

# MOMENTUM

MONASH HEALTH FOUNDATION NEWS

WINTER 2025



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Foundation

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# A message from our new Director John De Rango

It has been a pleasure to recently commence at the Monash Health Foundation and begin to get to know our wonderful community of supporters and the real difference you are each making in supporting world-class care every day at Monash Health.

In the first half of 2025 we have already had so many memorable moments thanks to your generosity. We thank you for your ongoing support and look forward to continuing to share the impact you are making every day across our service.

It was fantastic to see so many people come together for the Monash Children's Hospital Walk and Shine Gala - raising vital funds to support the care we provide our young patients and their families. I was fortunate enough to join many of you on the walking course and on the dancefloor!

Many amazing patients and their families generously share their stories of care and recovery across our vast Monash Health service. Their very personal journeys of resilience and hope are emotional and greatly inspiring.

The funds you donate go a long way in helping people within our community - at every life stage - navigate their care journeys, ensuring everyone receives world-class care, with enhanced support... in the right place, at the right time.



Please enjoy this issue of Momentum as we reflect on the year so far, and the wonderful stories behind the meaningful work you support across all of Monash Health.

I look forward to working with you, our wonderful donor community, and the Monash Health Foundation team, to continue to grow and support the important work of our doctors, nurses, allied health professionals and support services... all with the aim to provide improved and additional services, new equipment, and better facilities to our patients and families.

Thank you for your continued support.

**John De Rango**  
Director, Monash Health Foundation

## Calendar of Events

**Saturday 30 August 2025**  
**Springvale RSL**  
**Charity Gala**

A spectacular evening raising funds for Monash Children's Hospital.

**Wednesday 22 October 2025**  
**Monash Health**  
**Foundation Business**  
**Breakfast**

Save the date with more details to come.

**Sunday 9 November 2025**  
**Dr Hope High Tea**  
**Fundraiser**

Supporting Monash Health Clinical Cancer Trials.

For more event information, please email [foundation@monashhealth.org](mailto:foundation@monashhealth.org)

### Cover

Our cover this edition features 2-year-old Monash Children's Hospital patient Lola, her twin sister Shelby and their mum Kate. You can read their story on page 6.

## 1 in 5 women will have a stroke – Fiona's story

**At age thirty, Fiona lived life to the full. She was healthy and happy, travelled the world and was building a successful career. Then in April 2023, she received the difficult diagnosis of a rare form of lung cancer.**

Unsure if the treatment would include chemotherapy, Fiona, still in shock, made the quick decision to freeze her eggs. She adored children and had always wanted to be a mum. Immunotherapy tablets ended up being the most appropriate form of treatment for Fiona and the cancer stabilised.

Shortly after, much to Fiona and her partner Inti's complete surprise, but absolute delight, she had fallen pregnant naturally.

Having been through a difficult time, this wonderful surprise had brought hope to Fiona and Inti. It was a normal and very easy pregnancy. Fiona enjoyed things like walking every day and prenatal pilates.

However, at 22 weeks, Fiona began to find herself short of breath - and in June 2024, a few days after family and friends gathered for a gender reveal celebration, Fiona found herself in excruciating pain. She immediately called Monash Health with the pregnancy assessment centre advising her to come in immediately.

Scans showed that the baby was ok, but Fiona felt so unwell. Her oxygen was low, her stats were dropping... she couldn't breathe.

Fiona had to undergo a procedure. Going under general anaesthetic while pregnant, sent a million fearful thoughts racing through her head.

Fiona made it through and their unborn baby was unaffected. Fiona was taken to her hospital room. That's when she suffered two strokes... The rest was a blur for Fiona.

Fiona required emergency surgeries to remove blood clots from her brain.

After the second surgery, Fiona was unconscious and in critical condition. Fiona, usually so full of life, intubated and on a breathing machine, was one of the hardest things for her family and friends to see.

An extensive team of Monash Health specialist doctors, including oncology, haematology, neurology, an interventional neuroradiologist, stroke and maternity held an emergency meeting to plan what steps should be taken next for Fiona and bub. Bringing together specialists from so many disciplines, in such a short amount of time, was possible because of the breadth and scope of Monash Health services.

