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MEDIA RELEASE

SUCCESSFUL ANNUAL MEETING FOR WIMMERA HEALTH CARE GROUP

The Community Centre at Sunnyside Lutheran Retirement Village was packed to capacity for Wimmera Health Care Group's Annual General Meeting last week.

Board of Management President Bonnie Thompson said that more than 130 people attended the meeting. "It was fantastic to see so much interest in the important work we do at Wimmera Health Care Group" she said.

Ms Thompson said that the annual meeting gave the Board an opportunity to report on its achievements over the past year, including the adoption of a new strategic plan for Wimmera Health Care Group. "We are very excited about our new strategic plan. It was developed in close consultation with staff and other stakeholders and will guide the organisation well into the future" she said.

Acknowledgment of two key volunteers to the organisation, Miss Ula Hall and Mrs Lesley Stanton, was a highlight of the meeting.

Chief Executive Mr Chris Scott said that Miss Hall had recently retired from the position of treasurer of the Wimmera Base Hospital Ladies Auxiliary, a position she has proudly and efficiently held for the past nine years. "The Wimmera Base Hospital Ladies Auxiliary operates a significant business, the opportunity shop, along with numerous other fundraising activities. The role of treasurer is a very busy and complex one, and we are extremely grateful for the important contribution Ula has made to the auxiliary and this organisation over the past nine years. During the nine years that Ula was Treasurer, the auxiliary donated over \$400,000 to Wimmera Health Care Group for the purchase of vital lifesaving equipment for our hospital" he said.

Mr Scott said that Mrs Stanton had been a tireless worker for the Wimmera Hospice Care Auxiliary for the past 10 years. "She has been a significant contributor to the fundraising efforts of the auxiliary which gives support to our palliative care service for the terminally ill. The Wimmera Hospice Care auxiliary has a strong tradition of professionalism and commitment to the community and it is clear that the auxiliary holds Lesley in very high esteem" he said.

Former Victorian Supreme Court Judge Murray Kellam, AO, was guest speaker. He spoke about Burma and refugees in Thailand. Ms Thompson said that the presentation was very timely, given that a number of Karen refugees will be relocating to Horsham in the new year. "It is important that we, as a community, have an understanding of the background and culture of the Karen people, so that we may assist them in adjusting to life in the Wimmera" she said.

On behalf of the Board, Ms Thompson praised the enormous contribution of staff, Wimmera Health Care Group's greatest asset. She also expressed her appreciation for the significant level of community support the organisation had received from volunteers, donors, community groups, business and Government during the past year.

"In 2008/09, the health care group treated an unprecedented 11,000 inpatients, 17,000 emergency patients and 33,000 outpatients. These figures highlight the importance that the organisation plays in our community" she said.

People interested in obtaining copies of the 2008/09 Annual Report and Quality of Care Report for Wimmera Health Care Group can contact Mrs Sue Frankham, Community Liaison Officer, on ph. 5381 9200 or email sue.frankham@whcg.org.au or alternatively they can be downloaded from the Wimmera Health Care Group web site – www.whcg.org.au



Chris Scott (Chief Executive), Lesley Stanton (Wimmera Hospice Care Auxiliary member), Ula Hall (WBH Ladies Auxiliary member) and Bonnie Thompson (President) at the Annual General Meeting last week

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