The recent State Budget contained great news for Ballarat Health Services (BHS) with the allocation of $46.4 million for the construction of:

- a helipad;
- multi-deck car park;
- bed expansion; and,
- an Ambulatory Care Centre.

Planning for the future of BHS has involved the development of a Service Plan and Model of Care, along with a Master Plan. The Service Plan and Model of Care details the services to be provided now and into the future based on regional demographics, health care trends, Government health plans and burden of disease figures to mention just a few. The Master Plan details the facilities and buildings required to provide those services along with functional relationships between departments. The Master Plan has been through several updates as buildings are completed or circumstances change.

In recent years BHS has achieved substantial funding allocations for capital works including:

- commissioning of an additional operating theatre;
- redevelopment of the Mental Health Service Adult Acute Unit;
- construction of a new neonatal Special Care Unit;
- construction of a new Maternity Outpatients Unit;
- re-development of the Emergency Department including provision of an expanded waiting room and reception, fast track bays, improved security and a Short Stay Unit;
- construction of the Cardiovascular Suite;
- construction of the Deakin Clinical School;
- redevelopment of the Library;
- relocation of the Dental Clinic and subsequent funding for a new stand-alone expanded clinic;
- construction of the Ballarat Regional Integrated Cancer Centre (BRICC);
- relocation of administrative functions now in Yuille House to an additional two floors being built on the BRICC;
- power supply upgrade; and,
- commissioning of an additional bed in the Intensive Care Unit.

The total cost of works including the recent announcement totals about $150 million. An important feature of the Masterplan is that “future-proofing” has been considered. Examples include building four linear accelerator bunkers in the BRICC, of which two are for future expansion; building an extra shell for a second catheter laboratory in the Cardiovascular Suite and construction of two additional floors for administrative functions on the BRICC which in the future could be used for the expansion of cancer services. The Masterplan identifies future growth options for other services including the Emergency Department, Intensive Care Unit, Radiology and Mental Health.

It is proposed that the Ambulatory Care Centre, to be constructed once Yuille House is vacated and demolished, will abut the Bolte Wing. This will enable the extension of operating theatres, the Day Procedure Unit and Central Sterilising Supply Department (CSSD) into the first floor of the Ambulatory Care Centre. The ground floor of the Ambulatory Care Centre will include a new main entrance for the Base Hospital along with reception, and will enable a re-alignment of internal corridors. The Pharmacy will be relocated. All specialist clinics will be relocated from the west end of the Bolte Wing to the Ambulatory Care Centre. This will enable ward areas to be expanded in the Bolte Wing.

As well as increasing bed numbers the expansion will allow existing problems to be addressed including:

- inadequate staff stations;
- access to computers;
- storage;
- bathrooms; and,
- facilities for bariatric patients.

The proposed car park will initially be two levels, ground and first floor with the helipad at a fourth floor level. As demand increases, additional levels may be added to the car park.

BHS is experiencing a substantial period of growth and development and it is pleasing to receive support from the Department of Health and Government to expand our facilities. On completion these projects will build bed capacity, improve patient and staff amenities in the wards, improve car parking and provide an opportunity to expand the Operating Theatre Suite and CSSD.

Andrew Rowe
Chief Executive Officer
Ballarat Health Services
Mother-baby mental health unit

Ballarat Health Services (BHS) has received State Government funding of $3 million to build a five-bed, mother-baby mental health unit. The funding was announced recently by Minister for Mental Health, Mary Wooldridge. Ms Wooldridge said mothers dealing with severe post-natal depression in regional areas were faced with options that included traveling to Melbourne for treatment or staying without their children in an adult acute mental health facility.

The mother-baby mental health unit will allow mothers to continue developing parenting skills and attachment to their babies while at the same time receiving treatment for mental illness, closer to home.

“We know it will make a difference to mothers and babies in the region,” Ms Wooldridge said.

BHS Executive Director Mental Health Services Tamara Irish said the Ballarat and the Grampians region would benefit significantly from the new facility.

“This creates a deeper and richer health care system that places the mental health needs of mothers, babies and members of families in the centre of locally delivered health care,” Ms Irish said.

