

# NORTHEAST HEALTH FOCUS

WINTER 2026



HEALTH

COMMUNITY

CULTURE



# WELCOME

---

It has been a busy and rewarding few months at Northeast Health Wangaratta as we continue to support the health and wellbeing of our community. As we move into winter, we have been encouraging people to stay healthy by getting their flu vaccination and making use of the range of healthcare options available, including care from home through the Victorian Virtual Emergency Department.

This edition also highlights the incredible generosity of our community through local fundraising initiatives, along with the ongoing investment we are making in staff training and development to ensure we continue delivering high-quality care.

We have also enjoyed recognising and celebrating the dedicated healthcare professionals who make NHW such a special place, including our nurses, midwives and doctors, whose skill, compassion and commitment make a difference every day.

Thank you to our staff, volunteers, donors, partners and community members for your continued support. Together, we are helping to build a healthier and stronger future for North East communities.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "K. Bennetts". The signature is stylized and cursive.

Kim Bennetts  
Acting Chief Executive Officer

# CONTENTS

- 1  
**Welcome**
- 3  
**Board Update**
- 4  
**NHW Fundraiser**  
Buy a bed today
- 5  
**Winter Health**  
Stop the flu this Winter
- 6  
**Allied Health Update**  
Discover expanded team
- 7  
**Celebrating our team**  
Celebrating our medical teams
- 8  
**Virtual Care Expanded**  
Delivery care closer to home
- 9  
**Surgical care expanded**  
Partnership with Alpine Health



Northeast Health Wangaratta acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the land on which we work, the Bpangarang and Yorta Yorta people, and pays respect to their Elders past, present and emerging. We respect and celebrate all forms of diversity. We welcome and value people from all walks of life to access our services and join our team.

# BOARD UPDATE

Celebrating the NHW team and their amazing work.

I continue to be impressed by the commitment and professionalism of our staff and the quality of care being delivered across our health service.

In recent months, we have seen excellent outcomes across a number of clinical areas, particularly in orthopaedic and general surgery. Our teams continue to focus on safe, high-quality care, shorter wait times, and helping patients recover and return home sooner. These results reflect the skill and teamwork of our surgeons, nurses, allied health professionals, and support staff who care deeply about our community. In May, board members toured the ICU where our awareness was intensified of the challenges felt across the service to care for our patients in clinically appropriate surroundings.

I am also proud of the growing role Northeast Health plays as a teaching and training health service for the region. We have welcomed increasing numbers of graduate nurses, junior doctors, and student placements, while also supporting staff to undertake advanced training closer to home. NHW hosted the annual Australian Orthopaedic Association (AOA) Fellowship Trial Exam on 21 March 2026 – the first rural site to do so. Congratulations have been extended to Catherine Guest (Senior Registrar) and Mike Falkenberg (VMO) for a well organised event. This is a great achievement that enhances not only the clinical outcomes of the region but our reputation as a teaching hospital of regional renown.



*Board Chair, Ruth Kneebone*

Thank you to all staff who took time to complete the recent People Matters Survey. This gives your supervisors, executive and the board knowledge about how you are feeling about your work and I am confident you will notice new initiatives that respond to this feedback.

I would also like to acknowledge the leadership and commitment of our Executive team, directors, clinical leaders, and educators. Their focus on continuous improvement, innovation, and staff development plays an important role in maintaining the high standards of care our community expects and deserves.

On behalf of the Board, I thank our staff, volunteers, supporters, and community partners for their continued dedication and support. Together, we are continuing to build a strong and sustainable future for healthcare in our region.

# GIVE THE GIFT OF COMFORT

Gift a bed now and help support our community today

Northeast Health Wangaratta (NHW) has launched a new community fundraising appeal aimed at raising \$35,000 to purchase 10 state-of-the-art patient beds to support care across the health service.

