



Mercy Health

*Care first*

Mercy Health

## **Caring for people and planet**

Mercy Health's  
strategic response  
to Laudato Si'  
2020-25









# The Mercy Health reconciliation story in images

*Caring for people and planet Mercy Health's strategic response to Laudato Si' 2020–25 features original artwork by Yorta Yorta and Gunnai artist Dixon Patten. Dixon is Director and Designer of Bayila, an Aboriginal-owned graphic art company founded in Melbourne (Nairn). Dixon's own story is entwined with Mercy Health, having been born at the Mercy Maternity Hospital in East Melbourne. Dixon was also present for the birth of his two nieces at Mercy Hospital for Women in Heidelberg.*

Here, Dixon explains the narrative and symbolism of the artwork:

*This artwork represents Mercy Health's commitment to reconciliation and honours the connection and dedication to the communities it serves.*

*The central motifs represent the founding Sisters and the Mercy heritage story. The figures represent strong women and honouring the maternal roots of Mercy's identity. The hands represent Aboriginal people and honouring them as the First Peoples of Australia. The feet represent Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people walking together in reconciliation and exchanging energy, knowledge and perspectives.*

*The formations to the left and right of the Sisters' represents the various branches*

*of Mercy Health beyond maternity. The various circles represent the different communities and the pathways depict our connection to each other.*

*The boomerangs represent returning to culture principles for guidance while on the reconciliation journey. The shields represent resilience. The 'birthing' trees represent traditional Aboriginal birthing practices; where a woman's placenta was placed in a tree and that tree was sacred to the newborn and during their lifetime. The gum leaves represent being 'Welcomed to Country'.*

*The coolamon was used for many traditions: babies were carried in them as a nurturing practice and they were also used in smoking ceremonies, which are a spiritual cleansing ritual. The message sticks were used as a 'passport' to allow others to cross the different countries, this allowed for exchange of dialogue and education.*

*The ancestors are wrapped in their possum-skin cloaks, a tradition in which a person had one cloak from birth to death.*

*Mercy Health was formed in Nairn (Melbourne). In the artwork, Bunjil and Waa, two creator beings for the Kulin (traditional owners of Melbourne) fly overhead, guiding and protecting us on our life's journey.*

## **Title: wabung-ngetel**

Call of Country  
Gunnai Language

## **Artist**

Dixon Patten  
Bayila Creative  
Gunnai and Yorta Yorta

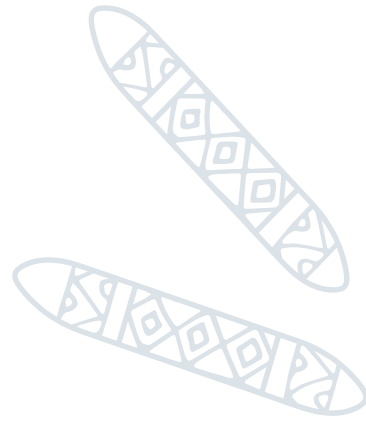
“Everything is connected. Concern for the environment thus needs to be joined with a sincere love for our fellow human beings and an unwavering commitment to resolving the problems of society.”

“A sense of deep communion with the rest of nature cannot be real if our hearts lack tenderness, compassion and concern for our fellow human beings,”

— Pope Francis

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# Welcome



As a ministry of the Institute of Sisters of Mercy of Australia and Papua New Guinea, Mercy Health seeks to bring God's mercy to those in need. It is clear from all evidence before us that our mission must include addressing the causal factors of environmental harm. This includes addressing our organisation's climate footprint by reducing our use of fossil fuels and playing our part in protecting the world's limited resources now and into the future.

In Pope Francis' 2015 encyclical *Laudato Si'*, he reminds us that we all have a role to play in protecting our planet. By taking responsibility for the things we can change, we can have an impact that extends beyond our organisation and across the globe. The *Mercy Health Strategic Framework* endorsed by our Board in 2017 outlines our vision, values and context and key strategic themes. The Framework recognises how our foundations as a Catholic Ministry couple with contemporary influences of the day in shaping our goals for the *future*. One such goal is to be a growing, resilient and sustainable ministry. The *Caring for people and planet* strategy outlines some of the first steps we can take to achieve this goal and implement real and sustainable change across the organisation. In committing to this strategy, Mercy Health is playing our part in protecting God's people and planet.

**Virginia Bourke, Mercy Health Chair**



Respect for human life and human dignity is the most sacred foundation of our Catholic ethical and social teachings. We can only flourish if we are in unison with the world around us. It is therefore a moral imperative that caring for our planet and our environment must be central to everything we do at Mercy Health.

The health and care sectors have a special responsibility to 'first do no harm'. Climate change is now regarded as the greatest threat to human health. The global health sector continues to be a major contributor to climate change. We have a practical and a moral responsibility to get our 'house' in order to help address the current climate crisis.

At Mercy Health, we will put all our efforts into reducing the carbon footprint of our services and doing all we can to care for and protect the most vulnerable from the impact of climate change. If we can align health sector growth and investment to assist in delivering on a target of producing zero carbon emissions, we will significantly decrease our climate footprint even as we continue to respond to the call to grow our response in health and aged care.

**Adj Prof Stephen Cornelissen, Mercy Health  
Group Chief Executive Officer**



The *Caring for people and planet* strategy is our organisation's best effort to address climate change and the associated global justice and sustainability challenges in such a way that honours a deep history of integrated ecology as articulated through Pope Francis' current reflections and thinking in his encyclical *Laudato Si'*. The strategy is strongly anchored to Mercy Health's mission and values, and the foundational principles of Mercy International. It also aligns with the Institute of Sisters of Mercy of Australia and Papua New Guinea's current focus on climate change and care for the earth.

The release of this strategy will close the current phase of our *Laudato Si'* project, driven by *Laudato Si'* Project Lead Dr Lisa Rasmussen and overseen by the former Executive Director Leadership and Mission Julia Trimboli. Lisa and Julia's passion for this bold and ambitious project is evident on every page and I thank them both for their hard work and commitment.

I am pleased to have assumed leadership of the *Caring for people and planet* strategy in this exciting next phase, which seeks to give Mercy Health people the knowledge, skill and agency they need to make real and lasting change.

**Jenny Smith, Executive Director Strategy, Planning and Major Projects**



*Postscript: The global coronavirus pandemic struck just as the final touches were being made to this strategic document. Mercy Health's commitment to *Laudato Si'* and the health outcomes of our patients, residents and clients continues to shape our organisation's strategic priorities.*





# Introduction

*Caring for people and planet* is a comprehensive strategy to guide Mercy Health in our response to Pope Francis' 2015 encyclical *Laudato Si'*. This strategy explains how we can continue to provide the best possible care; improve outcomes in health, aged care and home care; and protect the world's limited resources now and in future years. It champions transformational change to tackle the climate crisis, reduce Mercy Health's ecological footprint and help make the world fairer and more sustainable.

At a time when humanity is confronting global inequality and a climate emergency, *Caring for people and planet* is a strategy of hope. It carries forth the longstanding commitment of the Catholic Church, the Sisters of Mercy and Mercy Health to serving the poor and vulnerable, while looking to new evidence-based approaches for climate change mitigation and climate resilience.

This document is divided into two sections. The first describes our strategy, approach and goals in depth. The second outlines our vision and how we plan to achieve those goals.

There are three clear goals designed to deliver better environmental performance, improved health outcomes, substantial savings in expenditure and an effective, responsive and affordable healthcare system:

- Sustainable models of care
- Addressing climate change
- Ethical and social responsibility

Every person has a role to play in embedding *Caring for people and planet* across Mercy Health. Success relies on each of us recognising the potential impact of the strategy and the difference each of us can make. Strong partnerships inside and outside our organisation, leadership and support at all levels, and organisational courage are essential.

The journey may appear overwhelming, but, one step at a time, we can reach our destination.

*"Humanity still has the ability to work together in building our common home"* — Pope Francis, *Laudato Si'*



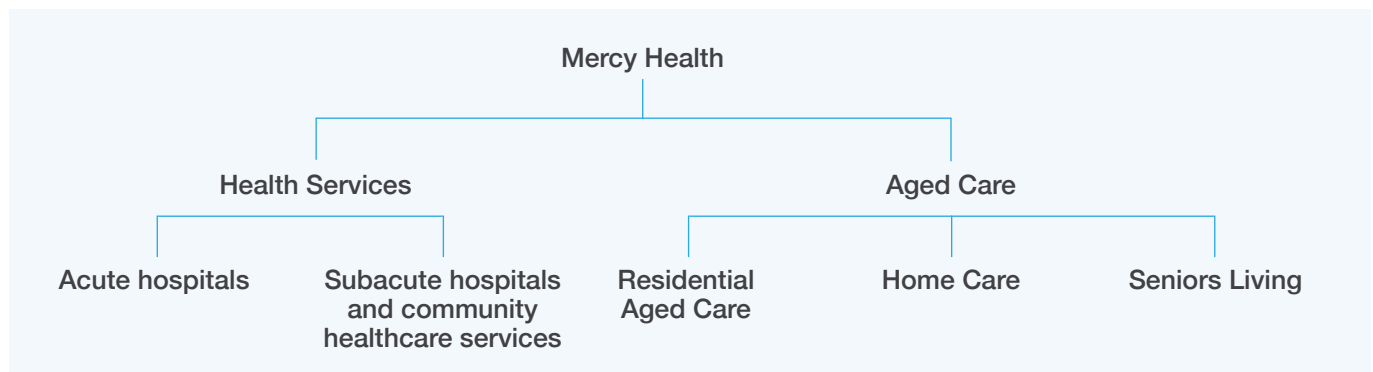
## Position statement

Mercy Health believes climate change is a shared global challenge for governments, organisations and individuals. We fully acknowledge that climate change is one of the biggest threats to the health of the world's people and commit to make sustainability central to everything that we do. We acknowledge our own impact on the environment and commit to reducing the environmental impact and the carbon footprint of our organisation as rapidly as possible.

