The Font









Message from the CEO

Every year, St Vincent's cares for more than 100,000 people and welcomes many more visitors, families and friends through our doors. In the pages of the Font we bring you stories of our staff, supporters and patients working together to make better healthcare possible for the whole community.

This shared commitment is clear in the story of Professor Michael Kamm's important research into Crohn's disease, which is now being spurred on by our donors. The same generosity has made it possible for St Vincent's to buy not one, but two, new stem cell centrifuges, which means people with cancer can get necessary treatment much faster.

'It is the courage of our patients and their willingness to put their health in our hands that drives our doctors. nurses and allied health teams to aim higher every day.'

The quest to find cures and better treatments is inspired by our patients - people like Mary Jane Galon. While pregnant with her first child, a large and fast-growing facial tumour not only threatened Mary Jane's life but made it difficult for her to enjoy the path to becoming a mum. With support of the Children First Foundation, St Vincent's, and donations from our own staff, Mary Jane made the courageous decision to leave her family in the Philippines and put her faith in our

team of world-class microsurgeons. One month later, Mary Jane is looking forward to returning to her daughter and sharing a much brighter future with her. She has kindly allowed us to share her story with you.

It is the courage of our patients and their willingness to put their health in our hands that drives our doctors, nurses and allied health teams to aim higher every day. It makes it possible for St Vincent's teams to stand out from a field of 600 applicants to win two of just five grants as part of the 2015 BUPA Health Awards. The grants will support research in joint replacement and heart disease which could deliver big benefits to patients and to the health system more broadly.

These are just some of the stories we showcase this month, and a fraction of the great work happening every day in this bustling community of patients, families, staff and supporters. I hope you enjoy this edition of the Font.

Ben Fieldina Chief Executive Officer St Vincent's Hospital Melbourne

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Heart-warming

success story

92 year old World War II veteran Eric Manning is more active than many people 20 years his junior. He loves going to his local RSL and is the sole carer of his wife of 69 years, Veronica.

'I feel a lot younger than I am, I thoroughly enjoy life. I don't do as much as I would like to do, my legs aren't up to it, but I feel like I could,' Eric says.

Eric owes his new lease on life to a transcatheter aortic valve implantation (TAVI) he received at St Vincent's one year ago.

The TAVI procedure, performed at St Vincent's since 2009, is suitable for older patients suffering from aortic valve stenosis (a narrowing of the aortic valve) for whom traditional open-heart surgery is deemed too risky, but would see improvements in their independence, quality of life and overall heart function if their condition was treated. The procedure involves inserting a new artificial heart valve through a catheter, making it less onerous than surgery.

'Health wise, body wise, I'm feeling better than I was just a year ago. I'm breathing easier and I'm not feeling as tired anymore.

Christine Wright coordinates the TAVI clinic, where prospective patients receive a comprehensive appraisal from a multidisciplinary team, which includes cardiologists, surgeons, physiotherapists, nurses and geriatricians.

'Finding the right patient is key to its success. Eric was a suitable candidate for TAVI due to his age, clinical symptoms and the size and severity of his aortic valve narrowing,' Christine says.

A/Prof Rob Whitbourn leads the program and is very happy with the results so far.

'We have seen excellent short to medium term outcomes from the program. It has proved to be a safe and effective alternative treatment to surgery, meaning patients such as Eric can keep their independence and quality of life without the risks associated with open heart surgery,' A/Prof Whitbourn says.

Eric couldn't agree more. 'The way I'm feeling, I reckon I'll see 100.'

Above: TAVI program coordinator Christine Wright and TAVI recipient Eric Manning have developed a close bond

St Vincent's cardiologists set up clinic in heart of Victoria

Heart patients in Shepparton are now being seen locally by a team of visiting St Vincent's cardiologists.

St Vincent's Hospital has partnered with Goulburn Valley Health to set up a heart clinic in Shepparton, meaning care can be seen by one of eight visiting specialists.

