

Giving Insight



ST JOHN OF GOD
Foundation

Transforming health care for **humanity**

AUTUMN 2025

ST JOHN OF GOD FOUNDATION

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Thank you for your feedback

We'd like to express our sincere thanks to everyone who took the time to complete our 2024 Supporter Survey. Your feedback is important to us, and helps us to understand the areas of our work that are most meaningful to you.

What you shared with us:



Your overall satisfaction score was 8.8/10

Your feedback means the world to us, and we will continue to report back on the impact of your generosity in ways that are meaningful to you.



Your generosity was driven by gratitude

Many of you shared that you chose to give as a way of expressing thanks for the care you or your loved ones have received from St John of God Health Care. Your gratitude is truly inspiring – thank you for giving back and making a difference in the lives of others.



Your feedback is always welcome.

We encourage you to get in touch with us anytime at Foundation@sjog.org.au or 1800 281 288.

What's on your mind?

A quick-fire Q&A with our CEO, Bianca Pietralla



Q How do you think philanthropy will help to shape the future of health care?

A Philanthropy plays a crucial role in shaping the future of health care by enabling innovation, expanding access to care, and supporting underserved communities.

With the help of compassionate donors, over the past year we've been able to fund world-class, clinician-led research aimed at advancing patient care and improving outcomes in fields such as cancer and orthopaedics. We've also invested in the education and training of our health care workforce, and supported the acquisition of state-of-the-art surgical equipment, including mobile robotic imaging technology and a cranial ultrasound probe, which have already led to significantly improved outcomes for patients with brain cancer.

Q Do you have a favourite quote or mantra that you turn to when you need a little extra inspiration?

A "Alone we can do so little; together we can do so much." – Helen Keller.

I find this quote incredibly powerful because it highlights the transformative impact of unity, shared purpose and collective action. It serves as a reminder that, as individuals, our ability to create change can be limited. But, through coming together as a community in support of a common cause we can effect real and meaningful change. Recalling this sentiment inspires me in my daily work, drives me to embrace collaboration and keep the bigger picture in focus.

Do you have a question for Bianca? We'd love to hear from you by email at Foundation@sjog.org.au

Outpouring of community support for world-class robotic surgery

The people of Bendigo and surrounds have come together to bring the very best health care to their local hospital for generations to come.

Thanks to the overwhelming support of the local community, St John of God Bendigo Hospital has acquired advanced da Vinci Xi robotic surgery technology, offering minimally invasive procedures with faster recovery for patients. This innovative technology also reduces the need for long travel and financial burdens for patients in regional and rural areas.

Associate Professor Janelle Brennan, urological surgeon at St John of God Bendigo Hospital, has been advocating for the benefits of making robot technology locally available for years. As a member of the community, she is also acutely familiar with the challenges regional patients face.

"Too often rural and regional Australians feel like second class citizens," A/Prof Brennan said.

"I feel passionately that our community, including me and my family, have access to the same care as someone who lives in Melbourne."

A/Prof Brennan has played a key role in the fundraising campaign for the da Vinci robot. Her dedication to this cause is a reflection of her deep passion for improving health care in the area.

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"It has an extraordinary impact, not just in the urology sphere where the robot is well recognised, but it enables us to really increase the complexity of surgery that we can do in the thoracic space, and the gynaecology space. We hope that the robot will enable us to provide a gynaecological oncology service," A/Prof Brennan said.

"So as well as improving the number of surgeries and how we do it, it'll also improve the scope of the surgery we can provide in the region.

"A second important reason – attracting the very best health care professionals to our hospital is dependent on having the most up to date technology. We know that the amount of doctors that are available for regional Australians are much less per head compared to our metropolitan colleagues. We believe this new technology will

enable St John of God Bendigo Hospital to continue to be a centre of excellence, and make sure our local patients receive the best possible care with recruitment of the up and coming next generation of surgeons."

The local community has truly come together to support St John of God Bendigo Hospital's bold fundraising goal for the da Vinci Xi surgical robot. Generous donations from individuals, families, businesses, clubs, and community groups have turned this ambitious vision into a reality, and this incredible achievement will have a lasting impact on the Bendigo and Loddon Mallee region for many years to come.

A/Prof Brennan expressed her extraordinary thanks to donors for their generosity and their faith in their local hospital to make the robotic surgery program a success.

