

Giving Insight



ST JOHN OF GOD
Foundation

Transforming health care for **humanity**

SPRING 2025

ST JOHN OF GOD FOUNDATION

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What's on your mind?

A quick-fire Q&A with our CEO, Bianca Pietralla



Q In a year that's been challenging for many, what has been a source of inspiration for you?

A I'm constantly inspired by the generosity and compassion of our supporters, and this year has been no exception.

What's really touched me has been the heartfelt action from our regional communities - local businesses and individuals uniting to bring world-class care to their own backyards.

You may recall the story from our last edition, where fundraising efforts at St John of God Bendigo Hospital led to the purchase of a state-of-the-art da Vinci Xi surgical robot which has already reached its 50th surgery milestone.

This edition, we also shine a light on the new Magseed technology and Tivato surgical microscope, now supporting breast cancer patients at St John of God Warrnambool Hospital.

Supporting health care in regional communities is vital to ensuring everyone, no matter where they live, can access the care they deserve.

Q What impact has the Foundation had recently that you've found rewarding?

A There are many projects that advance healthcare, address health inequity or provide renewed hope to patients that come across our desks at the Foundation, and they are all purpose and outcome-driven, and our privilege to facilitate.

A particular one that comes to mind recently, is the Moort Boodjari Mia (MBM) Aboriginal maternity service expansion and outreach program. MBM addresses the growing demand and critical need for culturally secure maternity care, and has the potential to lead to better overall health outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women.

Do you have a question for the Foundation team? Please write to us at Foundation@sjog.org.au



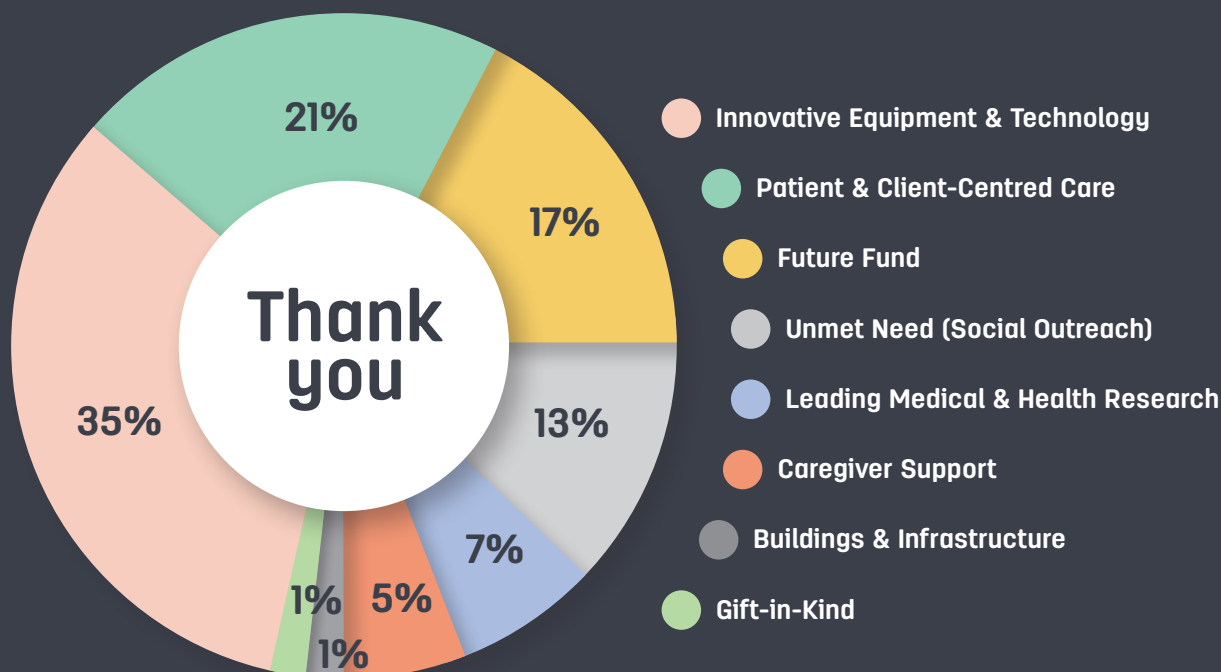
Your generosity brings light to someone's hardest days.



Visit www.sjogfoundation.org.au
call 1800 281 288, or scan the QR code.

