

Community Newsletter

by East Wimmera Health Service (EWHS)



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Back left to right: Sandra Patton, Noreen Ryan, Beth Dillon and Margaret Fradd, with Charlton Aged Care residents Mary (left) and Lorraine.

EWHS staff member, Rose with Workplace Trainers Careers Adviser, Joanne Filippe.

FEBRUARY 2024

Welcome back for a new year and a new edition of the Community Newsletter.

It has been a wet start so far with some wild and changeable seen weather across our region. The mozzie's are with us in huge numbers, but so far, no string of hot days to announce the arrival of Summer.

At EWHS, the working year in full swing, and all campuses are humming with activity, playing catch-up after the Christmas New Year break.

An orientation was held in December 13 for new staff. We welcome Leanne, Raj, Zhuojun (June), Brenden, Courtney, Rida, Gurjot and Sarah.

Mosquitoes can spread serious diseases



Apply mosquito repellent evenly to exposed skin. Pack repellent when going for walks, camping, fishing, or travelling



Wear long, loose-fitting, light-coloured clothing, and closed shoes



Empty buckets of water around home to stop mosquitoes breeding

Around the grounds

HEART RESEARCH MONTH

DON'T IGNORE THE SIGNS

“Don't ignore any signs; if you feel anything (and you know your body better than anyone), trust that and go with it”

This is the advice from Nicholas (Nick), a young man who suffered a heart-attack last month – the only warning signs, heartburn and palpitations in the two days prior. February, is *Heart Research Month* and Nick's story is a timely reminder that our heart's health is important.

Presenting at East Wimmera Health Service, St Arnaud campus, Nick underwent tests and soon went into cardiac arrest before eventually being air-lifted to Bendigo Health, where he underwent emergency heart surgery.

After a seven day stay, Nick was released is now recovering at home.

The warning signs of a heart attack differ from person to person. Knowing the warning signs and acting quickly can reduce the damage to your heart muscle and increase your chances of survival.

Reflecting on his experience, Nick says he is forever grateful and indebted to the staff that helped save his life, both at East Wimmera Health Service and Bendigo Health.

“You might think, oh, I've just got heartburn; but, the heartburn could be the start of your heart attack,” he adds.

Nicks partner, Jason was eager to thank nursing staff involved, “The quick actions of the staff meant that the CPR saved his life. I'm also extremely grateful that they persisted and didn't give up.”

Thank-you from the bottom of my heart”



St Arnaud Campus NUM, Veronica Wilson, says the contribution of the local St Arnaud Ambulance paramedics, was integral to the success of Nicks treatment. Veronica would also like to acknowledge the extraordinary efforts of the Osborne House team; the staff at Donald who initiated the EWHS Emergency Response Procedure; those St Arnaud staff who attended from home, in response to receiving the code blue message; as well as the staff onsite who attended from other areas of the campus. All carried out their roles with calm professionalism to ensure that Nick was given the best possible care to achieve a positive health outcome.

Photographs and extract reproduced, courtesy of Bendigo Health.



Nick (right) and Jason, pictured at Bendigo Health.

HEART ATTACK WARNING SIGNS INCLUDE

- **Discomfort or pain in the centre of your chest (this can feel like heaviness, tightness, or pressure which may spread to different parts of your upper body)**
- **Discomfort in your shoulders, arms, neck, jaw, or back**
- **A choking feeling in your throat**
- **Your arms may feel heavy or useless**
- **Shortness of breath**
- **Nausea and other gastrointestinal symptoms**
- **Cold sweat**

- **Dizziness**
- **Lightheaded**
- **Feeling generally unwell or not quite right**

It is important to note that not all heart attacks are the same and symptoms can vary, with symptoms often presenting quite differently between men and women. **If you experience any of these warning signs, regardless of age, seek medical advice as soon as possible. Every minute counts and getting an assessment can increase your chances of survival.**

Around the grounds

CALD TRAINING DAY AT DONALD CAMPUS

The Donald Campus is currently holding 3 days of 3 hours training, over 3 weeks to assist new staff members, Rose and Bo.

One of the first initiatives that Workplace Trainer Careers Advisor, Joanne Filippé introduced since commencing the role in April 2023, was the introduction of a Translator Plugin to all EWHS computer tool bar.