During this incredibly difficult time, Inti faced the unimaginable choice, deciding whether to deliver their



baby early in case Fiona did not make it. But he believed Fiona would pull through, and with unwavering faith, she did.

Doctors told Fiona that the further the pregnancy progressed, the better the chances would be for the baby.

Fiona, determined to give her baby the best chance, carried her baby to 34 weeks and 5 days. Baby Raia (her name meaning 'hope') was born.

'Our miracle baby' Fiona says. 'A fighter just like her mum who has brought immense joy into our lives'.

Today, Raia at six months old, is a much needed ray of light as Fiona continues to manage her cancer journey. Raia is thriving and continues to reach all her developmental milestones.

Fiona had two strokes while she was pregnant with clots to her heart and brain. After returning from a critical condition, she is now back to being able to walk, talk, drive and get back to her life. 'I wouldn't be here without the wonderful team of doctors and nurses. I am so eternally grateful to Monash Health'.

Fiona's stroke occurred as a result of the cancer spreading which made the blood thicker, causing the clots. More commonly, stroke in pregnant women is related to high blood pressure or hypertensive disorder of pregnancy.

**Monash Health is launching a national first - Stroke in Women Service for these women.**

**Your donation today will help fund a specialised Electromyography Machine (EMG) which can measure variability in heart rate and blood pressure. This could significantly enhance stroke care for all women, especially pregnant women with high blood pressure who are at higher risk of stroke compared to women of the same age.**

**You can make your much needed donation online today at [monashhealth.org/foundation-2025appeal](https://monashhealth.org/foundation-2025appeal), call us on (03) 9594 2700, or scan the QR code.**

**Whatever your gift, you can help change the lives of many women at risk of stroke.**





# MONASH CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL SHINE GALA 2025

A heartfelt thank you to everyone who supported the 2025 Monash Children's Hospital Shine Gala on Friday 16 May. Together, we raised over \$500,000 for Monash Children's Hospital to support the care we provide our young patients and their families.

Guests joined us at the Palladium Ballroom at Crown for a spectacular evening of entertainment, all for a great cause. Australian music royalty Kate Ceberano had guests on the dancefloor, even before the main course was served! Much-loved entertainer Rob Mills and his party band kept everyone singing and dancing well into the night.

Olympic gold and silver medallist, Brooke Hanson co-hosted with media personality Pete Lazer. She shared her own deeply personal connection to Monash Children's Hospital, like many other families in the room – their stories of hope and resilience inspiring attendees.

Professor Eugene Yafele, Chief Executive Officer of Monash Health and Dr Amiria Lynch, Director of Paediatric General Surgery at Monash Children's Hospital took to the stage to share the importance of philanthropy, and how our passionate and dedicated care teams at Monash Children's Hospital are enhancing care coordination to best support our patients and families in navigating their care journeys.

Magical evenings like this could not happen without the generosity of our supporters. A huge thank you to our principal and major sponsors.

On behalf of our patients, doctors, nurses, allied health professionals, support services and everyone dedicated to providing world-class care for children, the Monash Health Foundation extends our thanks to everyone who ensured this special event was a success.



## THANKS TO OUR SPONSORS







2-year-old Monash Children's Hospital patient Ryder and his dad Sam cross the finish line.



Walkers take off at the Monash University course.

## THE MONASH CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL — WALK —

**Thank you to everyone who joined the 2025 Monash Children's Hospital Walk!**

The amazing turnout of over 1,500 people was a special sight, all walking in step to raise funds for the Monash Children's Hospital. It was such a great day out with our community at the new event venue Monash University, Clayton.

Thanks to your efforts, together we raised \$160,000 for the Monash Children's Hospital which will support a range of patient and family-centred care initiatives, easing challenges for patients and their families when they need it most.

Thank you to those who attended or donated, supporting the amazing care at Monash Children's Hospital. Every dollar raised has a positive impact for the patients and families we care for.

## Supporting patients to navigate their care journeys – Lola's Story

**Meet two-year-old twins Lola and Shelby. These precious girls are now inseparable, but they spent the first two months of their lives apart.**

When they arrived in the world, parents Kate and Andrew were quickly faced with the news that Lola was born with Tracheoesophageal Fistula and Oesophageal Atresia (TOF/OA), a rare condition affecting the structure of her food pipe and airway.

