

Cancer Centre begins to take shape



Construction of the \$55 million Ballarat Regional Integrated Cancer Centre at the Ballarat Health Services (BHS) Base Hospital site is well under way.

On February 14 Member for Ballarat and Parliamentary Secretary for Health and Ageing, Catherine King, and Victorian Health Minister David Davis turned a sod to officially mark the start of on-site work.

The event was attended by representatives from Ballarat Health Services, BAROC, St John of God Hospital, Austin Health, Leighton Construction, Johnstaff Project Management, the Department of Health and Grampians Integrated Cancer Service. Victorian Health Minister David Davis said more had to be done to ensure cancer survival rates of those living in rural and regional Victoria matched those of metropolitan residents. Ms King said the Cancer Centre represented a joint effort from the entire region.



• An architect's impression of the Cancer Centre's facade from Drummond Street.

"The Ballarat community, Ballarat Health Services, Austin Health, and St John of God Ballarat, all worked hard with the State government to submit an extremely strong application for funding.

"But most importantly I would like to recognise the strong contribution that the people of the Ballarat and surrounding regions have played in this project."

The five-storey Cancer Centre will be linked with existing buildings to allow quick and efficient movement of staff and patients.

The ground floor will be dedicated to radiotherapy and a wellness centre; the first floor will be used for chemotherapy and clinical trials; the second floor will be cancer services administration; the third and fourth floors will be hospital administration.

Right now Ballarat has one radiotherapy bunker operating at BAROC. When the Cancer Centre opens there will be two fully equipped radiotherapy bunkers with scope to increase to four. Work is continuing on the centre's foundations and from mid-year the five-storey building will begin to rise above the surrounding BHS buildings.

P2: State-of-the-art additions in radiology and anaesthetics

P2: BHS receives national four-year accreditation



P3: Supporting our Special Care Nursery



P3: Building a better dental service



Welcome to the new edition of BHS News, the Ballarat Health Services newsletter. BHS is currently undergoing a very exciting phase with demands for services increasing and major capital works being constructed consistent with a detailed master plan.

And with so much happening at BHS we felt it was time to provide the community with an update.

The community that relies on our services is growing and in response so too is BHS. The very expansive program of building works — particularly the Ballarat Regional Integrated Cancer Centre and the Cardiac Catheter Laboratory suite — will

Message from the CEO



ultimately mean that hundreds of Ballarat and Grampians region residents will no longer need to travel to Melbourne for medical treatment.

Also on the capital works agenda is an expansion of our Special Care Nursery. This facility provides a high level of care to premature and sick babies. Along with the expansion we are running a fundraising campaign called Blossom. Blossom will help ensure the nursery has all the equipment it needs to give these babies the best possible start in life.

BHS continues to be an increasingly busy service.

In 2009-10 a record 50,013 people attended our Emergency Department. The indications are this record will be short-lived as we are on track to treat more people in ED this financial year. We are providing more services and treating more patients than ever before and we expect this trend to continue.

A State Government commitment of \$88.4 million will allow us to increase our bed numbers and help us continue to meet the needs of our growing community.

We hope that you find the newsletter interesting.

New technology in anaesthetics



• The Courier's Lachlan Bence with Dr Rosewarne and Dr Liz Bashford.

Ballarat Health Services' (BHS) has installed brand new anaesthetic machines in all six operating theatres.

BHS Director of Anaesthetics Fred Rosewarne said replacing the entire complement of anaesthetic machines was a rare occurrence in any hospital.

"The machines are similar to, but an updated version of, those currently in the Royal Melbourne Hospital, where most of our registrars come from," Dr Rosewarne said.

"They have increased intrinsic levels of safety built into them," Dr Rosewarne said.

"They are easier for our medical team to operate and ultimately BHS patients are benefiting from this wonderful upgrade of equipment."

The \$300,000 upgrade was made possible with a grant from the Department of Health's Targeted Equipment Program.

The new Aisys machines made by GE feature a new generation of electronic controls that are more reliable and have enhanced safety back-up systems.

Servicing costs are expected to be lower and the new machines will be compatible with existing monitors which were recently upgraded.

