

Cancer diagnosis NO REASON TO STOP LIVING

"I know I have the big C, but I'm a positive person and I'm living for the now. I'm not going to sit at home and feel sorry for myself... 'live life and love' - that's what I've always said."

It's a remarkably upbeat attitude that typifies Lesley Togni's personality. She's young at heart, kind in spirit and genuine to the core.

For anyone else a cancer diagnosis might put an end, or at least a pause, on their work as a palliative

care volunteer in the community - but not Lesley. "I'll do that as long as I'm able to," she declares.

Her doctors would prefer she hit pause on her partiality for a glass of champagne as well, but not yet.

"I want to live for the now and part of that is to continue to enjoy a bubble or two with family and friends," she said.

- continued page 4.



THANK YOU - *The Wheels of the bus are soon to go round and round thanks to your generous support*

Donations to our 2021 Annual Appeal rolled in strongly and we are now thrilled to let you know that we are about to purchase the community bus.

We can't thank you enough for your generous donations - they exceeded our expectations.

Our Social Support Group (SSG) participants in Cobden and Timboon could not contain their excitement when they heard the fantastic news that the bus they've been dreaming about for so long, will finally be hitting the road later this year.

Daytrips here we come!

Because of you, our generous community and local businesses, we are in the process of purchasing the community bus. This is a much-needed resource that will make it possible for our community members to stay better connected through our Social Support Groups. The asset will support people to be active, stay social and enjoy new experiences.

TDHS chief executive officer Rebecca Van Wollingen said the bus would be fitted with a hoist - providing easy access to community members with a

disability or mobility issue, assisting them to live their fullest life.

"We are so grateful to our community for supporting our endeavours. The bus will enable us to provide the best service possible and enable our members to further reconnect, reminisce and be reminded of all that's good about our lovely part of the world," she said.

"On behalf of our Board and staff, I'd like to say a huge thank you to all our community members for their generous donations. We look forward to making the most out of your contributions."



CEO & CHAIR'S *Report*

What a wonderful, supportive community we have. Your generous donations raised over \$100k to support the purchase of our bus, which will be used to transport our social support groups. It's an amazing outcome, particularly in such a short period of time, your generosity will be felt for many years. Thank you for your contribution.

In March we celebrated our annual ICARE staff and volunteer awards. It was a wonderful celebration recognising our dedicated staff and volunteers, whose hard work continually shines through. Particular congratulations to Sandith Kep and Linda Pender, winners of the coveted ICARE awards.

As we head into winter months, with restrictions eased, there is a greater chance that you might catch a cold or the flu. We encourage everyone to get their influenza vaccination, to see you and your loved ones through the winter months. We also encourage you to keep up your healthy habits like being active, getting outside when you

can, increasing your fruit and vegetable intake and staying connected with your loved ones.

The Board and executive team have also been busy at work developing our next strategic plan. It's an exciting time, as we look to the future of TDHS. We look forward to sharing the plan with you, and hearing your feedback, later in the year.

Warm regards

**Board Chair
Frank Carlus**

**Chief Executive Officer
Rebecca Van Wollingen**



National Diabetes Week is from 10 – 16 July raising awareness about all types of diabetes. Around 1.8 million Australians have diabetes. This includes all types of diagnosed diabetes (1.4 million known and registered) as well as silent, undiagnosed type 2 diabetes (up to 500,000 estimated).

For every person diagnosed with diabetes there is usually a family member or carer who also 'lives with diabetes' every day in a support role. This means that an estimated 2.4 million Australians are affected by diabetes every day.

For more information you can visit Diabetes Australia at <https://www.diabetesaustralia.com.au/>. You can also contact TDHS on 5558 6000 to make an appointment with our Diabetes Educator or make an appointment with one of our GPs by contacting our Timboon Clinic on 5558 6088.

Vin's double whammy

CANCER AND DIABETES

Vin Ayres lost one kidney 17 years ago, so when he was diagnosed with renal cancer last year on his remaining one he naturally thought that was going to be his biggest challenge for the next 12 months or so.

Unfortunately, in the midst of his cancer treatment, Vin became very ill in February this year and was subsequently diagnosed with Type 1 diabetes.

For Vin, 83, and his wife June, the diabetes diagnosis has presented a much bigger challenge – one they've relied on Timboon and District Healthcare Service to survive.

Twelve months ago, the couple headed off to Darwin with their camper trailer to visit their daughter. Vin had been off his food, had an aching back and just didn't feel right, but they decided to go ahead with their trip anyway.

June said Vin's health wasn't improving, so while they were in Darwin their daughter booked him in to see a GP for some tests.