At a small weight of 2.3kg, unable to eat or breathe normally, Lola was immediately transferred to the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU) at Monash Children's Hospital to undergo life-saving surgery and care.

Since returning home to live with her condition, Lola has had multiple admissions to the hospital and has faced a winter where her fragile immune system and airways were confronted with RSV, COVID and influenza.



'We have spent so much time in the care of the Monash Children's Hospital and different specialties, we even celebrated our older son Louis' birthday by Lola's bedside,' said mum Kate.

'The hospital has been a second home and a vital part of keeping Lola healthy – we are so grateful for her wonderful surgeon and specialists'.

Today, Lola is a happy, bright toddler, keeping up with her twin sister and big brother and all the fun to be had.

Her life-long condition will need ongoing management and appointments for her medical, nutritional and developmental well-being, so our care team can support her and her family every step of the way.

The support of the Monash Children's Hospital Walk and Shine Gala will go a long way in helping families like Lola's to receive world-class care, with enhanced support, in the right place at the right time.

## Chain Reaction Challenge: Pedalling for Purpose

**A huge thank you and congratulations to all the amazing riders who took part in this year's Chain Reaction Challenge, cycling the 1,000km course across the North Island of New Zealand and raising over \$800,000 for Monash Children's Hospital and the Starlight Foundation.**

Dr Cathy McAdam, Dr Sabine Hennel and Professor Nick Freezer represented Monash Children's Hospital, riding alongside Olympic champion Grace Brown, and warmed up those tricky inclines for Dr Rob Roseby, who took off shortly after as part of the Sydney-based Chain Reaction Challenge.

Thank you all for your incredible efforts and dedication to training to be mentally and physically fit to ride and raise funds for Monash Children's Hospital.

We are also incredibly grateful to the Chain Reaction team and support crew for putting together another outstanding event, and to Paul and Tatum Mitchell, our Charity Ambassadors. Thank you for putting in so much hard work as part of the support crew, going above and beyond your roles and sharing your own deeply personal experience of spending over a year in the NICU with your son Toby.

The funds raised for the Monash Children's Hospital will be used to purchase new state-of-the-art ventilators, helping critically ill babies and children to breathe and get home to their families sooner, where they belong.



Monash Children's Hospital riders and support crew in New Zealand



## Community fundraising: Supporting the Monash Children's Cancer Centre

**We were thrilled to welcome the Rotary Club of Emerald & District at the Monash Children's Hospital in April, who donated an incredible \$41,000 for the Monash Children's Cancer Centre.**

The funds were raised at the 2024 Kids Fun Run with Puffing Billy – a very special annual event hosted by the Rotary Club in support of our young patients.

We had the pleasure of taking our wonderful supporters on a tour of the Children's Cancer Research Labs with our dedicated team of clinicians and researchers, to see the innovation and collaboration underway with the Hudson Institute of Medical Research.



The Rotary Club of Emerald and District presenting their fundraising cheque at Monash Children's Hospital

On behalf of Monash Health and our patients and families, we extend our gratitude to the Rotary Club of Emerald & District and the families and kids who raced Puffing Billy to fundraise for this generous gift to support children's cancer research.



# Our Community

## Bailey's Day

**For over twenty years, Patrick Tessier OAM and his annual charity event, Bailey's Day, has made a significant difference in the lives of children and their families facing cancer.**

Since its inception, this amazing golf day, auction, and luncheon has raised over \$4.8 million, funding 21 specialist oncologists at the Monash Children's Cancer Centre.

Patrick's commitment is deeply personal, inspired by the loss of his 2-year-old son Bailey, to brain cancer in 2004.

The fundraising event in the family's little boy's honour, was driven by a desire to support Monash Children's Hospital and Bailey's doctor, Associate Professor Peter Downie AM, former Director of Monash Children's Cancer Centre, in improving treatment offerings and support for families.

On Friday 14 March more than 300 supporters turned out at Southern Golf Club for the annual luncheon and golf tournament.

We are thrilled to announce that the 2025 event has raised over \$280,000. Thank you, Patrick and the Bailey's Day team, for your continued support in ensuring our patients and their families receive the highest quality care at Monash Children's Cancer Centre.



