

Media Release



Western Health



Tuesday, 22 July, 2021

Djerriwarrh Health Services to amalgamate with Western Health

Western Health and Djerriwarrh Health Services have welcomed the Victorian Government's approval of the voluntary amalgamation of the two health services.

From July 1, Djerriwarrh Health Services' staff and facilities – including the Bacchus Marsh and Melton Regional Hospital, Melton Health, Grant Lodge aged care and Community Health Centres in Bacchus Marsh, Melton and Caroline Springs – will join the Western Health network.

Following the State Government's 2019 announcement that a new Melton Hospital will be operated by Western Health, the services began exploring the appropriate governance structure to ensure ongoing delivery of high-quality care to the growing community in Melbourne's west.

The services are pleased that the Government has today confirmed its support for their joint recommendation that a voluntary amalgamation would deliver clear benefits to communities, staff and volunteers by providing access to broader services and resources.

Western Health Board Chair Robyn Batten said the new network would strengthen the services provided to communities and reiterated the priority of delivering high-quality care.

"I am delighted to welcome Djerriwarrh Health Services staff, volunteers and communities to the Western Health network," Ms Batten said.

"A key aspect of the amalgamation, and which is even more important after the last year with additional pressures on health services during the pandemic, is that there will be no frontline clinical jobs lost and no reductions in overall health staffing levels due to the amalgamation.

"Clear commitments have been made around the future of Bacchus Marsh and Melton Regional Hospital and Grant Lodge, along with local fundraising for local services and the ability for clients and patients to choose where they access care."

Djerriwarrh Health Services Administrator, Dr John Ballard, said that given the Melton Hospital decision, the voluntary amalgamation was a logical next step for health provision in Bacchus Marsh and Melton.

"I have the highest respect for the people of Djerriwarrh, and the way they have embraced change and remained a strong community-focused health service over the past six years," Dr Ballard said. "It's important to also recognise the fundraisers, volunteers and others who have backed in change at Djerriwarrh."

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Western Health CEO Russell Harrison said: “Over the past 18 months, we’ve worked with Djerriwarrh staff regarding the proposed amalgamation and I have been really impressed with their ongoing dedication and commitment to their communities.

“I would like to thank everyone who has been involved in the amalgamation to date and look forward to continuing to work through the details to ensure a safe and smooth transition for staff, volunteers and the communities we serve.”

Ms Batten also paid tribute to Dr Ballard, who will leave Djerriwarrh Health Services at the end of this month.

“I’d particularly like to thank John Ballard who worked tirelessly throughout this process and who has always put the needs of the communities that Djerriwarrh serves at the centre of every decision”.

For more details, visit the Better Health for the West website: www.betterhealthforthewest.com.au

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