

Care For Our Region

Healthier, stronger, together

Introduction

Welcome to the first Care For Our Region update for the community.

This regular newsletter will keep you up to date with how Edenhope and District Memorial Hospital, Stawell Regional Health, Wimmera Health Care Group and Ballarat Health Services intend to come together.

Every fortnight, we'll talk about how we can tackle the challenges we face together. We'll also celebrate our staff, the partnerships we have engaged with in the spirit of integration, and update you on conversations with our community.

Most importantly, we commit to answering any of your questions. Please, if you are worried about something, or have a nagging issue, ask us. We will answer your questions as best we can.

This newsletter follows the launch of the [Care For Our Region website](#) and runs alongside our continuing engagement. We encourage you to visit the website to get the facts and have your say.

In this fortnight's Care For Our Region update:

- CEOs of the health services share a video message for the community
- We answer questions about the potential economic benefits of coming together
- We showcase the fantastic work of Ballarat Health Services nurse Shaun Finlayson and
- Director of Clinical and Resident Care Services Michael Kirby working on secondment at Stawell Regional Health.

In the next issue, we'll hone in on opportunities for services under a possible new health service.

CEO's Video Update

Interested in what a new health service can mean for you and your community? Our CEOs speak about the possibilities.



Economic benefits

Every issue of this newsletter will address key questions raised by local communities. First up, we answer questions around the impact on the economy of a new health service in the Wimmera, Stawell and Edenhope.

The Bottom Line

A proposed new health service can support further investment in local services and better choices of services for the community, and lead to more career opportunities and roles for staff.

Less people travelling unnecessarily for treatment can mean more people staying in the local community, which will offer a direct benefit to the economy.

For instance if one quarter of 1000 clinically appropriate hospital admissions can stay in Horsham instead of travelling to Ballarat hundreds of thousands of dollars in lost economic benefit could remain in Horsham.

Increased use of services will have flow on economic benefits for Stawell and Edenhope, while also alleviating rapidly growing demand at Ballarat.

To find out more, click [here](#).

Staff profiles

We sat down with Mick and Shaun who are currently working at Stawell Regional Health on secondment from Ballarat Health Services.

Shaun Finlayson – Pandemic Response Coordinator

Shaun has been working as the Pandemic Response Coordinator at Stawell Regional Health for the past two months. Shaun was identified as someone who could support Stawell's ongoing pandemic response at a time when resources were low. He leapt at the opportunity to develop his leadership skills and abilities.

"I'm a registered nurse and I've started to progress and look at moving into a leadership position. I began this process at Ballarat, which put me in a good position to move to Stawell to help here," Shaun said.

"As the COVID response coordinator, I help manage the ongoing COVID landscape. COVID is here to stay, and we need to make sure the hospital is mounting the correct response for the community's benefit.

"The benefits are three-fold. I'm helping Stawell, Stawell is helping me to develop my leadership skills, and in the long term it will help Ballarat as I fast track my leadership abilities.

"COVID has changed the landscape, and while I am based in Ballarat, there is the ability for me to work from home and function offsite. It's made things a lot more achievable than in the past."

Michael Kirby – Director of Clinical & Residential Care Services

Mick is on secondment at Stawell Regional Health to cover the Director of Clinical & Residential Care Services, while she is away on maternity leave. He saw the opportunity to hone his skills in a different area and support Stawell in a fixed term position that can be difficult to fill.

"I've been here for six weeks and it's been a breath of fresh air to work in a new environment. I have really noticed how prominent the community focus is and the impact it has in all decisions made around the community," Michael said.

"It's a very exciting time to be here over the next twelve months and see the new opportunities that could present themselves. I'm in a great position as I've been able to experience healthcare across the region, not just in Ballarat.

"I've noticed the different processes across the health services and see opportunities for improvement at Stawell and to tap into resources from somewhere like Ballarat, and there have already been examples in recent weeks. My secondment here is an example of how we can work together."

