

The Elms Family Medical Centre

Quarterly Newsletter

Keeping you in touch with developments at our Medical Centre

www.theelms.com.au

Winter 2024

The Elms recently celebrated its 30th year since opening with staff enjoying a relaxed Sunday lunch at the Mount Monument Winery in Romsey. We were blessed with beautiful late-autumn weather surrounded by amazing scenery and mobs of passing kangaroos. Along with birthday cupcakes, photos from the history of the clinic were shared at the table. Some things have changed over the years (from questionable fashions and hair-styles, to staff and facilities) but our core mission of providing a caring and comprehensive health service remains the same.

Staff news

The clinic is sad to announce that our Practice Manager, Tracy, will be retiring after spending over three years in the role. She has been instrumental in updating many of the processes and work-flows at the practice, including modernising policies to keep up with the everchanging Government bureaucracy. We wish Tracy and her husband the best for their future as they embark on their long-delayed caravanning adventures and to spend more time with family.

We are pleased that our current Assistant Practice Manager, Susanne, has accepted the role of Practice Manager. Susanne first started at The Elms in 2014 as an administrative assistant and has had valuable experience working under our former Practice Manager, Mandy, and more recently with Tracy. Susanne has proven herself to be highly capable and we have every confidence that she will excel in the role of Practice Manager. We would also like to acknowledge Susanne's 10-year milestone at The Elms, and thank her for her solid contribution to the clinic as both a colleague and a friend.

Receptionist news

The Elms would like to extend a warm welcome to Katie and Chloe, who have recently joined our reception team. Both Katie and Chloe have had experience as medical receptionists and we feel that they will fit right in with our existing front desk staff. Patients with any queries are encouraged to speak with our receptionists who are more than happy to assist.

Maddi, who has been working at The Elms as a receptionist and general assistant, recently graduated university as a Registered Nurse. She has a passion for paediatrics (children's health) and has begun her first placement at the Werribee Mercy Hospital. Maddi will continue juggling her roles between The Elms and the hospital. We congratulate Maddi and wish her a bright and fulfilling career in nursing.

Doctor news

It was with much joy that our Dr Laura Machan and Dr Andrew Pandza announced the safe arrival of their second child, baby Lucy. Both mum and baby are doing well, and Laura will remain on maternity leave until early 2025.

Our former registrar, Dr Emily Thrower, also recently had her first baby. Baby Oliver arrived healthy and well. Additionally, Emily has successfully passed her written examinations for the specialist Fellowship qualification in general practice. Congratulations to all for such uplifting news!

Clinic reminder service

As a service to our patients, we have a reminder system to alert about upcoming events such as immunisations, tests, or appointments. This is in the form of an SMS to the patient's nominated mobile phone number. Just in case an alert is not actioned within a certain time, a follow up reminder is usually sent. Patients may opt out of this service by informing our reception staff, although it would mean missing out on potentially important follow up. Mailed reminders will no longer be routinely used.

Aged-care facility visits

Doctors from The Elms conduct regular home visits for their established patients who have transitioned to nursing home care at Villa Maria Catholic Homes (VMCH) Providence, located at 9 Griffith Street Maddingley. Unfortunately, due to the increasing demand on doctors for aged-care home visits, we will no longer be accepting new patients moving into Grant Lodge Residential Aged Care (Bacchus Marsh), or Mecwacare Susan Barton House (Darley). However, we will continue to look after our patients who are already in Grant Lodge and Susan Barton House.

24-Hour heart monitor test

We now have access to our own 24-hour heart monitor device, also known as a Holter monitor. This is a test that may be recommended by your doctor to help diagnose palpitations, irregular heart rhythms and other symptoms. The device itself is about the size of a matchbox, with wires that are attached to the patient's chest. It records the heart rhythm, also known as an electrocardiogram (ECG), over a 24-hour period which can then be downloaded for analysis by a cardiologist. Our clinic nurses perform the test on the recommendation of your doctor, and is bulk-billed. Please speak with your doctor or nurse for additional information.

Patient feedback

We encourage feedback from our patients as a way to improve our services. If your experience has been positive, we always appreciate a Google review reflecting your thoughts. To leave a Google review, please use this QR code:



However, if your experience was not at the standard expected, patients should discuss their concerns with their doctor, or any staff member, or complete a Patient Feedback/Complaint Form which is available from reception. Alternatively, comments may be placed in the Suggestion Box located in the waiting room. You may also ask to speak with our Practice Manager.

Digits – Fingers, thumbs, and toes

Our fingers, thumbs, and toes are collectively known as digits. When talking about our hands, we avoid the use of terms that number the digits due to the risk of confusion. For example, on the hand, the index finger is the first finger but the second digit. Instead, the digits of the hand are labelled as thumb, index finger, middle finger, ring finger, and little finger. Informally, the index finger may be called the pointing finger and the little finger the 'Pinky'!

On the other hand (pun intended), our toes are often labelled as the first/big toe, the second, third and fourth toe, and the fifth/little toe. The reason the big toe is 'just a toe' is because unlike the thumb, in humans it is not opposable, meaning that it is not positioned to face the other toes to perform a grasping action. Some might argue that the big toe has been underrated as it is crucial when it comes to wearing flip-flops/thongs! Medically, being specific when identifying the digits is not about being pedantic but because no one wants to have the wrong digit operated on!

“Complete ongoing care for you and your family”

