



HEART TO HEART

ISSUE 06 | MARCH 2021 | AUTUMN EDITION

NATIONAL PATIENT TRANSPORT'S QUARTERLY STAFF NEWSLETTER



Heart Awards
Page 6

Lifeblood Teams
Page 13

A Taste of Harmony
Page 14



Damian De Zilva

**Chief Executive Officer,
National Patient Transport**

As the newly appointed CEO of National Patient Transport, I am excited for the future at NPT. After spending several years in major corporate entities in Australia holding various senior executive positions, I am proud of the to be part of the National Patient Transport team.

One year on from joining the company, it is evident that we have a strong sense of teamwork and the strength and resilience to overcome unprecedented challenges.

It is clear to me that our people are our greatest asset. A test of any great company is how quickly we can adapt and respond to challenges. It is a testament to the staff that we continue to deliver a quality service to our customers and patients despite the continual challenges we face. I am grateful to the staff for their continued support to this business.

In Victoria, the NPT brand is instantly recognisable and is known throughout the industry for service quality. In NSW and WA, we are focused on retaining current contracts, and growing our brand with our customers.

At NPT we have a stable well-established foundation. The Non-Emergency Patient Transport sector is a highly competitive environment with varying degrees of complexity. NPT is a commercial entity, with a focus on providing excellent patient care. However, many of our competitors have been granted a cost advantage by being classified as 'not for profit'.

CEO's Message

Throughout this current pandemic, NPT have ensured that we have provided the best PPE that has been available to us on the market. This has come at a significant cost to our organisation, with no corresponding increase in revenue. This has had a significant impact to our business and will continue to be a consideration for the remainder of the pandemic.

Ambulance Victoria is a strong partner, our major client continues to work closely with NPT, and this relationship remains strong. From time to time we have been impacted by AV recruitment drives, which I see as a strong validation of our operations. We serve as a good training ground for those looking to further their careers with AV, that is an endorsement to our first-class Recruitment, Training and Compliance departments.

The hospital networks ebb and flow with the COVID environment. Our Customer Service Centre is the conduit between customers and our valued on-road staff, working hand in hand to ensure every vehicle is productive and our customers' demands are met.

Our rostering department has been working diligently to ensure that we continue to meet the demand of the ever-changing environment. With over 550 staff in Victoria, the Rosters Department work through the many challenges to ensure that the optimal shifts are rostered.

In New South Wales we have been performing strongly. Recently we were invited to a workshop with HealthShare and KPMG to discuss our capabilities in the region. Whilst the operating model is strong, we are reliant on the ability and willingness of HealthShare to continue to work with us as one of the major NEPT providers in the state.

In Western Australia, we have recently recruited a new Regional Manager who is focused on stabilising and growing the business. Our relationships with WA Health and

other hospital networks are being maintained. We are focused on building the brand in WA, in readiness for the release of a Health Department tender later this year.

We are anticipating a big year in 2021, following a subdued 2020. We are expecting the release of the WA and SA tenders this year. QLD is a tightly held region and we will continue to work through the challenges with the view of entering that market as soon as practicable.

Our strategy is to secure our current contracts, by focusing on patient experience and customer service. We need to deliver value to our customers through greater efficiency and productivity. We need to build 'stickiness' with our clients through value-add services, such as our online booking systems, monthly reporting packs and continue to provide excellent patient care.

Upon reflection, we should not lose sight of the fact that there are many doing it tough in our community. We should all be grateful to be employed in the secure health services industry. We all need to value our positions with NPT and always look to raise the bar in service standards and productivity. We all have a part to play in NPT delivering a sustainable, national patient transport business. Our HEART values need to be at the core of what we do, High Standards, Efficiency, Accountability, Respect and Teamwork.

NPT continues to be the beacon of light that all other NEPT providers aspire to be. I thank all staff for your dedication and commitment during these challenging times. I look forward to better times ahead and hope to see you and meet you all soon. Together we are strong, and we have got this!

Thank you,

Damian De Zilva

From Your Managers



NSW has had a busy year with many changes in shift numbers and locations and the closure of our Gosford branch. Overall, it has been a very positive time in spite of Covid-19.

We have officially completed the first round of Covid-19 vaccinations for our staff. In NSW we are categorised as frontline workers and part of the first roll out.

Sonia Hardy just got married, there was much excitement in the lead up and we wish her and her partner a long and happy future together.

I would like to make special mention of the glowing and extensive positive feedback

Will Johnston was given in a letter of recommendation that he received from a Doctor who lectures at the University of Sydney. Will was commended for his outstanding care and service whilst undertaking clinical placement with NSWAS paramedics. It is an honour to see the great character and abilities of our crew members recognised both inside and outside of their work for NPT, and a privilege to have them in our team.

We also prepared one of our vehicles to be sent to WA to join their fleet.

Adam Orchard,
NSW Manager

As many of you are aware, our service in Western Australia has now seen a change of management structure. As I have moved into this role, I would like to thank everybody here at NPT for the overwhelming help and support I've received so far.

To single out any one member of the staff here in WA, for their commitment and positive attitude during this transition, would be doing the others a disservice. Every one of them have been amazing. I aim to do them

justice in providing a positive and motivating environment where we can all develop together.

Likewise, the assistance afforded to myself by the team in Victoria has been second to none and I am grateful.

Our service and operation here in the West will now begin to emulate that of the East. We are also very happy to have received vehicle 605 into our fleet.

