

March 2019

# Priceless



The news bulletin for supporters of the Clifford Craig Foundation

## New Team of Neurologists Welcomed to LGH

Following many years of limited access to neurology services across Northern Tasmania, the Launceston General Hospital has recently welcomed two members of the new neurology team that will service the north and northwest of the state.

Dr Matt Lee-Archer and Dr Lauren Giles recently commenced their appointments at the hospital and will soon be following by Dr Aaron De Souza who has moved to Tasmania from the UK. He is currently undergoing a period of supervision at the Royal Hobart Hospital as part of the college requirements before starting at the LGH.

Neurological services in the north have been virtually minimal for a decade following the loss of Dr Stan Seika in 2009 who died from a snow skiing accident in New Zealand. The new appointments are a welcome boost to health services at the LGH and will mean access to neurology services for North and North-West patients will be significantly improved.

Dr Lee Archer returns to Launceston after nearly two decades of work as a neurologist in Melbourne, Brisbane and London. He is particularly passionate about stroke medicine, including acute treatment, rehabilitation and prevention, but also has special interests in movement disorders and headaches.

Dr Giles is from Melbourne and specialises in multiple sclerosis, peripheral nerve damage and headache. Having spent her first four years of medicine in Darwin she underwent her advanced training as a neurologist at Royal Melbourne Hospital and Austin Hospital.

Dr De Souza has an interest in epilepsy, Parkinson's disease, toxic disorders of the nervous system, and the electrophysiology of diabetic neuropathy. With more than 15 years of experience as a medical practitioner, Dr De Souza is deeply involved in clinical research. He has nearly 30 publications in peer-reviewed journals and two books to his credit.

The appointments also follow the recruitment of two endocrinologists at the LGH, after a decade-long drought for full-time specialists in this important area.

*New LGH neurologists Dr Matt Lee-Archer and Dr Lauren Giles*



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research or the specified  
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P: 03 6777 6010

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- I would like to make a one-off donation of \$
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**All donations over \$2 are tax deductible.**

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### Thank you for your support.

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CLIFFORD CRAIG  
FOUNDATION  
PO Box 1963  
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Health • Research • Hope

## From the CEO



2019 has commenced in flurry and I find it hard to believe that a quarter of the year has passed already.

Whilst 2018 becomes a distant memory, it was another successful year for the

Foundation. It gives me great pleasure to report that we contributed nearly \$600,000 to the research program last year, thus enabling clinical researchers across the northern half of Tasmania to undertake research here in our own hospitals.

Each day I am inspired by the wonderful and unwavering commitment of the doctors, nurses and other medical professionals who dedicate their careers to provide the best possible healthcare to the patients who need their help. I feel very privileged to work in a hospital and witness their commitment to caring for others.

With this in mind, congratulations to our Chairman, Associate Professor Don McTaggart who was duly recognised in the Australia Day Honours for his dedicated service to medicine. A very well-deserved honour to a person who is committed to his profession and community. His passionate contribution to the success of this Foundation is admirable and we are fortunate to have his knowledge and leadership.

From an operational viewpoint, our organisation has recently undertaken a governance review and we are now in the process of preparing our strategic plan for the next five years. These are two important business elements of ensuring the Foundation continues to be an effective and sustainable enterprise which reflects community expectations.

Most importantly, we want to ensure that together with our community, the Clifford Craig Foundation is positioned to continue investing in medical research, facilities and education to advance the health and wellbeing of the people of North and Northwest Tasmania.

Please enjoy reading our latest newsletter and how your donations, and unwavering support, has helped contribute to enabling our hospital to deliver the best possible healthcare for the people of our region.

