

vitality

WHERE HEALTH MEETS HEART

Autumn | 2026



Your impact

The new FibroScan machine is now
in use at Austin Health

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Acknowledgement of Traditional Owners

Austin Health acknowledges the Traditional Owners of the lands we live and work on, the Wurundjeri people of the Kulin Nation. We pay our respects to Elders and the ongoing connections of the oldest living culture in the world. We support the important role First Nations Peoples continuously hold in our society and are committed to providing culturally safe services that will assist us in achieving our vision for reconciliation.

The power of giving

Thank you for being part of our generous donor community.

Because of you, Austin Health can go above and beyond what is possible as a public healthcare provider. Your support helps us better meet our purpose of helping people live healthy, productive, and fulfilled lives.

Our community turns to Austin Health, seeking not only excellent clinical care but also compassion, dignity, and hope. Your generosity helps make this possible. It ensures that our teams can deliver patient-centred care that is inclusive, respectful, and safe.

Your giving supports leading-edge clinical care, vital training programs, and groundbreaking research - all of which contribute to better outcomes for people facing some of life's most complex medical challenges. From the emergency department to specialist wards, your impact is felt in every corner of our hospitals.

We are truly grateful for your continued support. Philanthropy is essential to driving innovation and ensuring excellence in care.

You are a vital part of Austin Health community. We warmly invite you to continue your support. Together, we can achieve even more.



“
These efforts are the foundation of everything we achieve and sit at the heart of what makes Austin Health so special.”

As we move into the autumn months, I want to take this opportunity to reflect on the extraordinary efforts of our Austin Health community throughout 2025, and the shared purpose that continues to guide our work.

Across our health service our staff have continued to demonstrate immense dedication, compassion and resilience, providing outstanding care to patients and our community. These efforts are the foundation of everything we achieve, and sit at the heart of what makes Austin Health so special.

Our community's generosity has also been a defining feature of the year. Through our Christmas Appeal, we raised more than \$280,000, with strong support from our donor community and the Diamond Creek Opportunity Shop. Olivia's Walk for Wellness once again brought people together in support of patient

care and wellness. Together, we raised over \$1.3 million in support of the Olivia Newton-John Cancer and Wellness Centre and we couldn't have done it without you.

Your generosity enables us to support the vital work of creating environments where care extends beyond clinical treatment to include wellbeing, dignity and hope. In this edition of *Vitality*, you will see the impact of that support reflected across our health service, and the many ways your involvement continues to make a meaningful difference.

Best wishes,

Jodie Geissler
Chief Executive Officer, Austin Health

TALBOT MAKER SPACE HELPING RECOVERY

The Talbot Maker Space at the Royal Talbot Rehabilitation Centre is transforming rehabilitation through creativity. Supported by a donation from The Evelyn Margaret Waterworth Endowment (Perpetual Foundation), new machinery has made the studio even safer, quieter and more accessible for patients with cognitive and physical disabilities.

Maintenance time has halved and productivity has tripled, allowing more participants to create furniture and artistic pieces as part of recovery.

Staff, volunteers and participants extend heartfelt thanks for helping create a space where recovery, confidence and creativity grow together.



Patient using new machinery

“This donation has helped create an accessible studio where people’s physical and cognitive rehabilitation can happen in the creation of beautiful objects. Participants garner a sense of pride, learn new skills and develop greater understanding of their potential following illness or injury.” – Michael O’Dwyer, Maker Space Program Coordinator



Patient Salih

SUPPORTING TIMELY ENDOSCOPY CARE

For patients like Salih, timely access to endoscopy can be life changing. Donations from our recent Christmas Appeal will help finalise our new Endoscopy Centre, opening later this year, and provide essential equipment required for safe anaesthesia-supported endoscopy, including new anaesthesia machines, intubation trolleys and bluebell trolleys.

This support will enable earlier diagnosis, reduced waiting times and access to high-quality care for more patients and families, strengthening health outcomes across our community.



