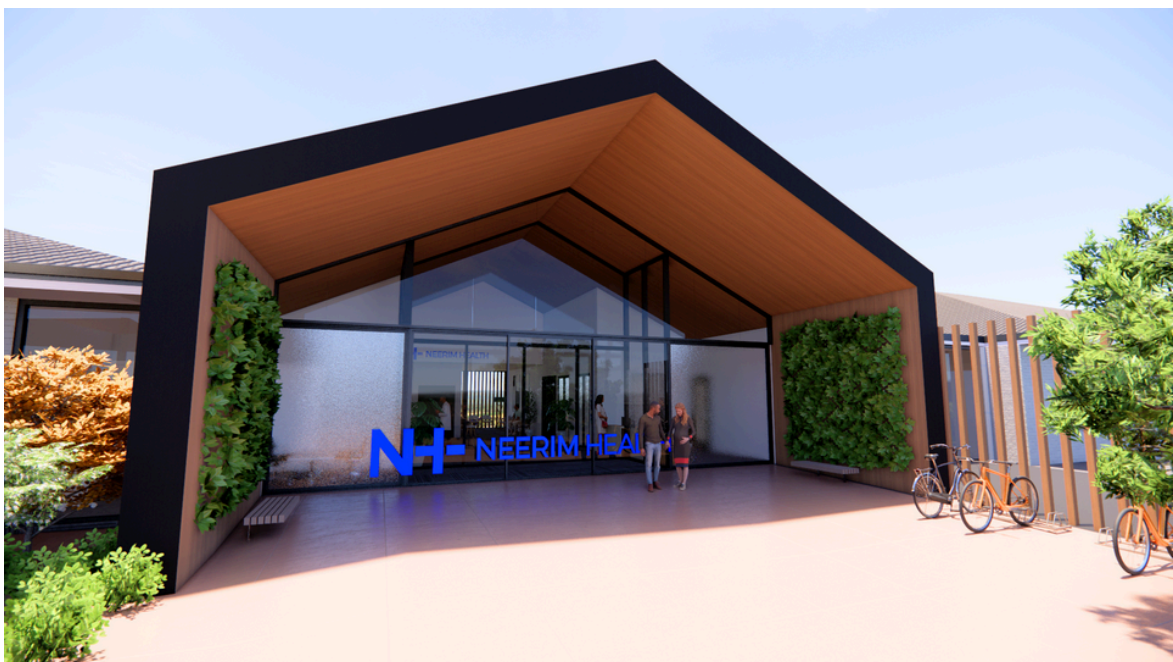




ANNUAL REPORT 2023-2024





Acknowledgement of Traditional Owners

We acknowledge the Traditional Owners of the land on which Neerim Health is located. We pay respects to their Elders, past and present.

We aim to provide a safe and welcoming health service for everyone.

Cover Image

Design impression of new entrance to Neerim Health.

Neerim Health

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Neerim South VIC 3831

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& Neerim Health

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NH About Us

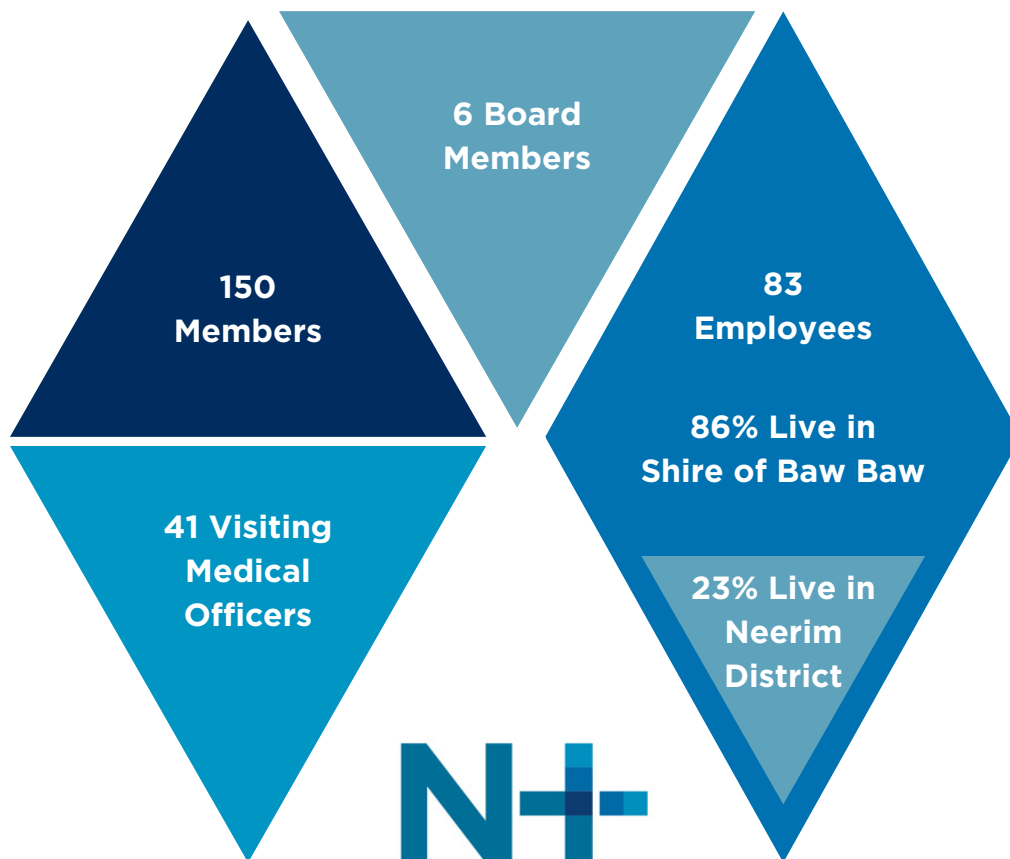
Neerim Health is a fully accredited, private healthcare provider, focused on providing quality care to residents of the Baw Baw Shire and Greater Gippsland Community. Neerim Health provides a range of hospital, theatre and healthcare services.

