



*Artist's impression of Stawell's new second operating theatre*

## First look at Stawell's second theatre

Artist impressions have been revealed for Stawell's new \$5.15 million second operating theatre – a project which will significantly boost surgical capacity in the region.

The new theatre will position Grampians Health Stawell as a leading provider in specialised healthcare services including ophthalmology, endoscopy, gynaecology and general surgery.

To be delivered by the Capital Projects team, construction works on the second theatre are set to commence in November.

Key features of the second theatre include a new endoscopy reprocessing room, a sterile stock storage area, a dedicated staff write-up space,

an expanded recovery section, an eye block anaesthesia area, enhanced staff amenities and cutting-edge medical equipment.

Chief Operating Officer Ben Kelly said the second theatre would deliver significant benefits for the Stawell community.

"The second theatre will be a game-changer for our community, reducing wait times for surgeries and eliminating the need for many patients to travel outside of Stawell for care," Mr Kelly said.

"Grampians Health is dedicated to providing high-quality, accessible, and timely healthcare in regional and rural areas, and this project is a testament to that commitment."

Chief Redevelopment and Infrastructure Officer Veronica Furnier emphasised the collaborative efforts behind the theatre's design and the focus on delivering exceptional care closer to home.

"Our Capital Projects team has worked closely with healthcare professionals to ensure this new theatre meets the highest standards of quality and safety," Ms Furnier said.

Stawell Site Director Sue Campigli said Grampians Health was excited to deliver a second theatre, enhancing healthcare delivery and patient outcomes.

The second theatre is expected to be completed in March 2025.

# Dietitian bites into new role

Lily Ramage is thriving in her new role at Stawell.

One of two new allied health professionals to start working at the campus in February, the effervescent dietitian has a healthy attitude to more than just food. The born and bred city girl loves the country life and the great outdoors.

After a two-year stint in Nhill, Lily has joined dietitian Dini Rajaputhra at Stawell.

Lily said working in a rural health setting was more enjoyable and more rewarding than the city.

"I particularly love the varied caseload characteristic of working as a clinician in a smaller rural town because no day is ever quite the same," she said.

"The other big plus is there's opportunity for career growth by working in a larger organisation that is Grampians Health.

"We have an ultra-supportive Dietetics team here, some of whom I've come to know from my previous role, and I can't wait to collaborate with my new colleagues."



Lily said dietetics was a natural career choice because of her love for food.

"Dietetics is an attractive blend of science and art," she said.

"Humans don't eat nutrients, we eat food that holds cultural and social significance beyond being mere fuel. I love this intersect."

"There's more misinformation than ever filling the 'health and wellness' space and I appreciate how confusing it can be for many to locate evidence-based and personalised dietary recommendations. I feel privileged to be able to offer a voice of credible advice among this noise.

"Food and nutrition are often under-utilised tools we all have at our fingertips to manage all health conditions and life stages."

As a dietitian, Lily's passion is to inspire patterns of eating that not only improve human health but that of the planet.

"Put simply, a healthy and environmentally sustainable diet involves eating more plant foods, locally-grown, seasonal and minimally-processed where possible and reducing our food waste.

"Living within the bountiful food bowl that is the Grampians, it's that much easier to make these healthier food choices."

# New eco-friendly accommodation for relocating staff

New accommodation has been secured to assist staff relocating to the region to work with Grampians Health.

The six new units, located about 200 metres from the hospital and approximately 300 metres from the Stawell Medical Centre, will significantly enhance our accommodation offerings in Stawell, which already includes about 20 properties in the town.

Chief Redevelopment and Infrastructure Officer Veronica Furnier said the new units are expected to play a crucial role in supporting the growth and development of our Stawell

campus, ensuring that new staff members had access to comfortable and sustainable living arrangements.

“Grampians Health is committed to providing infrastructure to deliver the best care possible and this commitment extends to offering the right accommodation to support our new staff relocating to join our team,” Veronica said.

Stawell Site Director Sue Campigli, who recently toured the new units, said securing the new accommodation was a fantastic outcome for Grampians Health.

“Several new international medical professionals have recently joined our team and having suitable, long-term accommodation within a short walking distance is an excellent achievement,” Sue said.

“The sustainable units are designed to operate carbon neutrally and generate twice the amount of power they consume, helping to achieve Grampians Health’s environmental sustainability targets.”

