

# Giving Insight

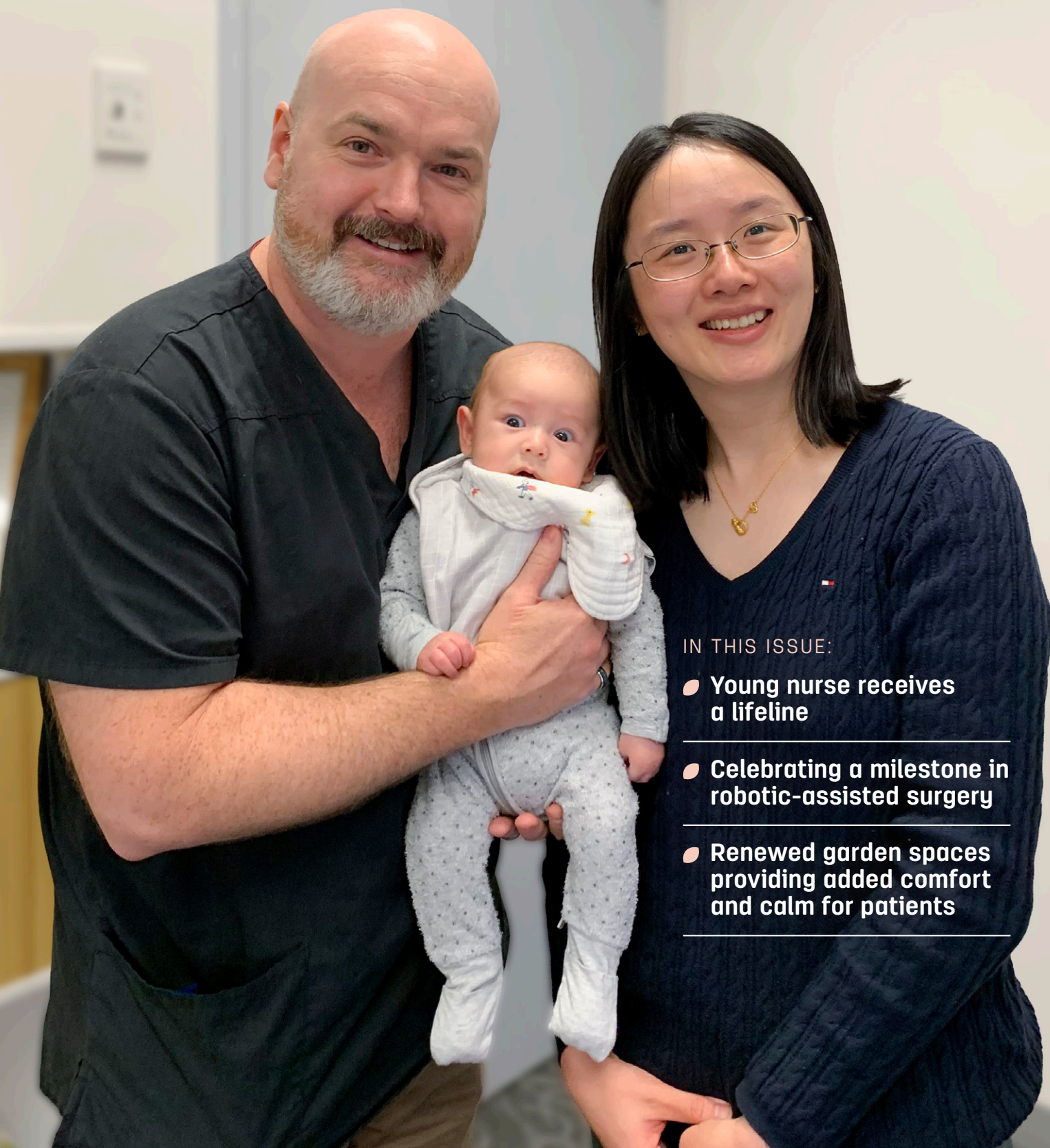


ST JOHN OF GOD  
Foundation

Transforming health care for **humanity**

**AUTUMN 2026**

ST JOHN OF GOD FOUNDATION



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- **Celebrating a milestone in robotic-assisted surgery**
- **Renewed garden spaces providing added comfort and calm for patients**

# At the heart of our care

Caregivers throughout St John of God Health Care bring our shared Mission to life in many different ways - through compassionate care, dedicated service, and by fostering the generosity that supports it.

