

impossible

NEWS | SPRING 2026



A vision realised

Donors help transform surgery

Honouring Emily

Giving back in her memory

Lasting legacy

Peter's life of generosity

Head of Vascular Surgery at The Alfred, Professor Thodur Vasudevan, is thrilled that the Hybrid Operating Theatre is open, thanks to support from donors.



**The Alfred
Foundation**

Part of Bayside Health



Director's report

Patrick Baker

Welcome to another edition of impossible.

At The Alfred, every breakthrough begins with the belief that tomorrow's healthcare can be better than today's. Realising that vision takes expertise and innovation, but it also relies on people who choose to invest in a healthier future for others.

In this edition, you'll discover how your generosity is driving progress across our health service. From research and clinical care to technologies and programs that improve patient experiences, your support continues to create opportunities that would otherwise not be possible.

You will read how donors helped realise a long-held vision for The Alfred through the new Hybrid Operating Theatre, including the legacy contribution of supporters like Peter Fleming.

You'll also meet Brett Folan, whose decision to take part in Dry July in memory of his wife Emily is a moving reminder of how gratitude and community fundraising can create a meaningful difference for patients and families facing cancer.

What connects these stories is the philanthropic spirit behind them. Our donors are united by a commitment to helping others and making a meaningful difference. Whether through a major gift, a bequest, community fundraising effort or regular donation, every act contributes to better outcomes for patients today and into the future.

We are continually inspired by this commitment and the trust our supporters place in us.

On behalf of everyone at The Alfred, thank you for standing alongside us. Together, we are transforming lives and advancing healthcare in ways that would not be possible without your support.

If you have any feedback or would like to learn more about our work, please contact us at foundation@alfred.org.au or call (03) 9076 3222.

Warmest regards,

Patrick Baker

Director, The Alfred Foundation
Group Director, Philanthropy and Health Innovation
Bayside Health



A safer, more welcoming therapeutic space

Bright and colourful murals now adorn the walls and outdoor tabletops of the Mental Health Inpatient Unit courtyard after an extensive renovation.

Along with decking, these final touches have made vast improvements across two wards and their external areas.

The transformation shows how investment in healthcare infrastructure can directly improve the experience of both patients and staff, creating spaces that support recovery, dignity and compassionate care every day.

Kathryn Henderson, the Deputy Director of Operations and Nursing, Hospital and Emergency at Alfred Mental and Addiction Health, said the redesign was an opportunity to put into action recommendations made by the Royal Commission into Victoria's Mental Health System.

"It allowed us to improve gender safety by ensuring each room has its own ensuite bathroom, increasing privacy and safety," she said. "We also know that our environments play a big role in shaping how we feel and recover, which is why we designed the common areas to feel as open and spacious as possible."

"The colours, indoor gardens and de-escalation areas with sensory features reflect this."

Artist Melanie Caple wanted to bring warmth to the space and make it feel like entering an area that felt both calm and embracing.

"To do that I've chosen a mix of native and domestic botanicals," she said. "The dahlias give a sense of caring for a garden, and the blue gum, eucalyptus and Leucadendron bring a sense of grounding."

Above image: Artist Melanie Caple with members of the Alfred Mental and Addiction Health team in the courtyard.

'What better way to honour my wife'

Brett and Emily Folan always tried to make the most of their life. Long holidays, parties and socialising was their way of living life to the fullest.

Unfortunately, Emily was diagnosed with acute myeloid leukaemia in October last year. Following treatment at another hospital, Emily started treatment at The Alfred in February, before passing away in June.

"Em was always full of beans, full of life," Brett said. "Her father passed away when he was 44, so she had this number stuck in her head all through our relationship — she wanted to enjoy life because she thought she might not be here for a long time."

Being so orientated towards family and friends, the couple always greatly enjoyed socialising, alongside their children, Tylah and Jake — which was why Brett initially thought Emily was joking when she suggested taking part in Dry July.

Dry July is an annual Australian fundraising campaign that challenges people to give up alcohol for the month of July while raising money for people affected by cancer. Since launching in 2008, the initiative has raised millions of dollars to fund support services, treatment programs and care for cancer patients, their families and carers.

"I had a bit of a laugh when she said it, but I said I'd do it with her," Brett said. "Unfortunately she passed before that, but I thought I'd honour her by doing it."

When he saw the option to direct donations to The Alfred, it was a no-brainer for Brett.

"We were all just blown away with the treatment and compassion from the staff. It was next level," he said. "They definitely tried everything they could and made us feel at ease."

