at Rural Northwest Health and the rural lifestyle around Warra, Kabeal and Hopetoun is obviously appealing to them as well."

Dr Knight said credit for the bolstered numbers should also go to

the clinical team who have supported these nurses at the bedside.

"Particularly our clinical support nurse Breanna Stonehouse who is doing a great job mentoring these nurses" she said.

"She has been marvellous with making these nurses feel comfortable and helping them to continuously improve their skills.

"It works both ways because our new grads have added capacity to our workforce and in return they will be provided with valuable support to learn more and become better nurses."

Dr Knight said RNH's education and training programs were the envy of other health services.

"It's also important to highlight RNH management has always encouraged team members to better themselves and to develop their careers to their maximum potential.

"That always benefits both RNH and our employees."

RNH has 14 team members studying either the Diploma of Nursing or Bachelor of Nursing program in 2019.

"They are our clinicians of the future," Dr Knight said.

Clinical support nurse Breanna Stonehouse welcomes a new team of graduates.



Casey scholarship to support RNH staff



Rural Northwest Health team members wanting to improve their skills will have the opportunity for financial support with the announcement of the Leo Casey Scholarship.

RNH board director Glenda Hewitt announced the introduction of the scholarship to a packed room at the Betty Richardson Awards dinner which included a clearly astounded Mr Casey. Mrs Hewitt said the scholarship would celebrate the commitment and contribution of the former board chair and director.

"Leo Casey has dedicated his life to helping others learn and grow," Mrs Hewitt told the crowd.

"As an educator, RNH board chair and director and active community member, Leo encourages people to see the bigger picture, to learn about the world outside the local community and bring back ideas, knowledge and skills that will enrich the lives of others," she said.

"Leo champions the notions of life-long learning and exploring the world to enable innovation and the provision of world class rural health care."

RNH Education and Research manager Dr Kaye Knight said the scholarship provided an important opportunity for team members who wanted to further develop their career.

She said the scholarship was about team members gaining learning experiences that will increase the capability and capacity of the RNH workforce to deliver high quality, safe care and services.

"RNH has a remarkable history of supporting team members to take their career as far as possible," Dr Knight said.

"Team members from any area within the health service are eligible to apply for the annual scholarship," she said.

"The scholarship can be used for expenses including course costs, paid study leave/placement leave, travel and accommodation, learning resources."

Mr Casey spoke briefly after the announcement, thanking the board for the honour and reiterating his strong belief in the growth of RNH.

He said he and wife Frances would commit \$1000 toward the scholarship.

The scholarship announcement was the second honour in six months for Mr Casey, after he was awarded a Life Governorship at RNH's annual general meeting in November, 2018.

New CEO looks to team

Rural Northwest Health's new chief executive officer is blending his sporting values into his role.

Kevin is a strong believer in taking advantage of teamwork to get the best result. He plans to implement the same strategy to ensure the region has the best possible health services.

"I'm looking forward to making an impact both in my new role and in the community," Kevin said.

"But whatever that might be, it will be the result of a team effort," he said.

"I'm huge on team."

Kevin's sporting portfolio is definitely above average which makes the work comparison a suitable one. He played 135 senior games for Kalkee Football Club and notched up six premierships in that time.

He also found time to win a premiership with Blackheath's A grade cricket team, despite a lifetime summer devotion to tennis.

Kevin still plays sport and intends to get involved as much as possible in his new community. When still at Edenhope, he joined his sons on the hockey field and they plan to continue playing at Warracknabeal.

Growing up on a Kalkee farm with three sisters and three brothers, Kevin made an early choice to start a career in accountancy. He studied at university in Adelaide and worked in private sector and public sector organisations in both SA and Victoria.

Kevin's career in the not-for-profit sector resumed when he moved back to Horsham working with Skill Invest before a seven year stint at Wimmera Uniting Care as chief finance officer. After that he moved his young family to Edenhope where he took over as CEO of the Edenhope and District Memorial Hospital from aspiring politician Emma Kealy.

His three years at Edenhope was enough time to lift the health service above the black line financially.

Kevin said he made his role at Edenhope easier by drawing on the experience and knowledge of CEOs and executives throughout the region.

"I did a lot of networking early and made sure I was learning about my role from the right people," he said.

"I spent a great deal of time talking with the CEO and executive members at Rural Northwest Health because the service was held in such high regard throughout the industry.

"From the moment I started at Edenhope, I viewed RNH as an industry leader.

"I was also very envious of the wonderful facilities here."

Kevin said he was looking forward to making an impact on the community and with the RNH team.

"The executive members all talk very highly of the teams in their various departments and my first priority will always be to those people who make up this great team to make our health service the best.

"Since arriving, I have really enjoyed spending time with various teams through training, meetings and reviews which is helping me to gain a greater understanding of RNH."

Kevin said he was working with the board and executive on several strategic initiatives. They include:

- a) an initiative to gain priority access for rural communities to appointment times, in person and through Telehealth, at Royal Children's Hospital.
- b) advocacy to the Primary Health Network to enable referrals to Primary Mental Health Services by social workers and other counsellors directly. The current process requires a GP referral.
- c) work continues with Edenhope and District Memorial Hospital, WWHS, WWSC, Hindmarsh Shire and Yarriambiack shire to establish a rural outreach program for mental health.
- d) expansion of the well-being model, YCHANGE and other Community Health initiatives in partnership with other health services, councils and service providers.

Kevin said he was also excited at the number of graduates who will be working and training at RNH in 2019.

"This is a great opportunity for us to help this group have a wonderful start to their new journey and help shape the future of our workforce," he said.

"I am confident that we provide a skilled workforce and a wonderful environment where they can flourish."



Kevin promotes 'November' with team members Peter Cox and Jason Hay.

Cheryl humbled by award

Hopetoun's Cheryl Reid proved a popular winner of Rural Northwest Health's 2019 Betty Richardson Award.

A packed room applauded loudly as the Hopetoun campus administration manager was announced during an awards dinner in Warracknabeal last May. Former nurse and nurse trainer Betty Richardson attended the event to present Cheryl with her award.

Cheryl thanked many people and gave a brief history of her working life during a gracious speech. She was clearly thrilled and humbled by her win ahead of fellow finalists wellbeing administrator Angie Cox and nurse Gary Bellis.

Cheryl started in 1991 as a receptionist for Hopetoun Bush Nursing Hospital where she was in charge of patient admissions, discharge, patient records and purchasing while also providing a friendly greeting to all who visited.

These days Cheryl's title has changed but her duties have only increased. Added to her list now is





health and wellbeing mentor, domestic violence mentor, admin support to the campus manager, Kronos coordinator and rosters manager.

Cheryl has also been involved in many RNH projects including Leadership training and the BRIGHT program. She has represented RNH on various committees including Women on Farms and a committee that brought the National Centre for Farmer Health nurses to Hopetoun.

Cheryl was the driver behind swapping the physiotherapy room at Hopetoun with the education room which has proved to create a change in perception with community members about the benefits of exercise.

In nominating Cheryl, 2018 award winner Kathleen Poulton said her biggest strength was her personality.

"Cheryl is held in high regard throughout RNH and the community," Mrs Poulton said.

"She greets everyone with a smile and deals with every situation in a pragmatic yet compassionate approach," she said.

"She is never flustered, no matter how explosive the situation may become. She is professional, trustworthy, reliable and always positive."

RNH's most prestigious annual award is presented to a team member who best reflects the attributes of Mrs Richardson who dedicated a career to nursing and educating in Warracknabeal. To help with their choice, a panel of judges take those attributes into consideration.