In this edition, three St John of God Foundation team members reflect on the moments that inspire them and the purpose they find in their work.

## How did you come to work in fundraising?

People find their way into fundraising for many reasons, often through a shared desire to help others or to respond to something deeply personal. This is why we find our workplace is filled with people from diverse backgrounds, each shaped by their own pivotal moments.

My own path was shaped by family illness, which taught me that the most precious things in life are time, love and good health. Playing even a small

part in giving someone hope for a better quality of life, or more time with loved ones, is both motivating and humbling. This sense of purpose is woven through every story in this newsletter. It also reflects why gratitude is at the heart of so many gifts we receive from people whose lives have been touched by compassionate care in our hospitals and services.

It's this shared hope, between those who give and those

who receive, that continues to inspire me and keeps me grounded in why this work matters.

**Rachel Bruechle**  
*Director of Community Engagement*



## How do you hope our work makes a positive impact for patients, families or the community?

Having recently transitioned from educational fundraising into the healthcare sector, I am really enjoying the personal impact philanthropy has on the patients in our care. I hope our work strengthens the support that patients and families feel during their most vulnerable moments. By connecting our donors with projects that enhance patient-centred care, compassion and excellence, we help create real and immediate benefits for our community. What inspires me most is the feeling you get when you walk into a St John of God hospital, it is felt in the extra steps our caregivers take, and the mission and values lived each day. For me, this is how I know I've found somewhere very special to work.

**Halina Dorward**  
*Associate Director Philanthropy*



## What do you love most about being part of St John of God Foundation?

What I love most about being part of St John of God Foundation is knowing that the work we do directly transforms people's lives.

Every day, I'm surrounded by people who genuinely care, and it's inspiring to be part of an organisation where compassion is lived, not just spoken.

As the Finance Manager, I'm motivated by the responsibility of ensuring strong stewardship of donor funds and enabling resources to be used where they can make the greatest impact.

It's incredibly rewarding to know that the work I do behind the scenes helps deliver better patient care, advance medical research and support the community in meaningful, lasting ways.

**Meeta Kumar**  
*Finance Manager*



# Young nurse receives a lifeline

**When Yuting graduated with her Bachelor of Nursing, she was full of dreams - helping others in the Emergency Department, building her career, and one day starting a family of her own.**



▲ Dr Cameron McLaren and patient Yuting.

But early one Spring, everything changed. After experiencing bouts of severe abdominal pain, scans revealed a large tumour in her colon.

And just as she was starting her nursing career, Yuting suddenly found herself on the other side of the hospital bed - as a patient.

Her medical training helped her understand the diagnosis, but nothing could soften the shock. Yuting looked into every possible option, determined to fight. But the immunotherapy treatment that offered her the best chance of recovery was financially out of reach. The only alternative, chemotherapy, threatened her dream of becoming a mother someday.

*"I was desperate," Yuting recalls. "I wanted to live, but I also wanted to have a future, a family."*

At that critical moment, her oncologist, Dr Cameron McLaren, turned to St John of God Foundation, applying for support through the 'Gifts of Hope' program to help Yuting access the treatment she needed.

Thanks to the kindness of donors, Yuting began immunotherapy, and for the first time in months, there was hope.

Month by month, the tumour began to shrink.

Nearly three years later, Yuting received the news she had been wishing for, she was disease-free.

In the time since, life has flourished. Yuting married her love, Daniel, and welcomed their first baby, a little boy named Cameron, in honour of the oncologist who fought so hard to give her a second chance at life.

