



Our Year In Review
Annual Report
2019-2020

With you for life

Bellarine Community Health is committed to investing in vital health initiatives and allied health services that assist people to manage their health needs



Contents

| | |
|---|-----------|
| About Bellarine Community Health | 4 |
| Our Vision | 5 |
| Board Chair Message | 6 |
| CEO Message | 8 |
| Services | 10 |
| Community | 16 |
| People & Culture | 18 |
| Quality & Safety | 20 |
| Health Promotion | 23 |
| Community Engagement | 24 |
| Corporate Services | 26 |

About Us

Bellarine Community Health (BCH) is the largest healthcare provider on the Bellarine Peninsula with a physical presence in five locations.

The BCH vision is to be the leader in primary health and secondary care through primary prevention, Dental, Nursing and General Practice.

We focus on providing comprehensive and professional health and support services for all the diverse communities on the Bellarine. Our primary care services, community support programs and wellbeing activities support clients to stay well and out of hospital.

BCH is a local, trusted and professional health service that delivers comprehensive community care.

Mission

Bellarine Community Health delivers a broad scope of health services and wellbeing programs for all people in our diverse communities.

Our values

Community First

A positive and inclusive environment

Excellence

Leadership

Integrity





Message from the Board Chair

Fay Agterhuis



An Annual Report is an opportunity to celebrate and reflect on achievements made, relationships forged and most importantly, sharing those achievements with our members and stakeholders.

Our 2019-2020 Annual Report is a snapshot of a year that none of us could have predicted, planned for or even imagined. Without a doubt it has been a year of learning for everyone in all our communities.

Our audacious agenda and our goal to be the best provider of health services to our communities now and into the future remains firm. Our aim to be the best in the country and our work during this period of Covid disruption has demonstrated that we have the team with the drive, passion and skills to make that goal a reality in the future. This year, our focus has been community centric and delivering the highest quality services to our communities front and centre of everything we did in the name of BCH.

In our new Covid world the importance of our community health services and programs cannot be underestimated. Our staff proved themselves to be agile, nimble and responsive. They worked from home, used Telehealth and contact visits to provide high quality care for clients, the community, their team and each other. Our programs changed to meet community needs and everyone had a part to play in the delivery from Volunteers through to staff, CEO and the Board.

Throughout the year we continued to work on future planning and saw the client management system commissioned, capital works funding secured for the Portarlington redevelopment and the Ocean Grove Health and Wellbeing Hub including a headspace site.

We advocated for BCH at every opportunity.

BCH is a people organisation and without our people we are nothing. Volunteers, members, staff, executive team, CEO and the Board all have a part to play. The Community Advisory Group (CAG) and Portarlington Ladies Auxiliary continue to be the most active conduits between BCH and our communities. They are not only information gatherers and idea seekers, but fundraisers and friendraisers too.

Following recommendations arising from the Conscious Governance Review (2019) and the desire to build a skill-based board, we advertised broadly for nominations to fill Board vacancies and facilitated workshops for potential Directors. The outcome was a much larger number of nominees and a closely contested election.

In November we welcomed newly elected Directors Mr Garry Ellis, Dr Virginia Dickson-Swift and Dr Robert James at the AGM and acknowledged that we were well on the way to building the Board that would take BCH forward to its the next stage of development. During the year we also farewelled Director Dr Paul Hemming.



It has been a year like no other and I thank my fellow Board Directors, Shane and the entire BCH team for their commitment to the work, because no matter what the challenges, the focus throughout the organisation has been on communication, care and support.

We are all truly in this together.



Message from the CEO

Shane Dawson



The year of 2020 will be one to remember - etched in history with the devastating impacts of COVID-19.

BCH began the 2019-2020 financial year with a positive outlook. The increased focus on strengthening and consolidating a range of services and the securing of capital funds for both the Portarlington redevelopment and the Ocean Grove Health and Wellbeing Hub, incorporating a headspace youth mental health satellite, were a wonderful kickstart to the year.

In 2018-2019 BCH made significant investment in IT systems including moving to the cloud and replacing ageing and failing hardware and servers.

