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Annual Report 2019

NEERIM HEALTH

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CHAIR MESSAGE

Over the past twelve months, the Board and management team of the Neerim District Health Service (Neerim Health) have initiated a major review of governance and strategic planning to ensure we can maintain our role and relevance within the health sector.

Regional hospital, health and aged care services have a long and challenging history of staying relevant to the changing needs of their community and the broader expectations of small health services in an evolving health delivery market.

The trend has been away from historically trying to meet all local medical and healthcare needs to new models of specialisation and core competencies. In the case of Neerim Health, our recognised capability in the area of cataract surgeries has underpinned the service's continuing sustainability.

However, the Neerim Health Board and management recognise that we need to evolve and further build on these core competencies to deliver new services if we are to emerge from decades of financial challenges and achieve a solid foundation for future sustainability and success.

Through strategic planning undertaken this year, we have sought to define the organisation's identity and establish strategies to ensure the future. Neerim Health is well placed to provide ongoing support to the health system in Gippsland by continuing to partner with larger public health services. Additional work is underway to engage surgeons and medical staff to operate and admit to the hospital beds.

This year has seen significant engagement with Government and the Department of Health and Human Services to demonstrate our efforts, high standard of health care, and contribution to the greater health system.

The economic value of Neerim Health to the Baw Baw Shire cannot be underestimated and recent data modelling from local Government indicated that Neerim Health contributes to the Local economy around \$12 million.

The Neerim Health Board remains a skills-based Board to ensure we have the expertise and experience required within a defined Board skills matrix. This structure also allows for ongoing refreshment of the Board as members retire.

Neerim Health has been fortunate in that there are a number of local professionals and community members with both the experience and commitment required to contribute to building our service for the future.

Selecting new directors to build a board that is right for the organisation is not a simple task and I am delighted to welcome two new Board members - Nicole Steers and Christie Bransgrove.

A senior executive with extensive management experience in Gippsland and Melbourne, Nicole's expertise includes health administration, clinical governance, business development (health services), accreditation and compliance, marketing and community engagement.

Christie is actively engaged in the Neerim district community through the kindergarten and primary school in Neerim South. She is one of the organisers of the Winter market that operates at the Algie Hall. Christie is a secondary school teacher in Warragul. As a young mother, she brings a different perspective to the value of the hospital in the community.

Your Board commends the Neerim Health management team for their achievements in the past year and looks forward to working closely with them in the year ahead.



Sean Dignum, Board Chair

CEO REPORT

The 2018/2019 financial year has been a time of consolidation and preparation for future growth for Neerim Health. As a not for profit organisation, Neerim Health continues to address the challenges associated with identifying and negotiating revenue streams with very little access to direct public health funding.

Following significant lobbying with the State and Commonwealth Governments, Neerim Health has established a priority strategy plan that seeks to partner with public health services by offering infrastructure and workforce opportunities.

This strategy is reflected in our continued efforts to partner with public health services in Gippsland to provide surgical and bed-based services. I am incredibly proud to report, that for the first time ever, Neerim Health has not only met but exceeded the Cataract Surgery target set by Latrobe Regional Hospital. This is the result of a well-developed and well managed whole of organisation approach to change management and demonstrates our capacity to provide valuable health services within an effective business model.