Neerim Health has a rich history going back to 1927, when the community united to raise funds to establish a local bush nursing hospital, which was completed in 1928. The hospital relocated to its current site in 1967, and was officially opened as the Neerim District Soldiers' Memorial Hospital. In 2024, our Association name was changed to Neerim Health Incorporated.

We are an accredited Aged Care services provider offering Palliative, Transition Care Program, Day Respite, Short Term Respite, Short-Term Restorative Care Program, and Home Care Packages.

We are also an accredited Hospital provider with one operating theatre and a low acute ward. Our hospital services are accessible to patients with private health insurance, Department of Veterans Affairs (DVA) cover or to patients who elect to self fund.

Public health patients are admitted by arrangement in partnership with Latrobe Regional Health and, at times, other public health services.



NH- Community Health Hub



Design impression of new entrance to the Neerim Community Health Hub.

Neerim Health was grateful to be approved for a \$5 million Priority Community Infrastructure Grant by The Honourable Catherine King, MP, in November 2023. The Agreement was signed in February 2024, and Council Planning Approval was received in August 2024.

The Grant underpins the redevelopment of our site, particularly, the old aged care section, into a Health Hub including a rehabilitation gym, group rooms for day respite, lifestyle activities, health awareness programs, etc, and a refurbished commercial kitchen. Renovations will also extend to allied health/specialist consulting rooms, a procedure room and telehealth facilities.

Our weeping birch and other significant trees will be protected. And, where possible, our beautiful established gardens and courtyard will be retained. We have a range of existing artwork and historical items which will feature in the new facility.

Demolition is planned to commence before the 2024-2025 summer break. All going well, works are expected to be completed by the end of 2025.

The renovations position Neerim Health to offer a wider range of Community Health services in the future.

NH- Board Members

Sean Dignum

Chair, Member of all Board Sub Committees. Board member since 2016.

Sean Dignum has expertise in media, issues management, sector reform & restructuring and as an advisor and strategist to business and government through complex and challenging periods and operational change.

Margaret Darton

Deputy Chair, Chair of Audit & Risk, Member of Finance, Strategy Review & Nominations Sub Committees. Board member since 2018.

Margaret Darton has extensive experience in governance and in the Victorian public sector, most recently in food policy and regulation.

David Wells

Treasurer, Chair of Finance Committee. Board member since 2023.

David Wells has extensive knowledge and experience as an Investment Advisor and Financial Planner. He has an interest in the aged care sector and has assisted a number of clients into assisted residential living, negotiating bonds and structuring their financial affairs for their greatest benefit.

Garry Wilkes

Member of Clinical Governance & Credentialing and Medical Advisory Committee. Board member since 2023.

Associate Professor Garry Wilkes is a specialist medical practitioner in emergency medicine with over 30 years experience in public and private Emergency Departments across Australia. Garry's interests include clinical redesign, communication skills, leadership development, conflict management and coaching.

Lyndal Turner Guy

Member of Audit & Risk Committee. Board member since 2023.

Lyndal Turner Guy is an accredited specialist property lawyer with a particular interest in the negotiation and drafting of clear and durable structuring arrangements for complex strategic plans. She has previously volunteered on the board of an organisation providing in-home care support in the aged sector for the CALD community.

Elisa Tumino

Board member since September 2024.

