



## About Us

Northeast Health Wangaratta is a leading Victorian healthcare service committed to providing quality health care to more than 90,000 people across North East Victoria. Our hospital has a 24/7 Emergency Department and offers an extensive range of [healthcare services](#) as well as our residential aged care facility, [Illoura](#). We also provide a telehealth service to these smaller facilities, allowing doctors at Northeast Health to provide medical advice via video link.

NHW places major focus on supporting and growing both our current and future workforce through the provision of a dynamic education and training program. In partnership with University of Melbourne, Rural Health Academic Network (RHAN) NHW has focused on building the capacity and capability of our staff to undertake and participate in research reflected in the newly endorsed NHW research strategic plan. In 2019, NHW commenced the development of clinical trial research support service, resulting in 10 applications progressing to feasibility stage and 2 of those are now active. We supported 10 staff to complete the Good Clinical Practice (GCP) Training, a requirement for primary investigators involved in clinical trials and the development of process and systems to support implementation of clinical trials.

At Northeast Health Wangaratta (NHW), we truly value our employees. We offer leadership, vision and an environment with a strong sense of teamwork, integrity, accountability, and respect. We are committed to providing staff with continuing education, research and professional development opportunities. This ensures that our people are part of a skilled and knowledgeable workforce, delivering exceptional high quality safe patient care. When you choose to work at NHW, you are committing to aligning everything you do with our values – **Fairness, Excellence, Respect, Kindness, Integrity and Courage.**

## The Year That Was

It's been a challenging year for all of us, none more so than for Victorians. There have been fundamental changes to the way we live and work and during this time the healthcare landscape has changed too. One thing we know for certain is that now, more than ever, it is vitally important that we acknowledge the necessity, the importance and the power of rural and regional hospitals. They are the backbone of our healthcare system, showing their power through community, care and the COVID crisis.

As the major referral facility for people with complex health needs from Bright, Mansfield, Beechworth, Myrtleford, Yarrawonga, Euroa and Benalla, we've maintained care for more than 90,000 people across North East Victoria and will continue to be here in the months and years ahead. We continue to provide a comprehensive range of services throughout 2019/2020 including:

- Treating 29,028 patients through our Emergency Department, an increase of 9.1% on the previous year, which included the COVID-19 screening clinic testing activity.
- Admitting 19,388 patients, a decrease of 6.3% on the previous year, a reduction driven by the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Undertaking 6,138 surgical cases, an 8.4% decrease on the previous year, a reduction driven by Statewide measures implemented to stop the spread of COVID-19.
- Our Day Stay Unit was open for 1,144 additional shifts to manage inpatient bed demand, an increase of 0.9% on the previous year.
- Outpatient service provision increased to over 28,084 consultations, an increase of 1,936 on the previous year.

- Conducting 66,139 occasions of service through our Medical Imaging Department, 217 less than the previous year, a decrease of 0.3% across all services. This reflected an increasing focus on ensuring only essential imaging services are undertaken.
- Welcomed 698 babies during the year, which was 28 more than the previous year.
- Illoura Residential Aged Care Facility continued to experience high demand and had an average occupancy of 98.01% during the year.
- Community Nursing Services, encompassing a 7 day a week Hospital in the Home (HITH) service, routinely care for newborns through to elderly patients.
- The Palliative Care team have consistently cared for over 80 patients in their homes.
- Despite the dental service being closed for several months due to Covid-19 we managed to see 6,413 individuals with over 12,838 appointments performed. 47.8% of these patients represented priority patients.



