

Thursday, 23 September 2011



## **Latrobe wound care project wins Victorian healthcare award**

Latrobe Community Health Service (LCHS) has won the 2011 Victorian Healthcare Association (VHA) Award for its Mobile Wound Care (MWC) research project.

The award, which recognises an outstanding collaborative project in Victorian public healthcare, was presented at the VHA's annual conference in Melbourne on Thursday September 23.

MWC is a web-based program with a regional wound consultant as the central reference point for clients at participating sites across Gippsland.

The consultant, Marianne Cullen, has remote access to every client file enabling her to provide expert wound management across 42,538 square kilometres.

"This reduces the time spent travelling, allowing Marianne to prioritise on-site reviews and spend more time with clients and supporting staff," LCHS Executive Director Ambulatory Care Nicole Steers said.

"This is a terrific example of how technology can help people in regional areas. It means that clients can access expertise that would otherwise be unavailable to them."

The MWC project was run from April 2010 to April 2011 and has just received an additional 12 months funding from the Victorian Department of Health.

It was a collaborative project between LCHS, the Department of Health, Monash University's Department of Rural and Indigenous Health, software companies HSA Global and Fujitsu, and 17 healthcare agencies in Gippsland.

Participating healthcare organisations included large regional hospitals and community health services, through to small rural bush nursing centres.

The target population was all clients with wounds in Home and Community Care, funded District Nursing Services and Public Sector Residential Aged Care Services. In the first 12 months, 12,775 assessments were performed on 824 clients presenting with 1227 wounds.

"MWC was a unique opportunity for Gippsland health services to participate in a collaborative research project using technology to positively impact health outcomes of clients across the region, including those in isolated communities," Ms Steers said.

"It also highlighted the potential for Gippsland healthcare providers to be at the forefront of innovation in wound management research."

The VHA Annual Conference entitled Collaboration: The Key to Better Health was held at the Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Centre on September 23 and 24. The 2011 VHA Award was sponsored by HardyGroup International.

The VHA is the major peak body representing the public healthcare sector in Victoria. Our members include public hospitals, rural and regional health services, community health services and aged care facilities. Established since 1938, the VHA promotes improvement of health outcomes for all Victorians.

For further information contact:

Trevor Carr, CE, VHA, (03) 9094 7777 or 0409 362 382