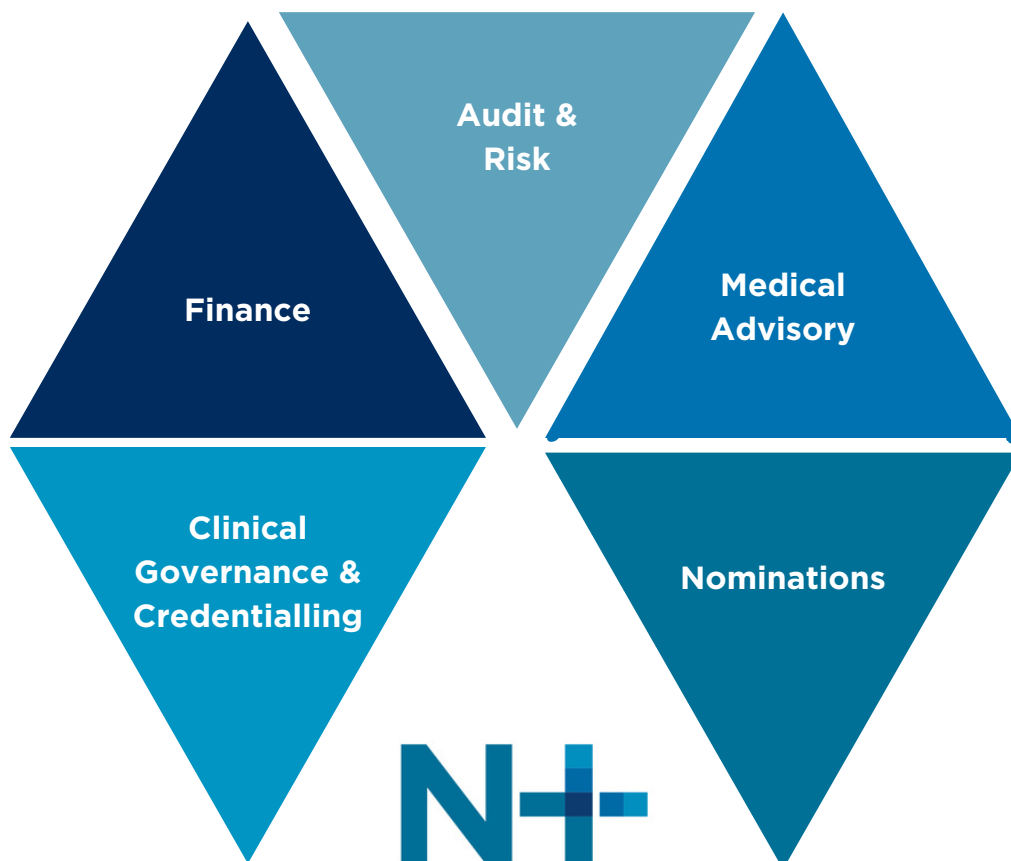
Elisa Tumino is an allied health professional with over 30 years experience in the public health sector. She has worked in metropolitan and rural acute health services and specialises in quality improvement and project management. She currently works for a Registered Training Organisation providing education for healthcare workers in leadership and management.

NH Board Committees

The Board of Neerim Health is supported by a number of committees including: Finance, Audit & Risk, Clinical Governance & Credentialing, Nominations and the Medical Advisory Committee (MAC).

Our **Medical Advisory Committee** is chaired by Dr Ian Graham, Chief Medical Officer LaTrobe Regional Health. This committee is well represented by our Visiting Medical Officers from general practice, pharmacy, anaesthetics and surgical specialties.

The committee members bring their extensive practical medical knowledge and experience to advise on clinical governance improvement strategies, ensuring that strategies are translated into effective organisational practice in relation to safe and high-quality healthcare. The Committee makes recommendations on actions to maintain the National Safety and Quality Health Services Standards (NSQHS) and Aged Care Standards. The MAC consider, review, and make recommendations to the Board and to the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) and Director of Clinical Services (DCS) in relation to clinical care.





NH Board Chair Report

It is now eight years since I became Board Chair and while Neerim Health has been acknowledged as achieving a lot in improving clinical standards and services, we still struggle to gain ongoing operational support from government and vital referrals from the health system.

Our ageing infrastructure and lack of the commercial scale for a hospital and aged care facility has meant for decades we have had to put in a massive effort just to maintain viability. In my time we have gained close to \$8 million in funding for capital works, but we need funding support for continuing day to day operations and maintenance. I have said before, regional hospital, health and residential aged care services have a long and challenging history of staying relevant to the changing needs of their community.

We are about to commence work on renovating for our new Community Health Hub which will make a great contribution to our community's well being but with current disruption in the construction industry, we have already been delayed several months and the demolition and rebuild works are expected to take up to 18 months. It will have further impact on our day-to-day operations, although we are committed to maintaining the theatre and surgery schedule during the process. The lack of flow-through of promised aged care funding and increasing costs that exceeded our subsidies, resulted in a significant deficit in the 2023-2024 financial year. As a community-owned health service, our funding is neither stable nor fully underpinned by government. The hospital is under State Government regulation and aged care is under the Federal Government. We still receive minimal funding from both.

The Neerim Health Board and management recognise that we need to build on our 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. We believe the new Health Hub will not only contribute to the community but also underpin our future viability.

We look forward to celebrating a century of community service in 2027 with the new Health Hub operating and offering a range of services to meet the growing needs of our community.

