

ECHO



East Grampians
Health Service

EAST GRAMPIANS HEALTH SERVICE



“Ministerial Visit Highlights EGHS Innovations and Future Plans”
Full story on page 3

CE Report

The year is well and truly underway at East Grampians Health Service, with our graduates and interns settling into their roles and nursing and medical students once again resuming their studies in Ararat. Planned operations continue across our two theatres, providing much-needed care to our community. Many core services remain unchanged, including the 81 residents living in our residential aged care facilities and the 85 people currently supported through home care packages.

As we plan for 2026, several key projects are on EGHS’s agenda. The first will be the selection of a commercial builder to commence stage one of the Willaura Hospital redevelopment. We will also finalise the refurbishment of 70 Lowe Street and undertake room upgrades at Garden View Court Hostel. Ongoing improvements to amenities across our aged care facilities are essential to ensure we continue to improve and meet the needs and expectations of our community.

Looking further ahead, as we approach the Victorian election on 28 November, we are hopeful that funding can be secured for the redevelopment of the Urgent Care Centre. Built more than 20 years ago, the centre now sees around 7,000 patients each year, far more than it was originally designed to accommodate. A refurbishment would significantly expand the facility, enabling it to better manage increased patient demand, staffing levels, visiting medical officers, and ambulance arrivals.

We are also working with the Ararat Rural City Council in the hope of securing land from the former Knitting Mill site. This would provide safer and more accessible parking for residents’ families and staff at 70 Lowe Street.



NICK BUSH
CHIEF EXECUTIVE

The continued growth in staffing at EGHS—driven by the expansion of our services—has led to increased demand for parking in the streets surrounding the health service. As noted earlier, we now deliver around 85 support-at-home packages.

Without these services, many clients would likely require hospital admissions or placement in residential aged care. Providing such alternatives is a vital role of an integrated rural health service.

CE Report cont. page 2

CE Report cont.

We have also considered the future development of a community services facility located off-site, possibly within the Central Business District. This could improve patient access, provide a central reception point for enquiries, and relocate staff parking spaces away from the main campus. We acknowledge, however, that this would represent a significant change, particularly for staff who value working together as a larger group—across the health service and at Café Pyrenees.

EGHS LEADS THE CHARGE ON RURAL ALLIED HEALTH SOLUTIONS

Allied health shortages continue to affect rural communities – and EGHS is taking action.

This week we joined RWAV to host a sector-wide roundtable, bringing together leaders from health, education, government and community organisations to explore practical, long-term solutions.

As highlighted in the discussion, “the insights shared will directly inform policy and workforce reforms.”

A stronger allied health workforce means stronger, healthier rural communities – and we’re committed to getting there together.



Pictured RWAV Roundtable attendees



Pictured is Lauren Cordwell, Chief Executive of Rural Workforce Agency Victoria, Rachel Elliott, Chief Allied Health Officer at Safer Care Victoria with Nick Bush, EGHS Chief Executive



Pictured EGHS Chief Executive Nick Bush



Pictured is Jake Romein, EGHS Allied Health Clinical Educator

MINISTERIAL VISIT HIGHLIGHTS EGHS INNOVATIONS AND FUTURE PLANS

JODIE HOLWELL – COMMUNITY LIAISON

A recent visit from Victorian Health Minister Mary-Anne Thomas offered East Grampians Health Service a valuable opportunity to highlight the progress made across the organisation. The visit marked an important moment for EGHS, allowing leaders to demonstrate how ongoing investment, innovation and collaboration are strengthening the services for the Ararat community and the wider region.

Led by EGHS Vice-Chair Lisa Davidson, the Minister toured several areas of the facility, with particular interest in the recently opened Practical Laboratory. The new laboratory has quickly become a standout feature of the organisation's education and training capabilities, and Minister Thomas was able to see firsthand the modern equipment, flexible learning spaces and thoughtful design that underpin the facility's purpose.

EGHS Director of Community Services Sarah Woodburn outlined the organisation's plans for a new women's health clinic, an initiative designed to expand access to specialised care and respond to the growing needs of local women and families. The Minister was briefed on the early planning work underway and the long-term benefits such a service would bring to the region.

Reflecting on the visit, Mr Bush said he was pleased to guide Minister Thomas through the Practical Laboratory, a project funded by the Victorian Government to support Deakin Medical School. He emphasised that the facility represents a strategic investment in the future medical workforce. By enabling first- and second-year medical students to complete their early training locally in Ararat, the laboratory helps break down the long-standing barrier of distance that has historically limited rural students' opportunities. It also strengthens the pathway of clinicians who may choose to train in Ararat as medical officer or a nurse.