FibroScan

Clinicians unveiling FibroScan machine

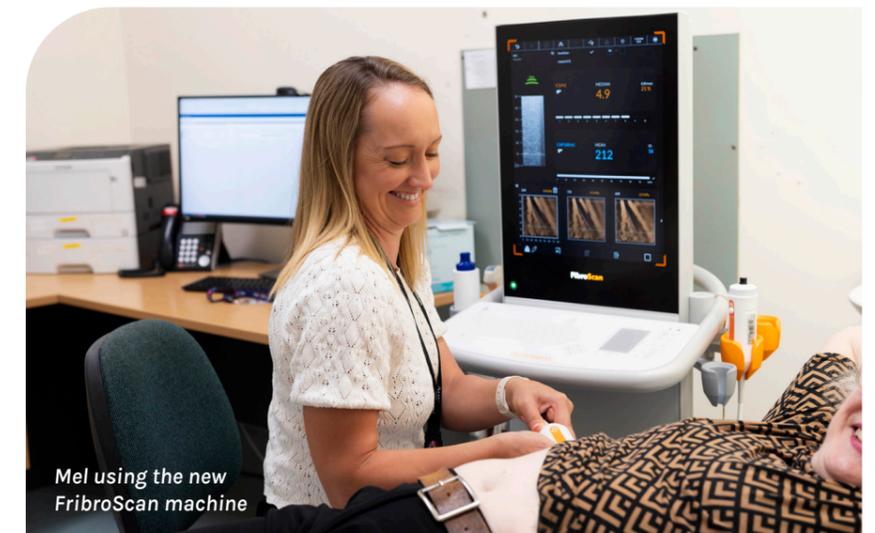
Earlier detection, stronger prevention

The new FibroScan machine is now in use at Austin Health, expanding our ability to identify liver disease earlier and support prevention.

Delivered through the 2025 Tax Appeal, with the support of a generous grant from the H.T. Pamphilon Fund, this advanced, non-invasive technology is already strengthening care for patients across our community.

Liver disease often progresses silently, with many people unaware they are unwell until the condition becomes serious.

FibroScan enables clinicians to assess liver health quickly and accurately, helping identify disease earlier and allowing treatment and monitoring to begin sooner. This focus on early intervention plays a critical role in preventing long-term complications and improving



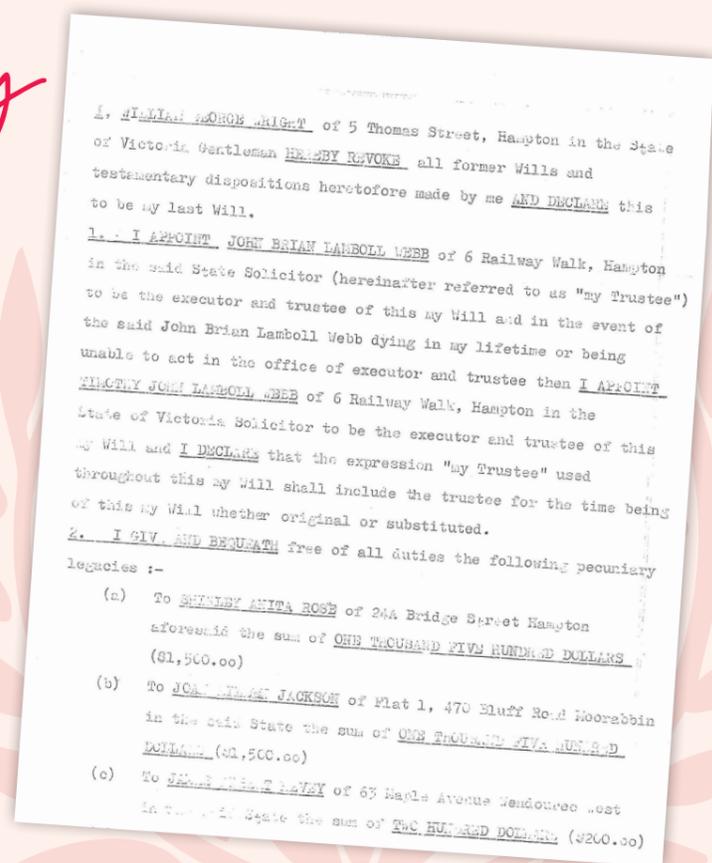
Mel using the new FibroScan machine

“This FibroScan is a very special machine that will allow us to extend the care that we provide to so many more patients in the prevention of serious liver disease. This state-of-the-art machine allows us to provide advanced therapies to our patients. Thank you so much, we couldn’t have done it without you, we are so grateful.” – A/Prof Josephine Grace