The appeal highlights the important role modern hospital beds play in patient comfort, dignity, safety and recovery, helping ensure patients receive the highest quality care during their hospital stay. Patient beds are used around the clock across inpatient areas and are a vital part of delivering safe, high-quality healthcare. The new beds will provide improved support for patients during some of the most vulnerable moments of their healthcare journey while also assisting staff in delivering safer and more efficient care.

The appeal is calling on the support of the broader community, local businesses and healthcare partners to help ensure patients across North East Victoria have access to modern equipment close to home. Donations of any size will contribute towards achieving the fundraising target and improving bedside care for local patients.

NHW provides healthcare services to more than 90,000 people across North East Victoria and continues to invest in initiatives that improve patient outcomes, comfort and safety.



Support your community

## GIVE THE GIFT OF COMFORT



Further information about the appeal, including donation details, is available via:  
[www.northeasthealth.org.au/appeal](http://www.northeasthealth.org.au/appeal)

Or by scanning the QR Code:



# STOP THE FLU THIS WINTER

Stay well this winter with flu vaccination and care from home

As winter approaches, Northeast Health Wangaratta is encouraging the community to take simple steps to stay healthy by booking a flu vaccination and being aware of the healthcare options available when they need them.

Flu vaccination remains one of the most effective ways to protect yourself, your family and the wider community during the colder months. Getting vaccinated can help reduce the risk of serious illness and support overall community wellbeing throughout winter.

NHW is also reminding community members that care is available from home through the Victorian Virtual Emergency Department (VVED), a free online service that connects patients with emergency doctors and nurses via phone, tablet or computer.

VVED provides a convenient option for many non-life-threatening medical concerns, allowing people to receive care without travelling to hospital. The service also helps ensure emergency departments remain available for patients who require urgent or emergency care.

By planning ahead, staying up to date with vaccinations and knowing where to seek care when needed, community members can play an important role in helping reduce pressure on local health services during the busy winter period.

For information about flu vaccinations, speak with your GP or local pharmacy. To access the Victorian Virtual Emergency Department, visit [vved.org.au](http://vved.org.au).

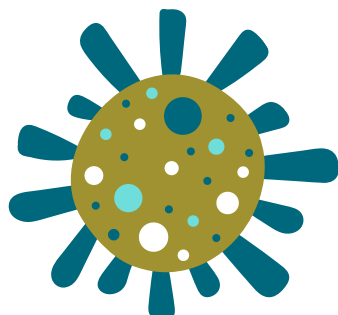
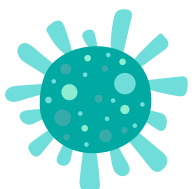


**Book your flu shot.**



Further information available via:  
[www.northeasthealth.org.au/](http://www.northeasthealth.org.au/)

**Or by scanning the QR Code:**





# ALLIED HEALTH UPDATE

Our Allied Health Education team has recently expanded.

---

Based within the Education and Research Unit (ERU), the team of allied health clinical educators is supporting the growth and development of current and future allied health professionals. Together, they are helping to create a positive learning environment that builds skills, supports inclusion and encourages lifelong learning.

This expansion has enabled education and training to be intentionally tailored to our different learner groups across NHW, including both staff and students.

Recent highlights include the development of a career progression program for allied health staff moving into more senior roles, such as Grade 2 positions, as well as strengthening student placement programs. This work has been made possible through the collaboration of allied health discipline managers, helping create valuable learning opportunities across the organisation.

Key activities have also included training and support for student supervisors, alongside welcoming the first social work student hosted by NHW in more than five years and the first-ever podiatry student placement at NHW.

These placements have provided valuable learning experiences for students while also showcasing the knowledge, enthusiasm and commitment of our supervisors in growing the future allied health workforce. We remain committed to building strong pathways for teaching and learning across allied health at NHW.



# CELEBRATING OUR PEOPLE

## Recognising and celebrating our medical teams

The past month has provided Northeast Health Wangaratta with several wonderful opportunities to recognise and celebrate the dedicated healthcare professionals who care for our community every day.

