



MAY 2021

# Djerriwarrh:

# Retrospective

*Picture: Bacchus Marsh Hospital (May 2021)*





"Express" SEPT. 30 1939

**Patriotic Guild Formed.**

**SUCCESSFUL PUBLIC MEETING.**

AT A SUCCESSFUL public meeting in Bacchus Marsh Mechanics' Institute on Wednesday afternoon and attended largely by local ladies, a "Patriotic Guild" was formed. The inaugural motion was moved by Miss Beatrice Anderson, who will be well remembered for her Red Cross work during the Great War of 1914-18, and whom the meeting later elected President of the new Guild.

The meeting was presided over by the Shire President (Cr. Robt. Lidgett), whilst the Shire Secretary (Mr. A. W. Bond) and Cr. C. J. MacFarlane were also present. There was an attendance of about 50.

Apologies were received from Cr. G. H. Anderson and Mrs. C. J. MacFarlane, who were unable to attend.

In opening the meeting, Cr. Lidgett said the purpose was to establish a branch of the Red Cross and to plan other necessary patriotic work in this time of national trial. It was desired to establish such an organisation early in order to give everyone a chance to show their loyalty.

Twenty-five years ago, in from a city office or whether they wished to do this work themselves. Whichever step was adopted, he suggested that they co-operate as far as possible with the Shire Council.

In moving that "a patriotic guild be formed for Red Cross work, soldiers' comforts and national efforts; membership to be 1/- per annum," Miss B. W. Anderson recommended the sending of goods direct from Bacchus Marsh to the local soldiers, as had been done in the last war.

In discussing the motion, Mr. Bond enquired of Miss Anderson if she did not think the work of the Guild should embrace the welfare of the local Militia (32nd Footscray Battalion) and also the training of First Aid companies who might render assistance in the event of air raids or other incursions of war. Miss Anderson replied in the affirmative.

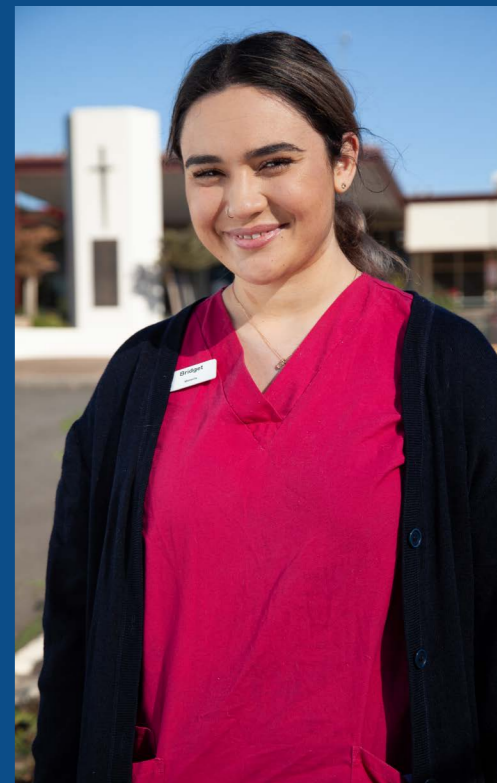
Mrs. F. C. Pearce, on whose suggestion the wording of part of the motion was altered from "patriotic efforts" to "national efforts," said the 32nd Battalion at Footscray already had a welfare committee.

Mr. Bond said the Shire Council had found it impossible to get sufficient local interest in a meeting to form a local welfare committee, and in the end the Council had been compelled to nominate itself as the welfare committee.

Mrs. Coyle urged a membership fee of 1/- per month, otherwise where were funds to come from? She believed it was better to raise



A view of the front of the Hospital, looking from the Staff-Quarters.





We acknowledge and respect the traditional lands of Wurundjeri Woi-Wurrung people of the Kulin Nation, and respect all Elders past, present and future. We ask all people that walk, work and live on traditional Aboriginal lands, to be respectful of culture and traditions and work together as one to better Aboriginal health.

# ***Djerriwarrh: Retrospective***

**A celebration of Djerriwarrh's character,  
achievements and the human stories at its heart.**

In mid-2021, the Victorian Government agreed to proceed with a voluntary amalgamation of Djerriwarrh Health Services with Western Health. *Djerriwarrh: Retrospective* celebrates the work of Djerriwarrh Health Services in Melbourne's greater west and further west to Bacchus Marsh and beyond for more than 20 years.

# Contents

<b>A Final Update</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>Allied and Community Health Programs</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>Dr John Ballard</b> Administrator	3	<b>Peter Daffy</b> Manager of Dental Services	16
<b>Clinical Governance</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>Prabha Shrestha</b> Community Health Nurse For Refugees and Asylum Seekers	17
<b>Governance and Accountability</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>Kirrip Aboriginal Corporation Partnership</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>Nicole Kearns</b> Chair of Diversity and Consumer Advisory Committee	5	<b>Peter Webster</b> Kirrip Aboriginal Corporation Executive Officer	18
<b>Kirby Clark</b> Chair of Finance and Resources Committee/ Chair of Audit and Enterprise Risk Committee	6	<b>Gillian Thatcher</b> Community Health Nurse	19
<b>Dr Christine Bessell</b> Chair of Quality and Safety Committee	6	<b>Drive-through Testing Clinic</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>The Little Health Service That Could</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>Mandy Cullen</b> Fever Clinic Manger, Urgent Care Manager, Manager of Renal Dialysis, Day Medical and Specialist Clinics	21
<b>Belinda Scott</b> Chief Executive Officer	7	<b>Hospital in the Home Program</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>Djerriwarrh Through Time</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>Yoga Ganeson</b> Hospital in the Home Patient	22
<b>The Growth Corridor</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>Kalyana Care</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>Djerriwarrh Health Services</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>Andrea Agius</b> Executive Assistant	23
<b>Doris Vella</b> Director of Nursing and Midwifery	11	<b>Bacchus Marsh Ladies Auxiliary</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>Maternity Services</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>Volunteers</b>	<b>26</b>
<b>Bridget Jinks</b> Registered midwife	13	<b>Board Members (2001 – 2015)</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>Grant Lodge</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>Administrator Dr John Ballard and Executive (2015 - 2021)</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>Robin Porter</b> Diversional Therapist	15		



# A Final Update

**Dr John Ballard**  
Administrator



“ To live is to change, and to be perfect is to have changed often. ”

This statement by John Henry Newman, often wrongly attributed to Winston Churchill, characterises the history - and future - of Djerriwarrh Health Services. We have been in a constant state of change, more so in recent years.

I did not foresee that my 12-month role to support the development of robust clinical governance systems within the health service would extend to almost six years, following the tragic events in Djerriwarrh's maternity services that not only changed Djerriwarrh forever, but also forced significant reform across Victoria's public health system.

During this time, I have grown to understand the health service and its communities. At the same time, I have developed deep respect for its services, people, volunteers, the amazing Ladies Auxiliary and each of the preceding boards who worked tirelessly to serve the communities of Moorabool, Melton and Caroline Springs.

I have been ably supported throughout by Dr Christine Bessell, Chair of the Quality and Safety Board Committee and her predecessor, Dr Arlene Wake; Mr Kirby Clark, Chair of the Finance and Resources Board Committee and the Audit and Enterprise Risk Committee and his predecessor, Professor Colin Clark; Ms Nicole Kearns, Chair of the Diversity and Consumer Advisory Committee and our committed and hard-working Executive teams.

I particularly acknowledge those who have worked in the role of Chief Executive over this time: Mr Andrew Freeman, Ms Belinda Scott and, in these last weeks, Mr Tony McNamara. Their leadership, resilience, and commitment to the delivery of high quality, compassionate care has been exceptional.