outcomes for patients. Assoc Prof Josephine Grace, Director of Gastroenterology, highlighted the significance of the new machine for patients and clinicians alike.

A legacy that continues to care

When Doctor William George Wright wrote his Will in 1979, he planned carefully for the future. After providing for friends and a life tenancy for a Mentone property, he directed that the balance of his estate support Austin Hospital, specifically care for female bone tuberculosis patients, or if that ward no longer existed, the Operating Theatre.



Dr Wright passed away in 1981, but his generosity has continued across generations. Finalised in December 2025, his bequest totalled \$830,000. Today, his gift is helping fund vital equipment including Sonopet surgical technology for neuro and liver procedures, Glidescopes to support safe anaesthesia intubation, and a steriliser trolley supporting safe instrument processing.

While little is known about Dr Wright's personal connection to Austin, his foresight means his

compassion is still improving patient care more than 40 years later.

Tony Balfe, who administered the estate, reflected on the extraordinary journey of the gift:

“It seems amazing that Dr Wright died 44 years ago, and yet his estate was able to make a difference to the work of the Austin Hospital. It has been a journey worth all the effort.”
- Tony Balfe

His legacy is a powerful reminder that gifts in Wills can shape healthcare for generations to come.

Through Austin Health's partnership with Safewill, you can write your will online with discounted or free access, including a legal review.

Even a small gift can make a big difference. Find out more information on our website.

For a confidential discussion, please contact bequests@austin.org.au or 9496 5753.

PHILANTHROPY ADVANCING NURSING EXCELLENCE AT AUSTIN HEALTH

Did you know Austin Health offers one of the most significant nursing scholarships in Australia – made possible entirely through philanthropy?

Established in 2019, the Beverley Briese Nursing Scholarship was created through the generosity of long-time supporter Beverley Briese to advance nursing excellence and nurse-led research.



Recipients with Beverley Briese

Valued at \$55,000, the scholarship enables outstanding nurses to explore important questions of clinical practice through study, research and national or international learning. Recipients return to

Austin Health to share their knowledge, strengthening care for patients and families. Opportunities like this begin with philanthropy and grow through community support.

Together, your generosity empowers our nurses, enhances patient care, and strengthens the community we serve.

COMMUNITY FUNDRAISING TURNING LOSS INTO HOPE

Last October, Alexandra and the Abound Group hosted a Women in Business luncheon at the W Hotel, bringing together more than 130 attendees to raise vital funds for the Olivia Newton-John Cancer & Wellness Centre.

Alexandra chose to support the ONJ Centre after losing her sister Michelle to melanoma in 2019,

and later her father to the same disease. She shared how Michelle spoke often about the hope she felt knowing ONJ was there, even during the darkest moments.

Fundraising initiatives like Alexandra's are incredibly important to Austin Health. They help fund wellness programs, research and patient support

services, while also offering individuals a powerful and fulfilling way to honour loved ones and create lasting impact.

As Alexandra's story reminds us, prevention matters too. Regular skin checks are a simple but important step in detecting melanoma early, when treatment is most effective.



Alexandra supporting the ONJ Centre

“It's very personal for me, and so important to partner with an organisation that offers hope to all cancer patients and their carers.”
- Alexandra



Participants at the walk

Highlights from 2025 Walk and Run for Wellness

A community united in compassion

Between April 2025 and 31 October 2025, we raised a total of \$1,310,846.90 through Olivia's Walk and Run for Wellness, community fundraising and other generous efforts - to make this incredible result possible.