In the context of COVID-19 this infrastructure stood the organisation in good stead and provided the capacity for BCH to immediately deploy staff to work from home and implement a range of online services including Telehealth. BCH has been able to provide a safe working environment to staff and continue to service the community, albeit in a reduced capacity in the second half of the financial year.

The General Practice with allied health services in Portarlington provided critical points of extended health care to the community through COVID-19 testing, Telehealth, urgent care and allied health services.

The challenges for BCH remain, as we see the exponential population growth on the Bellarine Peninsula and growing demand for high quality and responsive health care.

This increased demand has not been met with the required funding and the challenge remains to secure the best quality health care with the scarce health funding envelope that remains for community health.

BCH will continue to provide quality health care as close as possible to where people live and to keep the community well and out of hospital.

“The right care, at the right place, at the right time”.

I would like to thank the Board of Directors, Executive team, staff, volunteers, clients and our community for their hard work and ongoing support during a difficult year.

BCCH Board of Directors



Fay Agterhuis - Chair
B.Ed, Dip Ed, GradDip Special Ed



Tim Walsh - Deputy Chair



Rod Slattery - Treasurer



Jean Paul



Kristina Dimasi
BSc, LLB



Dr Robert James
*M.B; B.S (Medicine), Dip.Obs.
RACOG*



Dr Virginia Dickson-Swift
*PhD, BPubH, BHS (Hons),
GradCertHE*



Garry Ellis
*B.Com, MBA, GradCert Human
Resource Management GAICD*

Retired Board Directors 2019 – 2020 - Dr Paul Hemming

Our People

In a year of challenges, BCH staff and volunteers showed great strength and resilience. The sudden requirement to adjust service delivery models to deliver services consistent with COVID-19 restrictions saw staff adapt quickly, finding new ways to support clients and the broader community. Many staff moved to a working from home environment or were redeployed into other roles.

Many volunteers were also redeployed into key roles as new needs and processes were identified in response to COVID-19 such as drivers for the community transport program or temperature testers on the front line at BCH sites.

Despite the challenges, it was also a year of innovation. Staff embraced new technology including an organisation wide upgrade of ageing computers and operating systems and a move to Microsoft Teams, an online hub allowing meetings, video conferencing, phone calls, chat and collaborative teamwork.

Highlights include the development of an innovative Volunteer App to accurately track volunteer hours. The idea for the App followed an extensive mapping exercise of volunteer activities to create a model where volunteers can engage in all different areas of the organisation, not just individual programs.

A Volunteer Support Group now also guides BCH with planning and development of the volunteer program.

Our celebrations throughout the year recognised the years of service by many staff and volunteers.

More than 40% of staff have worked with BCH for five years or more, with many celebrating between 20 and 30 years with the organisation. Those milestones are now recognised with newly introduced service medallions.

To further support our staff and volunteers, BCH appointed a Manager of People & Culture during 2019. In a year dominated by COVID-19, this role has proved critical in providing and guiding support for the health and wellbeing of staff.

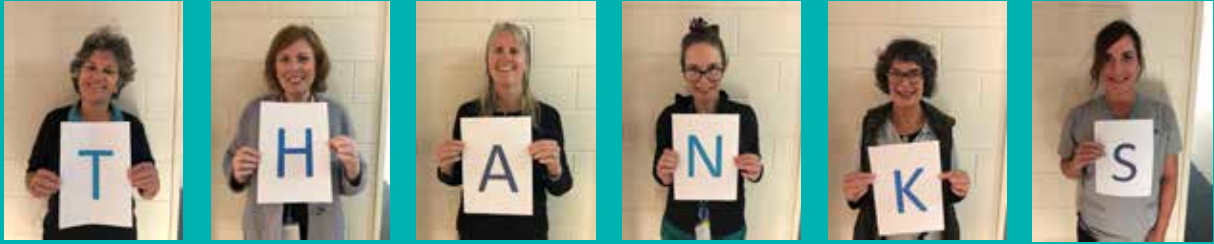
180
Staff




150
Volunteers

600
Volunteer
Hours
per month





Our COVID-19 Response

The second half of the financial year saw BCH, as was the rest of the community, dealing with the unprecedented circumstances of COVID-19.