Ministry of Dance perform for guests



Luncheon guests take part in live auction fundraising



Bailey's Day Founder Patrick Tessier OAM

## 65km for Cystic Fibrosis

**The 65km for Cystic Fibrosis endurance walk (or run) around Princes and Royal Parks in Carlton has been making strides for over a decade.**

This completely volunteer run event, started by a small group of 'cystic fibrosis mums' has raised over \$1 million since, towards continuing essential research for people living with cystic fibrosis (CF).

This year the amazing team took to the course on Saturday 15 March, joined by both familiar and new participants, raising over \$81,000 for CF research.

The Monash Health Foundation extends its congratulations to the organisers and to all the



participants. Your dedication to CF research ensures ongoing improvements in treatment and outcomes for those living with a diagnosis – thank you for your support.

## The Biggest Playdate

**24-year-old Taylah Miranda has been making a difference at Monash Children's Cancer Centre for over a decade, with fun, laughter, and incredible dedication.**

Diagnosed with leukemia at 14 years old, Taylah knows first-hand the challenges for patients and families facing childhood cancer.

When she was diagnosed, Taylah and her mum, Vanessa, decided to create a carnival event full of fun and purpose, aiming to bring joy to families affected by childhood cancer, all while raising funds to support research and patient care at the Monash Children's Cancer Centre.

Since Taylah's initial diagnosis in 2014, this driven

young woman has finished year 12, completed her Biomedical Science Degree, started her first job in STEM leadership, and continues to be an ambassador and community advisor for childhood cancer.

This March the mother and daughter duo hosted The Biggest Playdate for their tenth year at the Aspendale Gardens Community Centre, raising over \$60,000 thanks to the generosity of local business sponsors, ticket holders and donors.

On behalf of the Monash Children's Cancer Centre, thank you to the Miranda family for your incredible dedication and all those who attended the event and contributed to support patients and families impacted by childhood cancer.



The Miranda family and Monash Health team at Monash Children's Cancer Centre

## South Oakleigh College Walk-a-thon

**Students and teachers at South Oakleigh College got their step count up this April - walking in their annual walk-a-thon to raise over \$21,000 for the Monash Children's Hospital School.**

The Monash Children's Hospital School and the teaching staff are dedicated to ensuring children maintain their educational and social development, even when in hospital – delivering education alongside a patient's treatment, recovery and reintegration.

Thank you to all the students, families and teachers at South Oakleigh College for supporting students facing health conditions and helping us ensure their education is supported at every step of their journey at Monash Children's Hospital.





# The Power of Giving



L-R Dragan Bogetic, Dr Anjali Dhulia, Dr Jennifer Yo, Zorica Bogetic, Professor John Kanellis and Professor Peter Ebeling

## Supporting future leaders in kidney health: The Bogetic Nephrology Research Fellowship

**Thanks to the generosity of a kidney transplant recipient and donor couple, future leaders in Nephrology at Monash Health will have extra support to pursue an academic career.**

'The Bogetic Nephrology Research Fellowship' has been created thanks to Dragan Bogetic, a recent living donor kidney transplant recipient, and his wife and kidney donor Dr Zorica Bogetic, who have a close history with care at Monash Health and have invested so generously in its future.

Zorica trained and worked as a neonatologist in Serbia before migrating to Australia and working at Prince Henry's Hospital and Monash Health in the Department of Medicine in the 1980s and 90s.

Years later, the couple would experience their own journeys as patients at Monash Health undergoing a living donor transplant and making a heartfelt commitment to give back for future research into kidney health.

'This incredibly generous donation has given us an opportunity to promote the academic and research careers of the junior nephrologists in our department who we see as having great potential as future leaders locally, nationally and internationally,' said Professor John Kanellis, Director of Nephrology.

'We are extremely grateful to the Bogetic family for trusting and investing in our department and Monash Health's future.'

We are proud to announce that Dr Jennifer Yo is the inaugural recipient of the fellowship award for her research proposal, 'Early kidney damage after preeclampsia: a population-based cohort study'. Preeclampsia is a complication of pregnancy which causes high blood pressure and can affect your kidneys, liver and brain.