Funds raised this year will go towards refurbishing the Radiation Oncology treatment area reception desk and waiting room kitchenette, according to Operations Manager for Radiation Oncology at The Alfred, Cath Beaufort.



Brett and Emily Folan made sure to enjoy life together as much as they could; pictured here with children Tylah and Jake.

"Dry July has been such a valuable initiative because it enables us to focus on the aspects of the patient experience that we can directly influence," she said. "Our goal is to create an environment that is welcoming, calming and comfortable for patients during what is often one of the most challenging times of their lives."

Cath said the generosity of supporters like Brett has an extraordinary impact, not only on patients but also on the staff who care for them.

"We are deeply committed to providing every patient with the highest standard of care," she said. "When members of our community are able to support that mission, it is incredibly meaningful."

"It reinforces that they share our commitment to making a genuine difference to the patient experience."

"Brett has been through an incredibly difficult journey himself, yet he has chosen to give back in a way that will benefit countless other patients who come through The Alfred."

"That generosity is profoundly moving and means more to us than words can express."

"I get emotional when I think about it because while we can't always change a patient's outcome, we can make a meaningful difference to their journey."

Previous Dry July funding has gone towards projects such as renovating the patient garden and constructing a specialised patient waiting room for planning CT scans.

2023



2026



From our initial Tax Appeal in 2023 to the world-class theatre we see pictured with Professor Thodur Vasudevan today, donor support has helped make this transformation possible.

Your immediate impact for new hybrid theatre

Thousands of patients will benefit from The Alfred's new Hybrid Operating Theatre — and it was all made possible through the generosity of our donors.

Now operating in The Alfred Centre, the new hybrid theatre is having an immediate impact on better health outcomes, helping surgical teams deliver more precise, less invasive care for patients facing some of the most complex vascular conditions.

The theatre combines a traditional operating room with advanced imaging technology, allowing surgeons to perform image-guided and open surgical procedures in a single space and under a single anaesthetic. For patients, that can mean fewer procedures, shorter hospital stays and faster recovery.

Through our 2023 Tax Appeal and the generosity of major donors, regular givers, trusts, foundations and bequest supporters, The Alfred Foundation raised more than \$3.5 million towards the project. This included a formative donation from the Bottomley Research Fund, while there was also significant funding from The Alfred Whole Time Medical Specialists Trust.

Your contributions helped bring this long-held vision to life, funding the construct and fit-out of a world-class theatre equipped with advanced technology that will

benefit patients for years to come. Already, about 100 patients have been treated since opening earlier this year.

For Head of Vascular Surgery, Professor Thodur Vasudevan, seeing the theatre now operating is a significant milestone.

"The support we've received from donors has helped us bring in technology that simply wasn't available to us before," he said. "The hybrid theatre has been something we've been working towards for a long time."

"To see it now open and helping patients is very rewarding. We're thankful to everyone who contributed and helped get the project across the line."

"There's less chance of complication and more chance of a shorter recovery"

Professor Wendy Brown, Surgical Services Program Director

Prof Vasudevan says with the average age of patients steadily rising, a minimally invasive surgery means a faster recovery and ultimately better outcomes for all patients.

"A hybrid theatre plays a key role in this as it allows the combined open and endovascular treatment of difficult pathologies to occur at the same time, rather than patients needing multiple surgeries and a longer stay in hospital," he said.

At the heart of the theatre is the C-arm: suspended from the ceiling, it delivers high-definition, three-dimensional images in real time. This means that surgeons can see exactly what is happening during a procedure and make critical decisions immediately.

Professor Wendy Brown, Surgical Services Program Director, says hybrid theatres represent the future of surgery.

"Having high-quality imaging on hand means we can operate with greater precision and, in many cases, avoid some of the large incisions that were once needed," she said. "So there's less chance of complication and more chance of a shorter recovery."

Together with the donor-funded Da Vinci robot, the Hybrid Theatre is helping keep The Alfred at the forefront of surgical innovation.

The theatre goes beyond vascular surgery, supporting cardiac, thoracic, trauma, orthopaedic, oncology and neurological procedures. It also strengthens The Alfred's ability to take part in advanced research and international clinical trials.

"We're not talking about technology for technology's sake," Prof Vasudevan said. "What matters is that it helps us look after our patients better."

"The generosity of donors has helped us create a theatre that will benefit patients for many years to come."

Every patient who benefits from this technology is a reminder of what philanthropy can achieve. What was once an ambitious vision is now transforming care.

And it was made possible by supporters like you.

