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# newsletter

March 2018

## Jamie Durie supports PVC recycling to make garden hose

Dynamic TV gardening personality and sustainability advocate, Jamie Durie, was so interested to hear about the recycling of PVC medical waste into garden hose that he offered to film a short promotional video to help encourage people to get involved in the program.

Jamie was the keynote speaker at the annual Australian Nursing and Midwifery Federation Sustainability Conference in Melbourne last year and he loved the fact that hospital PVC becomes garden hose.

View his enthusiastic video for the Vinyl Council on [YouTube](#).



Jamie Durie at the PVC Recycling in Hospitals stand at the ANMF Sustainability Conference, April, 2017

### Increasing medical waste recycling

The team behind the PVC Recycling in Hospitals program is calling on hospitals to expand the clinical areas in each hospital involved in the program.

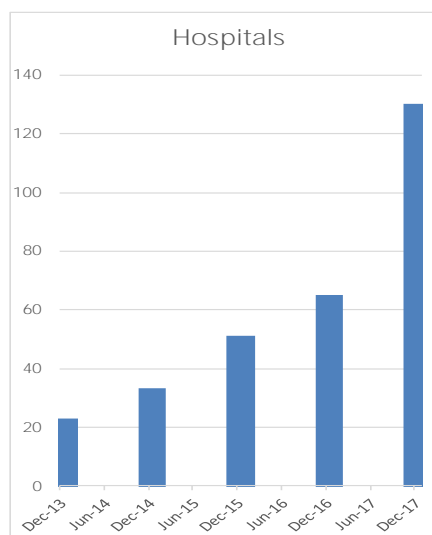
The program currently collects from 129 hospitals, which is fantastic; however these collections are only a fraction of the volume of products purchased and consumed by those hospitals. In some healthcare facilities, the program collects from only one department.

We encourage management to help staff roll out the program to other areas consuming relatively high volumes of IV bags, oxygen tubing and masks. And if your hospital has achieved this, let us know so we can share your experiences with others.

### A New Record!

One hundred and twenty-nine hospitals are now recycling PVC in Australia and New Zealand. The rate of take up has been astonishing for this program. In three years it has skyrocketed from 22 hospitals to 129.

Through this program, hospitals are now collectively diverting 13 tonnes per month from landfill and Baxter is recovering another 7 tonnes per month from renal home patients. Thus 20 tonnes per month is being recycled into new products.



### Victorian Government Fact Sheet on Implementing PVC Recycling

The Victorian Department of Health and Human Services has produced a handy two page Fact Sheet for hospitals on PVC Recycling.

Ideal for hospital staff and management to understand the program, it provides the business case for recycling and a helpful diagram on implementation steps (from your enquiry though to start of collections), data on quantities and where it ends up!

This is available via the [PVC Recycling in Hospitals webpage](#).

# 129 and rising!

Our program continues to grow at a rapid rate. Congratulations to the teams in these hospitals that have joined the recycling program since January 2017. To see the full list of all participating hospitals [go online](#).

Angliss Hospital  
Beleura Private—Ramsay Health  
Bethesda Hospital  
Box Hill Hospital—Eastern Health  
Calvary North Adelaide  
Calvary Surgicentre  
Craigieburn Health Renal Service  
Cranbourne Centre Monash  
Epping Dialysis—Austin  
Flinders Medical Centre  
Fremantle Hospital  
Glen Iris Private  
Gosford Private—Health Care  
Holmesglen Private—Healthscope  
John Flynn—Ramsay  
Lyll McEwin  
Maroondah Hospital—Eastern Health  
Masada Private  
Mater Private Springfield  
Melbourne Private  
Mildura Base Hospital  
Mitcham Private—Ramsay Health  
Monash House  
Noarlunga Hospital  
Peninsula Private—Ramsay  
Peter James Centre—Eastern Health  
Prince of Wales Private—Healthscope  
Robina Hospital Gold Coast  
Royal Brisbane and Women's Hospital  
Royal Children's Melbourne  
St Andrews War Memorial  
St George Private—Ramsay  
The Valley Private—Health Care  
Vermont Private  
Women's and Children's  
Yarra Ranges Health—Healesville,  
Lilydale and Wantirna

## Second Hospital Recycling Forum



In October 2017, the Vinyl Council hosted the second PVC Recycling in Hospitals Forum in Australia with 40 hospital representatives in attendance. With presenters pictured above from left to right, their key points were:

**Matthew Hoyne, Director, Welvic:** Recovered PVC comes from across Australia to be sorted, washed, granulated and compounded ready for customers to make into garden hose and children's playmats in Australia and New Zealand. Contamination levels vary between hospitals and pose risks to collectors and Welvic staff. Good training and checking loads in hospitals are essential measures.

