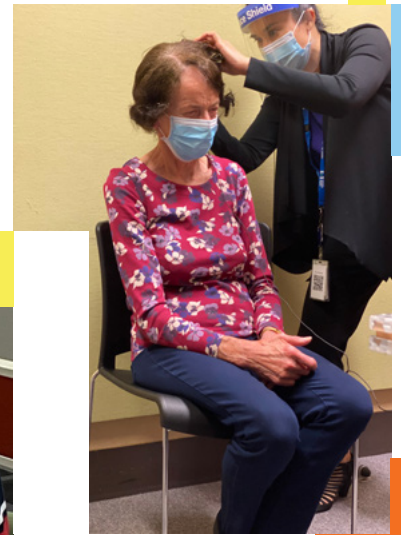




the royal victorian  
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# Sight + Sound

NEWS | AUTUMN 2021



David and Lanna Cochlear  
Implant recipients

## Cochlear Implant Milestones

The Eye and Ear is proud to be home of the Bionic Ear, performing all of Victoria's cochlear implant surgeries. Recently we celebrated some significant milestones related to these implants. In November 2020, Lanna Sago became our 4000th patient to receive an implant. The month prior, disability support worker, David Moore, was the 5000th patient to undergo cochlear implant surgery. Cochlear implants really can change lives, giving eligible recipients the gift of hearing where hearing aids have been unsuccessful.

76 year old Lanna experienced sudden hearing loss while at the dentist at the end of 2019.

"I could hear, and then a couple of hours later I couldn't hear. Most people go deaf gradually, not suddenly like I experienced," explained Lanna.

After waiting a few weeks to see if her condition would improve, Lanna decided it was time to seek professional assistance.

A cochlear implant is a device which improves the ability of adults and children who have a severe, profound or total hearing loss to communicate. They are an option for people who receive little or no benefit from traditional hearing aids.

Like many older Australians, Lanna's hearing issues were exacerbated over the past year with the introduction of mandatory face

masks due to the COVID-19 pandemic, which eliminates the ability to lip-read.

"It was extremely difficult to socialise. If I went out, I would often mistake what someone would say to me. You can tell you said the wrong thing by the puzzled look on their face."

**"Now, with my cochlear implant my hearing has improved. My favourite thing about the cochlear implant is being able to understand people again. I definitely say the words 'I beg your pardon' much less!"**

David has had hearing difficulties his whole life. Traditional hearing aids did not work for him in his right ear, which is when he decided to look into other options.

"I have always been able to hear with a hearing aid in my left ear, but in the right I wasn't able to," David explains.

"Going to restaurants I would need to have an 'interpreter' sitting next to me to understand the conversations."

"I am looking forward to being able to socialise, and being able to work without invading people's private space."

Lanna and David both have a new lease on life, thanks to their cochlear implant surgery and are now enjoying socialising with friends and family, and being an active part of the conversation.



## CEO Welcome

Welcome to the Autumn issue of Sight+Sound, our first issue of 2021. Whilst battling the uncertainties of COVID-19 in 2020 was challenging, I am proud of the resilience demonstrated by our staff, volunteers and community, and the agility that continues to be displayed in response to the pandemic.

As a hospital committed to continuous improvement, we will further develop our organisational learnings and processes created during these challenging circumstances to build a better platform for our future.

With the rollout of COVID-19 vaccinations underway, we continue to operate effectively delivering the best of patient care in the current COVID Normal environment.

In this edition of Sight + Sound, we meet cochlear implant recipients Lanna and David as they discuss their transformative experience at our Cochlear Implant Clinic.

In further stories about Eye and Ear staff we also hear from:

- Our Australia Day Honour recipients, Associate Professor Anne Brooks, AM Associate Professor Carmel Crock, OAM and Dr Richard Stawell, AM.
- Jessica Jones, our new Eye and Ear Fundraising and Philanthropy Manager

I am also delighted to share with you details of one of our most loyal supporters, the Joe White Bequest, who have generously funded initiatives at the Eye and Ear for 34 years.

Thank you all for your continued support and I hope you enjoy this edition.

Best wishes,

Brendon Gardner



Acting Executive Director Operations, Tracy Siggins and patient Stephanie at kiosk launch

## Patient self-check-in kiosk launch

At the Eye and Ear we are committed to acting on patient feedback. Nobody enjoys having to queue and so in February 2021, we launched our first patient self-check-in kiosk in our Acute Ophthalmology Service (AOS) clinic. This development marks a significant step forward in striving for a better patient experience by easing wait times, congested waiting rooms and reception queues.

The kiosk allows patients to digitally register their arrival using the touch-screen technology without the need to go to the physical reception desk. Digital calling screens in clinic waiting areas then alert patients when their clinician is ready to see them.

This kiosk is a tangible response to the feedback we received from patients, and represents a large body of work undertaken by a project team made up of Ambulatory Services and the Outpatient Bookings Unit. As with all decisions that impact our patients, valuable input was sought from consumers and AOS clinical and clerical staff.