Matthew Swan, WA Manager



From Your Managers



2021 has started off with a bang for the training department. Within the last three months, NPT Heart has run a Certificate III course, started a Certificate IV course, and started the first Diploma course for 2021. NPT Heart is still using the Quality Hotel to undertake practical training for our students. We look forward to the time when we will be able to resume face to face training at our Mitcham Branch. In 2021 NPT Heart plans to run six Certificate III course, five Certificate IV courses and two Diploma courses.

The training department has very few remaining Annual accreditation days set aside in the month of March to complete the 2020 annual accreditation. Over the next few

months, we will begin to focus our time on NSW and WA annual accreditation. We will also begin preparations for the Victoria 2021 annual accreditation. This year the training department will begin to focus on the creation of videos, to add more visual learning and to support staff members to improve their understanding of the operation of our equipment, and the correct performance of tasks.

I would like to thank our Clinical Instructors for providing memorable experiences for our NPT Heart students who work alongside them.

Gavin Harrison,
Training Manager

In and out of the last short lockdown, our operations centre continued to run as usual. The number of jobs we process has returned to a pre pandemic level which means we dispatch up to 450 patients per day.

We have 2 new staff members, Jessica Medwedew and Christopher Barr. They are settling in very well and are learning our systems and processes.

The office of housing contract, which keeps our call centre busy after hours and on weekends, is up for tender. We are in the process of preparing our tender submission for this contract.

You might have recognised a new voice on the radio.

Jonathan Fisher, after 3 months with us and many years dispatching at ESTA, is currently training to dispatch at NPT.

You might be surprised to know that on average 400 phone calls per day are made from the road crews to our dispatcher's. As you can imagine that is a lot of calls that require varying levels of attention. If you have a Radio in your vehicle, please ensure that it is turned on and the volume is turned up as this is a much more efficient form of communication and will reduce your time on hold when you require an urgent response.

Alison Roughton,
Customer Service
Centre Manager



It has been a busy start to the year with a lot of work and many changes to keep us on our toes.

We have had a few people leave us over the past few months to follow their dreams of advancing to work for AV. We know that their time at NPT has given them strong foundational skills and we are proud to have contributed to their journeys.

We say fond farewells to Carolyn Potter, Dianna Kynaston, Hayley Griffiths, Danielle Mlikota, Kaitlin Familiar, Stephanie Vassett, Joel Gilmour, and Ken Gaffney, and wish them all the best.

We have been busy recruiting excellent new staff who you will see around the branches and on the road in the coming weeks.

I would like to extend a big round of applause and congratulate Peter Hamzat, Racheal Fennell, Anthony Messan and Chazdeen Soabas, for passing their Final Competency Assessment (Stage 8).

You may have seen Zeva out and about this year. We are planning more frequent visits moving forward.

Clyde Scorgie,
Northern Metro and
Regional Manager



If you have visited the Noble Park branch recently, you may have noticed our total overhaul of the parking arrangements. After much consideration and a lot of rethinking, Rick and Malcom drew up plans and rearranged every vehicle. The hope was to create more space and easier access to all vehicles. The exact placement of the angles and space between vehicles is a work in progress and is being reassessed for its user friendliness and safety prior to formal quotes and permanent lines are put down on the concrete.

We are also in the process of formally and clearly labelling the NPT available parking spaces at the front and rear of the branch.

I would like to thank AJ Barrett for filling in for me while I was on leave during the last week of February. I know that his presence around the branch, his organizational skills, and his BBQ cooking skills were well received.

I am pleased to welcome more than a dozen new PTO's and ATA's and wish, Braden Kennedy, Grace Cesar-Wright, Adam Eagle, Demi Mand, Jessie Collins, Njala Sankhulani all the best in the next chapter of their careers with AV.

I would also like to congratulate Chelsea Brown on the success of passing her Final Competency Assessment (Stage 8) late last year.

Ernie Di Pietro,
Southern Metro Manager

It is great to see our new staff become part of the team. It is also great to see our senior staff assisting them in this process.

We are doing our best to keep on top of the servicing needs of our fleet. The effort undertaken to keep our vehicles as tidy as our branch has not gone unnoticed. We receive many comments on the cleanliness of our vehicles, so thank you and well done to you all.

We have also had some great feedback from our patients and customers regarding the excellence of our staff.

Many thanks to those who regularly put their hand up to fill and accommodate short notice shift swaps and car changes.

We are currently looking into the possibility of organising a golf day, as a team building exercise.

We have recently said goodbye to 3 of our Attendants who have gone to AV. We wish Kate Casey, Dan Davis, and Jordan Kallady all the best for their futures.

Thank you once again, you are an amazing team of people to work with.

Garry Walker,
Eastern Region Manager





Overall Heart Award Winners – 2020

Last year we were unable to host a formal presentation for our 2020 overall Heart awards. We may have missed the pomp and glory of this ceremony, but nothing could dull the shine of the tied winners of our 2020 award and their contribution to NPT. Last year's overall Heart award will be shared by Kate Casey and Debra Armstrong. The Overall Heart award recipients receive a trophy, a bottle of champagne, a \$200 gift voucher, and have their names engraved on the plaque displayed in our head office.

Kate Casey worked out of Vic Metro East up until her recent departure, to further her Paramedic career with Ambulance Victoria in regional Victoria. Kate was a model employee at NPT. She conducted herself professionally, was an exceptional mentor to her peers, consistently went above and beyond, and was a great team player. Kate loved a challenge and was therefore extended in her role, to include the induction of our new employees. Kate was meticulous and engaging, in her delivery of the induction material. She contributed to the great starting

point of many new employees and was the recipient of much excellent feedback. She was always ready to lend a hand and an exceptional team player. Kate also made a lasting contribution to branch life at Mitcham. Congratulations Kate.