Across International Day of the Midwife, International Nurses Day and Crazy Socks 4 Docs, we proudly acknowledged the incredible contribution of our midwives, nurses and doctors. These celebrations highlighted the skill, compassion and commitment that our healthcare workforce brings to patients, families and the wider community every day.

With 55 midwives, 845 nurses and more than 200 doctors working across NHW, we are fortunate to have a highly skilled and passionate workforce delivering care across a wide range of services. From welcoming new babies into the world and supporting patients through recovery, to providing specialist care and responding to emergencies, our teams play a vital role in the health and wellbeing of North East communities.

Throughout the month, staff came together to celebrate these important occasions, recognising both the professional achievements and personal dedication of our healthcare teams. It was also an opportunity to reflect on the positive impact they have on the lives of thousands of people each year.

We are incredibly proud of our doctors, nurses and midwives and thank them for the care, expertise and kindness they bring to their roles. Their dedication is at the heart of everything we do and helps ensure our community continues to receive exceptional healthcare close to home.



# VIRTUAL HOSPITAL EXPANDS

Virtual Hospital pilot expansion supports care closer to home

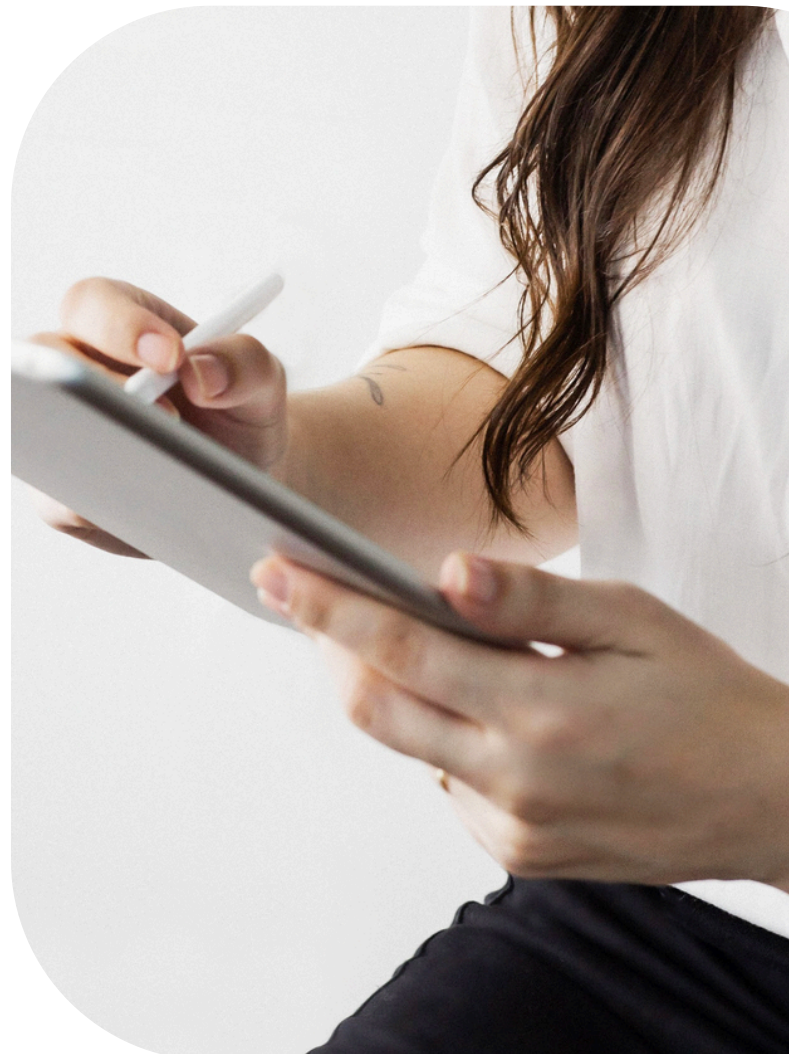
Northeast Health Wangaratta (NHW) has welcomed the expansion of the Victorian Virtual Hospital pilot, highlighting the opportunity to further strengthen access to specialist care for regional communities while supporting patients to receive treatment closer to home.