The last few years have seen the service grow with new capital developments, including the Central Sterilising Service, the Melton Community Health Centre, two new operating theatres and the refurbishment of an existing theatre, a new special care nursery, and the redevelopment of our medical and surgical ward. We also successfully acquired \$5.5 million in funding to upgrade Grant Lodge, our aged care service.

COVID-19 presented a major challenge, and the Services rose to the occasion. We built on our established partnerships to support our community, our staff and other struggling services. This work is documented in *Djerriwarrh: Retrospective*.

In November 2019, the then Health Minister decided to allocate the operations of the new and much-needed general hospital in Melton - in the middle of our service catchment - to Western Health. This decision was a game-changer for Djerriwarrh, and the catalyst for consideration of the voluntary amalgamation of the two health services.

Many community benefits were identified, and it was decided to recommend to the Secretary of the Department of Health that the services amalgamate, which was ratified by the Minister. This, therefore, is the last update from Djerriwarrh Health Services.

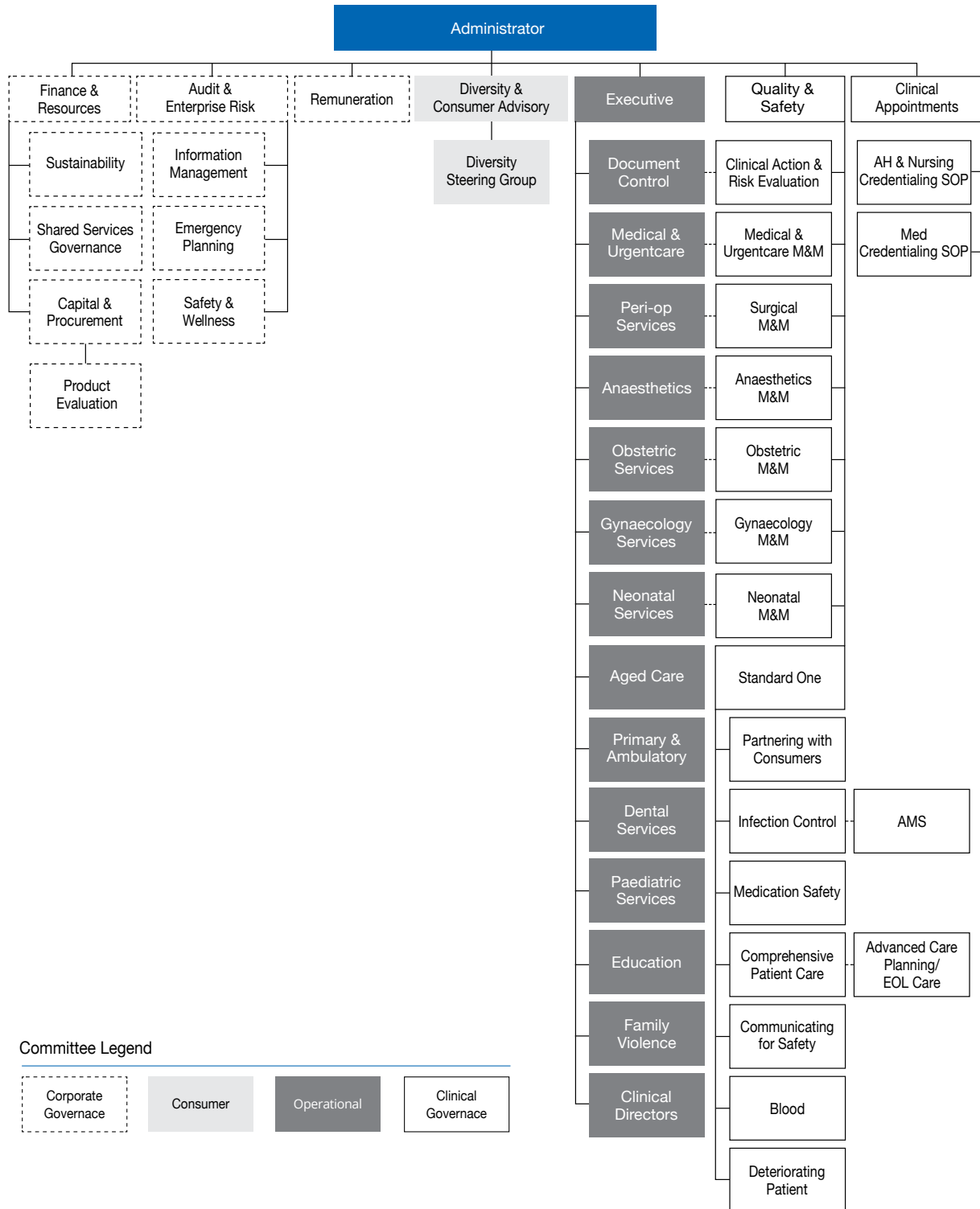
I thank the Minister for Health, the Department of Human Services, Western Health and, in particular, Belinda Scott for bringing us to this point where we continue to embrace change and strive for the perfection aspired to by every health service.

**Dr John Ballard**  
Administrator  
Djerriwarrh Health Service



# Clinical governance

A rigorous model that puts patient care first – always





# Governance and Accountability

## Nicole Kearns

Chair of Diversity and Consumer Advisory Committee

It has been a privilege to chair Djerriwarrh's Diversity and Consumer Advisory Committee (DCAC). This dedicated group of volunteer consumers aims to ensure perspectives from patients, carers and community members have the opportunity to feed into decisions about service operations, planning and policy. We've made a difference at monthly DCAC meetings and across Djerriwarrh's other governance committees, influencing improvements in organisational processes and governance and monitoring performance. This has supported vital two-way dialogue between the health service – particularly the Administrator, Chief Executive and Quality Manager - and the community. It's been amazing to see first-hand the impact that consumer voices have had on Djerriwarrh, and the impact that Djerriwarrh has on the communities it serves.





## **Dr Christine Bessell** Chair of Quality and Safety Committee

Djerriwarrh has undergone profound quality and clinical risk management enhancements in my time as head of the Quality and Safety Committee. All staff can be proud of the steps they've taken, through additional training, enhanced governance and a deep focus on quality and safety. Djerriwarrh delivers high-quality care matched to its capability and in line with community needs, underpinned by an evidence-based approach that benchmarks clinical outcomes against healthcare standards. I'm honoured to have worked with a dedicated committee made up of senior clinicians, service leaders and community members that's supported a culture of continuous improvement and best practice.



## **Kirby Clark** Chair of Finance and Resources Committee/ Chair of Audit and Enterprise Risk Committee

There has been substantial improvement during my time at Djerriwarrh, be it financial results, predictability of outcomes or the rigorous attention to safety. There has also been closer engagement with the community, improvements to facilities and the new development at Melton. These will have long lasting impacts and are testament to the committed management and staff. They've delivered what was needed and created pathways not just for Djerriwarrh, but for the overarching health system in Melbourne's west.





# The Little Health Service That Could

**Belinda Scott**  
Chief Executive Officer

“ Ultimately Djerriwarrh is all about people. ”



Djerriwarrh Health Services has taught me a great deal over three years. It has shown me the collective power of people linked together by determination and spirit, working for their community. Together, people achieve great things, particularly in the face of seemingly insurmountable challenges.

I started as CEO in 2018, a time when Djerriwarrh was grappling with constant change. The service was continuing its transformation.

Our staff had already led an extraordinary turnaround and were dealing with the laborious but essential accreditation process. Not only were they initiating fundamental clinical changes essential to a contemporary health service, but they were struggling to shed labels of the past.