Greater Shepparton was recently awarded the unenviable title of most obese region in Australia, meaning there is an important need for greater cardiology services, according to Director of Cardiology A/Prof Andrew MacIsaac

'Those who are overweight or obese typically have higher cholesterol in their diet, higher blood pressure, and are more likely to have heart disease,' says A/Prof MacIsaac.

'We know cardiovascular disease is more prevalent in rural areas and heart failure has been identified as being particularly prevalent in the Greater Shepparton area.'

Cover: A team of St Vincent's surgeons have saved the life of Filipino mum Mary Jane Galon. Read her story on page 4.

Good Samaritans join forces to save new Mum

As a young, poor Filipino woman, 35 year old Mary Jane Galon knew she was in trouble, as a lump on her jaw began growing at an alarming rate. The cancerous growth was not there in 2013, but by the end of 2014, it had already completely overtaken more than half of her mouth.

As it grew, and she became more disfigured, Mary Jane became too ashamed to be seen in public. She withdrew into her home and lived with the pain, the shame, and the worry.

'Before, I am always hiding, I am always in my home, I did not want to go outside.'

Pregnant with her first baby, she was also afraid that the tumour would prove fatal, and she wouldn't see her infant daughter Nicole, grow up.

Luckily for Mary Jane, the Children First Foundation heard about her plight, and organised to bring the new Mum to St Vincent's for life-saving surgery. Saving Mary Jane would secure Nicole's future. St Vincent's is covering the cost of her surgery – in part from its 'Good Samaritan Fund', into which staff donate money from each pay, to help patients.

Although the tumour was benign, doctors were afraid it would soon stop Mary Jane from eating and breathing. Professor Wayne Morrison led the surgical team.

'Well the tumour was massive when we were first confronted, and apparently it had been rapidly growing. It wasn't far off actually obstructing the airway and preventing her breathing,' he said.

The delicate operation took 14 hours, and involved a team of 16 experts at St Vincent's public hospital in Melbourne. Three surgical teams, including anaesthetics, head and neck specialists and micro surgeons worked on Mary Jane at the same time. The tumour removal took just two hours - the rest was the delicate reconstruction work. The surgeons removed the thin bone from the lower leg, the fibula, and reshaped it to make a replacement jaw. They transplanted veins and arteries from her leg and arm to ensure the blood flow resumed in her newly reconstructed face.

The head and neck team also had to do a tracheostomy so that Mary Jane could breathe, knowing that her face and neck would be quite swollen after the surgery. Just a few weeks after her surgery, Mary Jane's recovery is amazing.

St Vincent's is covering the cost of her surgery - in part from its 'Good Samaritan Fund'. into which staff donate money from each pay, to help patients.

'On all fronts we're very pleased. Mary Jane is certainly very pleased, and visually, it's pretty spectacular I have to say, compared to what we started with,' said Professor Morrison.

Mary Jane has shown a photo of herself to her family in the Philippines, and they are thrilled.

'My mother cry, my father cry, and then I hear the voice of my daughter, and I cry, because I miss my daughter! My future now, I can see that there is a light in my future now. Whereas before I am always thinking that I am in the dark, always hiding. I didn't want to go out. But my mother always told me don't close hope, maybe God will help. Now I see hope. Now I'm happy.'



Above: Plastic surgeons Mr Mathew Lee (left) and Professor Wayne Morrison led the team who performed the mammoth 14 hour surgery.

You too can help disadvantaged patients like Mary Jane by donating to the 'Good Samaritan Fund'.

Please visit our website Foundation on (03) 9231 3365





Last month we brought you the story of deaf Kitchen Services staff member Frank Tracomala, whose colleagues recently completed an Auslan training course to better understand Frank and make the workolace more inclusive.