## Vision

To provide the best possible care that improves outcomes in health, aged and community care while looking after the world's resources in a sustainable way for current and future generations.

# About Mercy Health



Mercy Health is a Catholic organisation grounded in a 2,000-year tradition of caring for others. Founded by the Sisters of Mercy, Mercy Health employs 10,000 people across Australia in Health Services, Aged Care and Support Services.

**Mercy Health – Health Services** cares for people in hospitals, clinics and community-based healthcare facilities in Victoria and southern New South Wales. In Victoria, we provide services at Mercy Hospital for Women, Werribee Mercy Hospital, Mercy Mental Health, Mercy Palliative Care and Mercy Health O’Connell Family Centre. In New South Wales, we provide subacute services at Mercy Health Albury and Mercy Care Centre Young.

**Mercy Health Residential Aged Care** homes support older people to live well, be active and stay connected to family, community and friends. There are 30 residential aged care homes across four states, in Victoria, New South Wales, Queensland and Western Australia, caring for about 2,400 citizen residents.

**Mercy Health Home Care** supports older people to continue living actively and independently in their own homes for as long as possible. We offer personalised services and care at all stages of life, and deliver care that is responsive to local needs. Our network extends across Melbourne and regional Victoria, Canberra and southern New South Wales, with 18 Home Care offices providing community and disability services to more than 4,000 clients every month.

**Mercy Health Seniors Living** fosters independence and caters to evolving lifestyle needs. There are 11 Seniors Living Villages, in Victoria, Western Australia and Queensland, with a total of 430 units. There is a focus on both community and independent living with the assurance that high-quality aged care is within easy reach if needed.



# Laudato Si' and Mercy Health

Pope Francis issued the encyclical *Laudato Si'* in 2015, calling on everyone around the world to take immediate and concrete steps to address climate change. He asks us to re-engage with our role as participants and beneficiaries of planet earth.

Pope Francis writes that the challenge facing our world cannot be solved one issue at a time. Instead, the way forward must take into account the following six issues that also align with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals: pollution and waste; climate change; water; biodiversity; global inequality; and breakdown in society.

*Laudato Si'* is a visionary document that calls for radical whole-of-society change — Pope Francis describes this as major 'ecological' change. He also emphasises that Indigenous peoples and the young must have a voice and become leaders of this change.

*Laudato Si'* and the *Mercy Health Strategic Framework 2018–22* have guided the development of *Caring for people and planet*.

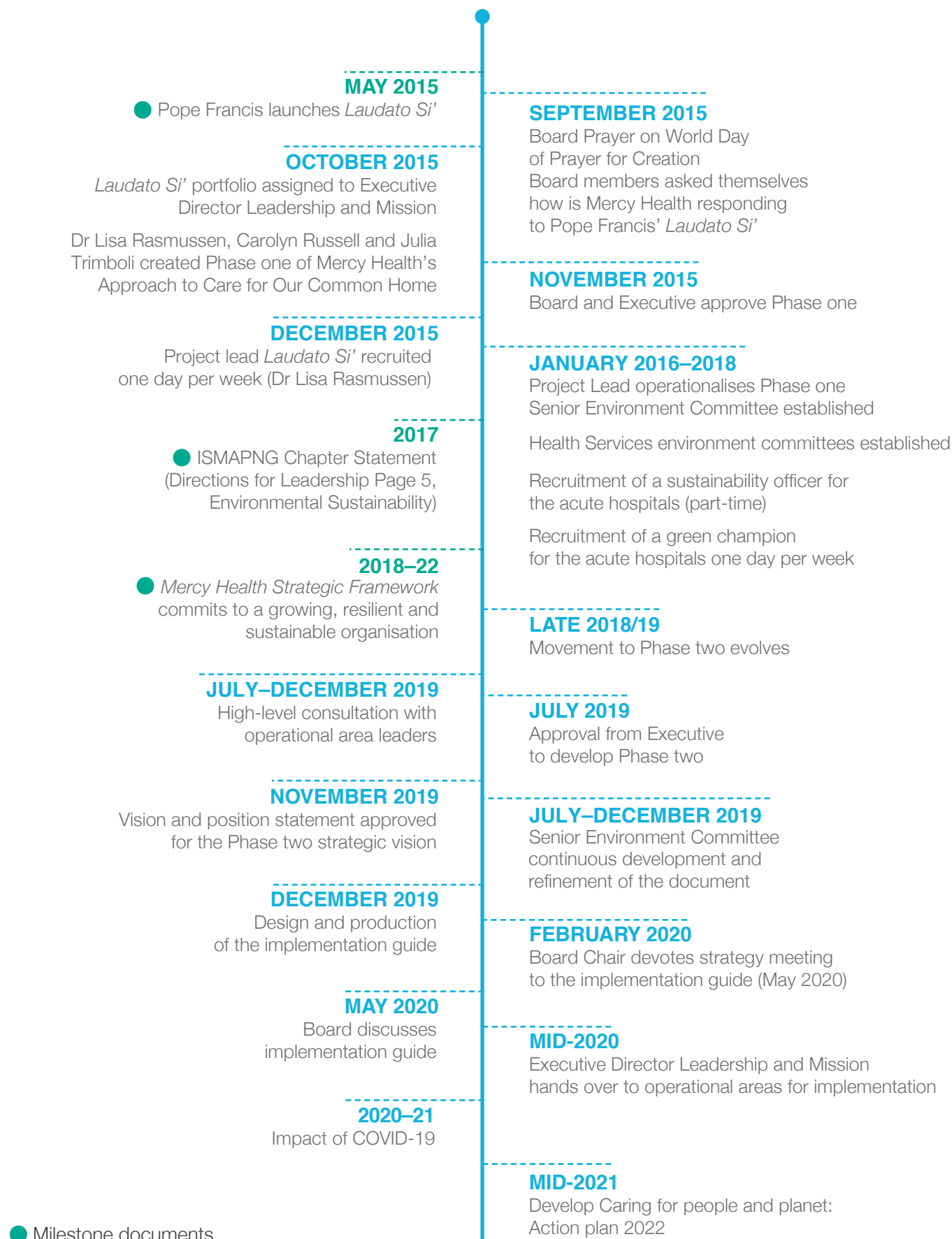
The *Caring for people and planet* strategy recognises that Mercy Health provides care for people at every age and stage of life. Our mission is to bring God's mercy to those in need and we aspire to demonstrate compassion, hospitality, respect, innovation, stewardship and teamwork in all that we do. Mercy Health's culture embraces innovation and creativity to push the boundaries of current practice and to lead through service excellence and innovation. These bold attributes will help us bring the *Caring for people and planet* strategy to life.



## Caring for people and planet: The timeline

This timeline depicts the journey through the first two phases of *Caring for people and planet* — our initial

response to *Laudato Si'* and our carefully researched and consultative strategic planning process. Today, we stand on the cusp of Phase three, where we will take our first bold steps on the pathway to achieve our vision.





## SECTION ONE:

# STRATEGIC RESPONSE

### Goals

Three goals will bring *Caring for people and planet* to life. Based on rigorous research, these goals align with Pope Francis' appeal for us to work together to save our 'common' home and also

respond to Mercy Health's preferential option for the poor. Goals two and three depend on the success of goal one, the heart of the strategy: sustainable models of care.

**1** Goal one:  
**Sustainable  
models of care**

**2** Goal two:  
**Addressing  
climate change**

**3** Goal three:  
**Ethical and social  
responsibility**

# Goal one:

## Sustainable models of care

### Our commitment

Each part of Mercy Health, and each person within the organisation, will rethink what kind of care we provide through the lens of sustainability. We will integrate sustainability into service planning across all areas. We also commit to measuring the impacts of more sustainable models of care and the resulting health outcomes and will advocate for funding reform that promotes the provision of care using fewer resources.

### Our objectives

- Ensure care is provided wherever possible in the least resource-intensive setting.
- Identify and make changes to areas of care where we can use less resources for the same or improved health outcomes.
- Increase our focus and involvement in chronic disease prevention and management.
- Reduce waste.
- Use water sustainably in all our care.
- Create green spaces as a central part of care.

To address climate change, first and foremost, we must focus on building sustainable models of care that deliver improved outcomes in both individual health and sustainability.

The World Health Organization (WHO) has emphasised the need for healthcare providers to step up and confront the challenges of sustainability. WHO's *Environmentally sustainable health systems: a strategic document (2017)*, calls for the global health sector to take an active role in 'environmental stewardship efforts'. This can help address the big issues that affect people's health; decrease environmental risk and help reduce costs and increase the resilience of health systems.

Current models of care in Australia have reached 'peak health'. This means we are spending more money and using more resources with little impact on health outcomes. About 10 per cent of Australia's GDP is spent on health and care services and this will rise to 25 per cent by 2025.

In 2015–16, the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW) noted that 678,374 people admitted to hospital should not have been there (AIHW 2017). This equals more than 2.5 million potentially preventable bed days. Most conditions that lead to ill health and impact our ability to live well are caused by preventable conditions, but we mostly treat and manage these conditions at the end stage, rather than focusing on prevention.

We will not significantly reduce Mercy Health's carbon footprint unless we focus on sustainable models of care that deliver better health outcomes, reduced healthcare costs and use less resources. We need to think about what healthcare we will deliver, and where and how we will deliver it.





## The Mercy Health approach

Mercy Health will focus on keeping people well and active through chronic disease prevention and early and optimal management of illness. We will work towards public health approaches to healthcare problems and prevention at scale.

