



Independent operator sought for Sea View House

PDH and the Sea View House Community Group are working together to find a new operator for the Supported Residential Service.

After lengthy discussions it has been determined that Sea View House will remain open while an alternative independent operator is sought to take over its management.

The PDH Board of Operations has rescinded its September 2010 decision to close the facility. Instead it will work with the Sea View House Community Group to find a new operator.

This decision will be reviewed after six months.

CEO John O'Neill said that by engaging the local community and the Sea View House Support Group it was hoped a positive outcome could be achieved for all parties.

It is proposed to appoint a manager to operate the facility within SRS guidelines and to work with a small working party of representatives of the Board and the Sea View House Support Group to produce a sale strategy/package for Sea View House to an independent operator, either private or not for profit.

PDH will no longer manage or operate a SRS in the future.

The Board representatives on the proposed working party will be President Andy Govanstone, Ros Alexander and Mike Noske.

Mr O'Neill said a number of Sea View House residents had been assessed by the independent Commonwealth Aged Care Assessment Service as requiring higher levels of care than provided in Sea View House.

"PDH, through Sea View House as a SRS operator, can no longer provide the appropriate level of care to those residents," he said.

"Consequently, in line with PDH's duty of care, PDH staff will work with residents and next of kin and families to assist in the relocation of those residents to appropriate residential aged care services as a matter of course."

Mr O'Neill said the Board was pleased that it was continuing to work with the support group to find a solution to the issue.

"This is a very positive outcome and I personally welcome the Board's decision," Mr O'Neill said.

The PDH Board of Management had earlier announced it would reluctantly close the Supported Residential Service within two years due to low occupancy rates and business model which had left it unviable.

The Board later met with the residents group and put the closure decision on hold.

Mr Govanstone said that in hindsight the business plan adopted for Sea View House, which opened in 2002, was flawed.

"The initial business plan was based on high occupancy rates and a high level of incomings from new residents coupled with short lengths of stay. That has failed to eventuate. It would be irresponsible to allow the losses incurred by Sea View House to continue to eat into the broader PDH budget."

He said the fixed rental model of payment at Sea View House failed to take into account increasing costs. "Over time there have been growing costs without a corresponding increase in rental, which strains on the operating budget."

The board has been involved in lengthy and productive meetings with the support group.

"Given that the board didn't want to close Sea View House in the first place, and residents and next of kin clearly don't want Sea View House closed either, we have a lot of common ground to base a strong foundation upon," Mr Govanstone said.

Gaynor is no.1

Clinical educator Gaynor Denboer has been named as PDH's Employee of the Year.

Gaynor, who has recently moved from her role as clinical support nurse to clinical educator, was described in her nomination as a great asset to PDH, always willing to help students, undergraduates, nurses, pharmacists and doctors.

"Gaynor is a terrific help to everyone and uses her knowledge, experience and friendly outlook to help our staff in their professional development,"

Gaynor working at PDH in her new role is the continuation of a long love of nursing. She has been with PDH for the past 13 years and has notched up more than two decades in nursing.

Her role as part of the staff development unit is helping PDH staff keep up to date with the latest in medical advancements.

"I try to be nice to everyone and I enjoy working as part of the team... it's really a team award," she said.



Helipad soon a reality



Portland's new helipad could be ready for use before winter after the new Victorian Government helped expedite the project.

Planning Minister Matthew Guy has amended the Glenelg Shire Planning Scheme to facilitate use and development of the emergency services helipad on PDH's preferred site at Ploughed Field, opposite the main hospital.

CEO John O'Neill said it was pleasing that the potentially life-saving project was now moving ahead after a long campaign.

"Ploughed Field is considered the best location by both the hospital and the emergency services, and we appreciate the efforts of the Minister and our local Member for South West Coast Denis Napthine in helping to cut the red tape to make the helipad a reality on this site," John said.

The Department of Planning and Community Development will coordinate the project and consult with the Glenelg Shire and Department of Sustainability and Environment. It is expected that the planning requirements will be finalised in March which will then allow us to seek a building permit with the aim of having

the helipad ready for use by winter.