"The newer ventilator on these machines is more akin to what you would find in an intensive care unit," Dr Rosewarne said.

The installation occurred over several days to allow for staff education and familiarization with the new machines.

Faster, safer, better ...



• Radiographer Jim de Jong and Radiology Department Medical Director Dan Arhanghelschi with the new scanner.

A new 128-slice CT scanner now operating in the Radiology Department provides fast, high resolution images using "low-dose" technology. The department's Medical Director Dan Arhanghelschi said the level of radiation used to create images is extremely low making the new Siemens Somatom scanner considerably safer than older generation scanners.

Upgraded computer equipment linked to the

scanner means that images that a decade ago may have taken minutes can be done in seconds.

This has particular advantages for elderly patients or patients injured in vehicle accidents.

For instance, a chest scan can now be completed in about four seconds.

The new scanner represents an investment worth \$1.4 million.

BHS awarded four-year accreditation from the ACHS

BHS has received a four-year accreditation after an in-depth review by the Australian Council on Healthcare Standards (ACHS).

The ACHS, Australia's leading independent authority on monitoring quality control in health care organisations, conducted a survey across all BHS operations late last year and produced a positive final report.

"This is a really pleasing result and the community should feel confident that Ballarat Health Services is not only performing at or above required standards but where possible is

striving to improve," BHS Chief Executive Officer Andrew Rowe said.

"The process of accreditation lets us know we are on the right track and having an independent team of experts assess our performance can provide insights into how we can provide a better service."

In every part of its operation BHS was found to be satisfying legislative and policy requirements and to have developed and evaluated its systems and procedures.

"Ballarat Health Services (BHS) has a strong

commitment across the range of services to the provision of high quality patient care for the local and regional communities. The commitment to patient-centred care and striving for excellence was evident at Board and Executive level as well as at the clinical and service level," the report said.

The BHS Mental Health Service was also praised as a "superior regional mental health service" with a "remarkably high level of satisfaction amongst all stakeholders" and excellent clinical outcomes.

Help our
Ballarat
babies this
Easter!



The Ballarat Health Services Foundation has begun a campaign to raise money for the Base Hospital's Special Care Nursery.

Funds raised through the Blossom appeal will go towards buying equipment for the Special Care Nursery, which looks after babies born prematurely or who are battling an illness or other medical complication.

In 2009-10 the Base Hospital accommodated more than 350 mostly premature babies in its Special Care Nursery.

That number is likely to grow. There has been an extraordinary 30 per cent increase in births at Ballarat Health Services over the past six years. BHS now plans to expand its Special Care Nursery from eight cots to 12 by February 2012.

The expansion will cater to the growing population in the Ballarat region and will help the Base Hospital care for more premature babies closer to home.

You can help us buy vital new equipment for our expanded Special Care Nursery so our nurses and doctors can continue to provide high-level neo-natal care right here in Ballarat.

Having the best possible Special Care Nursery reduces the chance of a baby needing to be transferred to Melbourne – which can be a stressful ordeal for families.

You can make a donation directly to the Blossom appeal by calling BHS Foundation and Fundraising Director Geoff Millar on 5320 4093, by visiting www.bhs.org.au or by filling out the donation slip on page four of this newsletter.

Tackling the big oral health issues

Reducing dental waiting times, implementing preventative dental health measures and recruitment of dental professionals are among the key goals of the new Grampians Oral Health Network project. Launched on March 28 by the Dental Health Services Victoria chief executive officer Deborah Cole, the project will look at innovative ways to improve the provision of dental health care across the Grampians region. BHS Population, Health and Strategic Planning manager Tracey Wilson says this could include sharing patients between locations, advocacy around issues including water fluoridation, targeted recruitment of dental professionals and providing continuing professional development to all dental teams in the region. BHS took over the management of Ballarat's public dental service in May 2008.



Tracey Wilson

At that time the waiting time to for a general check up was 56 months.

A number of initiatives have been implemented since that time resulting in the waiting time being reduced to 27 months but Mrs Wilson says the service would continue to work hard to make further inroads into waiting times.

Among the initiatives introduced is a Super Saturday Clinic - which has enabled more than 1,000 additional people to access care for their dental treatment each year.