BCH was forced to frequently adjust to changing health advice and COVID-19 restrictions which resulted in the closure of some sites, scaling back some services to provide only emergency or urgent care and ceasing group activities for extended periods of time which significantly impacted clients, staff, volunteers and the community, as well as having a financial impact on the organisation. BCH ensured there was regular communication to clients in regards to service impacts and new community supports available.

Rigorous COVID-19 safe plans were developed and adapted in line with evolving restrictions, keeping health and safety at the forefront of operations.

Many services successfully moved to the Telehealth environment while the BCH Social Support team found

innovative ways to maintain continuity and contact with our many vulnerable clients during difficult periods of isolation, including phone calls, activity packs and one on one visits.

At the forefront of our face to face service provision throughout the pandemic were our critical Nursing, Palliative Care, Dental, General Practice, Home Care Package services and Meals on Wheels service.

BCH also completed over 500 asymptomatic tests targeted at retailers and trades people across the Bellarine as part of Government COVID-19 testing blitz.

BCH established a COVID-19 Community Transport program to support isolated or vulnerable people to access medical appointments or critical food shopping.

Recent technology upgrades allowed many staff to transition from the office to working from home. This presented challenges and opportunities as staff adapted to the changed way of working.

COVID-19 presents ongoing challenges for the entire community and BCH will continue to adapt as required.



Primary Care Services

BCH provides responsive and timely services and programs for the changing needs of our communities. We provide quality services supported by great customer service in a clinical and quality framework.

Primary Care Services

General Practice

The BCH General Practice operates from Portarlinton, with our GPs and two Practice Nurses delivering a full range of general practice services including general check-ups, care planning and coordination for chronic disease management, mental health planning, women's health, men's health, vaccinations, minor surgery and skin checks.

Our team of GPs and Nurses ensure clients have access to multidisciplinary care, linking them to our Allied Health and Social Support Services, as well as external services when needed.

Highlights for 2019-2020 include:

- New Practice Nurse
- Delivering GP services to aged care facilities
- Commencing online bookings
- Reviewing data management processes to improve recall and reminder systems

COVID-19 presented huge challenges to ensure client and staff safety, but also an opportunity to establish Telehealth services and support clients to access remote specialist appointments.

The clinic adapted quickly to function in a COVID-19 safe environment including drive through flu vaccination clinics and COVID-19 testing.





Primary Care Services

Dental

In 2019, BCH opened the doors of its Private Dental Clinic expanding access to oral health care to the broader community.

The expansion of dental services to private clients grew steadily during the financial year, but like all services was impacted by COVID-19 restrictions. The Community Dental Clinic (CDC) provides eligible community members access to public general and emergency dental care. More than 55% of CDC patients were classified as priority access.

Prior to school shutdowns due to COVID-19, the Dental team visited eight schools and preschools and screened 850 students as part of the Dental Outreach Program.

The impact of the Coronavirus Pandemic on BCH dental services was significant. The Dental team continued to operate and adapted rapidly to changing restriction levels in line with recommendations from Dental Health Services Victoria and the Australian Dental Association Victoria Branch Inc.

At times services were limited to emergency only treatments. The Dental team successfully scaled services up and down depending on restriction levels and established a COVID-19 safe, modified working environment. In difficult circumstances, the team maintained the highest professional standards, with patients and staff safety their highest priority.

| | Public Dental Clinic | Private Dental Clinic |
|---------------------|----------------------|-----------------------|
| Individuals Treated | 3,167 | 267 |
| Courses of Care | 3,537 | 286 |
| Public Appointments | 4,545 | 352 |

Primary Care Services

Autism Dental Program

The innovative BCH Autism Dental Pilot Project was completed during the financial year. The project, funded through the Department of Health and Human Services, aimed to improve access to dental services and oral health outcomes for people with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD).

This pilot, the first of its kind in Victoria, identified a gap in dental services for people with ASD.