Already, the benefits of this partnership are becoming clear. Three EGHS staff members are currently studying medicine through the program, a development Mr Bush described as an encouraging sign for the future of healthcare in the region. Their participation demonstrates how local training pathways can inspire and support regional people to pursue medical careers that once felt out of reach.

Mr Bush also took the opportunity to acknowledge the work of builder Andrew Eastick, who delivered the project under budget despite rising construction costs across the sector.



Pictured Minister Mary-Anne Thomas, Sarah Woodburn, Nick Bush and Lisa Davidson



Pictured Terri-Anne Lewis and Min Mary-Anne Thomas



Pictured Taylor El-Hout, Minister Thomas and Kathryn Johnston



Pictured Minister Mary-Anne Thomas, Alanna McFarlane, Alex Van Opstal and Martha Haylett



Pictured Min Mary-Anne Thomas, Clare Stacpoole and Martha Haylett

ARARAT RSL FUNDS PURCHASE OF NEW ONCOLOGY TREATMENT CHAIR

JODIE HOLWELL – COMMUNITY LIAISON

Patients undergoing treatment at the EGHS Oncology Unit are now benefiting from a new treatment chair, purchased through an \$8000 donation from the Ararat RSL's Pink Day fundraising event.

Lead by RSL employee Margaret Kelly, the Pink Day event involved a morning tea, raffles, live music, donations, and three Ararat RSL staff members bravely shaving their heads in support of all those living with breast cancer, including Ms Kelly, Jenni Jacobi and Will Cairnes.

EGHS Chief Executive Nick Bush thanked the Ararat RSL for its generous donation to the Oncology Unit.

"The health service is very grateful to the Ararat RSL team for funding the purchase of this new treatment chair, which will benefit our patients, many of whom spend many hours in these chairs during treatment, as well as the staff who care for them," Mr Bush said.

"We are also grateful for the support of the community, who generously donated towards the Oncology Unit on Pink Day and who support our staff and patients."



Pictured with the new chair in the EGHS Oncology Unit are L-R, Tanya Beechinor, Kate Pitcher, Bec Peters, RSL representatives Ben McIntosh, Marg Kelly (seated), Jenni Jacobi, and Leesa McInnes

EGHS SHOWCASES LEADERSHIP AT RURAL WORKFORCE CONFERENCE JACLYN BISHOP – DIRECTOR, DEVELOPMENT & IMPROVEMENT

East Grampians Health Service (EGHS) was proudly represented at the Rural Workforce Agency Victoria (RWAV) Conference held in Geelong on 5–6 March 2026.

EGHS attendees included Nick Bush (Chief Executive), Dr Bruce Sanderson (Acting Director of Medical Services), and Jaclyn Bishop (Director Development and Improvement). The conference theme “Beyond Boundaries: Building Futures in Rural Healthcare” focused on strengthening the rural health workforce and exploring innovative ways to support staff and communities.

Across the two days, sessions explored a range of important topics, including connecting policy, practice and people, empowered leadership, building stronger healthcare systems, and recruitment and retention in rural health.

Jaclyn Bishop presented EGHS’s flexible family day care initiative, highlighting both the achievements and the challenges of addressing childcare as a key barrier to staff workforce participation. The presentation reinforced the importance of practical solutions that support staff to work to their full capacity.

A poster on the evaluation of a peer support program for aged care staff showcased EGHS’s commitment to staff wellbeing and support.

Throughout the conference, EGHS was also recognised for its broader contributions to rural workforce development. EGHS featured as one of four case studies in RWAV’s publication *More Homes, Better Healthcare: The Housing Challenge Facing Health Professionals in Rural Victoria* and was acknowledged for its work supporting allied health career pathways.

The conference also highlighted other significant rural health initiatives, including the Deakin Medical School End to End Rural Medical Training Program. EGHS contributes to this program by hosting first and second year medical students in Ararat, helping build future medical capacity in rural communities.

Overall, the conference provided a valuable opportunity to share EGHS’s work, learn from others across the sector, and strengthen partnerships that support sustainable rural healthcare into the future.



Pictured Jaclyn Bishop presenting on the EGHS flexible family day care initiative

MURRAY TO MOYNE 2026

Friday 27th – Departure for Echuca

At 2.30pm our riders and volunteer drivers departed for Echuca. Before the team rolled out, CEO Nick Bush shared words of thanks, acknowledging the riders' commitment to fundraising and the months of preparation behind them. He also wished everyone fair weather for the journey ahead.

Saturday 28th – Echuca to Hamilton (Approx. 400km)

The day began at the Echuca Wharf with a 9.30am Murray to Moynes briefing, covering safety rules and final checks. Four relay groups then set off on the long ride to Hamilton.