**Peter Milne**  
Chief Executive

## Professor Fiona Wood AM

**One of Australia's most innovative and respected surgeons, Dr Fiona Wood travelled to Launceston to present the annual David Huish Memorial Lecture at the LGH.**

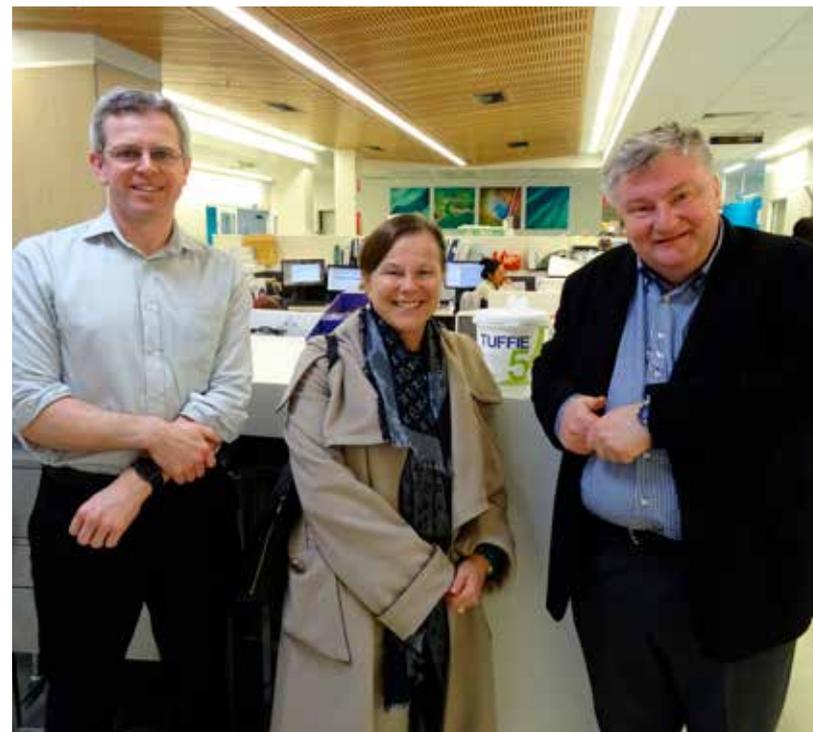
Australian of the Year in 2005, Dr Wood is best known for her pioneering work with skin culture and her invention of spray-on skin for burns victims.

Dr Wood became known to Australians during the aftermath of the 2002 Bali bombings where she was at the forefront of crisis response and the resultant burn care for the victims. She coordinated a major operation involving four operating theatres, 19 surgeons and 130 medical staff. Her team worked to save the lives of 25 patients - some with burns to up to 92 percent of their bodies.

Dr Wood was drawn to plastic surgery early in her career and one of her earliest achievements was the development of the of a skin culture lab in Western Australia where she is the Director of the Burns Service and the Burn Injury Research Unit.

Her presentation to the large audience at the David Huish Memorial Lecture was greatly received by both medical and public attendees.

Presented by the Clifford Craig Foundation, the lecture is in memory of LGH general/thoracic surgeon Dr David Huish who worked at the hospital for nearly 30 years.



*Dr Fiona Wood touring the Intensive Care Unit at the LGH during her visit with Dr Matt Brain and Dr Scott Parkes*



**Clifford Craig Foundation**

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# Tasmanian Tonsils play an Import Role

**Tissue and blood samples from the tonsils of Tasmanian children are likely to make a significant contribution to the development of better vaccines to combat influenza.**

In a unique hospital-based prospective research study being undertaken by infectious disease specialist Professor Katie Flanagan, the samples are being collected from 100 healthy children undergoing tonsillectomy at the Launceston General Hospital, Calvary St Lukes Private Hospital. The local research team will include local Ear, Nose & Throat (ENT) surgeons Simone Boardman, Danesh Irani, Santiago Draghi and Julia Springer, and Clifford Craig research nurses.

Postdoctoral scientist Prof. Katherine Kedzierska from the Peter Doherty Institute in Melbourne will undertake the laboratory testing to analyse the cells. A postdoctoral scientist from her lab recently visited Prof Flanagan's Launceston lab at UTAS for a week to train staff in sample processing. A Clifford Craig funded Honours student is also working on the project and will assist with analysing the samples in Melbourne later this year.

Collection of tonsil tissue commenced in mid-February with seven tonsil and blood samples collected and processed in the first week.

Millions of people each year get infected with the influenza virus or flu, many of whom die. Young children are particularly susceptible to severe disease and death from

flu. This is likely to be due to differences in the children's immune system compared to adults who are less susceptible, however very little is known about children's immune responses to flu.