"Straight away that doctor told us it wasn't good and Vin needed some scans, but we couldn't get appointments so we decided to drive home and deal with it," June said.

"We got to Katherine though and South Australia went into COVID-19 lockdown, so we turned around and went back to Darwin. We left our car and camper trailer there and flew home instead."

June said their GP at the Timboon Clinic, Warwick Rouse, got Vin booked in for scans in Warrnambool and they found a cancerous lump on his remaining kidney.

"There were some spots on his glands as well and the cancer specialist recommended Vin undertake immune therapy, which he started in August last year.

"It's a system where they put him on an infusion every few weeks to stimulate the immune system to fight the cancer.

"It made Vin terribly itchy, but the cancer was shrinking and things were heading the right way, but then in February this year he became very unwell."

Within half a day, Vin could no longer walk and was very confused. Even now he has a very poor memory of this time in his life.

June said he ended up at Accident and Emergency in Warrnambool where he was so confused he

couldn't answer any questions from the doctors.

"He was diagnosed with Type 1 Diabetes and spent several days in intensive care and a further two weeks on the ward before coming back to TDHS for six weeks," she said.

"While the immune therapy was doing its thing on the cancer, unfortunately it caused the diabetes. The team at Timboon were just so excellent helping us. The diabetes nurse Cheryl Poole and Warwick helped us understand diabetes and how to deal with it.

"Then when he came home, district nurses came every day for a few weeks and Sherryl Mueller still comes two days a week to help us.

"We do three finger prick checks every day and use a monitor on Vin's arm five or six times a day to keep on top of his sugar levels and there's injections morning and night but we're going pretty well with it all now."

June said Vin had just started steroids for the renal cancer and they were hopeful it would continue the good work the immune therapy started and that Vin's health can continue to track in the right direction.

Cancer diagnosis no reason to stop living

The Timboon resident was diagnosed last year with multiple myeloma - a blood cancer that over time spreads throughout the bone marrow. It's stage one and she's in a waiting game to see how fast it progresses and when treatment might start. That may involve chemotherapy, radiation and a bone marrow transplant - the future is unknown.

"I might be dealing with that a bit different to most, but I'm dealing with it and I can still help others, I can still raise awareness and I'm thankful for that," she said.

"I've been so lucky. I have my husband Francis, my five beautiful grown-up children and amazing supportive friends if I need anything or feel a bit down.

"I do have my moments, and I hate that, because I feel guilty that I'm feeling sorry for myself when there are other young people who have cancer and haven't had the chance I've had to live life."

Lesley said her COVID-19 vaccination had triggered a series of events that led to her early diagnosis. Without that jab, the cancer may have gone unnoticed for much longer.

"It was nothing to do with the jab of course, but I just had a bad reaction... I got sick and passed out when I got home and eventually went to see

Warwick (Dr Rouse at the Timboon Clinic)," she said.

"He took a blood test and all of a sudden we were talking about plasma and white blood cells and going to the cancer centre.

"My white, and red, blood cell counts were very low, I was anemic and my paraprotein was high which is also an indicator that you have multiple myeloma.

"I had a bone marrow biopsy, which was very very painful, a CT scan and then a one-hour MRI. Then I had cancer.

"I got a bit of an initial shock, and I wasn't going to tell anyone at first, but I turned that around, found my positivity and decided to get on with living."

Lesley said she had all the support she needed, but always went to her appointments alone to keep in control and manage it her way.

"The kids always want to come to the doctors with me, which is nice of course, but it's my body, my life and I want to tell them what I want them to know," she said.

"I can't say I never get down because I do - but not for long. I'm very spiritual, nature is my God, I do a lot of meditation and I'm okay, I really am."



Lesley combined her previous work, helping young people in schools as an integration aide, with palliative care training and then volunteering to help individuals and families cope with death.

"I didn't think I could do it, but the training helps. It's hard, but it's also very rewarding. I stay to the end, when people pass, and I'm always thankful to be there. I grieve and take it home with me, of course you do, but I get far more back from doing it.

"As for me, I don't have a prognosis... it's a waiting game, but I'll keep being a palliative care volunteer as long as I can and I'll keep living life until then too."

Myeloma affects multiple (hence multiple myeloma) places in the body where bone marrow is normally active in adults, i.e. within the bones of the spine, skull, pelvis, the rib cage, and the areas around the shoulders and hips. Myeloma Australia's Information and Support Groups are currently being held as a combination of face-to-face and Zoom video conferencing. For more information, you can visit Myeloma Australia at <https://myeloma.org.au/> or contact them on 1800 693 566 or you can contact our Timboon Clinic on 5558 6088 to make an appointment with one of our GPs.