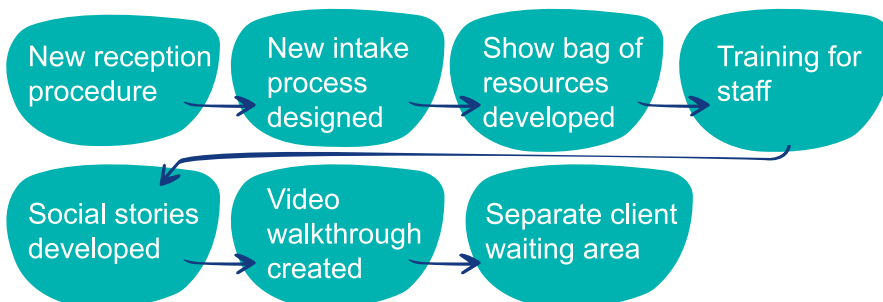
A new service delivery pathway was developed along with sensory resources and individualised care plans for participants. The new practices have now been embedded in BCH dental services to ensure that a patient with ASD is now identified at the first point of contact and receives resources, information and care to support their identified individual needs.

The project achieved outstanding results with 80% of participants reporting a more positive experience compared with their past dental treatments. One patient travelled four hours each way to access the service.

Patients said their sensory and communication needs were supported, and staff reported that training enhanced their knowledge and confidence to support the management of clients with ASD.

Eight-year-old Annalise Mackenzie participated in the pilot and mum Rachel said the outcome was amazing.

“They explained every step of the way, so Annalise didn’t get any nasty sounds or sensations she wasn’t ready for, and they were so patient and flexible with her.” Annalise found it easier to go the dentist with her older brother, so they even put Angus in the chair first and demonstrated on him first what they were going to do and that really put her at ease.”



Primary Care Services

Nursing

Demand for services from our highly regarded Community Nursing team continues to grow.

There was a 7% growth in client numbers and a 21% increase in service delivery hours for the financial year.

The team provided thousands of hours of direct nursing care to the community along with thousands more of indirect care.

The BCH nursing team was at the forefront of our COVID-19 response. They adapted quickly and professionally in a constantly changing environment, ensuring client safety was always paramount.

Changing COVID-19 restrictions brought various challenges at different times including a record 18 referrals for nursing services in one day as a result of changes to elective surgery restrictions in hospitals.

The COVID-19 restrictions resulted in greater client screening and Personal Protection Equipment protocols along with human resource management to ensure critical nursing services could be maintained.

Primary Care Services

Palliative Care

A highlight of the year was the outstanding work and outcomes of the BCH Palliative Care team.

Not only was the team at the forefront of supporting our community through the unprecedented circumstances brought about by COVID-19, they have also managed considerable growth in demand for their services.

The figures represent a 45% increase in referrals and an 89% increase in the number of face to face services provided.

In 2019 our Palliative Care team supported more than 80% of their clients to die in their preferred place with almost half those clients choosing to die at home. An incredible achievement.

| Activity | 2017/18 | 2018/19 | 2019/20 |
|------------------------------|---------|---------|---------|
| Total Referrals | 116 | 133 | 168 |
| Deaths | 89 | 89 | 124 |
| Face to Face Services | 923 | 984 | 1741 |
| Face to Face Hours | 1077 | 1130 | 1886 |
| Average Length of Stay Hours | 85 | 107 | 135 |

Primary Care Services

Nicola's Story



“

Like most people we had never thought about Palliative Care. In my mind it was something for the elderly. I was so wrong.

Our beautiful daughter Lorna passed away from Bowel Cancer on May 15, 2020. Without the help of the Bellarine Community Health Palliative Care Team we would never have been able to cope. They were there from the word go, surrounding us with a team of specialty nurses and doctors.

When Lorna was first diagnosed, the Palliative team were there to help us navigate our way through the whole trauma. No one is really prepared for the onslaught of information you receive from the medical teams when someone is first diagnosed with a life ending illness. Your brain is trying to process that your child is going to die, and all you want to know is “how do we cure her and how long will she have”.

We would attend all the meetings with Lorna and the Doctors and all of us would come out of them remembering something different. The Palliative team were able to fill in information that we had not processed properly. They answered all our questions with sensitivity and knowledge.

Lorna's wish was to be able to die at home. Without the help of the team, this would not have happened. The emotional and physical energy it takes on the whole family is so great; at times you think you are never going to manage. But we knew that we would do anything to ensure that Lorna's wishes would happen.

The Palliative team took us under their wing and cared for the whole family.”



Primary Care Services

Adult & Aged

BCH services focus on achieving the best possible health and wellbeing outcomes for our adult and aged clients.