Every staff member – from nursing and midwifery to medical to support staff - working diligently to continuously improve, built around an ethos of high-quality care for every patient, every time. In doing so, they were generating a unique, team-oriented culture of communication and listening to each other and our community.

It would take time, but staff were building pride in their work, their workplace and Djerriwarrh's critical role in the community – not only as providers of care, but as partners in improving the health and wellbeing of the communities we serve.

This bore itself out in many ways.

Firstly, and most importantly, Djerriwarrh improved safety, clinical governance, and quality of care – across the entire health service.

We became more person-centred, improved accessibility, and expanded our services to meet increasing demand.

We opened a new Special Care Nursery which meant families, mothers and new babies were no longer separated if the baby needed increased neonatal care for conditions such as low blood sugars, infection or jaundice. We expanded our theatre services so more patients could access surgery closer to home.



Our allied health and community professionals worked tirelessly to see more patients, becoming more innovative and offering more services – all without increased headline funding. We cultivated effective, close-knit partnerships with community organisations such as Kirrip Aboriginal Corporation, North Western PHN, Murdoch Children’s Research Institute and our local GPs. We also invested further in Dental, Family Violence and Autism programs.

These had an immeasurable impact on the ground, achieving results equal to or greater than any larger, or specialist health services.

And then came Djerriwarrh’s remarkable response to COVID-19, which hit Melbourne’s peri-urban west. We transformed our Hospital in the Home Program into a purpose-built service that provided clinical monitoring and treatment for people with COVID-19 in their own homes.

The service – led by passionate nurses – utilised technology, best practice and resourceful innovation to establish a first of its kind program, which was adopted across Australia as the pre-eminent service of its type.

Djerriwarrh was asked to lead the COVID-19 response at Kalyna Care, an aged care centre in Delahey. Our staff made an immense difference in helping to treat the dangerous, and destructive outbreak in the aged care facility. This was vital, life-saving work.

This commitment is replicated at Grant Lodge through staff dedicated to its residents and families. It gives me great pleasure to know its future is secure thanks to a \$5.5 million infrastructure grant, an investment Djerriwarrh’s team worked so hard to secure.

Ultimately, Djerriwarrh is all about people.

It’s the powerhouse team of dedicated women in the Ladies Auxiliary and the volunteers in the community. It’s the team of dedicated nurses, midwives, doctors, allied health clinicians, administration, support and executive staff.

It’s the new starters, the longest serving staff and everyone in between who contributes to the rich tapestry of people who come together with a common purpose to achieve great things.

I thank and acknowledge all staff for the hard work. I’m proud to have called them colleagues.

I specifically thank Andrea Agius for her commitment to getting the job done, no matter the job. Andrea combined courage and determination with care and kindness. This made us a formidable team, delivering time after time, and sometimes that which seemed impossible.

I acknowledge our Administrator Dr John Ballard who has led the way in rebuilding Djerriwarrh. His unwavering support and wisdom has been invaluable over the past three years. I thank him for his commitment, respect and belief in the health service and its people.

But mostly, I must thank the community. It has been a difficult, tumultuous time but together we’ve achieved a great deal.

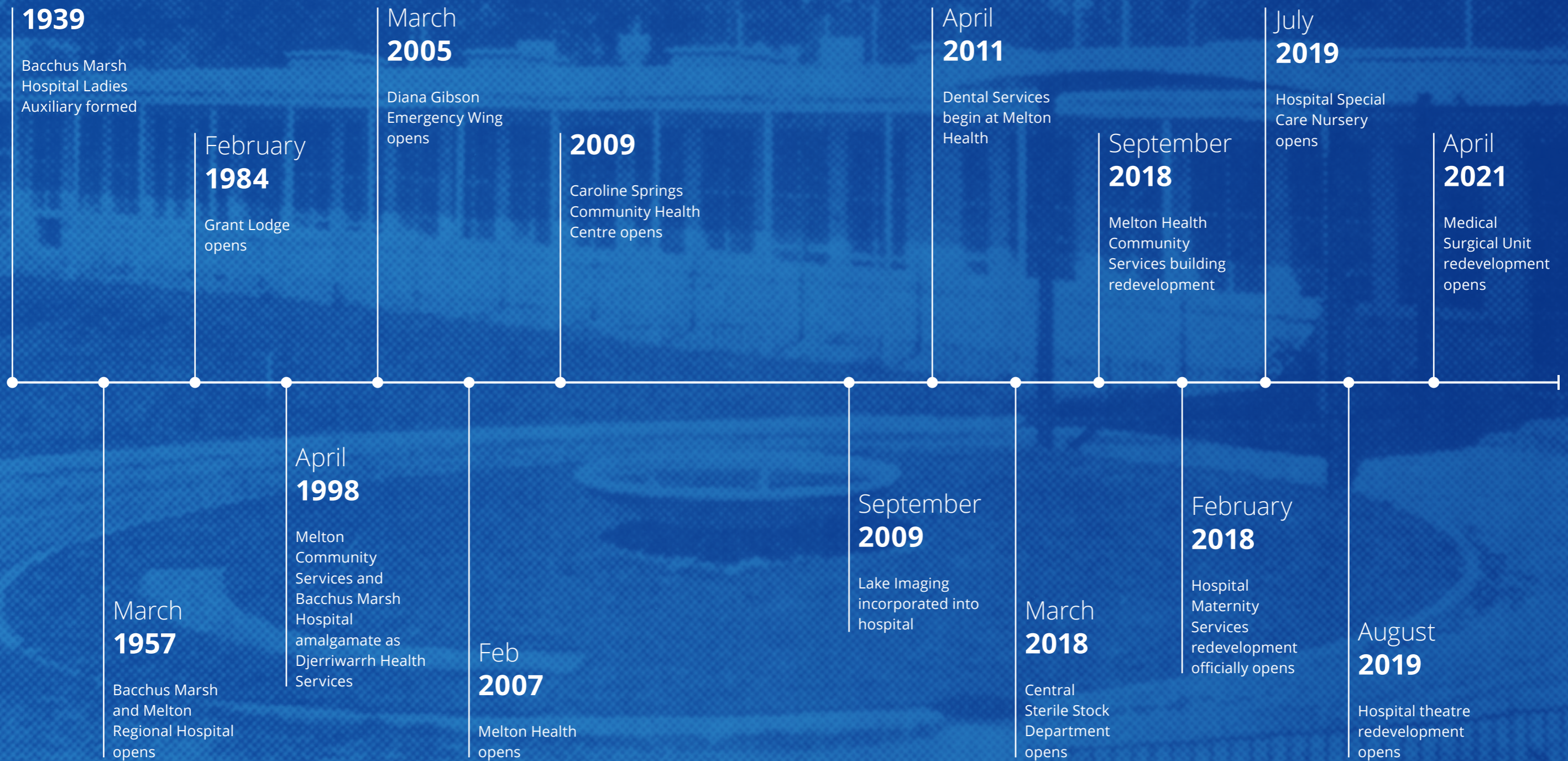
## You are all what makes Djerriwarrh Health Services, the little health service that could.



