

**Summary of Community Feedback
October 2017**





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WHAT IS THE CONSULTATION ABOUT?

Castlemaine Health is facing some big challenges to delivering its health services in the same way, into the future.

Our main site at the hospital in Castlemaine is not easy to get to or around. It's hard for people to access our services and move between them, especially older people and those with limited mobility.

It's a highly rated health service but it's being undermined by ageing facilities, which are expensive to maintain. Castlemaine Health is facing costs of \$40 million in the next 10 to 15 years just to make sure the current facilities remain safe and meet standards.

These costs mean the hospital and aged care service is not sustainable. As the local population increases and ages, the demand for services will increase significantly too.

While these are big challenges, they also offer us a chance to do things differently. There's an opportunity for us to create a new, sustainable health service for the future.

We did some early work to find out what might be possible and how much it could cost. The three options described potential locations for Castlemaine Health, as well as the services that it might offer. All options included a new hospital and 160 beds for aged care accommodation, with the possibility of a 'primary care hub'. They were:

Option 1 – redevelop the current site (Cornish Street)

Option 2 – split services between the current site and old hospital site (Halford Street)

Option 3 – find a new site.

THE PROCESS SO FAR

From April to July 2017, we took the three options to the residents of Mount Alexander Shire and asked:

- Do they look like the health service you want for your family and community?
- Do they offer the services that you might need in the future?
- Are they in a place that's easy to get to?
- Do you have other ideas that we haven't thought of?

We published a survey, discussion paper and frequently asked questions on www.engage.vic.gov.au/castlemaine-health. We received almost 300 written responses to our survey and 10 submissions to the online social map.

We held 11 roundtable discussions across the shire, presented to forums, clubs and meetings and held pop-up stands in Castlemaine at the market and supermarket. Throughout the consultation, we took comments, ideas and opinions from almost 1000 people.

NEXT STEPS

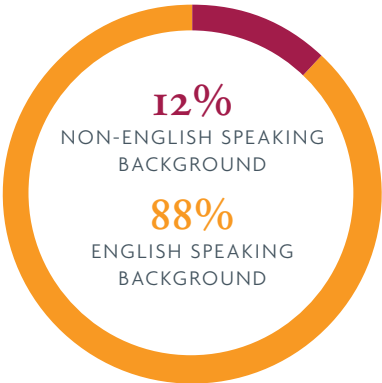
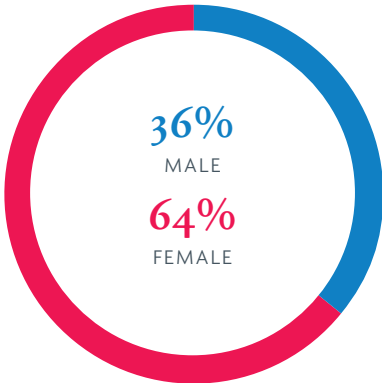
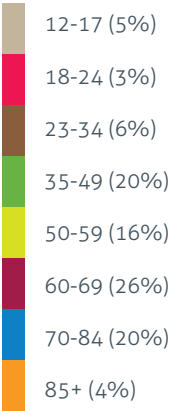
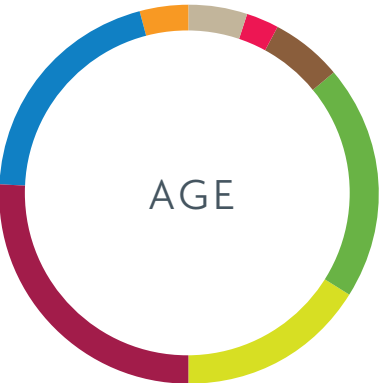
We will submit your feedback to the Government as part of our bid for funding in the 2018 budget. As part of that bid, we'll also put forward a detailed analysis of services and community need. As a first step, we'd like to secure funding for a masterplan to guide Castlemaine Health's development over the next 20 years.

We would like to thank everyone who took part. We heard from many people about what was important to them and why. We heard many personal stories about the healthcare system here in the shire and outside it. We'd like to thank you all for taking the time to be involved and for sharing your stories with us.

We would also like to thank the members of our Community Consultation Committee and Board of Management. All board and committee members are volunteers who donate their time and knowledge to improving our health service. Their guidance, support and direction throughout the consultation has been invaluable.

