

GREEN CROSS E-NEWS



SUMMER 2022

THE GREEN CROSS PROJECT INC
BIANNUAL NEWSLETTER

FROM THE CHAIRMAN

Plenty has happened since our Winter Green Cross Project Inc (GCPI) Newsletter.

Just as 2020 was a busy and challenging year for GCPI so too has 2021. Covid has seen our health partners use our buses in many and different ways over the past six months. I am very pleased to see how instrumental our buses have been in responding to the many and varied challenges of Covid.

Monash Health and cohealth have helped reinforced the value of our contribution to helping marginalised members of our community. This newsletter provides just two case studies of the many innovative ways in which our buses have been used to solve health challenge presented by Covid.

This year has been challenging for another reason too. Recently, GCPI has lost both its Vice-President, Dr Walter Uhlenbruch AO and former Committee of Management member Miss Margaret Pell. With their passing the Committee of Management acknowledges the significant contributions Margaret and Walter have made. We are sad to lose valued members and good friends. Our thoughts

and prayers continue to be extended to their families.

On a more positive note, GCPI is delighted to be working with the Victorian Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation (VACCHO). In late October 2021, GCPI was able to loan one of its buses to VACCHO to assist with the Covid vaccination program in rural and regional Victoria. Over the past few months GCPI's bus has been able to help deliver many hundreds of additional vaccinations in regional cities such as Mildura and Morwell, where higher vaccination rates were needed.

Our sock appeal was also very successful. A special thanks again goes to Underworks for donating many hundreds of high-quality socks. I was interested to learn that socks are one of least donated items yet are the 3rd highest requested items of clothing. Many thanks Mrs Cynthia Hines OJ for coordinating this effort and to cohealth and South East Community Links in distributing these socks to those in need.

Anthony Kennedy OAM
Chairman, GCPI

GCPI CHRISTMAS PARCELS TO THE HOMELESS

For many years GCPI has provided Christmas parcels for distribution to homeless persons in Melbourne via its partner agencies. This year GCPI has made up around 220 parcels of chocolates - 120 of these will be distributed by cohealth in the northern and western suburbs, and 100 will be distributed in the Monash Health region.

With increasing levels of unemployment and underemployment in Melbourne's suburbs, many charities are now under greater pressure providing their services. It was in this context the Committee of Management decided this year it was even more important to ensure that society's most marginalised are not forgotten.

For far too many people Christmas can be a very difficult time. For some people, the humble GCPI parcel may be the only gift they receive at Christmas time. So, while a confectionery gift pack may be small it is certainly an important gesture.



IMAGE: GCPI members wrapping up Christmas gifts

GCPI 'GIVES A SOCK'

In August 2021, GCPI established a sock appeal and was pleased to receive advice from Australian clothing company Underworks that it was happy to donate several boxes of socks, as part of its 'I Give A Sock' program.

Underworks' Head of Sustainability, Ms Annelou Ringers said, "at Underworks, we've partnered with charities such as Food Bank, The Salvation Army and now Green Cross Project Inc to provide brand new socks to the homeless, displaced and most in need in our community."

Ms Ringers also said, "that socks are one of the least donated, but highest demand items amongst the homeless community in Australia".

GCPI has been happy to provide these socks to its health service partners.

South East Community Link (SECL) has kindly offered to assist Monash Health with the distribution, given Monash Health is extensively focused on vaccinations. SECL's CEO, Mr Peter McNamara said that "pairs of socks are the 3rd most requested item of clothing from the homeless and disadvantaged, yet SECL does not often receive many donated pairs of socks".

Mr McNamara thanked GCPI and Underworks for their

support and stated, "that despite it being late Spring, the very cold weather has already generated strong interest in the socks that were donated".

To assist for this year's sock appeal, please feel free to contact the Hon Treasurer, Mr David Richards by email rob.dave@bigpond.com or by mobile: 0400 545 011.



IMAGE: Presents and socks starting to be distributed

GCPI WORKING WITH VICTORIAN ABORIGINAL COMMUNITY CONTROLLED HEALTH ORGANISATION

GCPI is delighted to announce that it has organised for its larger bus to be made available to support the Victorian Government's vaccine rollout in regional Victoria. GCPI and the Victorian Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation (VACCHO) agreed in late October 2021 to make GCOB 3 available for mobile vaccination in regional cities such as Mildura and Morwell.