**Belinda Scott**  
Chief Executive Officer  
2018 – 2021.



# Djerriwarrh Through Time





# The Growth Corridor

## City of Melton is one of the fastest growing municipalities in Australia

Moorabool Shire's population has **grown by 2%** every year since 2005 and is forecast to continue

City of Melton population is projected to increase **169 per cent** from 2021 to 2051, to an expected 489,542, bigger than Canberra, our national capital

Moorabool Shire population is projected to increase **75 per cent** from 2021 to 2041 to an expected population of **63,831**

The Djerriwarrh catchment is one of Australia's most culturally and **linguistically diverse**

After English, the top 10 languages spoken by residents are **Dinka** (South Sudanese), **Punjabi, Mandarin, Italian, Spanish, Greek, Vietnamese, Croatian, Serbian** and **Maltese**

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people make up **0.8%** of the catchment population

## Djerriwarrh Health Services (2020-21)

**Urgent Care Clinic Melton patients - 11,668**

**Urgent Care Clinic Bacchus Marsh patients - 8,867**

**Surgeries - 2,342**

**Dental undertaken - 4,382**

**Dialysis sessions - 6,102**

**More than 700 staff**

### **Bacchus Marsh and Melton Regional Hospital**

A 42-bed acute hospital with Maternity, Theatre, Medical, Urgent Care and Outpatient services

### **Melton Health**

Walk in care for Day Medical, Adult Health, Women and Children's Health and Dental Services

### **Grant Lodge**

A 30-bed residential aged care facility adjacent to Bacchus Marsh and Melton Regional Hospital

### **Bacchus Marsh Community Health Centre**

Allied health, counselling, community nursing and palliative care

### **Melton Community Health Centre**

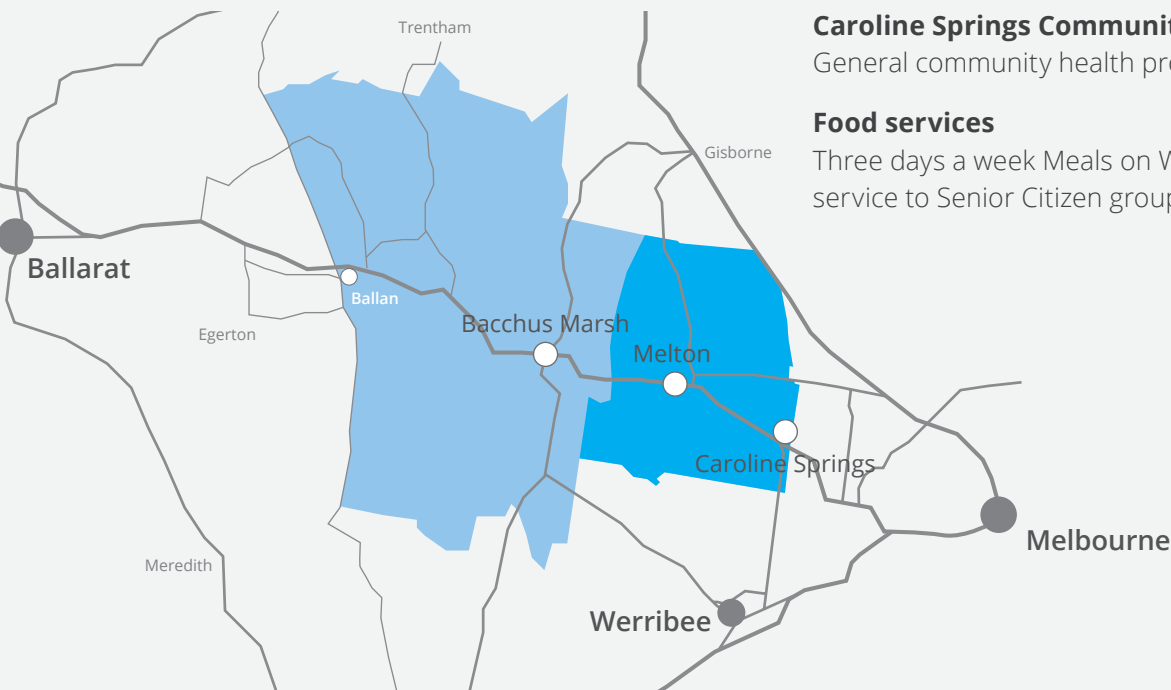
Allied health and counselling services

### **Caroline Springs Community Health Centre**

General community health programs

### **Food services**

Three days a week Meals on Wheels delivery service to Senior Citizen groups



## Doris Vella

Director Of Nursing  
And Midwifery



“The sense of community at Djerriwarrh Health Services is amazing. The connection you have with local people and the community reminds you every day why your work is important.”

**In 2020 Djerriwarrh Director of Nursing and Midwifery, Doris Vella, stepped up to lead the service’s response to its biggest challenge yet: the COVID-19 pandemic. Doris has 20 years experience, first at Royal Melbourne then Northern Health and from 2017 was at Djerriwarrh, using her wealth of knowledge about people as her best guide.**

“The pandemic has been a platform for cultural change at Djerriwarrh.

“It made everyone work more closely together and collaborate.

“People have come from Bacchus Marsh to work at the Melton campus, bridging the gap between the two and the gaps between our practices and disciplines.

“By doing this we have great engagement and a workforce that is willing and able to respond to the communities needs in a pandemic.

“If you think back to March 2020, we only had weeks to put together models of care in response to COVID.

“We had a fever clinic that started off in a room, rapidly transformed to a drive-through clinic and then evolved into a mega-clinic.

“In Victoria we went from 50 cases to more than 700 cases of community transmission in a day and had to quickly put together an innovative model of care for Hospital in the Home to ensure patients got the care and support they required.

“This nurse-led model supported patients in their home who had COVID through remote monitoring and transferred those patients to hospital only if clinically appropriate. In most cases this was because they needed oxygen. This saved hospital beds and lives as most patients didn’t know that they were deteriorating.

“In a pandemic the demand for patient beds goes up, having another way to deliver health care such as through Hospital in the Home takes the pressure off the hospital system ensuring those that need beds get them through a just in time approach.

“At one stage we had 140 patients in our Hospital in the Home program (equivalent to five wards) and transferring approximately two to three patients a day to hospital.

“Staff safety was always important to us, and the beauty of this model is it protected our staff from COVID-19 as care was provided remotely.

“One of the things about the pandemic that has been great, is our people got to see their executive team in action.

“Our chief executive was helping on the ground in the fever clinic, which isn’t something you see very often.

“We’re all in working together to make sure we look after our staff as well as the community.”



# Maternity Services

## (2020-21)

**Babies born - 322**

**Special Care Nursery care - 44**

**126 babies discharged from the Special Care Nursery since opening.**

**70,834 Outpatient appointments**

### Maternity Unit

Supportive care for healthy women with uncomplicated pregnancies, from the first antenatal visit to support in the first weeks at home.

### Childbirth Education

Accessible and comprehensive education about birthing, parenting and breastfeeding using adult learning principles.

### Home Support

Maternity support at home helps to ensure the transition for mothers into home life with a new baby is as smooth as possible.

### Infant Settling and Feeding Clinic (Tweddle)

Intensive support for parents with concerns regarding settling and sleep of newborns, breastfeeding, bottle feeding, nutrition, post-natal depression and anxiety.

### Healthy Mothers Healthy Babies

A community outreach service providing support, linkages and education to pregnant women unable to access antenatal care services or requiring additional support during their pregnancy and up to six weeks post-delivery.

### Breastfeeding Support Services

Advice and support for mothers with an experienced lactation consultant.



## Bridget Jinks

Registered midwife



“ We’re a close-knit family of colleagues working to provide continuity of care for women and their babies across the whole aspect of midwifery. ”

**Bridget Jinks started at Djerriwarrh Health Services in 2019 as a graduate midwife. After completing her university degree, she accepted a role as a registered midwife. Bridget’s experience of Djerriwarrh has been nothing but positive.**

“Djerriwarrh Health Services was a great place to learn to become a midwife. There was always someone around to answer my questions or to give me support.

“Every day is different, I love being able to work across all sections of midwifery including antenatal, birthing, postnatal and domiciliary.

“Because our hospital and community is small, we can look after a mother for the full continuum of her pregnancy. It’s very special to be able to care for them and see their pregnancy from start to finish.