Delivering care in the least resource intensive settings — in the community and at home — also contributes to sustainability and can be achieved through technology such as tele-monitoring, apps and telehealth. For example, a telehealth monitoring program in the Netherlands targeted chronic obstructive pulmonary disease and heart failure patients and successfully reduced outpatient visits by 26 per cent and re-admission rates by 28 per cent.

‘Hospital in the home’ services and home or community care after hospital can be expanded, and surgical theatres can move some care out of operating rooms and into procedure rooms.

How we fund care matters. Currently, particularly in hospital care, funding incentives favour outputs over health outcomes. Shifting this focus requires significant advocacy to funding and professional bodies and requires health, aged and community care providers to work together to develop new models of care.

Across Mercy Health, we can identify areas of care where we can use fewer resources to achieve the same or better health outcomes. An example is the

Choosing Wisely program, which encourages health services, staff and the community to think through every test, investigation, medication or treatment and ask ‘is this the best thing I should be doing based on evidence about patient health and care outcomes?’ Choosing Wisely can influence everything from on-the-ground decisions to ordering and prescribing practices.

A sustainable model focuses on perpetual care, rather than on episodes of care in health settings. Improving how we connect, integrate and coordinate care can reduce duplication of resources.

When care is delivered in resource-intensive settings, like hospitals, how can we reduce length of stay without compromising health outcomes? Developing green spaces within hospitals has been shown to improve recovery times, shorten hospital stays and lead to better staff retention.

Sustainable models of care must also pay attention to water use. The WHO points out that while direct water consumption of health systems is relatively minor, indirect water consumption is significant through electricity generation or the production of some procured healthcare products, such as disposable cotton materials.

There is also potential to contribute to sustainable models of care by incorporating best practice in home care services and in residential aged care small household living.

# Goal two: Addressing climate change

## Our commitment

Over the next five years, Mercy Health will make significant steps towards achieving zero carbon emissions by 2030. We will do this by establishing a range of climate mitigation programs across the organisation. This will include establishing a baseline carbon footprint for Health Services, Residential Aged Care and Home Care Services. We will develop a framework that proportionally focuses on reducing our carbon footprint in procurement, energy, transport and waste and a whole of organisation approach will monitor reductions in our carbon and ecological footprints. Mercy Health will increase standalone renewable energy and, wherever possible, move our power purchasing agreements to renewables. We will advocate for a move away from fossil fuels. Mercy Health will develop buildings, infrastructure and systems that are climate resilient and support staff to manage the stresses and challenges associated with climate change.

## Our objectives

- Proportionally reduce our carbon footprint in procurement, energy, transport, anaesthetic gases (Health Services), food and capital works (new builds and refurbishment).
- Build climate resilience by establishing systems to manage climate disaster, ensuring buildings and infrastructure are climate resilient, and supporting staff to be climate resilient.

Mercy Health aims to become a climate resilient organisation, working towards zero carbon emissions and 100 percent renewable energy by 2030.

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change states that we must keep average global temperature rises to within 1.5 degrees for the planet to survive. Halving emissions in the next decade will give us a 50 per cent chance of keeping temperature rises below the vital 1.5 degrees.

Global healthcare costs linked to climate change are predicted to be in the trillions. In addition to financial challenges, health systems will be increasingly prone to disruptions in power, supply chains, transport, water and key infrastructure. Our services must work hard to prevent, prepare for, and manage these impacts.

The healthcare sector is a major source of global greenhouse gases — if it were a country it would be the fifth largest emitter in the world. Australia ranks 10th in the list of top 10 global healthcare emitters, but we are second after the US in terms of the highest healthcare emissions per capita.

Healthcare sector greenhouse gas emission makes up around seven per cent (see diagram 2) of Australia's carbon footprint. Hospitals contribute most to the sector's carbon and ecological footprints. Successful climate change mitigation will therefore require a focus on acute hospitals.

## The Mercy Health approach

The first step in climate change mitigation is understanding what contributes to our carbon footprint, so we can reduce carbon emissions in those areas.

Most healthcare systems talk about scope 1, 2 and 3 emissions. See Diagram 1.

Scope 1 emissions come directly from healthcare facilities and healthcare-owned vehicles. How staff travel to and from work and how people travel to use our services is a key contributor to the carbon footprint. Finding ways to reduce a reliance on motor vehicles will help reduce air pollution and increase physical activity.

Scope 2 emissions are indirect emissions from purchased energy, such as electricity, cooling and heating. Over half of healthcare's carbon footprint comes from energy use. There needs to be a shift to stand alone renewable energy wherever possible, and to renewable energy in power purchasing agreements. We can also be vocal advocates for a move away from fossil fuels.

Scope 3 emissions derive from the healthcare supply chain through production, transportation and the disposal of goods and services. Procurement makes up most of these emissions with pharmaceuticals and medical equipment being key contributors.

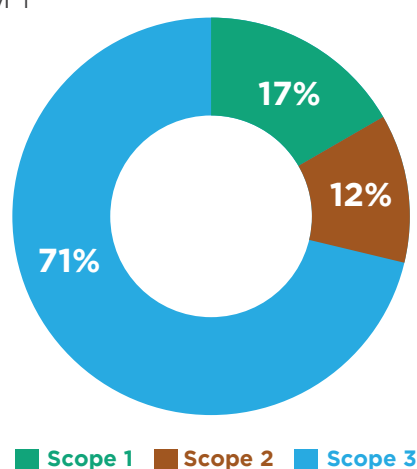
Anaesthetic gases are a small but significant part of health's carbon footprint. While carbon dioxide is our major greenhouse gas and remains in the atmosphere for at least 1,000 years, nitrous oxide is 300 times more potent than CO<sub>2</sub> and fluorinated gases are 20,000 times more potent. Anaesthetic gases need to be part of a carbon mitigation program.

Organisations face increasing expectations to support climate change and resilience with financial review

assessments, asset protection and climate disaster preparedness. Organisations leading climate change adaptation are advocating for superannuation bodies to review investment policies around fossil fuels and renewable energies.

Effective climate adaptation programs address asset protection and the development of disaster plans, including processes to support staff. Best practice health services conduct detailed assessments of current and future vulnerabilities, and develop resilient and robust systems to manage climate change impacts and to protect the health of individuals and communities.

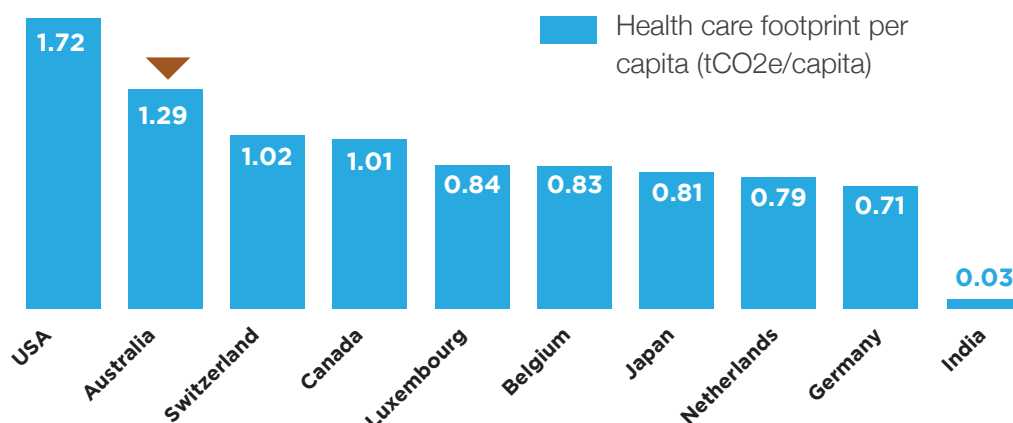
DIAGRAM 1



Source: Health Care's Climate Footprint: How the health sector contributes to the global climate crisis and opportunities for action. Health care without Harm. Climate-smart health care series. Green Paper Number One. Produced in Collaboration with Arup. September 2019.

DIAGRAM 2

## Global environmental impost



Source: Arup and Health Care Without Harm (2019).



# Goal three:

## Ethical and social responsibility

### Our commitment

Mercy Health will empower Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and we are committed to ethical and socially responsible procurement that focuses on employment and training, social inclusion, diversity and equality, local suppliers, social and service innovation and fair trade.

We have a zero-tolerance approach to slavery and forced labour and support working conditions that appropriately and sensitively manage issues of freedom of association, health and safety, child labour, wages, working hours and discrimination. Immediate action to investigate environmental breaches is paramount.

We are committed to social cohesion and will increase our focus on our Pacific neighbours who bear the brunt of climate change in our region. Equity and inclusion programs remain a priority and we will continue our commitment to local and global strategies to protect biodiversity.

### Our objectives

- Continued commitment to Catholic social teaching\*.
- Empowerment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.
- Ethical and socially responsible procurement.
- Strong social cohesion among our staff.
- Addressing loss of biodiversity.
- Reducing global inequality with a specific focus on Pacific and Torres Strait Islands.
- Equity and inclusion (listening to those who experience injustice).
- Strong governance oversight.

\*Catholic social teaching is based in Scripture and promotes a vision of a just society that is grounded in biblical revelation. It is about action in the economic, political and social arenas. Catholic Popes and National Conferences of Bishops have shaped Catholic social teaching since the late 19th century.

At Mercy Health our approach to ethical and social responsibility is founded on the Gospel of Jesus Christ, “I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly” (John 10:10) and on the Catholic social and environmental teachings of the Church, particularly *Laudato Si’*.

We recognise that everything in the world is connected. We heed Pope Francis’ call in *Laudato Si’* 91: “Concern for the environment thus needs to be joined to a sincere love for our fellow human beings and an unwavering commitment to resolving the problems of society.”