Here's what some of our staff had to say about Frank on Facebook:

Theresa Rogers

Frank is such a bright light. He is always so animated, that smile of his is infectious you can't help but respond even on a bad day. Thank you for just being you, Frank. I'm so glad that I now know your name.

f Greg Ingle

Frank is one of the nicest guys you could hope to meet. Always smiling.

Franca Calarco

Frank is lovely, always greets you with a smile early in the morning and holds the lift for us...keep up the good work Frank, always happy to see you!

Joann Ngaw-Mason

Frank is awesome!! One of the happiest people I've ever met!

f Mark Rose

Always enjoy my Hi 5s with Frank.



Healing hands, healing feet

Cancer patient Len Chandler was facing the prospect of losing his leg from below the knee due to cancer. However, a referral to St Vincent's Hospital and Professor Peter Choong lead to a new and innovative procedure.

In another world first for St Vincent's Hospital, Prof Choong, worked in collaboration with Melbourne biotech company Anatomics and the CSIRO, to create a titanium replica of his heel bone which had been taken over by cancer.

Amputation below the knee is the proscribed treatment for the cancer Len was suffering from. However, scientific advances in 3D printing meant that our medical staff could consider reproducing an exact replica of Len's heel.

'The idea is one of those things we often fantasise about – can I make something that's exactly like the patient? Anyone in my field constantly thinks about that,' Prof Choong says. 'Then you see the technology and it clicks.

Turning this into reality was a team effort, with doctors, surgeons, nurses, allied health professionals and, increasingly, partners in science, engineering and industry, all working together to help the patient.

'This procedure is an example of how science and technology can be focused towards patient care in a very novel way.'

Scans of Len's tumour-free left foot were sent to Melbourne-based medical device company Anatomics, which created a mirror-image design to help in the development of a replacement heel. The CSIRO was then able to use its state-of-the-art Arcam 3D printer to build the implant from titanium.

Len Chandler is delighted to still have both of his own legs and feet. 'I'm mobile and that's what I really love,' he said. 'I can still help my sons with

their business and do all the things I used to do with the grandchildren. I could not be happier.'

This is your opportunity to be part of a new and innovative medical discovery.

Prof Choong says it shows the future direction of medicine, 'This procedure is an example of how science and technology can be focused towards patient care in a very novel way,' he says. 'Now we can be bold enough to start creating other body parts, such as the pelvis.

Further research is now underway to generate human cartilage from adult stem cells. These are to be used to replace damaged cartilages in knees and other joints. Current procedures for cartilage repair or replacement often lead to rejection or more complex problems.

With the support of our donors, Prof Choong and his team of collaborators hope to build on this breakthrough.

The St Vincent's Hospital's 'Healing Hand Appeal' invites our supporters to send a personal message of thanks or support. The 'Healing Hands' will be placed in the foyer for people to read as acknowledgement of the treatment we provide and inspiration for those in our care.

Please donate and support our 'Healing Hand Appeal' to further research in our world first cartilage regeneration project.

You can donate by visiting stvfoundation.org.au/donate, call us on (03) 9231 3365 or complete and return the donation form at the back of this newsletter.

Crohn's research receives a wealth of support

St Vincent's world leading research into Crohn's disease received a welcome boost from our donors who raised over \$76,000 to further research into this incurable bowel condition.

Leading Gastroenterologist Professor Michael Kamm explains the difference this support has made: 'Conducting ongoing research is expensive, time consuming work. We were absolutely delighted to receive these additional funds which will assist in growing our understanding of this condition.'

'Our Crohn's disease research has been very successful and continues to steam ahead. We have been running a very large study around Australia and in New Zealand that aims to identify how best to manage the disease and prevent it coming back after surgery.'

'The "POCER" study, into post-operative care, won a prize last year for the best inflammatory bowel disease study globally. It was also published to great review in the world's top clinical medical journal, the Lancet.

'The funds raised will help support both clinical and scientific research. Our basic science research, running in parallel with the clinical research, aims to discover the cause of Crohn's disease.