It is hoped the Committee of Portland will assist financially to cover the cost of the planning submissions and that the Blue Ribbon Foundation and the Department of Health will enter a partnership to fund construction of the helipad. Total construction costs have not been determined at this stage.

"The arrival of an emergency helicopter service in south-west Victoria has been a welcome initiative for the region and Portland will stand to benefit in times of emergency by having easy access to this service from the Ploughed Field site," John said.

Growing our own produce

You say tomato, I say tomahto...now you can have your choice as we have all types of tomatoes growing at Harbourside Lodge.

The lodge has joined forces with Sea Winds Nursery to introduce a new project for residents in which they care for plants and seedlings till they are ready for sale.

Activities coordinator Debbie Taylor said up to 16 different varieties of heirloom tomatoes are being provided free of charge by Sea Winds Nursery, along with seedlings of capsicum, marigolds and other produce.

The tomatoes are being planted in foam boxes, with bush and staking varieties in each box.

The residents will also get to use the products they help to grow and volunteers and staff will help out to make sure the tomatoes are successfully grown to maturity.

Brie's sad farewell



For Brie Dendle parting ways with PDH has been a bitter sweet time. Brie joined us in 2010 as acting laboratory manager for St John of God Pathology. She always knew it was going to be short-term job when she replaced regular manager Jane Maybery who took extended leave. But she didn't reckon on finding PDH such an enjoyable place to work.

"I have worked in a few different hospitals, smaller and larger than Portland, and I can honestly say this is one of the best for a team

atmosphere," Brie said.

"People work together and care for each other, help each other out when they need to. Everyone should be really proud of what they've got here."

But all good things must come to an end and Brie has returned to her home base of Ballarat.

"I have been here just long enough to fall in love with the place. It's very sad for me to leave," she said.

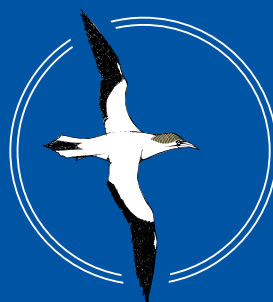
"I grew up in Ocean Grove and Portland reminds me a lot of what Ocean Grove was like when I was young."

Logo Update

After more than 60 years, the PDH logo has undergone a revamp. The traditional gannet image has been retained but the design has been given a new look for the 21st century.

Change Manager Anne Burley said the new look came after a review of PDH's mission, vision and values in 2009.

Staff were asked whether they wanted to retain the gannet or develop a new logo. The outcome was a vote in favor of retaining the bird image but incorporating it in a more modern design.



PORTLAND
DISTRICT HEALTH

The gannet has been PDH's logo since 1939 when it was suggested by 16-year-old George Compton. George came up with the suggestion when he noticed a flock of gannets over Whalers Reef while he was delivering money he and others had raised for the hospital on the day that the foundation stone was being laid.

The original logo which served PDH

well for six decades was believed to have been designed and printed by the former Portland Guardian. Melbourne designer Michael Lindell provided the redesigned logo image for free.

The Portland district is home to some of the largest Australasian gannet colonies. A gannet is a large seabird with a wingspan of about 1.6 metres.

Babies returning to PDH

Confidence is growing in PDH's maternity service...and the numbers are returning to prove it.

Already 46 women have confirmed bookings to have their babies at PDH in 2011. Maternity services manager Wendy Buckland said the number of bookings was up on the past few years.

"It's a good sign," Wendy said. There were 54 babies born in Portland during 2010, with numbers increasing in the latter half of the year.

"We are hoping 100 to 120 babies will be born in Portland this year," Wendy said. She added that confidence in the service was returning after its closure due to staff shortages in late 2009 and the subsequent re-opening in January last year.

"People tell us they will support us if they can. Most would prefer to have their babies in Portland so they are close to home but some still choose

to give birth in Warrnambool to get the 100 per cent guaranteed medical support."

Wendy added that PDH continued to offer 24-hour, seven days a week midwifery support with specialist medical assistance when available.

"It all comes down to the level of service that a mother is comfortable with," Wendy said. "We assess each case on a day to day basis to ensure that the safety of mother and child is our top priority."