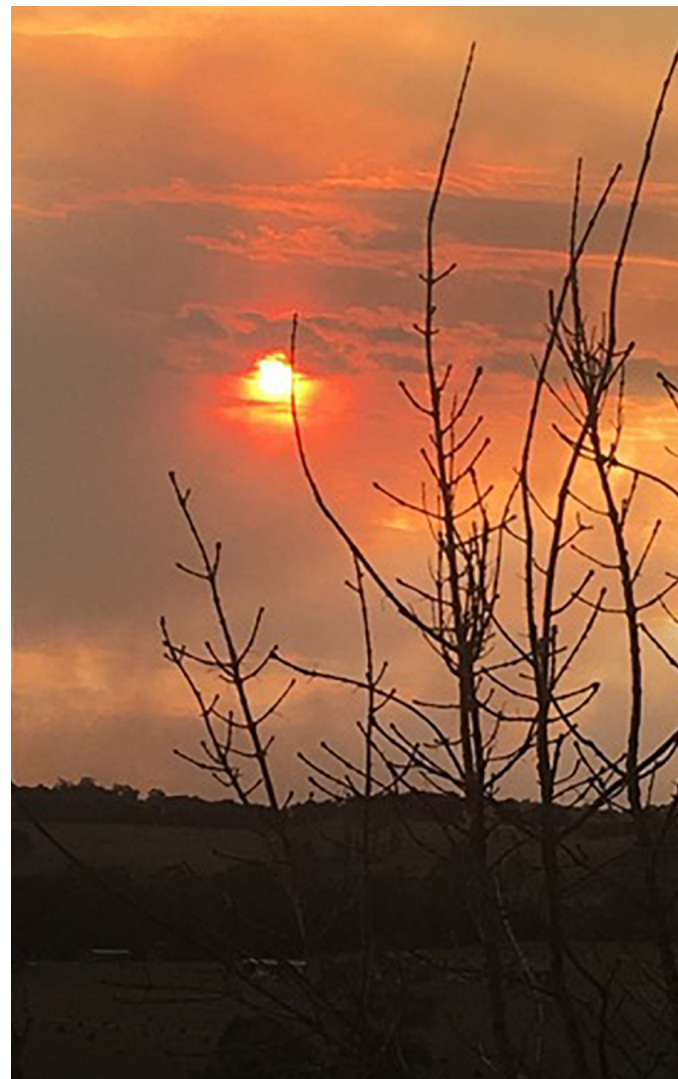
This same approach to performance and change management is reflected in our Short-term restorative care program. In the 2017/18 Financial Year, Neerim Health fell well short on the delivery of these funded packages. This past year, our performance has lifted from 20% to an outstanding 100% achievement of our target. This translates to an impressive 63% increase in the delivery of these often life changing health care programs to the community of the Baw Baw and Latrobe shires.

This is delivering a win-win set of outcomes for the public health system so often at capacity, for our long standing and respected health service and ultimately for the community that is benefiting from the expanded choice and high level of health care available. We are optimistic in our vision to grow these partnerships.

In early 2019 we were extremely proud to officially open our upgraded and refurbished aged care facilities. As a result of a significant contribution from the Commonwealth Government, the upgraded facilities have created vastly improved indoor and outdoor living space and a homelike communal environment for all our residents.



In March, our patients, residents and staff were faced with a full facility evacuation as a result of a bushfire threat from the Bunyip fires. With the assistance of our local CFA and Ambulance Victoria we were able to ensure our patients and residents were relocated quickly and efficiently and with no adverse outcomes. Thankfully, with a reduced threat from the bushfires we were able to return to the facility within 24 hours, thereby minimising unnecessary disruption quickly.



We were very fortunate to be the recipient of a grant from the Board of the Neerim and District Financial Services and the Neerim District Community Bank (Bendigo Bank). This generous grant provided the funding for the purchase of a new defibrillator and a patient trolley for theatre.

Our Clinical Services Manager has worked tirelessly to recommence student placements at Neerim Health. This is such an important part of our strategy to build a pipeline of staff and provide them with a unique learning environment. Arrangements are in place to accommodate student Registered and Enrolled Nurse and Personal Care Assistant clinical placements from a range of education providers.

Consumer engagement is a priority for Neerim Health and aligns directly with the new Aged Care Standards and the Australian Council on Healthcare Standards accreditation. A consumer engagement strategy was endorsed by the Board and further information is available in the Neerim Health Quality Account including consumer participation strategies.

In conjunction with this Annual Report, we are pleased to launch our second Quality Account that provides a detailed overview of our standards, activities and initiatives that demonstrate our commitment to the highest standards of health care.



Pictured – from left to right

Tim Kubale - Neerim & District Financial Services Board Chair
Brendan O'Brien Branch Manager, Neerim District Community Bank
Kate Graham - CEO and the management team

OUR BOARD OF MANAGEMENT



Sean Dignum, Board Chair

Sean has had an extensive career as an advisor and strategist to business and government through complex and challenging periods and operating conditions. His expertise in public affairs, media, issues management, sector reform and restructuring has been highly valued and sought after by his private advisory firm clients. Sean shares his time between his dairy farm in Neerim South and his firm in Melbourne and across Australia. He has advised on several major government health campaigns and hospital projects. He is a board member of the Committee for Gippsland, a former director of Latrobe Regional Hospital and serves on a range of Baw Baw shire group committees and advisory panels.