The expanded pilot builds on existing virtual care initiatives already operating across the region and complements the strong medical workforce and specialist expertise available locally at NHW, including the organisation's current neurology services.

The Victorian-first pilot, led through a partnership between Austin Health and The Royal Melbourne Hospital, uses digital technology, remote monitoring and virtual consultations to deliver hospital-level care in patients' homes. The program is designed to reduce unnecessary travel, support earlier intervention and improve continuity of care for regional patients.

As part of the expansion, NHW will continue building on the success of virtual ward rounds through the introduction of a neurology program delivered in partnership with The Royal Melbourne Hospital, Goulburn Valley Health and Austin Health. The model aims to strengthen collaboration between metro and regional clinicians while enhancing support for patients requiring specialist neurological care.

NHW has already seen positive outcomes through virtual ward rounds currently supporting haematology patients, with local clinicians working alongside metropolitan specialists in real time to review care and make shared clinical decisions. The broader Virtual Hospital Pilot has expanded across regional Victoria following strong early results, with more than 260 patients treated safely from home and more than 1,000 hospital bed days saved since the program commenced in late 2025.





# SURGICAL CLOSER TO HOME

Alpine Health is making it easier for people to access care closer to home through a strengthened partnership with Northeast Health Wangaratta.

Mount Beauty Hospital will continue as the primary campus for surgical care at Alpine Health, with monthly orthopaedic surgery now available locally — reducing the need for people to travel for common procedures such as carpal tunnel release and bunion surgery.

Orthopaedic Surgeon Anton Lambers, who lives in Bright, will lead the service and also offer consulting clinics locally. Dr Lambers works across Northeast Health Wangaratta and Wangaratta Private Hospital, supporting continuity of care from consultation through to surgery and follow-up.

Dr Lambers said local access to care improves the overall experience for patients.

“Being able to deliver care locally makes the experience easier for patients and their families,” he said.

Interim Chief Executive Officer Cameron Butler said the partnership reflects Alpine Health’s commitment to accessible, person-centred care.

“Access to care close to home reduces stress, keeps people connected to their supports, and helps improve recovery,” Mr Butler said.

Chief Executive Officer of Northeast Health Wangaratta, Libby Fifis, said strong regional partnerships play an important role in improving access to care.

“Working closely with Alpine Health helps bring specialist surgical care into the local community, reducing the need for patients to travel and supporting better outcomes,” Ms Fifis said.

Alpine Health will continue to explore opportunities to expand local surgical services in the future.