# Australia Day Honours

In January, not one, but three of our specialist clinicians were acknowledged in the 2021 Australia Day honours. We caught up with our award recipients to learn more about their respective careers and how they felt to be acknowledged in this way.

## Associate Professor Carmel Crock, OAM

Director of the Emergency Department, Associate Professor Carmel Crock, received a Medal of the Order of Australia (OAM) 2021 for service to emergency medicine and to medical education.

Associate Professor Crock has been part of the Eye and Ear team for over 20 years and is a passionate advocate of diagnostic excellence, shared decision-making and the quality and safety of patient care.

**“As an Emergency Department doctor, you’re always a part of a team, and I received this honour for my team. Nothing I do, I could do on my own. I’m proud to be part of a speciality that never closes, there is always someone there to help those in need.”**



## Associate Professor Anne Brooks, AM

Ophthalmologist and Head of Special Eye Clinic 3, Associate Professor Anne Brooks was appointed a Member of the Order of Australia (AM) for significant service to ophthalmology, and to eye health organisations.

Associate Professor Brooks was inspired to become an ophthalmologist by her late mother Dr Nancy Lewis who was a pioneer for female medicos and Ophthalmologists. Anne has a passion for teaching registrars in clinical ophthalmology and was the first female to be awarded the RANZCO College Medal in 2019.

**“I felt very pleased to be recognised like this and very grateful to all the people who have helped me to achieve what I have” Professor Brooks explained.**

## Dr Richard Stawell, AM

Ophthalmologist and former Eye and Ear Chief of Medical Staff, Dr Richard Stawell, was also appointed a Member of the Order of Australia (AM) for his significant service to ophthalmology, to research, and to professional bodies.



Dr Stawell became interested in ophthalmology as an intern at Wangaratta Base Hospital, when the consultant ophthalmologist was not able to manage microsurgery due to a medical problem and taught him how to do basic perforating eye injury repairs.

**“I felt both humbled and honoured that some of my colleagues had felt I deserved it and went to the trouble to put forward my name,” Dr Stawell stated in response to his honour.**

We are proud to have such dedicated clinicians who are experts in their field as part of the Eye and Ear community.



## Pico Diagnostic Microscopes

Recently, we successfully secured funding from the Joe White Bequest, through our formal grant application process, to purchase two Pico Diagnostic Microscopes, for our Ear Nose and Throat (ENT) Specialist Clinics. We were delighted to receive the full funding from the Joe White Bequest, who has been supporting us at The Royal Victorian Eye and Ear Hospital for 34 years.

Nurse Unit Manager Specialist Clinics, Toby Pontifex, spoke about the benefits the two Pico Diagnostic Microscopes are already bringing to the hospital.

**“The Pico Diagnostic Microscopes are primarily being used in our otology specialist clinics but also in other ENT spaces. On average more than 5000 patients go through our otology clinics each year.**

These state-of-the-art microscopes enable our medical staff to visualise high-contrast, true-colour images that they photograph and video for comparison in future treatments. This supports better outcomes for our patient group and enables the patients to see exactly what is being discussed. It also prevents movement of patients, promoting better care.

These microscopes use a more cost effective LED light and provide a better ergonomic set up for our staff. They also complement our role as a tertiary hospital and support the education of our junior medical staff.”

Doctor using Pico Diagnostic Microscope to examine patient



Joe White who funded the Pico Diagnostic Microscopes

A particularly beneficial feature of the microscopes is that it also allows photos and videos to be taken and uploaded to the patient's Digital Health Record (DHR). Securing this technology not only supports our staff and patients, but also ensures successful integration with other hospital networks.

**Thank you to Joe White Bequest and all our generous donors.**



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## Welcome Jessica Jones

We are very pleased to welcome Jessica Jones to the Eye and Ear family as our new Fundraising and Philanthropy Manager.

Prior to accepting the role at Eye and Ear, Jessica was working at the Brotherhood of St. Laurence, specialising in Philanthropy. Throughout her career Jessica has worked largely in healthcare, Melbourne Health and most notably serving seven years as Head of Philanthropy at the Leukaemia Foundation of Australia.

“The most appealing part of the role was simply the opportunity to work for the Eye and Ear. I was attracted to come and work at the hospital by a genuine alignment of values. I am so impressed by the standards of patient care, the world leading research being undertaken onsite and the teaching and training that goes on across the hospital.” Jessica explained.

Jessica hopes to further develop strategy and governance as part of the role combined with a culture of engaged philanthropy through meaningful relationships with our existing and future supporters.

**“I would like to express my gratitude to the Eye and Ear community and to our generous Donors for this opportunity. I am absolutely delighted and steadfast in my commitment to the role. I also look forward to saying “hello” in the not too distant future.”**



Dame Quentin Bryce, 25th Governor-General of Australia from 2008 to 2014 and Jessica Jones our new Fundraising and Philanthropy Manager

If you'd like to chat to Jessica about her appointment or have any donation queries please email her at [jessica.jones@eyeandear.org.au](mailto:jessica.jones@eyeandear.org.au).



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Sight+Sound is published quarterly.

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March 2021.

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