BHS Board of Management President Andrew Faull welcomed the funding and said work would soon begin on planning for the mother-baby unit.

He said the funding, in addition to the recent budget funding of $46 million, would allow BHS to complete key infrastructure works to meet the growing demand on services.

Ms Wooldridge also announced funding of $1.35 million to extend for a further 18 months the restructured BHS mental health service for infants, children and youth. The service, which was restructured and expanded late last year, has seen a 28 per cent increase in the number of young people accepted for mental health treatment.

Under the new model there is a focus on the special needs of children, with teams for infants and children aged up to 14 years, youth aged 15 to 25, adults aged 26 to 65 and seniors aged over 65 years.

Our ‘home grown’ enrolled nurses

A special graduation ceremony took place at the Base Hospital in March when the first cohort of endorsed enrolled nurses trained by BHS were presented with diplomas of nursing. The 14 students completed a course unique in Victoria. It combines academic study with paid on-the-job training in BHS wards, clinics and aged care homes.

Director of Nursing in Practice and Education Denielle Beardmore said the program brought with it many advantages.

“Much of the learning for these students has been practical and within the health service they have been surrounded by role models and well supported in an encouraging environment,” Denielle said.

“Having graduated with hundreds of hours of work experience they are ‘workplace-ready’ – highly employable and sought-after nurses.”

All the graduates will be offered positions within BHS.

“Our graduates have worked in a range of different areas from acute nursing and residential care to wound management and paediatrics.”

“Importantly, by training our own enrolled nurses, the program also helps us counter any shortage in nursing skills.”

Fundraising for the BRICC

The Ballarat community is generously supporting the Reach New Heights fundraising campaign for the Ballarat Regional Integrated Cancer Centre (BRICC).

So far more than $690,000 has been raised towards the $2 million target.

And if you make a donation to the BRICC before the end of June you will automatically go into a draw to win a week of accommodation at the wonderful Skyline Villa in Lorne.

For details on the BRICC go to www.reachnewheights.com.au

Bill Malady’s Mega Raffle

BHS oncology patient Bill Malady (right) is working tirelessly to raise funds for the BRICC.

His efforts over recent months have resulted in Bill’s Mega Raffle, tickets for which are now on sale at various outlets including the Base Hospital kiosk.

If you can help sell tickets please call our Fundraising Director on 5320 4093.

Vale Bill Kelly

BHS cancer patient and campaigner for the Ballarat Regional Integrated Cancer Centre, Bill Kelly, passed away on March 5 this year.

Bill is largely “the face” of the fundraising campaign for the BRICC - his image appears on many posters and in the BRICC information booklet.

In between his medical appointments and commitments as a father and grandfather Bill gave his time generously to the fundraising cause.

Constantly upbeat, Bill was also a member of the “Friday boys” - a group of oncology patients who attended the Base Hospital on Friday mornings for treatment. They created a boisterous corner and helped lift the spirits of those around them.

Bill was also of great assistance to the nursing staff, who would at times ask him to have a quiet, reassuring chat to new patients who found their health challenges particularly confronting.

Bill’s motto was that he was “living with” cancer - not dying from it.

He was farewelled by friends and family at a packed service held in St Columba’s Church, Ballarat.

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Jackie’s national mental health role

BHS Mental Health Services family carer consultant Jackie Crowe was appointed to the National Mental Health Commission earlier this year.
Jackie sits on a panel of nine mental health commissioners and a chairman, who are involved in monitoring national mental health reform.
Jackie, who has worked at BHS for eight years and had a carer’s role for 20 years, said she hoped to see a strengthening of family inclusiveness in the provision of mental health services.
She said there had been great change in the way in which families were included in the treatment programs for people with mental illness and this could be further expanded.
The National Mental Health Commission provides independent advice to the Commonwealth Government on the effectiveness of the mental health system in meeting the needs of people with a mental illness, their families and carers.
Former head of the Australian Consumer and Competition Commission Professor Alan Fels is chairman of the Mental Health Commission.