# VISITOR MAP

35-47 Green Street, Wangaratta  
Phone: 03 5722 5111

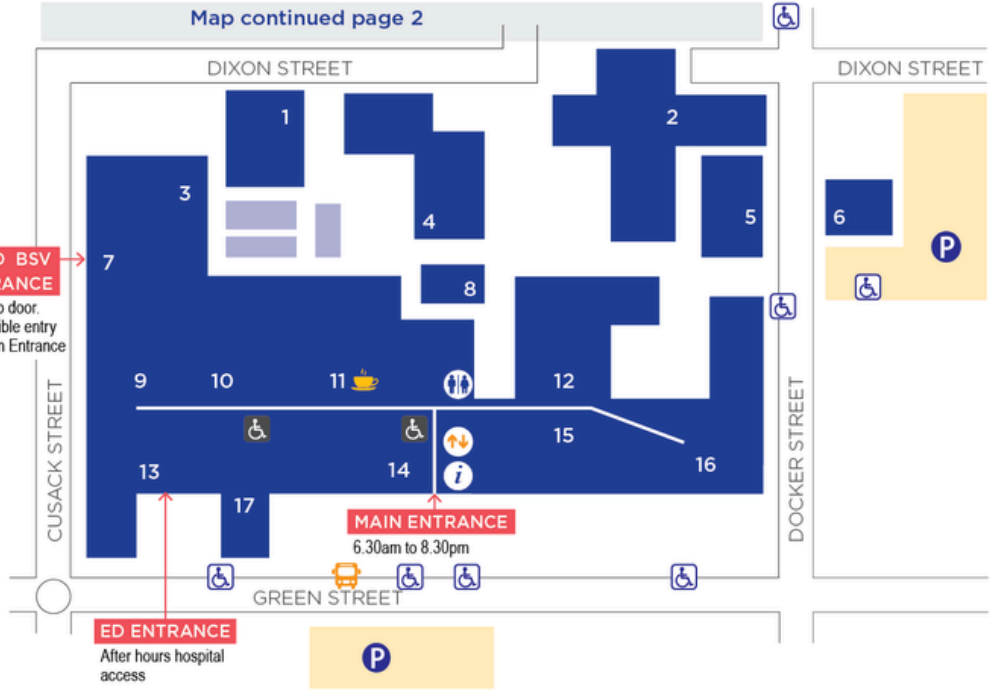
## GROUND FLOOR

Café	11
Cashier/Reception	14
Department of Rural Health	5
Emergency Department (ED)	13
Facilities & Maintenance Department	4
Human Resources	3
ICT Services	6
I-MED & BreastScreen Victoria (BSV)	7
Kerferd Unit	2
Medical Imaging	9
Medical Ward	12
Pharmacy	10
Short Stay Observation Unit	17
Spiritual Sanctuary	8
Supply Department	1
Thomas Hogan Rehabilitation Centre	16
Transit Lounge	15

**I-MED BSV ENTRANCE**  
Stairs to door.  
Accessible entry via Main Entrance

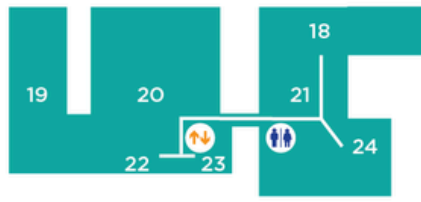
**MAIN ENTRANCE**  
6.30am to 8.30pm

**ED ENTRANCE**  
After hours hospital access



## FIRST FLOOR

Admissions & Day Stay	22
Dialysis	23
Intensive Care Unit	19
Maternity Ward	24
Paediatric Ward	18
Surgical Ward	21
Theatre Suite	20



## LEGEND

- Parking
- Disabled parking
- Bus stop
- Disabled toilet
- Visitor toilet
- Information
- Lift & stairs
- Stairs only
- Cafe

PAGE 1 OF 2  
03 5722 5111

4-12 Clark Street, Wangaratta

Community Rehabilitation	27
Dental Service	26
Oncology Unit	28
Outpatient Clinics	25