“Our smaller size means we also have the time to teach first time mums the basics – helping them learn how to breastfeed, safe sleeping practices and safe wrapping to reduce the risk of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome.

“It was great to be a part of the opening of the Special Care Nursery in 2019. Since it opened, we have looked after more than 100 babies.

“Previously babies who needed more intensive care had to be sent away to a bigger hospital. Now they can stay with their mums and be looked after here in Bacchus Marsh close to their families.”





# Grant Lodge

Grant Lodge has 29 permanent aged care beds and one respite bed. It practises person-centred care provided by registered nurses, allied health professionals and diversional therapists.





“My children would come and visit Grant Lodge after school to spend time with the residents. Everyone enjoyed these visits and my children, who are in their 30’s, still talk about the friendships they had with several residents. We’ve built a community over the years.”

**Robin Porter has worked at Grant Lodge since it opened in 1984. Since that time Grant Lodge has added another 10 beds, introduced technology that improves the quality of care and begun the lifestyle program for residents, which is part of Robin’s work.**

“I started as a ward assistant helping with personal care and making up beds and other admin before becoming a diversional therapist in the lifestyle program, providing activities to bring pleasure to the residents lives.

“You can learn so much when you work with elderly people.

“They bring with them knowledge and wisdom from their amazing lives. I try to provide them with enjoyment and bring laughter into their lives.

“Because we’re a smaller facility we can provide a more personal environment, we get to know all their families and really connect with them.

“All our staff on the floor are trained nurses, meaning our quality of care is extremely high.

“Over the years we’ve done some great things.

“We had an email buddy program with the local primary school for 10 years, we used to go watch the AFL football, visit the casino and take our residents out to lunch to many different places of interest.

“The themed parties and cocktail nights were always a blast!”



# Allied and Community Health Programs

A range of Allied and Community Health Programs help meet the healthcare and wellbeing needs of the Djerriwarrh's communities.

**Peter Daffy**  
Manager of  
Dental Services

“Djerriwarrh Health Services is a community. We're a family who are prepared to help each other. It's nice to be a part of that.”

**When Peter Daffy and his wife moved from Horsham to Melton to be closer to their grandchildren, they expected to lose the community aspect of their former country life. Instead they found Djerriwarrh Health Services a welcoming, close-knit and diverse place to work.**

“It's a great place to work. I was worried it might be more metro, but it really is a community place. There's a great team here and it's a great place to be.”

“I've worked at Melton Community Health since 2018 as manager of dental services.”

“That means working closely with Dental Health Services of Victoria, looking after the clinicians, managing La Trobe University students in their program, consulting patients directly and - when time permits - making dentures.”



“My favourite moment at Djerriwarrh Health Services occurred during the peak of Victoria's COVID-19 pandemic in 2020.”

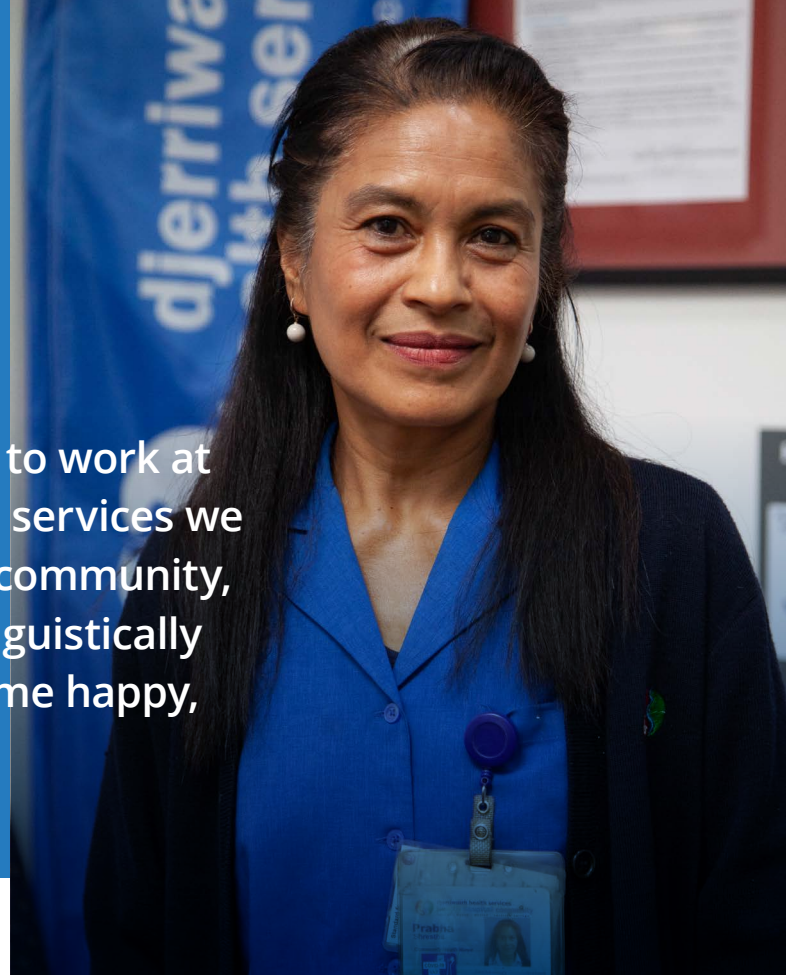
“Dental work was identified as non-essential at that time, so our team was redeployed to the fever clinic and screening areas, and for this they were recognised with an annual staff award.”

“Because we had moved so recently, our friends were our work mates. During the pandemic, we would come to work to have some friends, debrief and do what we needed to do.”

## Prabha Shrestha

Community Health Nurse For  
Refugees and Asylum Seekers

“ I am the proudest staff member to work at Djerriwarrh Health Services. The services we provide are so important to the community, particularly the culturally and linguistically diverse members, and it makes me happy, when they are happy. ”



**Prabha Shrestha has worked at Djerriwarrh since 2014 as a community health nurse, where she focuses on responding to the unique and often complex health needs of refugees and asylum seekers. Prabha has also worked with the Aboriginal community and facilitated the MARLA women group for a few years. Prabha who is a Nepalese-born Australian, has worked with Bhutanese refugees in Nepal and works as a team with other colleagues Suman and Jen. This background helps Prabha understand some of the challenges the people they see are going through.**

“Our clients are families who have come from some of the most disadvantaged places in the world, in terms of accessing preventative services and many have experienced atrocities including war and torture.

“They are often dealing with trauma and most don't speak English which can affect employment and education.

“Initially they're hesitant, but we slowly build their trust via Home Visit and they begin to open up and relax when they start using our services.

“It's our job to help them feel safe and make sure they are able to access the services available to them.

“When I meet a new client, they tell me that they feel they are now in a safe place and are in good hands.

“Often they experience isolation through a lack of networking and participation in social activities in this new place with an unfamiliar culture and foreign language.

“We run community support groups in Swahili and Burmese and for people from Iraq to help build social connections. These sessions include interpreters to help them understand important health messages such as COVID-19 safety, vaccinations, the importance of exercise, how to look after their mental health and many more other activities as per their priority need in partnership with other organisations including MiCare and the council.

“Djerriwarrh Health Services makes sure I can work independently and have the flexibility to support and help our community's most vulnerable. If I need to see one of my clients after hours, I can.”



# Kirrip Aboriginal Corporation Partnership

## Peter Webster

Kirrip Aboriginal Corporation  
Executive Officer



“We don’t have a specific Aboriginal health service in the west. It was really important that Djerriwarrh Health Services built trust and engagement with the Aboriginal community so they would start to look after their health.”