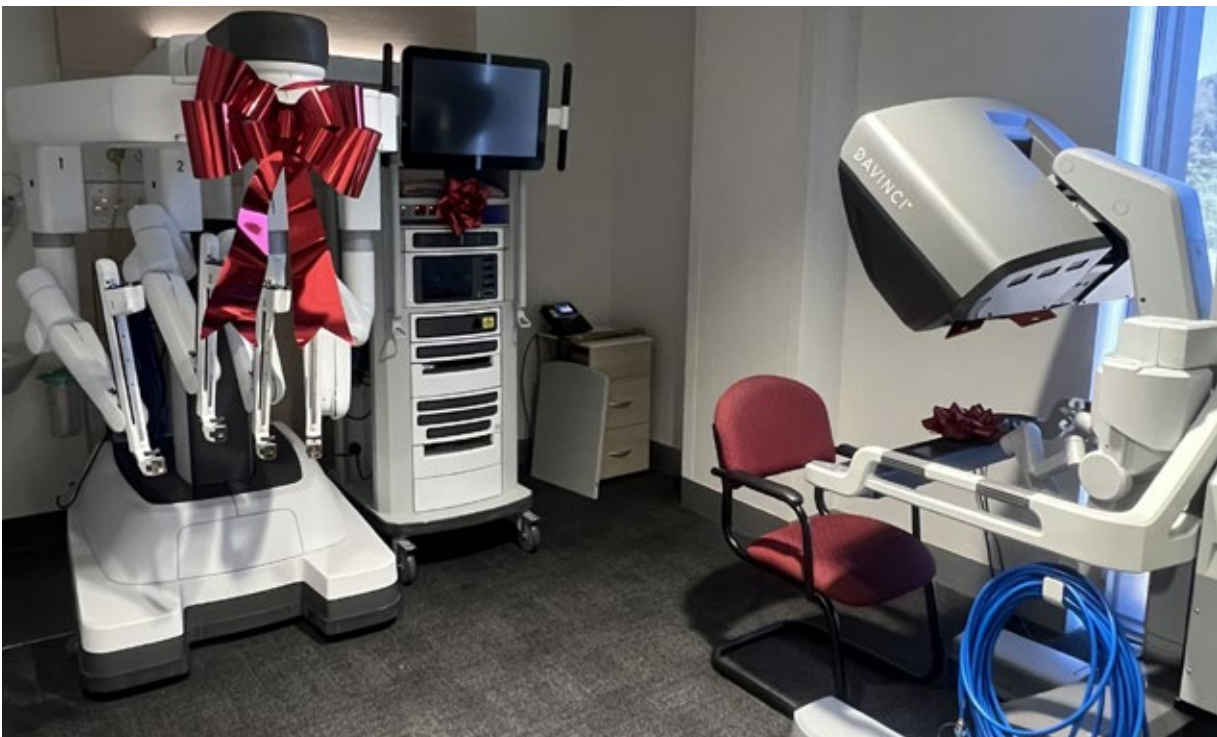
"We can never thank them enough," A/Prof Brennan said.

"We're only as good as the community that we serve and how they're involved, and it's up to us to repay that debt. And hopefully we will."

A/Prof Brennan also emphasised that donations in support of the robot would leave an incredible legacy.

"It is my hope that the current donors who've been involved in this campaign will be leaving a huge legacy for the next generation of doctors to see us as a centre of excellence to provide the best possible care," she said.

"This donation is not just about the here and now, it's definitely about the future, and I can't thank them enough for their faith and commitment to the community where we live and work."



▲ The state-of-the-art da Vinci robot on arrival at St John of God Bendigo Hospital.

Your support brings compassionate care to breast cancer patients



1 in 7 women will receive a breast cancer diagnosis in their lifetime. Thanks to new research, treatments and early detection, the survival rate for breast cancer has greatly improved in the past few decades – however for anyone who has received a breast cancer diagnosis, it can still be incredibly confusing, frightening and difficult to navigate.

Thanks to your compassionate support for our Winter Appeal, and a generous philanthropic commitment from a longstanding donor, a specialist Breast Care Nurse position has been expanded at St John of God Murdoch Hospital to support more patients from when they first receive their breast cancer diagnosis, and throughout their treatment.