If you would like to become a regular giver, supporting a project like the Hybrid Operating Theatre, consider joining our Life Support Program. The program offers a reliable income stream that allows The Alfred to go above and beyond in the care offered to our patients. For information, visit regulargiving.alfredfoundation.org.au



The new hybrid theatre combines a traditional operating room with advanced imaging technology.



A life and legacy shaped by kindness

Those closest to Peter Fleming remember him not for grand gestures, but for the quiet generosity and kindness that shaped every part of his life.

A thoughtful man with a love for conversation and a passion for tennis, Peter was someone who always had time for others and took genuine pleasure in helping people, whether family, friends or the causes he cared about.

His cousin, Trish Stargatt, with whom he spent a lot of time while they were children, recalls Peter's early years, growing up in Melbourne's Bayside community and part of a large Anglican Parish family. They would often meet at Brighton Beach Baths and have family holidays together, "going to places like Lakes Entrance in Uncle Austen's Ford Mercury car," she said.

His love of community remained a constant throughout his 85 years, while he was also a dedicated theatre-goer, and a lover of classical music, travel and good food — as well as a lifelong devotee of the St Kilda Football Club.

"He was always nicely dressed — very proper," Trish says.

Yet beneath Peter's many interests was a deeper commitment to giving back. The values of kindness and generosity guided him throughout his life and ultimately informed one of his most significant decisions.

When Peter passed away in 2023, he left gifts in his Will to nine charitable organisations, including The Alfred, where he had received care, and his childhood school, Brighton Grammar, ensuring the causes he cared about would continue to make a positive impact.



Peter Fleming's generosity will continue creating impact long after his lifetime.

Peter's gift significantly contributed to the Hybrid Operating Theatre featured here on pages 4 and 5, honouring his wish to support cardiac treatment at The Alfred. Like many appreciated estate gifts left to the hospital, Peter's contribution will continue creating impact long after his lifetime, helping The Alfred invest in innovation, research and equipment that benefits countless patients and families.

For Trish, Peter's legacy feels entirely fitting.

"He was very generous," she said simply.

For The Alfred, Peter's gift is a powerful reminder of the remarkable impact that supporters can have. Every gift in Will to The Alfred represents not only financial support, but also trust, compassion and a belief in better healthcare for future generations.

If you would like to know more about how you too could help shape The Alfred's future, please email giftinwill@alfred.org.au or phone (03) 9076 3222.

Thank you to our supporters

Thank you to the many members of our community who took the time to complete The Alfred Foundation's Supporter Survey earlier this year.

As valued supporters, your insights help us better understand your connection with The Alfred and ensure we share the stories, news and updates that matter most to you.

Your feedback also helps us reach more generous people who share our mission to deliver exceptional healthcare and save lives every day.

We had 1296 people respond to the survey, from which we learned that many of you (75 per cent) are grateful for care received, either for yourself or someone close to you.

Respondents also highlighted a wish to support medical research and innovation (45 per cent), as well as a desire to improve the lives of others (33 per cent).

Thank you for helping us make a lasting difference across The Alfred.

Research centre to boost outcomes for cancer patients

Victorian cancer patients will soon have access to more personalised, precise and potentially safer immunotherapy treatments, thanks to the launch of a new centre at The Alfred, which leverages equipment that was partly funded by donors.

The Australian Cancer Research Foundation (ACRF) Centre for Dynamic Immuno Oncology (CDIO) marks a significant boost for research into immunotherapy, a treatment that boosts or alters the body's own immune system to help it recognise, attack and destroy cancer cells.

The CDIO, based at The Alfred's Paula Fox Melanoma and Cancer Centre, is supported by funding from the ACRF (\$2 million) and the National Imaging Facility (\$700,000), and will use advanced imaging and cellular level immunology tools to understand a patient's immune response in real time.

This includes using existing state-of-the art infrastructure at The Alfred, including the \$24 million Quadra PET/CT scanner, one of the most advanced scanners of its kind globally.

The Quadra scanner was made possible through philanthropic support from The Alfred Foundation, the Federal Government and the State Government.

"By combining advanced imaging technology with cutting-edge tools to study cancer immunology at a cellular level, we will gain unprecedented insights into how immunotherapies work, ushering innovations and a new era in cancer treatment," Director of Oncology at The Alfred, Professor Mark Shackleton, said.

Bayside Health Alfred Chief Executive, Adjunct Prof Simone Alexander, said the centre's work, in collaboration with researchers from Monash University's newly established Department of Cancer Medicine, will improve access to breakthrough clinical trials and advanced cancer treatments.