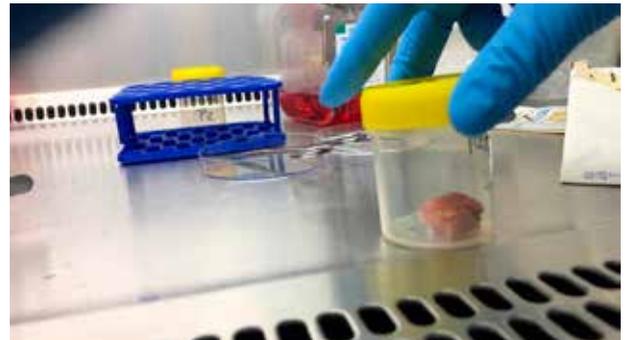
Flu vaccination is currently the best protection against the virus, however it provides 60% protection at best and only works against certain types of flu. Therefore, better vaccines are needed. We can only develop better vaccines if we understand what parts of the immune response to flu are important in protecting us. This study will provide this information by studying the immune cells in blood and tonsils of healthy children in order to understand how their immunity to flu differs from that of adults.

Collectively this study will inform pre-clinical, clinical and epidemiological studies that aim to reduce the human impact of seasonal and pandemic influenza in children and young people. In particular it will contribute important data for the development of better influenza vaccines for this vulnerable age group, including those designed to overcome the emergence of influenza escape mutants.

Professor Flanagan's project is being funded by a Clifford Craig grant of \$43,945.



Lab team working on the samples (from left Dr Nicole Ranson, Ms Jasveen Kaur, Dr Carolien van de Sandt)



One of the first tonsil samples to be processed

## Flu Season - When to Vaccinate

**The on-set of cooler weather in Tasmania prompts discussion of colds and flu, and of course, when to get a flu shot.**

A record 11 million Australians got a flu shot last year - nearly a third more than the previous year. In 2018, 58,824 cases of influenza were reported, compared to nearly 250,000 cases in 2017. It is not possible to predict what this season's influenza season will be like with each year being different. Indeed, the 2018 season has been unusually long.

The protection from the annual flu jab starts to wear off after four months and this year's free flu jab won't be distributed until the beginning of Aril.

Head of Infectious Diseases at the Launceston General Hospital, Professor Katie Flanagan recommends people get the

influenza vaccine once it becomes available and certainly by mid-May.

"We recommend that everyone (children over 6 months of age and adults) receive the vaccine, but this is even more important for those suffering from chronic diseases. The flu vaccine recommended for people >65 years of age is different to that recommended for younger people and is freely available from your GP," she said.

Another option is to participate in Prof Flanagan's influenza vaccine trial in which case *the vaccine will be provided for free* at the Vaccine Trial Centre at LGH. Please call a Clifford Craig research nurse on 0474 516 022 or 6777 6001 for more information.



# North West Asthma Study Published

**The prevalence of asthma in Australia is one of the highest in the world. Reflecting this, asthma is the leading cause of hospitalization among children in Australia, and the most common chronic childhood disorder.**

A Clifford Craig funded study into the prevalence of asthma in 6 to 8-year-old children in rural North West Tasmania has revealed that childhood asthma is more prevalent in regional Tasmania compared with national estimates, especially among indigenous children.

Undertaken by specialist paediatrician Associate Professor Heinrich Weber at the North West Regional Hospital in Burnie, the outcomes from the comprehensive five-year research project were recently published in the international peer reviewed medical journal, *Journal of Asthma*.

The aim of this study was to describe the prevalence and risk factors for asthma and allergic disorders among a high-risk childhood age group in regional and rural Australia, using the North-West region of Tasmania as an especially pertinent case study, and to evaluate any obvious high-risk issues.

Students in grades 1 and 2 (average ages 6–8 years) were recruited from participating schools. A total of 39 schools agreed to participate, with 1075 children enrolled for the study.