**When Peter Webster started as community development officer at Kirrip Aboriginal Community his first order of business was to improve the community’s engagement with Djerriwarrh. He sat down with Djerriwarrh chief executive Belinda Scott and had a conversation about how to achieve this. What followed began with a women’s support group where a Djerriwarrh nurse would come to the Kirrip House and talk to the community in a culturally safe space.**

“The good thing about Djerriwarrh is that they put people first.

“They go above and beyond to support the Aboriginal community’s health and wellbeing.

“One vital service is the Babaneek Baboop program for prenatal to eight-year-olds to improve healthcare outcomes for mums-to-be and their kids.

“Before Babaneek Baboop, our kids weren’t seeing maternal health nurses, but they’re all now highly engaged and we’re making sure kids are healthy.

“The nurses at Djerriwarrh care. They check in once a week. It’s the personal touch and care which has led to the community trusting them with their health.

“The appointment of the Aboriginal Health Service Liaison for Kirrip Aboriginal Corporation and Djerriwarrh Health Services shows commitment to engaging community and supporting them in getting access to important health services.”

Kirrip Aboriginal Corporation works with local Aboriginal communities in and around Melton and the surrounding area. Kirrip has a successful partnership with Djerriwarrh dating from 2016 based on an holistic model of healthcare. The shared program includes women's groups, family day health assessments, flu vaccinations, yarning circles to improve mental health, counselling support groups and improved accessibility to other health services such as optometry.

## Gillian Thatcher

Community Health Nurse



“It’s not hard to get up in the morning and come to work. I love being able to work with the First Nations Community. I am honoured to be invited to share in their culture, to help extend their legacy and traditions and to be trusted to support them to live healthily.”

**Gillian Thatcher joined Djerriwarrh in 2016 to work as a chronic health nurse specifically for the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. The Kirrip Aboriginal Corporation and Djerriwarrh Health Services partnership had just begun and Gillian helped run the first women’s group, which created a foundation of mutual trust and respect.**

“We’ve evolved a lot since the first Aboriginal women’s groups, now we do a bit of everything.

“We do face-to-face and group counselling and we also make sure social supports are secure: housing, school and food come first.

“Our wellbeing support group educates community about emergency housing, finance management, NDIS, legal services and the Optometry Clinic runs once per month.

“The last two years we’ve worked with Kirrip to provide flu vaccinations and in 2021 we have two flu vaccinations days. It’s getting bigger and bigger each year. We are also working with community to help them better understand the COVID-19 pandemic and vaccinations going forward

“Over the five years I’ve been at Djerriwarrh, I or a colleague will drop into Kirrip House on a weekly or fortnightly basis to have a yarn and see if anyone needs our services and what supports Kirrip is providing so we can share that knowledge.

“It’s nice to be able to knock on someone’s door, be asked to come in, sit down and have a cuppa and share their stories and their lives.

“We help to give people skills to live longer and be healthier.”



## COVID-19 Tests

17 March 2020 To 5 May 2021

Most swabbed  
in one day

**538**

2 January 2021

Screened

**48,961**

Swabbed

**47,261**

# Drive Through Testing Clinic

Djerriwarrh's drive-through fever clinic was set up in Melton in early March 2020, one of the first in Victoria

**Mandy Cullen**  
**Fever Clinic Manger,**  
Urgent Care Manager,  
Manager of Renal Dialysis,  
Day Medical and Specialist  
Clinics



“ For me Djerriwarrh Health Services means family. It’s the resilience to keep turning up and providing a high level of care for the community. ”

**Before the pandemic, Mandy Cullen was the manager of renal dialysis and day medical and specialist clinics, a role she has held since 2006. In March 2020, as COVID-19 hit, Mandy stepped in to manage Djerriwarrh’s fever clinic, leaving behind her role as manager of renal dialysis and day medical and specialist clinics, and bringing with her 20 years of service with Djerriwarrh.**

“I started on the second day of the clinic opening.

“We had no idea of the capacity it was going to grow to. We gathered a few nurses and offered a service for cars to drive up to, staff greeted them at their car, identified them, then took them into a consulting room.

“By May we were swabbing people in their cars and in June we had our first drive-through tent installed to shelter staff.

“When the second wave hit, we were inundated with cars. Nurses from other departments were all redeployed to the fever clinic and the Australian Defence Force helped us on the ground.

“We had up to 26 people at the clinic, treating anywhere between 100 and 300 patients a day.

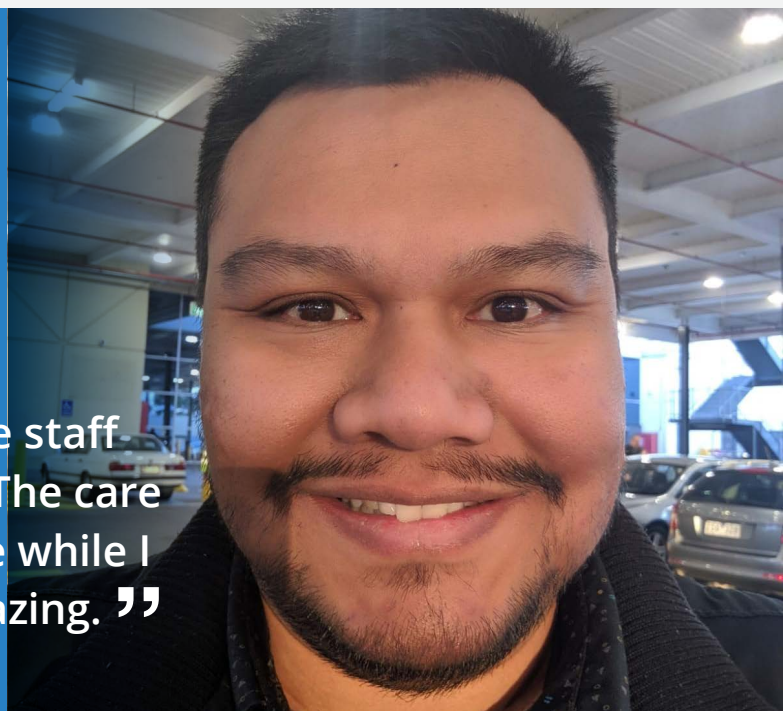
“It was wonderful for us to come together in this response, from all areas of the health service, to provide a vital program for our community.”



# Hospital in the Home Program

A program adapted as part of the pandemic response to allow patients who would otherwise require hospitalisation to recover in their own homes. More than 440 Hospital in the Home patients used the Djerriwarrh service, the highest number under Victoria's COVID-19 program. At the height of Victoria's second wave in August 2020, Djerriwarrh's Hospital in the Home was supporting 120 patients.

## Yoga Ganeson Hospital in the Home Patient



“I am incredibly grateful to all the staff at Djerriwarrh Health Services. The care and service they provided to me while I was sick with COVID-19 was amazing.”

**Yoga Ganeson moved to Melton at the height of Victoria's second wave of the COVID-19 pandemic. He was tested for COVID-19 at Djerriwarrh at noon on a Friday in August and received a call four hours later confirming he was COVID-positive. Yoga's doctor decided Yoga should be transferred to hospital immediately. Three weeks later, he was discharged to continue his recovery in Djerriwarrh's Hospital in the Home program.**

“Djerriwarrh's nurses were extremely helpful, patient and understanding.

“I live alone and English is my second language, so I was worried about my care.

“The Djerriwarrh nurses made sure I had nutritious, easy-to-prepare food and all my medication delivered to me. They checked on me three times a day to make sure I was okay.

“When I was a little better, they arranged a physio to help return my fitness and strength.

“The nurses continued to check in on my progress.

