

NORTHEAST HEALTH FOCUS

SPRING 2026



HEALTH

COMMUNITY

CULTURE



WELCOME

Spring is always a welcome time of renewal, and this edition of Health Focus provides a wonderful opportunity to reflect on the people, partnerships and progress that continue to shape Northeast Health Wangaratta.

Across these pages, you'll see many examples of what can be achieved when our health service and community work together. From new staff accommodation that will help us attract and retain the healthcare workforce our region needs, to the extraordinary generosity of our community in supporting new patient beds and local cancer care, there is much to celebrate.

You'll also read about some of the quieter but equally important ways we are improving people's experience of care — creating more welcoming spaces for our youngest patients, ensuring people can access interpreter support when they need it, and inviting our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community to help shape the future of Aboriginal health care at Northeast Health Wangaratta.

What connects all of these stories is our commitment to providing exceptional healthcare for our community, now and into the future. Thank you to our staff, volunteers, patients, families, donors, partners and community for the many different ways you contribute to Northeast Health Wangaratta. I hope you enjoy this Spring edition of Health Focus.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Libby Fifis'.

Libby Fifis
Chief Executive Officer

CONTENTS

1
Welcome

3
Board Update

4
NHW Fundraiser
Target reached

5
Interpreter Service
Get support when needed

6
Have Your Say
Aboriginal Strategic Framework
Consultation

7
Local Community Support
Mazda Supports Cancer Care

8
New Art for Young Patients
Local Art delivered to ward

10
Accommodation Project
Staff Accommodation now complete

11
Greener Building Project
New Project for NHW



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

Preparing for Spring 2026

For me, Spring brings with it a sense of optimism and renewal, and there is plenty happening across Northeast Health Wangaratta as we look towards the remainder of 2026.

One of the things I particularly value as Board Chair is learning about the stories behind the statistics in our board reports. At each Board meeting we hear about the experiences of our patients, residents and families. In recent months we have heard positive feedback from the family of a young patient, as well as the story of an Illoura resident who was actively involved in decisions about their own care. These stories bring our discussions back to what matters most — providing care that is safe, respectful and centred on the individual.

It is encouraging to see some very tangible improvements in how we care for people. The work undertaken to improve patient flow through the hospital is beginning to show results, with fewer patients experiencing very long stays. Our planned surgery targets were also achieved for the 25/26 year. None of these things happen by accident — they reflect a great deal of work across many different teams.

Our workforce remains central to everything we do. Board members are impressed to see that during a particularly demanding winter, 99 per cent of our staff were vaccinated against influenza. A great example of the commitment of our people to supporting one another and maintaining services for our community.

Another important undertaking is our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Strategic Framework and Reconciliation Statement of Intent. The Board endorsed these documents for consultation with our



Board Chair, Ruth Kneebone

community and Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisations. Listening carefully and developing this work together will make meaningful and lasting improvements in health outcomes.

Beyond Northeast Health Wangaratta, our connections across the region continue to strengthen. Work on the Hume Local Health Service Network Clinical Service Plan is progressing, with the twelve health services considering how we can work together to provide more care closer to home. I am also pleased to have recently been elected as Chair of the Hume LHSN Board Chairs Committee. This is an opportunity to ensure the needs and strengths of Northeast Health Wangaratta and our wider region are well represented.

I wish to acknowledge the changes around the Board table, sincerely thanking Cheryl Clutterbuck, who has recently completed ten years of service as a Board Director.



Cheryl has made a significant contribution to the governance of Northeast Health Wangaratta, and I am very grateful for the time, thought and commitment she has given to our health service.

I am also very pleased to welcome Clare Kiely to the Board. Clare has already commenced contributing through the People and Culture Governance and the Community Advisory Committees. I look forward to the perspective and experience she will bring to our work.

Finally, after a winter that placed sustained pressure on our health service, I want to acknowledge our staff. Health is demanding work, and behind every achievement are people turning up each day, solving problems, supporting colleagues and caring for patients.

On behalf of the Board, thank you. I look forward to the arrival of spring giving everyone an opportunity to enjoy some warmer days and find a time to recharge.

THANK YOU FOR THE SUPPORT

Thanks to the support of the community our fundraiser target has been met

Northeast Health Wangaratta (NHW) is celebrating the success of its recent fundraising appeal, with the local community raising an incredible \$39,650 towards the purchase of new patient beds.

The appeal exceeded its \$35,000 fundraising target, thanks to the generosity of local individuals, families, community groups and businesses who came together to improve comfort, safety and care for patients at NHW.

A special thank you goes to Bright Op Shop, whose remarkable \$13,500 donation played a significant role in helping the appeal reach and exceed its goal.

