



## EXCITING 40-YEAR MILESTONE ON THE HORIZON

Did you know that in 2026, The Prince Charles Hospital Foundation will celebrate its 40 year milestone and four decades of helping people live healthier for longer?

During that time, the Foundation has funded tens of millions of dollars in groundbreaking medical research and patient care projects. This support has led to life-changing impacts for many people in Brisbane and beyond.

It is a significant honour to help support remarkable achievements and breakthroughs, and it's only possible thanks to dedicated researchers and clinicians, past and present staff of the Foundation and its board, and, of course, our remarkable community of supporters, including you.

Over the coming months, we will share more about the exciting events we have planned to acknowledge and celebrate this incredible milestone.

### Submit your stories about The Prince Charles Hospital Foundation

Has the Foundation, and the research, patient care and equipment supported by it, played a part in your health journey? If so, we would love to hear from you.



Please email your details and your story to [40years@tpchfoundation.org.au](mailto:40years@tpchfoundation.org.au)

# THE GOOD NEWS

## A HOME AWAY FROM HOME FOR JACKO

*To come here (to Charlie's Village)... is amazing.... there's this feeling that I'm in a familiar place. It does not feel like a hospital. It just feels homey."*

Gaylene (Jacko's wife)

JACKO'S STORY ON PAGE 2 ▶



Jacko's Story

PAGE 2

Charlie's Village Alzheimer's Study Expands

PAGE 3



Children's retreat reopens Meet Kevin

PAGE 4



TCG supporting Caboolture Hospital

PAGE 5



End of an Era: Strawberry Sundaes and A Heartfelt Thank-You to Brisbane

PAGE 6

40 Year Milestone on the Horizon

PAGE 8

# JACKO'S STORY

When Gaylene's husband Jacko was 57, she first noticed slight changes in his behaviour and symptoms like losing and hiding things.

His official dementia diagnosis came about six years later.

"I started working part-time, and I worked from home so I could spend more time with him. But, it got to the stage where I had to keep an eye on him always, had to have eyes at the back of my head," she recalled.

Gaylene became his full-time carer. Eventually, that was no longer a suitable option.

Her husband is now 69, and for the past year or so, they have been trying to find a permanent place for him to stay.

So far, he's been to three hospitals and four facilities, including two stays at The Prince Charles Hospital's Cognitive Assessment and Management (CAM) Unit.

**"At his age, he's fit. He can lift, he can run, he can jump, and he can climb," she said.**

Within the outdoor space of the CAM Unit lies Charlie's Village, a village-like community area with built-in facades of a post office, café and bakery, hair salon, general store, a hotel (aptly named The Prince Charles Hotel) and a bus stop. There is also a sensory garden. Both the village and garden were made possible thanks to the unit's staff, and the generous support of the local community.

**"To come here and for him just to be able to walk outside is amazing... he's always gardened; he's an outdoors person," said Gaylene.**

"Plus, it's that daily thing; it's like walking down the street. There's the shop; there's this feeling that I'm still in a familiar place. It does not feel like a hospital. It just feels homey."

Gaylene describes the outdoor environment in the CAM Unit as soothing and says it would be great if it were replicated to other facilities around the country.

"The staff here are amazing too. I wish my husband Jacko could go to another place like this permanently."

Learn more about Charlie's Village on page three.



## CHARLIE'S VILLAGE: SUPPORTING PATIENTS WITH DEMENTIA AT THE PRINCE CHARLES HOSPITAL

Charlie's Village is a unique, village-like space within The Prince Charles Hospital's specialist dementia care unit.

It is the first of its kind in an Australian public hospital. This project space was funded thanks to the generosity of people like you.

Developed in collaboration with researchers and clinicians, the space has familiar settings, including a post office, café, pub, hair salon and bus stop, all of which fosters comfort, independence, and positive engagement among patients, their families and staff.

Khera Kim is a Nurse Practitioner in the Delirium and Dementia Service. She explains that, "Patients with cognitive impairment, such as those living with dementia, can become easily agitated or upset, so the space is a good distraction and helps keep them calm and relaxed."

## EXPANSION OF STUDY TO IMPROVE THE DIAGNOSIS & TREATMENT OF ALZHEIMER'S DISEASE

Currently, there is no single diagnostic test that definitively concludes that a person has Alzheimer's. However, for over 10 years, a group of Brisbane health professionals - including Dr Eamonn Eeles, a geriatrician at The Prince Charles Hospital, has been striving to change that.

Close to 20 people were part of the first stage of the study called the Dementia Tracer Program - also known as Sterling's Dream - which was supported by the Foundation. Now, the group has secured a prestigious national grant

worth \$820,000 to support an expanded trial.

"This phase focuses on detecting earlier changes in Alzheimer's and determine if our new tracer can serve as an early marker of the disease," said Dr Eeles.