It revealed a high prevalence of current asthma (26.0%) and/or wheezing (22.7%) in children (aged 6–8 years) in

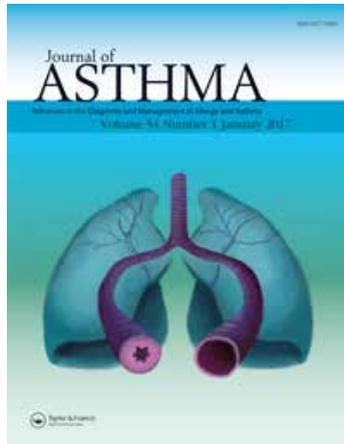
regional Tasmania; representing a low socio-economic, rural, and semi-rural community, generally poorly represented in the literature. The figures for diagnosed asthma and likely undiagnosed asthma are much greater than reported for the rest of Australia. The prevalence of current wheezing (22.7%) in study was higher than both national and international estimates.

A major finding of the study was the prevalence of current wheezing in almost one third (31.1%) of indigenous children, significantly higher than non-indigenous children (21.1%). Also, a significant proportion of children with severe wheezing episodes did not have a diagnosis of asthma.

Ass Prof Weber said the study highlighted the high prevalence's, and the suggestion of considerable under-diagnosis in the cohort with wheezing only, have implications for health-service planning. "Further research is required, as a priority, to explore why there is

this high prevalence of asthma in this semi-rural, low socio-economic community, especially among indigenous children", he said.

Ass Prof Weber's project was funded by a Clifford Craig grant of \$34,985.



## John Morris Diabetes Centre Fulfilling an Important Service

**Diabetes is the epidemic of the 21st century and the biggest challenge confronting Australia's health system. Around 1.7 million Australians have diabetes and it is the fastest growing chronic condition in the nation.**

Being diagnosed with diabetes can be overwhelming and raises numerous questions for new sufferers, from information about how to manage your diabetes, correct diet, monitoring your blood sugar levels to medications.

Northern Tasmanians are well served in this area with the John Morris Diabetes Centre (JMDC) at the LGH which was established to deliver significantly improved outcomes for people with diabetes in the region. Under the leadership of clinical nurse specialist in diabetes, Sam Beattie, the JMDC team includes two full-time endocrinologists and a nurse practitioner.

The "Diabetes Unit" at the LGH was originally established by Dr John Morris in 1957 and is Australia's oldest diabetes centre. In 2009, to honour Dr Morris, the centre was renamed the John Morris Diabetes Centre.



### Facts about diabetes

- **280** Australians develop diabetes every day. That's one person every five minutes
- An estimated **1.2 million** (6%) Australian adults had diabetes in 2014/15 ABS National Health Survey
- It is the fastest growing chronic condition in Australia
- More than **100,000** Australians have developed diabetes in the past year
- **1 million** hospitalisations were associated with diabetes (principal and/or additional diagnosis) in 2014–15—10% of all hospitalisations in Australia.
- For every person diagnosed with diabetes there is usually a family member or carer who also 'lives with diabetes' every day in a support role. This means that an estimated 2.4 million Australians are affected by diabetes every day
- In 2013, diabetes caused **5.1 million** deaths globally.

# Research could lead to fast track patients requiring surgery

Waiting times to see an orthopaedic surgeon for chronic hip and knee pain in the public health system are increasing, particularly in regional Australia.

However, a research study undertaken by the physiotherapy and orthopaedic departments at the Launceston General Hospital has shown an advanced scope physiotherapy model of care that could be cost effective, offer timely access for patients, and fast track those patients who clearly require surgery.

There is a growing burden of disease resulting from an increasing prevalence of osteoarthritis (OA). This is reflected by a 38% increase in the rate of knee arthroplasty procedures completed in Australia over the last 10 years. Tasmania, with the oldest average age of any state in Australia, is significantly affected by this burden. People living in parts of regional and rural Australia also have a higher prevalence of OA. Tasmania is also known to have longer waiting times for assessment and intervention than those experienced by metropolitan counterparts.

Advanced scope physiotherapists (ASPs) in Australia are increasingly being utilised to help support orthopaedic clinics within public hospitals manage increasing rates of referral from primary care physicians (GPs). This model of care aims to

provide a cost-effective, timely access for patients and fast track those patients who clearly require surgery.

