



The Royal  
Melbourne Hospital  
Foundation

# Royal *News*

Spring 2017



## Foundation makes record-breaking contribution of \$9M to Stroke Centre

The Royal Melbourne Hospital's reputation as a leader in stroke prevention and treatment has been cemented, with the RMH Foundation providing over \$9m in funding for a new 31-bed Stroke Care Unit.

The \$9.3M unit, with expanded capacity from the current 20-bed ward, will enable the RMH to continue providing world-class stroke care and will save lives.

The RMH's Director of Neurology, Professor Stephen Davis, said the new Stroke Care Unit, which will also provide care for other neurological conditions, will give Victorians access to evidenced-based best practice care on their doorstep.

Since 2014, the RMH has treated close to 2,500 strokes, with Professor Davis acknowledging that this will continue to grow. "We believe this figure will increase given the rise in chronic health conditions, but more importantly, the increasing recognition of the signs and symptoms of stroke and the need for immediate medical attention."

The RMH is one of Australia's leading stroke services and the state-wide provider of Endovascular Clot Retrieval (ECR), where the clot is manually removed from the brain using a stent.

"We are at the forefront of stroke research and have led the way in translating research into practice," Professor Davis said.

Under Professor Peter Mitchell, Head of Neurointervention and the stroke team, the RMH is expected to treat around 240 patients this year with ECR, which has transformed stroke therapy for many patients with stroke due to large artery occlusion. One third of these patients are from rural centres in Victoria and another third are transferred from other metropolitan hospitals.

The record-breaking contribution from The Royal Melbourne Hospital Foundation would not have been possible without the generous support of our donors, and with a total of 31 beds (including four high dependency rooms), the unit will undoubtedly save lives.

The RMH Stroke Care Unit is due to open in 2019.

Pictured above are the Minister for Health, the Hon. Jill Hennessy, Professor Stephen Davis, Director Melbourne Brain Centre at the Royal Melbourne Hospital and members and past patients of the Stroke Unit.



## RMH Foundation donates \$180,000 to the new Sleep Service

Thanks to funds raised through our Home Lottery, the Foundation was lucky enough to be able to provide the new state-of-the-art Sleep Service with \$180,000 in funding.

The Sleep Medicine branch will be a fantastic addition to the already world-class care we are able to provide our patients. This new service will assist people with all kinds of sleep disorders, including the increasingly common Sleep Apnea.

The custom built RMH Sleep Medicine Service was officially opened on Friday 14 July by CEO Christine Kilpatrick and Department Director A/Prof Lou Irving. The service began on the first floor, in small rooms that doubled as consultation suites during the day. Today, the sleep laboratory is a NATA-accredited six bed unit, running seven nights a week. The service has eight Specialist Sleep and Respiratory doctors with expertise across the spectrum of

sleep disorders, experienced sleep scientists and a sleep psychologist service. The patient capacity has doubled and waiting times are currently about two weeks. Referrals are triaged and priority is given to the most serious patients or those requiring a peri-operative screen.

“We understand that this can be a daunting process for some patients,” says department manager Chris Robinson. “It’s our aim to make the experience as effortless as possible while providing reliable results that are focused on positive patient outcomes.”

Pictured above are A/Prof Lou Irving, Director, Respiratory Medicine and staff at the opening of the Sleep Service.

### Director's Report



Welcome!

You'll notice something different about this issue of Royal News – it comes with a Supporter Survey. Along with reporting back to you just how your donations have made a difference this year, we're also asking for your feedback. We want to know what we're doing well, what we can improve on, and most of all, how we can make the overall experience better for you – our loyal and generous supporters.

Donations made to the Foundation make a very real difference to our medical staff, researchers and patients. In the last financial year, the Foundation gave away a record of \$12M – used to undertake research that puts us at the very forefront of medical care, and invest in the latest technology to make the patient experience the best we possibly can.

Over the last couple of months, we've achieved so much. You'll read about how you helped fund the building of a world-class stroke facility, a brand new Clinical Trials Unit and a state of the art Sleep Centre. Your donations will, without a doubt, save lives.

I really hope you enjoy reading how your donations and support have made the RMH be *First in Care, Research and Learning*. Our heartfelt thanks for all your support.

Best wishes,

Fiona Gillies  
Director, The Royal Melbourne  
Hospital Foundation

## Academy Services provides unique new space for NWMH patients

Thanks to the generosity of Academy Services, NorthWestern Mental Health's Broadmeadows Unit will receive close to \$50,000 in much-needed funding.

The funds have been used to build a garden retreat where patients can go to relax, offering a calming and therapeutic space for those in their time of need.

New plants and garden beds give patients the opportunity to take part in gardening activities and the area also features an outdoor television, providing an alternative space for residents to recuperate.