The new patient beds will provide greater comfort for patients while also supporting staff with modern features designed to improve safety, mobility and clinical care.

The success of the appeal reflects the strong connection between NHW and the local community, and the community's ongoing commitment to supporting high-quality healthcare close to home.

NHW extends its sincere thanks to everyone who contributed to the appeal. Every donation has helped turn this project into a reality, with the new beds set to benefit thousands of patients for years to come.



NEED AN INTERPRETER?

Get support from a qualified interpreter

Northeast Health Wangaratta provides access to qualified interpreters at no cost for patients, families, carers and others involved in a patient's care.

Interpreters can help ensure everyone can understand important health information, ask questions and be involved in decisions about care.

How to request an interpreter

Please let our team know if you or someone involved in your care needs an interpreter, including the language and dialect required.

We will do our best to arrange a qualified interpreter to support your communication with our healthcare team.

There is no cost to consumers for interpreter services.

If you need an interpreter, please speak with a member of our team.





HELP GUIDE ABORIGINAL HEALTH CARE



Northeast Health Wangaratta (NHW) is inviting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community members to help shape the future of Aboriginal health care by providing feedback on its new Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Strategic Framework and RSOI.

The Framework will guide how NHW works alongside Aboriginal communities to provide healthcare that is culturally safe, welcoming and responsive to community needs.

Community members, Elders, families, carers and Aboriginal organisations are encouraged to share their experiences, ideas and priorities to ensure Aboriginal voices are at the heart of the Framework.

The Framework will provide a roadmap for strengthening cultural safety across NHW, building stronger partnerships with community, supporting Aboriginal employment and leadership, and improving health outcomes. Feedback received during the consultation will directly inform the final Framework and help shape future planning, services and quality improvement initiatives.

Community members can have their say by completing the online survey or speaking with NHW staff at upcoming community engagement events.

To find out more or provide feedback, scan the QR code above or visit nhw.or.au/have-your-say.

WANGARATTA MAZDA SUPPORTS LOCAL CANCER CARE

Local partnership driving support for cancer patients

A new partnership between Northeast Health Wangaratta (NHW) and Wangaratta Mazda is helping support better care for local cancer patients, with \$100 from every new vehicle sold donated to the NHW Cancer and Wellness Centre.

The partnership commenced on 1 July and has already raised \$1,300, highlighting the strong commitment of Wangaratta Mazda and its customers to supporting local healthcare.

Funds raised will help enhance services and patient care across NHW's Cancer and Wellness services, supporting people to receive high-quality cancer care closer to home.

The partnership reflects a shared commitment to the health and wellbeing of the local community, with every new Mazda sold contributing to additional support for cancer patients and their families.

NHW is grateful to Wangaratta Mazda and its customers for their generosity and ongoing support of local cancer care.

Local businesses interested in supporting Northeast Health Wangaratta through fundraising or partnership opportunities can contact the NHW Communications team at donate@nhw.org.au.



NATIVE ANIMALS BRING COMFORT TO YOUNG PATIENTS

Colourful native wildlife is helping make hospital visits more welcoming for NHW's youngest patients.

Young patients at Northeast Health Wangaratta (NHW) are being welcomed by some familiar Australian faces, thanks to a colourful new artwork project designed to make hospital visits a little less daunting.

Created by digital artist Ronan Holdsworth, the new native animal door decals have been installed throughout paediatric treatment areas, helping children identify rooms in a fun and engaging way. Each treatment room features a different Australian animal, with matching colouring sheets available for children to take home as a positive reminder of their hospital experience.

The project was made possible through funding from the Royal Children's Hospital Good Friday Appeal, with funding shared across regional health services.

The artwork has been designed to create a more welcoming and comforting environment for children and families visiting NHW. The colourful animals provide an easy way for children to recognise their treatment room while encouraging conversation, curiosity and play during their visit.

Ronan's own experience of living with epilepsy has helped shape his understanding of the emotions children can experience when attending hospital.



His artwork aims to make these visits a little easier while celebrating Australia's unique native wildlife. The project is part of NHW's ongoing commitment to creating welcoming healthcare environments that support the wellbeing and experience of children and their families.

NHW is grateful to the Royal Children's Hospital Good Friday Appeal for supporting initiatives that make a meaningful difference to children and families accessing healthcare across regional Victoria, and to Ronan for bringing his creativity and experience to the project.



NHW COMPLETES STAFF ACCOMMODATION PROJECT

Nine new accommodation units will help attract and retain healthcare workers in our region.