With Victoria lifting its restrictions, Victorian health services were keen to ensure as many people were covered by the vaccination program. Mr Jim O'Shea, Secretary of VACCHO said that "it is essential to ensure we get as many of Victoria's Aboriginal communities vaccinated as possible." Mr O'Shea also said that "the VACCHO is pleased to be working with GCPI to assist with the rollout and that the bus has been essential in helping to achieve the target levels of vaccination".

GCPI's Chairman, Mr Anthony Kennedy OAM, said that "GCPI buses have played an important role in assisting Monash Health and cohealth with vaccinations and management of Covid patients. We are very pleased to not only extend our help to rural and regional Victoria, but to also help some of the most vulnerable members of the Victorian community".

Already many hundreds of Aboriginal people have now been vaccinated over the past few months, with the rollout to be extended to additional regional towns and cities.



IMAGE: GCPI's bus in Mildura



GCPI'S BUSES MAKES COVID HOMECARE A REAL OPTION

During the COVID-19 pandemic, Monash Health has continuously offered care and support for those in our community who are affected by COVID-19. In response to COVID-19 outbreaks, a state-wide program called the Victorian COVID-19 Positive Care Pathways program was developed giving patients with COVID-19 access to high-quality care and support at the right time and in the right setting.

Dependent on pre-existing comorbidities and or age, clients are streamed into low, medium and high priority care and are given access to an app where they enter their symptoms which trigger potential escalations through the pathway.

The COVID Care Pathways team in Monash Health Community supports adult and paediatric patients identified as requiring medium-level support who are at risk of deteriorating quickly and require clinical escalation and transitioning to higher levels of care such as Emergency Department and inpatient.

Green Cross Project Inc's (GCPI) bus has been an essential element in the program. GCPI's Committee of Management member Dr Ian Dickson AM said that "GCPI is pleased that its purpose designed and built bus is not only helping people with Covid but is helping to take pressure off the Victorian health system which is very pleasing". Dr Dickson also said that "members of GCPI should be encouraged to see GCPI is making an important difference across Melbourne".

Ms Julie White, Director Community Assessment Response and Director of Nursing Monash Health Community, said "the team offers assessments of patients and manages the Covid positive patients' symptoms while providing early access to

care and easy transition to hospital".

To support people at their homes and to help streamline pathways of care, the COVID Care Pathways team work collaboratively and directly with a range of stakeholders including nominated medical staff from infectious diseases, General Medicine, Monash's emergency departments, Ambulance Victoria, and Central Bayside Community Health.

Ms Julia Oxley, General Manager Monash Health Community, said, "the team is doing a remarkable job, ... to keep people safe in their home environment and, where necessary, expedite hospital admission".



IMAGE: Monash Health Staff using GCPI's bus for treatment of Covid patients

GCPI HELPS KEEP THE WHEELS TURNING AT COHEALTH'S KENSINGTON MEDICAL CLINIC



IMAGE: cohealth staff member about to start setting up the outdoor clinic

cohealth's Kensington medical clinic became a tier 1 site on 9-12 August 2021. As a result, the site was shut down for deep cleaning and all staff who attended the site were required to quarantine for two weeks. The clinic had 60 COVID vaccinations booked in, so the Green Cross bus was made available for these vaccinations. Those staff that were not required to quarantine were able to assist, including a GP and two nurses.

The team parked the bus around the corner from the clinic and left a note on the front door of the clinic with directions for clients, who were all super appreciative that the team had gone to extra lengths to get them vaccinated, most of them for second doses of AstraZeneca. As one staff member commented "it was a great day, it really was. We vaccinated a couple of extras who were our clients that just happened to be walking past and we said 'hey, come over here!' It was very worthwhile and really rewarding after a frustrating week of not being able to see clients."



KNOW YOUR COMMITTEE OF MANAGEMENT MEMBER – DR IAN DICKSON AM KLJ MMLJ

How long have you been a member of the Committee of Management?

I have been a member of the present Committee of Management for a relatively short period of time. However, my involvement with the now Green Cross Project goes back to very beginning of the project. I was a member of the original planning committee together with Dr Paul Nisselle AM and Judge McCarthy. It was the vision of these two gentlemen and the leadership of Tony Salman which set the foundation of the project.

Looking back, the Order was very ambitious in setting up an outreach bus providing support and medical assistance to the Street Kids of Melbourne, relying on volunteer nurses and doctors and the limited resources of the Order. Perhaps it was inevitable that project came to face serious challenges.

The game changer was the initial partnership with cohealth and then Monash Health which provided the medical personnel, resources, and administrative infrastructure to deliver innovative and flexible services to the underprivileged in our communities.