Dry July is a fundraiser that encourages going alcohol-free in July to raise funds for people affected by cancer. Since 2008, Dry July has inspired more than 290,200 Aussies to go dry, raising



over \$73 million for people affected by cancer, and funding projects at more than 80 cancer organisations across Australia. Participants can also select their preferred beneficiary when signing up to Dry July. For more information or to register please visit <https://www.dryjuly.com/>.



*"I've only got to make a
phone call and they're there."*

- Jo, who was diagnosed with bowel cancer in 2019

Timboon and District Healthcare Service is a lifeline for people in our community.

Will you please donate today to help train and equip our wonderful staff?

Dear Community Member,

Thank you for being such an important part of the Timboon and District Healthcare Service (TDHS) community.

Kind people like you make a vital difference for people like Jo, who relied on TDHS to help her through treatment for bowel cancer.

Jo is especially grateful for the kind, dedicated nurses here. Today, we are trying to raise \$60,000 to buy training equipment for those nurses.

Will you be there for our local community again please?

We need your help to buy much-needed educational equipment so that our staff can keep up-to-date with the latest techniques and continue providing the best possible care.

You may be wondering how your donation will make a difference? This time last year, kind people like you chipped in and were able to cover the cost of a new bus. That bus has been purchased and will be on the road, in a couple of months, helping the community stay connected.

This year, training equipment for our staff is a pressing need. By contributing to its purchase, you can help TDHS continue to deliver high quality care.

Your donation today could help people that you know or love.

When Jo was recovering from surgery to treat her bowel cancer, TDHS nurses would visit her home and change her portacath. It's a small medical device inserted under a person's skin to make taking blood and delivering medication easier.

Changing a portacath, or 'port', is a skilled procedure that requires constant practice.

Please, donate today to help raise \$60,000 for vital equipment that will help people like Jo in our community.

Anything you can give will be very much appreciated, and will make a difference to many lives.

Yours sincerely,

Rebecca Van Wollingen
Chief Executive Officer

Frank Carlus
Board Chair

**Yes! I'll help buy educational
equipment so people in my
community continue to receive
the best possible care.**



1 Please accept this gift of:

☐ \$25 ☐ \$50 ☐ \$100 ☐ My choice of \$ _____

Donations over \$2 are tax-deductible.

2 I would like to make my gift by:

☐ **Credit Card** ☐ Mastercard ☐ Visa
Name on card _____
Card number _____
Expiry _____/_____
Signature _____

☐ **Cash/Cheque/Money Order** Payable to Timboon and District Healthcare Service

☐ **Direct Deposit** BSB: 083-928 | ACC: 516 067871
Please use 'Equip' & the first 3 letters of your surname as reference

☐ **Online** Please go to www.timboonhealthcare.com.au/donate
Scan the QR code to go to our donation page



3 Here are my details so you can send me my receipt:

Name: Mr / Mrs / Miss / Ms _____

Address: _____

State: _____ Postcode: _____

**Please send this form back to us in the
reply-paid envelope provided. Thank you!**



TDHS celebrates major achievements

WITH 2022 ICARE AWARDS

Timboon and District Healthcare Service (TDHS) held its 4th Heart of TDHS ICARE Awards recently to celebrate major achievements by staff and volunteers.

For the second year, the event was held via Zoom.

Graduate registered nurse Sandith Kep received the ICARE Dr Peter Fox Staff award. The award is named after Dr Peter Fox, who served the community for over 50 years and whose work defines the history of TDHS.

The award acknowledges the outstanding contribution made by a staff member each year who demonstrate the healthcare service's ICARE values (Integrity, Compassion, Accountability, Respect and Excellence) to an exceptionally high level.

Sandith said he was very surprised to receive the coveted award saying,

"I started to get a bit of a feeling when the live stream showed Corry (last year's winner) and John (son of the late Dr Peter Fox) walking in our street, but I guess I didn't want to believe it until I heard the knock on the door," he said.

"I am grateful for working at TDHS. Nursing gives me the opportunity to meet people from different walks of life and to care for people when they are most vulnerable."

Sandith thanked the TDHS team for welcoming him and supporting him in his graduate year.

Peers who nominated Sandith wrote: "Sandith is a gentleman of complete integrity. He shows compassion through kind words and actions and his very gentle approach. Sandith treats consumers and their family and carers with dignity and he offers personalised care and choice."

The night also saw Linda Pender, Community Transport and Social Support Group volunteer, recognised with the 2022 Volunteer award.

Linda was also nominated by her peers, because of her positive, bright, and cheerful attitude - showing how

much she enjoys helping others. One peer wrote: "Linda is always positive and understanding of peoples' needs and feelings and is always willing to help."