A compulsory regrouping stop in Stawell gave all teams a chance to refuel with coffee, dinner and tea before heading into the night-ride section. The team pushed through the dark and arrived in Hamilton at around 12.30am on Sunday morning.

Sunday 29th – Hamilton to Port Fairy (94km)

With daylight savings ending, riders missed out on an extra hour of sleep, but spirits stayed high. Alarms sounded at 5.30am for a 7.02am start in the dark, beginning the final 94km leg from Hamilton to Port Fairy.

All riders completed the full distance together as a team. A welcome stop in Hawkesdale offered cake, slices and coffee generously provided by the CWA, with gold coin donations supporting their work.

The team rolled into Port Fairy at 11.00am, where Murray to Moynes organisers announced awards and raffle winners as all teams arrived. After the finish, the EGHS team travelled to Koroit for a well-earned lunch and rehydration. Cam Evans delivered a speech on behalf of Nick Bush, and team captains congratulated riders and drivers for their outstanding effort over the past 24 hours.



WORLD HEALTHCARE WORKER WEEK



APRIL FOOLS DAY!

At Easter we had a surprise visitor in dialysis, a very lifelike possum puppet brought in by one of our maintenance staff, which sparked plenty of smiles. Pictured is Cindy, one of our dialysis clients, who was among those fooled at first as the puppet's tail was wrapped around his arm and its little feet moved convincingly. The reveal came only when he slipped it off his arm, much to everyone's amusement.





CLINICAL CONVERSATION

Voluntary Assisted Dying (VAD)

Date: 5 May 2026

Time: 2:00 – 3:00 pm

Format: MS Teams – register via QR code in this email

About this session

This Clinical Conversation provides a safe and respectful environment for health professionals to discuss Voluntary Assisted Dying (VAD), ask questions, and share perspectives and experiences.

Who should attend

Health professionals working across the Grampians Region.

What we'll cover

- Legislative updates on Voluntary Assisted Dying
- Supporting staff who choose not to participate in VAD care
- Practical considerations including medication handling and locked box logistics
- Case presentation and shared reflections

Session format

- One-hour facilitated online session
- Update and Q&A with the Regional VAD Coordinator
- Open discussion and reflections in a supportive setting

Suggested pre reading:

Grampians Learning Hub - VAD online module (30mins)

Your organisation's End of Life framework and VAD-related policy documents.

CELEBRATING OUR VOLUNTEERS

HANNAH JENNINGS – EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT, DEVELOPMENT & IMPROVEMENT

In a rural health service like ours, community isn't just something we talk about, it's something we rely on every day. At the heart of that community are our volunteers, who generously give their time and without expectation of recognition, but always with genuine care for others.

Our volunteers support East Grampians Health Service in so many valuable ways. They assist staff and consumers with activities, support community programs, help at events and contribute behind the scenes in countless practical and thoughtful ways. In small communities like ours, these simple acts make a real difference. They help ease pressure on staff and strengthen the connection between our service and the community. Simply put, we couldn't do what we do without them.

In 2026, we are proud to recognise the Year of Volunteering, with the theme for National Volunteer Week (18–24 May 2026), "Your Year to Volunteer." It's a timely reminder of just how important volunteering is in rural and regional communities. It also encourages more people to think about how they might get involved, because every contribution whether big or small has an impact.

This is especially meaningful during National Volunteer Week, when we take the time to acknowledge the incredible contribution of volunteers across our health service. It's a chance to say thank you not only for the time given, but for the care, kindness and community spirit behind it.

To all our volunteers, past and present, thank you. Your generosity strengthens our service, supports our staff and brings comfort to those who need it most. You are a valued and essential part of East Grampians Health Service, and we are genuinely grateful for everything you do.

Clinical Conversation - Voluntary Assisted Dying (VAD)



JUST COS INITIATIVE FEATURED IN INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL

JACLYN BISHOP – DIRECTOR, DEVELOPMENT & IMPROVEMENT

East Grampians Health Service (EGHS) continues to contribute to improving evidence-based care, with the publication of "Evaluating an integrated quality improvement and research approach: the Just Cos Initiative" in the International Journal for Quality in Health Care in April 2026.

Developed by EGHS, the Just Cos Initiative addresses a common challenge in healthcare: ensuring that everyday practices are supported by the best available evidence. The Just Cos provides staff with a simple pathway to question practices that may be low-value and to explore whether they are truly benefiting our consumers.

The evaluation examined activity over a 14-month period during which staff submitted questions to Just Cos about clinical and service practices. These submissions were reviewed using a combination of research evidence, local data, and staff input. For example, one submission looked at whether oxygen or air should be used when nebulising medications in adults. This resulted in a policy update identifying air as the preferred option, leading to the installation of more air regulators.