*Stawell Site Director Sue Campigli and Stawell Support Services Manager Fiona Bottomley inspect the new accommodation.*



# Lions' life-saving donation replaces esky



Stawell Theatre Nurses Michelle Dunn, Sally Hamilton and Taylor Forster, who initiated the trolley purchase, demonstrate the simplicity of accessing life saving items from the drawers to Stawell Lions Club members Peter Martin, Dorothy Williams and Margaret and David Jones.

A generous donation from Stawell Lions Club has been used to purchase a dedicated malignant hyperthermia trolley for our Stawell campus.

Malignant Hyperthermia (MH) is a severe reaction to certain anaesthetic drugs where the body muscles rapidly heat up to extreme temperatures. It can be fatal without immediate treatment but fortunately it is a very rare disorder.

Stawell Theatre Nurse Unit Manager Sally Hamilton said having a dedicated cart for MH treatment was very important and has been well received by her team.

"We are extremely thankful to the Lions Club for their generosity and feel we are better prepared, should we need to utilise it," Sally said.

Prior to getting the cart, we stored all the treatment items in a container not fit for purpose and it was not easy to access items. The cart improves access to equipment and therefore improves response time for such an occurrence."

Malignant Hyperthermia is an extremely rare condition, estimated to occur one in 100,000 adult surgeries and treatable with a drug called Dantrolene.

Lions District Club Revitalisation team leader Robert Eyton said he was very impressed with the Stawell Lions Club to provide such an important life-saving item.

"This is a lovely thing to be able to do and I want to pay homage to the volunteers who have been members at the club over the years and have been able to ensure this donation could happen," Robert said.

# Stawell's gift that keeps on giving

Patients at a Tongan clinic are still benefitting today from a donation made by the Stawell hospital a decade ago.

Former Ballarat registrar Dr Tom Toohey visited the clinic recently and discovered that doctors there are still making use of a specialist theatre microscope that had been donated by the Stawell team in 2014.

Perioperative services associate nurse unit manager, Rachel Nicholls said Stawell Regional Health purchased the microscope in 1993.

Back then it was 'you beaut' top of the range and it performed many years of service as a one-stop microscope for both ophthalmic and ENT surgery," Rachel said.

"It was very reliable and had seen countless eyes and ears during that time but in 2014, to keep up with demand, changing technology and surgical techniques, it was determined the microscope required upgrading to two specialised microscopes."

Through the help of ophthalmologist Dr Michael Toohey and St. John of God

Through the help of ophthalmologist Dr Michael Toohey and St. John of God Hospital's 'Twinning' program, the old microscope was donated and shipped to Tonga and 10 years later, it remains in constant use.

Rachel said that without the microscope, the clinic would not be able to perform the eye surgery it currently does for its local population.

"The funding for healthcare in Tonga is nowhere near sufficient... and from what I understand the amazing staff make miracles with less than the basics," she said.

*Dr Tom Toohey (second from right) with the team in Tonga.*



# \$37,000 support for MacPherson Smith

Community generosity has not only ensured consultations with GPs and a variety of medical services is much easier for residents at Stawell's Macpherson Smith Care Community – it has also allowed them to have involvement in their medical care and the decisions that are made.

Stawell Hospital Foundation has donated \$37,000 to the Grampians Health care community to buy a new Visionflex all-in-one Telehealth cart.

The money is also funding a new bladder scanner for the care community.

Care Community Manager Tess Beniga said previous Telehealth consults were done with a nurse holding a laptop and relying on its built-in camera.

"The vision for the doctors wasn't that great and the system was clunky," Tess said.

"The Visionflex cart is much more mobile and easy for the nurses to move from room to room.

"It also has a hand held diagnostic camera which the nurse can easily hold in position to show the consulting GP any specific area of the body.

"Its other features include an ECG heart monitor, pulse oximeter, blood pressure cuff and an infrared forehead thermometer, all programmed to a medical grade computer.



*Meg Blake, Greg Earle and Kerrie Rosenow with MacPherson Smith Residential Care NUM Tess Beniga.*

"We are very grateful to the Foundation for their generosity because not only do we have a great Telehealth cart but the bladder scanner was also badly in need of upgrading.

Tess said the new bladder scanner ensured MSCC nurses could do an accurate scan of a patient's bladder.

"This allows for a quick diagnosis and subsequent treatment as opposed to a more invasive catheter option which can be painful as well as having associated risk of infection.