A snapshot of your support

From funding front line services to giving in kind, this is how your generosity came to life over the past year.



Your generosity has helped to deliver:

Thank you
for helping
us to raise
\$7.4M
in 2024-25



Compassionate
support for palliative
care patients



Gifts of Hope
for cancer
patients



Support for
regional hospital
services and care
closer to home



New surgical
equipment
and medical
technology



Specialist
nursing
positions and
scholarships



Support for young
people at risk of
homelessness



Health and
medical
research



And more

Comfort and care, closer to home

Meet Alyssa, our new Colorectal Clinical Nurse



Thanks to generous donor support, patients in WA's South West can now access specialist colorectal cancer support without having to travel to Perth.

For many people living in regional Western Australia, a cancer diagnosis can bring with it not only emotional and physical challenges, but also the daunting reality of having to travel long distances for treatment. Until recently, this was the case for colorectal cancer patients in the South West, where access to specialist care often meant frequent and exhausting trips to and from Perth.

Thanks to the incredible generosity of Community Bank Collie & Districts and Tour de Cure, this is beginning to change.

A new Colorectal Clinical Nurse Specialist (CNS) position at St John of God Bunbury Hospital has been established as part of a two-year pilot initiative to improve cancer care in the region.

Alyssa joins the team from St John of God Murdoch Hospital, where she spent thirteen years supporting patients with colorectal and general surgical conditions.

In her role, Alyssa supports patients from the moment of diagnosis through treatment and beyond, providing:

- Patient education and support
- Care coordination
- Psychosocial support
- Symptom management
- Stoma care
- Screening and prevention advice
- Participation in research and service improvement

Her extensive experience and deep compassion are now benefiting South West patients – who can access high-quality, evidence-based care closer to home, surrounded by family and the support of their local community.

"I find it incredibly rewarding to support people during challenging times. I'm driven by a commitment to improving patient outcomes through education, early intervention, and clear, compassionate communication."

Alyssa recently relocated to the region with her family and is excited to contribute to the local community.

As the CNS, Alyssa also works closely with Colorectal and General Surgeons to ensure colorectal surgical patients receive seamless, person-centred care. Behind the scenes, she collaborates with multidisciplinary teams to streamline referrals, improve treatment timelines and align care with the latest clinical standards.

The impact of this role reaches far beyond individual patients. It's helping to build a more robust, localised cancer care system that supports both people and practitioners - now and into the future.

This vital position has been made possible through generous support to St John of God Foundation, with special thanks to Community Bank Collie & Districts and Tour de Cure for helping bring expert care closer to home for South West families.

Clinical care hits the road

New MBM clinical van brings life-changing maternity care to communities



Moort Boodjari Mia (MBM), meaning Family Pregnancy House in Noongar language, is a perinatal care service for Aboriginal women based at St John of God Midland Public and Private Hospitals.

Designed to support women through pregnancy, birth and beyond, MBM provides holistic maternity care that honours cultural values, strengthens families, and promotes the health of mothers and babies.

Recognising the importance of care that respects identity and tradition, MBM offers education, care coordination and ongoing support to help families feel confident and informed throughout their parenting journey.

Thanks to the extraordinary philanthropic support of Channel 7 Telethon Trust, Stan Perron Charitable Foundation, Wen Giving Foundation and Jon & Caro Stewart Family Foundation, MBM has taken its next transformative step: readying to launch an innovative outreach service that delivers antenatal and postnatal care via a fully equipped mobile clinical van.

This first-of-its-kind mobile outreach program is a milestone for Western Australia. It will bring essential midwifery care directly into the communities where it's needed most – removing barriers such as transport, hospital hesitancy and long travel distances.

For many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families in rural and remote areas, these challenges can mean the difference between timely maternity care and delays that impact outcomes. Now, expert, culturally safe support will be delivered where families feel most comfortable – in their own communities.

The van will be fitted with diagnostic tools, enabling on-the-spot health assessments and midwifery care in familiar community spaces such as playgroups, schools, Aboriginal health centres and local events.

As the first Aboriginal maternity program in WA to deliver clinical outreach via a mobile service, MBM is leading the way in innovation and accessibility – a powerful example of what's possible when philanthropic vision meets community need.

“This funding has had a transformative impact on the families using the Moort Boodjari Mia service by providing enhanced support, access and resources tailored to their unique needs,” says MBM Midwife Jodee Hollingsworth.