Breast Care Nurse Jennifer Mager has seen firsthand the impact this service can make for patients on their breast cancer journey. For many patients, Jennifer comes into their lives at a very overwhelming and frightening time. Often, they've just received their diagnosis completely out of the blue.

"The Breast Care Nurse role is being able to guide someone through their whole journey from start to finish," says Jennifer.

"If they've just had their appointment with the consultant, sometimes all they hear is the

words 'breast cancer' and they don't hear anything else. So by the time I talk to them, they have a lot of questions."

A key aspect of Jennifer's role is helping patients through the process of surgery, chemotherapy and radiation, as well as supporting them with information and access to other services such as social workers, physiotherapists, and other allied health professionals. But beyond that, she is a consistent source of comfort and reassurance for patients and their families – a familiar, friendly face they can count on as they navigate the challenging cancer journey.

"I recently received a card from a patient. It said, 'Just having someone hold my hand for a bit, and talk me through the surgery and tell me it's going to be okay,' just gave me a sense of relief," recalls Jennifer.

"I think that's what I would want, someone telling me it's going to be okay, and telling me what comes next. It's a very rewarding experience and a rewarding job."

Jennifer is keen to raise awareness of the importance of the support that a Breast Care Nurse provides to patients, so that hopefully the service can grow and support more patients in future. She also expressed her immense gratitude to the donors who have supported her to keep doing the work that she is so passionate about.



▲ *Thanks to you, our compassionate donors, Breast Care Nurse Jennifer Mager will be able to help even more patients on their difficult breast cancer journey.*

"It's really hard to find the words to say thank you. I just know that without [our donors] we wouldn't be able to do this and make sure that everyone gets the care that they need. I just wanted them to know what a privilege it is to accept that donation," Jennifer said.

"I'm so grateful to them, for all they've done."



Improving patient and caregiver wellbeing through philanthropy

Donor support brings state-of-the-art equipment to St John of God Geelong Hospital's Intensive Care Unit

In today's ever evolving health care landscape, the critical care environment faces unprecedented challenges. St John of God Geelong Hospital's Intensive Care Unit (ICU) caregivers frequently care for patients who need intensive monitoring and treatment for life-threatening illnesses or serious injuries, often requiring round-the-clock care from a dedicated team of specialist doctors and critical care nurses. It is crucial that this exceptional level of care can also continue to be matched by equally exceptional facilities and equipment.

Thanks to the generous support of The Percy Baxter Charitable Trust (through Perpetual Trustees), the hospital has been able to secure state-of-the-art patient beds for the ICU. This new equipment promises to enhance patient mobility, expedite recovery and improve overall patient and caregiver wellbeing, demonstrating the profound impact that donor contributions can have for both patients and caregivers.

Austin Paterson, Member of the Advisory Board for Percy Baxter

Charitable Trust, said that the Trust supports Australian charities in the social welfare and medical research sectors, with an aim to improve health and wellbeing outcomes for local communities.

"The Percy Baxter Charitable Trust has a long and proud legacy of supporting health care in the region, and it is wonderful to know that this grant will help to make a difference," said Austin.

"We hope to enable caregivers to deliver their best work and provide support to patients at St John of God Geelong Hospital during some of the most vulnerable moments of their lives."

Sharnie McAuliffe, ICU Nurse Unit Manager at St John of God Geelong Hospital, said she hopes the beds will support the ongoing delivery of outstanding care for seriously ill patients in the ICU.

"The new beds are designed to enhance patient comfort and safety, which is essential for compassionate care," Sharnie said.

"With features like adjustable positioning and pressure relieving systems, they can improve patient mobility and reduce the risk of pressure areas in the critically

unwell. This allows caregivers to focus more on patient care, interaction and support. Additionally, a more comfortable environment can help to alleviate anxiety in patients."

Sharnie also reflected that high quality equipment supports better health outcomes for the community.

"Not having access to the best equipment can lead to poorer patient outcomes and increased complications. Lack of access to modern equipment can reduce efficiency, increase frustration and decrease staff morale," Sharnie said.

Sharnie expressed her gratitude to the donors who helped to make the new equipment a reality at St John of God Geelong Hospital.

"Your contribution is more than just a financial gift, it is a gift of comfort, dignity and improved care for our patients," she said.

"Your generosity has directly impacted the quality of care we can offer and for that we are deeply grateful. Thank you for making a difference in the lives of our patients, their families and our ICU team."