- Sean Dignum



NH- Treasurer Report

I am pleased to present the 2023/24 Treasurer's Report. I said last year that the year had been challenging – this year even more so. The Association recorded an operating deficit of \$911,952 for the year but, after abnormal items, there was a surplus of \$1,704,870 resulting from the revaluation of our land and buildings. This is not a great outcome overall but the Board is making headway in ensuring the lasting viability of Neerim Health. Net Assets are now up to \$3.55 million.

This year's external financial audit was straightforward with no material adjustments required. Improved systems, including bringing payroll in-house, contributed to this result.

Last year we made the sad but necessary decision to wind down residential aged-care but endeavoured to maintain some form of aged care services and keep most of our staff employed by providing "Home Care" packages. Home care service delivery has proven to be problematic because the Federal Government, while promising extra financial support for these packages, has over committed and there is a wait list extending out eighteen months. This is reflected in the accounts with current assets down by \$3 million and current liabilities only down \$2.35 million after the repayment of all Refundable Accommodation Deposits.

Our planned renovations to revitalise the hospital and incorporate a community health hub have been delayed and are still yet to start. This has compounded financial difficulties with promised support from the state-based health system to make extra use of our facilities still not forthcoming.

The deficit is largely due to the reduced inpatient flows, maintaining staffing levels whilst the promised aged care packages were delayed and lower than budgeted theatre usage. Had we continued providing Residential Aged Care the deficit could well have been higher by \$350,000 to \$450,000.

With state government health care funding under stress for the last year there have been fewer public patients and the cost of living also ensured that private patients for all our services were fewer, resulting in a cash flow from our operating activities of only \$450,686. We expect further challenges when renovations get underway but the operating theatre will remain fully operational. Given the level of demonstrated commitment and hard work from our staff I am confident that the future of Neerim Health will be much brighter as the transformation continues.

- David Wells



CEO Report

A handwritten signature in brown ink, reading 'Andrea Linden'.



In 2023-2024, two major events shaped our focus. The first, in November 2023, regarded the approval for the \$5 million Priority Community Infrastructure Grant. The Agreement was signed in February 2024, and Council Planning Approval for the renovation was received in August 2024.

In December 2023, the second major decision was made regarding our Aged Care services. Given our ageing infrastructure, declining Aged Care revenue, and the grant funding to enable the redevelopment of part of the site into the Neerim Health Community Health Hub, it was announced that we would transition our services from permanent residential services to home based and day respite services.

We acknowledged the distress the decision to cease offering permanent aged care caused to residents, their families, staff and the community. In providing over six months notice, we believed ample time was provided for residents and families to assess their options, view facilities and make an informed decision about their relocation. Neerim Health provided residents and families with support, including assistance from a Relocation Consultant. All permanent residents were relocated by the end of May 2024.

During this transition, we continued to offer Short Term Respite and commenced offering Home Care Packages. As mentioned at our Community Meeting in March 2024, we are committed to reintroducing permanent Residential Aged Care in the future. As such, in August 2024, we applied for a \$32 million grant under the Aged Care Capital Assistance Program (GO6989) to build a new 80-100 bed Aged Care Home directly behind our existing facility. We await the outcome of our application.

Over the year we have also focused on building a strong organisational foundation through improving: IT systems - cyber security and cloud services; payroll services - now inhouse; Work Health & Safety - revitalised committee; quality systems - reporting, auditing, policies and procedures; and re-engagement with the community, Association Members and the Ladies Guild. On top of which we: finalised a new four year employee Enterprise Agreement; overhauled our Emergency Management Procedures and Clinical Governance Framework, to name just a few of our other achievements. A massive team effort by all.

Special thanks to Lauren Mucic, Director of Clinical Services, for her enthusiasm, resilience and can do attitude. It is a privilege to work with you. Thanks also to our dedicated staff, Board, community, donors, volunteers and the Ladies Guild for their steadfast support.

- Andrea Linden



DCS Report

This past financial year we undertook test runs of our improved Emergency Management Plans which manage both internal and external risks such as bushfires and communication breakdowns. In February we experienced wild weather that put the organisation at risk and required us to implement this plan. This was coupled with a lengthy power outage that restricted communication and the use of our Operating Suite. The tail end of this weather event was the unexpected end of the life of our chiller unit that supplies cool air to our operating suite. With the installation of a new, improved chiller unit we were able to reflect on how well our emergency processes worked and what areas needed improvement. I am exceptionally proud of the team we have worked with this year who have handled any obstacles with professionalism and kindness and in trying circumstances continued to provide high quality care of our consumers.

Neerim Health made the difficult decision to transition from offering permanent and respite Aged Care to Respite care and Transitional Care Program (both forms of short term aged care). This enabled staff the chance to upskill in new areas of care and allowed Neerim Health to provide a service to the Community as we await the construction of our new Community Health Hub. During this time we were monitored closely by the Aged Care Quality & Safety Commission (ACQSC) to ensure that we maintained our Accreditation and provided appropriate care to all consumers. I am pleased to say that not only did we meet Accreditation in 2023, we continued to meet and exceed both the ACQSC standards as well as our own high expectations.