They include patient/client focus, team approach, flexibility, a logical and pragmatic approach, the ability to push boundaries in order to achieve the best outcome for the patient/client and typical 'Betty' qualities such as being humble, a quiet achiever, a strong sense of humour and demonstrating camaraderie.

The award night also highlighted team member milestone awards for 2019. At the top of the list were nurses Brenda Sleep and Karen Miller who both celebrated 30 years of service, followed by Debra Ashworth on 25 years.

Other service award recipients included Christine Harris and Bronwyn McIntyre for 15 years and Katrina Fallon, Lynne Boschen, Jacqueline Johnston, Raelene Fay, Jade Taylor, Joanne Watson, Bridget Williams, Lee-Ann Nikkelson and Lisa Cook for 20 years.



RNH life governor Jean Webster celebrates the opening of the units.



Stylish homes for our best asset

The erection of two modular units on the same block at Rural Northwest Health's Hopetoun campus has proved to be great success.

The two-bedroom, two bathroom units have been fully occupied by nursing staff since their completion last Christmas. RNH Community Health manager Jo Martin said the absolute occupancy justified the investment made by the board of directors.

"When I was acting CEO early last year, I saw there was a need for these units," Jo said.

"The accommodation for visiting nurses at Hopetoun was looking very tired and just wasn't inviting enough to attract clinical staff to our furthest placed campus," she said.

"I pointed out the urgency of the situation to the board and they realised we had to make sure it happened and as soon as possible.

"We put a planning committee together which included community members and nurses using accommodation and it all happened very quickly from there."

The beautifully appointed units have been built to provide

accommodation flexibility. They can be occupied by a couple with a child or by two single people.

Jo said RNH wanted units that would support people to move to Hopetoun.

"The accommodation we wanted was to reflect that our staff are the most valuable asset we have and this investment is an extension of that," she said.

"You would not find more stylish and comfortable accommodation anywhere.

"We've had great feedback on the standard of the accommodation already. It certainly enhances the experience of working on the edge of the Mallee."

The two units were built in Melbourne and transported to Hopetoun. They were completed there and made fully operational within budget, including landscaping around both units.



Jason Hay, left, takes acute team members through a training update.



Alliance support for leaders

In 2018, the Wimmera Southern Mallee Health Alliance took steps to ensure the leadership of its organisations was strong and cohesive.

This was achieved through the creation of the Future Leaders Development Program.

The program's first intake accepted nominations from team members of the various organisations who were currently managing staff. They were overwhelmed with nominations and ended up taking on two groups, with a total of 40 members.

The programs, made up of a mix of team members from all alliance organisations, met once a month to learn about a range of leadership skills, including their own personal strengths and skills.

The full day training sessions also gave attendees the chance to mix and form relationships with team members from other alliance health services.

This relationship allows for better idea sharing, innovation and efficiency.

Rural Northwest Health. Acute nurse unit manager Jason Hay

was one of several health professionals to complete the program. Jason said he found the program to be an excellent course.

"It aligned not only organisational values but it has given me tools to better lead my team," Jason said.

"The program highlighted different leadership theories including appreciative enquiry and a comprehensive analysis of what makes a good leader," he said.

"There are several elements that I've already been able to adopt in daily procedure as well as fostering the development of the associate nurse unit managers in my team.

"The program helps you to understand your strengths and those of your team, so you can build on them."

The program is now open to team members who do not immediately manage people so the members of the alliance can develop the next generation of leaders.

New manager brings wealth of knowledge

Rural Northwest Health's new Hopetoun campus manager brings a wealth of medical experience and qualifications to her role.

Jayne Maddick is a qualified critical care nurse and has worked in Melbourne health services in various management roles. Her most recent post was as hospital coordinator at Cabrini Health and prior to that, she was director of nursing at a private health unit in Melbourne.

RNH CEO Kevin Mills said Jayne's appointment was an exciting development for his team.

"Jayne has extensive management background but it's her knowledge and experience in emergency that adds another level to our organisation," Mr Mills said.

"We will look to tap into that knowledge wherever possible," he said.

"Jayne's skillset complements our leadership team as we move into an exciting new phase in delivering outstanding care and services for our community."

Jayne said the reasoning behind her shift to Hopetoun was to get back to the country life.

"I grew up in Melbourne but my husband Rick is from Echuca," Jayne said.

"After we married we lived at Echuca for 10 years and started our family there before moving to South Gippsland," she said.

"I returned to working in the city while we lived in a small town there."

The Maddicks have four adult sons.

In her spare time, Jayne is busy completing an honours program with Deakin University where she is studying psychology. She also enjoys kayaking, hiking, sewing and knitting.



Jayne Maddick checks a medication chart with nurse Shelby Monaghan.

Exercise area marks garden completion

The erection of an exercise area for seniors has drawn the wellness garden at Rural Northwest Heath's Warracknabeal campus to the cusp of completion.

The powerfully built motion wellness exercise package features a variety of fitness stations to support motion, laid out on a safe rubber surface. The 11 stations include a hand bike, tai chi wheels, snake pipe with ring, balance beam, rope bridge walk and more.

The senior circuit system is designed to include a variety of low, medium and high degree of exercises that support physical, cognitive and social awareness. The US-designed system improves stability, coordination and balance through continued use of the individual stations.

A variety of training tutorials are stamped on the equipment to show you how to use each component. Each tutorial also explains the benefits of using that particular exercise.

RNH CEO Kevin Mills said the installation of the equipment would almost complete the wellness garden which has been a major project for the RNH and Warracknabeal community.

"There are just a few aesthetic features still to be added such as statues, signage and a history board but the wellness garden work itself is at the completion stage for now," Mr Mills said.

"It was initially designed as a therapeutic garden for everyone to use including community members so we really want to see people utilising the area as much as possible now," he said.

"It's a great place to bring the entire family any day of the week and I imagine it will become a popular spot once the weather warms up."

Horsham firm Chapple Landscaping began work on the wellness garden just over two years ago, guided by an initial design from Melbourne landscape architects Kate and Kendall Monk. The themes of the garden were designed from the region's key elements including farm, tree, creek, community and health.

The garden was built in stages which include a sensory garden, community plaza and orchard forecourt, a movement park and a grassy knoll. A \$500 donation from Warracknabeal Rotary Club and RNH funding helped kickstart the project.

The finished product has provided an enchanting and functional gateway to the main campus. It features a large sheltered area with a roof imitating the old Warracknabeal hospital, a paved courtyard and areas of rubber flooring in earthen tones.

Mr Mills said the initial wellness garden concept also featured a water park.

"We haven't carried the water park idea but it's on the backburner at this stage," he said.

"We've left an area specifically for its installation and the necessary piping has been laid but at this stage we simply don't have the funding to complete it," he said.

"If anyone in the community would like to help make the water park happen, we would be very keen to discuss the idea with them."





Freda Hewitt tests the equipment watched by husband Joff.





A run to the river

Rural Northwest Health team members like to go that little bit further to make special memories for their aged care residents.

Taking residents on holidays each year is a perfect example of that commitment. The holiday program began five years ago when the team at the Hopetoun campus took their residents to Ocean Grove for a few days.

While staying there, they visited a wildlife sanctuary, a restaurant and the beach, among their many trips. The holiday program was recognised nationally with an aged care Better Practice award in 2015.

Yarriambiack Lodge soon followed suit after realising the great advantages of the program and soon both aged care campuses were making annual pilgrimages to places like Ocean Grove, Swan Hill, Echuca-Moama and Halls Gap.

Hopetoun holiday planner Norma Decker said the program relied heavily on many volunteered hours.

"While we still collect our wage, the holiday still relies on many hours of work volunteered and for volunteers to join us," Norma said.