Our team provides a range of services including podiatry, physiotherapy, counselling, dietetics and nutrition, exercise physiology, occupational therapy, diabetes education, cardiac rehabilitation, exercise groups and wellbeing programs and social support.

During the financial year our allied health staff provided services to eligible clients through State and Federal funding, along with a growing number of private clients in specific disciplines.

The impact of COVID-19 on our adult and aged care services was significant. All Social Support group activities were suspended in line with restrictions. Staff developed an action plan to remotely support these vulnerable clients including newsletters, phone calls, a lending library of DVDs and games and one on one visits when allowed. A social media video was also produced with clients engaged in a virtual sing-along.

COVID-19 also severely impacted the Physical Wellness Program with BCH gym facilities and group classes suspended for the remainder of the financial year.

Prior to the shutdown the team had been working to transition clients in the Weight Resistance Training groups to an eight-week program, opening access to the Point Lonsdale gym for greater community use and introducing an electronic gym membership system.

Primary Care Services

Youth Services

The BCH Youth team celebrated a huge milestone during the financial year - 10 years of delivering critical services to young people on the Bellarine.

Since the establishment of the Youth Services team, staff numbers have grown from 3 to 24, with clinicians seeing an average of 100 new referrals each month.

The team includes Doctors, Youth Health Nurses, Dietitians Physiotherapist, Podiatrist, Occupational Therapist, Psychologist and other allied health professionals. Many services provided are free for young people aged 12-25 years.

Demand for those services grew a staggering 225% from the 2018- 2019 to 2019-2020 financial years, with clinicians processing 850 new referrals.

Demand for mental health services for young people increased significantly during the financial year, particularly as a result of COVID-19 school shutdowns and restrictions. To meet that need, BCH was able to secure additional funding from the Geelong Community Foundation for a Provisional Youth Psychologist to work within the Youth team. Telehealth services were also introduced to enhance access to support.

The Doctors in Schools Secondary Program provided four school based medical clinics with a GP and Nurse to enhance access for students to medical information and support. Clinics were provided at North Geelong Secondary College, Geelong High School, Newcomb Secondary College and Lavers Hill P-12.

The need for access to clinical spaces during the year became critical and the BCH HealthCare Bus was deployed three days a week at the youth site as additional consultation space.

A highly successful project for the Youth team was 'Connect Ed' a specially devised program to support disengaged students and their families to re-engage in education.

Around 30 young people were engaged in the program with a mentor who worked on various therapeutic and engagement opportunities, including a popular art therapy program. The project resulted in 74% of young people returning to some level of education.



Primary Care Services

Child Health And Development (CHAD)

BCH has a multidisciplinary team and approach to early childhood services and focuses on family centred practice. The outcomes for two siblings supported by the team during the year is a great example of this approach.

The impact of COVID-19 in the second half of the financial year meant swiftly adapting service delivery for the CHAD team.

Paediatric Speech Therapy, Occupational Therapy and Dietetics moved quickly to Telehealth to ensure continuity of care for much needed therapy services.

This support extended interstate as BCH was able to continue to support a family who relocated to Queensland during restrictions.

The team also created some imaginative content to engage with their clients, including a video re-tell of the classic children's book 'We're Going on a Bear Hunt'. The Facebook post achieved more than a thousand views.

Demand for children's services under National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) funding continued to grow throughout the financial year, while demand for children's Speech Therapy under the Community Health model remains high.

Siblings story

The CHAD Occupational Therapist (OT) identified weight loss and oral sensory issues for one sibling and referred them to the BCH Dietitian to look at fussy eating strategies.

The Dietitian identified other concerns around mealtimes involving behavioural issues with an older sibling which resulted in poor nutritional outcomes for both children.

The OT identified balance and coordination issues which were also affecting the younger sibling and referred the child internally to the Paediatric Physiotherapist for assessment and strategies.

By looking at the whole family, both children received the assessments needed to support them and their family to achieve a better outcome.

A clients NDIS journey with BCH.

'Mary' (name changed) was referred to Bellarine Community Health at the beginning of 2020 for Occupational Therapy and Physiotherapy services.

She has a chronic illness that requires chemotherapy, and told clinicians of her history of falls, and tripping and needing to use gait aids.