Supporting team members to gain the skills and confidence to work and complete a task independently, Joanne visits a site when culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) team members require help, assisting with the translator plugin and basic computer skills. Translator apps are also invaluable for scanning and reading via a phone camera.

Separate study rooms have been organised with the assistance of CM Genette Heslop, each having a quiet room to focus on their learning.

As a first-time computer user, Bo faces the herculean task of learning a modern technology whilst studying in a new language. Joanne provided initial help sheets in Thai, explaining logging in, and entering passwords. Using the translator app on her phone, Bo was able to read the text in her native language and familiarise herself with navigation using a mouse, and open new pages.

She is extremely happy with her progress, "that was the first time I ever use a computer, I have brought them for my children, but never used one" she said.

Translating her own module to Malaysian (and grappling with the occasional English definition), Rose has managed to navigate most of the course herself.



Above: Bo working on her first module.



Rose with Workplace Trainers Careers Advisor, Joanne Filippé.

Proud of her efforts, she is extremely excited to have completed a module and looks forward to the next sessions.

Both ladies have successfully completed Infectious Control Prevention - Hand Hygiene.

Congratulations and very well done.

NEW GARDEN FEATURES FOR CHARLTON AGED CARE

Friends of EWHS Charlton (in recession), donated a garden windmill and 2 wind ornaments to the Charlton Aged Care Facility in December.



The garden features, are a welcome addition for residents as they look out the window, or when sitting in the garden.



Congratulations *to our* **2023 Graduate Nurses**

Remi Jeffery, Param Uppal,
Jo Thompson

A ceremony was held on 2.24 to congratulate and wish our graduates all the very best for future nursing endeavours. We are pleased that Jo and Remi will be staying on at EWHS.



Around the grounds



ST ARNAUD COMMUNITY GARDEN GROUP

On any given Wednesday morning, you'll find a group of locals gathered at a very green corner of the St Arnaud campus.



The thriving St Arnaud Community Garden Group have been nurturing the allotment since 2012, when Community Garden spaces were established for all five EWHS campuses (funded with federal and local government support, under the auspice of East Wimmera Health Service).

A cuppa and a catch up are the order of the day as members of the St Arnaud Community Garden Group trickle in, each bearing excess produce or flowers from their garden at home, or food to share. Some wander into the garden to attend to its needs, others stay to chat. After all the recent rain, the talk around the table was of mowing, and waterlogged yards, peppered with talk of grant submissions and the occasional “how was your week?”

You might meet the “ANZAC biscuit champion” Lynette Robinson or Val Hancock the “Jelly Slice Queen”, who not only makes an outstanding jelly slice, she never fails to bring in flowers from her own garden.

Uniquely for a garden group, there is no prerequisite to garden, with locals joining for the companionship and to enjoy the space. In St Arnaud, each member has their own plot, and they divide the maintenance and produce from the group beds. “We all share here; seeds, cuttings, ideas and excess produce” explains group member Maria Hills.

“I mainly plant species that don't grow well in my own garden at home”.

Excess produce is also sent to the St Arnaud community kitchen. Nothing is wasted.

Above left: A handful of members of St Arnaud Community Garden Group, from left; Clive Hancock, John Prendergast, Anton Atkinson, Maria Hills, Val Reeves, Brad Calvert, Barbara Robertson, Iris Hunter and Barry Robertson.

Community Gardens are vital for the health and wellbeing of locals, creating opportunities for the community to come together, learn skills and enjoy each other's company – locals who wouldn't necessarily have crossed paths have found new friends and it has improved the mental and physical health of those who participate. Carer Helen Condie regularly brings her charges to the Wednesday catch-up. Sometimes they come for a cuppa, sometimes to tend their own plot, and the resulting veggies are proudly taken home to Mum's. The benefits to a wide cross-section to the community is invaluable.

Around the grounds



ST ARNAUD COMMUNITY GARDEN GROUP CONT. . . .



The St Arnaud Community Garden Group meets each Wednesday morning between 9am and 12 noon, including a social morning tea.

For a small fee of \$10 per year, you receive an individual garden bed, (pending availability) and access to a shared garden and group produce, as well as meeting a great group of like-minded people. If you are interested, please drop in to see them at the garden on a Wednesday morning.