Debra Armstrong works out of Vic Metro North, and is the orchestrator of our immensely well received peer support dog program. Debra meets the criteria for every Heart value. Nothing is a problem for her, and her dedication to NPT and her peers is exceptional.

She is consistently reliable, punctual, and approachable. Debra brought Zeva into the lives and hearts of NPT and CDC. The peer support dog program was entirely Debra's initiative. NPT are immensely grateful for the positive contribution this program has made, and continues to make, to the morale of our employees and our worksites. Debra is a delight to work with in every aspect of this program. Her presence and delivery of the program is every bit as bright and welcome as Zeva herself. Congratulations Debra

Heart Award Winners – First Quarter 2021

Congratulations to the winners of our first round of Quarterly Heart Awards for 2021. The Heart Awards nominees are forwarded by NPT employees. The awards are presented to those nominees who have displayed our HEART Values of High Standards, Efficiency, Accountability, Respect, and Teamwork. The following individuals have been awarded the Heart Award for the Final Quarter of 2020. Each of them will receive a \$50 gift voucher, a HEART Award Certificate, and will go into the draw for the overall HEART Awards at the end of the year. Unfortunately, there were no nominations for NSW this quarter.

WA – Mitchell Lovett

Mitchell is the WA recipient of this quarter's Heart award. He is being recognised for his excellent **Teamwork**. Mitchell consistently puts his teammates first. He goes above and beyond to contribute. Mitchell is always willing to help his fellow teammates whenever they are in need. Congratulations Mitchell.

Vic Metro East – Holly Reefman

Holly is the Vic Metro East recipient of this quarter's Heart award. She is being recognised for her high level of **Respect**. Holly is always friendly and respectful toward her colleagues and her patients.

She 'goes the extra mile,' to ensure that her patients receive top tier patient centered care. Holly is always positive and respectful in the way she conducts herself at work. Congratulations Holly.

Vic Metro South – Mark Alley

Mark is the Vic Metro South recipient of this quarter's Heart award. He is being recognised for his high level of **Respect**. Mark is always respectful towards every single person at branch. He is always first to put his hand up to help out anyone who is in need. Mark shows of teamwork and respect in the way that he

takes care of the space that he shares with the whole team. Congratulations Mark.

Vic Metro north – Lina Khwaja

Lina is the Vic Metro North recipient of this quarter's Heart award. She is being recognised for her **Efficiency**. Lina is always punctual and flexible. She constantly and willingly accommodates having her shifts swapped around to assist others. Lina is always organized. She is exceptionally clean and tidy. Lina is also consistently respectful in the way that she conducts herself. Congratulations Lina.



FEATURE



National Patient Transport

through the years





we value the journey



Since 1993, NPT has grown from being one of the first privatised Non-Emergency Patient Transport providers in Victoria to being one of Australia's leading patient transport providers.

In 1993, NPT commenced operations in Victoria, following the privatisation of the Non-Emergency Patient Transport (NEPT) sector. Since then, we have grown into a national business with a presence in Western Australia and New South Wales.

At NPT we value the journey that has brought us to where we are now. We look forward to many more years of growth as a company and to where the future will take us.



Our new website goes live



The bright new colour palette, photo slides, graphic thumbnails, and performance motion graphics give a fresh new look to our online presence.

Great visual aesthetics are complimented by simple to navigate content, providing a richer overview of everything NPT. The new site also has multiple device adaptability. This makes it as smooth to use, and as visually pleasant, on desktop or mobile devices.

New Graphic icons distinguish the full spectrum of services provided by NPT. These icons are complemented by infographics that provide a running snapshot of the size and operational capacity of our company, including that we transport greater than 200,000 patients annually.

The new 'About us' section provides a more complete corporate profile. This section provides insight and connectivity to our parent company;

ComfortDelGro, whose sites can be accessed and explored through the click of a button. This section also includes a visually complemented historical timeline, an interactive location map, and puts faces to the names of our senior leadership team.

'Our Purpose' pages highlight our vision and values, provide an overview of some of our largest customers, centre our Patient focus, and celebrate our community initiatives. This section also includes our commitment to a sustainable trajectory. There is a link to the impressive national approach of our parent company, including information on their hybrid/electric vehicles. In this section we also see a motion info graphic. This motion sliding graphic shares some of the positive feedback we regularly receive from customers and patients.

Our new website, created by TransitGraphics, facilitates fully electronic job applications, electronic contact forms, and

electronic patient and customer feedback. The site also continues to act as a central access point for our online bookings system, staff email, and rostering platforms.

Our training pages remain a work in progress, with more information to come, but already provide an extensive overview of our incredible training program, a brief on each course currently on offer, and a link to external funding eligibility criteria. Our main training page also includes an info graphic displaying a small portion of the positive feedback received from current and former students.

Thanks to our new website, you can now keep up to date with all of the latest NPT News. Our News pages include a selection of the most recent feature stories from the current edition of our Newsletter. You can now access, read, and share these stories online. There is also access to PDF downloads of the latest edition, and past editions, of our Heart to Heart newsletter.

2021 sports tipping – NPT versus CDC

NPT and CDC have taken their sports tipping to the next level with 2 inter-company, friendly competitions, open to all NPT and CDC staff. Not only have we expanded the pool of tipplers, but we have also extended the field to include the NRL.

The NRL season officially kicked off on Thursday the 11th of March, and the AFL season began with Richmond versus Carlton at the MCG on Thursday the 18th March. We are already seeing NPT represent strongly in the first rounds of winners.

The competition is free to all current staff members, regardless of your knowledge of the games, and we are encouraging everyone who is interested to have a go.

It may be too late to be off to the strongest start with your overall tips, but it's never too late to jump on board.