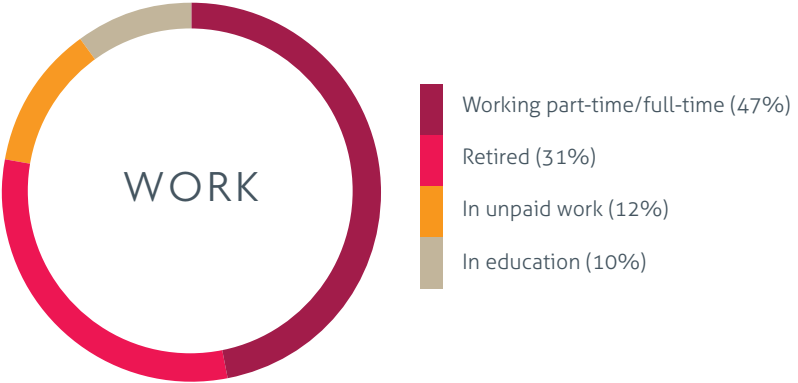
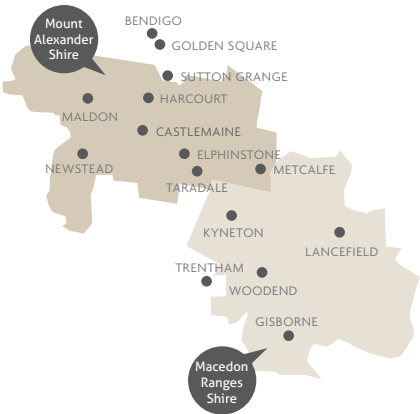
WHO RESPONDED?

We heard from a broad range of people from right across the shire. Many have been patients, visitors, staff or volunteers who have visited Castlemaine Health in recent years but some had not. Many people were familiar with our services, but some weren't.



Where are they from?

- Bendigo (1%)
- Castlemaine (52%)
- Castlemaine roadside delivery region (25%)
- Elphinstone/Metcalf/Sutton Grange (2%)
- Golden Square (1%)
- Harcourt (6%)
- Hepburn (1%)
- Maldon (3%)
- Newstead (8%)
- Taradale (1%)



WHAT DID YOU SAY?

"You should make sure that the planning scales up to the community's need in 20 years' time so it still fits us then."

"The hospital offers a wonderful service to the local community and employs loyal and caring staff."

"I can't speak highly enough of the efficiency and effectiveness of Castlemaine Health. It would be an unmitigated tragedy for its present services to be compromised in any way."

We heard that Castlemaine Health provides an outstanding service and you feel fortunate to have it so close by. Many of you have moved to Mount Alexander Shire because of it. You said that you liked being able to talk about the hospital's future with our board and executive.

Throughout the consultation, we heard many exciting ideas for the future. We heard suggestions on where we our buildings should be located. We also heard ideas for the type of sustainable design you'd like to see incorporated into new facilities.

You said that Castlemaine Health has struggled over the years with a lack of master plan to steer improvements and expansion. We heard very clearly that you do not want to see money or resources wasted. You don't want to see empty buildings around town or money spent on temporary 'fixes'. You want a considered, long-term strategy for the future put in place.

Many mentioned Bendigo Hospital with mixed feelings. Some felt that Bendigo's recent redevelopment might make it more difficult for Castlemaine to be improved. But with over 60% of Castlemaine Health's patients coming from Bendigo, others said it was important that we had the appropriate facilities and capacity to meet demand.

While your feedback was wide-ranging, it focused on several main themes. These were:

- access, site and facilities
- aged care
- health and wellness
- our services
- transport and parking

ACCESS, SITE AND FACILIITES



We heard that our current site is a huge problem for everyone, but especially for the elderly and disabled. You said that the sick and infirm, who are most in need of medical and rehabilitative services, are those least able to physically access these services. You said the current site is physically inaccessible for those with disabilities.

Overwhelmingly, you said that you want the hospital and aged care modernised or rebuilt. Opinion is divided on whether the hospital and aged care should be co-located or separated. Opinion is also divided on whether aged care or the hospital is better suited to the current site in Cornish Street or the old hospital site in Halford Street. Good arguments were put forward for both.

