



20 October 2025

St John of God Geraldton Hospital celebrates 90 years of care

This month marks 90 years since St John of God Geraldton Hospital first opened its doors in October 1935, a milestone made possible through community spirit, generosity and faith.

The idea for a Catholic hospital in Geraldton was first raised in 1934 by Bishop James O'Collins and agreed to by the Sisters of St John of God with construction of the 51-bed hospital beginning in January the following year.

The first patient, World War I veteran Paddy Briers, was admitted on 16 October 1935, three days ahead of the hospital's official opening on 19 October. Mr Briers was welcomed by five Sisters, supported by lay domestic staff, with the same compassionate care that has defined the hospital's service ever since.

Over the decades, St John of God Geraldton Hospital has evolved alongside the Geraldton community. A Maternity Ward opened in 1940, a Chapel in 1965, and major refurbishments in the late 1960s brought new ensuite rooms and the establishment of the Ladies' Auxiliary, which continues to raise funds and provide support today. A major community fundraising drive in the late 1980s raised \$1.6million to build a new hospital, which opened in 1992, followed by the addition of a Specialist Medical Clinic in 1995.

Today's modern facility provides a wide range of surgical and medical services including ENT, general surgery, gynaecology, ophthalmology, orthopaedic surgery, urology, and vascular. The hospital also provides maternity services, chemotherapy and medical infusion services, and palliative care.

Recent innovations include the introduction of hotel-style room service for patients, reflecting the hospital's ongoing commitment to providing personalised, high-quality care. Recent renovations include a complete upgrade to the air conditioning system with patient controlled temperature settings.

Chief Executive Officer Phillip Balmer said the hospital has played an integral role in caring for the Geraldton and Mid-West communities for generations and reduced the burden of injury, or illness posed by time cost and distance by providing excellent services closer to home

"I'd like to thank our many past and present caregivers, doctors and volunteers for their unwavering commitment to caring for our community. We are grateful for the support from our GPs, patient community and the public hospital. It is only as they support our hospital and we work together in partnership that the hospital will be successful. This ensures as the region continues to grow, we look forward to evolving alongside it and maintaining our exceptional level of high-quality, patient-centred care," Mr Balmer said.

Director of Mission Integration Jeremy Beckett said the hospital's culture of compassion and connectedness remains as strong as ever.

"I think the founding Sisters would be delighted to see our service now, not only in the breadth and quality of what we're able to offer, but the sustained commitment to our Mission and Values," Mr Beckett said.

"Our caregivers often describe the sense of family we share, which extends beyond our walls into the lives and stories of those around us. It reminds us we're part of something bigger and something that matters deeply," he said.

Today, St John of God Geraldton Hospital is a 60-bed private facility featuring two operating theatres and a minor procedure room. The hospital employs almost 200 caregivers and works with 90 accredited general practitioners and a range of local and visiting specialists. In 2024–25, 8,000 patients received treatment at the hospital.

A celebration marking the hospital's 90th anniversary will be held for caregivers and special guests as part of St John of God Health Care's Foundation Day commemoration.

Find out more about St John of God Geraldton Hospital [here](#).

ENDS

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About St John of God Health Care

St John of God Health Care is one of the largest Catholic providers of health care services in Australia. Established in Western Australia in 1895, we are not-for-profit private health care group and a ministry of the Catholic Church.

We employ 16,500 staff across Australia and New Zealand operate 26 facilities comprising more than 3,300 beds in Australia and New Zealand, as well as home nursing, disability services and social outreach programs.