With this new outreach model, MBM is driving progress towards a national goal: by 2031, 91% of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander babies will be born at a healthy birth weight.

The MBM clinical van brings us closer to that goal – ensuring that no matter where a family lives, safe, compassionate and culturally appropriate care is within reach.





Local business hits huge Gift of Hope milestone

▲ Ashby Farrell, owner at WHITEARCH, with caregivers from St John of God Murdoch Hospital's Cancer Centre

Congratulations to Ashby Farrell and the team at WHITEARCH for reaching an incredible \$20,000 milestone in donations to the **Gifts of Hope** program.

Since 2022, the real estate company has generously donated 3.5% of every commission earned to Gifts of Hope, helping to ease the often overwhelming financial burden faced by patients undergoing

cancer treatment. Ashby's dedication to the cause is deeply personal, shaped by witnessing the challenges faced by families affected by a cancer diagnosis.

"Sadly, I think everyone has been affected by cancer in some way," Ashby shares.

"I often see people who are distressed and trying to sell their home because of the cost of their

treatment, or struggling to buy a house due to the financial burden.

"To know that Gifts of Hope can help patients and families when they need it most is something I'm very proud to be part of."

Heartfelt thanks to Ashby and the WHITEARCH team, on behalf of all patients who have received support via the Gifts of Hope program.

Restoring dignity, one wig at a time

Bendigo's first wig library for cancer patients

Hair loss can be one of the most confronting side effects of cancer treatment, often affecting a person's confidence and making their illness visible before they're ready to share it.

Until now, Bendigo patients needing wigs faced the added burden of travelling to Melbourne or Ballarat to find suitable options - often at a high cost.

St John of God Bendigo Hospital is stepping in to change that, launching the region's first **wig library**. Initiated by McGrath Breast Care Nurse Shanya Beattie

and supported by the hospital's Director of Nursing, Liz McEncroe, the service will offer high-quality wigs, turbans and headscarves free of charge.

Funded by generous community bequests, wigs can be borrowed for as long as needed and are professionally cleaned and prepared with care.

By removing cost and travel barriers, the wig library offers more than just headwear - it provides emotional support, dignity, and comfort for people facing cancer, closer to home.



▲ Supportive staff and volunteers guide patients through the process via private appointments

Help bring comfort, care, and hope to those who need it most.
Go to www.sjogfoundation.org.au call 1800 281 288 or scan the QR code.



Inclusive and compassionate emergency care experience

For people who are neurodivergent - including those with autism, ADHD or intellectual disabilities - visiting a hospital can be especially challenging. Emergency Departments can feel particularly overwhelming, with bright lights, loud noises, unfamiliar spaces and rushed conversations all adding to feelings of stress and anxiety.

At St John of God Midland Hospital, a growing number of neurodivergent patients coming to the Emergency Department led to the development of a more inclusive and supportive approach to care.

Thanks to the generosity of Swan Rotary and the City of Swan, and in partnership with Autism WA, the hospital is launching **an innovative program designed to make emergency care more welcoming and supportive for neurodivergent individuals and their families.**

The Neurodivergent Transition Program will include:

- Specialist training for clinical staff to improve communication and understanding;
- The creation of a calming, sensory-friendly space within the ED;
- Family support resources to help loved ones feel informed and empowered;
- A part-time registered nurse dedicated to championing the program and coordinating care in partnership with Autism WA.



▲
Registered Nurse Maddison Calzada, receiving an award for her outstanding contribution to the project, with Paul Dyer, CEO St John of God Midland Hospital

"Our goal is to reduce the stress that can accompany a hospital visit and ensure neurodiverse patients receive the compassionate, individualised care they need," says Maddison Calzada, a registered nurse at St John of God Midland Hospital and one of the program's key drivers.

Maddison was recently recognised by her colleagues for her outstanding contribution to this meaningful and practical initiative.

Beyond the hospital, the program is expected to create broader change across the community. By sharing tools and learnings with other healthcare providers, schools, and support services within the region and beyond, the initiative aims to create a ripple effect of inclusive care that stretches far beyond Midland.

This program exemplifies the heart of our mission – demonstrating how philanthropy and community partnerships come together to improve care for those who need it most.