"The entire scan takes only a couple of minutes to complete and being a mobile scanner it

is much better for our residents as the scanner can be taken to their bedside rather than the patient having to be transported up to the hospital."

Stawell Foundation's newest member Meg Blake said it was gratifying for her organisation to be able to provide such useful equipment, particularly the bladder scanner.

"We get to make the donation but the money could not be raised without the generosity of the Stawell and district community," Meg said.

"This has been a major fundraising project, and we are thankful for the support from everyone."



Scholarship winner Mandie White (left) with Simpson ward joint Nurse Unit Manager Kylie Davey.

## National recognition for Stawell nurse

Stawell nurse Mandie White has been awarded a highly-prized scholarship with the Australian College of Nursing.

Mandie completed her Division One Nursing degree two years ago but has been quickly recognised by her peers as a future leader. She regularly works as a charge nurse in the Simpson acute ward at Grampians Health Stawell.

More recently Mandie was honoured with a scholarship into the ACN's Emerging Nurse Leader program – one of only a dozen scholarships gifted throughout Australia. The program empowers nurses to achieve their goals and aspirations through personal and professional development.

Mandie said the course had opened her to a broader view of nursing.

"I'm learning specialist skills that are not taught in undergraduate training such as how to deal with conflict resolution among patients and family members," Mandie said.

"I'm also learning how to network with people and I have mentors to support me, not just at Stawell but across the country."

One of Mandie's mentors, joint Nurse Unit Manager for Simpson ward Kylie Davey, said the achievement was thoroughly deserved

"Mandie is highly regarded and much respected at Stawell," Kylie said.

"When we are under pressure people really enjoy working with Mandie because she creates such a calming environment and her leadership is shown through that calmness.

"The Emerging Nurse Leader course will continue to help Mandie seek opportunities that are created in our healthcare system. We are so proud of her and happy to support her in any way we can."

Grampians Health Chief Nursing and Midwifery Officer Leanne Shea said the supportive mentoring of the nurses at Stawell was a great example of how Grampians Health is growing a workforce that is empowered, well trained safe and connected.

"I congratulate Mandie on her recognition and wish her the very best with her studies," Leanne said. "With the guidance and support she is getting, Mandie will be a great leader in the Grampians Health team."

# Reconciliation Action Plan launched

The inaugural Grampians Health Reconciliation Action Plan has been launched, formalising a framework for providing just, equitable and culturally safe healthcare for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Chief Operating Officer Ben Kelly said the Reconciliation Action Plan is key to Grampians Health's vision of being a trusted, progressive, and innovative leader of regional and rural healthcare.

"Reconciliation is a shared responsibility for all Australians, and our Reconciliation Action Plan showcases our commitment to going beyond symbolic gestures," Ben said.

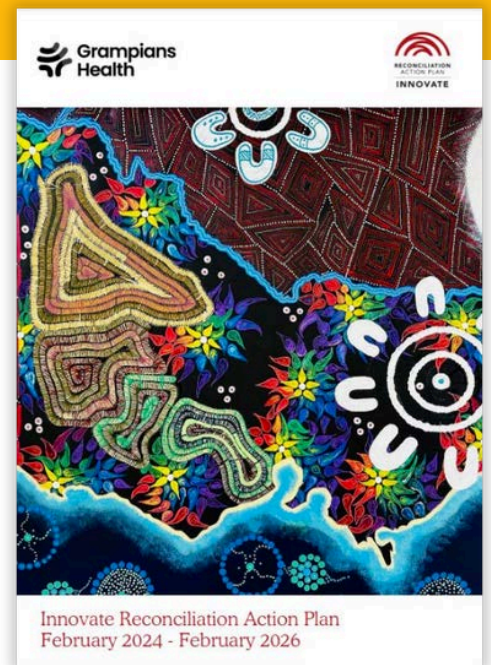
"As a public health service provider, we are committed to

improving health outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, and key to this is providing comprehensive healthcare that meets individual needs closer to home and Country."

Grampians Health Chief of Strategy and Regions Dr Rob Grenfell said the Reconciliation Action Plan was an integral step towards reconciliation for Grampians Health.

"Our vision is for Grampians Health to be a place where First Nations peoples know they are valued as individuals, and that their rich and diverse heritage, culture, and spirituality is respected and celebrated," Rob said.