The evaluation found that Just Cos identifies low-value practices requiring change, supports policy improvements, and also confirms where current practice aligns with best evidence. Importantly, staff described Just Cos as providing a

safe and supportive way to raise questions and contribute to improving care.

This work highlights the value of locally developed evidence-informed approaches in strengthening care. There is strong potential for the model to be expanded to other rural health services, supporting broader uptake of evidence-based practice.

Just Cos is an active programme within EGHS, and staff are invited to continue submitting questions about clinical and service practices using the QR code below.

A summary of the publication is available on the International Journal for Quality in Health Care's website:

https://academic.oup.com/intqhc/advance-article-abstract/doi/10.1093/intqhc/mzag041/8533541?utm_source=author&utm_medium=email



THE JUST COS



INITIATIVE
Being curious about
best practice

NEW ARRIVALS AT EGHS

JODIE HOLWELL – COMMUNITY LIAISON

Leo Brian Laundry is the second child for Kira Stapleton and Mitch Laundry.

Baby Leo was born at East Grampians Health Service on March 30, weighing 4340 grams.

"Thank you so much to the amazing midwives, you're so talented. Very very grateful for the entire service at EGHS all the team!" Kira Stapleton and Mitch Laundry.

Khaleesi Fay Qalokale is the first child for Katelyn and Junior Qalokale.

Baby Khaleesi was born at East Grampians Health Service on April 1, weighing 2701 grams.

"We thank everyone at EGHS for the safe delivery of Khaleesi and for the general care and support we received from the Drs and midwives." Katelyn and Junior Qalokale.

Estelle Olympia Milosevic is the second child for Madeline Fratin and Jonno Milosevic.

Baby Estelle was born at East Grampians Health Service on April 6, weighing 3114 grams.

"Thank you to all of the wonderful staff at EGHS for taking care of us." Madeline Fratin and Jonno Milosevic.



EGHS HOT CROSS BUN COMPETITION

This year's Hot Cross Bun Competition brought together a thoughtful mix of tradition, creativity and community spirit. Bakers presented their entries to a panel of judges, local baker Daniel Blight, Natalie D'Anna, and Clare Bennett who assessed each bun on appearance, texture, and taste.

In the Traditional Category, Zoe Keith received 1st Prize; Sue Burns was awarded 2nd Prize, followed by Angela Nagpal in 3rd.

The Creative Category highlighted some inventive approaches. Zoe Keith placed first with her Biscoff Hot Cross Buns, and second with her Triple Choc Hot Cross Buns, and Andrea Monaghan received 3rd Prize for her Hot Cross Biscuits, offering a different take on the theme. In the Gluten Free Category, Nicole Murray earned 1st Prize.

A sincere thank you was extended to everyone who took part, and to the judges, Dan Blight, Natalie D'Anna, and Clare Bennett for their time and careful consideration.



FIRST NATIONS NEWS

CLARE STACPOOLE – FIRST NATIONS LIASION LEAD

May 26, marks National Sorry Day. On this day Australians pause to acknowledge the profound harm caused by the forced removal of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children from their families—now known as the Stolen Generations. It is a day of reflection, respect, and commitment: reflection on past injustices, respect for the strength and resilience of survivors, and a shared commitment to reconciliation.

National Sorry Day is not only about remembrance; it is also about listening and learning. Across the country, communities come together through ceremonies, storytelling, and education to deepen understanding of Indigenous histories and cultures. These moments remind us that healing is ongoing and that meaningful reconciliation requires action as well as words.

As we mark this day, please consider your role in shaping a more just and inclusive future—one where truth is acknowledged, voices are heard, and respect guides our collective path forward.

UPCOMING EVENTS

STAFF YARN – MONDAY MAY 18TH

**NAIDOC WEEK – MONDAY JULY 6TH
ARARAT CELEBRATIONS**

**WEDNESDAY JULY 8TH WILLAURA
CELEBRATIONS**

Workdays:

Monday: 8:00 AM – 4:30 PM

Tuesday: 12:30 PM – 4:30 PM

Friday: 8:00 AM – 12:00 PM

You can reach me at:

✉ **Email: ahlo@eghs.net.au or ☎ **Phone: 0474 079 031****

**Please contact me for anything First Nations
or just to have a yarn**

DID YOU KNOW?

On Saturday, 17 April 1993, St Kilda travelled to Victoria Park to take on Collingwood at their home ground.

Before the game had even begun, Aboriginal players Gilbert McAdam and Nicky Winmar were subjected to sustained racial abuse from sections of the crowd during the warm-up.

Determined to respond, McAdam turned to Winmar and said, “Bro, we have to do something today. We’ve got to make a statement. We’ll show this mob – we’ll make them quiet.”

What followed was a fiercely contested match, with both sides trading the lead throughout.