How Zuhail is helping the planet... and our patients!

Sustainable fashion designer turns hospital scrubs into fundraising collection



During her stay at St John of God Mount Lawley Hospital, sustainable fashion designer Zuhail Kuvan-Mills noticed the scrubs worn by the nurses and wondered what happened to them once they were no longer in use.

"I was speaking to the nurse on duty pre-surgery, and we talked about the amount of potential textile waste across many industries where staff wear uniforms," said Zuhail.

Inspired by this exchange, Zuhail decided to take some end-of-life scrubs and upcycle them into a high-fashion runway collection that was unveiled at Eco Fashion Week Australia 2024. Collaborating with other local design labels including Fabric of Nature and Deadly Denim,

she debuted a new clothing line featuring beautifully unique dresses, skirts, and tops. The collection was named Aqua in a nod to climate change and Australia's water scarcity.

In addition to the environmental message, Zuhail saw an opportunity to support those in need. She learned about the St John of God Foundation's Gift of Hope program, which helps Australians facing life-threatening conditions such as cancer. She chose to donate the proceeds from the sale of the upcycled garments to the program, which provides assistance to cancer patients experiencing financial hardship.

Eco Fashion Week Australia was founded by Zuhail in 2017, and in 2024 featured 58 shows across Perth and Busselton, including an unofficial world record attempt for the world's longest catwalk on the Busselton Jetty.

Rachel Bruechle, Director of Community Engagement at St John of God Foundation, expressed her gratitude for Zuhail's initiative.

"When creative, community-minded individuals like Zuhail dedicate their time and talents to helping others, they bring hope and support to those in need. On behalf of our patients and the wider community, we extend our heartfelt thanks for her inspiring commitment to sustainability and patient care."

Legacy gift to help improve community health outcomes

St John of God Burwood Hospital, a private mental health facility located in the Inner West of Sydney, has been providing personalised, compassionate care for over 60 years. The hospital offers a range of treatments for conditions such as depression, anxiety, mood disorders, and perinatal mental health, alongside general psychiatry services.

Thanks to a generous legacy gift from a member of the Burwood community, caregivers at St John of God Burwood Hospital will be able to provide exceptional care in a peaceful environment, supported by state-of-the-art equipment. This thoughtful donation will make a profound impact—bringing comfort and support to patients in their time of need.

The donation will support the refurbishment and furnishing of patient lounges, kitchen areas, group rooms, and bedrooms at the hospital, as well as the acquisition of essential equipment for the hospital's rehabilitation gym. These improvements provide patients with spaces

where they can relax, socialise, and engage in their recovery journey with greater comfort and dignity.

Cindy Foot, Director of Clinical Services, expressed her sincere gratitude for the gift.

"Any refurbishment or equipment we are able to provide patients is always appreciated and enjoyed. Being away from home, family, and friends is a challenging time for patients, and having open spaces where they can feel at ease makes a big difference," said Cindy.

"It's always heart-warming to walk down the hallways and see patients sharing a tea, watching TV, or talking in a comfortable lounge."

Leaving a gift in your Will can help St John of God Health Care to meet the growing needs of patients in our communities. We welcome you to contact Preema on 0427 526 899 or email Preema.Wong@sjog.org.au for a confidential discussion on how leaving a gift in your Will can create a lasting legacy.



Walking to change lives and honour a beloved friend

Suncorp has partnered with Tour de Cure to fast-track scientific breakthroughs and advancements by raising essential funds for cancer research. Together, they're helping pave the way for a future where cancer is no longer life-threatening, driving the discovery of new treatments, improving existing therapies, and enhancing the lives of those impacted by the disease. Now in its fourth year, 'Spirit to Cure' is a Suncorp initiative dedicated to supporting cancer research, prevention, and support – and also provides a fantastic opportunity for participants to improve their fitness while bonding with colleagues for an important cause.

"Employees of Suncorp, and selected business partners, are given the opportunity to get fit and connect with colleagues all

while working towards our goal of curing cancer and changing lives. At each event, one organisation is selected to receive a \$10,000 grant to support their work in the fight against cancer," said Caitlin Makin, Spirit to Cure Program Manager.

This year's Spirit to Cure Walk in Perth took on an extra special meaning, as Suncorp employees honoured the memory of a beloved colleague.