Developed by the Grampians Health Aboriginal Health Liaison



Office (AHLO) in consultation with Reconciliation Australia, the Reconciliation Action Plan builds on the AHLO team's continual work across the organisation which includes providing organisation-wide support to and cultural safety for First Nations people accessing care at Grampians Health.

The Reconciliation Action Plan can be found on our website [grampianshealth.org.au](http://grampianshealth.org.au)

*Aboriginal Health Liaison Officer Danae McDonald with the new Grampians Health Reconciliation Action Plan*





# Garry's lifetime of keeping Stawell cool

Garry Lewis has devoted his entire career to refrigeration maintenance and repairs. To the staff at Grampians Health Stawell, he is considered a 'rock star' – and not because he works in front of many big fans.

For more than 50 years, Garry has diligently serviced the cool rooms, refrigerators and air conditioners at the Stawell campus and MacPherson Smith Residential Care Community. That service includes replacement and repairs on call 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Garry said many of his callouts are in the middle of the night.

"I've always tried to be available, no matter what time of day or night," he said.

"Many of the calls are after midnight, around 2am because that's the time the refrigeration defrosts are generally cutting in and refrigeration is more likely to break down."

When Garry first started working at the Stawell hospital, he was completing an apprenticeship and attending trade school at RMIT in Melbourne.

"Fan motors and refrigerant leaks used to be common breakdowns so when I was doing my apprenticeship my boss taught me how to repair refrigeration on the spot and that pretty much became my main role throughout my apprenticeship and working life."



Garry has noticed a lot of changes to the hospital's infrastructure over the years.

"When I first came, I was servicing just stand-alone fridges in the kitchen and a few under-bench fridges. Later the hospital needed coolrooms for more capacity. There were no dedicated pharmacy fridges on the wards back in the day. They just used domestic fridges and wrote 'drugs' on the front of them."

Garry eventually started his own business and was full of praise for the support he received from the Stawell campus team over the journey.

"As a contractor, the staff have been fantastic to work with," he said.

"You know if you need help with something for a couple of minutes, there is always someone from maintenance who will help you."

"It might seem like 'all in a day's work' to them but for me it's been fantastic because it would have taken me longer on the job otherwise."

Grampians Health maintenance manager at Stawell Phillip Hutton said Garry was very much a part of the furniture at Stawell.

"We've been able to rely on his quick response and his helpful, friendly nature over the years so he is very important to our operations, especially the catering side," Mr Hutton said.

# Empowering Elie's Paralympic dreams

When Vanuatuan para-athlete and shot-put champion Elie Enock was first informed about the possibility of being fitted with a prosthesis, she remembers being hopeful.

"I never thought I'll have a leg one day," said the Stawell resident, who had lost her limb in an accident in 2009. But now, the para-athlete was seeing a ray of sunshine with a promise of a prosthetic limb – largely made possible due to the support of Grampians Health, which funded the prosthesis, and the local community in Stawell, including the Northern Grampians Shire Council and Elie's employer Thomas Foods International.

While the lack of a prosthesis has not stopped Elie from achieving impressive milestones in her sporting career – she won a gold medal for Vanuatu at the 2023 Pacific Games and qualified for the Paris 2024 Paralympic Games before being fitted with a prosthesis – a prosthetic limb would further support her performance.

A prosthesis would provide the track and field champion with more independence in her daily life whilst improving her overall strength and conditioning to support her athletic journey, said Karina McAuley, Deputy Manager of Prosthetics and Orthotics at Grampians Health.

"A prosthesis can help with improving Elie's muscle control, balance and posture to enhance her performance in her sport. Prior to being fitted with a prosthesis, Elie had to depend on crutches but now she can be more independent and confident."

For Elie, it meant several appointments at Grampians Health's Ballarat campus during which the prosthetics and physiotherapy team worked collaboratively to help Elie achieve her dreams of walking again. Meanwhile, her employer Thomas Foods International assisted her by providing transportation from Stawell for her appointments.

"The team here [at Grampians Health] was so friendly and kind when I met with them, and they patiently answered all my questions about the leg – both the advantages and the challenges I might have with it," she said.

After some preparation that involved building the prosthesis, Elie was fitted with her prosthesis earlier this year. She continued her appointments with the rehabilitation team who ensured she was comfortable and confident walking with her prosthesis.

Ben Kelly, Chief Operating Officer, said that providing care that is responsive to local communities' needs is at the heart of Grampians Health.