'In the first instance the funds raised will help leading researcher Dr Emily Wright receive specialist training in Crohn's disease testing. Much of the money also will support the expensive basic laboratory work."

On behalf of all the patients and staff thank you. Without this kind of support undertaking research would not be possible.

You can further support Crohn's Research by donating online at styfoundation.org.au/ donate, call us on (03) 9231 3365 or by returning the coupon at the back of the newsletter and mark your donation in support of Crohn's Research.

Below: Professor Michael Kamm.



Save the date

2015 ACMD Research Week

The Aikenhead Centre for Medical Discovery Research Week is a celebration of research activity across the campus held on an annual basis.

The broad aims of the ACMD Research Week are to encourage excellence in on-campus research, provide opportunities for researchers in different disciplines to present their work at the same forum. and to promote interaction between clinicians and scientists.

ACMD Research Week will be held on Monday 17 August -Friday 21 August. For more information visit http://wired. ivy.com.au/event/ACMD15.



Above right: BUPA grant recipients Dr Trish Peel and A/Prof Vijaya Sundararajan.



Two St Vincent's research projects win awards

There was fierce competition for the 2015 BUPA Health Awards, with almost 600 projects vying for selection. Just five research projects were chosen to share in \$1.6 million dollars.

Two of the five research award recipients are based at St Vincent's hospital in Fitzroy.

Dr Trish Peel's research project aims to reduce the time patients stay in hospital by one or two days after they've had a hip or knee replacement.

Traditionally, these patients could expect a hospital stay of four or five days post-surgery. The STEP trial (St Vincent's Early-mobilisation Pathway) will compare patients who have standard post-surgery care, with patients who have an early mobilisation plan. The intensive program will include additional interventions, such as intensive physiotherapy to get the patients moving earlier after surgery.

St Vincent's Hospital in Melbourne has a busy orthopaedic surgery unit, performing about 800 of these operations each year. The cost to the hospital of each hip or knee replacement is approximately \$22,000 dollars. If the STEP trial is successful, it will result in significant healthcare savings for the hospital, but the real benefit will be for the patients.

While less time in hospital is a bonus for patients, it's also likely to lead to fewer complications, and hospital re-admissions. The three year study will follow 80 patients over an eighteen month period, and is expected to start later this year.

Dr Peel's research partners are Prof Peter Choong, Head Department of Surgery, St Vincent's Hospital; Dr Michelle Dowsey, NHMRC Research Fellow, Department of Surgery, and Professor Philip Clarke, Chair in Health Economics, Melbourne School of Population and Global Health, University of Melbourne.

Cardiovascular disease is the biggest killer in Australia, and was responsible for nearly 44,000 deaths in 2012. It is also the most expensive disease treated nationally, accounting for 11% of direct healthcare costs.

A study lead by Associate Professor Vijaya Sundararajan will look at clinical decision-making and the appropriate use of coronary artery angiograms. An angiogram is used to diagnose narrowing of the arteries supplying oxygen to the heart.

Existing data shows that angiograms are potentially under-used in patients who've had a heart attack, and overused for patients with stable angina. The research is hoping to understand how clinicians currently decide when to use an angiogram, with the aim of changing these outcomes. The research could not only result in lower health costs, but more importantly, could save many lives.

A/Prof Sundararjan's research partners at St Vincent's are A/Prof Andrew MacIsaac, Director of Cardiology Services; Dr. Belinda Smith, Cardiologist and Perioperative Physician; Dr. Jodie Burchell, Research Fellow, Dept. of Medicine. Also included in the study are University of Melbourne and Professor Richard Harper, Emeritus Director of Cardiology, Monash Health.

Connecting volunteers and patients

It's not surprising that two people who just celebrated their 60th wedding anniversary have a lot in common. That is certainly true for Albury couple Margaret and Jim Cornelius, but now they also share a connection to St Vincent's.