Northeast Health Wangaratta (NHW) has completed a new staff accommodation project, delivering nine modern housing units to support the recruitment and retention of healthcare workers across the region.

Delivered ahead of schedule, the project is an important step in NHW's ongoing commitment to strengthening the local healthcare workforce and ensuring staff relocating to the region have access to safe, suitable and affordable accommodation.

NHW welcomed Minister for Regional Development Michaela Settle onsite to officially hand over the completed buildings, recognising the important role the project will play in supporting regional healthcare delivery and workforce sustainability.

The new accommodation will provide high-quality housing options for essential staff commencing with NHW, particularly those relocating to the region. Access to suitable accommodation can help ease one of the challenges often faced by healthcare workers moving to regional communities.

The project forms part of NHW's broader workforce strategy and will support long-term workforce stability by helping attract and retain skilled healthcare professionals to the region.

NHW thanks Regional Development Victoria for its support and grant funding, which has helped make the project possible and contributed to strengthening healthcare services for the local community.



GREENER, MORE EFFICIENT FUTURE FOR NHW

Powering a healthier, greener future for our community.

Northeast Health Wangaratta (NHW) is taking a significant step towards a more sustainable future, with a major energy efficiency project set to reduce energy use, lower utility costs and improve infrastructure across our health service.

The Victorian Government is investing \$4.16 million in an Energy Performance Contract at NHW through the Greener Government Buildings program, which supports improvements to the energy efficiency of government-owned buildings.

Hospitals are significant users of energy and water, operating around the clock to provide essential care. For NHW, the project provides an opportunity to reduce our environmental footprint while investing in infrastructure that will support our health service and community well into the future.

A range of upgrades will be delivered across NHW, including replacement of the chiller plant, improved building controls, high-efficiency LED lighting, rooftop solar and the transition of gas domestic hot water systems to electric heat pumps. The project also includes electric vehicle charging infrastructure and additional energy sub-metering.

One of the most significant additions will be 900 kilowatt-peak of rooftop solar, allowing NHW to generate more of its own renewable electricity on site.

It is another important investment in the future of NHW and reflects our commitment to providing high-quality healthcare while reducing the environmental impact of the services and facilities our community relies on every day.

Once fully implemented, the upgrades are expected to reduce NHW's electricity consumption by 28 per cent, saving around 1.55 gigawatt-hours each year. Gas use is also expected to reduce by 24 per cent. Importantly, these improvements are expected to reduce annual utility spending by around 20 per cent, representing approximately \$760,000 in savings each year.

For our community, these savings mean more than lower energy bills. Reducing the cost of operating our facilities helps NHW make better use of its resources while creating a more energy-efficient and environmentally responsible health service for future generations.

The project is being facilitated by the Victorian Health Building Authority in partnership with NHW, FG Advisory and Victorian Government departments.

It is another important investment in the future of NHW and reflects our commitment to providing high-quality healthcare while reducing the environmental impact of the services and facilities our community relies on every day.