“It was amazing knowing if I needed help, they were just a phone call away.”

# Kalyna Care

## Andrea Agius

Executive Assistant to  
Chief Executive



“When I reflect on 2020, it is amazing to think what our health service achieved during the COVID pandemic. We helped saved lives and made a huge difference.”

**On 25 July 2020, Djerriwarrh Health Services, as part of the west metro cluster support group, received a call from the Department of Health asking for our assistance. They were advised that there was an outbreak of COVID-19 at a non-government aged care facility in Delahey and they were in urgent need of skilled assistance. That evening Djerriwarrh Health Services Chief Executive Officer Belinda Scott, Chief Financial Officer Tony McNamara and Director of Nursing Doris Vella developed an urgent response to control the outbreak. They began to implement their plan the following morning and engaged Executive Assistants Andrea Agius and Kylie Blacker to coordinate administration on the ground.**

“Most Kalyna Care staff were furloughed at home in quarantine, which meant we had to engage and organise qualified staff for the facility, which was an enormous challenge at the height of the pandemic.

“Doris coordinated operations inside the aged care facility managing infection control and coordinating care, and the rest of us under Belinda’s guidance set up an external response team outside. In a matter of hours, we had basically set up the inside of the facility like a hospital, procuring personal protective equipment (PPE) and conducting the first of many deep cleans.

“We separated positive and negative residents – which was critical for infection control – and assigned separate staffing for each wing of the home.

This was important because we could tailor the care needs to each resident while ensuring no cross contamination.

“Due to restrictions, family members were not able to physically be with their relatives, something that was distressing for everyone. We did everything possible to make sure the family on the outside could connect with their family member on the inside. We enabled calls via zoom or FaceTime, we called family members daily to check in and provide updates, as well as sending them photos of their loved ones and facilitating window visits.

“For those patients who were sadly at end of life, we made sure their family members could be with them, and that they were surrounded by people caring for them. We spoke to family about their spiritual and pastoral needs, and made sure that their wishes were met, drawing on technology and video conferencing to facilitate this. It was tragic and sad, but we knew how important it was for family.

“The Djerriwarrh staff who attended on site all supported each other and kept spirits high. There were a lot of tears but also laughter. I’m so proud of our work.

“The lives we saved and the residents and families we helped, shows what can be done when we work together as a team. We were there every day for six weeks, and while it was just the five of us onsite, it felt like we had the whole of Djerriwarrh with us.”





# Bacchus Marsh Ladies Auxiliary

“ We’re doing it for the right reasons. It’s quite interesting to look at these ladies and say you’ve been doing it all these years and are still enthusiastic. ”

Sarah Tollis, President

The Bacchus Marsh Hospital Ladies Auxiliary is a well-oiled machine, and it’s been that way since 1939. They roll up their sleeves, head into the Bacchus Marsh hospital op-shop to sort through bags and bags of donations, picking the good from the bad and prepping everything for sale.

All funds raised go to Bacchus Marsh Hospital. In 2020 alone, the auxiliary raised \$270,000 for the hospital. Over the past decade they’ve donated more than \$2 million.

The auxiliary has been raising funds for the hospital at Bacchus Marsh since soldiers started returning from World War Two. The auxiliary founders knew a hospital would be needed and their initial efforts helped to pay for the land and get the new hospital up and running.

It started with selling pre-loved items out of a small caravan, but quickly expanded with a move to the former butcher’s shop and then in 1997 to a dedicated space on Gell Street – now the sorting room.

Ladies Auxiliary members are mostly 70 years and over. They include former nurses, retirees and passionate members of the community who all want to do their part for the hospital.

Some, including Ann Bennett, have been there since the beginning. They volunteer and work as much as they prefer, with most doing two or three shifts a week. The sorting room operates Monday, Wednesday and Friday mornings.

Sarah Tollis is Bacchus Marsh Ladies Auxiliary President. She joined in 2018, after visiting the op shop one day and was inspired by Auxiliary members’ passion and dedication.





“Over the years the Bacchus Marsh Ladies Auxiliary has funded the renovation of the palliative care wards, a new oven for Meals on Wheels, refurbishment of operating theatres and maternity wards, new portable thermometers and much more.

“The relationship between the Ladies Auxiliary and Djerriwarrh Health Services is a two-way street.

“During the COVID-19 pandemic through 2020, the op shop was forced to close and the ladies, who previously were so social, were now isolated and lonely.

“I was very worried about their mental health so Belinda Scott, the chief executive at the time, put a plan together for me.

“The committee would call each member every month to keep them engaged and make sure they were okay. During that time, the committee sent a monthly email out with funny contributions from the Auxiliary members to keep everyone entertained and informed.

“It struck me how much the hospital cares about the volunteers and the auxiliary members.

“They’re happy to help out. They bring donations down from their own families. They’re always checking everyone is okay.”

“I went in one day and I was struck by how lovely the shop was and the reason the ladies do it.

“No one gets paid and every cent we make goes back to the hospital to pay for vital equipment and services.





# List Of Volunteers

## 2021

### Volunteers

Mrs Lynette Allis  
Mrs Barbara Atkin  
Mrs Pamela Bailey  
Mrs Susan Bakunowicz  
Mrs Catherine Bell  
Mr Richard Bell  
Mrs Anne Bennett  
Mrs Iris Blythe  
Mr Peter Blythe  
Mrs Linda Bracksley  
Mrs Pamela Broad  
Mrs Joan Brown  
Mrs Anita Buckland  
Mrs Marlene Burvill  
Mrs Barbara - Anne Caisley  
Mrs Nola Camilleri  
Mrs Gail Campbell  
Mr Colm Carragher  
Mrs Dorothea Cook  
Ms Pamela Course  
Mrs Elizabeth Davie  
Miss Wendy Deacon  
Ms Barbra Deligiannis  
Ms Michelle Dellios  
Mrs Barbara Di Collalto  
Ms Celestine Drake  
Ms Lili Eggleston  
Mrs Karena Esnouf  
Mrs Janice Farmelo  
Mrs Sandra Ferella  
Mrs Marilyn Fernandez  
Mrs Gwenda Ferry  
Mrs Susan Fletcher  
Mrs Christine Fraser  
Mrs Katherine Geurts  
Mr Lawrence Geyer  
Mr Christopher Giles  
Miss Stavroula Gouros  
Ms Julie Grace  
Mrs Deborah Grech  
Ms Marilyn Gregg  
Dr James Grimes  
Mr Keith Gundry  
Mrs Nina Harbison  
Ms Emily Harbison  
Mrs Dorothy Hatcher  
Mrs Glenda Hateley  
Mrs Bernadette Hayter  
Mr Andrew Heal  
Mrs Nanette Hein  
Mrs Robyn Hein  
Mrs Lynette Hewat  
Miss Debra Hine  
Mrs Athena Holmes  
Mrs Margaret Hose  
Mr Greg Hose  
Mr Damiene House  
Mrs Maryanne Hucker  
Ms Sharryn Hutton  
Mr Lance Jennison  
Ms Julie Johnson  
Mr Wayne Johnson  
Mr Donald Johnson  
Mr Bruce Johnson  
Ms Nicole Kearns  
Mr John Keddy  
Miss Dawn Kelly  
Mrs Cheryl King  
Mrs Sharyn Kitchen  
Mrs Christine Klempel  
Mrs Eileen Knight  
Mrs Betty Le Sueur  
Mr Emmett Lee  
Mrs Wendy Lesko  
Ms Katherine Leslie  
Mrs Heather Linsdell  
Mrs Lorna Loft  
Mrs Janette Lowe  
Mrs Robyn Mackenzie  
Mrs Sharon Madigan  
Ms Michelle Males  
Ms Amy McDonald  
Ms Carol McGrath  
Mrs Janice McGuinness  
Ms Cornelia McLaughlin  
Mrs Christine Meaney  
Mr Grant Migani  
Mrs Nicole Migani-Roberts  
Ms Lynette Mikunda  
Mrs Susan Miller  
Ms Lee-Anne Miller  
Ms Erin Mitchell  
Miss Caitlin Mitchell  
Mrs Sharon Moore  
Mrs Beryl Morgan  
Mrs Margaret Murdoch  
Mr Raymond Newland  
Mrs Sheryl Newton  
Mrs Robyn O'Keefe  
Mrs Kathryn Orchard  
Mr Bernard Orchard  
Mrs Glenise Palmer  
Mrs Wendy Parkes  
Mrs Marie Perry  
Mrs Helen Pike  
Mrs Heather Pongracic  
Mrs Deanna Portlen  
Mrs June Prout  
Miss Chantel Pusetic  
Mrs Nola Roberts  
Mrs Lynette Robinson  
Mrs Gayle Rodda