During this past financial year we not only transitioned our care from permanent residents to respite, we also spent this time transitioning many of the systems and processes that we use daily to monitor and evaluate the work we do. Our Quality, Learning and Development Manager, Amberley, and I coordinated the implementation of an improved clinical governance structure, which has enabled our departments to audit and collect data from each area of our organisation and report them to a central system. We can now track progress and identify areas for improvement collectively. Our teams report this key information to the appropriate committees and even external bodies to show a level of accountability and compliance. An added bonus of these processes is the ability for Neerim Health to benchmark against other like organisations.

Continued on next page.



DCS Report...

We encourage active participation. Each employee has a responsibility to contribute to improvement activities. Audit results, feedback and investigations are reviewed periodically through our audit system and tabled at various committee meetings to review their effectiveness and impact. Another benefit of a centralised system is the ability to show transparency and provide feedback from consumers and our community.

Feedback Examples

“Wanted to express my gratitude for the wonderful way staff looked after me. I've had quite a few procedures over the years but this far outshone any level of care I've been given. From reception and nursing to the lovely and skillful anaesthetist and surgeon, there was no doubting the teams' dedication, ability and concern. A special thank you to Tracy and Sharyn for adding a human touch to their professionalism and making me feel like much more than a number. This was not just from my own perspective but what I observed being shown to every patient both pre and post recovery.”

“I would just like to give you and all the staff a huge thank you, for taking care of my husband and giving me a fantastic break, the care and attention that you all gave him was fantastic so thank you again.”

“Thank you so much for the professional and well-humoured care I received today when I had my right eye cataract operation. I hope you all have a safe and happy Christmas as you continue your quietly efficient nursing care. Best wishes.”

“I was quite concerned about how mum would feel about coming into the respite situation and she has told me this morning that she is happy and feels well cared for. Please can you pass on my thanks to your staff.”

“I would like to THANK YOU so much. Everything has been beyond fantastic, you did an amazing job, I can't honestly thank you enough for all your time and effort, putting things into place to make things go smoothly. Even if things didn't go well, I still wouldn't be able to thank you enough, but you nailed EVERYTHING, and things couldn't have gone any better. So thank you so very much. I really appreciate all your time and effort. You are truly amazing so thank you so much.”

A thank you card left on behalf of Access Care Network Australia - Resident's Experience Surveys Team. “Dear Tarago Views staff, thank you for your hospitality! Great feedback and your residents are all very happy here! Keep up the great work! Warm regards, Camden on behalf of ACNA RES team.”

A lot has been achieved over the year, which is reflected in well deserved feedback for our caring and professional staff. Thank you!

- Lauren Mucic

NH+ Our Staff

Executive

Chief Executive Officer

Andrea Linden

Director of Clinical Services

Lauren Mucic

Senior Leadership

Perioperative Nurse Manager

Lisa Ashmore

Acute, Aged Care & Community Nurse Manager

Kelly McMillan

Quality, Learning & Development Manager

Amberley Ashmore

EA & Human Resources Manager

Alexandra Blackwood

Surgery Access & Support Services Manager

Karlee Bennell

Chief Health Information Manager

Diane Draper

Maintenance Officer

Robert Hibbs

NH+ Our Staff

Service Awards

At Neerim Health, we recognise our staff are our greatest asset. We are grateful to each one of them for their commitment and dedication to providing quality care to our consumers and patients. Each year we recognise staff who have reached a milestone of years of service to Neerim Health. This year we acknowledge the service of the following staff and thank them for their valued contribution:



Sally Sewell

25 Years

Jillian Dowsett

20 Years

Julie-Anne Gourley

15 Years

Dinah Moles

10 Years

**Linda Agnew, Lisa Ashmore,
Barbara Milner, Dianne Telford**

5 Years

NH- Our Staff...

Education

Learning and development is important for staff to have opportunities and access to relevant education and training programs to maintain and enhance their skill set. Staff are encouraged to pursue education and research relevant to their discipline. Where possible, onsite education sessions are offered as well as impromptu education opportunities, upskilling opportunities for clinical staff and onsite practical training in partnership with Tafe Victoria.

2023-2024 saw our role of education take on a new approach. Amberley Ashmore has been successful in establishing a new role as Quality, Learning and Development (QLD) Manager which solidified the relationship between quality improvements and education. Working closely with our Managers and DCS, there is monitoring and reporting by the leadership team that ensures the provision of high quality care. Benchmarking and peer comparison enable the organisation to review where it is positioned in relation to peer health services. This provides the opportunity for development helping us strive for excellence in care.

With the changes in management structure came the opportunity for a fresh approach to learning and development across the organisation. Amberley worked with the managers across all departments to review the list of mandatory competencies required for our staff to ensure we met the needs of our people, and that ongoing training provided relevant information to the teams. This enables our staff to continue delivering quality healthcare to all consumer groups from theatre to acute stays and aged care clientele.