Mary was able to manage her own self-care, but due to fatigue, she was only managing certain tasks, like showering every three days.

Our Occupational Therapist did a comprehensive assessment and identified that Mary needed to be supported to apply for NDIS funding to support her function at home and in the community.

With the help of the clinician and the BCH NDIS Development Officer, Mary's NDIS plan was approved

Assistance was provided to the client by the Occupational Therapist to apply for NDIS funding and she was successful.

Mary now has a wrap-around service from BCH and is accessing Occupational Therapy, Physiotherapy, Exercise Physiology, Continence assessment, Podiatry and Dietetics.

Primary Care Services

NDIS

BCH has seen a significant increase in the number of participants it supports under NDIS funding.

Most of the BCH NDIS work occurs within the Child Health and Development Team. During the financial year the Youth Team also introduced NDIS support with participants accessing Occupational Therapy, Nursing and Psychology.

Nursing support for our adult clients is another area of growth. A change in guidelines now allows participants with disability related health supports to access NDIS funding. There was a 62% increase in this area largely related to catheter and wound care.

During COVID-19 restrictions the number of referrals for adult Dietetics through Telehealth increased from participants outside the BCH catchment. This increase was predominately from participants in disability accommodation.

BCH supported a total of 85 new NDIS participants during the financial year, an overall increase of 62% in demand for services. BCH will undergo NDIS Practice Standards Accreditation in late 2020.



Services in the Primary Care Division



Cardiac Rehabilitation



Chronic Disease Management



Counselling



Dental – public and private



Diabetes Education



Dietetics & Nutrition



Doctors in Schools



Exercise Groups



Exercise Physiology



General Practice



Gym



Home Care Packages



NDIS



Nursing



Occupational Therapy



Palliative Care



Physiotherapy



Podiatry & Foot Care



Social Support Groups



Speech Therapy

Our Client Contact Service Hours for 2019 - 2020

| Discipline | Contact Hours |
|---|---------------|
| Dietetics | 868 |
| Physiotherapy (includes Physical Wellness Groups) | 10,315 |
| Counselling | 2,263 |
| Occupational Therapy | 3,484 |
| Speech Pathology | 1,519 |
| Podiatry | 2,451 |
| Community Health Nursing | 2,445 |
| District Nursing | 8,239 |
| NDIS services | 3,000 approx |
| Dr's in Secondary Schools | 2,016 |

BCH is funded under various State and Commonwealth funding streams, Community Women's Health, Home and Community Care and Commonwealth Home Support Program.



Health Promotion & Community Engagement

Health promotion, health advocacy and community development are key drivers to build the health and wellbeing capacity of community.

The BCH Community Engagement and Healthy Communities teams strive to be inclusive and empower our communities. Our community partnerships are critical in this area.

BCH partnered with Queenscliff Neighbourhood House and Barwon Health to facilitate a community Advance Care Planning workshop looking at how to identify and appoint medical decision makers along with guidance on how to navigate the documentation. BCH staff also delivered a series of free Health Talks through Neighbourhood House providing information on falls prevention and how to access My Aged Care.

BCH's community COVID-19 response involved the establishment of a free community transport service to help isolated community members attend health appointments, pick up and deliver pharmacy scripts and shopping assistance across the Bellarine. The service has supported 35 participants who were all very grateful to have access to a reliable and safe service during the COVID-19 period.

BCH receives Integrated Health Promotion (IHP) funding from the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) which is directed to support the outcomes of two regional prevention plans managed by the Healthy Communities team - the G21 Regional Healthier Eating & Active Living Plan and the Prevention of Violence Against Women Health Alliance Plan.

BCH has been supporting physical activity for girls and women by working with local governments in the region on projects such as VicHealth's This Girl Can campaign. Opportunities for women to participate in sport locally and online were also shared over the campaign period.

The regional campaign Choose Water Every Day encouraged families on the Bellarine to drink more water. BCH attended local community events with Create and Hydrate stalls, including the Wallington Strawberry Fair, the Bellarine Sunset Run and the Bellarine Agricultural Show.

The Healthy Communities team works across the Bellarine Peninsula with childcare settings, kindergartens, primary schools and secondary schools to help make them healthy places for our children and young people.