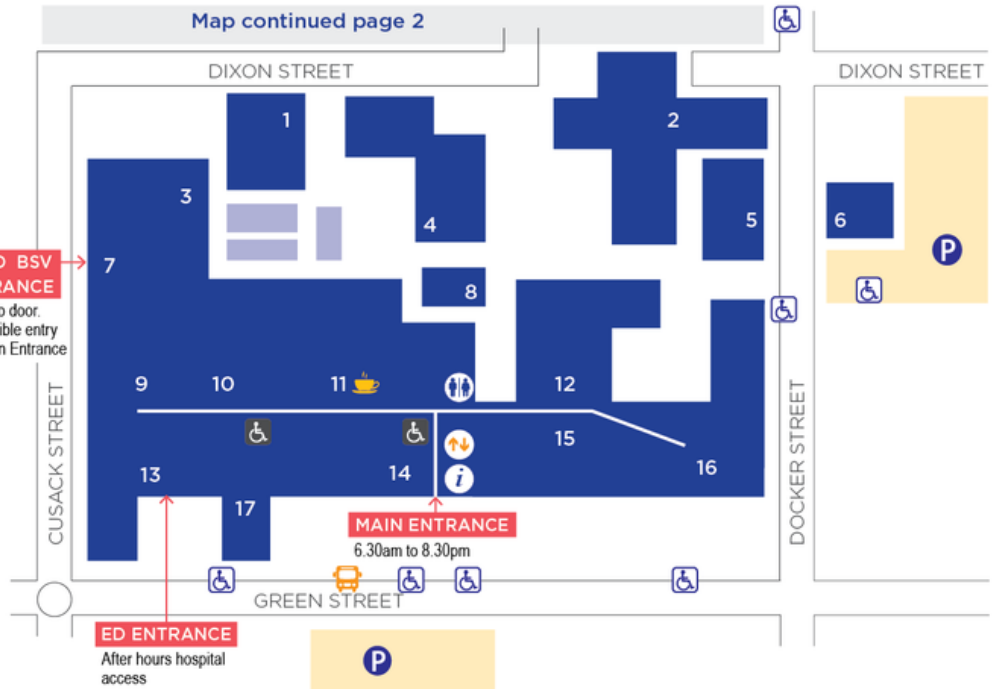
VISITOR MAP

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

GROUND FLOOR

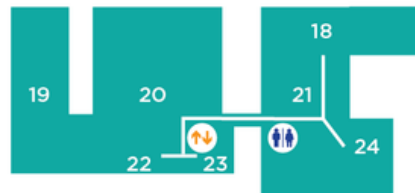
Café	11
Cashier/Reception	14
Department of Rural Health	5
Emergency Department (ED)	13
Facilities & Maintenance Department	4
Human Resources	3
ICT Services	6
I-MED & BreastScreen Victoria (BSV)	7
Kerferd Unit	2
Medical Imaging	9
Medical Ward	12
Pharmacy	10
Short Stay Observation Unit	17
Spiritual Sanctuary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

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



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	Information
Disabled parking	Lift & stairs
Bus stop	Stairs only
Disabled toilet	Café
Visitor toilet	

PAGE 1 OF 2
01 01/2019/01/2019

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

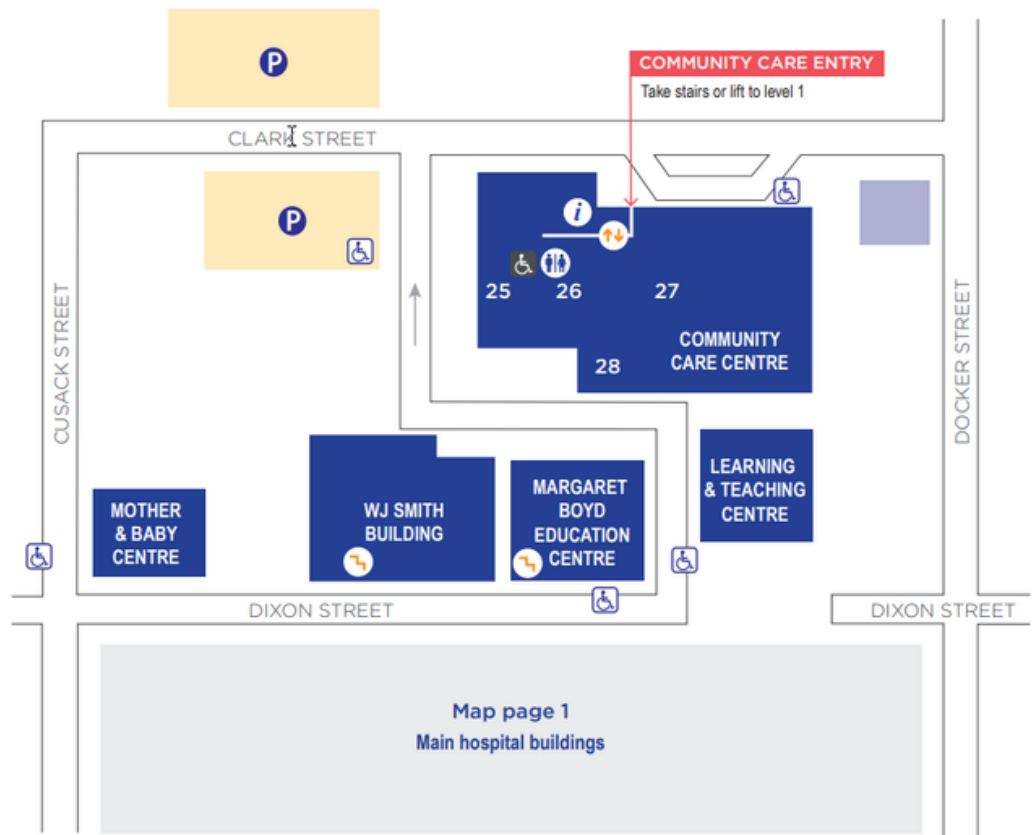
Community Nursing Services
Education & Research Unit (lower floor)
- Conference Room
- Clinical Skills Room
- IT Training Room
- Seminar Room
- Tutorial Rooms 4 - 6

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



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
- Email us at feedback@nhw.org.au
- Write to Manager Consumer Experience, Northeast Health Wangaratta, PO Box 386, Wangaratta 3676



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