"Prosthetics can play an integral role in empowering an individual and we're glad to have had a role in supporting Elie and her dreams and goals," Ben said.



*Elie with Grampians Health prosthetics and orthotics team members Jane Wells, Karina McAuley, Rebecca Alston, Holly Brettle, and Nadia Botha.*

# New monitors for oncology unit

Money collected from a major annual fundraiser has paid for new vital signs monitors at Grampians Health Stawell's oncology unit.

Stawell Hospital Auxiliary raised \$11,000 at a Wine and Savoury evening and purchased the three new monitors to replace old equipment.

Oncology's Acting Nurse Unit Manager Majella Hunter thanked the auxiliary members for their hard work, and the

Stawell community for its generosity.

"It's important that equipment as essential as these monitors is replaced and upgraded regularly to ensure patient safety, and it makes our job that little bit easier as well," Majella said.

Vital signs monitors provide regular readings to clinical staff of a patient's blood pressure, heart rate and oxygen flow.

"We are grateful to the community for their support for our Wine and Savoury evening," Auxiliary president Pam Byron said.

"This donation would not have been possible without their support and to raise \$11,000 on one night was a wonderful result.

"We are all feeling reassured knowing the importance the vital signs monitors play in caring for our region's cancer patients."

*Stawell Hospital Auxiliary with the three new vital monitors.*



Do you have suggestions for us?

If you have a suggestion or an issue you want to raise, please contact us at [feedback@gh.org.au](mailto:feedback@gh.org.au)

Like to join our mailing list?

To join our mailing list – or to update your details – send your name, email and postal address to [communications@gh.org.au](mailto:communications@gh.org.au)



*Kelly Lee, Practice Manager Stawell Medical Centre.*

## Nurturing tomorrow's healthcare leaders

For Stawell's Kelly Lee, attending Grampians Health's Clinician 2 Manager Emerging Leaders Program in 2022 gave her the confidence to take on a bigger role at Grampians Health.

She initially joined Grampians Health Stawell's administration department, but soon progressed to other roles.

For over six months, Kelly and some of her colleagues from Grampians Health's Stawell and Edenhope campuses attended several sessions about the basics of leadership, with a particular focus on transitioning to a leadership role.

Not too long after she attended the Clinician 2 Manager Emerging Leaders Program, Kelly was confident enough to apply for a bigger role as a Practice Manager at Stawell Medical Centre – a position that she was successful in securing.

"The Emerging Leaders course taught me to recognise my strengths, weaknesses, and has boosted my confidence as a leader. It has helped me in my new role by providing new perspectives on skills such as effective communication, problem solving, decision making, and time management," said Kelly.

"The Clinician 2 Manager Emerging Leaders Program is just one of the many learning and development pathways available for staff members at Grampians Health.

"Many of our clinical staff have years of valuable experience and as a health service, providing them access to resources like the Clinician 2 Manager Emerging Leaders Program can help uncover the next generation of leaders who are familiar with our values, ethos and goals and those of

the communities they serve," said Claire Woods, Chief People Officer, Grampians Health.

"While we are focused on attracting new people to live and work in the region, we are also constantly looking at ways to engage with our existing staff members and equip them with skills and resources so that they make a real difference in the delivery of care."

Claire said that providing learning and development opportunities for staff members to evolve would continue to be a key focus of Grampians Health.

"We are committed to providing high-quality healthcare to the communities we serve and by fostering a culture of growth for our people, we hope to continue to excel in providing exceptional care," she said.

# Geriatricians improving outcomes

Regular visits from Grampians Health geriatric doctors are helping to improve health outcomes for patients in Stawell and Horsham acute settings.

The specialist doctors have been providing the service for a few months and it is expected to expand even further over time. Stawell campus acute nurse unit manager Amy Yole said the service was a great example of how Grampians Health was expanding services to its regional campuses.

"The geriatricians visit every Tuesday to do a ward round with the hospital medical officer and they review the inpatients that are suitable to be seen by them," Amy said.

"In the past we would have waited months for this kind of service at Stawell. It used to be on a referral system that we would refer through and then it would be outsourced.

"For us this new service has meant better outcomes for all our patients in that category because they are receiving timely care.

Amy said as the title suggested, the service was for older patients.

"But that's not always a strict criteria because sometimes we get patients a bit younger that might have early onset dementia or more complex issues so they definitely don't exclude anyone," she said.

"They might be just someone who has limited ability to care for themselves at home.

