

### Message from the CEO

We wish to inform you that the proposal for the voluntary amalgamation of Nathalia, Cobram and Numurkah health services was recently submitted to the Department of Health and Human Services following endorsement from the Boards.

The proposal to join services has been unanimously supported by the three Boards following extensive community and staff consultation, due diligence assessment, and careful consideration of the benefits and issues - with focus on improving health care for each local community and the communities combined.

The health services are working in close consultation with the Department of Health and Human Services and the proposal will be considered by the Minister for Health. The Minister is yet to make a decision.

The independent Due Diligence Report found no major issues of concern on the proposal to join services - this included a comprehensive assessment of clinical, financial, governance, regulatory and human resource matters.

We wish to thank the community and staff for providing valuable input into a range of consultation opportunities, with communications taking place over 18 months.

Overall, we heard from a variety of people through 34 separate meetings; 165 attendees at staff and community engagement sessions in Nathalia, Cobram and Numurkah; over 70 people attending an additional consultation session at Numurkah; 125 attendees at community tents across the three towns; 72 survey responses; thousands reached via social media with 506 engagements; plus 20 letters/submissions received. Publications, letters, advertising and media publicity were also included to reach communities.

The proposal aims to improve service delivery and access to care for local communities – close to home.

There will be no loss of services, staffing or funding. Existing hospitals/facilities will remain in place, in their current locations. Current services will be maintained and enhanced. The local identity and unique characteristics of each facility are valued and will be preserved.

The merger will be business as usual. A CEO has been managing the three entities over the past 12 months and the management structure is well advanced with a range of senior management positions in place across the campuses. The proposal will combine the governance of the three organisations.

In an amalgamated entity, the Board would have local representation from each community and three Community Advisory Groups. Local funding will remain local. Reserves at each organisation will be kept for local priorities. Donations and items will remain with each facility/location.

We welcome ongoing feedback and we are continuing to meet with service groups and community members to hear feedback and answer questions in relation to the proposal.

Community members can make an appointment to come and talk to the CEO or Board Chairs; Email: [ncnhealthservices@humehealth.org.au](mailto:ncnhealthservices@humehealth.org.au); or Write to: NCN Proposal PO Box 252 Cobram 3644 VIC.

Information is ongoing through meetings, newsletters, media and the NCN website: [www.ncnhealthservices.org.au](http://www.ncnhealthservices.org.au)

**Jacque Phillips OAM**  
**Chief Executive Officer**



# Infrastructure Updates

**A number of capital improvements are taking place across the three organisations.**

## All Sites

Solar panel installation will be occurring at each location and aims to enhance energy efficiency and environmental sustainability.

We have participated in a tender for solar panels through Health Purchasing Victoria. Evaluation is currently underway and we expect an outcome in the next few months.

## Cobram

### Irvin House Aged Care

The final stages of planning for the upgrade of Irvin House is well underway.

Consultation is being conducted with residents, families and staff to inform the design and ensure we meet residents' needs and expectations. Staff have also provided valuable input into the design. Consultation is ongoing.

The upgrade works include an extension to the existing facility and the creation of seven new single rooms with ensuites.

The project also includes building an internal courtyard (with garden) and creating a dementia-friendly environment.

This project is funded by a \$1.6 million grant through the Victorian Government's Rural Health Infrastructure Fund.

In the next stage, the plan is to convert six double rooms into single rooms, so residents will have greater privacy.

A funding submission has been made to the Department of Health and Human Services for the renovation of the double rooms.

### Kitchen

A brand new, state of the art kitchen will be built at Cobram District Health, through a Rural Health Infrastructure Fund grant.

The kitchen will continue to provide cooked meals on site to residents and inpatients across the health service.

Staff are participating in the planning and look forward to an improved facility to work in plus brand new equipment.

### Mechanical Upgrade

We are in the final stage of the mechanical upgrade at Cobram, including the replacement of the boiler system, installation of new air conditioning into Irvin House, and updated air conditioning and heating throughout the hospital.

The replacement of the air conditioning system at Irvin House enables each resident to control the temperature in their rooms.

The entire main switchboard is being upgraded to replace the old system.

### Information Technology

We are in the final stages of planning for the upgrade of the wireless Information Technology system, enabling wifi access across the whole facility.

## Nathalia

A car park shade is being constructed at Nathalia. This will be a fixed structure and the roof will include solar panels.

Replacement of Vinyl flooring is currently underway.

Air conditioning was installed into the aged care facility.