Professor Meng Law and Professor Mark Shackleton are excited about the new centre.



The 'All of You' program brought clinical expertise and industry innovation together.

The power of partnership

Corporate partnerships play an important role in helping The Alfred deliver exceptional care and support to patients, families and staff.

A recent example is the 'All of You' program between The Alfred Foundation, Alfred Cancer and founding partner La Roche-Posay, bringing together clinical expertise and industry innovation to enhance holistic cancer care.

Through this collaboration, patients and clinicians have taken part in specialised education sessions focused on managing skin-related side effects of cancer treatment, including skin toxicity, which is associated with chemotherapy, radiotherapy and immunotherapy.

Led by Alfred Cancer experts and supported by La Roche-Posay, the program provides practical guidance that helps improve wellbeing throughout treatment.

We were also thrilled with the reception to our Critical Care Appeal this year, with support from radio station 3AW and QMS Media.

Thank you to all of our corporate partners, including Bank First, Pinchapoo, Zapparas Lawyers and Skilled Medical, and of course the many thousands of donors who have given to this year's appeal to support our work.

YES, I WOULD LIKE TO DONATE TO THE ALFRED FOUNDATION

☐ \$35	☐ \$60	☐ \$100	☐ \$250	☐ \$1,000	Name on card:
☐ Other \$					Card number:
☐ Or					Expiry Date:
☐ I want to give a regular monthly gift of \$_____ to The Alfred Foundation to be deducted from my credit card on the last day of each month (I can cancel at any time by giving 14 days notice)					Signature:
Please find enclosed:					From:
☐ Cheque	☐ Money order (payable to The Alfred Foundation)				First Name:
Or, please debit my:					Surname:
☐ Visa	☐ MasterCard	☐ Amex	Address:		
					Phone:
					Email:

☐ Yes, I have already included The Alfred in my Will

☐ I am considering including a gift to The Alfred in my Will

To make your gift, complete and return this coupon in the enclosed reply paid envelope, or send to:

The Alfred Foundation
PO Box 2021
Pahran VIC 3181
T: 1800 888 878
alwaysalfred.org.au



ABN 52 892 860 159

Our community



Run Melbourne

Thank you to everyone who turned out to this year's Run Melbourne, to take part and cheer on members of Team Alfred.

It was wonderful to celebrate with so many runners — enjoying the sunshine, sharing stories and soaking up the excitement of the day together.

One of the highlights of the morning was having Alfred Care Group Chief Executive Simone Alexander cheering on Team Alfred.

Together, our incredible supporters helped raise more than \$14,000. This support makes a meaningful difference to The Alfred's patients, their families and staff.



Recycling galore

Siya and Krish are hard at work ahead of October's Melbourne Marathon — and not just on the pavement.

As part of the Alfred Allstars team, the pair is collecting cans and bottles from their school to process via the recycling scheme and donate to The Alfred.

Siya and Krish's mum, Nisha, said they had chosen for the money to go to heart transplantation this year, with the theme of 'recycling bottles and recycling organs'.

"We like thinking of innovative ways to raise money," she said.

Good luck to all of our participants at this year's Melbourne Marathon!

You too can turn recycling efforts into donations for The Alfred. Visit www.cdsvic.org.au for information.



Josh Ihle

The Alfred will benefit from a remarkable gift from the community of Dr Josh Ihle, raising more than \$15,000 in his memory.

Established by his family and friends, the fundraising will support our ECMO service, helping future clinicians build expertise in the lifesaving treatment to which Josh dedicated much of his career.

A highly respected Intensive Care specialist, Josh was renowned for his leadership in ECMO, his commitment to teaching and his compassionate care for critically ill patients.

The outpouring of support for Josh's family and the generosity shown through donations is a testament to the lasting impact he had on colleagues, patients and the broader healthcare community. His legacy will continue through the next generation of ECMO specialists.

Make the
impossible
possible

See reverse for details on how to donate to The Alfred Foundation, or scan the QR code below



Are you interested in creating your own fundraiser?

Scan the QR code or head to fundraising.alfredfoundation.org.au and create your own page today.



**The Alfred
Foundation**
Part of **Bayside Health**

The Alfred Foundation

PO Box 2021
Prahran VIC 3181
T: 1800 888 878

Find us online

🌐 alfredfoundation.org.au
📘 [thealfredfoundation](https://www.facebook.com/thealfredfoundation)
📷 [thealfredfoundation](https://www.instagram.com/thealfredfoundation)