Ms Pamela Roginson  
Mrs Carolyn Rowan  
Mr Robert Russell  
Mrs Loredana Ryan  
Miss Victoria Said  
Mrs Doreen Salt  
Mrs Nola Scicchitano  
Mrs Diane Sellner  
Miss Kamayanee Shrivastava  
Mrs Gail Skinner  
Mrs Deborah Slattery  
Mrs Kerry Small  
Miss Jennifer Smith  
Ms Gayle Smith  
Ms Bethany Somers  
Miss Enya-Louise Somers  
Miss Eunice Soriano  
Mrs Sharon Sowter  
Mrs Yvonne Spargo  
Mrs Debra Spiteri  
Mrs Rosa Stainer  
Mrs Shirley Stephenson  
Mrs Gayle Stevens  
Mr Anthony Stevens  
Mrs Nancy Stewart  
Mrs Alicia Sultana  
Ms Natalie Suwart  
Ms Lorraine Symons  
Mrs Glenda Tanner  
Ms Pamela Thorne  
Ms Jennifer Todd  
Mrs Sarah Tollis  
Ms Norma Trotter  
Mrs Corinne Vaughan  
Ms Jennifer Wade  
Ms Diana Wade  
Miss Melissa Walerszek  
Mrs Allyson Watts  
Mrs Helga Weiss  
Ms Denise Werner  
Mrs Jean Weybury  
Mrs Lucille Wheelahan  
Mrs Janice White  
Ms Kathryn Whye  
Mr Anna Williamson  
Mr John Wilson  
Mr Stuart Wood  
Mrs Denise Woodman  
Mrs Robyn Youl  
Mr Barry Youl

## Retired

### Volunteers in 2021

Mr Geoffrey Button  
Ms Naomi Donaldson  
Mrs Anne Gatt  
Ms Robyn Goodman  
Miss Angela Grigg  
Mrs Erica Hocking  
Ms Sharryn Hutton  
Ms Lesley Jenner  
Dr Kate Laing  
Mrs Bernice Light  
Ms Amy Mangion  
Miss Jacquelyn Melvin  
Mrs Robyn Millar  
Mrs Bertha Missen  
Mrs Pauline Pace  
Mrs Jennifer Partridge  
Ms Denise Robinson  
Ms Dianne Simboro  
Mr Hernan Vinco

# Djerriwarrh Health Services

## Board Members (2001 – 2015)

### 2001

Dr. Barrie Bardsley (Chair)  
Sheryl Tunnecliff  
Robert Farrugia  
Adrian Pennell  
Helen Dobson  
Malcolm Peacock  
Del Leggatt  
Graham Proctor  
Marcos Anastassiou

### 2002

Graham Proctor  
Del Leggatt (Chair)  
Maurie Schenk  
Marion Ingram  
Helen Dobson  
Sheryl Tunnecliff  
Ian Fehring  
Marcos Anastassiou  
Robert Farrugia

### 2003

Del Leggatt (Chair)  
Marion Ingram  
Claire Sutherland  
Graham Proctor  
Maurie Schenk  
Sheryl Tunnecliff  
Ian Fehring  
Marcos Anastassiou  
Michael Tudball

### 2004

Ian Fehring (Chair)  
Maurie Schenk  
Sophie Ramsey  
Sheryl Tunnecliff  
Claire Sutherland  
Michael Tudball  
Ian Read  
Del Leggatt  
Marion Ingram

### 2005

Ian Fehring (Chair)  
Marion Ingram  
Sophie Ramsey  
Claire Sutherland  
Helen Dobson  
Sheryl Tunnecliff  
Michael Tudball  
Ian Read

### 2006

Ian Fehring (Chair)  
Marion Ingram  
Claire Sutherland  
Helen Dobson  
Michael Tudball  
Ian Read  
Hayden Legro  
Sheryl Tunnecliff  
Sophie Ramsey

### 2007

Michael Tudball (Chair)  
Ian Read  
Hayden Legro  
Sheryl Tunnecliff  
Helen Dobson  
Marion Ingram  
Ian Fehring  
Sophie Ramsey  
Claire Sutherland

### 2008

Michael Tudball (Chair)  
Marion Ingram  
Helen Dobson  
Ian Fehring  
Claire Sutherland  
Hayden Legro  
Sheryl Tunnecliff  
Sophie Ramsey

### 2009

Ian Fehring (Chair)  
Claire Sutherland  
Helen Dobson  
Michael Tudball  
Sheryl Tunnecliff  
Sophie Ramsey  
Hayden Legro  
Eric Sharkey  
Salvatore Cristiano

### 2010

Michael Tudball (President)  
Sheryl Tunnecliff  
Helen Dobson  
Sophie Ramsey  
Claire Sutherland  
Hayden Legro  
Salvatore Cristiano  
John Payne  
Eric Sharkey

### 2011

Michael Tudball (Chair)  
Helen Dobson  
Claire Sutherland  
Sophie Ramsey  
John Payne  
Dirk Sauer  
Hayden Legro  
Eric Sharkey  
Salvatore Cristiano

### 2014

Claire Sutherland (Chair)  
Eric Sharkey  
John Payne  
Helen Dobson  
Pauline Madden  
Sophie Ramsey  
Cr. Dr. Helen Thompson  
Michael Tudball AFSM  
Arthur Uren  
Bruce Marshall, OAM

## Administrator Dr John Ballard and Executive (2015-2021)

### 2015

Bruce Marshall, OAM  
David Grace  
Vida Pranskunas  
Wendy Davis  
James Rubeli  
Elizabeth Wilson  
Dr Lee Gruner

### 2016

Andrew Freeman  
Vida Pranskunas  
David Grace  
James Rubeli  
Fiona Lukaitis  
Dr Elizabeth Mullins

### 2017

Andrew Freeman  
Vida Pranskunas  
Amanda Edwards  
James Rubeli  
Fiona Lukaitis  
Dr Elizabeth Mullins

### 2018

Belinda Scott  
Vida Pranskunas  
Fiona Lukaitis  
Dr Elizabeth Mullins  
James Rubeli  
Amanda Edwards

### 2019

Belinda Scott  
Anthony McNamara  
Vida Pranskunas  
Annie Carr  
Dr John Gallichio

### 2020

Belinda Scott  
Anthony McNamara  
Vida Pranskunas  
Dr Ian Graham  
Annie Carr

### 2021

Anthony McNamara  
Dr Ian Graham  
Ruth Martin  
Doris Vella

**Thank you to everybody in the communities of Bacchus Marsh, Melton and Caroline Springs for your support over the years and helping us to continually change to better meet your needs.**