### We are all connected

The global market for hand-held surgical instruments was valued at \$650 million per annum. Most are made in Germany and Pakistan. Germany has 6,000 workers while Pakistan has more than 50,000 workers. Workers in Pakistan are exposed to corrosive chemicals and unsafe work practices and have no job security, guaranteed income or insurance. A sixth of them are under the age of nine. In Pakistan, instruments cost \$1 to make but are sold to end-users for \$80. When the US passed legislation requiring imported surgical instruments to be of a certain standard, this led to an explosion of

short-term contracts in Pakistan that further eroded workers' wages and safety standards.

While some conditions have improved for workers over the past decade, the overall issues persist. These issues exist in the production of our medical instruments and equipment, gloves, masks, gowns and pharmaceuticals.

This example highlights the unintended consequences that arise when privileged countries think they understand the problems of poorer countries without listening to the people who are directly involved. Good communication and respectful relationships are integral to procurement contracts. Equity is also important and our procurement should involve local communities and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations and businesses.

Mercy Health's empowerment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people is reflected in our Health Services Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP), a milestone in our journey towards culturally safe healthcare. It recognises the need to provide services and work environments that are accessible and sensitive to the culture and values of First Australians. The RAP demonstrates a commitment to develop and strengthen relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples and organisations.

Climate change in the Pacific and Torres Strait is real. The Pacific Islands Forum has described it as the 'single greatest threat' to the region. Papua New Guinea made headlines as the first place in the world to require population relocations due to climate and rising sea levels. Torres Strait Islanders are on the frontline with some islands less than one metre above sea level and tides flooding homes, land and cultural sites. Rising sea temperatures have damaged marine environments.

In May 2019, Torres Strait Islanders lodged a climate change case with the United Nations Human Rights Committee against the Australian Government — the first time the Australian Government has been taken to the UN for their failure to take adequate action on climate change.

Australia's biodiversity is also under threat due to climate change, land-clearing and deforestation, habitat loss and invasive species.

## The Mercy Health approach

Mercy Health can enhance the organisation's ethical and social responsibility by moving to an accounting system that considers the environment in purchasing decisions. For example, Victorian hospitals once bought 'cheap' paper produced from virgin Indonesian forests. The financial costs were small but the environmental costs were significant. Strong social cohesion among staff and communities is also increasingly important as people feel overwhelmed by climate change issues. Mercy Health will support people to manage the impact of events like heatwaves, bushfires and flooding. We will develop processes to listen to staff and to help them feel empowered to take action.

Climate change will affect marginal and disadvantaged communities in Australia. Mercy Health will respond in a humane and compassionate way to people displaced by climate change, potentially by opening health and aged care buildings to provide refuge and care.

Just 20 per cent of the global population with the highest levels of consumption, including Australia, has contributed approximately 80 per cent of human-caused greenhouse gas emissions. We have an ethical and moral responsibility to rectify this.

A courageous and radical response to the 'preferential option for the poor' is a primary imperative of the Gospel, that is we are to make the problems and struggles of people who are poor, our own. It is a major theme of the teachings of Jesus Christ so evident in his Good Samaritan story and his own actions.

— Fr Gerald A Arbuckle, SM, PhD







## Bringing the strategy to life

*The most effective change agents in an organisation are people who are central in the informal network, regardless of their position in any organisational hierarchy. It is the capacity to bridge disconnected groups or individuals that helps bring about new and rapid change (National Health Service, UK)*

Successful change hinges on strong, transparent relationships within an organisation and between an organisation and its networks, partners and supporters. It is also important to have clear and regular communication to bring everyone along for the journey.

**Support of staff and leadership:** Mercy Health will establish systems to develop and encourage change agents. We will harness our individual and collective power to make a positive difference and mobilise those around us. Mercy Health will support staff to develop their own agenda for change and to feel empowered to create that change. The Green Champion program will expand to foster and support sustainability leadership and to grow knowledge and skills across the board. Indigenous peoples and younger people in our communities will be given a leadership voice.

**Governance and advocacy:** The strategy will operate within existing organisational structures while embedding new approaches to improve health, care, environmental and financial outcomes.

The strategy will respond to government policies and legislation and position Mercy Health as a champion for change with peak bodies, governments, professional bodies and relevant institutions. Mercy Health will move from 'business as usual' to forging sustainable approaches that consider economic, environmental and social costs and obligations in all we do.

**Education and behaviour change:** Each person within Mercy Health must understand the thrust of *Caring for people and planet*. Education empowers people to take the necessary steps, big and small, to change behaviour and achieve the strategy's goals.



The Choosing Wisely initiative will kickstart education and behaviour change and is already underway in our acute hospitals as part of our Fit for the Future strategy. The Green Champion program will also foster the spread of information.

**Capacity building:** Additional key roles within Mercy Health are necessary to steer and embed the strategy. When fully implemented, more sustainable models of care will save money and protect budget blow-outs. Mercy Health will continue to work with the Mercy Health Foundation to fund new roles and programs that align with *Laudato Si'* and this strategy.

**Partnerships:** Mercy Health will continue to work with Commonwealth, State and Local governments, and with universities and Catholic organisations experienced in tackling climate change issues and familiar with *Laudato Si'*. We will liaise with relevant professional bodies; health, aged and community care organisations; environmental bodies; and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples' organisations. Mercy Health will also expand our relationships with experts in climate change, sustainable models of care and achieving improved health outcomes, measuring carbon footprint reduction, divestment and reinvestment and how to address global inequality.

Strategy without process is little more than a wish list

— Robert Filek

## Measuring our impact

The *Caring for people and planet* strategy requires data, monitoring and evaluation across the following four areas:

- Sustainable models of care
- Climate change mitigation
- Climate change adaptation and resilience
- Ethical and social responsibility

Being able to measure and report our impact will help us determine what is or is not working, and will encourage greater engagement with the strategy. We must measure our carbon footprint now and develop a system of rigorous audits to attain baseline data. We will work with our Auditing and Quality, Safety and Innovation teams to expand and deepen current data and measurement systems to incorporate the above four areas.

This ongoing measurement and evaluation process will require Mercy Health to develop capacity and capability. We will recruit expertise in areas such as carbon footprint measurement and procurement to ensure rigour and accuracy and to roll out training for key people across the organisation who will lead the changes outlined in the strategy.

While this process may initially appear daunting, it is both vital and achievable. We will need to set our own targets based on the evidence that is now well understood about scope one, two and three emissions and additional emissions specific to health.

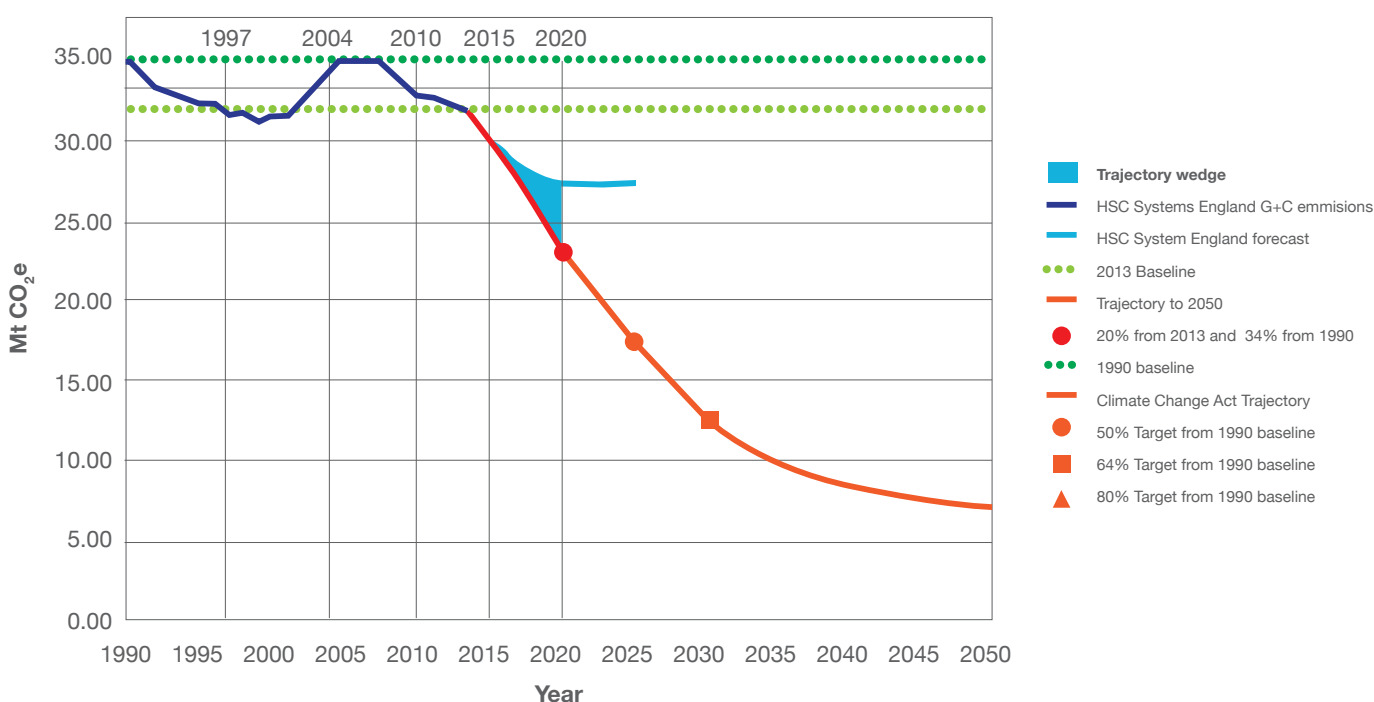
The United Kingdom National Health Service (NHS) has demonstrated that it is only by addressing the specific carbon footprints of all areas progressively, in such a way that reflects the proportional contributions of each activity, that we will be able to successfully draw down our emissions across the organisation.