**Helen Millicer, Recycling Manager, Vinyl Council:** the Council initiated and co-founded the program, initially undertaking promotion to hospitals and conducting training. Benefits include reduced waste to landfill and carbon emissions cut by around 80% compared to virgin PVC. It also delivers more jobs and product manufactured in Australia/New Zealand.

**Tiernan Humphrys, Manager Sustainability, Dept of Health and Human Services:** The Victorian Government is preparing an Environmental Strategy for the health system. This will cover energy, water, waste and recycling and procurement. There will also be a Waste Education Officer in the Dept funded via the Victorian Sustainability Fund.

**Christine Neumann, Divisional Director Health Support Services, Western Health:** Piloted originally by Western Health, this program shows what people can achieve together - they create a better future. Champions at Western Health continue to innovate with energy and surgical instrument recycling.

**Bradley Keam, Sustainability Manager, Baxter Healthcare:** PVC Stewardship signatory and recycling program partner with the Vinyl Council, Baxter provides in-house training, bins and stickers and subsidises collections. Trainers can assist advise hospitals on bin locations. A key objective is to lower contamination.

**Roslyn Morgan, Environmental Health Officer, Australian Nursing & Midwifery Federation:** Reasons for hospitals to improve performance include climate change, cutting emissions and costs. The PVC recycling program is a good entry point for hospitals to begin their transformation.

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### Hospital Story—Success by training, and re-training

“What do you do when the contamination in your PVC bins is too high? David Webb, Manager of House Services at Launceston General Hospital shares Launceston General's experience:

‘We decided to actually stop the collection. We did this for a time so we could focus on training and do a relaunch when we were ready.

‘Launceston General Hospital is a 400-bed hospital with no environmental manager, so it is up to other staff to champion and monitor the program.

‘During the ‘Stop Period’, a Baxter team visited, helping with retraining and a powerpoint presentation, and the hospital teams concentrated on proper separation of PVC from other materials. We took time out, focussed, trained and retrained, making a significant step change from bad bins to good bins.

‘In addition, the House Service team agreed to collect the PVC every Wednesday and check. Because each bin has a clear liner, our HS staff can see contamination when they lift out the bags. Bad bags go to landfill and they give feedback to the teams. With confidence, we can now expand the collection across the hospital.’ ”

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Additional presenters included:

**Rebecca Pascoe, Registered Nurse,**

**Epworth Hospital:** The Epworth is the first hospital working with Baxter and Aces Medical Waste to add aluminium anaesthetic gas cannisters to their recycling on the back of the PVC program.

The Epworth was a proud finalist in the 2017 Victorian Premier's Sustainability Award (see below).

**Sandra Molinaro, Support Services,**

**Northern Health:** PVC Recycling is not in conflict with existing waste and recycling contracts. Sandra has worked across teams and departments, including infection control, cleaners and clinical staff, to grow the program in different areas. They were going to stop the program due to contamination, but with further guidance, things got better. Emails saying 'thanks' with photos of good separation and others with images saying 'please none of these', kept the interest growing. Some units started friendly competition on who had the 'bad' bins – now they are all brilliant! Northern Health has since started an Environmental Sustainability sub-committee.



Rebecca Pascoe RN, Epworth Hospital, Finalist in Victorian Premier's Sustainability Award 2017

## Handy hints from hospitals at the Recycling Forum

There were some great ideas shared at the Forum:

- Placing small caddies or baskets on top of bins when it is busy, so the night recovery nurses can help do the separation later when it is quieter.
- Passing around a commitment sheet for staff to sign stating that they will participate in training and monitoring before the collection starts; this develops greater buy-in for success.
- Moving the PVC bin away from the doorway, reducing contamination.
- Adding PVC to the Daily Check List – Recovery room nurses check contents of bins and remove contamination from items such as pill bottles and elastic straps.
- Putting photos of bin contents on the noticeboard, with a big cross or tick for bad and good bins and items, with grumpy and smiley faces to keep it fun and friendly.
- Deciding as a team to do intensive checking and training for an agreed period, say 6 months, to get the process right, then celebrating the team's achievements.
- One department setting targets to engage other areas using high quantities of PVC and inviting those areas to a training session to see how successfully it works.