You can follow these steps to enter:

- 1 Go to www.footytips.com.au
- 2 Click on Join the Tipping Fun! – then click Play Now
- 3 Scroll to the top of the tab for competitions, enter the competition name into the Search bar and then click to Join the Competition
- 4 Enter the specific password for the competition you are joining



NRL

Competition name:
CDC and NPT NRL

Password: cdcnpt

AFL

Competition name:
CDC and NPT

Password: droppunt

NPT on the ground for AFLW and AFL Men's pre-season matches

The 2021 world Superbike event was scheduled to take place in Phillip Island during the last week of February. Although this event has been postponed, our general event presence has undergone an exciting 2021 expansion.

NPT has secured the contract to provide an Ambulance and staff members to be present during the AFLW, the Australian Women's Football League, and the pre-season Men's AFL matches.

The first AFL women's games were played on the 28th January 2021, and the last games are set to be held over the weekend ending on the 28th March. The men's pre-season matches took place between the 4th and the 8th March.

NPT provides one ATA and one PTO to every event. Our crews work alongside Physicians who are contracted to these events by

the AFL. The job of our crews is to provide support to the players and the officials at these events.

The AFLW and AFL pre-season shifts run for five hours, and crews are required to be at the grounds one hour prior to the start of the game. NPT do not transport players during the duration of the game; however, if the player is stable, falls within the NEPT criteria, and the Physician approves the use of the NPT ambulance to transport the player, the crew may be asked to transport a player after the game.

From the start of the season, until the end of the first weekend in March, NPT has been on the ground at Ikon Park – Carlton, RSEA Park – Moorabbin, Swinburne Centre - Punt Rd, GMHBA – Geelong, Whitten Oval – Footscray, Vic Park – Abbotsford, Casey Fields – Cranbourne, Arden Street - North Melbourne, and Marvel Stadium.

NPT would like to thank the crew members who have attended an AFL event. We thank you for your punctuality, your professionalism, and for upholding the NPT Heart values in every moment during your attendance on these shifts. To date, the feedback we have received from the AFL is that NPT is providing an exemplary service. We know the high standard of service that our crews deliver every day and we welcome the opportunity to be on display in the field.

Hopefully we can secure further events which will continue to allow us to showcase the excellent service that we provide as a company.

It has also been an honor and a privilege to part of the growing legacy that will be our top-notch AFL women's football league.



Meet Matthew Swan

NPT are pleased to welcome new Western Australian manager Matthew Swan to the team. Matthew joined us in May 2020 as an ATA after moving to WA from the UK. He is a graduate paramedic with a background in team management in other industries, primarily security. Matthew has a passion for training and supporting his team. He has demonstrated an excellent understanding of the needs of our business and the people working within it. We look forward to seeing NPT WA flourish and grow with Matthew's sense of reinvigoration.

Where did you grow up?

I grew up in the north east of England, in a small village called Scotton near Scunthorpe in Lincolnshire.

What did you want to be when you were small?

When I was young I wanted to join the army but I'm allergic to running.

If you could choose to do anything or be anyone for a day, what/who would it be?

I would choose to be one of the zoo workers that gets to interact with the tigers and lions, it looks like so much fun assuming they don't eat you.

What would you sing at a Karaoke night?

Bon Jovi Living on a Prayer is my go-to, but I can't say I'm good at it.

If you could only eat one meal for the rest of your life, what would it be?

Burritos! Mad Mex do a kilogram burrito once a year and it's amazing! Even worth the stomach-ache afterwards.

What are your hobbies?

I've done Mixed Martial Arts for over 10 years now, on and off, but recently I've found myself getting into reef fish keeping (like the ones from nemo). I've only got a small fish tank and would like to get a bigger one, but they're so expensive!

Aside from necessities, what one thing could you not go a day without?

I'm pretty easy going to be honest. I do like to listen to music a lot, so probably my headphones and a good playlist.

If you were a super-hero, what powers would you have?

Talking to animals for sure, Dr Dolittle made it look so fun.

If you could share a meal with any 4 individuals, living or dead, who would they be?

Margret Hamilton, Dashrath Manjhi, Jonas Salk & Ryan Reynolds.

What's your favourite holiday?

A few years ago, my friend and I decided to go travelling over the Christmas holidays, the only issue was that he lives in the UK and I'm here in Australia, and we're both really stubborn with each other. Neither of us wanted to fly further than the other to meet up and it turns out that New Delhi takes about the same amount of flight time for the both of us, who would have guessed? I found myself having an authentic Indian Christmas curry and although it was strange it was a brilliant holiday in the end, we went to Tokyo for New Year's Eve.

What's the most daring thing you've ever done?

I don't think I've ever done anything too daring. I do have skydiving booked in for later this year though!

What would be your last meal if you were on death row?

I refer you to my burrito answer above.

What would you recommend everyone watch on Netflix/Stan?

Scrubs, it's my favourite sitcom ever.

What's your favourite movie of all time?

It's probably a typical answer but the Avengers movies, I like all the comic book action films. I had big hopes for DC's suicide squad franchise, but the movie didn't really live up to the hype.

Can you share 3 things that you value most from a work environment?

Respect, teamwork, and a positive attitude.

Where has your career taken you and what has been your most challenging job?

I recently just finished working nightclub security which I did for over 5 years, in the UK and here in Perth. Overall, I loved the job and had some great times. You definitely meet some characters.

How do you see your role at NPT?

I see my role at NPT as doing all the "behind the scenes stuff" to allow our team here in WA to do what they do best, in a positive and safe environment. I can only do that thanks to the effort they put in with the patients and hospitals, and the assistance and expertise we get from everyone in Victoria and New South Wales.