Linda said volunteering was something she loved doing.

"I like helping others and love listening to the clients' stories as I drive them to their appointments or help them out at Social Support Group. We share jokes and a laugh and so we brighten each other's day... you know they really appreciate what you're doing for them.

"I'm very surprised and honoured to receive this award and would like to thank the people who voted for me, and I also want to thank TDHS for giving me this volunteer opportunity.

I hope one day someone will do the same thing for me when I need it."

The healthcare service also honoured the following staff with Long Service awards:

- Stephen Hanel – 10 years
- Simon Henriksen – 10 years
- Vera Convey – 15 years
- Mary Duynhoven – 20 years
- Lorraine Wilson – 30 years

Chief executive officer, Rebecca Van Wollingen, said the awards night was a wonderful way to formally acknowledge and celebrate the great work TDHS staff and volunteers did.

"We congratulate our award recipients and recognise the hard work, dedication, commitment and enthusiasm, but above all the resilience of all our staff and volunteers that make up TDHS."



Top: TDHS's 2021 ICARE Dr Peter Fox Staff Award winner Corry Kerr (left) and Dr Peter Fox's son John Fox (right) with in the (middle) 2022 winner Sandith Kep at the surprise presentation last Wednesday night.



Left: 2022 Volunteer Award winner Linda Pender (right) with Community Engagement Officer and Volunteer Coordinator Sabine McKenzie



This is home now

Dr Shashi's new gift to the local community

When Dr Shashika Jayakody arrived at the Timboon Clinic in early February last year, she admitted to being quite uncertain how long she would be able to stay.

A little over a year later 'Dr Shashi' can't believe how much Timboon feels like home and how the community has wrapped its arms around her and her family.

The 36-year-old has even found time to complete additional study to help fill a service gap in the community.

Dr Shashi is now taking counselling appointments after completing her GP focused psychological strategies training under the national Better Access Initiative – Supporting Mental Health Care.

"I would say my husband and our two-year-old son are very settled here now. When we came I wasn't sure if it would be sustainable...now it feels

just like my actual home town in Sri Lanka," she said.

"The support here, for us, has been amazing. Before my husband was able to move down as well it was a struggle to balance my son and my work here at the clinic, but people here watched him for me and helped me. The support has been amazing.

"I would like to say a huge thank you to the community – the response to me arriving has been very special and really nice. This is home now."

Dr Shashi said she had always been interested in behavioral therapy and she was pleased and proud to now be trained to deliver initial psychological strategy consults.

"When I arrived, we didn't have a counsellor here and it was clear very quickly we were struggling to get timely counselling appointments for our patients," she said.

"Sometimes, patients were waiting 4-6 weeks and when people are in need, we can't ask or expect them to wait that long to get help.

"The course I did is six months full time, but it took me nine months at my own pace with work and my little one. It has been a very busy time."

Dr Shashi said her new qualification meant she could assist people in need with anxiety disorders, depression, relationship counselling and also issues facing school-age community members such as poor focus, memory and concentration.

"This has always been an interest of mine and I can also support elderly people in our community who may be struggling with loneliness, grief or other mental health issues," she said.

For further information or to make an appointment please call the Timboon Clinic on 5558 6088.

COVID-19 WINTER DOSES & FLU VACCINES AVAILABLE NOW

Please call the **Timboon Clinic** on 5558 6088 to book for a Monday-Friday appointment.

A WINTER COVID-19 VACCINE DOSE IS AVAILABLE 4 MONTHS AFTER YOUR LAST BOOSTER DOSE TO:

- 1: ADULTS AGED 65 AND OVER
- 2: ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER PEOPLE AGED 50 YEARS AND OLDER
- 3: RESIDENTS OF AGED CARE OR DISABILITY CARE SETTINGS
- 4: PEOPLE AGED 16 YEARS AND OLDER WHO ARE SEVERELY IMMUNOCOMPROMISED.



WHAT'S ON *Events*

Please note that some activities may be subject to change
due to COVID-19 restrictions.

Please call us on 03 5558 6000 to check.