Ultimately, the impact of St Kilda’s Aboriginal players proved decisive, with Winmar and McAdam delivering standout performances and earning best-on-ground honours.

As the final siren sounded, Winmar found himself near the Collingwood cheer squad, where some supporters continued to direct abuse.

In a moment that would become iconic, Winmar stood his ground. He raised his arms in defiance, then lifted his jumper, pointed to his skin, and declared: “I’m black – and I’m proud to be black.”

This photo is credited as a major catalyst for the AFL’s movement against racism, eventually leading to the introduction of Rule 30 in 1995, which prohibits racial and religious vilification.



INSTALLATION OF HALF DOME MIRRORS FOR SAFETY

JESSICA MOLLOY – OH&S REP, PERIOPERATIVE SERVICES

The theatre corridors can be a busy place, and when you are transporting an unconscious patient from theatre to recovery you need a clear view of the corridors to get your patient there safely. After a few near misses, it was evident that something needed to be done to prevent further near misses, from both an employee and OH&S point of view.

Installing half-dome (convex) mirrors at two main intersections gives staff a full view of oncoming people, trolleys, and equipment and allows a safer flow in the corridors. A quick glance up at the mirrors before turning can prevent collisions, keeping everyone - from patients to staff - safe. Safety is a small change that makes a big difference.



FOOTY TIPPING LEADERBOARD AFTER ROUND 7

JO SUMMERS – EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT TO CEO

RANK	NAME	TOTAL SCORE	TOTAL MARGIN
1	Bec Peters	58	174
2	Kirsten Carr	56	163
3	Lucy Mills	56	202
4	Ashlea Waller	55	157
5	Scott Wilson	54	170
6	Lachlan McRae	54	200
7	Brent Bulger	53	162
8	Jacob Buther	53	174
9	Danni Ralph	53	187
10	Leah McCarthy	53	212
11	Catherine Jennings	53	246
12	Alex Van Opstal	52	200
13	Elizabeth Thomas	52	225
14	Nick Bush	52	241



EGHS Family Day Care - 2026 enrolments and bookings are available

now.

EGHS Family Day Care operates 5 days a week through Let's Go Family Day Care.

A message from Let's Go Family Day Care.

We provide a warm, homely setting with a quality educational program.

Our Educators have many years of experience working in early childhood education and care. We have an exceeding rating for our service under the childcare accreditation program.

The New Year has started and you may be thinking about your childcare options. We are here to support families, especially when childcare options in town are limited and you need to work.

Contact us:

Approved Provider: Olivia 0402 315 332
Email: letsgofdc@outlook.com

Educators for bookings:
Julia 0477 043 596/Sally 0434 427 173

EGHS contact person: email Donna.halloranfoster@eghs.net.au



WELCOME NEW EGHS STAFF

ROS BLOOMFIELD, HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGER

ANNA ANWAR
CATERING ASSISTANT

ALL ABOUT ME...

Favourite Music | **Easy Listening**
Interests | **Cooking, visiting new places, listening to podcasts**
One thing I'm good at | **I believe I am caring, friendly and trying to have a positive attitude**
One thing I want to do in this lifetime | **Enjoy what you have and be grateful**



AREEBA ARIF
MEDICAL INTERN

ALL ABOUT ME...

Favourite AFL Team | **Brisbane Lions**
Favourite Food | **Italian**
Favourite Music | **Bollywood**
Interests | **Gym, hiking, swimming, movies**
One thing I'm good at | **Baking**
One thing I want to do in this lifetime | **Skydiving and bungee jumping**



JAYDAH BELCHER
LEISURE & LIFESTYLE ASSISTANT

ALL ABOUT ME...

Favourite AFL Team | **Essendon**
Favourite Food | **Steak**
Favourite Music | **All kinds**
Interests | **Netball, fishing & camping**
One thing I'm good at | **Making people feel welcome**
One thing I want to do in this lifetime | **Travel**



ANN BRASSER
ADMINISTRATION ASSISTANT - PRE-ADMISSION

ALL ABOUT ME...

Favourite AFL Team | **Collingwood**
Favourite Food | **Anything Caramel**
Favourite Music | **Anything 90s especially Alanis Morissette**
Interests | **Cooking, gym, true crime, son's soccer**
One thing I'm good at | **Being organised**
One thing I want to do in this lifetime | **Travel Australia**



WELCOME NEW EGHS STAFF

ROS BLOOMFIELD, HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGER

SHANE CLARKE CLEANER/PORTER

ALL ABOUT ME...

Favourite AFL Team | **Essendon**
 Favourite Food | **Satay chicken pasta**
 Favourite Music | **Country**
 Interests | **Cycling, running, family time**
 One thing I'm good at | **Fitness**
 One thing I want to do in this lifetime | **Play sports with all my kids**



JASMINE COLEMAN RUSON

ALL ABOUT ME...