What is your proudest accomplishment?

One of my oldest friends has just had his first child a few months ago. He asked me to be the godfather! This will be my proudest accomplishment. I can't wait to be able to travel again to go see them both.

Getting onboard with Lifeblood Teams

Did you know that every single blood donation has the capacity to save 3 lives?

The Australian Red Cross needs over 29,000 blood and plasma donations every week. As frontline healthcare workers, we know first-hand how important it is, and how big a difference it can make, to the 1 in 3 Australians who will require a life-saving blood donation during their life.

NPT have a registered Lifeblood Team. We are encouraging our employees who donate blood to add your donations to our tally.

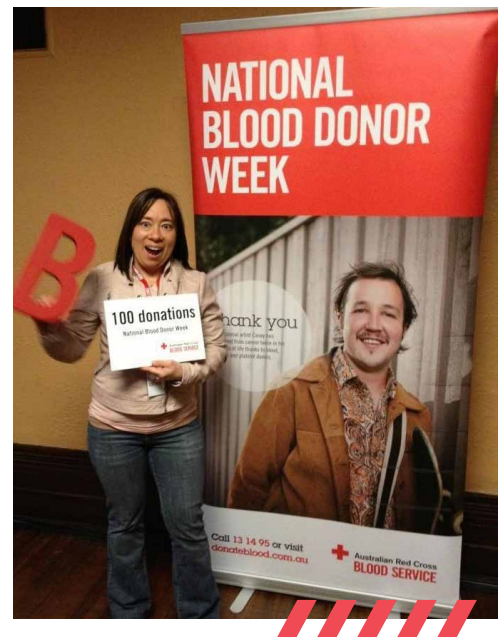
To join our team, search 'National Patient Transport Group' in the 'Teams' section of your online account. If you're not a regular blood donor, we encourage you to read up about the great work undertaken by Red Cross Australia at donateblood.com.au.

We will provide regular updates on NPT's donation tally, and stories from our teams about their own personal experiences.

NPT's 2021 Tally is sitting at 12 donations of Plasma. That number can save the equivalent of 36 lives. It may not be a grand number, but to each one of those 36 people and their families, it has made a pretty grand impact.

Ambulance Attendant Lynette Young shares her donation story:

"Ever since I was little I've always been needle phobic... I got the courage to make an appointment for my first donation in the city only to find when I got to the centre I had left all my ID at home... I worked up the courage once again, made sure I had my ID and went to my appointment. I sat in the big recliner, being very brave, took a deep breath... I could handle it... I was able to



donate every 2 weeks, alternating between platelets and plasma and whole blood every 3 months. I'm now up to my 135th donation this Friday. I would love to get to 500."

Building a Fitness Passport for our employees and their families

NPT is working towards building a program with Fitness Passport.

This will give our employees and their families the opportunity to have discounted access to hundreds of gyms, pools, and health clubs across Australia with one membership.

The first step in this process is for interested employees to complete a short survey, to identify what locations and services they would like to be available as part of our program. There is no obligation to participate in the survey, or to sign up with Fitness Passport – this step is simply

to get an idea of the potential take up and areas for NPT staff.

If you are interested – keep an eye out in your emails, and please participate in the survey. The survey will be open for 3 weeks, so please fill it out as soon as possible.

A Taste of Harmony - conversations about food and culture

Nothing encapsulates the essence of community and family more than food. The foods we cook in our homes tell the stories of our ancestors; they keep us connected to our histories and through sharing they have the ability to bring us all together.

According to the Australian Human Rights Commission, 1 in 4 Australians were born overseas. Half of all Australians have at least one parent who was born overseas and almost 1 in 5 Australians speak a language other than English at home. We also live in a country with one of the oldest continuous cultures in the world. Prior to colonization, the land we call Australia was made up of over 500 nations, who spoke more than 250 languages including 800 dialects. Cultural diversity is the spice of life in Australia.

A taste of Harmony is an annual initiative in which Australian workplaces recognise and celebrate cultural diversity at work. This initiative aims to bring co-workers together and to discover and learn more about each other's cultural heritage. The hope is that through the process of sharing stories and food we can enhance cultural understanding, workplace community cohesion and, as the name suggests, promote harmony.

In the spirit of this endeavor, we have been sharing some culturally

representative treats, displaying delicious recipes, and encouraging conversation about culture by providing talking cards and quizzes downloaded from the A Taste of Harmony website. We are also encouraging our staff to recognise their cultural heritage by placing a marker on one of the three large wall maps that will remain on display indefinitely.

We are also delighted to be able to share the culturally significant dishes of some of our staff members and the stories behind them.

Patient Transport Officer Anna Naismith, whose cultural heritage is Swedish, shares some fond memories and a few of her favorite dishes.

I moved to Australia in 2004 after meeting my husband in Scotland.

When I was little, I used to love watching my mum and grandmother cook. There are a lot of dishes that come to mind that I connect with my family.

My grandfather was a fisherman, so we always had fresh fish when visiting my grandparents. My favorites were the oven baked side of salmon with a creme fraiche, dill and white fish with roe sauce, and also small whitefish that we put on the barbecue and ate alongside breakfast.

In Autumn teams of hunters have a week to hunt a quota of moose, and we would spend a

few evenings as a family trimming, mincing and cutting up the meat, and then freezing it for the rest of the year.

Moose Bolognese and moose steaks are delicious!

I could go on, cinnamon buns, saffron buns, glögg (mulled wine), and many other dishes are close to my heart.

I think cultural heritage is so important because it gives us a sense of belonging to more than one place, celebrating it also allows us to share each other's experiences, food, and traditions. I think Australia is wonderful for its multicultural diversity.