"This study aims to improve diagnostic outcomes and guide more effective treatment strategies for Alzheimer's disease. By enabling earlier and more precise diagnosis, it may optimize the use of current treatments like cholinesterase inhibitors, which are most effective when started early."



The next phase of the study will include a larger sample size of 140 participants, including 40 clinical patients with mild cognitive impairment or mild Alzheimer's.



To help more researchers like Eamonn with early stage funding visit [www.tcg.org.au/donate-now](http://www.tcg.org.au/donate-now)



## REVAMPED CHILDREN'S RETREAT REOPENS

**A refreshed children's retreat space in The Prince Charles Hospital's Paediatric ward opened just in time for Christmas.**

The revamp has several inclusions, like a colourful bubble tube, dimmable fairy lights, hand painted custom mural and toys appropriate for a variety of ages, to help keep

the hospital's littlest patients and their siblings entertained during their stay. "Having a place to play means they can develop their gross motor skills and their fine motor skills. This is also about improving their cognitive, emotional, and social well-being, and we need to provide

that holistic service to our patients," said Registered Nurse Rachael Patterson. The previous play space was closed during COVID-19 due to infection control reasons. The refurbishment was funded through The Prince Charles Hospital Foundation's third annual Giving Day in 2023.

## MEET KEVIN: PROUD MEMBER OF THE COMMON GOOD

**In 1967, Kevin was just months away from finishing year 12 when he was involved in a life changing car accident that injured his spinal cord, leaving him a paraplegic.**

Some fifty years later, Kevin's experience has shaped his passion to do what he can to improve outcomes and quality of life for other people through medical research.

He began by donating to an organisation conducting spinal research, but when it ceased operating due to financial constraints, he searched for another cause that resonated with him.

"I'd read articles about the research into heart disease and lung disease supported by The Prince Charles Hospital Foundation and it impressed me, so I decided to broaden my horizon from the spinal cord to other areas," Kevin said. Several years ago, Kevin toured the research labs within the Clinical Sciences Building at The Prince Charles Hospital and met some of the researchers he was helping to support. "How passionate they were came through big and loud," he said.



**Kevin encourages everyone to support medical research, because every little bit helps keep them researching. "Anyone can donate and help. That is the bottom line."**

# THE COMMON GOOD SUPPORTING CABOOLTURE HOSPITAL

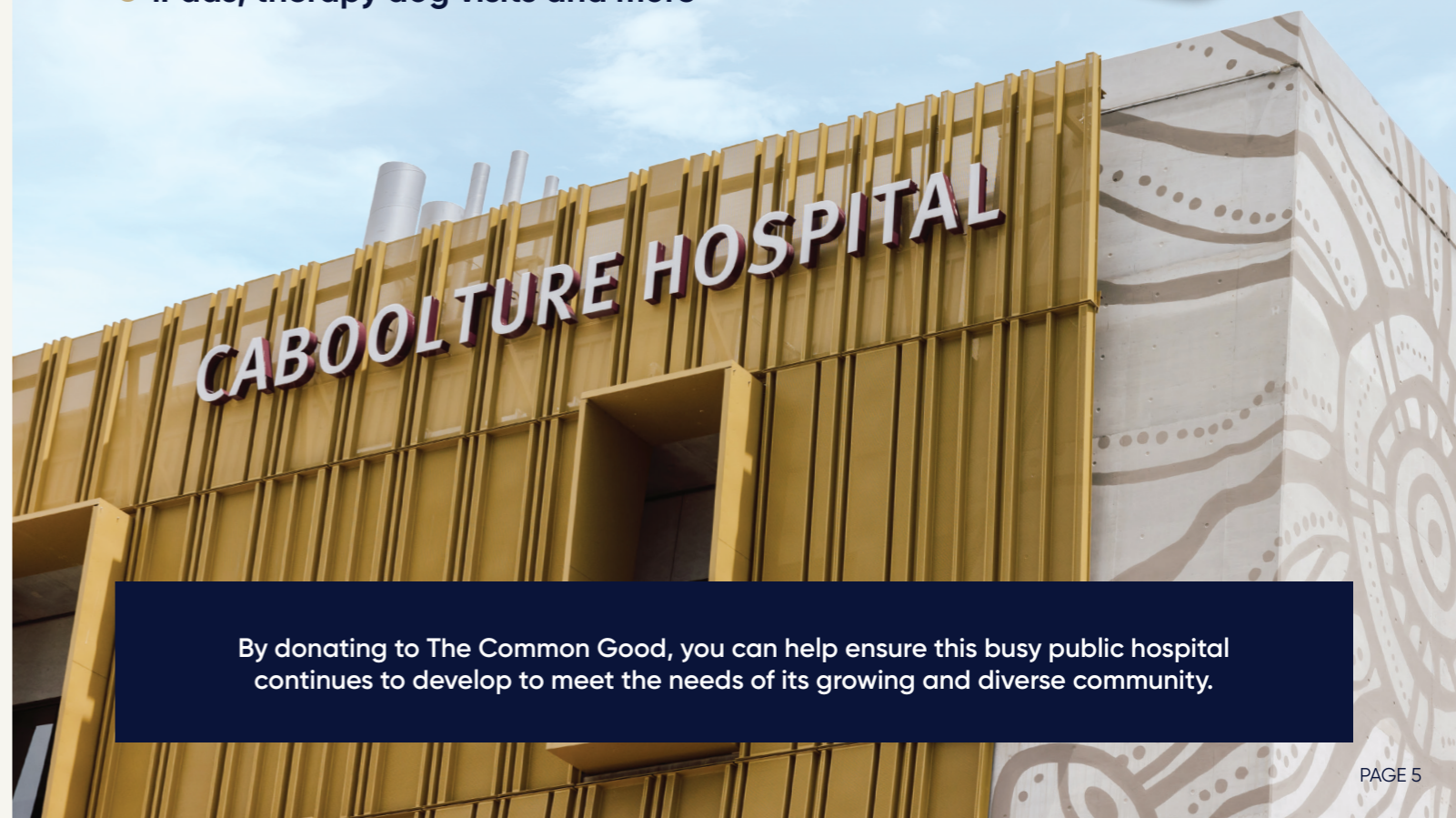
Since 2020, with your help, we have provided support to Caboolture Hospital and assisted with some amazing outcomes.

