

Accessing experienced specialists across critical areas of care

For more than five years, Kyabram District Health Service has utilised My Emergency Doctor's expert emergency telehealth service to support exceptional after hours care. As healthcare evolves in the age of COVID, that innovation continues to grow.

Kyabram District Health Service (KDHS) in central Victoria's north is committed to providing the best in care for its communities. It offers an integrated

range of acute, subacute and residential aged care, along with a comprehensive suite of allied and primary health care services.



Bridging the after-hours gap in emergency medicine

For regional health services like KDHS, geographical isolation and workforce shortages present a genuine challenge to the day-to-day delivery of care. Kyabram's Urgent Care Centre (UCC) operates 24 hours a day, seven days a week, supported by experienced, highly qualified nursing staff and on-call local GPs.

But beyond the on-call period, between 11pm and 7am each day, lies a crucial gap in access to medical oversight across

the full acuity spectrum of presentations.

"You can never predict who will present on any given night, and this can include extremely serious conditions," explains Andrea Windridge, former UCC project lead and now COVID Response Coordinator for KDHS. "It is essential that our UCC patients and staff can access support from a specialist emergency doctor when required after hours."

REGIONAL HOSPITALS

CASE STUDY
KYABRAM DISTRICT
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KEY OUTCOME:

80%
of UCC
patients treated
in situ after
MED consults



MED has helped Kyabram Health to:



Support
the delivery of quality, timely
urgent care after hours



Provide
medical backup for Covid
vaccination clinics



Reduce
on-call burden on local GPs



Prevent
unnecessary transfers
and ED admissions



Realise
financial and operational
efficiencies

Transforming the landscape of urgent care

KDHS sought out emergency telehealth provider My Emergency Doctor (MED) in 2018, looking for quality medical support from its team of Australian-qualified FACEMs (Fellows of the Australasian College for Emergency Medicine). The model was to sit alongside an arrangement with Goulburn Valley Health (GVH) to access support from their in-house emergency doctors, when available, to prevent unnecessary transfers to GVH's emergency facility.

"For anybody that presents overnight, if the nurse deems that they require medical assistance, the nurse consults with My Emergency Doctor via video call," says Windridge. "It provides assurance for our staff and patients that, no matter the situation that presents, there will be expert help available fast."

UCC nursing staff report feeling more

comfortable, considering MED's doctors part of their team, and local GPs rest easy knowing they won't be required in the middle of the night. Kyabram's community - traditionally expecting a doctor to be called in when needed - have also responded positively to the service.

"With My Emergency Doctor, we also have the ability to admit patients, and they are then happy to hand over to their usual doctor in the morning."

With the evolving Covid situation amplifying the already heavy workload for Goulburn Valley Hospital's emergency doctors, Kyabram UCC is now almost exclusively relying on MED's FACEMs to support after-hours care in its UCC. Supported by MED, KDHS UCC treats up to 80 per cent of patients in situ, without the need to call in local GPs or transfer to another facility.

Extending benefits to more of the community

In September 2021, KDHS expanded MED's contract to provide expert medical backup at its offsite Covid vaccination clinic, ready to support nursing staff should a patient experience an adverse reaction.

"The vaccination clinic is not on the same grounds as our facility and as such there is no medical lead on site, so engaging MED's doctors to provide that service if and when needed has been a critical step," says Windridge.

"Thankfully we haven't needed to use it, and that's the best possible outcome. But knowing that quality backup is there is incredibly reassuring."

The service is also available as an after-hours support option for its 42-bed residential aged care facility (RACF), located on the same site as the UCC. While the facility's robust early warning system and access to the UCC's experienced and qualified night manager

means MED is not often called on by RACF staff, Windridge says it provides further assurance that expert help is at hand in an emergency.

Alongside MED's support for after-hours care in the community through Murray PHN - which reports in-situ treatment rates over 80 per cent - telehealth has proved invaluable for Kyabram in avoiding emergency department presentations and supporting quality care in the community.

"MED's emergency telehealth service has been absolutely excellent. It was just taken on by our staff, and has been an amazing success and support - all with minimal education needed," Windridge says.

"It's embedded in our practice now; it's not something that I could see us going backwards on. So it's really just planning ahead with that service in place as an integral part of our overnight model."

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“Health services have a strong focus on providing access to timely care and, where possible, providing that care closer to home. MED is another resource in the KDHS toolkit that supports our team to provide the best care to our community.”

Meredith Hodder,

Director of Clinical Services,
Kyabram District Health Service

Contact us today to discuss how our services can support and enhance care for your patients.

My Emergency Doctor

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