This will require collective action from all our staff, in addition to working collaboratively with Mercy Health's partners and appropriate investment in resource.

The valuable work done by the NHS over the past decade has developed effective means to measure and monitor all aspects of change. This work will help Mercy Health as we acquire and develop the skills and resources needed to measure and monitor change across all our three goals.

## Health and Social Care England Carbon Footprint

CO<sub>2</sub>e baseline from 1990 to 2024 with Climate Change targets



Source: 'Reducing the use of natural resources in health and social care, 2018 report'. Sustainable Development Unit for NHS England and Public Health England.

## SECTION TWO: VISION

*“While we place all our confidence in God  
— we must act as if all depended on our exertion.”*

Catherine McAuley to Francis Warde, November 24 1840



## Our planning approach

Every person at Mercy Health has a role to play in providing the best possible care and improving care outcomes while protecting the world's resources. This section provides an overview of how we are going to reach our three goals.

Each area of the organisation has its own specific objectives and deliverables. The plans for each area are broken down into the three goals and their associated objectives. These are explained further in the accompanying action plan.

As with any bold strategy, we recognise that the path ahead is a challenging one and we will adapt as required to achieve our vision. Each area of the organisation will continue to review and fine-tune their targets to enable progress towards the three goals.



### Goal one: Sustainable models of care

- Increase our focus on primary care and disease prevention
- Ensure care is provided wherever possible in the least resource intensive setting
- Identify and make changes to areas of care where we can use fewer resources for the same or improved health outcomes
- Use water sustainably in all our care
- Create green spaces as a central part of our care

### Goal two: Climate change

- Procurement
- Energy
- Transport
- Waste
- Anaesthetic gases and metered aerosol systems
- Food
- Commissioning — new builds and refurbishment
- Establish systems to manage climate disaster
- Ensure buildings and infrastructure are climate resilient
- Support staff to be climate resilient

### Goal three: Ethical and social responsibility

- Empowerment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people
- Ethical and socially responsible procurement
- Strong social cohesion across the organisation
- Reduce global inequality
- Ensure equity and inclusion
- Address losses in biodiversity

Every company has two organisational structures: the formal one is written on the charts; the other is the everyday relationship of the men and women in the organisation

— Harold Geneen

## STEPS FOR ACUTE HOSPITALS

Mercy Health's two acute hospitals — Werribee Mercy Hospital (WMH) and Mercy Hospital for Women (MHW) — contribute most to Mercy Health's carbon and ecological footprint. Thus, they are a priority in our efforts to mitigate climate change.

### Goal one: Sustainable models of care

#### Increase our focus on primary care and disease prevention

- Program areas to review and increase focus on primary care and prevention

#### Ensure care is provided, wherever possible, in the least resource-intensive setting

- Program areas to consider expanding least resource-intensive services, for example Hospital in the Home, telemedicine and follow-up services
- Implementation of the Fit for the Future strategy

#### Identify and make changes to areas of care where we can use fewer resources for the same or improved health outcomes

- All program areas to review activities and develop a plan
- Program areas to progressively develop and implement the Choose Wisely program

#### Use water sustainably in all our care

- Every program area to review water usage and identify where this can be reduced
- Every facility to increase rainwater capture capacity in gardens and explore water recycling options

#### Create green spaces as a central part of our care

- Every facility to explore options for internal and external green spaces
- New builds to actively incorporate green spaces



## Goal two: Addressing climate change (reduce our carbon footprint)

### Procurement

- All program areas to review procurement practices, focusing proportionally on areas known to contribute most to our carbon footprint (such as medical equipment and pharmaceuticals)
- All program areas, departments and wards to develop a Choose Wisely program plan
- Work with product adviser, Sustainability Officer and Procurement in Support Services to move all purchasing towards zero carbon emissions, and to include triple bottom line accounting (people, planet and cost) with a focus on global equality, climate justice, slavery and biodiversity
- Actively work to reduce carbon through 'circular economy' and 'close the loop' approaches to procurement: reduce use, reuse, recycle, close the loop and purchase goods made from recycled waste

### Energy

- Work towards a goal of zero carbon emissions and 100 per cent renewables at all sites through on-site energy generation, including solar and other renewable sources and power-purchasing energy agreements based on renewable energy
- Increase focus on energy efficiency
- Move to climate smart cooling techniques

### Transport

- Further develop and embed a multi-location approach to work with a combination of working from home and on site for all staff wherever possible
- Improve access to public transport by working with Public Transport Victoria to develop better links with buses and trains for shift workers
- Develop new transport initiatives to get staff to work, for example car sharing, systems that

favour public transport and active transport (walking/bike)

- Increase bike and showering facilities
- Develop department or friendship-based car-pooling systems
- Review hospital car fleet

### Water

- Embed sustainable waste management in our care:
  - Reduce, reuse, recycle
  - Determine recycling streams
  - Seek onshore recycling options

### Anaesthetic gases and metered aerosol systems

- Review use of nitrous oxide and fluorinated gases (sevoflurane, isoflurane and desflurane)
- Change to regional anaesthesia where appropriate
- Change to nitrous oxide and fluorinated gas with less impact on carbon footprint where possible

### Food

- Move to local, seasonal and sustainable food production
- Reduce food waste
- Reduce meat usage
- Reduce packaging
- Review food miles in food supply chain

### Commissioning (new builds and refurbishment)

- Align with green hospital building standards for new builds and refurbishments, such as building with natural ventilation, low carbon and net zero emission building design and construction



## Goal two: Addressing climate change (build climate resilience)

### Establish systems to manage climate disaster

- Develop systems to manage disasters
- Develop systems to function as a refuge for communities

### Ensure buildings and infrastructure are climate resilient

- Ensure buildings and infrastructure are climate resilient
- Develop an approach for old and new buildings and infrastructure to better manage changing climate and climate disasters

### Supporting staff to be climate resilient

- Improve resilience to climate change via Green Champions program
- Arrange regular staff education sessions and invite input
- Facilitate regular meetings for staff and clients during fire, heatwaves and flood

## Goal three: Ethical and social responsibility

### Empowerment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples

- Maintain and foster Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander teams on site at hospitals to support the care of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples
- Support ongoing implementation of Mercy Health – Health Services' Reconciliation Action Plan
- Increase number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples in all roles across our hospitals (Aboriginal Employment Plan)
- Continue to develop the cultural competency of all hospital staff
- Support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander economic development wherever possible

### Ethical and socially responsible procurement

- Increase knowledge of ethical and social impacts of procurement practices
- Work with suppliers to develop better understanding of the supply chain for items we procure
- Address issues of slavery and other impacts of the supply chain on vulnerable communities within procurement policies, procedures and tender processes and through the Supplier Code of Conduct

- Shift to a full lifecycle analysis and triple bottom line accounting approach for all goods and services procurement
- Support local communities wherever possible in procuring goods and services

### Strong social cohesion across the organisation

- Encourage work cultures and programs that foster connection and support amongst staff
- Identify, develop and support change makers across the organisation
- Build specific mechanisms to support staff around climate stress and climate emergencies
- Develop specific behavioural change programs to support and empower staff response to the key pillars of *Laudato Si'*
- Continue developing a Green Champion program that addresses climate resilience, social cohesion and staff as change makers

### Reduce global inequality

- Develop climate smart programs with our Pacific neighbours, particularly Papua New Guinea and Torres Strait Islands
- Review overseas programs in light of increasing climate change inequality
- Work with Mercy Works to explore how Mercy Health can best assist Pacific partners

## Goal three: Ethical and social responsibility (continued)

### Ensure equity and inclusion

- Strengthen and review existing equity and inclusion policies and programs in light of *Laudato Si'* objectives
- Address losses in biodiversity
- Actively pursue local garden plantings designed to support insect, bird and animal populations and soil health
- Develop a staff volunteer program with conservation and environmental organisations

### Following the NHS approach

The NHS has mapped out the full scope of emissions that we need to address to properly reduce the full scope of emissions in health. Our emissions follow the same pattern and we can model our strategy on the NHS approach,

as it remains the most comprehensive and sophisticated of any health system to date.

'Figure 1' shows the NHS Greenhouse Gas Protocol scope 1, 2 and 3 emissions and the emissions that fall outside these three scopes. They are the emissions from patient and visitor travel to and from health services and medicines used within the home.

'Figure 2' shows that the greatest areas to focus on for change are the supply chain, facilities, pharmaceuticals and medical devices, and travel.

It is in acute hospitals where we can make the greatest gains, but this approach to change is needed across every setting of care at Mercy Health.