Woodwork proves a popular pursuit

Residents at James Thomas Court Hostel are lining up to take part woodworking sessions.
James Thomas Court, one of several BHS residential homes for the aged, is where Martin Relouw has conducted woodwork classes for about eight years.
Participants make toys, letters of the alphabet and intricate wooden mosaics featuring cartoon characters, animals and people.
The painstaking cutting of the timber for the mosaics is done by Martin on a scroll saw with the residents involved in assembly and painting of items.
Resident Hazel Cordon said it was the only activity she was interested in participating in.
"I find it fascinating," she said.
"It's a terrific group."
The timber creations are typically given away to kindergartens, relatives, friends and staff. A few adorn the walls of the hostel.
Martin says the woodwork helps maintain hand and eye co-ordination and those in the group get to know each other well.
"They’ll be talking about all kinds of things, not just about woodwork, but personal stuff," he said.
The oldest in the group is Ron Sarah, 93.
Ron said he enjoyed the fellowship along with creative side of woodwork.

Ballarat Health Services donation form

(Title/name) Mr/Mrs/Miss/Dr/other: .......................................................... Postcode: ..................... Tel: ..................................
Address: ........................................................................................................
Email: ...........................................................................................................
Direct my donation to: the Ballarat Regional Integrated Cancer Centre □ the BHS Foundation □
Enclosed is my cheque or money order for the indicated amount: $25 □ $50 □ $100 □ $200 □
My choice: $
Please debit the amount I have indicated from my: VISA □ Mastercard □
Card No. _ _ _ _ / _ _ _ _ / _ _ _ _/ _ _ _ _ Expiry date: _ _ / _ _
Cardholder’s name: ......................................................................................
Signature: ....................................................................................................

Donations can also be made online at www.bhs.org.au or via direct deposit to:
ANZ, BSB 013-141, account number 907 659 583

All donations over $2 are tax deductible
If you do not wish to receive further communication from Ballarat Health Services Foundation please contact the Foundation by telephone on 03 5320 4093 or via email, geoffm@bhs.org.au
George to give up the drink

ike many of us, George Fong loves a drink. The IT expert and president of the Ballarat Health Services Foundation enjoys a glass or two of red wine on more evenings than not after a testing day at work and with friends at the weekend. It’s part of his routine. But as of July 1 he will give this cherished habit up – for a month anyway. George has signed up to be part of Dry July, the campaign that raises money for adult cancer patients across Australia. It’s a simple approach and it makes a lot of sense – individuals or teams sign up to the challenge of a month-long sponsored abstinence from alcohol. All proceeds go towards Australian cancer treatment centres. The Foundation recently negotiated the inclusion of the Ballarat Regional Integrated Cancer Centre (BRICC) on the list of Dry July beneficiaries. So while George is raising money through not touching a drop of alcohol during July, all of his sponsors’ support will go towards the BRICC. “I’ll miss a glass of red in the evening but it’s for a great cause and most Dry July participants say that after the challenge has finished they are drinking less alcohol,” George said. The Foundation has already pledged $250,000 towards the BRICC. George has also persuaded the Foundation’s secretary Geoff Millar to sign up to Dry July. To support George and/or Geoff the BRICC, go to www.dryjuly.com, click on the donate link and type in “George Fong” or “Geoff Millar”.

All systems go in our new Cardiovascular Suite

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ore Ballarat and Grampians region cardiology patients are receiving treatment closer to home with the opening of the BHS Cardiovascular Suite. The $6 million purpose-built Cardiovascular Suite, fitted with the latest imaging equipment, was opened late last year. It includes a six-bed recovery ward, all beds equipped with telemetry and resuscitation equipment. Angiography is carried out in the suite’s cardiac catheter laboratory along with angioplasty and the insertion of stents and pacemakers. Director of the Cardiology Unit Dr Ernesto Oqueli. Ernesto was raised in Argentina and studied medicine at the renowned Favaloro Foundation, a centre of excellence dedicated to cardiology and founded by Rene Favaloro, the first surgeon to perform coronary bypass surgery. The leading cause of death in Australia in 2009 was heart disease according to the Australian Bureau of Statistics, accounting for 16 per cent of all deaths. The Grampians region has a higher than average incidence of cardiovascular disease than the state average by almost 19 per cent for males and almost 11 per cent for females.