"In Perth this year, we were proud to carry on the legacy of Rachelle Nelson, a tenured employee and Suncorp legend who sadly lost her battle earlier this year. Rachelle received outstanding care at St John of God Subiaco Hospital during her battle with ovarian cancer. The Nelson family and the wider Suncorp community were honoured to be able to pass on the Gift of Hope to another family in need," said Caitlin.

▲ *Pictured: St John of God Foundation and Suncorp team members celebrate at the 2024 Spirit to Cure Walk in Perth*

A Gift of Hope is a gift of financial support provided to patients in St John of God Health Care hospitals who are struggling with the cost of cancer treatment. New medical discoveries, including medicines can help patients to live longer and to experience less pain or other debilitating symptoms. However, these treatments can often be costly and out of reach of many Australians. A Gift of Hope can support a person to access potentially life-changing treatment during their time of greatest need.

On behalf of patients in our hospitals, our sincerest gratitude to the Suncorp team for their incredibly generous gift.

A beacon of hope for young people at risk of homelessness



Young people can find themselves at risk of homelessness for many reasons. When faced with this challenge, St John of God Horizon House offers a safe home, and the space and support they need to build the life they want.

More than just a roof over their head, the Horizon House team supports young people to understand who they are and what they want to do, and helps them to develop skills and access the support they need.

Thanks to generous support from Mineral Resources, Horizon House has been able to expand access to recreation and enrichment activities, and provide Christmas gifts, to young people in WA.

Mineral Resources Director People, Andrea Chapman, reflected on her hopes for the impact of the company's support.

"At MinRes, we know that while the festive season is meant to be a time of joy, people may experience feelings of isolation, financial pressure or family conflict which can make it a challenging time," said Andrea.

"We're determined to help where we can. That's why we're pleased to support St John of God Horizon House again this year by providing a donation to help bring joy and happiness to people using their vital services over the festive season."

"As a proudly Western Australian company, we are determined to empower local not-for-profit organisations like St John of God Health Care to support people in the community."

Dana Anderson, Manager of Youth Services at St John of God Horizon House, said that support from Mineral Resources has had a profound impact for young people and their families.

"During this festive season, the generosity of our donors has been a beacon of hope for the young people at Horizon House," said Dana.

"Their support not only enables us to offer enriching recreational activities but also shows these individuals that they are valued and cared for. It is a wonderful opportunity for our youth to bond and share a new experience, creating lasting memories."

"Expanding access to these activities of enriching experiences for all of our young people at Horizon House would give them the chance to explore new horizons, build connections and enjoy opportunities they may have never had before. It's also a wonderful reminder that they are not alone on their journey."



▲ A young mother and her child enjoy a visit to the Zoo, made possible through Mineral Resources' support for Horizon House recreation activities

Supporting care closer to home

How Vicki is honouring her husband's legacy and bringing world-class cancer care to regional Victoria

For people living in regional and remote areas, the challenges of a cancer diagnosis are often amplified. In addition to the emotional stress, fear, and overwhelm that comes with cancer, those living far from major cities face the added burden of long travel times, extra costs, and being away from home, work, school, and their support networks.

Vicki Jellie understands this experience all too well. In 2008, her husband Peter was diagnosed with oesophageal cancer. Like many cancer patients in regional Victoria, he had to travel long distances for vital radiotherapy treatment. Over the course of his 20-week journey from diagnosis to sadly passing away at the age of 49, Peter spent 12 weeks away from home, separated from his family and support network.

In honour of Peter's wish to bring radiotherapy closer to home, Vicki and her family established 'Peter's Project'. Initially a lobbying group, the charity worked with both State and Federal governments to highlight the need for improved cancer services in South West Victoria. They advocated for better access to radiotherapy treatment for people in regional areas, aiming to ensure the community had access to the same level of health care as their metropolitan counterparts.

A formal board and working committee were set up to lead the charge.

Once the need for better cancer care was clear, the community rallied together to support the cause, and the centre officially opened in July 2016.

"We have been very pleased to support St John of God Warrnambool with various cancer-related equipment and services over the past 10 years," said Vicki.

"Many patients from a wide expanse of the Warrnambool region benefit from these contributions we have been able to make, which results in great health and wellbeing benefits to many, for generations to come."