### Learning & Teaching Centre

Auditorium  
Tutorial Rooms 1 & 2

### Margaret Boyd Education Centre

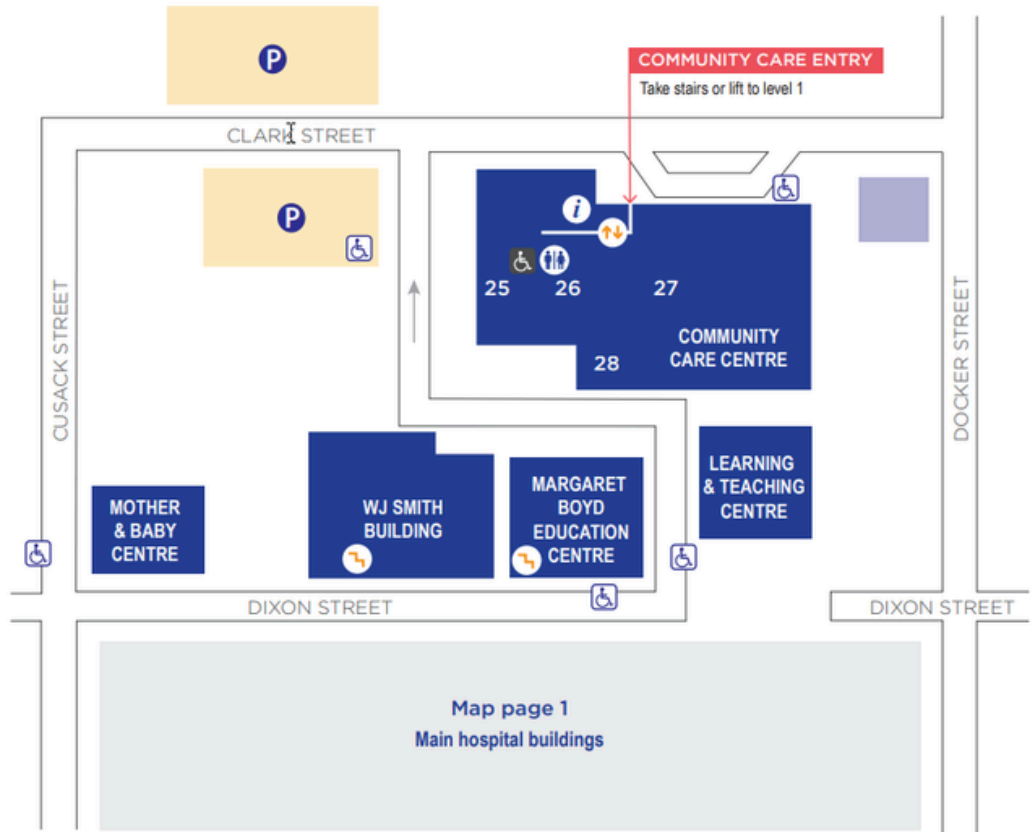
Community Nursing Services  
Education & Research Unit (lower floor)  
- Conference Room  
- Clinical Skills Room  
- IT Training Room  
- Seminar Room  
- Tutorial Rooms 4 - 6

### Mother & Baby Centre

34 Cusack Street, Wangaratta  
Lactation Clinic  
Midwifery Group Practice

### WJ Smith Building

Marketing & Media  
Volunteer & Philanthropy Services



Map page 1  
Main hospital buildings



VICTORIAN VIRTUAL  
EMERGENCY DEPARTMENT  
Northern Health

The Victorian Virtual Emergency Department (VVED)  
is a public health service for non-life-threatening emergencies.

You can access emergency care from anywhere in Victoria,  
24 hours a day, seven days a week.

You will be connected to doctors and nurse practitioners,  
who are trained to assist you.

Interpreter services are available for patients who prefer  
to speak in their own language.

**To access visit [www.vved.org.au](http://www.vved.org.au)**

**REMEMBER** if your situation is life-threatening  
call Triple Zero (000)

# GIVE YOUR FEEDBACK

We value any feedback about our service, whether it be a suggestion, a complaint or a compliment.  
To give feedback, you can:

- Speak with any member of staff or the Manager of the Department you are receiving the service from
- Call our Consumer Liaison Officer on (03) 5722 5202 between 8.00am and 4.30pm, Monday to Friday
- Complete our online feedback form at [www.nhw.org.au](http://www.nhw.org.au)
- Email us at [feedback@nhw.org.au](mailto:feedback@nhw.org.au)
- Write to Manager Consumer Experience, Northeast Health Wangaratta, PO Box 386, Wangaratta 3676



35-47 Green Street  
Wangaratta VIC 3677  
(PO Box 386 Wangaratta VIC 3676)  
(03) 5722 5111  
[enquiries@nhw.org.au](mailto:enquiries@nhw.org.au)

[WWW.NHW.ORG.AU](http://WWW.NHW.ORG.AU)