In November last year, Jim came to St Vincent's for major heart surgery. Doctors gave him a slim chance of surviving the operation but the alternative was just as bleak. Six months later, the spry 81-year-old is by wife Margaret's side as our staff work to diagnose and treat an autoimmune disease that has robbed Margaret of the active life she cherishes.

The connection doesn't end there. Both Jim and Margaret have been part of patient experience surveys which help St Vincent's pinpoint areas where we're doing well and where we could do better for our patients.

Margaret is one of the first people surveyed as part of a new program linking St Vincent's volunteers and current patients.

Sarah Gray is one of those volunteers, and has been a member of St Vincent's Community Advisory Committee for six years. A medical scientist at one of Melbourne's most respected research laboratories, Sarah says spending time with patients is very satisfying.

'It's wonderful to be able to hear their stories. We're gathering a lot of valuable information through the survey itself, but the conversations with patients are just as important. And because we're talking to patients who are in hospital right now, if they share a concern with me, I can pass that on to the nurses straight away.'

Toni Blyth is the acting nurse unit manager of the ward caring for Margaret.

'We're all here for the patients,' she says. 'We want them to feel cared for and know they can talk to us about anything that's worrying them. Sometimes a patient may not be comfortable doing that, so this is another way for us to keep in touch with our patients and their needs."

Jim and Margaret can't speak highly enough of the staff they've encountered during their time at St Vincent's.

'Everyone, from the nurses and doctors to the kitchen and cleaning staff, are just amazing,' says Margaret.

When he's not by his wife's side, Jim's been known to pop down to the cardiac ward where he stayed for six weeks, to say hello and thank the nurses and doctors who helped him get back on the golf course. He and Margaret are hopeful that after her stay at St Vincent's she will once again be able to join him.

Left: St Vincent's volunteer Sarah Gray has greatly enjoyed sharing stories with patients such as Margaret Cornelius.





St Vincent's corporate partner, Alleasing, has donated Six Seasons by Joe Geia to symbolise their Aboriginal people.

people, so that when they arrive

entering a safe place, where they can connect and feel a sense of art being displayed.'

St Vincent's staff came together for the annual Sorry Day reflection.



Dry July no laughing matter for comedian

Melbourne comedian Dave O'Neill has signed up to Dry July, to raise money for the St Vincent's Cancer Centre.

As an 'A List' celebrity, Dave is regularly offered plenty of free champagne, beer and wine, but he's going to pass it all up, for a good cause.

It will be mocktails all the way for Dave; although knowing that there is always the 'golden ticket' - where you buy a pass to allow a night off - is reassuring!

Dry July encourages people to raise money to support adults living with cancer by going alcohol-free for the month of July.

At St Vincent's, whilst we provide the most up to date and effective treatments, we know that receiving treatment for cancer can be a very difficult time for patients and their families. It is our vision to provide an environment that is welcoming, supportive and comforting.

Nurse Unit Manager Jan Chapple says previous Dry July fundraisers have made a real difference to patients who spend so much time in the Cancer Centre.

'We have managed to fund a range of items we would never have been able to get through government funding, including our beautiful internal and balcony gardens, a fish tank for the waiting room, a state of the art massage chair, equipment to lessen patient discomfort during everyday procedures, artwork, iPads and many more items to assist our patients and their families during this difficult journey,' Jan says.

So join Dave O'Neill - go Dry for July and support St Vincent's Cancer Centre – and make a real difference!



How to get involved:

- 1. Sign up to the challenge and join Team St Vincent's http:// au.dryjuly.com/team/ teamstvincents and start fundraising today!
- 2. Or donate directly to Team St Vincent's online http://au.dryjuly.com/ team/teamstvincents

For more information contact Bridget Bible on (03) 9231 3369.

Generous support improves cancer treatment

Many people who are diagnosed with cancer will require some form of chemotherapy, radiation or biologic therapy; or a combination of these treatments.