I was born in Chongqing South West China and came to Australia in 1999 to study a Bachelor of Commerce. I am the only child, my father dreamed of a very bright future for me, so my life was very much focused

Lisa Zhang is Finance Manager at NPT and shares some of her food and culture journey.

on study. I never actually learned to cook when growing up with my family in Chongqing. My Grandmother helped to raise me from a very young age, and I hold her very dear to my heart.

My Grandmother didn't teach me to cook as I really had no interest at that stage, I was actually taught to cook by many different landlords in Australia who had also emigrated from China and with whom I lived with while I studied my degree in Sydney. Before this, I mostly lived on peanut butter sandwiches. I was taught to make spicy chicken stir fry with black fungi. This dish reminded me of home, my family,

and traditional Chongqing food. I still cook this dish regularly, sometimes I make a traditional Hot Pot.

I love the cultural diversity of Australia because it gives us so much yummy food choice. You can try so many cuisines without ever traveling anywhere, it is so enjoyable to learn about other people's cultures and their traditional foods. Sharing cultural diversity through food helps people to open up to one another, to laugh together. It breaks down barriers and reminds us that we are all human. You don't even need to speak the same language when you are speaking the language of food.

Patient Transport Officer Dina Dizon shares her favorite dish and some of her family heritage.

"The Philippines is divided into three island groups, Luzon, Visayas, and Mindanao. My mother is from Cagayan de Oro (Mindanao region), and my father is from Bulacan (Luzon). I grew up in a culture that is a mix of East and West, because of colonial influences. Our dishes have indigenous ingredients that have evolved overtime. My family has a strong Christian faith, which made us resilient despite challenges. We love to eat, aside from breakfast, lunch, and dinner, we have snacks in between. When we celebrate festivities, we invite our families and friends over and feast on the food.

One of the recipes that caught my attention at every feast is the "Rellenong Bangus" or Stuffed Milkfish. This is a very labor-intensive dish; you have to debone the fish carefully as there are lots of bones embedded in its flesh. Milkfish is said to be our national fish, but most people would only eat the belly and leave the rest. This makes Rellenong Bangus a perfect solution for people to be able to eat the whole fish.

This dish is usually served during special occasions such as fiesta, birthdays, Christmas, and New Year.

I can still recall seeing my mother preparing it for hours, for it to be eaten in only minutes! My mother has passed down this recipe to me and my siblings. Preparing this dish brings back childhood memories, it reminds me of our culture as Filipinos, and allows me to be able to preserve and love my culture. The preparation of a dish like this, that takes so much of your time, really shows the love you hold for those that you are serving.

Traditionally, Rellenong Bangus is a dish stuffed with minced milkfish meat, onion, garlic, peas, raisins, and spices. Now there are several varieties of the dish.

Celebrating cultural diversity is important to me because it cultivates knowledge and appreciation of our differences. This promotes respect and harmony, as well as creativity in the workplace. It also discourages racism and stereotyping."





Our 2020 Christmas spread

Christmas 2020 may have looked a little different than previous years but it was perhaps our grandest to date.

Many hard-working little elves chipped in to transform 6 pallet loads of goods into Christmas bundles for every staff member. The aroma of sausages and bacon greeted crews starting shifts out of our main branches and little parcels of sweet and savoury treats made their way, like Christmas morning magic, into satellite cupboards and regional branches across Victoria.

In what was actually a mammoth logistical endeavour, the stock cage at our Mitcham branch was transformed into a production factory akin to something you might see in the North Pole.

Many of our crew members who were undertaking light duties at the time, including Matthew Lawrence and Daniel Fordham, put their elf hats on and set to work constructing over 700 Christmas bags to send out to all NPT employees Australia wide.

We made our lists, checked them more than twice, and those little parcels were transported to branches and gifted out to our very appreciative and well deserving staff. The feedback has been fantastic and watching so many staff using their cooler bags to pack and carry their work lunch has spread the joy well into 2021.

In the lead up to Christmas, we also shared a snag and a chat around the barbeque at our 3 largest metropolitan Melbourne branches. It was a great opportunity to spend some time getting to know one another a little better, having a laugh and sharing a bite of one of Damian De Silva's masterfully cooked egg and bacon sandwiches. This is something we hope to repeat on a quarterly basis.

NPT also posted delicious hampers from Frist Class Hampers and The Gourmet Pantry to our regional branches and created Christmas lolly jars to put into our satellite branch cupboards.



We wanted to ensure that as many of our staff as possible received a little something to represent our appreciation for the work that they do every day.

This appreciation is felt toward all our staff, across regional Victoria, across Metropolitan Melbourne, and across NSW and WA. We hope that the extension of our Christmas spread helped to convey this message further than ever before.



Meet Gwen Jones

In our last edition of this Newsletter we gave a very brief introduction to Gwen, our new Human Resources Manager. We hope that she is settling well into her new home at NPT. We are happy to be able to get to know Gwen in greater detail, and thank her for allowing us to do so by candidly answering our quirky questions.



Where did you grow up?

I grew up in a small town called Maryknoll, which is in West Gippsland on the edge of the Bunyip State Forest – picture rolling hills, towering gums, and kangaroos in the backyard.

What did you want to be when you were small?

When I was very young, I wanted to be a teacher like my mum, then I thought I would be a professional netballer (a very unrealistic goal for a range of reasons). I was probably about 16 when I thought I would study business or commerce, and saw myself working in the corporate world.

If you could choose to do anything or be anyone for a day, what/who would it be?