#### Looking to the Future

However, we have so much more to do. In the next two years NHW will undergo a \$22M re-development providing an expanded ED, CCU and inpatient bed capacity. As part of the Andrews Labor Government's \$470 million Regional Health Infrastructure Fund (RHIF), Attorney General and Northern Victorian MP Jaclyn Symes turned the first sod of the works on April 15 2021. The project will deliver:

- A new 12 bed Intensive Care Unit.
- Additional treatment spaces in the Emergency Department.
- A new eight bed Short Stay Observation Unit in the Emergency Department.
- A Behavioural Assessment Room to support safe care of patients presenting to the Emergency Department with acute mental health or drug and alcohol issues.
- The establishment of a new relocated Paediatric Unit.
- Additional acute care medical beds.

Once complete, this will make a significant difference to the level and quality of care the community receives as well as a better experience for all the clinicians working in the hospital. The need for our service is growing, we average around 75 presentations Emergency Department per day, and this virtually doubled over the recent Easter period. There are four separable portions of work and some of these will run slightly concurrently but predominantly we begin with the ED and that's where the community will see most of the action initially.

## Our Work and Culture

Our Vision: Thriving communities in North East Victoria, achieving the best quality of life for everyone.

Our Purpose: To be leaders in health, who transform and deliver high quality, safe healthcare for all.

### Our Values

Courage: Boldness and bravery are required to meet the needs of our community – this means going above and beyond what we do today.

Excellence: Quality is non-negotiable. We believe in ourselves – we have the vision, skills and determination to innovate and drive excellence.

Fairness: We believe that everyone has a right to equitable access to healthcare, and that this is vital for a flourishing community.

Integrity: We commit to being open and ethical in our actions, and ensuring we have a positive culture defined by commitment.

Kindness: We will always support one another, care deeply about our community, team and partners, and treat each and every person with kindness and compassion.

Respect: We believe in not only listening but hearing, responding to and advocating for those we care for and about. We believe in and commit to trust and mutual understanding.

### Beautiful Wangaratta

Wangaratta's economy is exceptionally diverse. Being centrally located between major distribution centres, Wangaratta is home to major manufacturing, transport and distribution activities. Wangaratta is famed for its Festival of Jazz and Blues which attracts artists of genuine stature and its proximity to some of Victoria's finest wine growing regions and world renowned wineries such as Brown Brothers makes it a popular regional hub. It produces world-class wines, craft beers and gourmet food, including of beef, dairy, lamb, wool, hazelnuts, kiwi fruit and more. Wangaratta is also central to the Victorian snowfields and ski resorts, just an hour's drive to Mt Buffalo and two hours to Mt Hotham. For those who enjoy the outdoors our lakes and rivers provide a playground for fishing, skiing, boating or canoeing. Wangaratta is on the Murray to Mountains Rail Trail at the foothills of the famous Victorian High Country, a popular four-wheel driving, bush walking, mountain bike riding and camping destination.

COVID-19 has resulted in shifts across many parts of the economy including preferences and demand for housing. Throughout regional Australia, it appears population growth is strengthening more quickly than it otherwise would have in 2020. Victoria remains the fastest-growing state in the country with our population expected to reach 11.2 million by 2056. Our interstate migration has been strongly positive for about 10 years now, with a strong economy and large housing growth in regional Victoria. Migration from our capital cities to regional areas has been a trend and regional Victoria is the major beneficiary of Melbourne's population exodus, with almost 12,000 Melburnians moving there in the April – June quarter in 2020. Regional Victorian areas within commuting distance to Melbourne have also seen strong population growth. There are two distinct trends driving up demand for regional property; lifestyle and jobs.

The Wangaratta economy and community are growing. They offer exciting opportunities and potential, have a strong economic development strategy and continue to attract new businesses, residents and visitors to the region.

Our hospital plays a vital role as a cornerstone of this community and the users of our service at the forefront of everything we do: **Every Patient, Every Resident, Every Client, Every Time**. Our board and executive are proud of the commitment of our staff in continuing to deliver excellence in healthcare.