Wendy added that the transfer system to South West Healthcare in Warrnambool was also working well and was used when required. Mothers are usually able to return to Portland within a few hours of giving birth.

The hospital is continuing its long-running campaign to recruit more specialist staff to ensure continuation of services.



Wendy Buckland

A centralised phone number (55 210691) has been established to give expectant mothers easy phone access to a midwife at any time of the day.

Our pregnancy care clinic established last July is also proving to be a popular drawcard for mothers. The clinic is open every Monday from 9am-midday in the PDH specialist centre.

Rural adjustment

Adjusting to a working life in a rural hospital has been an interesting challenge for Dr Yaser Dardr.

Yaser joined PDH in January as a hospital medical officer and is appreciating the differences of working in a rural environment after his previous stint with Nepean Hospital.

"I like to be under a bit of pressure and I liked the challenge of working in a rural community," he said. "In bigger hospitals you have all the specialist services on hand but in rural communities you have to work more on your own, which I find more challenging."

Yaser came to Australia from Kuwait in 2005 where he working in general practices. He has enjoyed the rapid

rate of learning he has achieved since that time. "I saw the move as a good chance to learn more quickly. There are more training opportunities in Australia."

He said it had been interesting to compare the health systems of Australia and Kuwait. "I think in both cases they are well adapted to the societies they serve."

Helping make the transition to Portland easier has been the support of staff from PDH. "Portland is a beautiful place. We came here a few weeks early with my wife and little daughter to rent a house, find the shops and settle in," he said.

"The staff have been really great, which is very important when you move to a new workplace. There's a great team here."



Dr Yaser Dardr

Emergency help for families



Dan May, PA Safety Manger

Cathy Bones, PA Occupation Physician

Anne Burley, PDH Business Development Manager

Neil Daniel, PA Safety Resource

Catherine Haldane, PDH Emergency Department Nurse

Linzi Donlan, PDH Emergency Department Nurse Unit Manager

Families are now taking advantage of a new scheme which offers relatives of critically ill patients the opportunity to be with their loved ones when they are transferred to Melbourne.

The Emergency Transfer Fund is a unique partnership between PDH and Portland Aluminium, under its Partnering Stronger Communities initiative, which provides money for accommodation and/or return airfares to immediate family members of younger patients who have been transferred from Portland to Melbourne.

One Portland family has already taken advantage of the program.

Mitch Peters, 10, was injured when a free-standing basketball ring collapsed on him after he attempted a slam dunk by jumping off his dad's ute.

For his parents Rachel Stoneman and Mark Peters the accident was made more bearable thanks to support from the emergency transfer fund.

Mitch was rushed to Portland District Health with head injuries and then flown to the Royal Children's Hospital in Melbourne.

"He was intubated and on a ventilator so there was no room for anyone to go with him," Rachel said.

"It was quite scary at the time."

The emergency transfer fund arranged for Rachel to fly to Melbourne the next morning to be with Mitch. The medical staff were quick to put Rachel at ease.

"It was good to be able to get there quickly, otherwise I would have made Mark drive down over night which isn't the best thing to do," Rachel said. "We were in a bit of shock ourselves."

Chief Executive Officer John O'Neill said the new fund was invaluable for helping families to stay together during times of need.

"While PDH's Emergency Department provides high quality care and effective, safe, specialised treatment for all patients, a number of critically ill

patients require transfer to another hospital for further treatment, John said.

This can sometimes result in immediate family members being separated from their loved ones.

"It is a four hour road trip to Melbourne but having access to potential flights or accommodation will be of great benefit to families."

Portland Aluminium Operations Manager John Osborne said the smelter was always looking to add value in the community through its partnering stronger communities program.

"We are extremely pleased to support the fund through the Portland Aluminium Safety League – an internally-based program where our employees raise money through an AFL-based season of safety rounds," he said.

Sharp Aviation has supported the program with discounted airfares for people using the transfer fund.

Right at home in Portland



With a population of nearly 14 million, Delhi is one of the world's great cities. But for Dr Sachin Dahiya the pace of life in Portland is much more to his liking.