Tough question! I love live music, and was lucky enough to get a ticket to Glastonbury Festival (in the UK) a few years back – not many people can say they've seen The Rolling Stones perform live in the last 10 years! So, if I could be anyone/do anything – I would be one of the people who manages to find themselves backstage watching an amazing live set at the Pyramid stage. 100,000 people dancing in the mud would be a sight to behold.

What would you sing at a Karaoke night?

Creep – Radiohead. I'm a terrible singer, but I sang this song one very late night (early morning) at a Karaoke bar in Tokyo and it was definitely a highlight.

If you could only eat one meal for the rest of your life, what would it be?

Ramen. There are so many variations and I would never get sick of it.

What are your hobbies?

I grew up playing netball, 2 knee reconstructions later and that hobby is well and truly over. These days, it's probably limited to live music – festivals, gigs – and trying to keep my

indoor plants alive... (What even is a hobby once you're an adult??)

Aside from necessities, what one thing could you not go a day without?

Definitely coffee. I don't recommend talking to me if I haven't had a coffee yet.

If you were a super-hero, what powers would you have?

Hmm...Time travel...plenty of things I'd go back in time to relive/redo I think.

If you could share a meal with any 4 individuals, living or dead, who would they be?

Bjork, Yannis Philippakis, Tina Fey and Peggy O'Neal (Carn the Tiges!). Hopefully not all at once together, because that is a strange group.

What's your favourite holiday?

My favourite place to visit is Wilsons' Prom – I spent many, many school holidays camping there when I was young, and I still go a couple of times a year.

What's the most daring thing you've ever done?

I'm not much of a daredevil, but my first overseas trip was when I spent a semester studying in Denmark during university – arriving on the other side of the world on my own was daunting at the time!

What would be your last meal if you were on death row?

Can it be three courses? Let's start with a nice grazing platter, with some good quality bread, followed by a perfectly cooked piece of eye fillet with duck-fat roasted potatoes and a simple green salad, with a cheese platter to end the meal. All washed down with a glass (or bottle) of red from the Adelaide Hills. That's not too much to ask, is it?

What would you recommend everyone watch on Netflix/Stan?

I tend to use Netflix as a source of trashy background TV, so I'm not sure

I should recommend anything. But! If you're into podcasts, I recommend listening to 'This American Life', and the episode 'No Coincidence, No Story'. It is 1 hour of delightful stories of coincidences, some that seem completely unbelievable, and others that are just outrageous, but it does put a smile on my face.

What's your favourite movie of all time?

Toy Story (the original) – I got the VHS for Christmas when I was about 8, and watched it every day during the school holidays. (I also went to see Toy Story 4 the night it came out at Imax – I just love those movies!)

Can you share 3 things that you value most from a work environment?

While all of NPT's HEART values are equally important, I think Teamwork, Respect and Accountability stand out to me. I think if we work together, respect each other and our differences, and take responsibility for our performance, NPT will continue to succeed.

Where has your career taken you and what has been your most challenging job?

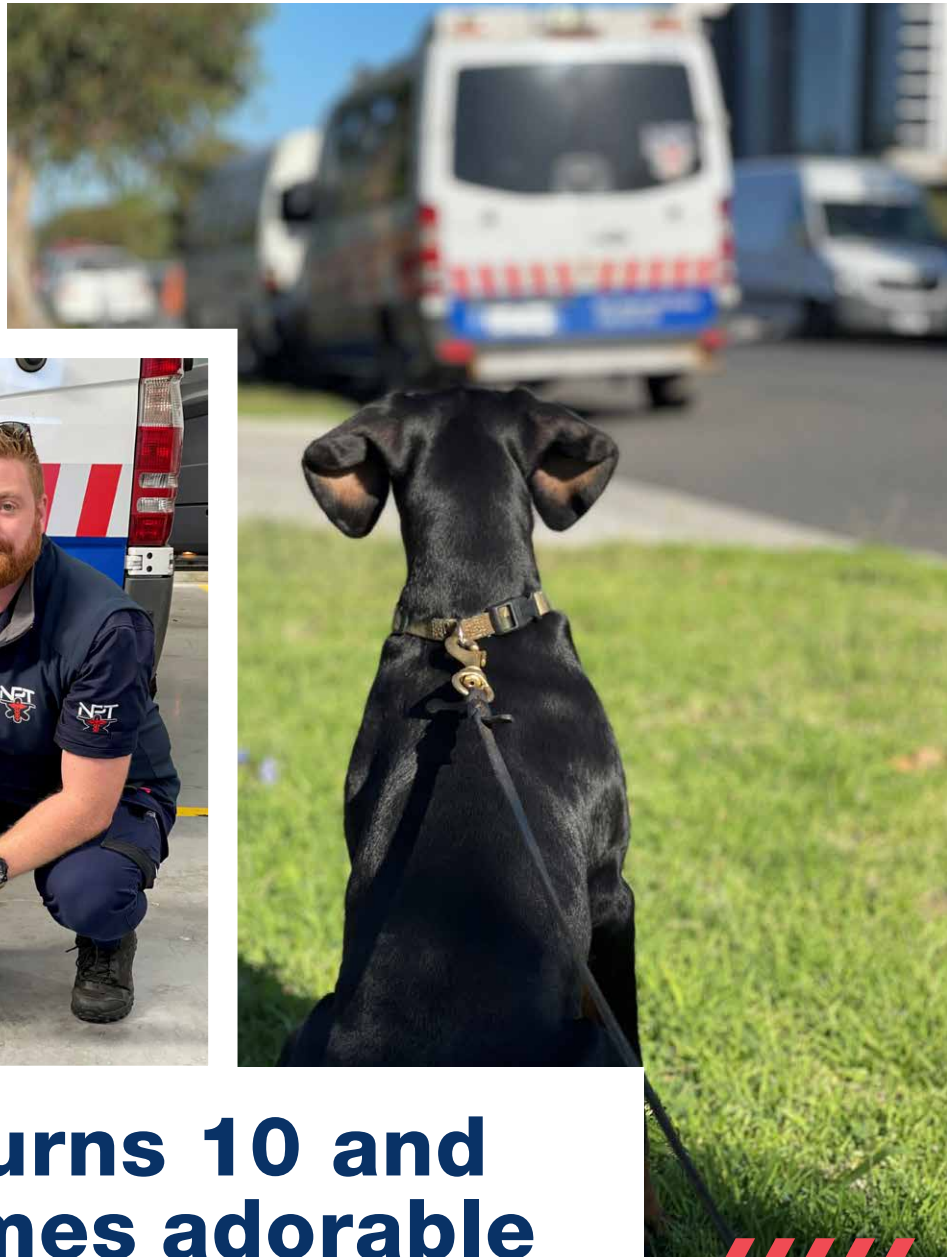
I've spent almost all of my career in the bus industry, so moving across to health is certainly a challenge I'm excited about!