"There's a lot of time and effort sacrificed to make it happen," she said.

"This year we went to Echuca Moama with 11 residents and eight caring staff including a registered nurse.

"As usual they all had a ball and everyone is keen to go again."





Wedding beams in to Dal Monte

Warracknabeal couple Graham and Beverley Hobbs had resigned themselves to the realisation that they would have to miss their grand daughter's wedding.

Lauri was getting married in Sydney and had organised airline tickets for her grandparents to attend. But a sharp decline in health had made the trip impossible for the pair and all looked lost for the important family event.

Fortunately technology was able to step in and save the day, along with some close friends.

Mr Hobbs was in respite care at Rural Northwest Health's Yarriambiack Lodge when the wedding date arrived and his wife had been at home convalescing from treatment. The plan was devised for the pair to watch the entire wedding via skype media in the comfort of the lodge's Dal Monte Cinema.

Their son Grant and his wife Michelle filmed the Friday afternoon wedding using a drone and gimbal and beamed it directly to the Dal Monte Cinema big screen. Family friends and techno-wizards John and Joan Thompson were able to connect the cinema equipment to the skype broadcast so that the couple was even able to talk to Grant while he was filming the wedding.

Mrs Hobbs was very impressed with the technology and the fact that they could view the entire wedding in plush chairs and from the climate controlled comfort of the cinema.

"It was good that we were able to see the entire wedding," Mrs Hobbs said.

"She looked lovely."

Online support for dementia under trial in Warracknabeal

La Trobe University researchers have recruited Warracknabeal community members to help trial a new \$1.7-million project into dementia support.

Researchers at the university's John Richards Centre for Rural Ageing Research launched the Virtual Dementia Friendly Rural Communities (Verily Connect) project in Warracknabeal in August, 2018. They used trial participants for the project which is designed to improve the lives of carers of people living with dementia.

The project trialled online technologies to support carers of people living with dementia in 12 rural communities across Victoria, New South Wales and South Australia.

Director and John Richards Chair of Rural Ageing and Aged Care Research at La Trobe Professor Irene Blackberry is principal investigator of the Verily Connect project. Professor Blackberry said there were an estimated 200,000 informal carers of people with dementia in rural Australia.

"Our aim is to use online technology to increase support for these carers," Professor Blackberry said.

"To trial the new technology, we utilised people in Warracknabeal including carers of people with dementia, volunteers and service providers," she said.



La Trobe University's Kayla Royals and research fellow Dr Clare Wilding with RNH memory support nurse Katie Ramsdale.

As part of the trial, researchers introduced three key initiatives including a volunteer-led support and mentoring hub to assist older people to use online technologies; a website and mobile app that helps carers of people living with dementia to find local services and connect with other carers; and online video-conferenced carer peer support groups.

"A dementia friendly rural community has many benefits," Professor Blackberry said.

"If carers can be better supported, their capacity to care for people with dementia is greatly improved, reducing the need for more expensive and more disruptive residential care, or multiple acute care admissions."

Rural Northwest Health memory support nurse Katie Ramsdale is the local liaison support to the project. Ms Ramsdale said she was thankful to the many carers, volunteers and support services in the

region who participated.

"We're looking forward to seeing how technology can play a role in supporting and encouraging connection among those caring for people living with dementia, particularly in regional areas where there are barriers to services and support," Ms Ramsdale said.

Other communities taking part in the trial include Edenhope, Kyneton, Heathcote, Horsham, Robinvale, Kooweerup, and Mansfield in Victoria, Molong and Nyngan in NSW, and Victor Harbor and Riverland in SA.

VERILY is funded by the Department of Health and delivered in collaboration with Swinburne University, Newcastle University, Flinders University and Saskatchewan University Canada. VERILY will be implemented and evaluated across 2018-2019 and the project will culminate in June 2019.



Planting the future

Residents at Rural Northwest Health's Hopetoun campus have been taking full advantage of a moat of gardens surrounding the building.

The gardens include a wheelchair-friendly pathway around the campus providing easy access for all. A handful of Hopetoun-based team members initiated what became a complete community project and the finished result is a credit to the community.

It was supported financially by donations from Hopetoun's ladies auxiliary as well as RNH management and a drought relief grant. Hopetoun receptionist Judy Ferguson submitted the grant and was among the initial team to kick start the garden.

Judy said she was very proud of how the Hopetoun community supported it from the start.

"There were so many people who donated time or plants that you could never thank them all individually," Judy said.

"We also received many donations of plants from families of residents who saw what we were doing and wanted to contribute."

A virtual tour of the garden is available on the website: www.rnh.net.au



Community Health feedback lunches

Community Health continues to host quarterly feedback lunches with its clients to ensure Rural Northwest Health is delivering its allied services to the best possible standard.

Clients are invited to dine with the Community Health manager and team leader in the boardroom of the Warracknabeal campus. There they can openly discuss any concerns they may have with the service or any improvements they might want to suggest.

CH manager Jo Martin said clients were often overwhelmed at the variety of allied health services available to them at all three campuses.

Five clients attended the feedback lunch held in June, 2019. Some of the comments provided to the meeting included:

'Didn't realise how much we offer'

'Amazing service and facilities compared to metropolitan hospitals, especially on the Acute visit. Enjoyed great interaction with the clinician'

FORTUNATE:

'Everyone is accommodating'

'Communicates well'

'Physio is great – home visits are amazing'

'Equipment is not ideal for younger people'

DIFFICULTY:

'Need more than one physio appointment per week'

'Another physio would be great'

YOU SAID

Parking for gophers

Pram parking

District Nurse – amazing, just the best

General public don't know the services available

'Did You Know' flyers at the pharmacy



How do you refer into RNH services – did not know about self-referral

SURGERY:

Pre and post – rehab etc

To advertise what is available

Heart problems – Telehealth to Epworth Hospital in Richmond was great

More information provided from Acute

Exercise equipment out in the wellbeing garden is amazing

Needle exchange – would feel more comfortable at hospital

WE DID

Reviewed and provided ongoing monitoring

Community advertising

New physio will cover workload

A compact and reliable team of physiotherapists and undergraduate students has covered an increasing workload at Rural Northwest Health in recent times.

Our senior physiotherapist Brett Boyle has utilised the services of both undergraduate and locum physios to keep up with demand while RNH searched for a second full-time physiotherapist. The most recent contribution was from Melbourne graduates Michael and Hirumi and locum physio Lenny Aronsten.

Lenny said he liked locum work because it gave him the opportunity to see and experience all of Australia.

"I've loved my time working in Warracknabeal and I am really hoping to return in the near future for a further placement," Lenny said.

"The facility is very modern and fantastic to work in and the Rural Northwest Health team are a great bunch and I find it very easy to work with them," he said.

"I've used my weekends to travel the immediate region and have discovered all these great places to visit.

"My fondness for bush walking has lured me to nearby places of intrigue like the Gramplains and Mt Arapiles.

"They are just amazing locations to visit and enjoy."

La Trobe University students Michael and Hirumi are in the middle of a series of work placements before they can qualify as physiotherapists. For Michael, it is the first time he has ventured this far from his hometown of Melbourne.

"I've never worked in the Wimmera or Mallee but I loved every second of it here," Michael said.

"Rural Northwest Health's team has been fantastic because they are really supportive and I've gained more from constructive feedback," he said.

"It's definitely an environment conducive to my learning. I've been challenged beyond what I thought were my capabilities and I've really enjoyed it.

"The variety of work has also provided a lot of opportunities that I might not have gained elsewhere."

Mr Boyle said his team was doing the best it could to keep up with demand.

"We've been getting through the workload as well as possible and having the support of locums and students has definitely helped," Mr Boyle said.