This involves making changes such as healthy lunchboxes and canteen menus and meeting the benchmarks of the Achievement Program.

BCH continues to work to be a leader in Prevention of Violence Against Women by running programs and campaigns, changing internal procedures and guidelines and helping people to understand the issue. As part of the International 16 Days of Activism Against Gender Based Violence campaign, BCH undertook Unconscious Bias and Active Bystander training with staff.

Health Promotion & Community Engagement

Community Partnerships

Over the year BCH has supported the development of two new community organisations: Shedding the Blues and Compassionate Hearts on the Bellarine (CHoB). Shedding the Blues is a group that supports men's health and wellbeing and uses music as the catalyst. CHoB works in partnership with the BCH Palliative Care team to provide practical and social support to BCH palliative care clients and their families through their pool of volunteers.

The BCH Community Advisory Group (CAG) have undertaken a range of community engagement projects this year including the development of a Mental Health Discussion Paper, following the Royal Commission into the Victorian Mental Health System and a response to the Bellarine Peninsula Distinctive Landscapes and Areas Discussion Paper (DELWP).

BCH established Community Engagement Reference groups (CERG) for various projects and their purpose is to gather community input and support the engagement process.

Health Promotion & Community Engagement

Fundraising and Grants

BCH successfully applied for several grants during the financial year and received wonderful community support through donations.

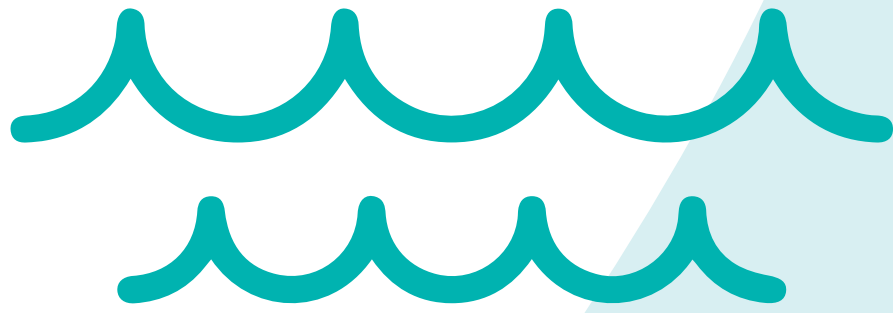
These funds were used to help purchase vital equipment and support incredible initiatives including youth mental health services, the Autism Dental program and Nursing and Palliative Care services.

Our sincere thanks go to the following organisations:

- City of Greater Geelong
- Geelong Community Foundation
- State Trustees Australia Foundation
- Arcare Family Foundation
- Flying Brick Bellarine Sunset Run
- Queenscliff Rotary
- Portarlington Ladies Auxiliary
- Victorian Health & Human Services
- Batforce

We would also like to make special mention and say thank you to those people who have made donations in loving memory of family or friends who have used our Community Nursing & Palliative Care services. Your support of these crucial community support services is greatly appreciated.





Corporate Services

Corporate Services support the day-to-day operation of BCH in areas such as Finance, Human Resources, Information Technology, Quality & Compliance, Communications & Marketing.

Corporate Services

Information Services - New CMS

Client information and data management are integral to the running of successful client services. During the year the decision was made to replace the current Client Management System (CMS) with a new dynamic and versatile system that would meet the needs of the organisation into the future.

A provider was identified, and a project group consisting of 10 staff have been working through the stages of configuring the new system and the secure transfer of data.

The new CMS will be fully implemented by the end of 2020 and this digitised health records system will place BCH at the forefront of client information management systems in the community health arena.

Corporate Services

Quality & Safety - COVID Safe

BCH has been forward thinking and forward planning during this time of uncertainty. To assist with the ongoing management of COVID-19, a COVID-19 Governance team was established to oversee the operational response to the Pandemic.

Actions undertaken include the development of a BCH Pandemic Plan, a COVID safe operational plan, stringent COVID safe protocols and screening procedures, additional staff training on PPE and safe working from home procedures.

Corporate Services

Accreditation

Bellarine Community Health achieved full accreditation across three Standards during the financial year.