Typically, the most effective cancer treatments are toxic to bone marrow, which is essential for recovery. To help patients cope with the treatment, and to aid their recovery, stem cells are extracted and stored using a centrifuge machine. These cells are then re-injected into patients after their chemotherapy to boost the patient bone marrow level.

St Vincent's Cancer Centre had a single Stem Cell Centrifuge Machine which had been used to treat and aid the recovery of countless cancer patients.

However, in late 2012 the machine was reaching the end of its useful life. It was becoming increasing difficult to find spare parts, and it could no longer be serviced or repaired.

The St Vincent's Foundation launched a collaborative fundraising effort, seeking support from donors, businesses and charitable trusts. A long standing supporter of the hospital, the Collier Charitable Fund provided a particularly generous grant towards the project.

This coming together meant that our Cancer Centre was able to purchase not only one but two machines.

The Cancer Centre's Nurse Unit Manager Jan Chapple and nurse Eilish Gribbon say the new machines have made a big difference.

'These machines have been in regular use since their installation, performing stem cell collections for Non-Hodgkins Lymphomas, Hodgkins Lymphoma and Multiple Myeloma. They've lived up to our expectations in collecting the cells more quickly and reducing the number of treatment delays which can be life threatening for some patients,' said Jan. Eilish added 'The new machines are quieter, more compact and easier to manoeuvre, which is very much appreciated by the Cancer Centre staff.'

Thanks to this support the stem cell collections are now of a higher quality and the outcomes for our patients have noticeably improved. The collections are much quicker, taking two days instead of the previous three days. This is more convenient for patients as once a patient is connected to the machine and a stem cell collection procedure starts it cannot be interrupted.

We are extremely grateful for the significant support we received from our donors, business supporters and the Collier Charitable Fund. Thanks to this support countless patients can continue to receive this potentially life-saving treatment.

The Cancer Centre Giving Tree

We'd like to thank the Assouni family for their generous gift to the Cancer Centre.

Father and Grandfather, Maurice.

donate online at styfoundation.

donation for the Cancer Centre.







Remembering St Vincent's Hospital in your will

St Vincent's Hospital is touched to receive significant support from people who have chosen to leave a gift to St Vincent's Hospital in their will.

'I love being out in the community and spending time with donors and bequestors; hearing about their lives, memories, hobbies and families,' said Barry Sheales, Donor Relations Officer.

A focus of Barry's role is to meet both loyal supporters and confirmed bequestors, to thank them for their long term commitment to St Vincent's Hospital. 'Many donors are unaware of the benefit of leaving a bequest to St Vincent's Hospital in their will.'

If you are considering making a bequest to St Vincent's Hospital please contact the Foundation and we will send an information pack.

Leaving a bequest to St Vincent's Hospital is a lasting and meaningful gift to future generations. There are several different types of bequests that you can make, and your solicitor or public trustee can provide advice on what is best for you.

If you have already left a bequest to St Vincent's Hospital Foundation, please let us know so that we can keep you updated and acknowledge your support.

'For me it is important to acknowledge and thank our friends who have chosen to support St Vincent's in this very special way. However, you'd be amazed how often we hear about a bequest too late to thank the person for their kindness and generosity during their life time,' said Barry.

'St Vincent's family of donors and bequestors should feel free to contact me at any time with any queries. I'm always happy to hear from them!'

If you would like further information about leaving a bequest please call Barry Sheales, St Vincent's Foundation Donor Relations Officer on (03) 9231 3270 or email barry.sheales@svha.org.au

Little book of big value

The Funde Booklet can now be purchased for \$20 from the St Vincent's Foundation Office.

Funde is dedicated to helping charities across Australia to raise much needed funds for great causes.

Inside the booklet you will find offers from some of Australia's biggest brands across many of your favourite activities, including entertainment, food & beverage, attractions and sport.

By purchasing the Funde Booklet you will be helping to support St Vincent's Hospital. Melbourne.

or call (03) 9231 3365 to purchase your booklet today



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