Three Grampians Health geriatricians work on a roster system and a geriatrician registrar visits Stawell and Horsham every week, treating patients with capacity difficulties or cognitive decline.

Amy said this service had been a huge win for the Stawell and Horsham campuses.

"The ability to get someone seen within a week rather than a month or longer is easily our biggest win," she said.

"Our HMOs are learning from the geriatricians because they have this wealth of knowledge and they are supporting them. They are able to have a real complex ward round with these highly skilled clinicians and that is helping them learn as well.

"The other thing is that by having the geriatricians come up here and learning what

Stawell can manage, they can make a firm assessment on which hospital campus is the best for each individual patient.

"So, in that way they've been able to prevent premature transfers or be able to facilitate transfers earlier than they would have been. It's kind of like having a set of eyes at each campus with that collaborative approach helping to keep people closer to home sooner.

"Having three sets of medical eyes on a patient as opposed to one set is always a good thing and they also look at their medications in depth and work out how we can best treat the patients."

A geriatrician is a doctor who specialises in caring for older people. They are experts in diagnosing and treating the many health issues that older adults might have. Just like kids have a paediatrician, older adults can see a geriatrician.

*Dr Baxter Naing (Geriatric Fellow), Debbie Sharer EN, Nazish Satti HMO and Dr Yih Harnng Chong (Geriatrician)*



# Early Parenting Centre to benefit parents in the region



*Chief Operating Officer Ben Kelly, Member for Ripon Martha Haylett, Minister for Children Lizzie Brandthorn, Chief Redevelopment and Infrastructure Officer Veronica Furnier, Board Chair Bill Brown and EPC Nurse Unit Manager Vikki Doddamani.*

Grampians Health's Early Parenting Centre (EPC) has opened in Lucas, providing specialist care for parents with children aged 0-4.

It will help address common issues such as sleep routines, child behaviour challenges, parental fatigue, and the general transition to parenthood.

The new purpose-built facility provides a range of programs designed to improve the health, wellbeing, and developmental outcomes for children.

Chief Operating Officer Ben Kelly said Grampians Health was thrilled to provide essential support to new parents, eliminating the need for lengthy trips to Melbourne which often add to additional parental stress.

"Our specialised team will deliver several programs to meet the needs of individual cases including a home stay program, a day stay program, one-on-one appointments, video appointments, and group sessions."

Chief Redevelopment and Infrastructure Officer Veronica Furnier said, "The new facility has been designed to create a safe and serene environment with natural light and rooms suitable for various family arrangements to help allow families to feel at home. The design of the centre also ensures that it is inclusive to all."

Parents can self-refer or be referred by a GP or health care professional to this new service.

The Early Parenting Centre has been delivered in partnership with the Victorian Health Building Authority.

The EPC works alongside Grampians Health's Parent & Infant Unit, which focuses on assessing and treating the mental health and wellbeing of parents, whilst strengthening the attachment relationship between parent and infant within an inpatient setting.

For further information on these services please visit:  
[www.bhs.org.au/parenting](http://www.bhs.org.au/parenting)

Maintenance Manager Phillip Hutton, who helped install Grampians Health's new \$500,000 Main Switch Board, pictured next to the new MSB and generator.



## Empowering our Stawell campus

A new state-of-the-art \$500,000 Main Switch Board (MSB) has been installed at Grampians Health Stawell.

Chief Redevelopment and Infrastructure Officer Veronica Furnier-Tosco said the successful upgrade of the

MSB demonstrated Grampians Health's commitment in delivering excellence in patient care while embracing modern technologies.

"The new MSB will power the entire site while helping safeguard critical care

provisions within clinical areas," Veronica said.

The MSB upgrade was necessary due to the previous MSB reaching its capacity and end of life support for electrical components.



ARE YOU OUR NEXT  
**VOLUNTEER?**



Grampians Health Stawell are looking for people to volunteer and assist in our hospital and nursing home.

If you, or someone you know, is interested in volunteering with Grampians Health Stawell, please contact Leah Ferguson at [Leah.Ferguson@gh.org.au](mailto:Leah.Ferguson@gh.org.au) or on 5320 6931.