*"I am so grateful to have met Dr McLaren and to receive the treatment made possible through Gifts of Hope," Yuting says. "Your donations gave me hope when I had none. You've not only helped me, but my family and everyone I will go on to care for as a nurse. I promise to pay it forward, and to raise my son to be kind and give back to others."*

Dr McLaren shares, *"Her case will absolutely be one of the highlights of my career. Everyone who contributed should be proud, you didn't just save a patient, you helped build a family."*

Without the compassion of people like you, Yuting's story could have ended very differently. Instead, it's a story of hope, gratitude, and the incredible ripple effect your kindness can create.



▲ Baby Cameron, named after the oncologist who helped to save his mother's life.

**Your generosity can help ensure patients receive the care, treatment, and perhaps even a second chance when they feel they have nowhere else to turn.**

**To make a gift in support of vital care, please visit [www.sjogfoundation.org.au](http://www.sjogfoundation.org.au) call 1800 281 288, or scan the QR code.**



# 100 reasons to celebrate

## Robotic surgery milestone for regional patients

St John of God Bendigo Hospital celebrated its 100th robotic-assisted surgical case using the da Vinci Xi system, just months after the program's first case on 12 March 2025. With strong clinical uptake and community support, the donor-funded robot has brought world-class, minimally invasive care closer to home for people across central and northern Victoria.

Robotic-assisted surgery can mean smaller incisions, less pain, shorter hospital stays and faster recovery for suitable patients - reducing the need to travel to Melbourne for care.

Chief Executive Michael Hogan said the pace of progress reflects growing regional capability.

*"From our first case on 12 March to our 100th today, the momentum is remarkable. It speaks to the skill of our surgeons, theatre and nursing teams - and to a community that believed Bendigo could lead. We're carefully expanding into appropriate specialties and training local talent to sustain the service for years to come."*

The hospital will continue developing the program in line with patient need and safety, partnering with clinicians and caregivers to deliver exceptional outcomes for the region.

**Director of Business Development**  
Anna Hill thanked donors, sponsors and partners.

***"This achievement belongs to Bendigo. To our major donors, philanthropic families, corporate sponsors and every person who gave - thank you. Your generosity keeps families close, eases the burden of travel and invests in compassionate, high-quality care for our region. As we power toward more cases, we remain focused on evidence-based growth and exceptional patient experience."***



▲ Bendigo caregivers celebrate milestone surgery with the da Vinci robot.

# Spaces of calm nurturing connection and comfort

Dad (Steven) and son (Brendan) grateful ►  
for the calming space.



**Newly enhanced outdoor spaces at St John of God Bunbury Hospital are now complete, bringing comfort and calm to patients and their families at Grenada, the 15-bed palliative care ward.**

With calming greenery and inviting seating, the outdoor spaces next to each room give patients and families the opportunity to step outside, share precious moments, and find peace during their care journey. These spaces now reflect the compassionate care our Bunbury caregivers provide

every day. Care centred on dignity, comfort, and wellbeing.

The transformation introduced vibrant plants, comfortable seating, and soothing wall art, creating warm, welcoming areas that encourage reflection, togetherness, and serenity.

*"It makes me really happy to be able to be outside. I've been enjoying the space to feel the morning sun and the fresh air. When my kids come to visit me, they can run around and get some time away from*

*the hospital room,"* says patient Brendan.

To everyone who helped make this project possible, including Southern Ports, Kerman Charitable Foundation, and the many kind donors who supported our Christmas Appeal, we thank you again for supporting this truly magical project. Your kindness and compassion have created meaningful moments for patients and families who need it most.



## A place to grow

**Empowering young parents and their babies for a brighter future**

It was a proud moment to officially open Horizon House West Leederville - a new facility providing safe housing and holistic support for young parents and their babies who are homeless or at risk of homelessness. More than a home, Horizon House offers wrap-around services to help young parents aged 16-22 continue their education, build life skills, find employment, and stay socially connected.