# Infrastructure Updates

## Numurkah

### Numurkah Pioneers Memorial Lodge

The first stage of planning for the redevelopment of Numurkah Pioneers Memorial Lodge is underway. Interviews have been conducted for the master plan and feasibility study and the tender has been awarded to Bamford Architects. We are currently in the process of finalising the contracts.

The entire project including master planning, feasibility study and redevelopment stages will include extensive consultation. The initial stage of consultation will commence in late June-early July. This will involve residents and families, community and staff/volunteers.

The master plan and feasibility study process is expected to take six months.

Part of the process involves selecting the most appropriate site and structure for the redevelopment. Site investigation will consider the existing site or another part of land within the Numurkah District Health Service grounds. Once this is completed the feasibility study will take place, followed by the tendering of works and construction.

This project is self-funded. Numurkah District Health Service will use reserves to fund the capital project.

### Karinya Upgrade

The renovation of Karinya Nursing Home has commenced. Moretto Builders was appointed and commenced on 29 April. James Seymour is the architect.

Several consultation meetings have been held with residents, families and staff in the design of the extension.

There is no change to the front entrance of the building. However, there is activity taking place at the rear access and back car park.

A noticeboard has been placed in the Karinya foyer to provide regular updates on works taking place, including any potential disruption or noise on a particular day.

Works will include the extension of the west dining room and renovation of the kitchenette and dining area with an activities kitchen for residents to enjoy. The new facilities will enable residents to prepare food, cook and enjoy meals - activities cherished by many.

The lounge will provide an extended area for residents to enjoy and a quiet space for meeting with friends and family.

The new facilities will bring a modern, bright addition to Karinya, to enhance the lifestyle and experiences of residents.

The works were made possible through a successful State Government refurbishment grant along with funding allocated by the Numurkah District Health Service Board.

# Updates

## Studer: Leadership & Cultural Development

Nathalia, Cobram and Numurkah have partnered with the Studer Group to shape each organisation's performance, leadership approach and organisation culture.

The program focuses on service quality, consumers, values, behaviours, development and ongoing improvement. It is based on evidence based leadership and includes organisation strategies, 90 day goal setting, work plans, monthly accountability meetings and leader rounding with staff.

The program aims to enhance leadership and cultural development at each location with a focus on goal setting, developing projects, team building and service enhancements.

Programs include Leadership Training/ Emerging Leaders, Building Capability in Project Management and Cultural Development.

## Training

Family violence training has been rolled out across the three organisations and a joined up project team is in place. Occupational Violence and Aggression training is also underway.

Shared cultural diversity training and LGBTI training is being held for the three locations.

Shared orientation is now conducted for staff and volunteers. This is supported by site-specific orientation.

## Risk Management

The three organisations have been working with the Victorian Managed Insurance Authority through a combined workshop to update risk registers, undertake training, and review policies, procedures and continuous improvement plans.

## Partnership Projects

The Better Care Victoria Urgent Care Project – "Choose Well, Feel Better" has been extended to the end of 2019. The respiratory project and mental health services project have also been extended across the three services.

## Accreditation

National Safety and Quality Health Service (NSQHS) Accreditation for Numurkah District Health Service will be held on 4 and 5 June.

Numurkah District Health Service had an aged care unannounced visit on 3 April for assessment with the Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission. The services are operating well and meeting all standards at Karinya and the Numurkah Pioneers Memorial Lodge.

Nathalia underwent full aged care accreditation in January and met all accreditation standards.

NSQHS Accreditation for Nathalia District Hospital will be held on 3 and 4 September.

Cobram District Health had a unannounced visit in late January, and demonstrated safe and quality care.

Cobram will have NSQHS Accreditation in 2020.

## Urgent Care

At each site, we are reviewing our urgent care clinical pathways and maintaining our strong working relationship with GV Health, Ambulance Victoria and local doctors.

### My Emergency Doctor App at Numurkah

In Urgent Care, a Registered Nurse will currently undertake a thorough assessment of any patient who presents to determine if they can provide treatment or advice, or if further consultation is needed by a medical practitioner. As an unfunded Urgent Care Centre we rely on local GPs who provide an on call service most days of the week.

Numurkah District Health Service has commenced the use of the "My Emergency Doctor" App in the Urgent Care Centre, which allows you to have a video consultation with a specialist emergency doctor within minutes, 24/7, from wherever you are in Australia. The emergency doctors are experts in making rapid, accurate assessments of all medical emergencies to assess a situation via the built-in video on a smart phone or tablet. They can write prescriptions, order X-rays and pathology tests, refer patients to other specialists, or send them straight to the emergency department when needed. These expert doctors are Fellows of the Australasian College for Emergency Medicine, or FACEMs and are the most senior doctors who work in hospital emergency departments.