Sachin joined PDH late last year as a medical officer, his first appointment in Australia since emigrating from India earlier in 2010.

"Delhi is a very busy place," he said. "I decided to move to get some international experience."

Sachin found the same hectic pace when he moved to Melbourne. "I was in Melbourne for a few months as I settled into Australia and completed my exams. It was great to come to Portland which is such a nice place – and very quiet."

"All the staff here are very friendly and helpful – the move has worked out really well for me."

Sachin said Portland residents should appreciate the service provided by PDH. "In Melbourne you might have to wait for hours for service but it's much quicker to see somebody at Portland."

Sachin's arrival in Portland will have an added bonus. His wife Shalini is also a qualified doctor and hopes to start practicing soon.

However, she has bigger things on her agenda for the moment. She is pregnant with the couple's first child which is due in July.

Farewell Ivor

Ivor Graney recently ended his long association with PDH.

After taking on the part-time PDH job in 1986 Ivor became a full-time worker two years later.

"The place was pretty run down when I started. To change a tap washer it took 45 minutes and you had to co-ordinate the whole of the hospital," he said.

"Getting things working properly was a challenge."

Ivor initially came to specialise in maintaining the hospital's refrigeration systems. The inclusion of essential services standards into

the weekly maintenance routine was a major overhaul of the hospital's systems and a redevelopment in the early 1990s brought with it another new set of challenges.

"There was new technology we had to learn, air conditioners through the whole hospital, computer screens for settings...a whole new ballgame," he said.

Ivor has deputised for four of the five different engineers over his lengthy stint with the hospital, including roles such as accounts and ordering parts.

"It's been a good time...they are a good team to work with," Ivor said.

Still tinkling the ivories

The sounds of a piano are never far away at Harbourside Lodge thanks to resident Keith Whitbourn. Keith, a retired music teacher, moved into Harbourside early in 2010 and has since become a regular entertainer for our residents.

Activities coordinator Riemie Gunssar said residents loved to listen to Keith's music. "He plays for all our services and hymn singing and often just comes down to the piano in the morning to play a few tunes," she said.

"The residents absolutely love it. Keith is a wonderful pianist and he can play anything and everything."

Keith served many years as a music teacher in Portland, where he specialised in piano. His daughter Leonie Holn said Keith still enjoyed playing and entertaining.

"He would teach music at home and then play piano or organ at churches every weekend. He also played at lots of weddings," she said.

The musical connection goes way back in Keith's family. "My



grandparents were also into playing piano. When we were kids dad taught us piano."

Keith settled in Portland when he was married and he had several other occupations apart from teaching music, including building inspector, real estate agent, cannery worker and shop keeper. He also did a Diploma of Ministry later in life and Keith and his late wife Genieve also managed the Salvation Army Opportunity shop.

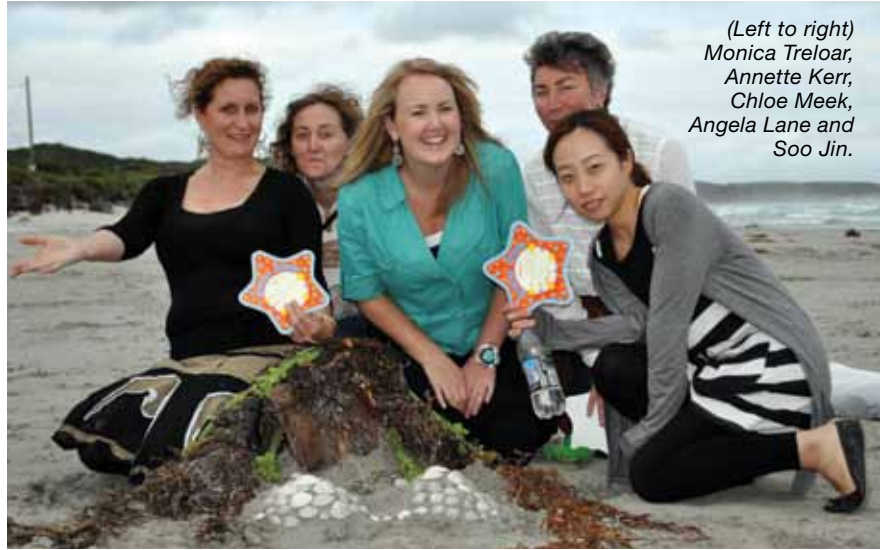
Team work and sand sculpting

Team building exercises are known to play important roles in building friendships and cooperation in workplaces...but they can also result in the building of some neat sand sculptures!