## NHW Strategic Plan

Northeast Health Wangaratta was first established on our current site in 1872. Through decades of commitment, connection, investment, and the passion of our community and region, a district base hospital evolved into today's modern health service of NHW. Today, the hospital is the largest employer in North East Victoria and employs over 1,500 people across our region. We also engage more than 340 volunteers, who are a critical part of both our team and our community. We operate an extensive range of healthcare services and supports for people of all ages living in North East Victoria. We

deliver our services from our sites in Wangaratta, in people's homes and, more recently, through telehealth with our healthcare partners and in the community.

Our strategy has been developed with and alongside our Board, team, community and partners from across North East Victoria and beyond. Through a blend of workshops, interviews and research we have had the opportunity to reflect, innovate and create a direction and framework for NHW for the next five years. This strategy provides

- A foundation for all stakeholders to understand what we are looking to achieve over the next five years, how we will prioritise our actions to achieve it and the aspirations we have for our community.
- A framework to inform our strategic decisions and our annual operational, workforce and clinical plans.
- A tool for enhancing and fostering new relationships across our region.

The next five years are about providing leadership in the transformation of our healthcare service, while continuing to deliver high quality, safe care. This strategic plan sets out our aspirations and priorities, and how we will deliver on these through being collaborative, bold, innovative and responsive to the opportunities and challenges ahead. Over the next five years, we will work towards our four core pillars and priorities, which are underpinned by 20 focussed actions. We recognise that our strategic actions will continue to evolve over the next five years so they remain fit-for-purpose, and drive our vision and purpose.

Our drivers for change, and the many opportunities we will embrace over five years of the Strategy include:

- **Being responsive:** As an agile and flexible service, we can effectively respond to the changing and growing needs within our community.
- **Focus on wellness:** We will reduce the burden of disease and injury in our community through increased focus on wellness, early intervention and prevention that go beyond what we do today.
- **Leverage digital:** Integrating and applying digital infrastructure will enable us to make better decisions, increase equitable access, enable collaboration and drive efficiencies, supporting better outcomes for the community.
- **Be transformative:** We will put new and enhanced approaches and models of care in place that address and respond to need, without compromising on our quality, safety and financial viability.
- **Collaborate and integrate:** Exploring, initiating and strengthening our collaborations is essential to our success, including going beyond what partnership looks like today so our organisation, our region and the health system is more connected, sustainable and resilient.
- **Connect and reconnect with community:** We will continue to work closely with our community, so that they inform and shape our approach, as well as trust and understand us and our services.

Our plan provides the pathway to seize opportunities and tackle these challenges to ensure we are providing the very best healthcare in our community, for our community and with our community.

Through our Roles –the distinct roles we provide with our people, in our community, region and beyond:

- **We are a healthcare provider:** Committed to the provision of equitable, accessible, high quality and safe healthcare.
- **We are an employer:** Which supports, grows and empowers its people to deliver.
- **We are an educator:** Conducting research, and sharing its knowledge and experience internally and externally, within the health sector, the region and beyond.
- **We are an innovator:** Developing and enhancing new models of care, practice and other solutions that will see tangible outcomes for NHW and more broadly.
- **We are an advocate:** Representing the needs of our team, community and region at a range of forums, with consideration to both current and future healthcare needs.

**We are a partner and leader:** Actively leading opportunities to collaborate and develop meaningful partnerships that will share resources and expertise, reduce duplication and ultimately drive better outcomes for communities

## OUR STRATEGIC PILLARS



Northeast Health Wangaratta acknowledges the Traditional Owners of the land on which we work and live, and pays respect to the Elders – past and present – for they hold the memories, traditions, culture and hopes of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples across our region.

We are proud and committed to embrace the spirit of reconciliation and learn more from the local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community about how best to improve the health, social and economic outcomes of First Nations' people.

We are working towards Rainbow Tick Accreditation and embraces inclusive practice for LGBTQIA+ patients, carers, visitors and our team.

Northeast Health Wangaratta respects and celebrates all forms of diversity. We welcome and value people from all walks of life to access our services and join our team.