How do you see your role at NPT?

I see the main responsibility of my role to be supporting the business to develop and implement HR solutions that align with the HEART values, so that we can all achieve our goals.

What is your proudest accomplishment?

Not work related, but I bought my own little piece of overpriced Melbourne real estate last year! Pretty proud of that.



Zeva turns 10 and welcomes adorable understudy

In February the crews at our Thomastown branch were paid a visit by the ever sweet Zeva and her understudy Kenzi, who was completing her first official observer shift.

Kenzi couldn't wait to meet everyone and show them her already impeccable manners and perfect sit, and Zeva is doing incredible work as her instructor.

Kenzi was a mere thirteen weeks at the time of her first visit and Zeva will have celebrated her 10-year-old milestone birthday on the 15th March. We hope she received all the love and pats, and enough

treats to make her feel like the queen she is.

Zeva's plans for 2021 are to continue to visit our crews and show Kenzi the ropes. Kenzi is Debra Armstrong's newest family member. Debra likes to take a back seat to Zeva but is every bit the champion herself and we are very grateful for the service she provides and the joy she spreads.

Kenzi and Zeva share a lineage and Debra plans for Kenzi to follow in Zeva's footsteps as a competition champion.

Reports so far suggest that Kenzi has an amazing temperament and a cuteness factor that is undeniable and endearing to all.

It's nice to have Zeva back for 2021 and we are excited to welcome Kenzi to the team.

Feedback & Comments

Well done Lindsey Smith-Booth and Cecilia Archer

"...a very professional and friendly crew that were caring...I can't thank them enough...to be cheered up and treated with the utmost respect, thank you team."

- Patient

Well done Alun Roberts and Jessica Marget

"...These two went above and beyond...Working with them was a pleasure and I hope they are highly complimented for their efforts and superior work ethic. Thank you very much for having such wonderful staff onboard."

- RN from The Alfred

Well done Paula Broadhurst and Rebecca Donato

"...their attention to detail was nothing short of exceptional. They made me very comfortable...I'm so lucky I had two absolutely amazing people with me."

- Patient

Well done Holly Reefman and Jeanette Tucker

"...They were amazing assisting my brother in law...They were very reassuring and made him feel comfortable..."

- Patient's Family

Well done Chenier Moore and Sofia Halpin

The NSW ambulance crew described the NPT crew as professional and calming during their assist, fully explaining everything to the family... describing their assistance as a 'top job!'

- Patient

Well done Stuart McBeath and Van Tuan Nguyen

"...These two lovely men walked in like a breath of fresh air and gently and respectfully took the situation..."

- Patient's family

"On behalf of Ambulance Victoria, please pass on our thanks to your crew for their care, gentle kindness and professionalism on this occasion..."

- AV

Well done Katie Grogan and Anne Kearsley

"...I was greatly relieved when they arrived & attended to the resident with great professionalism, care, a little bit of humor, patience & respect..."

- RN from Cameron Close Retirement Village

"...on behalf of Ambulance Victoria, pass on our thanks for their care, kindness and professionalism on this occasion..."

- AV

Well done Jeanette Tucker and Paula Broadhurst

The patient's husband called to compliment this crew on the 'first class job' they did, and advise that they were courteous and very professional.

Well done Operations Centre and manager Alison Roughton

"...Please extend our appreciation, their continual customer focus and service does not go unnoticed and is a credit to you."

- Northern Health

Well done Faye Angus

"I want to give a big thumbs up to Faye...She's always friendly, funny, and professional...a full recommendation for a job well done."

- Patient

Well done Jangeer Chail

"...the driver we had, Jerry, was sensational...Jerry was very compassionate, extremely helpful and has an extremely nice nature and clearly cares about the patients he transports..."

- Patient's wife

Well done Thomas Hadland and Amy Hardy

"...their professionalism, willingness to listen to the problem and assist was outstanding together with their empathy and awareness of the needs of the patient...both Amy and Tom are assets to your team."

- Acting Operations Manager at John Hunter Hospital Outpatient Services, Switchboard and Mailroom

Well done Will Johnston

"I was most impressed by Mr. Johnston's dedication and sense of duty, his excellent teamwork and communication skills, his understanding and execution of clinical tasks, as well as his empathy and consideration for the patient... Mr Johnston also demonstrated great resourcefulness and resilience..."

- the duty doctor aboard the CareFlight Rapid Response Helicopter

Well done Brooke Lewis and Warrick Sainsbury

A patient you transported contacted NSW HealthShare to advise how happy was with the service you provided.