Favourite AFL Team | **Essendon**
 Favourite Food | **Steak**
 Favourite Music | **90s**
 Interests | **Bodybuilding, gym, sports**
 One thing I want to do in this lifetime | **Run a marathon**



CHALITA LEETHONG DATA ADMINISTRATOR

ALL ABOUT ME...

Favourite AFL Team | **Hawthorn**
 Favourite Food | **Sushi**
 Interests | **Cooking, arts, personal development**
 One thing I'm good at | **Cooking**
 One thing I want to do in this lifetime | **Travel around the world**



CAITLIN MAWBY RN - PERIOPERATIVE

ALL ABOUT ME...

Favourite AFL Team | **Hawthorn**
 Favourite Food | **Tomatoes**
 Favourite Music | **Taylor Swift**
 Interests | **Reading, sewing, crafting**
 One thing I'm good at | **Drawing**
 One thing I want to do in this lifetime | **Visit Japan**



DISPOSABLE HEAT PACKS TO REPLACE REUSABLE ONES

HANNAH JENNINGS – EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT, DEVELOPMENT & IMPROVEMENT

The Environmental Sustainability Committee has reviewed the use of disposable versus reusable heat packs as part of its action plan. This included consideration of cost, environmental impact and practical use.

A one-month trial of reusable heat packs was conducted. Eleven packs were purchased, numbered and distributed, with a tracking system implemented in CSSD to monitor returns for sterilisation. The trial found that many reusable packs were not returned, with some misplaced, sent to offsite laundry, taken home with patients or damaged during the sterilisation process. In addition, the sterilising washer contributed to increased costs, reducing the anticipated financial benefits of reuse.

Based on these findings, reusable heat packs were not considered a viable option at this time. From an environmental perspective, both reusable and disposable packs contain similar materials (primarily sodium acetate and water), resulting in comparable low-level environmental impacts.

Please dispose of used disposable heat packs in general waste and return any reusable packs in your area to CSSD.

As a committee we will continue to review opportunities to reduce waste and improve sustainability across our health service. If you have any ideas, please feel free to share them with the committee.



Pictured is David Romeril, EGHS Supply Clerk

KNOW YOUR RIGHTS: WHISTLEBLOWER ACT & COMPLAINT PROCESS

Protecting your voice. Protecting our community.



The new Aged Care Act starts on 1 November 2025. One important change is better protection for whistleblowers - people who speak up or report problems. This means older people, their families, carers, and aged care workers can make a complaint or share concerns without worrying about being punished or treated unfairly.



You can make a complaint at East Grampians Health Service by:

- Talking to a staff member.
- Filling out a feedback form.
- Emailing info@eghs.net.au
- Via our website at www.eghs.net.au/contact/your-feedback



You can make a report to:

- Us, as a registered aged care provider.

Ask to speak with:

- Someone in charge.
- Facility manager.
- Clinical care manager.

• Any aged care worker.


• An independent aged care advocate:

- Older Persons Advocacy Network (OPAN): 1800 700 600.
- The Aged Care Quality & Safety Commission: 1800 951 822.
- The Department of Health, Disability and Ageing: 1800 020 103.
- A police officer.

You can make the report in person, over the phone or in writing. A report can be made without giving your name.

For further information follow the link or scan the QR code:

www.eghs.net.au/contact/your-feedback



East Grampians Health Service
16.01.40 - V1.0 - Oct 25

HINCHEY HIGHLIGHTS

NICHOLAS BETSON – ADMINISTRATION ASSISTANT, PATRICIA HINCHEY CENTRE

During March and April 2026, the Patricia Hinchey Centre delivered a lively, varied program with a strong focus on wellbeing, inclusion, and staying connected with the community.

March included our 'Pattern Month' activities, Harmony Week celebrations, St Patrick's Day fun, and outings such as the Moyston Sheep Dog Trials and the Ballarat Begonia Festival.

April continued with a great seasonal line-up, including Easter activities, wellbeing highlights for World Health Day, an environmental focus for Mother Earth Day, commemorative activities for ANZAC Day, and music therapy to mark International Jazz Day.

Across both months, we also kept up a entertaining schedule of exercise sessions, social groups, creative activities, games, and live entertainment! PHC is certainly the place to be.



Pictured is Rod and George chatting over some St Patricks Craft



Pictured is Katie and the therapy dog



Pictured is Shirley and the bunny



Pictured is Nicole and Kaye get ready for some Lowe Street entertainment.



Mexican pizza feast!