For this research, Jennifer will be collaborating with experts in Sweden to look at the data from nearly 200,000 pregnancies and examine the impact of preeclampsia on longer-term renal function and on cardiovascular outcomes.

Through this work, Jennifer will help us better understand how to improve the management of women during and after pregnancy, particularly when preeclampsia has a high likelihood of adversely affecting their longer-term kidney and cardiovascular health.

On behalf of Monash Health and the Nephrology Department, thank you, Dragan and Zorica, for your generous gift, which will have such a positive impact on the next generation of nephrology researchers and the care we provide.

## Legacy of learning: Dr. Sukanya Roy's gift to future haematologists

**Dr Sukanya Roy is generously supporting the next generation of haematologists after retiring from an incredible twenty-two years of service at Monash Health.**

'Sukanya is a widely respected specialist who made significant contributions to the craft of haematopathology, the study of blood diseases and disorders, and to registrar training during her time at Monash Health,' said Professor Jake Shortt, Clinical Director of Haematology.

When retiring, she was looking for a meaningful way to have a lasting impact on future haematologists and a career that had meant so much to her.

Through her own generous donation, the annual 'Sukanya Roy Prize' was established, to support the careers of future specialists following in her path.

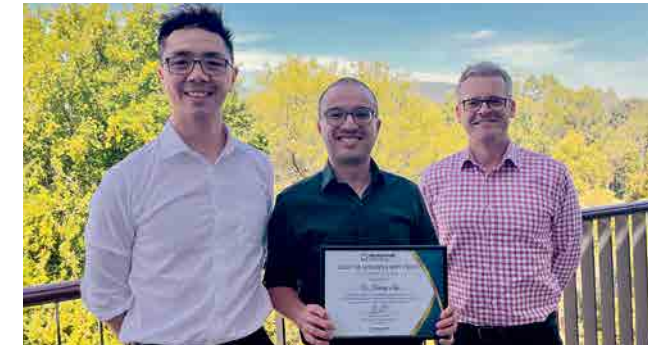
The prize is used to help fund the professional development of a Monash Health Haematology Trainee each year, who has contributed significantly to the laboratory's research, quality improvement initiatives and education.

Dr Trung Ngo is the deserving recipient of the prize for 2025. He has been an invaluable member of the registrar

team that is exploring a new test for blood cancers under the supervision of Dr Paul Yeh, Haematologist and Clinical Scientist. This now published research received NATA accreditation – making it the first RNA fusion panel of its kind for testing blood cancers in Australia.

'Sukanya cared for us as junior doctors, provided excellent pearls of wisdom and helped to mould our future careers – I am so thankful for her generosity and commitment in establishing this prize.'

We thank Sukanya for her incredible passion and the lasting legacy she leaves in her retirement.



L-R Dr Paul Yeh, Dr Trung Ngo and Professor Jake Shortt

## Heartfelt Giving: Improving care for heart failure patients and carers

**Over 400,000 Australians are currently living with heart failure. While there is no cure, timely supportive care and treatment can improve a patient's quality of life and help manage their symptoms.**

Thanks to the generosity of the Opalgate Foundation, a new project is underway, that will significantly improve the care of heart failure patients - supporting them to communicate and report evolving issues with their treatment teams from home with real-time data.

Led by Associate Professor Peter Poon, Supportive and Palliative Care Research Director, the project's mobile app will promote timely referrals to supportive care services and alert clinicians to problems developing between clinic attendance – helping to deliver timely, high-quality care for our patients.

'By creating this application, we will be empowering patients and their carers to report their physical symptoms, mental health, carer burden, and any pressing issues impacting their wellbeing with their treatment teams in real-time, not just at their next appointment,' said Peter.

This project will have a big impact on the care journeys of heart failure patients and their families during what is such a challenging time.



L-R Associate Professor Peter Poon, Alice Wang, Professor Eugene Yafele, Professor Stephen Nicholls and Catherine Law at the Victorian Heart Hospital

'With this data, we will be able to improve our communication and care, identifying and addressing any problems sooner, and provide more holistic timely care.'

The research and co-design for the mobile app and its paradigm of care, is under way in close collaboration with the Victorian Heart Hospital and key stakeholders. This will be followed by a feasibility study making the app available for our Monash Health patients with heart failure.