This outstanding result reflects the generosity of our community and its shared commitment to supporting people affected by cancer.

SUPPORTING THE WHOLE PERSON

Olivia's Walk for Wellness is the signature fundraising event for Austin Health's Olivia Newton-John Cancer and Wellness Centre (ONJ Centre). Inspired by Olivia's belief in caring for the

whole person - mind, body, spirit and heart - the ONJ Centre provides free, evidence-based cancer wellness therapies that support healing, build resilience and help patients feel empowered, supported and never alone.

With limited government funding available, every philanthropic dollar raised goes directly towards delivering wellness therapies that support patients alongside their medical treatment.

Helen's story: finding strength in wellness

When Helen booked a routine mammogram, she never expected it would lead to a breast cancer diagnosis. A single mum of four, her first thoughts were for her children and how she would support them through treatment.

While Helen received excellent medical care, the Wellness Centre became a vital part of her recovery, supporting her physical and emotional wellbeing alongside treatment.

Last year, Helen walked alongside her children, partner and friends in Olivia's Walk and Run for Wellness, to give back to the Centre that supported her through one of the most challenging times of her life.

“

From the first day of treatment, it wasn't just about fighting cancer. It was about restoring wellness - body, mind and spirit. I learnt things from the wellness staff that will stay with me for life.”

- Helen



Helen with Tottie and Chloe



Margaret and Gary

The ultimate gift of love

After 52 years of marriage, Margaret and Gary have faced life's milestones side by side. Recently, they reached one of their most profound yet, a successful living donor kidney transplant.

Gary had lived with chronic kidney disease since birth and required a transplant to improve his quality of life. When the opportunity for a living donation arose, Margaret did not hesitate. Initially told she was ineligible to donate due to her age and weight, she set herself a goal. Driven by love and determination, she lost 17 kilograms to meet the criteria.

"A healthy weight is an important consideration for living kidney donation, as it helps minimise surgical risk and protect the donor's long-term health," said Dr Sia Pefanis, nephrologist and transplant specialist. "Margaret's determination is truly exceptional."

The transplant was performed in December and was successful. Today, both Margaret and Gary are recovering well, supported by their care teams, families, and each other.

Philanthropic support plays a vital role in enabling outcomes like this. Contributions to Austin Health help fund the work of the Australian Centre for Transplantation Excellence and Research (ACTER), supporting living donors, advancing transplantation research and strengthening care for patients and families. **Through philanthropy, supporters are helping more people receive life-changing transplants and more time together.**



Learn more about ACTER's work at austin.org.au/ACTER

Q&A MEET OUR WONDERFUL VOLUNTEER - TINA

You may have received a Grateful Phone Call from the wonderful Tina, one of our dedicated Foundation volunteers. You can see some of these messages on the back of this magazine. Tina's warmth and genuine care make every conversation meaningful, and we are incredibly grateful for the kindness she brings to each call.

Here, you'll have the opportunity to get to know Tina a little better.

Q What motivated you to volunteer for the thank-you calling role?

A I love speaking with people from all types of backgrounds and hearing their stories of connection to Austin Health. Even though each connection is very different, they all have one thing in common — deep gratitude to the doctors and nurses who helped them through an illness or that of a family member.

Q Was there something specific about this role that appealed to you?

A I used to work in airline reservations, so I had lots of experience dealing with people on the phone. I'm delighted to put my old skills to good use. Did you know that you can hear a smile on the phone?

Q Do you have a personal connection to the hospital or our cause?

A My personal connection to the Austin goes back to 1967 when my father was a spinal patient there. Despite being told that he would never walk again, the Austin gave him the chance of rehabilitation and he walked for another 50 years. My first "volunteer role" was a 5 year-old "page turner" for the quadriplegic patients so that they could read books.

Q Have there been any moments that stood out to you?

A Speaking with a donor who actually had the same experience that my father did; same specialist spinal doctors and rehabilitation, and he is still walking! We both said that we had tears in our eyes as stories like that were quite rare back then.

