

Media Release

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Health initiatives to improve the wellbeing of aged care residents

VMCH is thrilled to announce its success in securing \$192,000 worth of grants to introduce Telehealth services to residents at eight of its aged care homes.

The Australian Government Department of Health initiative was in response to the final report of the Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety, which highlighted inequities in access to care among aged care residents, especially after hours and for specialist services.

Telehealth – which involves remote consultations with healthcare providers via video calls – has become an extremely popular form of accessing healthcare over the past few years.

VMCH Chief Operating Officer David Williamson says for aged care residents, access is particularly important.

“Telehealth will provide timely and early medical assessment and treatment, allowing residents to stay in the comfort of their home, reducing unnecessary hospital transfers and the flow on impact on emergency services,” Mr Williamson said.

Residents can use Telehealth independently, however training is currently being rolled out for staff, should residents need support.

Sash Pokharel, Care Manager at VMCH Wantirna, describes Telehealth as a “game changer”.

“It creates a stress-free environment that residents feel comfortable with, and no longer must leave the comfort of their home to be assessed or have a clinical observation/diagnosis. Everything is there at your fingertips.”

Meanwhile, VMCH is pleased to be involved in another innovative health initiative for residents, currently being rolled out across four of its aged care homes.

The Victorian Department of Health is leading a clinical trial, installing Germicidal Ultraviolet Lights into the ceilings or walls in 100 residential aged care homes to see if it is successful in reducing the transmission of the flu, COVID-19, and other respiratory viruses.

Germicidal UV lighting has been used in hospitals for many years to reduce the spread of disease.

The lights have been installed in four VMCH aged care homes, with a further five acting as a control group. They are expected to be turned on in September, once all participating organisations have lighting installed.

“We are thrilled to add another layer of infection control protection at VMCH sites for our residents, their families and our staff, in-line with our existing best practice care,” Mr Williamson said. “We look forward to the completion of the trial in around 12 months’ time – and hopefully witnessing a decrease in respiratory infections for our residents now and into the future.”

Telehealth’s success, meanwhile, will be evaluated in April 2025.

Media enquiries

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About VMCH

Here at VMCH, our services are as diverse as the people we support.

Our values underpin the work we do. As a Catholic, for-purpose organisation, love, joy, hospitality and courage aren't just words to us, they guide us in everything we do.

While we've been around for over a century, we're always moving forward. Always staying true to who we are by supporting people and families to live their best lives; providing a place to call home and spaces to learn and grow.

Our professional and compassionate teams are with you on your life journey; helping you with a wide range of support from early learning and therapy, specialist education, disability services, affordable homes, residential aged care, retirement living and at-home aged care.