A celebration of generosity and its lasting impact

Community kindness leads to transformation in regional Victoria



On a crisp Warrnambool morning, the quiet hum of gratitude filled the halls of St John of God Warrnambool Hospital as a special group of guests gathered to celebrate something truly powerful: the difference they've made for patients and families in the region.

Hosted by Director of Clinical Services Leanne McPherson and CEO Maria Noonan, the morning tea celebrating philanthropy was a heartfelt tribute to the Warrnambool community of supporters whose generosity continues to transform the hospital, not just in structure, but in spirit.

Guests heard from plastic and reconstructive surgeon Dr Robert Toma, whose work in breast reconstruction has been directly enhanced through philanthropy. He shared how generous support has enabled the hospital to acquire cutting-edge technologies, including Magseed and a Tivato surgical microscope, both of which are improving outcomes for women undergoing breast cancer treatment and reconstruction.

Magseed, a magnetic marker smaller than a grain of rice, is used to precisely localise breast cancer tissue before surgery.

Unlike traditional guidewires, it provides a more comfortable experience for patients, and its near 100% retrieval success rate allows more accurate procedures and outcomes.

The addition of the Tivato surgical microscope has further revolutionised reconstruction surgery by providing magnification, shadow-free illumination, and crystal-clear visibility. This allows surgeons to reconnect tiny blood vessels, often no thicker than a strand of hair, between donor tissue and the chest area, making natural-feeling breast reconstruction possible.

"Thanks to this technology and the generosity behind it, women in our community are receiving world-class care, right here in Warrnambool," said Dr Robert Toma.

"Everything that goes 'bing' costs millions of dollars," said Maria Noonan, CEO of St John of God Ballarat and Warrnambool Hospitals, drawing warm laughter from the room. "From me, a heartfelt thank you."

The tone of the morning tea was personal and deeply appreciative. *"Without your support, many of our improvements would not be*

possible," added Leanne McPherson. "We are extremely appreciative and often overwhelmed with your generosity and kindness."

More than just a thank you, the event was a celebration of compassion in action, a recognition that every refurbished space, every new chair, and every comforting touch is made possible by people who choose to give.

As guests mingled and shared stories, there was a quiet, collective sense of pride in what they've helped build – not just a better hospital, but a stronger, more caring community.



▲ Plastic and reconstructive surgeon Dr Robert Toma, with the Tivato surgical microscope

Sanctuary in the sunshine for palliative patients

► Maeve O'Malley
- Clinical Nurse
Manager Palliative
Care, St John of God
Bunbury Hospital



The palliative care courtyard project is a powerful example of what's possible when a community rallies together. Thanks to the generous support of Southern Ports, Kerman Charitable Foundation and many generous donors to our 2024 Christmas Appeal, the outdoor spaces at St John of God Bunbury Hospital's palliative care ward, Grenada, are being transformed.

Grenada is a 15-bed ward supported by a team of compassionate caregivers who aim to bring comfort and dignity to every patient.

The adjoining courtyards hold great potential to become peaceful, restorative sanctuaries where patients and families can share meaningful moments.

Palliative care is about more than medical treatment – it's about dignity, compassion and comfort.

Soon, the revitalised courtyards will feature vibrant plants, comfortable seating and calming wall art – creating a warm, welcoming space that encourages reflection, connection and peace.

As Nurse Unit Manager Maeve shared: *"If we can bring patients outside – even those who are bedbound – to feel the fresh air and take in a beautiful space, what a difference it makes. You're no longer in a hospital room. You're just outside, having a chat or a quiet moment. It allows our patients and their families to cherish moments of time spent together."*

Thank you for supporting this truly special project.

New era of learning for clinical caregivers



▲ St John of God Subiaco caregivers with Rick Sherlock, Maxxia General Manager (far left)

The Clinical Academy is a new online portal designed to support the professional development of clinical caregivers across St John of God Health Care.

With many caregivers working varied shifts, attending in-person training can be challenging. Yet, ongoing education is essential to delivering safe, high-quality, person-centred care aligned with our Mission.

That's why the St John of God Health Care Clinical Academy was established: a flexible, self-paced online learning platform available 24/7.

It empowers caregivers to grow professionally in ways that suit their schedules and learning styles, nurturing excellence across our hospitals for the benefit of caregivers and, most importantly, our patients.

Developed in collaboration with clinical leaders, educators and strategy teams, and supported by

Maxxia, The Clinical Academy reflects real-world needs. Content is practical, evidence-based and shaped by nursing, allied health and workforce experts.