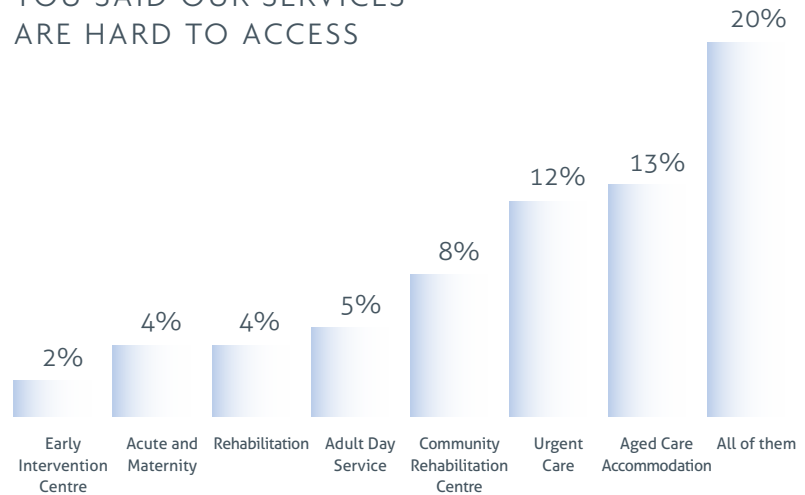
Most people want to see Castlemaine Health to run services from both the current and old sites at the same time, or run all services from a new greenfields site. However, you found it difficult to identify a suitably central greenfields site. Instead, we heard that it may be possible to find a new site for the hospital or aged care, but not both. You also suggested the old high school site in Etty Street could be an option.

While you are pleased to have community groups and small businesses working from Halford Street, you want to see the site actively used by the hospital or a decision made to repurpose it. You said that it is hard for people to find affordable housing and land should be repurposed or sold to benefit the local community.

What we heard

- Current site is a major problem for the elderly, ill and disabled
- Current site is unsuitable for disabled, non-English speaking and vision impaired people
- Improving existing facilities is an uphill battle
- Find a new flat site, or use both current and old sites to rebuild
- Repurpose or sell Halford Street
- Residential aged care and the hospital can be separate

YOU SAID OUR SERVICES ARE HARD TO ACCESS



"Castlemaine Health's current location and site makes ageing, and health problems at any age, more disabling than they need to be."



"We need something new but recycle what you can and avoid the throwaway mentality."

"There are huge accessibility issues. It's made worse because people who come to hospitals are often already stressed or in pain. It just doesn't work as a hospital or aged care facility."

"People say blithely that Bendigo is only 30km up the road but that presupposes you can drive, that you're not too old or too sick."

AGED CARE

"Husbands and wives get really worried about how to get there to visit. They're worried about falling, even getting there without hurting themselves."

"I have seen aged care and hospitals work equally well when located together as they do when separated."

"In a humane society, having facilities for people who cannot be managed at home to die with dignity and care close to family and friends is vital."

Overwhelmingly, you want investment and modernisation in residential aged care. You said it's the area of greatest need. That people put off decisions to go into care because the quality and condition of the accommodation is simply not acceptable.

You feel strongly that aged care services should be delivered as a continuum in one place. You believe people should have the right to return to their home rather than be moved away because their care needs have changed. That couples should be able to live together and single people should not have to share rooms.

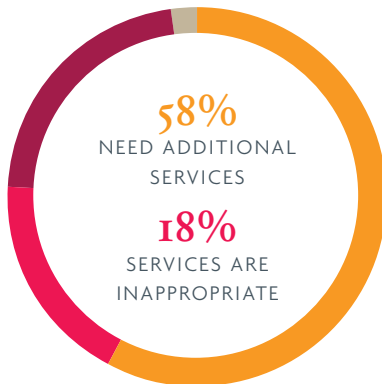
We heard time and time again that you want to see more diverse and higher quality 'retirement' and supported/shared living accommodation for older people in the shire. You're very open to finding innovative ways to deliver this, with suggestions for 'public and private partnerships' and co-location put forward.

You said that residents, their loved ones, families and friends can be fearful of going into aged care because of the site. Ageing partners worry about visiting spouses because they're scared of falling on the hill. They want aged care located on flat ground, with easy access to good quality gardens and parking close by.

What we heard

- Provide more diverse and better quality aged care accommodation
- Offer specialist facilities for people with Alzheimer's and dementia
- Deliver more aged care in the home
- Single residents should have single rooms
- Couples should be able to live together
- Aged care needs a flat site, with easy access to parking and green space

OUR SERVICES



22%
I'M NOT SURE

2%
SOME SERVICES ARE
UNNECESSARY

"Rehabilitation has a great name. People ask to go there and it's something that you should build on."

"Castlemaine Health supports low-risk births and with Bendigo up the road to deal with complications, it's the best of both worlds."