Catherine Gale, Deputy Chair

Catherine is a lawyer with almost 40 years of experience in Family Law matters. In 2008, following an impressive legal career, Catherine established Resolve Conflict Family Law and Mediation as a Melbourne based boutique family law firm. Catherine shares her time, personally and professionally, in and around the Neerim South community. She is principal of the Gippsland Mediation Centre in Drouin. She is the former President of the Law Institute of Victoria and The Law Council of Australia and previously served on the Board of the College of Law Victoria, the Australian Centre for Justice Innovation, and the International Academy of Collaborative Professionals.



Mark Dunsmuir, Board Treasurer

Mark is a founding director of Pursuit Advisors, the highly respected accounting and business advisory firm based in Warragul. Mark has more than 20 years of experience in public accounting practice has worked with an extensive range of clients across a diverse mix of the businesses including not for profit, agriculture, and professional service industries. He is a former board member of Gippsdairy, GippsTAFE and Fairview Home for the Aged.



Margaret Darton, Board Member

Margaret Darton has an extensive career working in the Victorian public sector, most recently as a regulatory advisor on agriculture and food industry policy in the Department of Economic Development, Jobs, Transport and Resources. Margaret has extensive experience in governance and has served on a number of Boards including Dairy Food Safety Victoria. She was awarded the Public Service Medal in 2015 for services to state and national food policy. Margaret is a community member of the Neerim District Secondary College Committee and a local resident of Neerim, having lived in the district for the last 30 years.



Jenny Muir, Board Member

Jenny is an executive team member of the Tarago Gardens residential development in Neerim South and a deeply committed member of the Neerim South community. She lives with her husband in nearby Lilloo and together, they have been long term supporters of the hospital and aged care facility. Jenny is an active member of the local community and is a member of the Warragul Business Group.



Prof Graeme Jackson, Board Member

Professor Jackson is the Deputy Director of the Florey Institute of Neuroscience and Mental Health. He is a Professorial Fellow of the Florey Department of Neuroscience and Mental Health, University of Melbourne and a Neurologist at the Austin Hospital and Honorary Neurologist at the Royal Children's Hospital in Melbourne. He is internationally recognised as an expert and authority in MR technologies and his work is advancing the diagnosis and treatment of patients with epilepsy. Graeme grew up in the district, now has a home in Rokeby and conducts a general Neurology practice in Warragul.



Joe Rabar, Board Member

Joe is a highly experienced medical surgeon and has worked across metropolitan and rural areas around Australia. Joe is currently practicing as an assisting surgeon at Knox, Epworth and Warringal hospitals. His past roles include serving as the chief medical officer for AIG Australia. He is a former council member of the Australian Medical Association. With his broad experience and extensive professional network in the medical and hospital sectors, Joe's appointment to the board is adding value in developing new opportunities for our hospital's theatre services. Joe is a resident of Neerim South and an active member of the local community.



Nicole Steers, Board Member

Nicole is a Registered Nurse and a qualified senior executive with many years' experience spanning acute, community and primary care. Nicole has a particular interest in clinical governance and innovative business development opportunities. Nicole is currently the Chief Operating Officer at Jobs Australia. Nicole brings practical understanding of the requirements for establishing robust clinical governance systems that will be essential to the successful implementation of new services and ensuring best practice for existing services. Appointed Aug 2019