"Lenny's experience has been invaluable and he's very professional," he said.

"He extended his stay an extra two weeks which was a big help as well."

Mr Boyle said RNH supported university students with work placement as often as possible.

"We have genuinely established ourselves as a teaching health service and the students all seem to really enjoy coming here," he said.

"They learn a great variety of skills at a rural health service and they enjoy our modern facilities and equipment.

Mr Boyle said he looked forward to the appointment of a new physiotherapist in mid-August.

"We have been very fortunate to secure the services of a second full time physiotherapist because there is a strong demand for these services in our shire at the moment," he said.

"The long-awaited appointment will give us the ability to provide sustainable quality care for the community.

"We will certainly be able to improve what is already a great service to the region, once this has happened."



RNH physiotherapist Brett Boyle with his students and locum physio Lenny Aronsten.

Life at the other end is great

Warracknabeal couple Enid and Edward Schultz are the epitome of what love and life are all about.

When they married 66 years ago, Enid's mother joked that they wouldn't last two years because of the 11-year gap in their age. Yet here they are, a million hugs later and still very much in love and wanting to do everything together.

That includes an individualised weekly exercise program at Rural Northwest Health's Warracknabeal campus gym. Under the watchful eye of exercise physiologist Britenie Power, the couple complete their regular but varied program which usually includes a 10-minute bike ride that they have gradually increased to four kilometres.

Next is usually a weight session and a series of other strengthening and balance exercises that Britenie prescribes for them as she sees fit. The 45-minute session is impressive enough for any retiree but the couple work through their routine always with a smile.

Not bad when you consider Enid is a spritely 87 and Ed is 98.

Britenie is a huge fan of the couple and is amazed with their resolve.

"They are just my favourite couple," Britenie said.

"They have been together forever and yet they are just so passionate and driven," she said.

"It's that determination that seems to drive them to sustain their fitness and live healthy happy lives.

"It's what we all want to do and Ed and Enid are showing us that you can do it forever."

Enid said they wanted to keep fit in preparation for their favourite activity.

"We both love old time dancing and we've been doing it for more



Edward and Enid Schultz dance around the RNH gym.

than 40 years," Enid said.

"It's kept us fit and active and it's something we enjoy doing together," she said.

"The only trouble is there aren't many dances to attend these days so we had to look at an alternative.

"That's why we contacted Britenie and asked if she could develop a regular exercise program for us."

Edward said they really enjoyed attending the sessions with Britenie.

"It keeps us fit," he said.

For all your health and wellness needs, contact our wellbeing coordinators on free call 1800 667 301.

To watch Enid and Edward tell their inspirational story, follow the YouTube link: <https://youtu.be/nBnU5xxblwl>

Beulah steps up

Beulah community members have been full of praise for the new mini gymnasium at Rural Northwest Health's smallest campus.

Until recently RNH exercise physiologist Michael Pohlner had been taking clients through their exercise routines in a shared community room at the rear of the Beulah Business and Information Centre.

Michael said while it was great to have somewhere to instruct his clients, the community room wasn't ideal.

"It was a general meeting room for the community and it had a few obstacles that we had to work around," Michael said.

"On top of that, we were constantly moving the equipment in and out for each session," he said.

"Now we have a dedicated mini gym and we don't have to worry about rearranging anything."

Michael said the new room was painted and renovated by RNH's maintenance team.

"This room is more private, more climate controlled and just better all around," he said.

"It's made a huge difference to the level of enjoyment for our clients and the fresh coat of paint also helps.

Future plans include the installation of more safety equipment such as hand rails and more gym equipment.

RNH exercise physiologist Michael Pohlner, right, shows Beulah Dey Group members around the new gym.





RNH executives Kay Knight, Jo Martin, Kevin Mills, Wendy James and Acute nurse unit manager Jason Hay dress up for their part in the video.



Jamie Horton, Peter Weller and Felicity Fine record the music for the video in Jamie's lounge room.



Patients urged to get moving

Get up, get out of bed and get moving.

That's the message Rural Northwest Health acute care nurses are promoting to their patients.

The message is part of a new worldwide campaign called #endPJparalysis and it is getting the full support of RNH management. The campaign is all about nursing patients back to an active lifestyle as soon as possible so their time in care is minimal.

Warracknabeal campus manager Wendy James said #endPJparalysis was a Safer Care Victoria project with a simple theory.

"If patients remain wearing pyjamas and spending every hour in their hospital bed, they will take longer to recover," Ms James said.

"Patients who get up, get dressed and start walking around will feel better about themselves sooner," she said.

"That way they are more likely to recover quicker and be discharged from hospital sooner."

Ms James said there were examples of hospitals in England where

there were big reductions in falls and pressure injuries as well as a reduction in the length of stays.

"One study showed that a 50 percent increase in walking while in hospital led to a six percent shorter length of stay," she said.

"Keeping active will also help your ability to fight infections and improve your appetite, sleep and mood."

Rural Northwest Health has promoted #endPJparalysis with a series of posters and brochures produced by communications manager Peter Miller. Mr Miller has also recorded a video clip starring Warracknabeal acute nurse Felicity Fine performing a parody of the Queen hit I Want To Break Free.

The video has been viewed more than 4,000 times on Youtube and FACEBOOK. The YouTube video can be viewed on the website www.rnh.net.au

Alternatively, you can google 'I want to break free from my PJs' or open the link <https://youtu.be/MO3B7qJvVE>

#endPJ paralysis is a Safer Care Victoria project.



RNH midwife Janet Coghill
talks to Breeanna Stonehouse.

Support for new mums

New and expectant mothers from Warracknabeal to Hopetoun and beyond are taking advantage of ante natal and domiciliary services available from Rural Northwest Health.

While RNH does not provide birthing services, our midwives Maree Bell and Janet Coghill support mothers before and after they give birth in a variety of ways.

They host a shared care clinic for low-risk expectant mothers which means they don't have to make regular trips to Horsham prior to birth. A variety of health checks are offered at the clinics, including blood pressure tests and foetal heart checks.

The midwives will also provide expectant mums with education.

They are also able to organise their booking at Horsham's maternity ward or any other major centre they may wish to call the birthplace of their newborn. Wimmera Health Care Group provides our midwives with direct access to its maternity program, making this process a straightforward one.

Once the baby is born and has returned home with mum, our midwives begin their domiciliary services. These services include a visit on the first day at home, post-natal check, they will weigh the baby and provide support.

They will also assist with any feeding issues and refer mother and baby onto a maternal and child health nurse. Maree Bell said the feedback from the region's mums for these services was...

"We have travelled as far as Speed and Patchewollock to help young mothers and they are very thankful that we do," Maree said.

"Some of these mothers can feel very isolated living so far from towns or services and it can be a nervous time for them," she said.

"So our visits are very important to them".

Auxiliary looks for fresh faces

Rural Northwest Health's Warracknabeal auxiliary are looking for like-minded people who enjoy working as a group to help support their local health service.

The auxiliary is a little light on numbers and president Bev Joyce wants to recruit some fresh faces to the group. She said gender would not matter.

"We are keen to get both men and women onto the auxiliary and would love to have a few younger members too," Mrs Joyce said.

"We meet once a month at the Rural Northwest Health Warracknabeal campus and we work on a handful of projects each year," she said.

"So it's not necessarily a major commitment but it is certainly a rewarding one."

Mrs Joyce said auxiliary projects included an annual raffle and a variety of craft activities.

"We crochet blankets and make items for aged care and acute," she said.

"We like to get involved in special projects and some of our more recent examples include donating a toy box and outdoor play gym to the acute unit and providing outdoor seating and iPads for Yarriambiack Lodge residents."