The space enhances patient dignity and experience of care, provides an additional option for how and where to spend their time, supports recovery programs, and encourages engagement in healthy activities. Without the support of Academy Services, one of RMH's key corporate partners, this would not have been possible. If you are interested in discussing how your organisation could play a part, please contact Gareth Scott, Corporate Partnerships Manager, on (03) 9342 7371



## \$1M gift for the new Clinical Trials Unit

The Royal Melbourne Hospital has taken a major step towards realising its vision of being First in Care, Research and Learning with the establishment of a multidisciplinary dedicated Clinical Trials Unit (CTU).

Officially opened in August 2017, the CTU provides world-class facilities for the conduct of clinical trials across a broad range of therapeutic areas including (but not limited to) neuroscience, nephrology/renal medicine, diabetes and endocrinology, respiratory medicine and cardiology.

The opportunity of participating in a clinical trial allows our patients to gain advice and treatment from Melbourne Health's leading medical experts in cutting edge facilities and provides patients with a greater understanding of their condition or illness. Clinical trials are an integral part of best practice medicine and are often an option of first choice for treatment of a given disease or illness.

Through the establishment of a dedicated CTU, Melbourne Health offers patients who are enrolled on a clinical trial the best experience

possible, with access to the newest, most up-to-date health care treatments.

The CTU will be the catalyst for a greater number of clinical trials to be undertaken at the hospital, directly benefitting the community by ensuring a larger range of treatment options will be available to our patients.

The Foundation was delighted to be able to contribute \$1M in funding, which would not have been possible without the generous support of our donors.

Pictured above are Minister for Health, the Hon. Jill Hennessy, Professor Peter Colman (Director, Diabetes and Endocrinology, RMH) Christine Kilpatrick (CEO, Melbourne Health) and Professor Ingrid Winship (Director of Research, RMH).





## Dry July

This year, 153 loyal and generous donors demonstrated rock-solid willpower and went “dry” for the month of July. Each year, participants all over the world pledge to give up drinking for a month and nominate a charity of choice to receive funds donated by their friends and families.

The Royal Melbourne Hospital was a lucky recipient, with the proceeds raised used to purchase equipment for our cancer patients. Due to the overwhelming generosity of these donors, it was a record year for Dry July with nearly \$50,000 raised – that’s \$20,000 more than last year!

Hannah Page, an Oncology Nurse at The Royal Melbourne Hospital, set herself the challenge of staying dry this July. Together with two of her RMH colleagues (pictured), Hannah put on a bake sale with tremendous success, raising over \$1,300. Hannah’s own father had cancer several years ago and this, coupled with her personal

experience working on the haematology and bone marrow transplant unit, is what inspired Hannah to participate – and give back.

Hannah expresses her gratitude to those who supported her journey.

“I am so thankful for everyone’s support, it has been overwhelming. I’m excited to see the final result for RMH and how we can utilise these donations to help cancer services and patients and families in our care.”

Dry July will return again in 2018.

## Heart Rhythm Centre to save lives

Heart disease affects 1 in 6 Australians, and cardiovascular disease was the main cause of hospitalisations in 2013/14.

In the last 12 months, more than 2,550 procedures were performed on cardiac patients in our Catheterisation Laboratory. One of the most common cardiovascular presentations to The Royal Melbourne’s emergency department was atrial fibrillation – something that our new, state-of-the-art Heart Rhythm Centre will hope to change.

Heart rhythm disturbances (Atrial Fibrillation) leading to sudden death are on the rise and the risk increases with age; in fact it will double in the next

50 years. A dedicated Heart Rhythm Centre is urgently needed to treat arrhythmia and conduct research to find a cure. The RMH Foundation are continuing in their efforts raising money to fund this life-saving project.

The new technically advanced centre will feature:

- 512 channel electrical recording system
- Imaging equipment including 3D CT scan, 3D low dose X-Ray equipment, phased array intra-cardiac ultrasound

- Non-fluoroscopic imaging equipment
- 3D electrical mapping systems
- Ablation technologies including radiofrequency, cryoablation, ultrasound and microwave

The Heart Rhythm Centre will open in late 2018.

## RMH Birthday League celebrations

In June, we held a very special event to commemorate the 95th birthday of The Royal Melbourne Hospital's famous "Birthday League".

In 1922, the Birthday League was established by Mr Arthur Baillieu, and was based on the idea that it is better to give, than receive. People were invited to sign up for a subscription and every year, on their birthday, members would donate a sum of their choice, typically aligned with the cost of running the hospital for one minute — as you can imagine, that sum has vastly increased over time!

To celebrate this historic occasion, Birthday League members were invited to a delicious morning tea, with entertainment provided by Dr Emma O'Brien OAM. Dr O'Brien spoke to the guests about Music Therapy, which is the beneficiary of the League. Happy Birthday to all our Birthday League members — and thank you for making a difference to our patients' health and wellbeing — we really are so grateful.

Pictured below are Birthday League members Valmae Evans and Alison Oldham celebrating the joyous occasion with RMH Music Therapy staff member Nadia Millar.