1800RESPECT
NATIONAL SEXUAL ASSAULT, DOMESTIC
FAMILY VIOLENCE COUNSELLING SERVICE

JUNE

**Bowel Cancer Awareness Month,
National Burns Awareness Month,
Men's Health Week 13-19,
World Continence Week 20-26**

1. Cobden SSG, Radiology
2. Private Podiatry, Men's Shed, Dietitian, Diabetes Educator, Timboon SSG
3. Timboon SSG
6. Walking Group, Physiotherapy
7. Men's Shed, Public Podiatry, Private Dental, Social Worker, Dietitian, Occupational Therapy, Cobden SSG
8. Cobden SSG, Radiology
9. Private Podiatry, Men's Shed, Diabetes Educator, Dietitian, Timboon SSG
10. Timboon SSG
13. Public Holiday
14. Men's Shed, Private Dental, Cobden SSG, Social Worker, Occupational Therapy, Dietitian, Continence Clinic
15. Cobden SSG, Radiology
16. Private Podiatry, Men's Shed, Diabetes Educator, Dietitian, Timboon SSG
17. Timboon SSG
20. Walking Group, Physiotherapy
22. Social Worker, Dietitian, Occupational Therapy, Men's Shed, Cobden SSG, Private Dentist, Cobden SSG, Radiology, Audiology
23. Private Podiatry, Men's Shed, Diabetes Educator, Dietitian, Timboon SSG
24. Timboon SSG
27. Walking Group, Physiotherapy
28. Men's Shed, Private Dental, Social Worker, Dietitian, Occupational Therapy, Cobden SSG
29. Cobden SSG, Radiology
30. Private Podiatry, Men's Shed, Diabetes Educator, Dietitian, Timboon SSG

JULY

**Dry(ish) July (cancer fundraiser),
National Diabetes Week 10-16,
NAIDOC Week 3-10,
National Farm Safety Week 18-22**

1. Timboon SSG
4. Walking Group, Physiotherapy
5. Men's Shed, Public Podiatry, Social Worker, Dietitian, Occupational Therapy, Private Dental, Cobden SSG
6. Cobden SSG, Radiology
7. Private Podiatry, Men's Shed, Timboon SSG, Diabetes Educator, Dietitian
8. Timboon SSG
11. Walking Group, Physiotherapy
12. Men's Shed, Private Dental, Social Worker, Dietitian, Cobden SSG, Continence Clinic, Occupational Therapy
13. Cobden SSG, Radiology
14. Private Podiatry, Men's Shed, Timboon SSG, Diabetes Educator, Dietitian
15. Timboon SSG
18. Walking Group, Physiotherapy
19. Public Podiatry, Occupational Therapy, Private Dental, Social worker, Dietitian, Cobden SSG, Men's Shed
20. Cobden SSG, Radiology, Audiology
21. Men's Shed, Private Podiatry, Diabetes Educator, Dietitian, Timboon SSG
22. Timboon SSG
25. Walking Group, Physiotherapy
26. Men's Shed, Private Dental, Social Worker, Dietician, Occupational Therapy, Cobden SSG
27. Cobden SSG, Radiology
28. Timboon SSG, Diabetes Educator, Dietitian, Men's Shed, Private Podiatry
29. Timboon SSG

AUGUST

**National Tradies Health Month,
Dental Health Week 1-7,
National Stroke Week 8-14,
Speech Pathology Week 21-27**

1. Walking Group, Physiotherapy
2. Private Dentist, Social Worker, Dietitian, Occupational Therapy, Men's Shed, Public Podiatry, Cobden SSG
3. Cobden SSG, Radiology
4. Private Podiatry, Diabetes Educator, Dietitian, Timboon SSG, Men's Shed
5. Timboon SSG
8. Walking Group, Physiotherapy
9. Men's Shed, Private Dental, Social worker, Dietitian, Occupational Therapy, Continence Clinic, Cobden SSG
10. Cobden SSG, Radiology
11. Diabetes Educator, Dietitian, Private Podiatry, Timboon SSG, Men's Shed
12. Timboon SSG
13. Walking Group, Physiotherapy
16. Men's Shed, Public Podiatry, Social Worker, Dietitian, Occupational Therapy, Private Dental, Cobden SSG
17. Cobden SSG, Radiology, Audiology
18. Diabetes Educator, Dietitian, Private Podiatry, Timboon SSG, Men's Shed
19. Timboon SSG
22. Walking Group, Physiotherapy
23. Social Worker, Dietitian, Occupational Therapy, Men's Shed, Cobden SSG, Private Dental
24. Cobden SSG, Radiology
25. Men's Shed, Timboon SSG, Diabetes Educator, Dietitian, Private Podiatrist
26. Timboon SSG
29. Walking Group, Physiotherapy
30. Social Worker, Dietitian, Occupational Therapy, Men's Shed, Cobden SSG, Private Dental
31. Cobden SSG, Radiology

SSG = Social Support Group



The digital version of our Quarterly can be found on our website by visiting: TIMBOONHEALTHCARE.COM.AU/NEWS-EVENTS/NEWSLETTERS