Pictured is Patricia Hinchey Centre Bobbers Bobsledding their Way to Victory



Pictured is Gary and Chrissy investigate soil

EASTER AT 70 LOWE STREET

WENDY DUMESNY – RESIDENTIAL SUPPORT COORDINATOR

Residents at 70 Lowe St have an Easter tradition of making their own Hot Cross Buns.

This is something they look forward to and have a lot of fun baking and sharing stories of previous years successes and the occasions fail.

The smell of the buns cooking travels through the whole building and very soon draws a crowd of interested taste testers.



Pictured is Werner and Katerine



Pictured is Nina



Pictured is Katerina and Kylie



Pictured is Dawn

FUN AND EXERCISE AT 70 LOWE STREET

WENDY DUMESNY – RESIDENTIAL SUPPORT COORDINATOR

Always looking to add fun to programs, 70 Lowe St Leisure & Lifestyle staff members, Mel & Casey donned oversized hoop pants for warmup exercises.

This was a hit with both residents and staff. Residents were tasked with getting as many small beachball into the hoops as they could.

We are not sure who get the best workout, residents or Mel & Casey.



Pictured is Casey and Mel



Pictured is Mel



PARKLAND PURSUITS

MICHELLE MASLEN, PAMELA WHEELER, JOSIE HICKEY – LEISURE AND LIFESTYLE

What an adventurous Month we have had in April. Easter Bunny visited with easter eggs and we supped on Hot cross buns and chocolate. Good Friday was a great feed of fish and chips the tradition Easter meal. Residents travelled to Stawell and saw the new Salvation Army building with host Jacqui who presented us with a great afternoon tea.

We had Clare Stacpoule the aboriginal liaison Officer talk to us all about her job and some history of Victoria. Willaura Kindergarten and Willaura Primary came and we had fun with games and craft. Every Month the residents have a pub lunch and invite family members.

We will be hearing from a new musician from Glenthompson who is a retired musician. But loves to play for the love of music. The ladies will be pampered and the residents will enjoy a BBQ and Anzac poems for Anzac day. We have three Lifestyle persons and each has a different style with different activities.

May will see the month kick off with a Carnival, games and carnival food. Residents will enjoy the Biggest Morning tea, Outings to Pomonal, Mortlake, Penshurst and Grampians Estate. We will have the pleasure to hear from two different musicians.



Pictured is Residents enjoying the Country music performers



Pictured is Nina Mclean with Easter Bunny



Pictured is Lorraine Borg with Easter Bunny



Pictured is Lorraine Borg with Easter Bunny



Frank Hucker visiting the pony



Pictured is School kids playing table games with residents



Pictured is Frank and Barry at the Lake Bolac college student visit



Pictured is Alison Holmes patting the pony



YOU ARE INVITED

East Grampians Health Service warmly invites our volunteer community and interested newcomers to attend

AFTERNOON TEA

Alexandra Oval Community Centre
Tuesday 19th May 2026
2.00pm - 3.30pm




Guest Speaker: Bronson Potter
School Captain, Marian College

RSVP by 13th May 2026 to:
Hannah Jennings
P: 5352 9481
E: volunteercoordinator@eghs.net.au



MOVE IT MAY Challenge

JOIN THE MONTH'S STEP CHALLENGE
DOWNLOAD THE STEP UP PEDOMETER APP TO JOIN IN ON THE CHALLENGE. INDIVIDUAL AND DEPARTMENT PRIZES TO BE WON. GET OUT AND START STEPPING THIS MAY.


How to book a Mask Fit Test



Click on the link via SMS
Email: fittest@eghs.net.au
Phone: 5352 9478

*Bookings are currently by appointment only -
Flexibility across Monday to Thursday 9:00am - 3:00pm*

Please notify us if your mobile number has changed since commencing your role at EGHS

Respiratory Protection Program

EGHS STAFF FITNESS

JONAH PIDGEON – EXERCISE PHYSIOLOGIST

Join us every Tuesday from 5:15–6:15 pm for Staff Fitness – a free, weekly session

open to all fitness levels. Whether you're brand new to exercise or already active, this is a relaxed and supportive way to move your body and boost your wellbeing.

Each week offers something a little different, with sessions ranging from

strength and conditioning to fun, modified sports. Activities run:

- Indoors at the Ararat Fitness Centre during the winter months
- Outdoors when the weather warms up

Why join?

Regular exercise helps strengthen muscles and bones, reduce the risk of

chronic conditions, and improve mood, energy, and focus. Just as importantly,

Staff Fitness is a chance to unwind, have a laugh, and connect with colleagues in a welcoming environment.

We aim to create a fun, inclusive space where everyone feels comfortable giving it a go – no pressure, just movement.