*"Pregnancy and early parenting are pivotal times in life, and without the right support, they can also be very vulnerable times. St John of God Horizon House West Leederville will give young parents not only a safe place to live, but also the skills, connections and confidence to build a brighter future for themselves and their children,"* said St John of God Social Outreach CEO Susan Cantwell.

For more than 20 years, Horizon House has helped young people across WA and Victoria build independence and stability. This new home is the



▲ **At the official opening, pictured (L-R):**

*Sister Una O'Loughlin; the Hon Kerry Sanderson AC CVO; Bryan Pyne; the Hon Hannah Beazley MLA; the Hon Neville Owen AO; Sophie Lawson; Susan Cantwell; and Reverend Heri Leba CSsR.*

13th Horizon House and extends that support to more young parents - offering healing, hope, and dignity to those most in need.

This project was made possible through the generosity of our supporters and a transformational Lotterywest grant.

**Learn more about the Horizon House program at [www.sjog.org.au/horizonhouse](http://www.sjog.org.au/horizonhouse)**

# Calming space for healing and reflection

**Generous community support transforms hospital garden into a sanctuary of serenity.**

The Ivy Suite day oncology unit at St John of God Subiaco Hospital sees countless patients and families pass through its doors daily, each carrying their own hopes, fears and quiet strength. In the hospital's main courtyard sits a long-established garden area waiting to offer a moment of calm. But after years of constant footsteps and weather, this space was in need of some gentle care too.

Thanks to generous donations made through St John of God Foundation, and the in-kind support of Tim Davies Landscaping, the garden has been beautifully renewed. The team donated their time, expertise and even new plants, thoughtfully redesigning the area to restore its warmth and welcome. The space has been reborn as the **Waalbiirning (Healing) Garden**, honouring the rich and enduring cultural heritage of the Whadjuk Noongar people.

Caregivers, patients and their loved ones now have a sanctuary to sit, breathe, and share precious moments together. In this space, where a few minutes of calm can mean the world, the renewed garden has become a place of comfort, reflection, and hope.

We are deeply grateful for this heartfelt contribution, and to our community of supporters whose generosity continues to make spaces like this possible. Your kindness helps us surround patients with extra comfort and compassion when they need it most.



▲ **At the garden blessing, pictured (L-R):**

Sister Elizabeth Bones, Sister Eugenia Brennan, Dr Siobhan Galos, Sister Una O'Loughlin, Sister Catherine McGuane, Tina Chinery, Fr Jude D'Rosario, Sister Isobel Moran AM, Karlee Guest.



▲ Four circular mosaic artworks adorn the wall and paving. Titled Koort Boodja (Heart of Country), they celebrate the sacred roles of Fire, Water, Earth and Air, in healing, balance and connection, in nurturing wellbeing. Created by Noongar/Yamatji mother-daughter artists Emily Rose and Robyn Jean in collaboration with Chris Rose and Scape-ism.

📷 Michelle Lee from Tim Davies Landscaping.



**Scan the QR code to read more about the space and the traditional healing plants chosen for this garden.**

**Bequest plaque presentation, Ivy Suite Team** ►  
**pictured (L-R):** Tracy Cecchini, Bec Rekowski,  
Tracy Milne, Jenn Fraser, Ash De Marie.

# A gentler path through chemotherapy

**How scalp cooling can help patients hold on to identity, comfort and control.**



Thanks to a generous legacy gift from the *Estate of Joseph Henry*, St John of God Subiaco Hospital has been able to purchase a new Paxman Scalp Cooling System, enabling more people to access this highly sought-after cancer care treatment.

For many people, hair loss is one of the most visible and heartbreaking parts of cancer treatment. It can change how patients see themselves, how the world sees them, and impact their confidence in facing the road ahead. At a time when life can already feel uncertain, losing their hair can take away yet another piece of control.