The PDH acute team recently went to Cape Bridgewater for a team building exercise that challenged participants to build sand sculptures.

Unit manager Nola Edmonds said it was good for co-workers to do something together out of the hospital environment. "Everyone was keen to get involved and do everything as a team. We had a great time."

More than 20 staff members broke up into teams of about five and each came up with a different theme and look for their sand sculptures, all using natural products found on the beach.



(Left to right)
Monica Treloar,
Annette Kerr,
Chloe Meek,
Angela Lane and
Soo Jin.

Another wedding to remember

Not only is Sathya Sankarasubramanian looking forward to his wedding in India in March, he's excited about sharing the experience with several of his friends from PDH.

About 10 of Sathya's colleagues will travel to India to share in the event which promises to be a unique cross-cultural experience.

The marriage ceremony will be held over two and a half days, and promises to be a memorable event not only for Sathya and his wife-to-be, Anu, but also for his Aussie guests.

Sathya has been with PDH for more than two years as a physiotherapist and has been in Australia for four years.

"I came here to pursue my Masters in Sports Physiotherapy, which I completed at the University of Melbourne.

Sathya said his Indian family and friends would also enjoy having his Australian friends join in the ceremonies.

Sathya said the wedding ceremony would be a major event in his town.



"They used to last for five days but they have been reduced to two and a half days now," he said.

The wedding includes various religious ceremonies, events for family and friends, gift sharing, and a lot of traditional customs. "Each part of the ceremony has symbolism and meaning and teaches about increasing our love, affection and sharing."

"It will be a fantastic opportunity for people to see a cross-cultural

happening," Sathya said.

Sathya says he has been welcomed like a family member at PDH. "When I came here Portland was a very quiet city and I didn't know anyone. People here didn't just treat me like a colleague but like a member of the family or a friend."

"PDH has supported me in so many ways, it has been fantastic."

The wedding of Sathya and Anu will culminate in Chennai on March 7. The couple will then return to Portland.

Five generations... and still growing



Harbourside Lodge resident Dorothy Moody is now the proud matriarch of a family dynasty which includes five generations of girls.

Dorothy's great grand-daughter Jasmine Knight recently gave birth to Dakota Lee, who is actually Dorothy's second great, great grand-daughter following in the tiny footsteps of Amelia Lee who was born three years ago.

The good news for the extended family is that they all live around Portland and keep in close contact. Dorothy's daughter Robyn Smith said all

five generations get together regularly and spend as much time as possible with Dorothy, who is now 87 and has been a resident of Harbourside for the past three years.

"Mum is in high level care but she loves seeing the babies. All the residents love it when they come in."

Rounding out the five generations is Robyn's daughter Joanne Knight.

This year Robyn plans an extended holiday but will keep in contact with Dorothy through the SKYPE facilities.

Graduating in style

Thirty five staff members of PDH had reason to celebrate during December when they took part in our inaugural Graduation Bonanza.

The event was put together to recognise the great work undertaken by staff during the year who had graduated or completed courses during 2010.

The hospital is proud of its education and training program and all the staff members who undertook extra studies to help improve the level of service we offer to the public.

The graduation ceremony, complete with cake and certificates of appreciation, was a way to say 'thank you' for those efforts.



Cake time: Soo Jin Cho, Val Stirling, Rajana Puwakwaththa, Jing Zhang cut the celebratory cake.



PORTLAND
DISTRICT HEALTH
PUTTING OUR PATIENT'S HEALTH FIRST

Portland District Health
Ph: (03) 5521 0333 Email: pdh@swarh.vic.gov.au
www.pdh.net.au