Figure 1

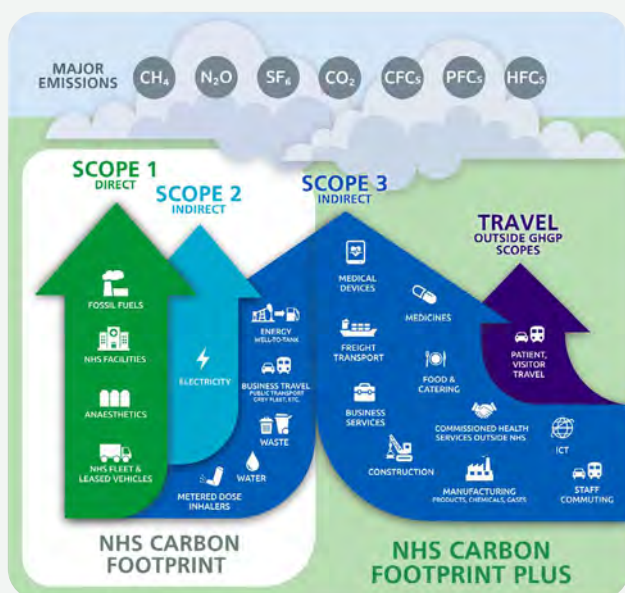
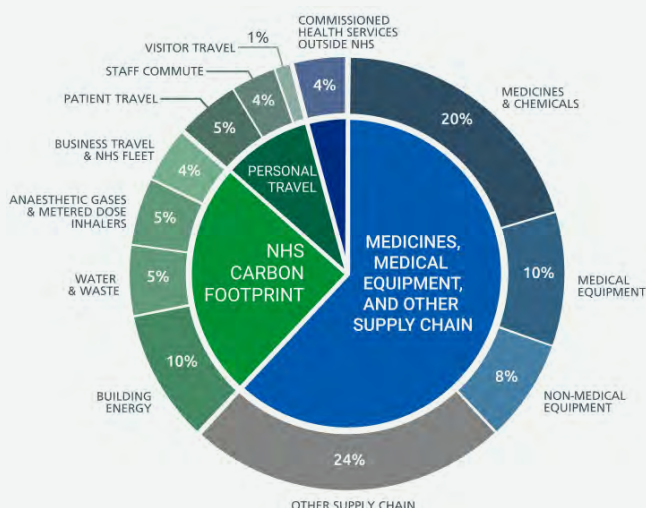


Figure 2



Source: 'Reducing the use of natural resources in health and social care, 2018 report'. Sustainable Development Unit for NHS England and Public Health England.

# STEPS FOR SUBACUTE HOSPITALS AND COMMUNITY HEALTHCARE SERVICES

Mercy Health's subacute and community healthcare services include Mercy Mental Health, community palliative care, our early parenting centre in Melbourne's east and hospitals in Albury and Young, New South Wales.

## Goal one: Sustainable models of care

### Increase our focus on primary care and disease prevention

- Maintain, strengthen and support subacute and community care services at Mercy Health
- Continue to expand programs that encourage daily physical activity and intellectual engagement to support both mental and physical health
- Build new approaches and programs that embrace the six *Laudato Si'* goals with clear and defined co-benefits to health
- Strengthen early intervention programs as a primary focus of care
- Expand community consultation and liaison in all programs to strengthen primary care and disease prevention programs
- Strengthen and expand programs that work specifically with general practitioners (GPs) and primary healthcare services

### Ensure care is provided wherever possible in the least resource-intensive setting

- Each service to develop the best possible mix of telehealth and direct face-to-face care appropriate for the location and the care needed
- Each service to coordinate care with GPs, medical specialists, local hospitals and care services to support care and ensure best health outcomes in the least resource-intensive setting including specialist and hospital support to community services via telehealth

### Identify and make changes to areas of care where we can use fewer resources for the same or improved health outcomes

- All program areas to review activities and develop a plan
- Progressively implement and develop a 'Choose Wisely' program with particular attention to decision-making for pathological tests and other investigations and prescribing of medications

### Use water sustainably in all our care

- Each service to expand water capturing capacity as much as the site will allow
- Link water capture capacity with programs such as the development of green spaces and on-site food production on sites where this is possible

### Create green spaces as a central part of our care

- Create internal and external green spaces as a central part of our care
- Link green spaces with shade creation climate change adaptation and with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander reconciliation and inclusion and equity programs where possible



## Goal two: Climate change (reduce our carbon footprint)

### Procurement

- Actively work to draw down carbon through procurement (reduce, recycle, reuse, close the loop)
- Reduce procurement wherever possible
- Review product lifespan and procure products with longer product lifespan
- Move all purchasing onto a zero-emission trajectory
- Include key emission criteria in all procurement policies
- Explore 'circular economy' procurement options
- Purchase energy efficient appliances, such as freezers, fridges, ovens and washing machines

### Energy

- Reduce energy use where possible by improving efficiencies
- Review and reduce use of appliances where possible
- Default settings to turn devices off when they are not being used, for example computers and light sensors
- Use devices at off-peak times
- Change lighting from incandescent lighting to LED and new fluorescent lighting
- Replace energy inefficient devices with energy efficient ones
- Ensure energy efficient building design and surrounds (new builds and retrofits):
  - Use passive solar design
  - Use skylights/design that increases natural lighting
  - Light roof colour
  - Insulation choices with highest 'R' value
  - Energy efficient windows/well-sealed doors
  - Shade gardens
- Work towards a goal of zero carbon emissions and 100 per cent renewable energy at all sites through:
  - On-site energy generation including solar and other renewable sources where possible
  - Purchasing energy agreements based on renewable energy

### Transport

- Further develop and embed a multi-location approach to work with a combination of working from home and on site for all staff wherever possible
- Work with stakeholders to improve access to public transport wherever possible
- Develop new transport initiatives for staff travelling to work, for example car share systems, systems that favour public transport, or active transport (walking/bike)
- Increase bike/showering facilities
- Review car fleet in line with strategy
- Liaise with local community, council and families about sustainable transport options

### Waste

- Embed sustainable waste management in our care
- Reduce use and re-use wherever possible
- Determine recycling streams
- Seek onshore recycling options, including container deposit schemes (such as 'Return and Earn' in NSW) and local council recycling options
- Determine key waste streams and significantly reduce waste to landfill
- Identify products where there are organic options, such as continence products
- Expand on-site organic composting or contract local organic composting services where appropriate

### Food

- Move to local, seasonal and sustainable food production
- Reduce food waste
- Reduce meat usage
- Reduce packaging
- Review food miles in food supply chain

### Building

- Align with green hospital building standards for new buildings and refurbishments, for example building with natural ventilation, low carbon and net zero emission building design and construction

## Goal two: Climate change (build climate resilience)

### Establish systems to manage climate disasters

- Subacute care and community healthcare leadership and Risk Officer at Mercy Health to develop coordinated plans including asset protection for climate change and climate disasters
- Develop flood, heatwave and fire management plans for each facility
- Develop systems to function as a refuge for the broader community

### Infrastructure and systems are climate resilient

- Improve all built environments and surrounds for severe weather events
- Ensure that energy, heating, cooling, food production and staff travel can continue during times of climate stress

## Goal three: Ethical and social responsibility

### Empowerment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples

- Develop an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander team across subacute care and community healthcare services to support the care of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples
- Develop a Reconciliation Action Plan
- Increase the number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples employed in subacute care and community health services
- Continue to develop the cultural competency of all staff
- Support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander economic development wherever possible, for example through catering choices

### Ethical and socially responsible procurement

- Increase knowledge of ethical and social impacts of current procurement practices
- Work with suppliers to develop a better understanding of the supply chain for items we procure
- Address issues of slavery and other impacts of the supply chain on vulnerable communities within procurement policies, procedures and tender processes and through the Supplier Code of Conduct

### Strong social cohesion

- Encourage work cultures and programs that foster connection and support among staff
- Identify, develop and support change makers across the organisation

- Build specific mechanisms to support staff around climate stress and climate emergencies
- Develop specific behavioural change programs to support and empower staff in response to the key pillars of *Laudato Si'*
- Introduce a Green Champion program that addresses climate resilience, social cohesion and staff as change makers

### Reduce global inequality

- Develop climate smart programs with our Pacific neighbours, particularly Papua New Guinea and Torres Strait Islands
- Review all existing programs with any aid component in light of increasing climate change inequality
- Review all existing overseas programs in light of increasing climate change inequality

### Ensure equity and inclusion

- Strengthen and invigorate existing equity and inclusion policies and programs in light of *Laudato Si'* objectives

### Address losses in biodiversity

- Develop links with Landcare and other environmental groups for interested residents and staff
- Develop plantings around facilities that address losses in local biodiversity, for example birds, frogs, bees and soil health
- Consider global biodiversity in procurement decisions

## STEPS FOR AGED CARE

There are three streams within the Aged Care portfolio: residential aged care, home care and seniors living. The Aged Care model at Mercy Health is strongly aligned to the approach taken in the *Caring for people and planet* strategy. There is enormous potential to develop and embed innovative and integrated programs across all three streams.

### Goal one: Sustainable models of care

#### Increase our focus on primary care and disease prevention

- Continue to expand programs that foster and increase levels of daily physical activity and intellectual engagement
- Build new approaches and programs that embrace the six *Laudato Si'* goals with clear and defined co-benefits to health

#### Ensure care is provided wherever possible in the least resource-intensive setting

- Each service to develop the best possible mix of telehealth and direct face-to-face care, appropriate for the location and the care needed
- The Aged Care Leadership Team and each service to work with professional GP/specialist groups, local hospitals and care services to ensure best care outcomes in the least resource-intensive settings

#### Identify and make changes to areas of care where we can use fewer resources for the same or improved health outcomes

- All program areas to review activities and develop a plan
- In Residential Aged Care:
  - The Aged Care Leadership Team to work with the Royal Australian College of General Practitioners and relevant bodies to develop an approach to coordinate care by multiple GPs

- Progressively implement and develop a Choose Wisely program with particular attention to decision-making for pathological tests, investigations and prescribing of medications

#### Use water sustainably in all our care

- In the applicable setting:
  - Use water sustainably in all our care
  - Expand water capturing capacity as much as each site will allow
  - Link water capture capacity with programs such as the development of green spaces and on-site food production

#### Create green spaces as a central part of our care

- In the applicable setting:
  - Create green spaces as a central part of our care
  - Develop internal and external green spaces
  - Link green spaces with shade creation climate change adaptation and with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander reconciliation and inclusion and equity programs



## Goal two: Climate change (reduce our carbon footprint)

### Procurement

- Actively work to draw down carbon through procurement (reduce, recycle, reuse, close the loop)
- Reduce procurement wherever possible
- Review product lifespan and procure products with longer product lifespan
- Move all purchasing onto a zero-emission trajectory
- Include key emission criteria in all procurement policies
- Explore 'circular economy' procurement options
- Purchase energy efficient appliances, such as freezers, fridges, ovens and washing machines