Christie Bransgrove, Board Member

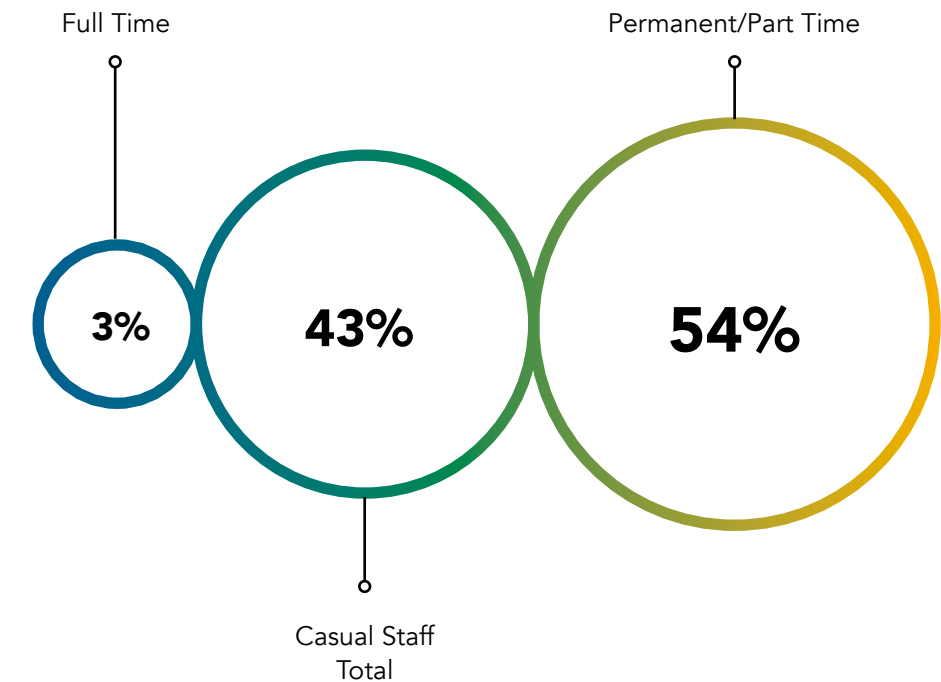
Christie lives in Neerim South and is actively engaged in the Neerim district community through the kindergarten, primary school and as one of the organisers of the Winter market that operates at the Algie Hall. Christie is a secondary school teacher in Warragul. As a young mother Christie brings another perspective to the value of the hospital in the community and is a good ambassador for the hospital with this demographic, particularly as we develop new services. Appointed Sept 2019



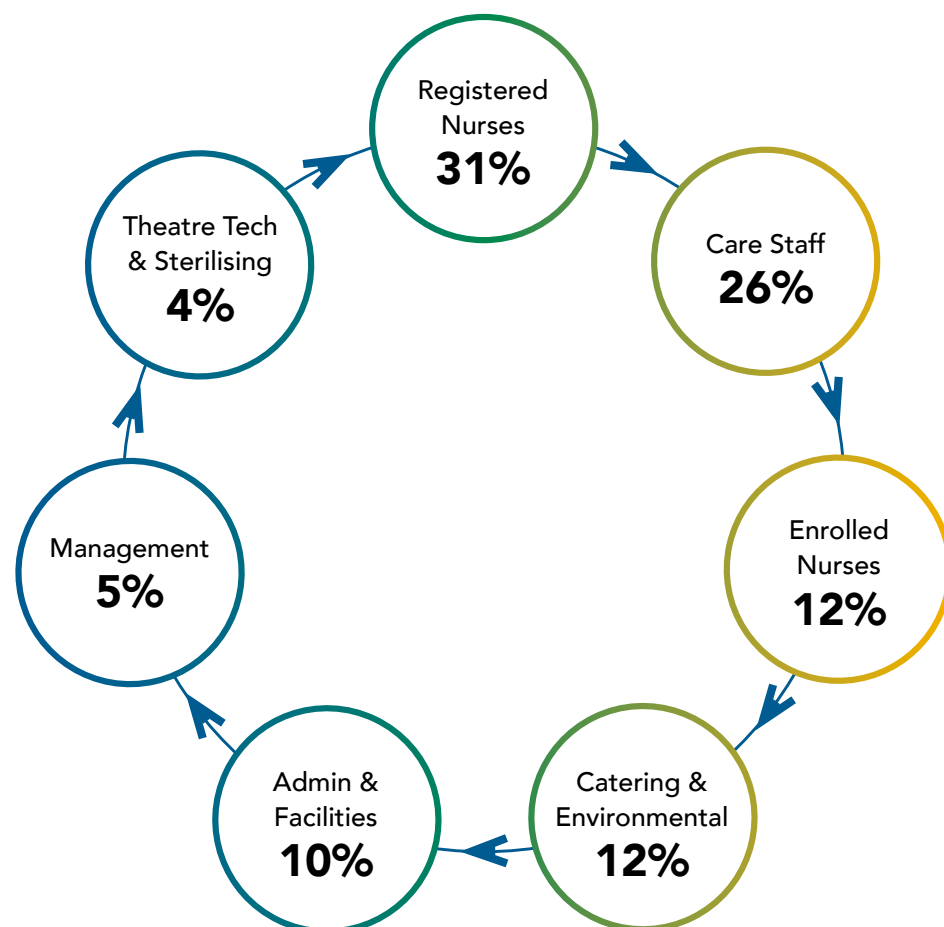
Kate Graham, Chief Executive Officer and Director of Nursing

