

NEWS

AUSTRALIAN NEWS

In the latest edition of the *ANZCJ* for 2024, I am proud to report on all we have achieved at the Continence Foundation of Australia. This year has been very busy for the Foundation as we continue to advocate and advance the voice of continence health in Australia. The year was punctuated with several substantial projects, including multi-channel campaigns supporting World Continence Week, the Great Dunny Hunt, professional development events including the National Conference on Incontinence in Brisbane, and successful collaborations with Jean Hailes and the Prostate Cancer Foundation of Australia.

The Economic Cost of Incontinence

In September, the Foundation launched a report from Deloitte Access Economics which highlighted the economic cost of incontinence to the Australian economy. The report found that there is an estimated 2.4 million men and 4.8 million women living with some form of urinary and/or faecal incontinence, which costs the Australian economy over \$100 billion per annum.

The report estimates that by 2032, the number of Australians living with some degree of incontinence will rise to 8.6 million, representing 34.1% of the population. This increase is largely driven by an aging population and underscores the need for proactive measures to manage the growing burden of incontinence on individuals and the Australian community.

As a result, the Continence Foundation of Australia is calling on healthcare providers, policymakers, and the public to prioritise incontinence as a significant health issue. The Foundation is committed to raising awareness, reducing stigma, and advocating for better treatment options for all Australians.

Read the full report [here](#)

Women's Health Week: 2-6 September 2024

In support of Women's Health Week, the Foundation has continued our community partnership with Jean Hailes to inspire women of all ages to focus on good health and wellbeing.

This year, Jean Hailes had five daily themes under the banner 'Your Voice. Your Choice', encouraging women to make informed decisions about their health with topics including 'courageous conversations', 'trust your gut' and 'food for thought'. Aligning with these themes, the Foundation focused on reminding women of all ages there is much they can do to reduce their risk of incontinence. In fact, in many cases, incontinence may be prevented, better managed, or even cured.

A highlight of the week was our free webinar 'Let's Talk - Menopause and Continence' which was hosted by the manager of our National Continence Helpline, Janie Thompson, with special guests Bronwyn Ford (lived experience with menopause and pelvic organ

prolapse) and Libby Oldfield (Specialist Pelvic Health Physiotherapist).

The webinar began with an informational discussion on menopause, followed by a Q&A session where attendees had the opportunity to submit their own questions for our expert panel to answer.

The webinar was successful in attracting and engaging an audience of over 1000 registrants, with 60% of attendees in the target age range of 40-59. The link to the recorded webinar was shared with everyone who registered and can be accessed [here](#).

Education: Catheterisation Workshops

The Foundation's pilot catheterisation workshop has now been in operation for one year. Participants in the pilot complete a 2-3 hour online theory module before attending the half day practical session. The practical sessions allow students to practice male, female and suprapubic catheterisation on medical manikins using aseptic technique. Once completed, students can perform the procedure under supervision until deemed competent by their workplace.

To date, the Education team has trained 74 people across 16 catheterisation workshops including two in Perth, four in Melbourne, four in Albury/Wodonga, four in Sydney and two in the New South Wales Central Coast.

This course can be delivered to individuals, or onsite at your premises for a group of 3-6. For more information contact education@continence.org.au or call 8849 9482.

BINS4Blokes: Perth Airport our first Airport Supporter

Through its Access and Inclusion Advisory Group, Perth Airport has partnered with the Continence Foundation of Australia's BINS4Blokes initiative to ensure that all passengers travelling have access to incontinence product disposal bins so that their travel experiences are comfortable and dignified.

Perth Airport has recently installed 56 incontinence product disposal bins in all male ambulant toilets and unisex disabled toilets across its five terminals.

By raising awareness and improving service delivery for males living with incontinence, Perth Airport is addressing a significant but underrepresented health priority, contributing positively to the community, and promoting greater inclusivity.

Perth Airport's Chief Commercial and Aviation Officer Kate Holsgrove said the Airport is focused on ensuring accessibility, comfort and convenience for all passengers, "Our partnership with BINS4Blokes is a great initiative through our Access and Inclusion Advisory Group and the partnership enhances the facilities within our terminal infrastructure. We're happy to be playing a leadership role in this area and

hopefully other airports will also head down this path in the future.”

State Education Days

In September, October and November the Foundation's State and Territory Advisory Committees (STACs) organised state education days. These education days posed an informative professional development, networking and learning opportunity for health professionals across Australia working in bladder, bowel and pelvic floor health. Program highlights included a small group pelvic floor ultrasound workshop for beginners in Victoria and a gender diversity session in Western Australia which addressed some of the common questions surrounding gender diversity and continence health/function. With close to 100 attendees at each event and nearly 60 exhibitors, this year's state education days were informative and inspiring.

According to a delegate at the Victorian State Education Day, this event was “one of the best conferences I have attended for ease of information regarding everything. The organisation was outstanding.”

If you would like to hear about other professional development events, sign up to our [events mailing list](#).

I am looking forward to 2025, as we continue our vision and purpose of an Australian community free from the restrictions of incontinence across the lifespan.

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CEO, Continence Foundation of Australia