The standards test an organisation across a wide range of critical clinical, governance, quality, safety and consumer measures to ensure that the community is receiving quality, safe and best-practice health care.

BCH underwent accreditation under the National Safety & Quality Health Services Standards (NSQHS) for its Dental Services, the Quality Improvement Council Standards (QIC) for services to clients under 65 and the Australian General Practice Accreditation Limited (AGPAL) for the new GP clinic at Portarlington.





Corporate Services

Communications & Marketing

This year the Communications and Marketing team have invested in print and digital platforms to continue to raise the profile of BCH as a comprehensive provider of health and wellbeing services.

COVID-19 created significant challenges with rapidly changing restrictions and information, needing timely responses and ongoing communication requirements for both clients and staff. Internal communications are critical in the COVID environment and as a result, regular video updates were introduced to help keep staff informed of key activities and changes.

Almost 180 proactive media opportunities were achieved throughout the year through a combination of publicity and paid advertising.

Media stories included coverage of the BCH Healthcare Bus, Autism Dental Program, Youth Services celebrations, numerous profiles on the Palliative Care team and COVID related information.

BCH implemented a 12-month marketing plan focusing on key areas including the private GP Clinic, private Dental and private allied health services. A key outcome for the year was the establishment of an online booking system for the GP clinic to maximise client bookings.

Our social media channels have also grown significantly during the year including the introduction of Instagram to BCH platforms and Google Advertising.

Corporate Services

IT Systems

BCH has invested heavily in technology in the past year with a major upgrade of IT and Communications infrastructure including cloud-based services, Microsoft Teams, financial and client management applications, all of which are necessary to support and increase service capabilities of a modern health organisation.

The focus on technology allowed staff to work from home without compromising information security standards and allowed BCH to deploy Telehealth services to continue to support clients.

Investing in the future of health services

BCH has been fortunate to secure six million dollars in Commonwealth funding for two major projects – further redevelopment of the remaining ageing Northern section of the BCH site in Portarlinton and a new Health and Wellbeing Hub incorporating a headspace satellite site in Ocean Grove – both projects will deliver enhanced health service access for communities on the Bellarine.

The funding agreements for both projects were finalised at the end of 2019.

Work is underway to identify potential sites, along with some initial community engagement to understand community needs and scoping for potential co-located services for the Ocean Grove Health and Wellbeing Hub.

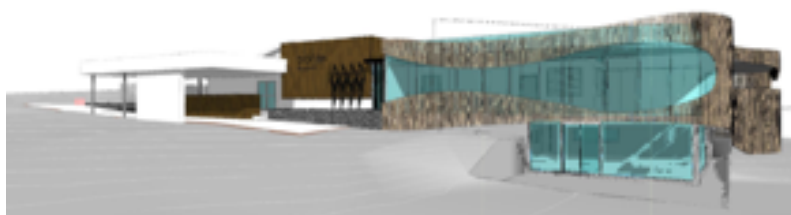
Four18 Architecture is the appointed contractor to design both projects, and their work on the redevelopment at Portarlinton has progressed significantly.

A local community engagement strategy helped inform the building design with the redevelopment plans and associated reports submitted to the City of Greater Geelong for planning approval at the end of July 2020. BCH will tender for a construction company as soon as the planning permit is issued, and we anticipate demolition to begin before the end of 2020. This redevelopment will also provide a much-needed new home for the Portarlinton Ladies Auxiliary to operate their Opportunity Shop.

Modelling work on the redevelopment of the Eric Tolliday Units (ETU) at the BCH Point Lonsdale site continues.

Traffic and Town Planning Consultants have also commenced preparation of town planning documents, and a Community Engagement Reference Group formed to plan the community engagement and provide input to the BCH Board into the preferred operational model of accommodation. Capital funding is required to further progress the ETU project.

Architect drawing Portarlinton site





Our site locations

Drysdale: 23-25 Palmerston St

Drysdale Youth: Peninsula Drv

Ocean Grove: 78 Presidents Ave

Point Lonsdale: 2 Nelson Rd

Portarlington: 39 Fenwick St



We acknowledge the traditional custodians of the land on which our offices stand and pay respect to Elders past, present and emerging.

BCH offers free access to interpreter services.

*With you
for life*

bch Bellarine
Community
Health

With you for life