Scan the QR Code to find out more or visit [grampianshealth.org.au/volunteer](http://grampianshealth.org.au/volunteer)



# URGENT CARE

## What you need to know...



**If your condition is serious, or you are experiencing chest pain, you need to call 000 (Triple Zero) for an ambulance.**

**Grampians Health Stawell has an Urgent Care Centre, staffed 24 hours a day, 7 days per week.**

### Assessment in Urgent Care

Members of the public who present at our Urgent Care Centre will receive a comprehensive assessment by our experienced nursing team. If required, the nurse will work with our on-site doctor or nurse practitioner, available from 8:00 am to 8:00 pm every day, to provide your care.

Outside of these hours, the nursing team are supported by the Victorian Virtual Emergency Department (VVED), unless the patient's condition is critical and requires further escalation to the doctor or nurse practitioner on call.

### Triage

Community members presenting at our Urgent Care Centre will be assessed based on the severity of their condition, with the most critical cases being prioritised.

Patients with less urgent needs may experience a wait or offered the option to use telehealth services via the Victorian Virtual Emergency Department (VVED). The consultation is in real time, with very clear images, and allows patients to ask questions as if they were in the same room as the doctor. This technology supports rural patients by reducing the need for travel and enables faster commencement of treatment.

### Fees

Urgent Care Centres are not like Emergency Departments in large hospitals. Fees may apply for some services, including transport or transfer with Ambulance Victoria.

### Ambulance Membership

We strongly encourage all community members to hold an Ambulance Victoria Membership ([www.ambulance.vic.gov.au/membership/](http://www.ambulance.vic.gov.au/membership/)). Having this membership is the only way to ensure your transfer costs are covered. Many private health insurance policies do not include full ambulance cover, please check your level of cover.

If you have a serious medical condition that requires transfer by ambulance to a larger hospital, you will need your Ambulance Victoria Membership. Without this coverage, you will be invoiced for the ambulance fees by Ambulance Victoria.

### Non-Urgent Medical Attention

If medical attention is required for a non-urgent condition, patients are encouraged to contact their GP during business hours. Expert health advice can also be sought 24 hours a day from a registered nurse via the Victorian Nurse-on-Call service by phoning 1300 60 60 24.

**Nurse-on-Call: 1300 60 60 24**

## Other Care Options

**When you need immediate care, but it isn't life-threatening**

### Virtual Emergency Department

(Online service - smart phone or computer with camera required)  
No appointment necessary | Free service  
24 hours, 7 days  
Interpreter services available  
[vved.org.au](http://vved.org.au)

### Health Direct (Nurse on call)

(Telephone service)  
No appointment necessary | Free service  
24 hours, 7 days  
1300 60 60 24

### National Home Doctor (Health Direct)

(Telephone service) After hours GP clinic  
Bulk-billed for eligible Medicare card holders | Booking lines open:  
6pm weekdays, 12 noon Saturday, all day Sunday and public holidays  
13SICK (137 425)

### Doctors on Demand

(Online service - smart phone or computer with camera required)  
An out-of-pocket fee applies to most appointments.  
Book online 24 hours, 7 days  
[doctorsondemand.com.au](http://doctorsondemand.com.au)

## Helplines

- Pregnancy Birth and Baby Hotline 1800 882 436
- Victorian Poisons Information Centre 131 126
- Lifeline 13 11 14
- Beyond Blue 1300 224 636
- Sexual Assault Crisis Line 1800 806 292
- Safe Steps Family Violence Centre 1800 015 188
- Rainbow Door (LGBTIQ+) 1800 729 367
- Kids Helpline 1800 551 800
- 13YARN 13 92 76

## GPs and Medical Centres

Find your closest medical service at [healthdirect.gov.au](http://healthdirect.gov.au)

### Stawell Medical Centre

Co-payment/Appointment required  
8am - 5pm, Monday to Friday  
Ph: 5358 1410  
26 Wimmera Street, Stawell

### Patrick Street Family Practice

Co-payment/Appointment required  
8am - 6pm, Monday to Friday  
Ph: 5358 7555  
8-22 Patrick Street, Stawell

## Emergency Departments

**For life-threatening emergencies, chest pain or uncertainty**  
Call Triple Zero (000) or proceed to your nearest Emergency Dept.

**Your nearest Emergency Department is:**

### Wimmera Base Hospital

No fee  
24 hours, 7 days  
Ph: 5381 9111

**Access from Baillie Street**



Emergency: call Triple Zero (000)  
Urgent but not life threatening: see options at top of page  
Not urgent: see your regular GP

[my.gh.org.au/emergency](http://my.gh.org.au/emergency)