Kate Graham was appointed as CEO in February 2018 following an impressive career in health and hospital services across Gippsland, metro Melbourne, South Australia and Queensland. Kate has held previous executive leadership roles that have assisted in developing her skills and experience in leadership and administration whilst maintaining a focus on evidence informed and best practice patient and client outcomes. Kate's continued professional development across her career spanning more than thirty years has developed her reputation as an outstanding health and hospital administrator that combines business and commercial acumen within the health care industry. Kate is a registered nurse and holds Post Graduate qualifications in Strategic Human Resource Management from Charles Sturt University. Kate is long term resident of the Baw Baw Shire.

OUR PEOPLE



Neerim Health continues to be the largest employer across the Neerim District with 95% of our staff identified as living locally within the Baw Baw Shire.



We are continuing to move from a casualised to permanent part-time workforce to not only improve continuity of care needed for our patients and residents but to ensure protection of employment for staff. In particular we expect to increase our permanent part time workforce in our operating theatre by the end of 2019 with the engagement of new surgeons and improved planning for regular operating lists.

Over the past year, negotiations continued on a new Enterprise Bargaining Agreement (EBA) for Neerim Health. Application and approval of the EBA was confirmed by the Fair Work Commission in September 2019.

Neerim Health remains committed to ensuring that all Registered Nurses have appropriate, recognised skills and qualifications. Again, this year we provided our nursing staff with the opportunity to complete their Advanced Life Support competency training with support and access to qualified educators and all resources.

Staff Awards

Throughout this year, we recognised the following staff for their continued service.

5 years:	Dinah Moles and Louisa James
10 years:	Linda Agnew and Julie-Anne Gourley
15 years:	Michelle Dent and Jill Dowsett
20 years:	Sally Sewell

CLINICAL GOVERNANCE AND ACCREDITATION

In late 2018, we commenced a mid-cycle periodic review with the Australian Council on Healthcare Standards (ACHS) to ensure our compliance with standards across the hospital and operating theatre. As a result of significantly improved processes, policies and procedures and the publication of our inaugural Quality Account in 2018, we were successful in maintaining our ACHS Accreditation status.

Neerim Health maintained our Private Hospital Registration with the Victorian Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) in 2019. As part of the Registration process we were subject to a rigorous on-site review.

DHHS also conducts site visits to hospitals and health services across Victoria to ensure compliance with Drugs and Poisons Registration. Again, Neerim Health was successful in maintaining our compliance certification.

We were subject to on-site visits by both WorkSafe and corporate CFA this year as part of ensuring our Dangerous Goods (bulk gas storage and medical gases) are registered, managed and compliant with legislation and regulations. As a result of a major overhaul of emergency service planning, and improved and streamlined processes, both WorkSafe and CFA requirements have been met.

The Clinical Governance and Credentialing Board Sub-Committee has been pivotal in ensuring our compliance with credentialing of visiting surgeons, anaesthetists, medical and allied health staff in accordance with Safer Care Victoria guidelines. A Clinical Capability Framework has been developed that articulates our clinical capability and capacity for admission for our hospital beds, operating theatre and aged care facility.

Additionally, there are several other staff credentialed but not currently operating, including Dental, General Surgeons and Obstetrics & Gynaecology.

A major review of the organisational Risk Register was undertaken this year and incorporates relevant risk assessments and mitigation strategies and interfaces with our updated Business Continuity Plan. Further to this an organisation wide review was implemented to ensure updated and improved asset management processes.

Credentialed Medical Staff



OUR SERVICES

Theatre

Neerim Health continues to provide access to a range of surgical procedures including cataracts, dental, scopes, urology and general surgery. Negotiations continue with a range of surgeons with plans in place to increase current surgery and offer additional surgical procedures.

For several years, Neerim Health has performed public cataract surgery on behalf of Gippsland public health services including Latrobe Regional Hospital (LRH) and West Gippsland Healthcare Group (WGHG). During this financial year we made improvements in service delivery of sub-contracted cataract surgery particularly on behalf LRH where we achieved above target levels for the first time since arrangements have been in place.