The significant changes for 2023-2024 were:

- Clinical managers maintaining recency of practice by completing the same competencies as the clinical staff.
- Including all Neerim Health staff in the ongoing training in CPR and Basic Life Support.
- Engaging external facilitators for the delivery of manual handling, and fire training, and planning this training to be run in conjunction with the QLD Manager attending to practical assessments.
- This format saw the commencement of an annual calendar with quarterly mandatory training days run throughout the year, enabling us to capture the bulk of staff in a group session where they learn together in a relaxed and supportive environment. This review included moving the reset period for mandatory training to the calendar year, aligning us with comparative employers in the region.
- Completion rates for mandatory training since making these changes have increased from an average 55% to seeing over 80% of our staff base completing their CPR training before the mid-year mark (June 30th) and more than 70% having attended the Fire Warden and extinguisher training sessions.

Continued on next page.

NH- Our Staff...

Education

When selecting external providers to deliver training to our teams the focus was on re-establishing local partnerships, and engaging providers who understood the unique workforce here at Neerim Health.

- We worked with local CFA volunteer, and certified trainer Alan Richardson from AJR Emergency Consulting Services to deliver Fire Warden and Extinguisher Training.
- Linda Butt, a physiotherapist who has a long history of partnering with local Aged Care facilities to provide resident assessment, care plans and delivering manual handling training to staff across West Gippsland over many years.
- Mick Cannata from Shadow Security in Wonthaggi has attended onsite to empower our staff in de-escalation techniques and how to manage themselves in threatening situations.
- Parasol engaged to run Advanced Life Support (ALS) in the last half of 2024, for the bulk of Registered Nurses, with commitment to assist those wishing to maintain their ALS 2.

Neerim Health continues to partner with Federation University offering students placement in our operating theatre. The placements provide students practical experience under the supervision of experienced practitioners, allowing the students to develop self-confidence while increasing their competence as nurses.



Manual Handling Training

Staff learning to use manual handling equipment for safe patient transfer.

NH+ Our Staff...

Academy of Healthcare

In November 2023, six staff completed the dual Diploma of Leadership and Management and Competitive Systems and Practices with the Academy of Healthcare.

Karlee, Harpreet, Corrina, Alexandra, Amberley and Michael completed their qualifications after 18 months of study. The students showed great tenacity to stick with the course over this time period as it was often difficult to balance the clinical workload, Covid-19 challenges, and have the time to study or work on projects and assignments.

This group, together with the unwavering assistance of our educator, Elisa Tumino, supported each other to achieve the diplomas and celebrated with a graduation ceremony and presentation of projects at the Bendigo Bank meeting room in November 2023. With Lauren Mucic DCS, Andrea Linden CEO and board member Lyndal Turner Guy in attendance to cheer them on and offer congratulations.



NH- Our Staff...

Workplace Health & Safety

With a renewed management team came renewed passion for workplace health & safety and wellbeing. With the support of our new CEO, Andrea Linden, the Workplace Health & Safety (WH&S) committee started to run monthly meetings and initiate projects to bring awareness and cultivate a passion for staff to participate in WH&S matters. With this ongoing commitment we have seen our monthly meetings go from not making quorum, to having six elected Health & Safety representatives and deputies across three designated work groups.

We now have strong attendance each month representing the groups and contributions from all in attendance to address WH&S issues/opportunities, and facilitate special events and acknowledgement days throughout the year such as International Women's Day, RU Okay Day, Aged Care Employee Day, International Nurses Day, and Perioperative Nurses Week.

With more celebrations to come throughout the year and initiatives championed by members of the WH&S committee we now have a calendar of events, voted on by Neerim Health staff, planned to involve the whole Neerim Health team in wellness initiatives.



International Women's Day
Lauren, Jillian & Alexandra



International Nurses' Day
Melinda & Janick

NH+ Our Services

Theatre	Hospital	Aged Care
Dental Surgery Endoscopy Minor General Surgery Ophthalmology Oral Faciomaxillary	General Medicine Palliative Care Transitional Care Program	Home Care Respite Care Short Term Restorative Care

Theatre

In Australia over 250,000 people undergo cataract surgery every year. Approximately 70% of these procedures are performed in Private hospitals.* Neerim Health is proud of our one theatre facility performing nearly 2,000 ophthalmology procedures in 2023-2024. We are pleased to partner with Latrobe Regional Health in performing all their public cataract surgeries. Our total procedures by type for the year are outlined below.

Procedure Type	# Patients
Ophthalmology	1,921
Endoscopy	470
Dental	119
Total 23/24	2,510

*<https://www.safetyandquality.gov.au/about-us/latest-news/media-releases/new-standard-improve-care-australians-cataract>

NH- Hospital

Our Acute Hospital bed occupancy in 2023-2024 declined to 6% from 25% in 2022-2023. Hospital beds are utilised for general medicine, palliative care, and Transitional Care Program clients. Given our distance to emergency services, and no onsite overnight medical doctors, we are only able to accept low acuity care needs patients, which limits our admission capabilities.