### Energy

- Reduce energy use where possible by improving efficiencies
- Review use of appliances
- Reduce use of appliances, for example use clothes lines
- Default settings to turn devices off when they are not being used, for example computers and light sensors
- Use devices at off-peak times
- Change lighting from incandescent lighting to LED and new fluorescent lighting
- Replace energy inefficient devices with energy efficient ones
- Ensure energy efficient building design and surrounds (new builds, retrofits)
  - Use passive solar design
  - Use skylights/design that increases natural lighting
  - Light roof colour
  - Insulation choices with highest 'R' value
  - Energy efficient windows/well-sealed doors
  - Shade gardens
- Work toward a goal of zero carbon emissions and 100 per cent renewable energy at all sites through:
  - on-site energy generation including solar and other renewable sources
  - purchasing energy agreements based on renewable energy
- In home care, rental agreements will be sought with a high priority placed on energy efficient buildings

### Transport

- Further develop and embed a multi-location approach to work with a combination of working from home and on site for all staff wherever possible
- Continue to expand and develop grid systems of care to reduce staff travel miles in Home Care
- Improve access to public transport wherever possible
- Develop new transport initiatives for staff travelling to work, for example car share systems, systems that favour public transport, or active transport (walking/bike)
- Increase bike/showering facilities
- Review car fleet in line with strategy
- Liaise with local community, council and families about sustainable transport options

### Waste

- Embed sustainable waste management in our care
- Reduce use and re-use wherever possible
- Determine recycling streams
- Seek onshore recycling options, including container deposit schemes (such as 'Return and Earn' in NSW) and local council recycling options
- Aged Care Leadership Team to determine key waste streams and significantly reduce waste to landfill
- Identify products where there are organic options, such as continence products
- Expand on-site organic composting or contract local organic composting services

### Food

- Move to local, seasonal and sustainable food production
- Reduce food waste
- Reduce meat usage
- Reduce packaging
- Review food miles in food supply chain

### Building

- Align with green hospital building standards for new buildings and refurbishments, for example building with natural ventilation, low carbon and net zero emission building design and construction



## Goal two: Climate change (build climate resilience)

### **Establish systems to manage climate disasters**

- Aged Care Leadership Team and Risk Officer at Mercy Health to develop coordinated plans including asset protection for climate change and climate disasters
- Develop flood, heatwave and fire management plans for each home
- Develop systems to function as a refuge for the broader community

### **Infrastructure and systems are climate resilient**

- Improve all built environments and surrounds for severe weather events

- Ensure that energy, heating, cooling, food production and staff travel can continue during times of climate stress

### **Supporting staff to be climate resilient**

- Improve climate change resilience through Green Champion program
- Hold regular staff education sessions and invite input
- Facilitate regular meetings for staff and clients during fire, heatwaves and flood

## Goal three: Ethical and social responsibility

### Empowerment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples

- Develop an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander team across Residential Aged Care and Home Care Services to support the care of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples
- Develop a Reconciliation Action Plan in Residential Aged Care
- Increase the number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples employed in Residential Aged Care
- Continue to develop the cultural competency of all staff
- Support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander economic development wherever possible, for example through catering choices

### Ethical and socially responsible procurement

- Increase knowledge of ethical and social impacts of current procurement practices
- Work with suppliers to develop a better understanding of the supply chain for items we procure
- Address issues of slavery and other impacts of the supply chain on vulnerable communities within procurement policies, procedures and tender processes and through the Supplier Code of Conduct

### Strong social cohesion

- Encourage work cultures and programs that foster connection and support among staff
- Identify, develop and support change makers across the organisation
- Build specific mechanisms to support

staff around climate stress and climate emergencies

- Develop specific behavioural change programs to support and empower staff in response to the key pillars of *Laudato Si'*
- Continue to develop a Green Champion program that addresses climate resilience, social cohesion and staff as change makers

### Reduce global inequality

- Develop climate smart programs with our Pacific neighbours, particularly Papua New Guinea and Torres Strait Islands
- Review all existing programs with any aid component in light of increasing climate change inequality
- Review all existing overseas programs in light of increasing climate change inequality

### Ensure equity and inclusion

- Strengthen and invigorate existing equity and inclusion policies and programs in light of *Laudato Si'* objectives

### Address losses in biodiversity

- Develop links with Landcare and other environmental groups for interested residents, clients and staff
- Develop plantings around homes that address losses in local biodiversity, for example birds, frogs, bees and soil health
- Consider global biodiversity in procurement decisions



## STEPS FOR SUPPORT SERVICES

Support Services forms the scaffold of Mercy Health's operations, including Finance; People, Learning and Culture; Information Technology; Legal; Marketing, Communications and Stakeholder Relations; Procurement; Quality, Safety and Innovation; and Strategy, Planning and Major Projects. Each of these teams will support the implementation of the *Caring for people and planet* strategy across Mercy Health.

### Finance

- Progressively work towards a triple bottom line accounting framework across Mercy Health that takes into account social and environmental performance as well as financial performance
- Lead this approach in the organisation and assist with its development across all key areas and budget

### People, Learning and Culture

- Include sustainability and *Laudato Si'* statements in job applications and position descriptions at Mercy Health
- Include *Laudato Si'* in staff orientation training and annual performance development reviews
- Help integrate a behavioural change program for the three goal areas of this *Caring for people and planet* strategy
- Develop a culture of sustainability across Mercy Health where staff are supported to be change-makers in addressing the three goal areas
- Hold annual Mercy Health *Laudato Si'* awards and apply for relevant national awards
- Measure and report on positive employment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples and on equity and inclusion

### Information Technology (IT)

- Work across Mercy Health to find technological solutions that will align with the overarching strategy
- Continue to develop and expand IT mechanisms towards reducing our carbon footprint with particular attention to:
  - Multi-location approaches to work, including working from home

- Developing strong platforms for telehealth, webinars and online meetings
- Energy savings
- Reducing waste, for example through paper choice, printer default settings, computer and phone procurement choices, repairs and recycling options
- IT systems to assist staff travel reduction through carpooling

### Legal

- Keep abreast of legislative changes at Commonwealth and State/Territory levels (Victoria, NSW, WA, ACT and Queensland) to identify compliance with laws relating to:
  - Climate change and carbon emissions
  - Ethical and social procurement
  - Modern slavery

### Procurement

- Establish a new role in Procurement to help to guide and implement the required procurement changes across the organisation. This new role would assist to:
  - Identify and develop a priority list matrix in sustainability risk (including pharmaceuticals, medical equipment, food, office supplies, cleaning products, systems, fleet and linen)
  - Negotiate with existing suppliers to modify and strengthen procurement contracts in line with the strategy, paying particular attention to:
    - carbon mitigation — heading to zero carbon trajectory with key emissions criteria
    - sustainable supply chains, including:
      - circular economies
      - product life-cycle analysis
      - logistics including local sourcing wherever possible

- non-toxic materials
- waste reduction (reduction of purchases where possible; longevity of products, packaging and recycling; and single-use versus reusable)
- social and ethical responsibilities globally and locally
- equity and inclusion policies
- global biodiversity

- Identify inherently unsustainable and harmful suppliers
- Ensure all new contracts are in line with the strategy, including new builds and infrastructure improvements
- Ensure there is dedicated focus on all contracts relating to energy, waste, water and fleet management

### Communications

- Assist with the launch of the strategy
- Assist with communication of the strategy and its progressive operationalisation across the organisation
- Assist with communication of the strategy to external organisations

### Quality, Safety and Innovation

- Support developing the process for measurement and reporting for the strategy

### Strategy, Planning and Major Projects

- Take responsibility for ongoing development and modification of strategy in line with organisational feedback, new thinking in climate change mitigation and resilience, global events, research and land legislation
- Assist in ensuring that all major projects are in line with *Laudato Si'* objectives across all three goals

### Subject matter expert roles in Support Services (including external experts)

- Overall development of the communication, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the strategy across all three goals
- Establish targets, reporting lines and work plan requirements to report on sustainability progress across the organisation
- Assist in the development of grant proposals for specific projects
- Undertake a carbon footprint audit across the organisation, with a particular focus on all scope 1, 2 and 3 emissions at the two acute hospitals
- Develop staff training in relevant areas including data measurement and reporting going forward across the strategy's three goals
- Develop staff engagement programs to help deliver the strategy's goals

### Mercy Health Foundation

- Engage funders with a key interest in a particular project, or a more generalist interest in addressing climate change, and progress funding applications



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## STEPS FOR GOVERNANCE

The Mercy Health Board and Executive will provide the bold leadership that will give *Caring for people and planet* traction within Mercy Health. For the Board, this will include rapid knowledge-gathering about the urgency of the climate crisis and the real risks to our organisation's financial and physical assets. For the Executive, it will include learning about models of care with better health and care outcomes, which rely on fewer resources and systems and can also measure how our carbon footprint changes as we implement this strategy.





# MERCY HEALTH EXECUTIVE

## Knowledge-gathering phase

The Mercy Health Executive will rapidly move into a knowledge-gathering phase and become more informed about:

- Models of care that have better health and care outcomes for our communities and that use less of the planet's resources
- Best practice transition approaches to more sustainable models where appropriate
- Approaches to measuring potential financial gains as we move to more sustainable models of care
- The urgency of the climate crisis
- The carbon footprint breakdown across the organisation and how to make our program of change reflect this breakdown
- Systems to ensure we can properly measure our current carbon footprint and how it changes as we progressively implement *Caring for people and planet*
- Ethically and socially responsible procurement

## Supporting delivery of strategy

The Executive will actively initiate change to support the Strategy's goals and objectives across the organisation.