This year we have also undertaken a major review and planning process to seek capital funds to upgrade the sterilising requirements to meet Australian Standards by 2021.

Earlier this year our Theatre staff provided significant assistance to WGHG over several weeks when their operating theatres were shut down. A range of public theatre cases were undertaken on behalf WGHG at Neerim Health including urology, general surgery and gynaecology. Subsequent to that, our staff also provided significant assistance with sterilising theatre equipment for WGHG whilst their new steriliser was installed.

Hospital

Neerim Health provides access to sub-acute medical and post-surgical hospital beds for private, fee for service and publicly contracted patients. Over many years the hospital beds at Neerim Health have been utilised in partnership with WGHG for slow stream rehabilitation and restorative care. Unfortunately, these arrangements ceased midway during the 2017/2018 financial year and this has led to a significant reduction in our hospital bed occupancy.

The hospital beds at Neerim Health are not publicly funded and therefore require ongoing partnership arrangements and marketing to maintain occupancy. With the cessation of the WGHG arrangements a reliance to admit patients only from the Neerim district is not considered sustainable. Negotiations have commenced to better utilise the hospital beds, including partnerships with public health services to improve withdrawal services and palliative care services. We are optimistic of finalising arrangements with a public health service later in 2019.

A strategic priority for Neerim Health has been to engage a wider range of General Practitioners across West Gippsland to admit to our hospital beds.

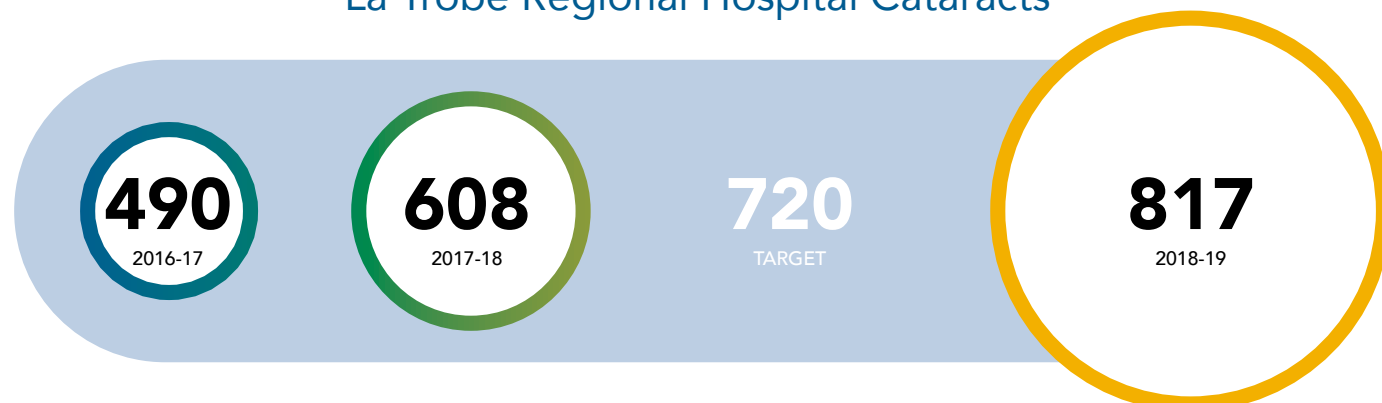
Aged Care

Tarago Views is our aged care facility that provides individually centred and high-level care and support to our aged residents.

Highlights this year have included the significant renovations to our communal indoor and outdoor living spaces and a revitalised diversional therapy program. New aged care standards have been introduced this year and a self-assessment of our services has been undertaken to ensure our compliance with these standards.

Neerim Health understands the community desire to maintain aged care beds in the local district and we have strategically committed to the ongoing provision of these important services. We continue to advocate to government for access to capital funds to continue refurbishment of bedrooms and bathrooms.

La Trobe Regional Hospital Cataracts



Short-term Restorative Care

Our Short-term restorative care (STRC) program provides time limited, multidisciplinary and flexible care that aims to reverse and/or slow 'functional decline' in older people. STRC provides coordinated care and services designed with, and approved by, each individual.

For the majority of clients, services can be provided in their own home but if circumstances require or clients require additional care and support, their STRC services can be facilitated through a stay at Tarago Views Aged Care.