Neerim Health is committed to provided excellence in theatre and hospital patient services, and actively seeks feedback to monitor how we are going.

During the financial year we received 181 responses to our patient satisfaction surveys.

Positive feedback examples included:

“Nurses were excellent, very friendly, caring and accommodating. Would recommend Neerim Health over the two other hospitals I have been to. Wait times were excellent. I was in and out. Great work.”

“My experience on two occasions for cataract surgery was first rate!”

“Best day procedure I have ever had! No waiting. Staff were fantastic! Neerim Health is a great hospital. Thank you.”

“Nursing staff were the best I have come across in years.”

“Thank you, care was excellent eyesight now perfect.”

Thanks also to those that made suggestions for improvements. In response to our survey question ‘Hospital was easy to find, and the signage adequate?’ a respondent commented that we did not have a street number. Seems obvious to most of us, but the respondent was indeed correct. A simple fix. Street numbers have since been installed on our main signs and at our entrance. Very practical feedback - thank you!



NH- Aged Care

Since its formation, Neerim Health has a long and proud history of providing health care services to the local district. During the 1980-90s, residential aged care was introduced, utilising our old hospital wards. A further ten beds were added in 2002. As at December 2023, the aged care facility was licensed for 25 beds housed in six ensuite rooms, and the balance in single and shared rooms with communal bathrooms. Much of the aged care facility is old and would require a significant investment to address infrastructure issues and meet the National Aged Care Design Principles and Guidelines. Due to the ageing infrastructure, it has been, and continues to be, difficult to comply with Standard 5 - Organisation's Service Environment of the Aged Care Quality & Safety Commission (ACQSC).

Maintaining residential aged care has been a challenge for Neerim Health for many years. In the previous financial year (2022-2023), changes to aged care funding and substantially higher operating costs exceeded our subsidies, resulted in a significant financial deficit. As a community-owned health service, our funding is neither stable nor fully underpinned by government. It was simply no longer viable to provide residential aged care in our current facility. To continue to do so would threaten the entire organisation's future.

In early December 2023, we announced our intention to transition our aged care residential services to home based and day respite services to enable us to build the Neerim Health Community Health Hub and adding further healthcare services - thereby retaining our dedicated workforce and expanding our services to the wider community.

The decision to transition away from permanent residential aged care was not made lightly, and we acknowledged the distress caused by the announcement. We made a commitment to maintaining our service levels to our existing aged care residents and respite admissions until 30 June 2024. In providing over six months notice, we believed this ample time for residents and families to assess their options, view facilities and make an informed decision about their relocation. Residents and families were supported in this transition with assistance from Older Persons Advocacy Network (OPAN); a Neerim Health Relocation Consultant; and help with relocation.

Continued on next page.



NH Aged Care...

Our last permanent residents successfully relocated to new facilities in late May 2024. A number of our team have visited residents in their new homes, and received positive feedback that the residents are settling in well. We wish all our former residents and their families the very best.

During our transition, we had been looking after a number of Short Term Respite Residents. Finding Respite Care in the region can be a challenge. We have successfully assisted the Aged Care Assessment Services (ACAS) team with emergency respite care places, and others who are waiting for permanent placements at their preferred Aged Care home.

The decision was made in June 2024 to continue using our existing modern Banksia Wing (five ensuite rooms) for Respite Care in conjunction with Home Care Packages (HCPs) and Day Respite Services.

Advertising of our expanded services in local newspapers, a letterbox drop and promotion by the Ladies Guild resulted in a number of HCP enquiries. Unfortunately, most enquirers had not yet received funding for their packages, with further delays of up to twelve to eighteen months before funding becomes available.

With no HCP clients and low numbers of Short Term Respite Residents, we have been unable to achieve our budgeted revenue required to support our Aged Care services, resulting in continued financial losses. In addition, on 18th September 2024, the Department of Health & Aged Care announced the 24/7 RN Supplement Rate applicable from 1st October 2024 would reduce, and only further reduce as resident numbers increased. Despite every effort being made, as at 6th November 2024, Neerim Health suspended all Aged Care and Overnight Hospital services.



NH Aged Care Capital Grant



SHIRLEY ROAD PERSPECTIVE (NORTH)

Whilst transitioning away from Permanent Residential Aged Care, Neerim Health is committed to reintroducing the service when possible. It is envisaged a new facility would be built directly behind our existing facility, and over part of the neighbouring vacant block in Shirley Road.

A new Aged Care Capital Assistance Program Grant Opportunity (GO6593) was announced last December 2023, with Round 1 closing in January 2024. In order to do our due diligence and ensure a robust application was submitted, we decided to wait for Round 2 to apply. In January 2024, Neerim Health's building designer, Board Chair and CEO met with the local Baw Baw Shire Council to discuss the project and seek their initial feedback on planning considerations, building set-backs etc and obtain in principal support.

The project is still subject to council planning approval and building approvals, which may take up to six months or more to obtain.