For some patients, scalp cooling caps can offer something precious back.

By helping to reduce chemotherapy-related hair loss, scalp cooling caps can support patients to hold on to their sense of identity and dignity.

It can also give families comfort in seeing their loved one retain some normalcy during an incredibly difficult journey. And for many, this emotional support makes treatment feel just a little more bearable.

Over the past year alone, 101 patients accessed scalp cooling during 468 chemotherapy sessions at St John of God Subiaco Hospital. With demand fast outgrowing capacity, the new Paxman unit will offer greater access to cooling cap treatment, but more units are still needed.

With your support, we can provide three more scalp cooling machines for patients across our Subiaco and Murdoch hospitals, helping patients maintain their sense of identity, confidence, and dignity during chemotherapy.

Our caregivers see, every day, the emotional toll that treatment can take, and the hope that's within reach.

*"Access to scalp cooling gives patients the chance to reduce chemotherapy-related hair loss, helping preserve dignity and a sense of normalcy during treatment. These machines support not just physical wellbeing, but emotional resilience,"* says Tracy Milne, Nurse Unit Manager - Ivy Suite, Subiaco Hospital.

*"For many patients, the cooling cap provides not just the chance to keep their hair, but a sense of control at a time when so much feels out of their hands. Having more systems would mean we can offer this choice to more people—and that truly matters,"* says Tanya O'Connor, Nurse Unit Manager, Murdoch Hospital.

With your support, we can extend this gift of comfort, choice and dignity to more patients who need it.

**To help bring comfort, care, and hope to patients with cancer, go to [www.sjogfoundation.org.au](http://www.sjogfoundation.org.au) call 1800 281 288 or scan the QR code.**





▲ Sisters of St John of God, Adelaide Terrace, 1896.

# Acknowledging 130 years of care

**Every story has a beginning, and ours goes back to Western Australia's gold boom when Bishop Matthew Gibney called on the Sisters of St John of God in Ireland to help care for the sick. Eight women answered the plea, arriving in Perth on 25 November 1895. This date marks the beginning of the Sisters' health care ministry in Australia.**

The Sisters of St John of God immediately began nursing from their first convent in Perth and soon extended their care to Coolgardie and Kalgoorlie. In 1898, they moved to Subiaco where they established their permanent home in Australia and opened St John of God Subiaco Hospital. Their numbers grew as more Sisters arrived from Ireland and local women joined the congregation.

Over the decades, the Sisters of St John of God expanded their reach into the Kimberley and regional towns in Victoria, New South Wales and Western Australia. Between the 1930s and 1970s, they introduced maternity care and specialist services such as pathology, orthopaedics, mental health, oncology and cardiac care.

In 1989, the Sisters of St John of God united their nine hospitals in Australia as one organisation, ensuring a strong foundation for their future. While the Sisters of St John of God had stepped back from formal roles in St John of God Health Care by the mid-2010s, their influence remains deeply woven into our culture of care.

Today, we celebrate their 130 years of extraordinary service and thank the Sisters of St John of God for the gift of St John of God Health Care. As we continue to provide care across Australia and beyond, we do so with the same spirit of compassion and dedication that guided them for decades.



▲ Women's Ward, St John of God Subiaco Hospital, c. 1950.



▲ Maternity care, St John of God Ballarat Hospital, c. 1970.



# Lake shines with love

In early December, the lake by St John of God Murdoch Hospital was transformed into a place of love and remembrance, in the cherished annual event **Light up the Lake with Love**. Families and friends who have lost loved ones came together in a safe, gentle and inclusive space to share memories and find comfort during what can be a difficult time of year.

As the lake and surrounding trees were lit, the glow created a beautiful tribute that shimmered throughout the Christmas season, displaying a symbol of ongoing love and connection.

Special keepsake memorial candles were available for purchase, with a portion of proceeds supporting people receiving palliative care at the hospital or hospice. Each candle helped bring a little more light to those in need.