Initial learning opportunities will focus on:

- Registered and Enrolled Nurses
- Assistants in Nursing / Patient Care Assistants
- Allied Health professionals (across 10 disciplines)

Over the next 12-24 months, the platform will expand to include more clinical disciplines, leadership and research pathways, and partnerships with tertiary institutions.

Our aim is to become a centre of excellence for caregiver education. By investing in our caregivers, we enhance the quality of care and ensure St John of God Health Care remains a place where skilled, compassionate professionals choose to work.



Building

Supporting vulnerable youth

Every young person deserves a safe place to call home – and the opportunity to build a life filled with purpose, stability and hope. At St John of God Horizon House, young people aged 16 to 22 who are experiencing or at risk of homelessness find more than shelter - they find stability, tailored support and the tools they need to thrive.

With wraparound care and access to life-changing opportunities, Horizon House empowers young people to move forward with confidence. Many have experienced significant trauma, grown up without consistent caregivers, lived in unstable housing or faced other complex challenges.

Helping vulnerable youth achieve independence

Thanks to generous philanthropic support from Spinifex Trust and WA Charity Direct, a new **Transition to Independence Program** has been launched to help address these barriers and includes three key components:

1. Independent Living Skills Course

Funded by St John of God Social Outreach, this course builds self-reliance through essential life skills, including budgeting, tenancy support, nutrition, hygiene and wellbeing.

2. Education and Employment Grants

Supported by generous donors, these grants remove financial barriers to education and work, covering things like course fees, tools and certifications.

3. New Home Starter Packs

When young people move into independent housing, these tailored packs – including linen, cookware, furniture and cleaning supplies – help them set up their homes with dignity and confidence.

“The greatest challenge our young people face is securing stable employment or accessing education opportunities,” shares a Horizon House team member.

This program is already making a powerful impact. Sally, a young Aboriginal mother from the Young Mother & Baby program, purchased a laptop and Microsoft 365 subscription to begin a Certificate III in Early Childhood Studies.

Lola, another resident, was thrilled to move into her own unit with support from a youth housing service. A grant allowed her to purchase essential kitchenware and home items, and she’s since transitioned to independent living.

Wesley used his grant to buy gardening tools and a vacuum cleaner, helping him care for his new rental and take pride in his space.

The Horizon House team sees the difference this support makes every day. ***“With the right support and resources, we see time and time again just how much they’re capable of achieving.”***

Independence may have once felt out of reach, but through the Transition to Independence Program, young people are discovering their potential. Thank you to generous donors like Spinifex Trust and WA Charity Direct – your belief in them is helping build brighter futures.



futures

through Horizon House

Empowering young mothers to thrive

Building on the care they already provide, the Horizon House caregivers identified an urgent and growing need: safe accommodation and support for young mothers and their infants.

Many young mothers face homelessness due to family conflict, financial hardship, a lack of support networks and the ongoing crisis in affordable housing. A new initiative designed to help address these issues will empower these young women to achieve stability, independence, and a brighter future for themselves and their children.

Thanks to the support of Lotterywest and the Stan Perron Charitable Foundation, an existing block of one-bedroom units opposite St John of God Subiaco Hospital will be transformed into self-contained apartments - accommodating up to six young mothers, each with up to two children, for stays of 12 to 18 months. Located close to the hospital, the site enables caregivers, midwives and case managers to provide integrated, holistic support during a critical time in each mother's life.

A communal space featuring an accessible kitchen and lounge is central to the program's vision: **a nurturing hub that fosters connection, reduces isolation, and builds peer support networks.**

While each apartment will include basic kitchen facilities, full kitchens will not be installed, encouraging connection through regular, communal meals and shared time together.



The space will also host group education sessions led by experts in areas such as newborn care, sleep and feeding, mental wellbeing, financial literacy, and healthy lifestyle habits.

These sessions are intended to build confidence and life skills, increasing the likelihood of long-term success beyond the program.

This initiative addresses a unique service gap in WA, particularly for young mothers with more than one child, and offers a culturally safe and inclusive space where they can rebuild, connect and thrive.

Small acts of kindness create big ripples of care.

Support social outreach programs like Horizon House today – visit www.sjogfoundation.org.au call 1800 281 288 or scan the QR code.





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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:

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