Members can access the St Arnaud Community Garden 24 hours per day, 7 days per week, 365 days per year.

Need a COVID vaccination or booster shot?

Don't worry, there are health clinics coming up in our neighbouring areas.

COVID vaccinations available

Please bring take your Medicare card



For more information phone
Liz at Ballarat Health
0491 085 342

Grampian Community Health have upcoming clinics at:

Avoca | February 8

Avoca Information and Community Centre 10.30am-12.30pm

Horsham | February 22

Centre for Participation 11.00am-1.00pm

Horsham | February 22

Horsham Neighbourhood House 2.00pm-4.00pm

Stawell | February 23

Stawell Town Hall 10.00am-2.00pm



You can:

Put your name down on the wait list at either St Arnaud, or Charlton, Medical Centres **OR**

If you prefer not to wait, Grampians Community Health are holding health clinics that offer COVID vaccinations at the locations listed.

For more information phone Liz, at Ballarat Community Health on 0491 085 342

Don't forget to take your Medicare card.

Needs assessment consultation

Western Victoria Primary Health Network (WVPHN) is an organisation that works to support local doctors and other health professionals, fund health services, and make links between different services to make our health system work more efficiently.

They operate in 21 municipalities in western Victoria and fund around \$60 million worth of health services each year.

They want to understand the needs of the communities that they serve in order to deliver on local needs. Every three years, they ask the people that live and work in our communities about the health issues they face, and what services they need to feel healthier.

This year they are asking three key questions:

- What are the major health issues or problems in your community?
- What services or other changes are needed to address these issues?
- What are some of the existing things about your community that help people to be happy and healthy?

WVPHN want to hear from as many people as possible to make sure they truly understand what our communities need. Your opinion and experiences matter. There are lots of ways to share your thoughts.

You can:

- Fill out a short survey.
- Use a map to show us the location of your community, and to share your ideas and experiences.
- Share your thoughts and experiences and comment and vote on the thoughts of others.
- Tell your story of accessing health services in our community – you can use video, images or words to tell your story.
- Request a phone call or meeting to share your thoughts.

You can find out more or share your thoughts by visiting the project page (<https://www.meetingplacewestvicphn.au/needs-assessment>) or by calling 03 5222 0800.



We are listening!



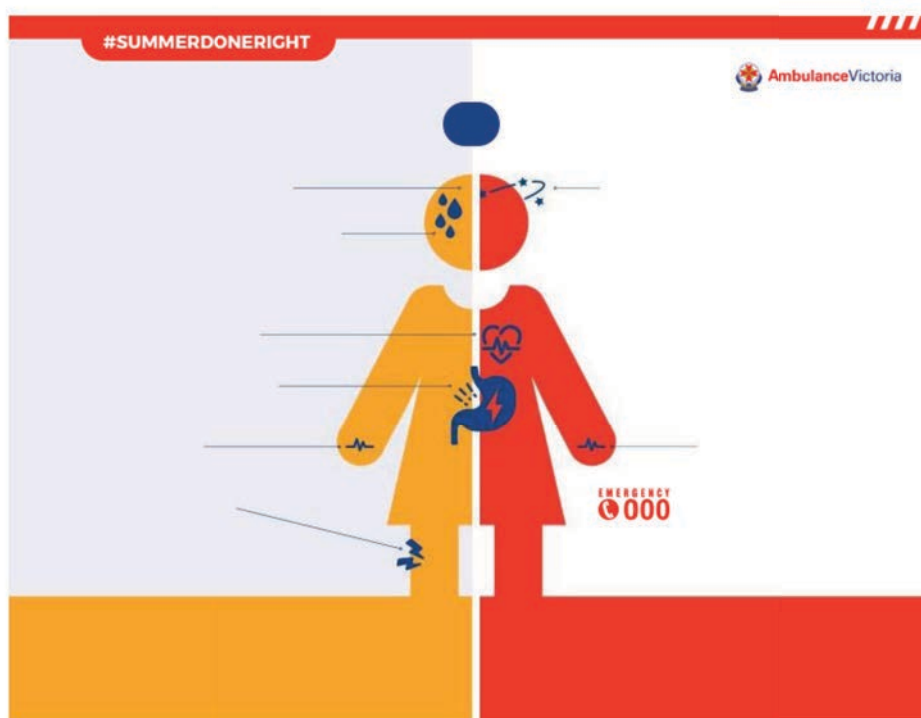
HEAT ILLNESS

Heat illness can be fatal if left untreated. Recognise the early warning signs of heat related illness.