Following the significant service delivery model review last year, the STRC program has consolidated service brokerage relationships with Baw Baw Shire Council, Latrobe City Council and new private Allied Health providers to ensure the appropriate assessments and services are available within the 8-week STRC service delivery period.

We are well advanced in a thorough policy and procedure review of our STRC program and engaging in aged care and home care standards self-assessment activities to ensure that our program remains in line with the new aged care standards.

To increase the program's community profile in the greater community during 2019, the STRC program has been featured in the Neerim Health advertising campaign published in the Warragul and Drouin Gazette, on our social media Facebook page, and profiled on the Neerim Health website (www.neerimhealth.org.au). The STRC program has also provided relevant resources and facilitated numerous presentations to a variety of local community groups, GP Clinics and various other stakeholders across the Baw Baw Shire and Latrobe Valley regions.

The STRC program significantly increased its service provision across the Baw Baw Shire and Latrobe Valley catchment by 63% compared to the previous financial year. Most importantly, 100% of our clients reported being actively involved in making decisions about their treatment, care and services. This is so important to their overall health outcomes.



Deborah's Story

Deborah was diagnosed with a condition known as Peripheral Neuropathy following an injury in 2008. Due to the severe pain she experienced in her feet, she was unable to continue working as a nurse.

Deborah reported that since 2015 her pain issues have been well managed and she's had periods of being pain free with only occasional pain "flare ups" which can significantly impact on her life. Deborah also reported that she has experienced increased difficulties over the last 5 years with physical activities like kneeling and squatting. More worrying though, has been her increased fall risk with increasing frequency of tripping over her feet up to 30 times per day, resulting in 3 falls in the last 12 months and numerous near misses.

Deborah discussed her concerns with her GP and together agreed that she would benefit from access to community based and allied health services to reduce falls risk and support at home. Deborah's GP arranged a referral to ACAS for an STRC program assessment. Deborah participated in the STRC program for the full 8 weeks and was able to access a variety of community based and Allied Health services to support her at home which were all overseen by the STRC Care Coordinator and funded by the Neerim Health STRC program.

Deborah's services included:

- Physiotherapy assessment and regularly planned treatments to improve strength, balance and mobility
- Occupational Therapy home assessment which resulted in recommendations for minor home modifications to improve safety and reduce risk of falls
- Minor home modification service provided through Baw Baw Shire Council included: installation of handrails in multiple bathroom/toilet areas and a fold down shower seat in the ensuite shower
- Access to domestic assistance service provided through Baw Baw Shire Council to assist with basic home cleaning activities
- Access to Podiatry services for assessment, initial treatment and ongoing footcare.

Deborah reported that she found the STRC program exceptional and allowed her to access extra services to help her maintain her safety and independence at home. She also noticed an improvement in her ability to perform physical tasks as well as a marked reduction in her back pain.

Business processes, services and improvements

This year we have undertaken a major overhaul of our finance and accounting systems and significantly improved the financial reporting processes. Our external auditor commended the improvements that have been undertaken. The improvements have been reflected in our Board finance reporting, processes and documentation ensuring the Board are fully informed on financial matters.

Verification of organisational assets has been undertaken and a revised Asset Register has been completed. A formalised and centralised preventative maintenance schedule has been developed to ensure that valuable and critical equipment and services are maintained in a timely manner.

A formal Schedule of Fees was developed and endorsed by the Board. This schedule ensures that patients, staff and other stakeholders are aware of the cost of services provided for uninsured patients.

Marketing our services this year has been a priority and included the development of program brochures, a refreshed website and the introduction of marketing via social media.

For a number of years, Neerim Health has been contracted by the Baw Baw Shire to provide Meals on Wheels services to the local community. Despite the majority of Meals on Wheels services being sub-contracted to a larger provider in other areas of West Gippsland, Baw Baw Shire has made their commitment to the Neerim district clear by renegotiating and renewing the contract with Neerim Health.

In the second half of the year we launched the upgrade of our new iCare software for aged care. Five staff members attended a one-day education session to understand and navigate the new system. Three staff were involved in the design of the program creating assessments and pathways to improve the evidence for data collection and Commonwealth funding. The upgraded system will provide a more effective and accurate platform to manage assessments, clinical notes, care planning and collection of relevant statistics for monitoring resident care.