The public dental clinic in Ballarat is relocating to a refurbished area on the first floor of the Base hospital site. The new clinic will be towards the rear of the hospital from the Drummond St entrance.

Eligible patients (you must have a Health Care Card) can follow signs to the clinic or a blue line on the floor from the main entrance.

Cardiac Cath Lab on track



• The Cardiac Catheter Laboratory under construction.

Work on the new \$6 million BHS Cardiac Catheter Laboratory is progressing well and will finish later this year.

The new laboratory will allow more people to be assessed and treated for heart disease in Ballarat.

When built, the facility will mean that for the first time patients can have stents inserted at the Base site while the process for having pacemakers inserted will continue in a dedicated, state-of-the-art facility.

Cardiologist Ernesto Oqueli said a team of architects and clinical staff had spent six months designing the new laboratory which will feature the first fully integrated Siemens cardiology-angiography imaging system to be installed in a regional Australian hospital.

The new equipment will provide people in Ballarat and Western Victoria with access to the highest quality cardiac and interventional vascular radiology imaging available.

"The hospital is taking a big step forward with regard to the services it will provide to the community," Dr Oqueli said.

Ballarat firm SJ Weir is has undertaken the construction work.

The new imaging system will complement a range of leading edge equipment at BHS which includes a SPECT-CT scanner - which is a first for regional Victoria.

BHS chief executive officer Andrew Rowe said the laboratory was part of a capital works program that included relocation of Maternity Outpatients and the relocation and expansion of the Special Care Nursery.

New recruits boost BHS oncology service

Doctors Heather Francis and Yen Tran have joined the BHS oncology team.

For Dr Tran, originally from Vietnam, the journey to Ballarat was circuitous.

She came to Australia with her family in 1990 after enduring five years in a refugee camp in Hong Kong. Remarkably, her first three years in the camp were spent without family or schooling.

Dr Tran started a medical degree at Melbourne University in 1996 then completed post-graduate training at the Royal Melbourne and Austin hospitals and at BHS.

Dr Francis was also familiar with Ballarat, having worked as a registrar in BHS in 2008 before completing her training last year.

Before completing her specialist training Dr Francis and her husband, BHS paediatrician David Tickell, spent 12 months in 2007-2008 doing volunteer work in Malawi.

For Dr Francis, the attraction to oncology is a combination of the patients and the science.

"I find oncology patients a privilege to work with. They are courageous, highly motivated and you are interacting with people at such a unique time in their lives ... it's amazing what you can learn and



• Doctors Yen Tran and Heather Francis.

you can have a positive impact at a traumatic time."



Help us spread our wings

Thankyou for helping us spread our wings

As a result of wonderful support from the Ballarat and Grampians community the BHS Foundation was able to pass its \$500,000 fundraising target to help with the redevelopment of the Emergency Department (ED). The ED redevelopment was officially opened last year and now includes a fast track treatment bay along with a Short Stay Unit where patients can remain under observation for up to 24 hours. In 2009-2010 the ED treated a record 50,013 patients. The ED is on track to exceed this figure over 2010-11.



• The first shift in the Short Stay Unit: clerk Allana Alexander, ANUM Sherree Atkinson, nurse Annie Machacek, ED care co-ordinator Nola Poulter, nurse Rachel Taylor and ED Director Jaycen Cruickshank.

Yes, I want to help the Blossom appeal for the BHS Special Care Nursery.



(Title/name) Mr/Mrs/Miss/Ms/Dr/ other: _____

Address: _____

Postcode: _____

Tel: _____

Email: _____

Enclosed is my cheque or money order for the amount I have indicated:

☐ \$25 ☐ \$50 ☐ \$100 ☐ \$200

My choice: \$

Please debit the amount I have indicated from my:

☐ VISA ☐ Mastercard

Card No. _____

Expiry __ / __

Cardholder's name: _____

Signature: _____

Donations can also be made online by clicking on the Foundation link at:

www.bhs.org.au

Or via direct deposit to ANZ, BSB 013-141, account number 907 659 583.

All donations over \$2 are tax deductible. If you do not wish to receive further communication from Ballarat Health Services Foundation please write to or telephone the Foundation, details below.

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