Heat can cause:

- Heat Cramps
- Heat Exhaustion.
- This can lead to the life threatening condition of Heat Stroke.

Heat may also worsen the condition of someone who already has a chronic medical condition such as heart disease, pulmonary disease, or diabetes.



How to prevent heat illness

- Drink plenty of water.
- Prioritise outside tasks to complete them in the morning if possible.
- Seek shade and wear protective clothing.
- Check in on vulnerable friends, neighbours, and family.
- Use air conditioning and fans where possible.
- Never leave children or animals in a parked car.

For more information
ambulance.vic.gov.au. Follow the
Buloke Paramedic Community Support
Coordinator (PCSC) on Facebook
(facebook.com/pcscbuloke)
Saving lives is a team effort and the
community is a vital part of the team.

Around the grounds



AWARD RECOGNITION

EWHS is proud to partner with the North Central LLEN, North Central Trade Training Centre and local schools, to support students in Vocational Education and Training (VET) as part of their secondary school studies.

At the Donald High School Awards presentation ceremony held in December, the EWHS were pleased to receive the *Workplace Award for Excellence* in 2023 for our work with Jorjah Roberts.

Jorjah undertook a Structured Workplace Learning placement (a requirement for her VET Certificate III Allied Health Assistance -partial completion studies) at our Donald campus.

Jorjah is also currently a junior support services staff member with EWHS.

In a thank-you letter to EWHS, Mary-Ann Sait, Careers & Education Partnership at North Central LLEN writes, "The mentoring and support given to Jorjah has enabled her to integrate practical on-the-job experience, enriched her knowledge of careers within the health industry and given her broader work-related skills."



CERTIFICATE OF APPRECIATION

EWHS - Donald Campus

Thank you for supporting and enriching the learnings of our Certificate III Allied Health Assistant (partial) students by providing a quality Structured Workplace Learning experience.



Please forward on our appreciation to your staff".

Our own thanks go to staff member, Emma Burke who was on hand to receive the award on behalf of the East Wimmer Health Service.

FEBRUARY IS

REDFEB

Heart Research Month

Heart disease is still Australia's leading cause of death and affects families and communities around the country.

REDFEB is a month dedicated to raising awareness for heart health and raising much-needed funds for research. <https://www.heartresearch.com.au/redfeb/>

OVARIAN CANCER AWARENESS MONTH

Held each year in February to educate Australians on ovarian cancer, and raise awareness by sharing the stories of real women affected by the disease. <https://www.ovariancancer.net.au/get-involved/ovarian-cancer-awareness-month>

FEBFAST

What will you say goodbye to this febfast?

Give up a vice of your choice for the whole month, feel the health benefits and raise funds for YSAS' drug and alcohol programs. <https://febfast.org.au/>

OTHER HEALTH EVENTS

- Feb 4** World Cancer Day
- Feb 4-10** Healthy Lunchbox Week
- Feb 4-10** Feeding Tube Awareness Week
- Feb 11-17** Heart Failure Awareness Week
- Feb 14** National Condom Day
- Feb 28** Teal Ribbon Day
- Feb 29** Rare Diseases Day



East Wimmera Health Service acknowledges the Traditional Owners; the Dja Dja Wurrung Peoples, Djaara Peoples, Jaara Jaara Peoples, Wotjobaluk, Jaadwa, Jadawadjali, Wergaia and Jupagalk Peoples and Custodians of the land in which we work and live, and pays respect to their Elders past, present and emerging. We acknowledge their significant cultural heritage, their fundamental spiritual connection to the country, and value their contributions to a diverse community. We are proud to embrace the spirit of reconciliation, and learn more from the local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Communities, on how best to improve their health, social and economic outcomes.



Eas: Wimmera Health Service is proud to support and provide care for all lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans and gender diverse, intersex, queer and/or questioning and asexual (LGBTQIA+) staff, consumers and communities. We are committed to ensuring our services are welcoming, safe, inclusive and respectful for everyone.