LADIES GUILD REPORT

Office bearers for the year

President – Jenny Neil

Vice President – June Wachter

Treasurer - Joan Gleeson

Secretary – Margery Price

We currently have 11 members and would welcome more members from the community to assist in our fundraising efforts.

A Certificate of Appreciation was awarded to June Flowers this year for her 35 years of dedicated service to the Ladies Guild.

Thanks go to all who knit, sew, cook, donate to raffles and for the support of the community. Thanks go also to Jenny Agnew who donated Christmas decorations and fabrics, and thanks to the Community House Craft Group who make items for the Ladies Guild stalls. Thanks go to the Men's Shed who assist at the Fete and other times when needed.

We have raised funds by way of a Father's Day stall, Fete, Car Boot Sale stall, catering at Tall Timbers, a Christmas Carol raffle, a Rokeby Market stall, selling scones to the Neerim Show, Mother's Day stall and raffle, street stalls and raffles.

We raised just over \$6,100 for the financial year.

These funds raised went towards the purchase of equipment such as:

- Anaesthetic Syringe Driver
- Kitchen equipment
- Paediatric Emergency Medication Manual
- Christmas gift to the Nursing Home
- ALBAC Evacuation mats and mat holders
- Nursing Home chairs and Lounge chairs

Totalling - \$14,970.00 for the year.

Thank you to Kate Graham C.E.O., Rhonda Skews and to the office and nursing staff for their support.

Margery Price
Secretary

Neerim District Health Service Ladies Guild
PO Box 498, Neerim South 3831

TREASURER'S REPORT

The financial position of Neerim Health continues to improve this year. Both the Revenue from Operating Activities and Net Assets have increased further this year. The overall result for the year is a Surplus of \$54,157.

Reference to the financial report will provide the reader with an overview of the financial position. It includes:

- Statement of Profit & Loss and Comprehensive Income;
- Statement of Financial Position; and
- Statement of Cash Flows.

Highlights for the year include:

- Greater utilisation of the Theatre resulted in a 6.4% increase in related revenue
- An increase in clients for Short -term restorative care resulted in an additional \$92,053 income for the year
- Improved staffing efficiencies has seen a decrease of 4% in employment costs.

We have seen an improvement in operational results on the prior year and our net surplus again this year was achieved from the receipt of non-operating revenue including bequests, donations, fundraising and grants - as well as a final receipt of funds from a previous sale of land. As a board, we recognise the need to shift this reliance on non-operating revenue.

The Finance Sub-Committee is responsible for reviewing and monitoring the financial performance of Neerim Health. Management has worked closely with the external auditors to ensure a detailed audit was completed, with robust accrual accounting being a key component in the process.

I would like to thank Neerim Health staff, members of the Board and the Finance Sub-Committee for their participation in meetings and contributions throughout the year.

Signed
Mark Dunsmuir
Treasurer

Please note that the full financial report will be available on the website: www.neerimhealth.org.au

THANK YOU

Neerim Health continues to benefit from the generosity of so many members of the community, and those who have been associated with the organisation over many years.

This year we have been fortunate to receive donations and support from community events such as Gardivalia and the Neerim South Carols by Candlelight; and from organisations including the Neerim District Community Bank, Neerim District Bowling Club, the Rotary Club of Warragul and Women on Farms West Gippsland. We extend our greatest appreciation to all those who have and continue to contribute to the valued work of our organisation.

As a result of many days of hard work, extraordinary volunteering and very generous donations we were able to undertake a major upgrade to the front of the hospital including new fencing and gardens. Significant thanks must go to Helena, Maryanne and Frank Schellekens and Jenny and David Muir for their incredible contribution. Trafalgar Rose and Fuchsia

Farm donated a number of standard roses and the Baw Baw Shire Council donated a large amount of garden mulch. Thanks to Philip Hunter and David Muscat for donating and constructing the sensory garden and the Ryrie family for donating the raised garden beds. Our special thanks to our volunteer, George Bromley and to so many of our staff who also volunteered on their days off to complete this upgrade.

To all those individuals and organisations that we regularly partner with including Neerim South Medical Centre, Latrobe Regional Hospital, West Gippsland Healthcare Group, Baw Baw Shire Council, Latrobe City and our local emergency service personnel including the CFA, Ambulance Victoria and Victoria Police, we acknowledge your support over so many years.

Neerim Health is honoured to continue to be recognised for our important and valued contribution to this vibrant and healthy community.