## Corpus Medicorum heads to Europe

Off the back of their hugely successful trip to Osaka in Japan, internationally-acclaimed amateur orchestra Corpus Medicorum has announced a European tour in 2018.

Corpus Medicorum is an exceptionally talented group of health professionals who join together in the spirit of creating beautiful music, playing sell-out shows at the Melbourne Recital Centre year-round. With proceeds donated directly to medical research at the RMH, the Foundation is delighted to see the orchestra gaining even more momentum and attention on the world stage.

The tour will see the orchestra visit Melbourne's sister cities in Thessaloníki, Greece and Milan, Italy — with a bonus show in beautiful Ljubljana, Slovenia.

Full details of the performance are below — to find out more about this tour or the orchestra in general, please visit [corpusmedicorum.org.au/aboutus/](http://corpusmedicorum.org.au/aboutus/) or email [info@corpusmedicorum.org.au](mailto:info@corpusmedicorum.org.au)

### TOUR DATES

**27 March – 6 April**  
(over Easter holidays)

### CONCERTS

**Saturday 31 March**  
Megas Musicis  
Thessaloníki, Greece

**Tuesday 3 April**  
Philharmonija Theatre  
Ljubljana, Slovenia

**Thursday 5 April**  
Verdi Conservatorium  
Milan, Italy

### REHEARSALS

**Thursday 29 and Friday 30 March**  
Thessaloníki, Greece

### PROGRAM

#### 2018 European Tour

DVOŘÁK Carnival Overture  
CASSOMENOS Concerto for Two Pianos and Orchestra  
PROKOFIEV Piano Concerto No. 2  
TCHAIKOVSKY Symphony No. 5



## Online Auction News

Using funds raised from our Online Auctions, the Foundation was delighted to purchase and deliver 35 new wheelchairs to our City and Royal Park campus.

The idea came about when the generous husband of one of our patients decided to give us money to purchase a walker. Team members from the Foundation did some research and discovered that there was a shortage of walking aids and set out to do something about it. In addition to the wheelchairs, 57 other items (frames, walkers and walking sticks) were purchased for the Physio teams for both the City and Royal Park campus.

The RMH Online Auction for Melbourne Health staff will be returning once again this year from 6–8 December. Our partners and suppliers have generously provided us with outstanding prizes such as holidays, accommodation, electronics, health and beauty and so much more. Last year's auction raised over \$12,000 – which was used to purchase equipment, such as these wheelchairs, walkers and other essential items for wards across our City and Royal Park hospital campuses. We are hoping to raise even more money this year and thank our wonderful staff, their families and friends for their fantastic support last year.



## Foundation Staff Profile

Alison Byrne,  
Senior Relationships Manager

**Why do you work at the Royal Melbourne?** I work at the RMH because I love working in a medical environment and raising funds for essential programs, research and equipment that will ultimately improve the health of our patients.

**How will your work impact/change peoples' lives?** We are so fortunate to have some of the best medical minds in the world at our hospital, people who really change the lives of Victorians and beyond, it is a privilege to raise funds that enable them to create lifesaving outcomes.

**Can you recall the time where you felt proud to work at The Royal Melbourne Hospital?** I was absolutely delighted to see our new Intensive Care Unit up and running due to the generosity of our donors, and following the journey through to fruition. ICU treats the sickest people in our community and this state-of-the-art space has made such a difference to staff, patients and their families.

**What are your favourite things to do outside of work?** I enjoy my growing family with three grandchildren and another grandbaby on the way, volunteer for an international gastroenterology training association, lots of lovely walks around Melbourne and time with friends.



## Corpus Medicorum

Sunday 3 December 2017  
5.00–7.00pm

Corpus Medicorum is delighted to present their final performance of the year, "Pictures".

DVOŘÁK Carnival Overture  
SIBELIUS The Swan of Tuonela  
SAINT-SAENS Danse Macabre  
MUSSORGSKY (arr. RAVEL) Pictures at an Exhibition

Directed by A/Prof Keith Crellin OAM

A picture tells a thousand words – imagine when you then add a grand Russian Masterpiece of Orchestral composition!

The programme starts with Dvořák's boisterous and popular Carnival Overture full of sounds, colours and light, then the Devil dances amongst us in Saint-Saens quirky Danse Macabre, and Mussorgsky's jewel – Pictures at an Exhibition, arranged by RAVEL – brings alive 13 Grand Art Works of Viktor Hartmann. Join us to see, hear and be a part of our rich tapestry of sound!

**WHERE:** Melbourne Recital Centre,  
31 Sturt Street, Southbank VIC 3006

To book, please call (03) 9699 3333  
or visit [thermh.org.au/events](http://thermh.org.au/events)

### The Royal Melbourne Hospital Foundation

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 The Royal Melbourne Hospital  @TheRMH

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