We are deeply grateful to everyone who contributed and attended, and we hope all who joined us found moments of peace, comfort, and connection during this meaningful community gathering.



▲ Writing messages to much missed loved ones.



▲ Light up the Lake with Love ceremony in the marquee.



▲ Messages to loved ones on the remembrance tree.



▲ Director of Nursing Sarah-Jayne Powell lighting symbolic candles.

# Community spotlight: Champions of change

**We'd like to extend our heartfelt thanks to the incredible community members, local organisations, and businesses who have recently donated, led or supported fundraising efforts.**

Your support means the world to us, and even more to the patients and families whose care and comfort you help make possible every day. Together, we can turn every act of generosity into hope and comfort for those who need it most.

## Silvana's fundraiser for oncology

Grateful for the kindness and care she received from all caregivers during her cancer treatment at St John of God Geelong Hospital, Silvana wanted to give back to the hospital, to help ensure others can experience the same compassionate support when they need it most. Silvana put a call out to friends and family who came together for this fundraiser.

***"You are amazing in the care you provide, from the wonderful Doctors and Nurses and the volunteers who make sure we have food, coffee, tea, and so much more. Thank you all, so very much! From Silvana S."***



## Hope painted forward

In a very thoughtful gesture, landscape and seascape artist David has donated part of the sales of his artwork and all community donations to St John of God Murdoch Community Hospice and St John of God Murdoch Hospital Cancer Centre, turning his creativity into hope for others. David is a patient at the Cancer Centre and is grateful for the care he has been receiving and wanted to give back to the service so that others walking a similar path will also be able to access the care they need.

The mentioned artwork was part of Armadale Hill's Arts Trail. We are sincerely thankful for David's heartfelt contribution and to everyone who supported this cause.



## Challenge for a cause

Each year, F45 East Perth and F45 Victoria Park hosts their "Challenge For A Cause" fundraiser, and this year we're so grateful to be one of the beneficiaries. Team member Kate chose St John of God Foundation to give thanks for the exceptional care she received during her cancer journey.

Over 45 days, teams trained and prepared for the big Erg-athon, a remarkable 12-hour challenge keeping their row, ski and bike ergometers in motion! The teams completed the challenge with energy, determination, and plenty of fun along the way. Together as a community, they completed a powerful 1,183,331 metres! Congratulations and thank you for your incredible team effort fundraising for a great cause.

## Eye surgery now closer to home for the South West

The South West community of WA can now access sight restoring surgery to address serious eye injuries and disease. This was made possible by the generosity and support of local donors, including the Friends of St John of God Bunbury Hospital, Bunbury & Busselton Eye Specialists, and donors to St John of God Foundation working with vitreoretinal surgeon and ophthalmologist Dr Alex H Kang.

Thanks to these combined fundraising efforts, new specialist ophthalmology surgical equipment for vitreoretinal surgeries has been purchased for St John of God Bunbury Hospital, expanding the range of eye care services available to the region. This achievement is a testament to what a community can accomplish when it comes together, creating lasting benefits for its people.



**If you would like to host a group fundraiser, visit [www.sjogfoundation.org.au/get-involved/for-community](http://www.sjogfoundation.org.au/get-involved/for-community) for details, or email [Foundation@sjog.org.au](mailto:Foundation@sjog.org.au) to tell us about your idea.**





# Your legacy, their future

**Your gift can help  
to change the future  
of health care for  
generations to come.**

If you would like to know more about how leaving a gift in your Will can create a life-changing health care legacy for future generations, please contact Preema Wong for a confidential discussion:

**Preema Wong**

**T: 0427 526 899**

**E: [Preema.Wong@sjog.org.au](mailto:Preema.Wong@sjog.org.au)**

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## Good health is the greatest gift.

Every story of human impact, from new cancer treatments to breakthroughs in medical research, has only been made possible thanks to the generosity and compassion of people like you who share a vision of transforming health care for humanity.



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