You said that Castlemaine Health provides an outstanding, personal service. That our staff are thoughtful, considerate, professional and a credit to the health service. But you don't understand why 'basic' services aren't delivered here, such as setting broken bones, x-rays on weekends and emergency treatment (as opposed to 'urgent care').

You're not sure why patients are sometimes referred to larger hospitals to get the best treatment. You'd like to see extra services for high-frequency treatments, such as dialysis and chemotherapy. Lack of public dentistry is an issue. So too is the absence of a hydrotherapy pool that would deliver better rehabilitation outcomes. You said a hydrotherapy pool could be jointly managed by Castlemaine Health, Mount Alexander Shire Council and Castlemaine District Community Health (CDCH).

Lack of access to GPs is a very common theme. You also think good mental health services are very important but are unclear about who delivers them and unsure about what's currently available. You think young people should have better access to mental health treatment and crisis support. That young people with disabilities and high care needs should have better support and accommodation too.

What we heard

- Better mental health services
- Dialysis, chemotherapy, public dental
- Specialist palliative care for aged and terminally ill
- Hydrotherapy pool
- More weekends services (e.g. radiology and CRC appointments)
- More specialists and on-site GPs
- Better support for young people with disabilities and high care needs

HEALTH AND WELLNESS

"Community health – are we talking to each other? We don't need two average remedial gyms – just one good one!"

"Why are there two health services in Castlemaine. Why can't they join up?"

"You need to catch people before they fall over."

There is confusion about who delivers health services in the shire. You're not sure whether it's Castlemaine Health, Castlemaine District Community Health (CDCH) or the shire. But you're not interested in organisational boundaries. You're not concerned about 'who does what'.

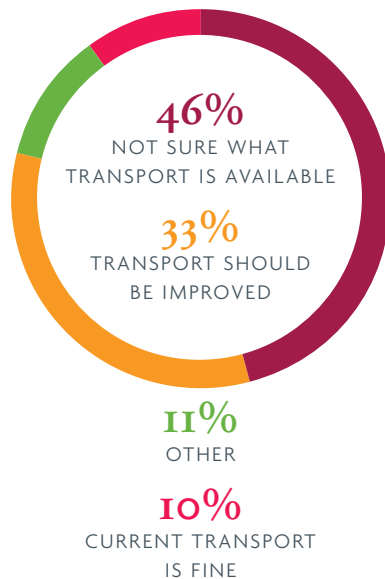
Instead you want to see a much closer working relationship that moves the focus from 'treating illness' to 'promoting wellness'. You want to move away from just treating people when they're sick to increase the focus on keeping people well.

You'd like to see wellness and health promotion services delivered jointly between the two organisations from a single site. You think Castlemaine Health and CDCH should work more closely together and share resources. You believe they both share the same goals and should capitalise on this.

What we heard

- Closer collaboration between Castlemaine Health and CDCH
- Keep people well, don't just treat them when they're sick
- More joint programs on preventative health
- Co-locate all community health services on one site (CRC, District Nursing, CDCH)
- Better preventative health services

TRANSPORT AND PARKING



You said parking and transport are major barriers to accessing services. Those with the most challenging mobility issues – the older, frail and disabled – are least able to access the services they need.

There is little knowledge about transport options but you said that whether you arrive on foot, by car or bus, each presents its own problems.

There are not enough car parking spaces where they're most needed, such as outside Urgent Care and CRC. The loose gravel, dirt surfaces and potholes mean the car parks that are available are poor quality. The distance from parking to services is also a problem. It's too far, signage is poor and it's hard to find the right route through the 'rabbit warren' buildings.

You said public transport is not accessible for disabled people and the bus stops are too far from services to make them useful. You'd like accessible public transport that drops you at the door, not at the top or bottom of a hill.

You value the patient transport service. But with only one car in the fleet and big demand on services, it can be difficult or impossible to make a booking.

What we heard

- Transport is problematic regardless of method of approach
- Not enough parking where it's most needed
- Quality of parking needs improving
- Journey from all car parks is difficult
- Public transport and its drop-off points are inaccessible
- Not enough vehicles and staff to meet demand for patient transport
- Lack of accessible transport and accessible parking spaces
- Need better transport between local GP clinics and the hospital



"There is nowhere near enough parking for people with disabilities."

"I avoid visiting friends in daylight because I can't get a park. When I do visit though, I can't take my friend outside because I'm not strong enough to push her up the hill."

"Mum is on CRC but by the time she finds a park and walks to CRC she is already exhausted."

"The back parking area is very dark at night. People don't visit in the evening because they feel unsafe when walking back to their cars."



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