At a Community Meeting in March 2024, we outlined our plans to apply for the Capital Assistance grant, whereby we could reintroduce permanent Aged Care services. This was strongly supported by the Community.

The new Aged Care Capital Assistance Program was announced on 11 June 2024 and we applied in August 2024 for a \$32 million grant to build a new 80-100 bed Aged Care Home directly behind our existing facility.

Continued on next page.

NH Aged Care Capital Grant

It is envisaged the facility will be multi-story, with parking underneath, and tucked into the hillside. The scope of works includes:

- Dedicated Memory Support/Dementia Care Units
- Ensuite rooms, living, dining and outdoor areas compliant with the National Aged Care Design Principles and Guidelines.
- Courtyard connecting the new and existing facilities with BBQ, and Winter and Rehabilitation Gardens.
- Enclosed walkway between the new and existing facility linking Aged Care to the Community Health Hub.
- Hydro-Pool

We believe we have a strong application. Our thanks to Regional Development Australia (Gippsland), Baw Baw Shire Council, Neerim District Progress Association and the Committee for Gippsland for letters of support for the project. We await the outcome of our application.



NH Ladies Guild

2023-2024 Annual Report

At the AGM of the Ladies Guild on the 2nd October 2023 the committee leadership was elected as follows:

President	Marilyn Lewis
Vice President	Jenny Neil
Secretary	Kathy Irvine
Assistant Secretary	Margery Price
Treasurer	Jacky Bailey (temporary role accepted) Narelle Mann from February 2024.

Other members of the Ladies Guild for this year were: Joan Gleeson, Cheryl McKay, Narelle Mann, Di Whitford, Laurelei Vincent.

The year since our AGM in October 2023 has not been without challenges. This has required much discussion and a review of the role of the Ladies Guild in supporting Neerim Health.

It was decided at our meeting on 4th March 2024 to postpone further fundraising efforts until the future direction of Neerim Health was clearer.

The Guild focus on fund raising for 2023-2024 included:

- The Christmas cake raffle. Again grateful thanks to Shirley Le Page for providing the Christmas cake. Tickets were sold by Ladies Guild members and also to staff/public attending Neerim Health.
- A Christmas street stall and raffle was held on 25th November which raised \$ 917.
- The Ladies Guild attended the last of the Winter Markets held in the Algie Hall and used this opportunity to also display new brochures from Neerim Health explaining the new direction of Aged Care Support in the Community. As usual the baked goods provided by members proved popular and the interaction with the Community was mainly a positive one.
- Donations from members of the public, CWA and the local garden enthusiasts who sold plants to the value of \$930.

Every year at Christmas, the Ladies Guild donate \$500 to Tarago Views Aged Care as added support for the residents.

In 2024 this donation was used to embroider personal names on quilts for each permanent resident transferring to a new facility due to the cessation of permanent residential aged care at Tarago Views Aged Care.

Continued on next page...

NH Ladies Guild Report...

We also express our gratitude to the local community and the wider Neerim District for their ongoing support of any fund raising efforts.

During the recent damaging storms in early September, many in the Neerim District Community were left for days without power and phone connections. It was a wonderful incentive of Neerim Health to organise access to showers and phone charging on site. Emergency respite was also available for the most vulnerable in our Community. It was pleasing to see how the Neerim Health can play an important and valuable role to support the community during times of stress and uncertainty.

The committee has appreciated the efforts made by Neerim Health leadership team to attend our meetings and give us updates on the health service. The committee also recognise the support of the Opportunity Shop in allowing us access to the Community meeting room over this year. We are now meeting back at Neerim Health which gives us a higher visibility for staff and makes it easier for the leadership team to attend.

Kathy Irvine
Ladies Guild Secretary



Thank
you!

Examples of the personalised quilts given to departing Tarago Views Permanent Residents. Made possible by the fund raising efforts of the Ladies Guild.

NH- Donations

We are grateful to our community for their generosity in supporting the work of Neerim Health through donations. We would particularly like to acknowledge the outstanding ongoing support of the Neerim Health Ladies Guild who so faithfully continue to fundraise for the betterment of those in our care.

We are grateful to have received a \$50,000 bequest from the estates of John and Peter Carnegie, which enabled us to replace our manually operated wooden painted doors into our theatre with touch-less, lightweight, hygienic, positive pressure maintained, hermetic polymer doors with stainless steel hardware.

For the financial year 2023-2024 we would like to thank the following groups and people for their support:

Up to \$300

S Blackwood
P & R Bright
J & J Caughey
J Cowden
S Dignum
R Evans
J Frowd
J Gatford
M Hughes
T Le Page
J Tucker
L Turner Guy
P Whyte

\$301 - \$500

Ladies Guild Christmas Donation
A Linden
J & E Miller
R Oostergetel

\$501 - \$1,000

P & M Darton
J Jedynak

Several anonymous donations were also received, for which we are grateful.

Special Thanks

\$50,000 John & Peter Carnegie Bequest

New Main Theatre Doors





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