

MEDIA ALERT

For immediate release

From: Porter Novelli on behalf of Mercy Health

Date: Wednesday 28 August 2024

Mercy Health's Dr Gillian Opie honoured as tunnelling begins on the North East Link

Founder of Mercy Health's Breastmilk Bank, Dr Gillian Opie, has been recognised by the Victorian Government as part of the North East Link tunnel development with a Tunnel Boring Machine (TBM) named in her honour.

Dr Opie's name was selected as part of a long-held tradition which states a TBM cannot start work until it is given a female name. Dr Opie was selected from hundreds of submissions in recognition of her ground-breaking, inspiring work, as well as her connection to Melbourne's north-eastern suburbs.

A neonatal paediatrician at Mercy Hospital for Women in Heidelberg, Dr Opie founded Victoria's only Breastmilk Bank in 2011, providing sick and premature babies in Melbourne's neonatal intensive care units with safe, screened donor milk.

Since opening, the Mercy Health Breastmilk Bank has provided more than 4000 litres of breastmilk to thousands of recipients. The service has also expanded, with satellite sites at Monash Children's Hospital, the Royal Children's Hospital and the Royal Women's Hospital.

Mercy Health Group CEO, Angela Nolan, said this honour is a reminder of Dr Opie's commitment to helping babies get their best start in life.

"Mercy Health is extremely proud of Dr Opie's achievements and her ongoing contributions to enhancing the care of sick and premature babies. It's fantastic to see her work being recognised through a project that will also have a huge impact on the local community," said Ms Nolan.

"Mercy Health is deeply grateful for Dr Opie's tireless commitment to caring for some of our most vulnerable patients."

The 'Gillian' will begin working on the 6.5km twin tunnels from Watsonia to Bulleen in the coming weeks.

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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 is made up of approximately 10,000 people who provide acute and subacute hospital care, aged care, mental health programs, maternity and specialist women's health services, early parenting services, home care services and health worker training and development.

Mercy Health is proud to be recognised as an Employer of Choice for Gender Equality by the WGEA.

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