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[WWW.VINYL.ORG.AU](http://WWW.VINYL.ORG.AU)



Northern Health's small caddies for later sorting of PVC for recycling.

## Welvic commissions and launches new recycling plant for PVC

At a time when there is concern about the viability of recycling, the PVC Recycling in Hospitals program has created jobs and helped strengthen Australia's recycling capacity.

Following participation in the hospital recycling program, Victorian-based PVC compounder, Welvic Australia more than matched a \$420,000 grant from the Victorian Government and Australian Packaging Covenant with an investment of over \$500,000 to purchase new plant and equipment at its Deer Park site, to increase its recycling capacity and capability.



Welvic normally produces around 12,000 tonnes of PVC compound each year. With this new recycling line, it will produce an additional 1,000—4,000 tonnes. The company has also created six ongoing jobs to handle the material. Welvic sells the hospital PVC recyclate as a substitute to virgin compounds to Australian and New Zealand manufacturers of finished products like garden hose and children's playmats.

*Pictured: Representatives of funding partners at the Welvic Recycling Plant launch. Photo courtesy of Western Times.*

## National Banksia Award

The Vinyl Council of Australia, founder of the PVC Recycling in Hospitals program, was thrilled it was a finalist in the 2017 national Banksia Awards, Circular Economy category.

The 2017 Banksia Award Judges praised the PVC Recycling in Hospitals scheme as an 'excellent case study of an industry's response to keeping its social license' and 'embracing product stewardship' to achieve that.

They also commended the 'leadership shown by the health industry and good collaboration between industries', as well as recognising 'good circularity – PVC is a good material for a circular economy'.

"The program stands out as a unique solution taking a waste stream that would historically go to landfill and re-purposing it thus preventing virgin components required for new products" the judges stated.

"The issue of plastics and chemical use in hospitals is enormous and the lack of sustainability focus in that sector is well-known. Seeing a project that brings change to that sort of culture is great. Overall it's an innovative solution filling a niche that can be expanded globally and sets an example."

Vinyl Council Chief Executive Sophi MacMillan commented: "We appreciate this valuable feedback and agree completely with the judges' view that there is much potential to scale this and expand it across other industries. Watch this space!"

*Banksia Chair, Dr Kate Auty (centre) with Helen Millicer and Matthew Hoyne.*

## And now recycling in South Africa!

On the theme of global expansion, South Africa is the second country to follow Australia and New Zealand's lead with PVC collections from hospitals, after Britain.

In 2017, the South African Vinyl Association (SAVA) received a financial boost from Adcock Ingram Critical Care to cover the costs of a trial at five hospitals.

Delanie Bezuidenhout, CEO SAVA, hopes to lift hospital numbers to 10 in 2018 and produce a 'How To Guide'.

The UK was operating the program at seven hospitals by the end of 2017.

For contacts visit: [www.savinyls.co.za](http://www.savinyls.co.za)

And in UK: [RecoMed](http://RecoMed)

## Buy Recycled!

*"I don't think people quite appreciate that recycling — and this program — only works when people buy finished product with recycled content. Otherwise even good material ends up in landfill."*

Matthew Hoyne, Welvic Australia



## Upcoming events to learn about PVC Recycling in Hospitals:

Healthcare Waste Management Conferences [18 April Bendigo](#) and [9 May Swan Hill](#), Loddon Mallee Waste & Resource Recovery Group.

[Health and Environmental Sustainability Conference, Friday 27 April, Melbourne](#)  
Australian Nursing & Midwifery Federation Vic Branch, Melb Convention Centre.

73rd [Annual Conference](#) Australian Nursing & Midwifery Federation NSW Branch, Rosehill Gardens, Sydney, 25-27 July 2018.

## New stickers for program

New bin stickers have been produced that more clearly show both the Vinyl Council of Australia and Baxter Healthcare as key sponsors of the PVC Recycling in Hospitals program. Let us or your Baxter rep know if you need more bin stickers.



To contribute useful Fast Facts or Top Tips to help others and share stories, or to find out more about this product stewardship program and how to get involved, contact us: **Vinyl Council of Australia ACN: 083 012 533**

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