The Green Cross project bought, modified, and also maintains the buses in consultation with our partners. Green Cross is proud that without our contribution of these bespoke medical units, the delivery of mobile, targeted, and flexible medical services to underprivileged sectors of our society would not occur.

What achievements of GCPI have you been most proud of?

Without a doubt, the relationship we have with our partners.

What do you like/value most about GCPI?

This is the only charity that has been established and run by

the Order of St Lazarus in Australia. This project has made a demonstrably valuable contribution to the provision of medical services to sectors of our society who, for whatever reason, find it difficult to access our traditional medical system. Something the Order can be justifiably proud.

What encouraged you to join the Committee of Management?

I have been a member of the Order for a long time, this project is the most significant project it is involved in and I am proud to be a part of it.



IMAGE: Dr Ian Dickson AM behind Monash Health's General Manager, Ms Julia Oxley and GCPI Chairman, Mr Anthony Kennedy OAM.

VALE MARGARET PELL

The members of GCPI have been saddened by the recent passing of Miss Margaret Pell DLJ.

Margaret Pell DLJ was a long-time member of GCPI and served as a general member of the Committee of Management from 2014-2018. Margaret played an important role on the Committee of Management, joining just after GCPI moved into its growth phase. During her time on the Committee Margaret saw two new refurbished buses enter GCPI's fleet.

Having grown up in Ballarat, Margaret went to the University of Melbourne where she studied music and was a resident at St Mary's Hall (which moved to its current location and became St Mary's College). After graduating, Margaret became a respected member of the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra

(MSO) for 30 years.

As a member of the MSO and an accomplished violinist Margaret travelled the world. In her retirement Margaret was tutor for students and also was an examiner for Australian Music Examinations Board.

In 2004, Margaret Pell was invested as an Officer within the in the Order of St Lazarus and was member of the Victorian Commandery executive when she was made the Commandery's Almoner and was ultimately made a Dame of the Order in 2015.

For a detailed summary of Margaret's contribution to GCPI, visit our website: www.greencrossproject.org.



VALE DR WALTER UHLENBRUCH AO KLJ OMLJ

The members of GCPI are also saddened by the passing of Dr Walter Uhlenbruch AO KLJ OMLJ.

Walter was the Vice President (2019-2021) and Chairman from 2001-2019, making him the longest serving Chairman of GCPI's 27-year history.

At the age of just 25, Walter emigrated to Australia where he built the HELLA business from the ground up. Today there are more than 1,200 employees. Dr Uhlenbruch was included in the Australian Automotive Aftermarket Association Hall of Fame when awarded the "Outstanding Service to Industry Award" in 1994.

HELLA Gmbh & Co. KGaA Chief Executive Officer Dr Rolf Breidenbach, said. "From the laying of the foundation stone of our Australian plant in Mentone in 1961 until his retirement after the turn of the millennium, he shaped HELLA's presence in the Asia-Pacific region for more than four decades like no other".

Across his career, Walter was a former Director, CEO and Chairman of fourteen private and/or public companies in the automotive parts, construction, and superannuation industries across Australia, south east Asia, and the US.

In 2005 he was appointed as an "Officer of the Order of Australia" (AO), the second highest award in Australia. Given Walter was caring, compassion and determination were highly regarded by everyone. He stood up for socially disadvantaged people and was a recipient of the German Federal Cross of Merit.

Dr Uhlenbruch made a significant contribution to GCPI over his many years as Chairman of GCPI. His leadership not only helped steer GCPI through its most challenging years, but also into its growth phase.

For a summary of their service and impact to GCPI, please visit: <https://www.greencrossproject.org/>



GCPI LAUNCHES AN APPEAL FOR AN ADDITIONAL BUS

Based on the growing demand for GCPI's buses, the Committee of Management is establishing an appeal for a new bus. To purchase a new vehicle and refurbish it into a mobile clinic is expected to cost approximately \$90,000. To help GCPI with this appeal, please refer to the details below.

DONATE NOW

To make a tax-deductible donation to GCPI please email the Honorary Secretary, advising of the amount and your contact details.

BSB: 013 030
Account: 4404 37353
Honorary Secretary: vicsecretaryolj@gmail.com

CONTACT GCPI

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One of Dr Walter Uhlenbruch's last contributions to GCPI was his very kind donation for a new number plate for our next bus. To officially kick off its appeal for a new bus, GCPI purchased the specialised GCOB 4 number plate. This plate matches our three other GCOB plates.