The auxiliary meets on the third Wednesday of each month. Anyone interested in becoming involved can contact the secretary Sharon Powell on 5396 1200 during business hours.

Caption: From left, auxiliary members Myrtle Huebner, Lois Kasper, visitor Angus Jonasson, Sharon Powell, Jill Muller, and Bev Joyce are keen to see some new faces at the monthly meetings.



From left, auxiliary members Myrtle Huebner, Lois Kasper, visitor Angus Jonasson, Sharon Powell, Jill Muller, and Bev Joyce are keen to see some new faces at the monthly meetings.

Talk to someone

A singular compelling message resonated through a packed Warracknabeal Community Centre last June.

"Talk to someone."

Just three words but they were delivered continuously as each expert presented to more than 150 people during the Hardest Kick mental health forum. Presenters delivered impassioned stories of young people who had tragically taken their lives after being unable to overcome their dark disease.

But they all delivered an important message that there are people whom they can talk to and who will listen and help them. Consultations with these highly trained people are free and confidential.

Wimmera PCP mental health officer Lissy Johns kicked off the night and told about her own family tragedy. Lissy was followed by Rural Outreach worker Mal Coutts who shared his own experience with suicide.

The message from both included signs that were overlooked through a lack of knowledge and understanding from the era. They also spoke of the importance of talking about suicide and bringing it into the open.

Royal Flying Doctors Service counsellor David Turnbull and Rural Northwest Health social worker Sandra Telfer confirmed the various free and confidential services available to everyone. Pat Timmons from Rural Financial Counsellors spoke of the free financial advice available to our farmers.

Yarrilamblick Medical Clinic's Dr Franklin Butuyuyu talked about the support GPs could provide to anyone experiencing mental health issues. In an enlightening address, Dr Franklin elicited chuckles from the crowd when he drew parallels to our lack of understanding to mental health with his own toils to comprehend the music favoured by his teenage sons.

Guest speaker, former football champion and Beyond Blue ambassador John

Sudholz began his talk by asking for a show of hands from anyone who knew someone who had taken their own life. John spoke of his contentment with life as an elite sportsman but after he returned to farming at Rupanyup he began experiencing deep anxieties.

John, who kicked more than 60 goals in one season playing at centre half forward for South Melbourne, found playing football even at the highest level possible to be relatively easy. After seven years he returned home with a wife and young family to take control of the family farm but agribusiness was not as natural for John as was football or cricket.

He struggled and was unable to talk to anyone about it. His life hit a low point early one morning when he wandered out to the shearing shed before dawn.

John's wife feared it would be the last time she saw him. It wasn't. Now John is happy to tell everyone who will listen that he is a survivor and for more than 20 years, he has remained in control of his past demons.

He again echoed the key delivery that if you are finding yourself struggling, talk to someone. "Talk to someone close first and if you can't do that, contact a professional. They are all here tonight," John said.

"Always remember, it is okay not to be okay."

Several presenters asked that everyone be more aware of a change in behaviour of family members or friends. If you notice someone withdrawing, take them aside and ask them if they are okay.

If you need to talk to someone, contact a worker from the Rural Outreach Program. It costs nothing to talk. They will listen, talk things through and support you to link to other services you may need.

These workers are not professional clinicians. They are someone to whom you

can talk and they are trained to guide you toward the right support for your personal needs.

Event organiser and RNH health promotions officer Kelsey Hamilton said the successful evening was a wonderful partnership of support.

"Wimmera PCP provided important funding and Warracknabeal Neighbourhood House did a great job promoting the event," Ms Hamilton said.

Warrack Eagles Football Netball Club made sure everyone enjoyed a great dinner," she said.

"People of all ages attended and we were just amazed at the response."

Warrack Eagles president Chris Taylor agreed the event was a huge success.

"We appreciate Rural Northwest Health including us in such an important event and I know our club members gained a lot from it," Mr Taylor said.

"We had great representation from junior and senior players as well as our volunteers and the presenters gave us all plenty to think about," he said.

"Many of our club members have felt the pain from suicide and it's good to know support is available to all of us."

"As a club we want to work more closely with our community and its services because we all need to stick together for our town's future."



Plenty to be happy about

Data from the 2019 People Matters Survey has provided Rural Northwest Health management with plenty of positive feedback.

While there is still room for improvement in areas such as preventing stress and helping people to feel a sense of accomplishment from their work, the survey results have suggested staff are happier and satisfied.

For staff wellbeing-job related, our team scored more than 19 per cent higher in comparison with other Victorian health services for being happier and more enthusiastic. We also rated higher than other health services for satisfaction, engagement and an intention to stay.

For the past six years, the People Matters Survey has been added to RNH's annual team forum which has helped ensure maximum participation in the survey. The team forums take on a different theme each year and the 2019 forum was an 'Under the Sea' theme. Executive manager of Education and Research Kaye Knight took charge of the team forum for 2019 with regulars Peter Miller and Kerry Seater and another newcomer, CEO Kevin Mills.

Flu Vax

The forums also provided an opportunity for team members to be vaccinated against influenza. The result was our highest ever with 93.5 per cent of staff getting vaccinated.



Record result a shot in the arm

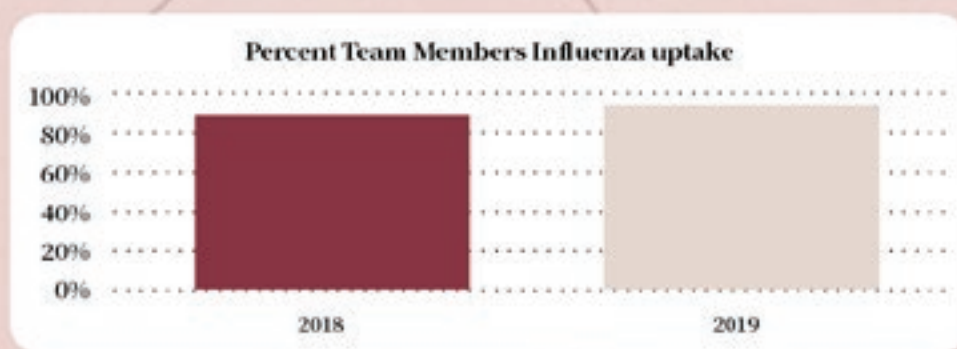
In recent years, our dedicated and dependable team members at Rural Northwest Health have proven their accountability by stepping up to the challenge of improving the influenza vaccination rates.

Staff numbers for flu vaccinations have always been at a strong level but RNH management refused to allow any complacency around the importance of vaccinations and worked hard to raise the bar even higher.

