Local patients are experiencing improved access to doctors at The Kilmore & District Hospital (TKDH) thanks to a workforce model that is attracting qualified medical officers to our Urgent Care Centre (UCC).

After a successful three month pilot, the new UCC model was put into place in July 2017. Visiting Medical Officers (VMOs) are now rostered to be in attendance from 10am to 10pm, every day.

The doctors are then on-call until 8am the next day, while urgent care cases are triaged by advanced nurses, led by the Associate Nurse Unit Manager or After Hours Coordinator.

UCC Manager, Garry Wilson, says it’s a huge shift from the previous model where there was minimal medical officer coverage available on site. The previous way of delivering services meant that the majority of medical advice was provided over the phone.

“Now people can come in and know a doctor is here or nearby on-call after hours. With these reliable medical resources and the credentials of our skilled nurses TKDH can better meet need and respond to public expectations about receiving care close to home,” said Garry.

Nursing staff feel better supported at work by the collaboration with medical officers, says registered nurse, Racheal Woodham.

“It helps to improve our skills and knowledge base when we treat patients.”

UCC nurses all have advanced skills training. They can plaster or suture stitches, and are qualified for advanced life support.

The patient experience of TKDH Board member, Kathryn Harris, has improved by gaining local access to regular venesections for a medical condition. She no longer travels to Melbourne for the procedure.

Her family recently experienced first-hand the benefits of having doctors available in the UCC, when 14 year old Ben presented with possible appendicitis.

“It turned out to be gastro but we were relieved to be checked by a doctor. We have great GPs in our community, but it’s reassuring to know that if you need quick attention there are doctors available here.”

Our UCC doctors are accredited to admit short stay (24 hour) patients to the hospital. For specific cases, they will support a patient transfer to another hospital for appropriate care.

The new model is an effective way of delivering expanded services and safer patient care. Check out page four where you can meet one of our Urgent Care doctors.
CEO’s Update
Welcome to the summer edition of The Kilmore & District Hospital newsletter, with a focus on Urgent Care.
As the New Year begins, it’s an opportunity reflect on last year’s achievements and to highlight key priorities for the year ahead:

2018 highlights:
• Established a Parent Child Day Stay Program in partnership with FamilyCare
• Refurbishment construction works began at Caladenia Nursing Home
• Caladenia Nursing Home and Dianella Village Hostel were successfully re-accredited by the Australian Aged Care Quality Agency (valid until October 2021)
• New equipment and technology were installed in our maternity services
• Our community showed us strong support at the Open Access day in October and Annual General Meeting in November.

2019 priorities:
• Completion of construction works at Caladenia Nursing Home
• Accreditation site visit from the Australian Council on Healthcare Standards to review the quality and safety of our hospital services
• Review of our strategic plan in consultation with the community
• Increasing the use of renewable energy resources through further investment in solar power.

A big thank you to our supporters, donors, volunteers and committee members for your ongoing support of the hospital. I wish you all a safe and happy 2019.

Regards,
Sue

Beat the Heat
As the hot weather kicks in over late summer, there are some things you can do to minimise the risk on days of extreme heat:
• Never leave kids, adults or pets in hot cars
• Drink plenty of water, even if you don’t feel thirsty
• Keep yourself cool by using wet towels or cool water
• Spend as much time as possible in cool or air conditioned buildings
• Block out the sun by closing curtains and blinds
• Open the windows when there is a cool breeze
• Stay out of the sun during the hottest part of the day
• Wear a hat and light coloured, loose-fitting clothing made from natural fibres
• Eat smaller meals more often and cold meals such as salads
• Keep in touch with sick or frail friends and family.

What have we been up to?
Data from 1 October to 31 December 2018 included in these figures

- 2231 Urgent Care presentations
- 1357 Community Nurse Home Visits
- 9 New Staff Members
- 3 Dianella Resident Outings
- 60 Babies Born
- 1332 Outpatient Clinic Visits
- 440 Procedures Performed
- 2 Awards won by Caladenia at Kilmore Show
Putting Children Back Together Again

The Foundation recently donated a Massimo Radical 5 paediatric pulse oximeter to our Urgent Care Centre.

This machine measures the oxygen saturation of a patient’s blood through a light sensor probe, rather than a blood test. So it is a less invasive way to monitor unwell kids.

UCC Nurse Unit Manager, Garry Wilson explains that having a dedicated machine for children also means that staff can make informed clinical decisions, resulting in the best assessment and management of the young patient.

“Prior to receiving this wonderful donation our Urgent Care Centre did not have a specific paediatric pulse oximeter. We can now be confident in more accurate readings because we are no longer limited by using an adult probe on children,” said Garry.

Thank you to the Humpty Dumpty Foundation for thinking of our community and supporting us to care for kids.
Who are You?

Raja Devanathan
Urgent Care Medical Officer

What does your average day look like at TKDH?
As an Urgent Care Medical Officer, I work two shifts per week. That means I am on site between 10am and 10pm. Outside of these hours, I am on call for patients who present with urgent care needs.

During my shifts I am the clinician responsible for code blue medical emergencies, like cardiac arrest. It’s my job to respond to Medical Emergency Response Team calls anywhere on hospital grounds including our residential facilities. When it’s needed, I provide urgent reviews of ward patients. These are people who might have had an operation, are geriatric or obstetric patients or were admitted for general medical reasons.

Across an average shift, I see approximately 25-35 patients. The Urgent Care Centre team includes me and two experienced nurses. We work as a team, and often have multiple roles during our shifts to ensure there is smooth patient flow. I like to be kept busy!

How did you find yourself at TKDH?
I am a GP who has a special interest in rural urgent care. About two years ago, I was driving to Echuca for a wedding and noticed Kilmore Hospital along the way. On my return trip, I rang up the Director of Medical Services and expressed an interest in joining the team. So it was literally a “cold call” from me!

What is the best thing about working here?
I enjoy team focused work. I have found working at Kilmore Hospital a very pleasant experience. I appreciate the support I get from nursing colleagues and other medical staff. I am keen to be an active member of the urgent care team, and also willing to contribute to other areas of the hospital to enhance the patient experience. I appreciate how the nursing and medical staff have welcomed me into their team.

What local activities do you enjoy on your days off?
Over the past 12 months I have taken up power walking. I also teach GP registrars and medical students. I note that Kilmore seems to have a significant population of horse riders (including some of our nurses). I have never ridden a horse so before I retire, maybe one day, I will learn to ride!

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The Kilmore and District Hospital

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