In the past year alone, Peter's Project has funded several key initiatives at St John of God Warrnambool Hospital, including:

- Critical medical equipment for oncology and palliative care services
- A tissue/vessel sealing unit for endoscopy
- A nerve monitoring device for ear, nose, and throat surgery
- A specialised patient bed with a pressure-relieving mattress for palliative care
- Support person pull-out beds for palliative care rooms

Laura Levett, Nurse Unit Manager of Day Oncology at St John of God Warrnambool Hospital, highlighted the profound impact Peter's Project has had on regional patients and their families.



"The equipment we've received ensures we can provide the best possible care to our patients, with the most current equipment," Laura said.

"This not only helps patients recover more quickly but also means they can undergo procedures locally, rather than travelling to metropolitan hospitals."

On behalf of the hospital, Laura expressed deep gratitude for the ongoing support of Peter's Project.

"If it wasn't for all the support of Peter's project over the years we simply wouldn't be able to maintain our wonderful standards of care that we provide to our patients with the very best equipment. On behalf of all our staff and patients I would like to say a massive THANK YOU for their generous support – it means the world to us and helps us continue our excellent work."



Visionary philanthropy changing lives for WA children



The generosity of our philanthropic donors plays a critical role in the lives of our hospital patients, caregivers, and their families. St John of God Foundation extends its most profound gratitude for the life-changing commitment and ongoing support from Channel 7 Telethon Trust (Telethon) and the Stan Perron Charitable Foundation in helping to bring the very best care to families in our maternity and paediatric departments across Western Australia.

Funding from Telethon will help bring innovative new initiatives to life, including:

Humidifiers and Nitric Oxide for Neonatal Oxygenation:

These technologies will provide critical support to vulnerable neonates, particularly those born prematurely. By enhancing respiratory function and promoting lung development, these tools give fragile infants a stronger start in life.

Moort Boodjari Mia Safe Sleeping and Essentials Packs:

These packs will equip Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander mothers and babies at St John of God Midland Hospital with essential resources, helping to create safer sleeping environments and reduce the risk of Sudden Unexpected Death in Infancy (SUDI).

Seventeen Telemetry Fetal Monitoring Machines:

These devices enable continuous, wireless monitoring of fetal heart rates, allowing mothers greater mobility during labor while providing real-time data for informed decision-making and improved care.

Seven Billistick 2.0 Devices:

This innovative tool streamlines jaundice assessment and treatment, reducing the need for painful blood tests and cutting down on waiting times for pathology results, ultimately saving critical time in caring for newborns.

Eight Purpose-Built Toy Cars:

Designed to transport children from the ward to the operating theatre, these toy cars will ease anxiety, reduce stress, and help create a more child-friendly hospital experience.

In addition, Telethon's generosity will establish the Midwifery Outreach Service through Moort Boodjari Mia at St John of God Midland Hospital, with additional support from the Stan Perron Charitable Foundation. This new service will provide antenatal and postnatal care to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and their children in Midland and the Wheatbelt region. It will be the first program of its kind in Western Australia, bringing care closer to the communities that need it most.

"This funding will have a transformative impact on the families using the Moort Boodjari Mia service by providing enhanced support, access, and resources tailored to their unique needs," said Jodee Hollingsworth, Aboriginal Maternity Group Coordinator and clinical midwife.

"By addressing barriers like transport, culturally appropriate care, and resource availability, we aim to create a safer and more supportive environment for Aboriginal women and their babies. This funding will not only improve immediate health outcomes for mothers and children but also contribute to stronger, healthier families for generations to come."

Jodee also expressed her heartfelt thanks to Telethon and Stan Perron Charitable Trust for their immense support.

"You are helping to create safer, healthier futures for these women and their families, breaking cycles of disadvantage, and empowering communities for generations to come. Thank you for investing in a brighter, stronger future for us all. Together, we are driving change that truly matters."

We are truly grateful to Telethon and Stan Perron Charitable Foundation for their compassion and ongoing commitment to ensuring better health outcomes for our communities.

Find out more at www.sjogfoundation.org.au.



Thinking about your legacy?

Your gift can help to change the future of health care for generations to come.

If you would like to know more about how leaving a gift in your Will can create a life-changing health care legacy for future generations, please contact Preema Wong for a confidential discussion:

Preema Wong

T: 0427 526 899

E: Preema.Wong@sjog.org.au

**Scan here or visit our website to donate today:
www.sjogfoundation.org.au/donate**



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