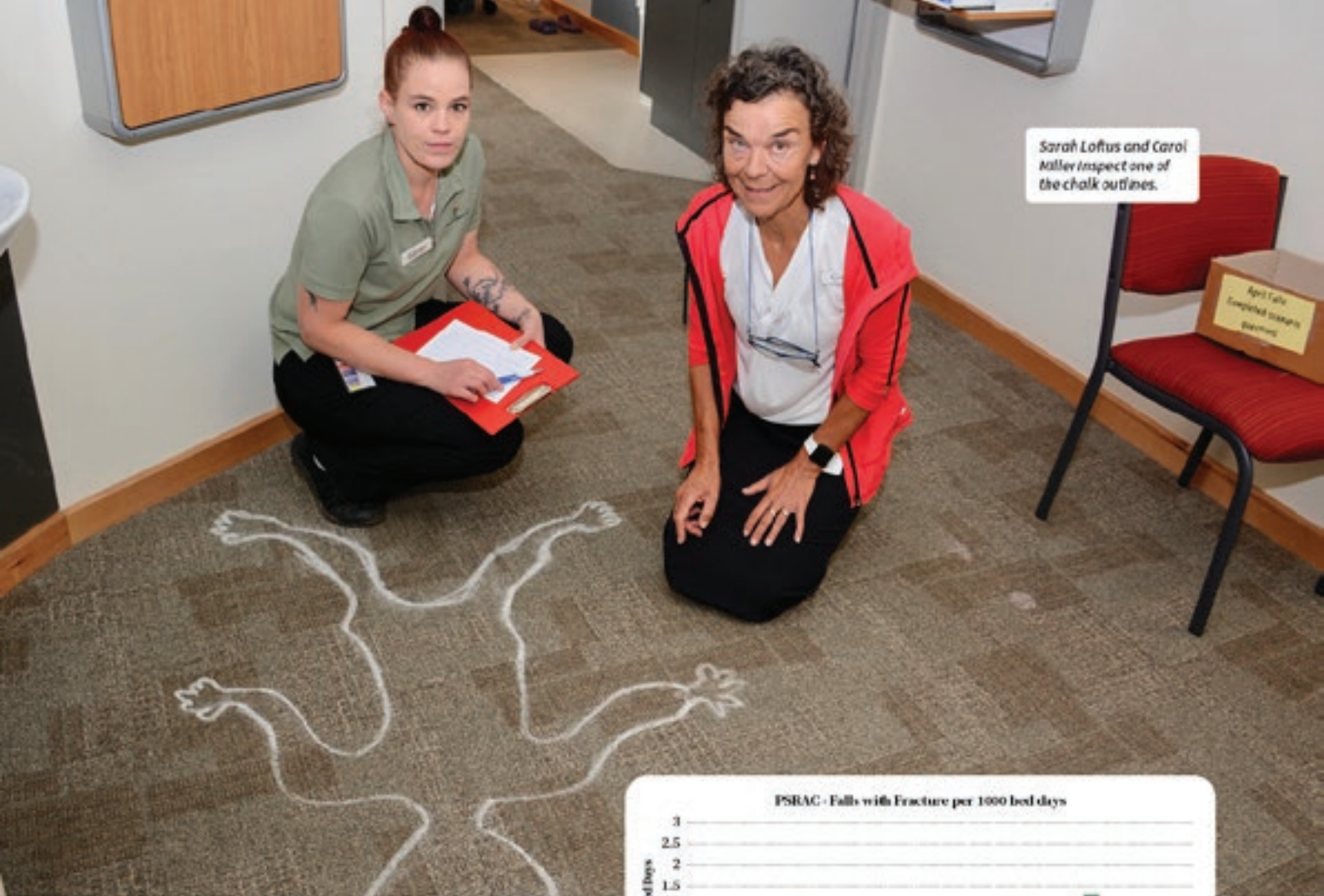
Education around the importance of vaccination has mainly occurred during our annual team forums which are held to ensure staff are compliant with Department of Health requirements. The message has been delivered each year either orally, in song or by video - or all three.

The delivery has clearly been effective because each year has seen a new record set for flu vaccination rates. In 2018, we broke through the 90s barrier for the first time, to achieve a 92 per cent vaccination rate for the April-August auditing period and in 2019 that rate has risen further to 93.5 percent.

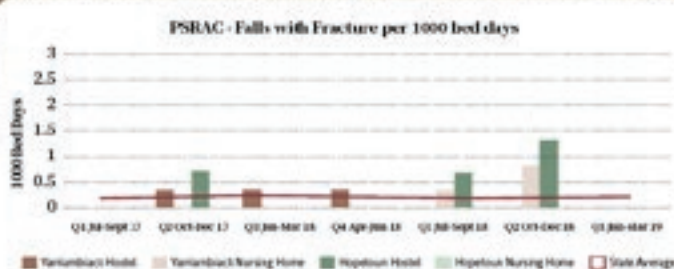
RNH infection control nurse Maree Bell is confident that her team will soon reach a perfect score for influenza immunisation.



RNH infection control nurse Maree Bell inoculates team member Dan Reid.



Sarah Loftus and Carol Miller inspect one of the chalk outlines.



Chalk outlines highlight falls prevention

Visitors to Rural Northwest Health's campuses during April might have thought they were stumbling on a murder scene.

While team members were required to use detective skills to solve a mystery, the chalk outlines were merely for the purpose of educating team members around falls prevention.

For April Falls Month, RNH challenged all team members to participate in some simulation training. A chalk outline of an imaginary 'fallen patient' was drawn on the floor of different areas in the facility.

When team members came across these

outlines, there was a short questionnaire about the specifics of the clinical situation. They were asked to document what they believed had happened at the scene.

A prize was awarded for the team member that correctly answered the most questions from each of the scenarios.

Warracknabeal acute NUM Jason Hay said the discussion about falls was integral to how we treated our residents and patients at RNH.

"It is a fact that our residents and patients are living older and have more complicated health needs," Jason said.

"So it is even more imperative that we identify the risks that contribute to falls and implement strategies to mitigate them from happening in the first place."

RNH Environmental Services manager Trenton Crisp won the prize for most correct questions and received a series of coffee vouchers to use at YarriYak Café.

Floorline beds improve safety



Nurse Jade Taylor with the new bed.

The level of safety for Warracknabeal Acute patients has increased with the purchase of four new floorline beds and mattresses.

Warracknabeal Acute nurse unit manager Jason Hay said the new beds were unique and amazing.

"The beds have the ability to lower all the way to the floor, making them a safe option for patients that are susceptible to falling," Mr Hay said.

"But they also have the unique ability to cater for bariatric patients," he said.

"It's unique to find these two qualities in the same bed."

Mr Hay said several bed designs were trialled before the Acute team settled on the new floorline beds.

"It's great for us to have these beds because the Acute ward has been using the same beds for many years," he said.

"It's also the first time we've had beds that support us to treat patients of all sizes and abilities."

Mr Hay said the board of directors had approved the purchase of four new beds in the 2019-2020 financial year which would complete the necessary furniture overhaul.

Second cardiac monitor for acute

The purchase of a second cardiac monitor for Acute and Urgent Care at the Warracknabeal campus has been a welcome addition.

Warracknabeal Acute NUM Jason Hay said it was identified last year that Urgent Care in Warracknabeal had the ability to treat two patients at one time but only had one cardiac observation machine.

"Due to the changing health needs of the population, this was identified as an area for investment," Mr Hay said.

"It was also an opportunity to improve the clinical equipment in Urgent Care to treat and assess our most unwell patients," he said.

"The new cardiac observation monitor was almost \$15,000 and could not have been purchased it without the support of the RNH Board of Directors of RNH.



Nurse Coral Schmidt sets the new cardiac monitor.

"We are truly thank for their continued support – not just for our equipment needs but also to the health of the community at large."

Rural Northwest Health Accreditation Status

Rural Northwest Health has welcomed several visits from Department of Health accreditors during the 2018-19 financial year.

AGED CARE

In September 2019 RNH's Hopetoun Campus Residential Aged care facility underwent full accreditation with a site visit from the Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission and has since been notified of full compliance in all areas. In May, 2019 accreditors returned the facility for an unannounced visit in aged care with no actions required. The Hopetoun campus is due for its next accreditation in 2021.

The Yarriambiack Lodge aged care facility at RNH's Warracknabeal campus had an unannounced visit from the ACQSC in April 2019 and received positive feedback with no actions required.

Yarriambiack Lodge has implemented the New Aged Care Quality Standards in preparation for accreditation due in July, 2020. In keeping with new aged care quality standards, RNH will provide a self-assessment prior to the unannounced visit.