Through the generosity of donors, community fundraising and corporate partners, The Common Good has helped support several patient care initiatives, vital pieces of equipment, and research projects for Caboolture Hospital, Kilcoy Hospital, and Woodford Corrections (CKW) in the past couple of years.

- Over **\$260,000** of research grants supported
- Over **\$650,000** of research capacity building

### Specifically at Caboolture Hospital:

- A refreshed **paediatric ward with a kid's retreat** where children and siblings can play
- Specialised **infant incubator bed** for critically ill newborn babies
- **VR Goggles** which serve as distraction therapy for sick and injured children
- **Washer and dryer** in the older adult's ward to ensure patients have clean clothing
- **iPads, therapy dog visits and more**



**By donating to The Common Good, you can help ensure this busy public hospital continues to develop to meet the needs of its growing and diverse community.**

# END OF AN ERA

## STRAWBERRY SUNDAES AND A HEARTFELT THANK YOU TO BRISBANE

For generations, Ekka Strawberry Sundaes have been a beloved tradition in Brisbane, bringing families together over an iconic treat that has helped fund life-changing medical research.



What started as a small and humble fundraising opportunity over 30 years ago has swelled to a mammoth operation

Since the 1950s, these sundaes have symbolised more than just a delicious dessert – they represent the heart and generosity of a community coming together for the common good.

For The Prince Charles Hospital Foundation, being the proud custodians of this iconic program for over 30 years has been an extraordinary privilege. However, as we approach our 40-year milestone in 2026, the time has come for us to step back from the program to allow us to focus on amplifying our impact on patient care and medical research.

To some people, Ekka Strawberry Sundaes might elicit cherished family memories of the show. For others, they are a treasured treat that not only delights the taste buds but also contributes to life-changing medical research at The Prince Charles Hospital.

What started as a small and humble fundraising opportunity over 30 years ago has swelled to a mammoth operation requiring nine months of planning, five busy sites, and the help of over 2,000 incredible volunteers each year.

Some of these remarkable volunteers have dedicated many hours over decades of their lives to scooping and serving sundaes – a testament to the power of community spirit.

**We are deeply grateful to everyone whose hard work and generosity helped make the Strawberry Sundae program a success for The Prince Charles Hospital Foundation – we can't thank you enough.**



This wasn't an easy decision to make, but we're confident it's the right one. By transitioning away from this program, we can focus even more on initiatives that can make the biggest impacts in people's lives. It's about using our resources in the most effective way to make a real difference.

The Strawberry Sundae program will always be a cherished part of The Prince Charles Hospital Foundation's journey, and we are so proud of all it's helped to accomplish over the years in supporting medical research, providing innovative equipment, and enhancing patient care across Brisbane and beyond.

As we reflect on the incredible legacy of the Strawberry Sundae program, we're also looking ahead with excitement.



This change will allow us to do even more for those who need us most. By focusing our efforts, we can continue to support critical research, equipment, and patient-care programs that have the potential to transform lives.

While the Foundation is stepping back from delivering the Strawberry Sundae program, it's not the end of the sundaes themselves! The Strawberry Sundae will continue to be available at the Ekka, delivered by the RNA, so that the public can still enjoy this iconic treat for years to come.

**Steve**

Although our chapter with the Ekka Strawberry Sundae program has ended, your opportunity to make an impact hasn't. We invite you to continue supporting The Prince Charles Hospital Foundation by exploring new ways to volunteer, donate, or advocate for our work. Your involvement directly supports our ongoing mission to improve health outcomes and fund critical research, equipment, and patient-care programs.