For weekly updates and last-minute changes, join the EGHS Staff Fitness Facebook group. Keep an eye on the EGHS home page for exercise timetables.

Locations:

- CHC Gym = Community Health Centre Gym
Ararat Fitness Centre: 61–73 High Street, Ararat

Please click the link to join:

[Ararat Fitness Centre : 61-73 High Street, Ararat](#)

Please click the link to join:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/272393883425954>

STAFF FITNESS

+ 24 MARCH-12 MAY INSTRUCTOR: JONAH (EP)

24 MAR	HIIT (HIGH INTENSITY INTERVAL TRAINING)
31 MAR	BOXING
7 APRIL	CARDIO AND CORE
21 APRIL	FULL BODY CIRCUIT
28 APRIL	BOXING
5 MAY	LOW IMPACT STRENGTH
12 MAY	STRETCH & DE-STRESS

JOIN EGHS STAFF FITNESS FACEBOOK GROUP FOR ANY UPDATE/CHANGES



THANKFUL THURSDAY

“I am truly thankful for Allied Health Clinician Support. In my role as a nurse practitioner, I believe that a holistic support in our aged care facilities is one of the ways to providing patient centered care. Consultations with clinicians such as Diabetes CNEs, dieticians, physios, pharmacists etc. help me by drawing on their experience and knowledge to help formulate nursing care plans and provide direct hands-on care when tasks are outside my scope of practice.”

DEBORAH BENNETT
NURSE PRACTITIONER/EDUCATOR
EDUCATION

THE QUIET FORCE BEHIND RURAL HEALTHCARE

HANNAH JENNINGS - EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT, DEVELOPMENT & IMPROVEMENT

When people think of healthcare, they often picture doctors and nurses on the frontline. But behind every appointment, referral and visit is a broader team keeping the system running smoothly, from administrative staff in clinical areas to those working across corporate services. Their work behind the scenes supports clinicians, ensures staff are paid, keeps systems and processes functioning and ultimately helps the health service continue to care for the community.

Across East Grampians Health Service, administration teams are the quiet force keeping services running smoothly. They are often the first voice a consumer hears on the phone and the first smile they see at the front desk. From managing busy appointment schedules and helping consumers navigate paperwork and services, to ensuring documents reflect best practice and meet governance requirements and sharing updates on social media to keep the community informed, their work keeps the system moving.

In rural communities like ours, these roles are even more

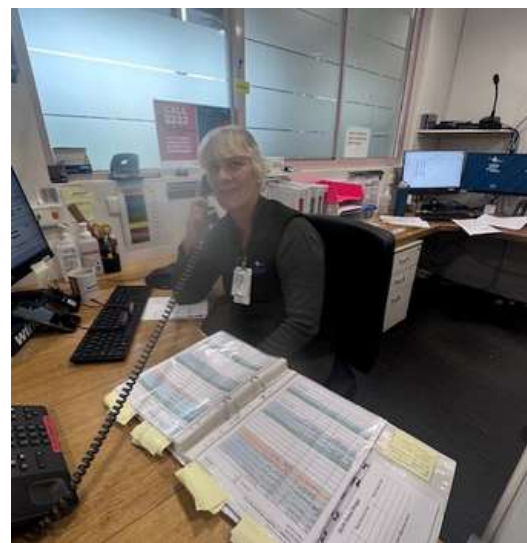
important. Health services are smaller, resources can be stretched, and staff often wear many hats. Administrative staff help connect the many moving parts of rural healthcare from supporting clinicians to ensuring consumers can access the care they need.

Just as importantly, they provide reassurance and kindness during moments that can be stressful for consumers and families. A calm voice on the phone or a warm welcome at reception can make a real difference.

While much of their work happens behind the scenes, its impact is felt every day across rural communities.

This Administration Professional's Day, we recognise and thank the dedicated administrative professionals who keep our health service running. Their organisation, compassion and commitment help ensure quality healthcare reaches our community.





EGHS STAFF EASTER CELEBRATION



EGHS ARK TOY AND ACTIVITY LIBRARY – EASTER EGG HUNT





East Grampians Health Service

East Grampians Health Service
Girdlestone Street (PO Box 155) Ararat VIC 3377

 **5352 9300**

 **5352 9333**

 **info@eghs.net.au**

The Echo is published on the 4th Friday of the month. The deadline for submissions of articles is the Tuesday prior. The ECHO Editor is Lisa Nolen. Information can be sent through, preferably by email, to lisa.nolen@eghs.net.au. Printed copies of the ECHO are distributed to IPU, Theatre, 70 Lowe Street, GVC, Day Centre and the Cafeteria. The ECHO is sent via email to all staff, Board of Management, Ararat Medical Centre, Ararat Psych Services as well as the staff at the Ararat Ambulance Station.