The Opalgate Foundation's heartfelt contribution to this project is in memory of Anna Law, the Law family's much-loved daughter, sister, niece and aunt. Her legacy enhancing the quality of life outcomes for heart failure patients at the Victorian Heart Hospital.

Thank you to the Law family and the Opalgate Foundation for their generous support and commitment to this cause.



## Support Monash Health directly with a donation.

### There are lots of ways you can donate



Visit [monashhealthfoundation.org/donate](https://monashhealthfoundation.org/donate) or scan the code.

Detach and post this form in the reply paid envelope supplied or return to:  
Monash Health Foundation,  
Locked Bag 29, Clayton South  
VIC 3169.

Call 03 9594 2700 to pay by bank transfer.



Yes, I would like to make a donation to Monash Health.

Ways to donate

- Scan the QR code or visit [monashhealth.org/foundation-2025appeal](https://monashhealth.org/foundation-2025appeal)
- Detach and **post** this form in the reply paid envelope supplied or return to Monash Health Foundation Locked Bag 29, Clayton South VIC 3169
- **Call** 03 9594 2700 to pay by bank transfer



Amount (donations of \$2 and over are tax deductible)

☐ Donate monthly ☐ Donate once

Please accept my donation of:

☐ \$250 ☐ \$175 ☐ \$75

My choice \$

☐ I would like to keep my donation anonymous.

Details (\*required fields)

Title*	First name*
Last name*	
Email*	
Mobile/phone*	
Street address	
Suburb	
Postcode	State
Supporter number	

I prefer to be contacted via: ☐ Email ☐ Mail

Payment options

**Cheque/money order** Please make payable to 'Monash Health Foundation' and return in the reply paid envelope supplied.

**Credit card** ☐ Visa ☐ Mastercard ☐ AMEX

Card number:

Expiry date

Cardholder name

Signature

Date

Giving in your legal Will

☐ I am considering a gift to Monash Health in my Will. Please provide me with more information.

☐ I have already mentioned Monash Health in my Will.

At the Monash Health Foundation we respect your privacy. We collect personal information through this form so we can process your donation, issue you with tax receipts, respond to any requests you make and to send your communications. Monash Health likes to keep you updated on how you can make a difference. If you would like to change your communication preferences please contact us at [foundation@monashhealth.org](mailto:foundation@monashhealth.org) or 03 9594 2700. ABN: 82 142 080 338.



Monthly gifts changing patient lives every day

DISCOVER THE  
**POWER**  
OF REGULAR GIVING

 Monash Health  Monash Health Foundation

# Join our Regular Giving Program: GIVING POWER

– a simple, secure way to make a powerful impact.

Regular giving provides a reliable source of funding that supports vital healthcare services for our community. Your ongoing support will be at the heart of our ability to continue providing world-class health care, research and education, so our community can ultimately have a better and healthier future.

Please join Monash Health's Regular Giving Program today and help make a meaningful difference to patient care every day. Scan the QR code for more information.





**Fundraise for Purpose**  
You have the power to change lives.

 Monash Health



We'd love to help make your fundraising idea a reality. Scan the QR code for more information.

## Fundraise for Purpose

Our platform empowers donors to turn their great fundraising idea into a reality.

This could be a special challenge or physical event – a head shave, free dress day, a run, hike, or even a kayak! Choose to raise funds for a cause that has special meaning to you, in your own way.

## Have you written your Will?

**More than half of Australians haven't - if you're one of them, now is the perfect time to take this important step.**

Writing your Will gives you peace of mind and an opportunity to reflect on the people, causes, and communities that matter most to you. The process is simpler than you might think, and it ensures your wishes are honoured.

At the Monash Health Foundation, we can guide you through the steps involved and share information about trusted online Will-writing

services. As you consider your legacy, we invite you to think about leaving a gift in your Will to Monash Health. It's a powerful way to make a lasting difference to the future of healthcare in Victoria.

We'd love to help you create a legacy that reflects your values and supports exceptional healthcare for generations to come.

Scan the QR code for more information, contact us on (03) 9594 2700 or email [bequests@monashhealth.org](mailto:bequests@monashhealth.org).