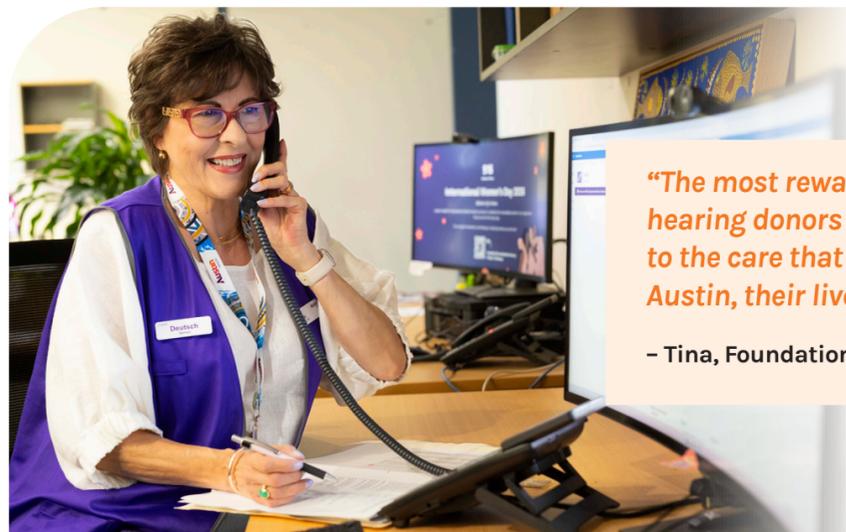
Q What has been the most rewarding part of the role for you?

A Hearing donors tell me that thanks to the care that they received at the Austin, their lives are good again.

Q What is your favourite hobby?

A I love knitting, particularly when I am making something for a friend.

Thank you **Tina and all our amazing Austin Health Volunteers!**



"The most rewarding part is hearing donors tell me that thanks to the care that they received at the Austin, their lives are good again."

- Tina, Foundation volunteer

Yes! I would like to donate to Austin Health today.

Donations of \$2 or more are tax deductible

\$ASK1 \$ASK2 \$ASK3

My best gift \$ _____

Monthly Give once

Please find enclosed my Cheque / Money Order* (payable to Austin Health)

Please debit my VISA MasterCard AMEX

Card Number _____

Cardholder Name _____ Expiry _____ / _____

Signature _____



PLEASE CORRECT THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION:

Donor ID _____

Name _____

Address _____

Suburb _____

Postcode _____

Phone _____

Email _____

I prefer to be contacted by email

GIVING IN YOUR WILL

I am considering a gift to Austin Health in my Will.

I have already mentioned Austin Health in my Will.

Other ways to give:



Austin Health Foundation
Locked Bag 25, Heidelberg VIC 3084

(03) 9496 5753

austin.org.au/donate

*Cheques are being phased out across Australia by the end of 2028 - with some institutions already beginning the process.

Join our Regular Giving Program

– a simple, secure way to make a lasting impact.



Start your regular gift today and help deliver better care, every day, for every patient.

Regular giving provides a reliable and sustainable source of funding to support world-class healthcare, innovative research, and vital education initiatives.

By making regular gifts, you'll help shape the future of patient care.

“

I have been donating to Olivia's Wellness Centre for at least 23 years as well as other areas of your wonderful hospital from time to time. Your endoscopy centre sounds fantastic and will help many people. Great job.”

- LORRAINE

“

I have had procedures done privately but with improved services and great gastrointestinal team at Austin. I would look at having them at Austin instead.”

- ANN

“

I was so well looked after by everyone from triage to my discharge following open heart surgery on 3rd September last year. I love the Austin.”

- ALAN

Germahl was really happy with a thank you call. He said “no-one rings to say thank-you.”

Eva really appreciated the call and especially to know that we can go ahead with setting up the endoscopy centre.

With Thanks

Heartfelt messages from our supporters remind us how grateful we are for your continued generosity and commitment.

Stay in touch

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ABN: 96 237 388 063

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