ACUTE CARE - HOPETOUN AND WARRACKNABEAL

Acute Care received full compliance for National Standards from its accreditation visit in 2017. RNH Acute Care is due for the Version 2 Standards accreditation in July, 2020. RNH will again provide a self-assessment prior to this visit.

COMMUNITY HEALTH

RNH Community Health underwent national accreditation in June 2018 and was assessed as fully compliant in all areas. Community Health will move to the new Aged Care Quality Standards accreditation in 2021.

Adverse and sentinel events

Sentinel events are infrequent events that occur in health services as a result of system and process deficiencies.

In Victoria, public and private health services and all services under their governance structure are required to report sentinel events to Safer Care Victoria.

We are pleased to report that in 2018-19 Rural Northwest Health had no sentinel events.

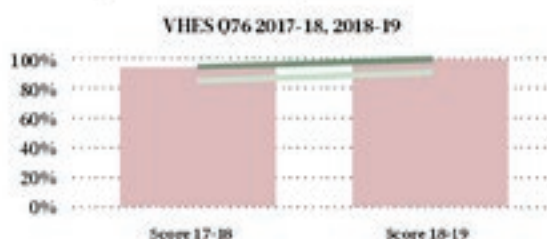


Consumer, Carer and community participation

The Victorian Health Experience Surveys (VHES) allows for a wide range of people to provide feedback on their experiences and provides specialised questions. The VHES adult inpatient questionnaire seeks to discover the experience of people, 16 and over, who have been admitted to a public hospital. Potential respondents are randomly selected from people who were discharged from the health service in the preceding month.

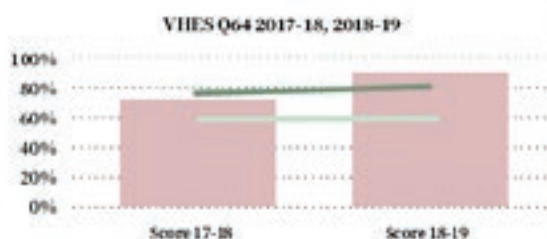
Below are results of positive experiences at Rural Northwest Health against the State & Peer Groups.

VHES Q76 - OVERALL, HOW WOULD YOU RATE THE CARE YOU RECEIVE WHILE IN HOSPITAL?



100% of consumers surveyed were very happy with care received while in hospital, the 'nurses were fantastic'. This is an improvement from previous year.

VHES Q64 - DID YOU FEEL YOU WERE INVOLVED IN DECISIONS ABOUT YOUR DISCHARGE FROM HOSPITAL?

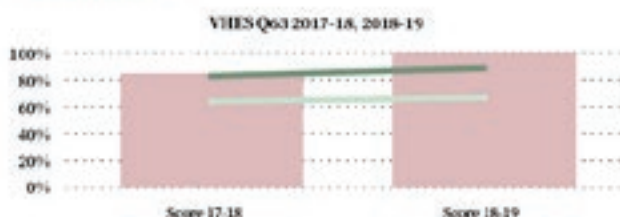


Rural Northwest Health scored 73% last year for 'did you feel you were involved in decisions about your discharge from hospital'. Team member and GP education around discharge planning and consumer engagement has clearly resulted in an increase this year.

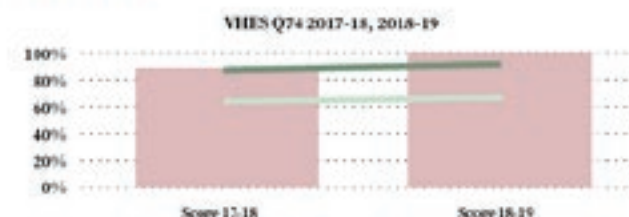
Discharge planning is one area where improvement is evident due to Nurses In Charge asking and prompting GP to provide a discharge date. Also GPs more compliant with discussing discharge plan and patient involvement

during bedside handover. Improvements also around Multidisciplinary team meetings. Patients stated they were certainly given enough information about managing their health care when they go home.

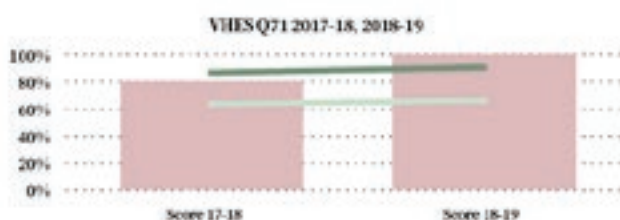
VHES Q63 - WERE YOU GIVEN ENOUGH NOTICE ABOUT WHEN YOU WERE GOING TO BE DISCHARGED?



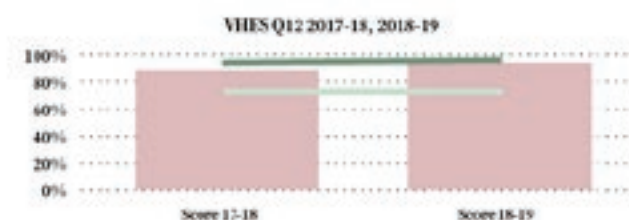
VHES Q74 - OVERALL, HOW WOULD YOU RATE THE DISCHARGE PROCESS?



VHES Q71 - BEFORE YOU LEFT HOSPITAL, DID THE DOCTORS AND NURSES GIVE YOU SUFFICIENT INFORMATION ABOUT MANAGING YOUR HEALTH AND CARE AT HOME?



VHES Q12 - IN YOUR OPINION, HOW CLEAN WAS THE HOSPITAL ROOM OR WARD THAT YOU WERE IN?



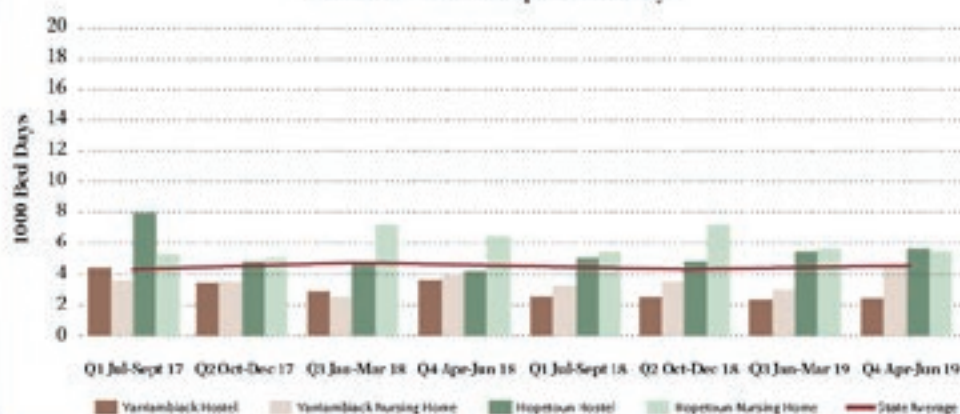
High Risk Quality Indicators

The Department of Health & Human Services has a program to help public sector residential aged care services (PSRACS) collect and report on five quality indicators covering high-risk care areas:

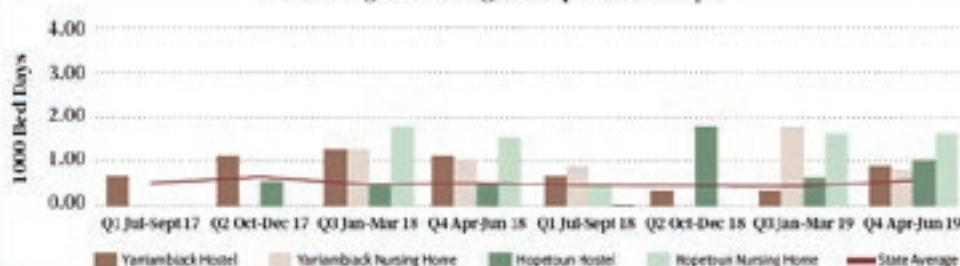
- pressure injuries
- falls and fractures
- use of physical restraint
- use of nine or more medicines
- unplanned weight loss