### Governance

The Executive will assist in the initiation of new governance structures to enable on-the-ground activities in:

- Auditing and data gathering and measurement

- Financial accounting mechanisms with environmental and social considerations
- Annual business plans and reporting mechanisms that include *Laudato Si'* objectives
- Communicating State and Commonwealth legislative requirements in relevant areas
- Capacity building to help deliver objectives
- Education and program planning
- Ethical and social responsibility

### Advocacy

The Executive will advocate and influence government and leading agencies on:

- New funding models for more sustainable models of care with the same or better health outcomes
- Divestment from fossil fuels and reinvestment in more renewable forms of energy
- The impact of climate change on health and the urgency of the climate crisis
- Global justice and worsening global climate change inequality

### Financial

- Develop a funding approach to support this strategy including philanthropic investment
- Support staff participation in *Laudato Si'* Animator Training

## EXECUTIVE NEXT STEP

How will we be accountable and monitor business and operational planning?

# MERCY HEALTH BOARD

## Knowledge-gathering phase

The Board will rapidly move into a knowledge-gathering phase to become more informed about:

- The urgency of the climate crisis
- The real risks to our financial and physical assets in the face of heatwaves, large-scale fires and floods across our states
- The real risks to our employees' superannuation funds that are tied to fossil fuels
- Models for successful divestment from fossil fuels and reinvestment in more renewable energies
- Running Board leadership programs in areas related to the six *Laudato Si'* goals

## Supporting the delivery of the strategy

### Governance

- Respond to the direction from global Catholic networks and *Laudato Si'* to divest from fossil fuels and reinvest in renewables
- Invest in and advocate for the decarbonisation of local and national energy systems and the implementation of lean renewable energy at local, state and national levels
- Work with relevant superannuation companies to shift away from fossil fuels and advocate for companies that have already done this
- Will make every effort we can to reduce emissions as rapidly as possible, in the knowledge that 2030 is a critical turning point
- Assess our climate risk for Mercy Health's financial and building assets and seek advice as to how to respond to this risk

- Set and implement criteria for low-carbon or zero emissions procurement to decarbonise the supply chain
- Set policies that enable empowerment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples
- Support new programs that solidify relationships with our Pacific Island neighbours and foster climate smart initiatives
- Establish a Board subcommittee for *Laudato Si'*

### Advocacy

- Actively support the organisation, particularly in working with government to seek funding models that move Mercy Health to more sustainable models of care and focus on primary healthcare and prevention
- Advocate for the transition to clean renewable energy and transportation as the key step in protecting public health from climate change and as a central measure to reduce healthcare's climate footprint
- Lobby Australian Catholic University (ACU) to establish an Ethics of Ecology Program (See *Laudato Si'*)

### Financial

- Develop new financial policies and practices that consider our impact on the world's resources, particularly Pacific and Torres Strait islands and foster climate smart initiatives
- Foster ethical national and global procurement practices

## BOARD NEXT STEP

Board members will familiarise themselves with Governance Institute of Australia document: Climate change risk disclosure: A practical guide to reporting against ASX Corporate Governance Council's Corporate Principles and Recommendations.

## Message of hope

'The scale of change required to address this crisis will never be easy, comfortable or predictable. Any transformation means leaving behind the security of what has been to dare to enter a space of loss, discomfort and uncertainty and of accepting the unimaginable.'

I commend Mercy Health for properly taking on the commitment of *Laudato Si'* to help save this wonderful planet of ours, and its people'.

Sister Eveline Crotty RSM

Leader of the Institute of Sisters of Mercy of Australia and Papua New Guinea

*At this time of global vulnerability*

*God's transforming mercy*

*fires our hearts anew with*

*deeper reverence for all creation.*

*Disturbed by*

*the despair and suffering of many peoples and*

*the degradation of Earth,*

*we are impelled to reflective action for*

*gospel justice.*

Chapter Statement 2017

Institute of Sisters of Mercy of Australia and Papua

New Guinea





**On the day Pope Francis issued his encyclical *Laudato Si'* in 2015, he offered these two prayers and asked Christians to commit to creation.**

### **A prayer for our earth**

All-powerful God, you are present in the whole universe  
and in the smallest of your creatures.

You embrace with your tenderness all that exists.

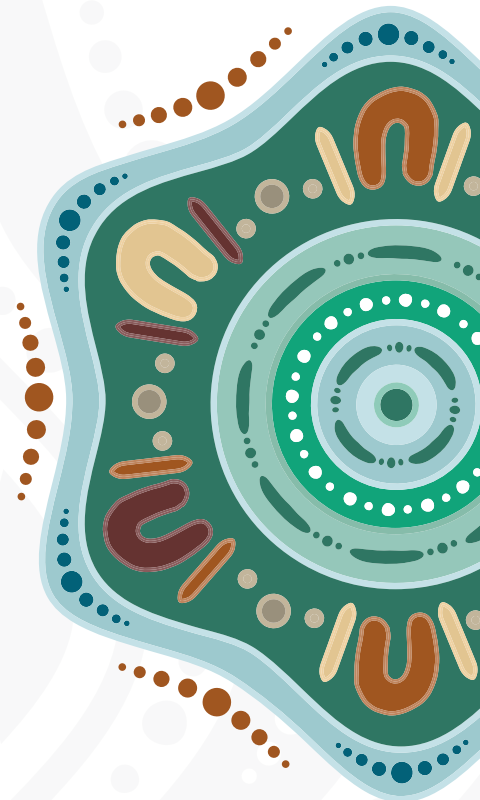
Pour out upon us the power of your love,  
that we may protect life and beauty.

Fill us with peace, that we may live  
as brothers and sisters, harming no one.

O God of the poor,  
help us to rescue the abandoned and forgotten of this earth,  
so precious in your eyes.

Bring healing to our lives,  
that we may protect the world and not prey on it,  
that we may sow beauty, not pollution and destruction.

Touch the hearts  
of those who look only for gain  
at the expense of the poor and the earth.  
Teach us to discover the worth of each thing,  
to be filled with awe and contemplation,  
to recognize that we are profoundly united  
with every creature  
as we journey towards your infinite light.  
We thank you for being with us each day.  
Encourage us, we pray, in our struggle  
for justice, love and peace.



## A Christian prayer in union with creation

Father, we praise you with all your creatures.  
They came forth from your all-powerful hand;  
they are yours, filled with your presence and your tender love.

Praise be to you!

Son of God, Jesus,  
through you all things were made.  
You were formed in the womb of Mary our Mother,  
you became part of this earth,  
and you gazed upon this world with human eyes.

Today you are alive in every creature  
in your risen glory.

Praise be to you!

Holy Spirit, by your light  
you guide this world towards the Father's love  
and accompany creation as it groans in travail.

You also dwell in our hearts  
and you inspire us to do what is good.

Praise be to you!

Triune Lord, wondrous community of infinite love,  
teach us to contemplate you  
in the beauty of the universe,  
for all things speak of you.

Awaken our praise and thankfulness  
for every being that you have made.

Give us the grace to feel profoundly joined  
to everything that is.

God of love, show us our place in this world  
as channels of your love

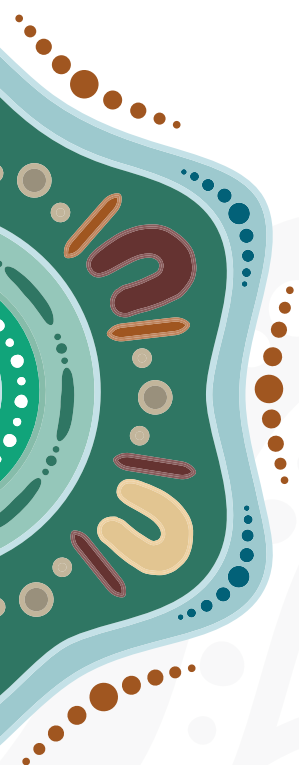
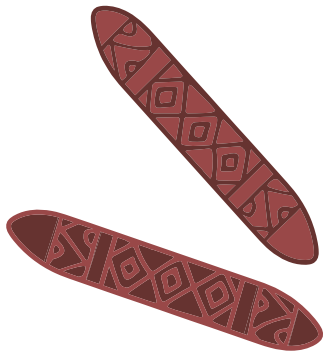
for all the creatures of this earth,  
for not one of them is forgotten in your sight.

Enlighten those who possess power and money  
that they may avoid the sin of indifference,  
that they may love the common good, advance the weak,  
and care for this world in which we live.

The poor and the earth are crying out.  
O Lord, seize us with your power and light,  
help us to protect all life,  
to prepare for a better future,  
for the coming of your Kingdom  
of justice, peace, love and beauty.

Praise be to you!

Amen.







## About the artist: Dixon Patten

Dixon Patten is a proud Yorta Yorta and Gunnai man.

Dixon has over 13 years' experience in the arts and design space as an artist, curator and graphic designer and is now the lead storyteller for Bayila Creative.

Art has always given Dixon a platform for interpreting and understanding the world through many lenses; his experiences and learnings have given him cultural and personal liberation that has allowed him to

embrace his role as storyteller with honour and pride.

Dixon is passionate about storytelling in all its forms and loves the information, wisdom, knowledge and energy exchange that unites us as people(s).

His motivation is to Indigenise and humanise spaces that may seem otherwise clinical and hopefully influence conversations, instil a sense of understanding and for people to simply connect.





Mercy Health

*Care first*

“We can never say ‘it is enough’”

— Catherine McAuley



Mercy Health acknowledges Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples as the First Australians. We acknowledge the diversity of Indigenous Australia. We respectfully recognise Elders past, present and emerging. This report was produced on Wurundjeri Country.

### **Acknowledgement**

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