The quality indicators help Victorian PSRACS provide high quality care for residents. They are part of a suite of resources to support safe, quality care

PSRAC - 9+ medication per 100 bed days



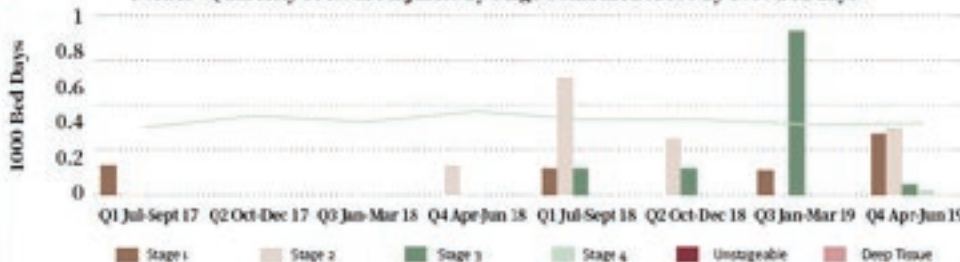
PSRAC - Aged Care Weight Loss per 100 bed days



PSRAC - Restraint per 1000 bed days



PSRAC - Quarterly Pressure injuries by Stage Combined RAC's by 1000 bed days



ISR INCIDENTS

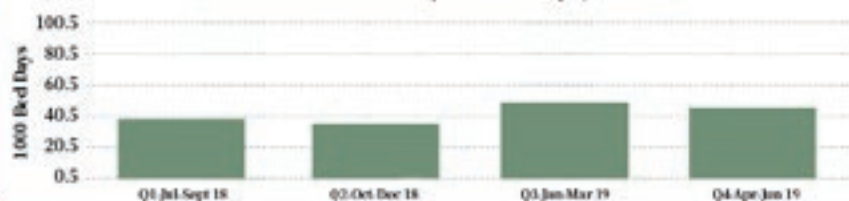
All incidents are given an incident Severity Rating (ISR) of between 1 and 4. This rating measures the severity of the impact caused to the person affected following an incident. ISR 1 and 2 are the most serious incidents, resulting in some level of harm and ISR 3 and 4 are the less serious (including near miss incidents) and often do not result in harm to a patient, client or resident.

An incident with an ISR rating of 1 or 2 must be fully investigated by either an in-depth review or Root Cause Analysis review. These reviews are undertaken by a team with often external assistance, to identify issues and make recommendations and mitigation strategies.

RNH ISR 1 & 2 Report per 1000 bed days | 2018 - 2019

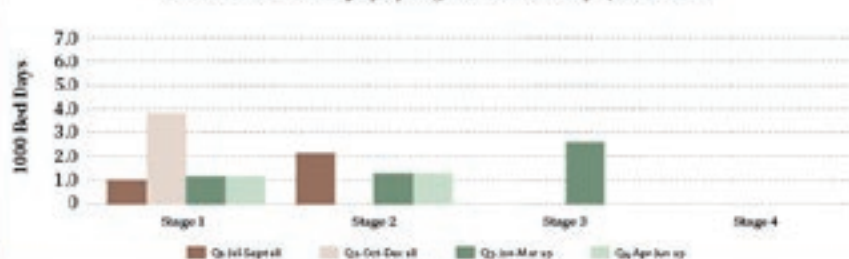


Acute Care Medication Errors per 1000 Bed days | 2018 - 2019



Rural Northwest Health implements and monitors systems to reduce the occurrence of medication incidents, and improve the safety and quality of medication use. Clinical Advisory Committee review all medication incidents. There has been an increase of medication related incidents and a quality improvement plan developed to address issues identified.

Acute Care Pressure Injury by Stage Per 1000 Bed Days | 2018 - 2019



Pressure injuries can occur in consumers of any age. Rural Northwest Health has systems for pressure injury prevention and wound management that is consistent with best practice guidelines.

Falls and with Injury per 1000 Bed days | 2018-2019



Rural Northwest Health provides services to consumers at risk of falls, has systems that are consistent with best practice.

Acute Care Blood Product Errors per 1000 bed days | 2018 - 2019



Blood Management covers all elements in the blood management and clinical transfusion process. Blood incidents are viewed and actions documented to address issues identified.

At your service

Rural Northwest Health provides a range of services and programs that the community is able to access through in-patient, residential, home or community based services including:

AFTER HOURS

Service GPs, Nurse Practitioner and Nursing team members provide an After Hours - On Call service 24 hours a day 7 days a week at Warracknabeal and Hopetoun

ACUTE CARE

Rural Northwest Health has 12 acute beds at the Warracknabeal campus and 4 acute beds at Hopetoun. Both campuses provide urgent care services.

- Acute Medical
- Palliative Care
- Pharmacy
- Pathology Services
- Urgent Care

AGED CARE

Rural Northwest Health has 60 aged care places at the Warracknabeal Campus and 24 aged care places at Hopetoun.

- Respite Care
- Cognitive Rehabilitative Therapist
- Memory Support Unit
- Lifestyle Program
- High and Low Care accommodation

COMMUNITY HEALTH

Community and Allied Health services are provided across the three campuses at Warracknabeal, Beulah and Hopetoun:

- Ante Natal and Domiciliary midwifery services
- Asthma education and support
- Diabetes education and support
- District nursing services
- Health education and promotion
- Hospital in the home
- Day Programs (Warracknabeal and Beulah)
- Post Acute Care
- Memory Support Nurse
- Wellbeing Coordinator
- Continence Nurse Advisor

MEDICAL IMAGING

X-ray and 4D Ultrasound are provided at Warracknabeal by Rural Northwest Health contractors.

ALLIED HEALTH

- Occupational Therapy
- Physiotherapy
- Podiatry
- Speech Pathology
- Dietetics
- Foot Care
- Exercise Physiology
- Social Work
- Massage Therapy

SUPPORT SERVICES

- Carer Support Services
- Volunteer program

SPECIALITIES

- Ear Nose Throat
- Cardiology
- RFDS Mental Health

WARRACKNABEAL CAMPUS

Dimboola Road
PO Box 386
Warracknabeal VIC 3393
Tel: (03) 5396 1200
Fax: (03) 5396 1210
Email: reception@rnh.net.au

BEULAH CAMPUS

Cnr Henty Hwy & Bell Street
PO Box 2
Beulah VIC 3395
Tel: (03) 5396 8200
Fax: (03) 5396 8201
Email: reception@rnh.net.au

HOPETOUN CAMPUS

12 Mitchell Place
Hopetoun VIC 3396
Tel: (03) 5083 2000
Fax: (03) 5083 2050
Email: reception@rnh.net.au


IMPORTANT TELEPHONE NUMBERS

Emergency Call	000
Nurse on Call	1300 606 024
Community Health (Wellbeing Coordinators)	5396 1238
District Nursing	5396 1278
Occupational Therapy	5396 1262
Freedom of Information	5396 1200
Radiology	5396 1200
Psychiatric Services (Horsham Office)	1300 661 323
Yarriambiack Medical Clinic	5396 1380
Hopetoun Medical Clinic	5083 2080
Beulah Medical Clinic	5396 8200

PLEASE VISIT OUR WEBSITE:

www.rnh.net.au

ON FACEBOOK

 [/ruralnorthwesthealth](https://www.facebook.com/ruralnorthwesthealth)