LGH physiotherapist Dave Jovic undertook a study in 2018 with orthopaedic surgeon Dr Jonathan Mulford to investigate the clinical effectiveness of an ASP triaging patients referred from GP's to the orthopaedic clinic. The research involved 87 patients with chronic hip and knee pain being assessed by both the advanced scope physiotherapist and a consultant orthopaedic surgeon. Diagnostic and treatment decisions were compared, and it revealed the clinical decisions made by an advanced scope physiotherapist, when compared with an orthopaedic consultant, are similar in terms of diagnosis and treatment planning.

The results indicate the surgical conversion rate in an ASP-led model would halve the referrals that an orthopaedic consultant would have to review in outpatient clinics. This would improve the waiting time access to the surgical waiting list and free up the surgeon's time to see those patients

requiring surgical intervention. Patients not requiring surgery can also be referred to appropriate high quality non-operate management services in a timely fashion without the need to wait for a surgical review.

**Research saves lives.**

Your charitable bequest will help us create a brighter future for your loved ones.

100% of your donation remains in Tasmania and is used for medical research or the specified area of need in our community.

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## New Head of Launceston Medical School

The University of Tasmania has appointed Associate Professor Tim Strong as the new Director of the Launceston Clinical School at the Launceston General Hospital.

The appointment was announced late last year following the retirement of Associate Professor Kim Rooney who had held the position since the establishment of the school at the LGH.

A/Prof Strong has been a senior specialist anaesthetist who has worked at the LGH for over 17 years. He has also been a senior lecturer at the Clinical School, mentoring many of "tomorrow's doctors".

The Launceston Clinical School is a valuable asset and plays an important role in the success of the hospital. The training ground for young doctors in the fifth and sixth year of their university degrees, the school receives an annual intake of approximately 100 students studying across years 4 and 5 of the medical course.

## Art Exhibition

Thank you to highly regarded local artist, Nigel Lazenby, who nominated the Clifford Craig Foundation as the beneficiary of his recent "Art for Life" Exhibition in Launceston.

Co-presented by Nigel and Henry's Restaurant, the exhibition was held at Shop 9 the Quadrant Mall with an enthusiastic attendance for the opening night cocktail party.

Nigel has a strong association with the LGH and has a number of his artworks on display throughout the hospital, including the John Morris Gallery in the research centre.



Artist Nigel Lazenby opening the "Art for Life" Exhibition

# For the Diary

## Clifford Craig Charity Ball

- "Grease"

**When:** Friday, 11th May  
**Where:** Hotel Grand Chancellor Launceston  
**Bookings:** Foundation Office - 6777 6010 or [www.cliffordcraig.org.au](http://www.cliffordcraig.org.au)

## Launceston Friends of Clifford Craig

- Pre Mother's Day Lunch

**When:** Friday, 11th May  
**Where:** Riverside Golf Club  
**Time:** Midday  
**Bookings:** Foundation Office - 6777 6010 or [www.cliffordcraig.org.au](http://www.cliffordcraig.org.au)

## Launceston Friends of Clifford Craig

- Soup & Sandwich Lunch

**When:** Thursday, 25th July  
**Where:** Kings Meadows Bowls Club  
**Time:** Midday  
Booking information TBA

## Ladies Day Out

**When:** Saturday, 17th or 24th August (to be confirmed)  
**Where:** Country Club Tasmania  
**Bookings:** Foundation Office - 6777 6010 or [www.cliffordcraig.org.au](http://www.cliffordcraig.org.au)

## Run & Walk for your Heart

**When:** Sunday 6th October  
**Where:** UTAS Stadium Precinct  
**Entries:** [www.cliffordcraig.org.au](http://www.cliffordcraig.org.au)

## Entertainment Yourself and help support Medical Research

The 2018-19 Entertainment Book is now available for purchase through the Clifford Craig Foundation.

For just \$65, this year's book contains \$20,000 worth of 50% off and 2 for 1 offers for the best restaurants, cafes, arts, attractions, hotels, travel and shopping.

For every book sold through Clifford Craig, \$13 is donated back to help fund our medical research program here at the Launceston General Hospital.

You can grab your copy by visiting the Foundation office on level 5 of the LGH or call us on 6777 6010 to order a copy.



## Wonderful Friends of the Foundation

Our wonderful volunteer fundraising group, the Friends of Clifford Craig have again provided a significant contribution to the Foundation from their 2018 fundraising activities.

Under the leadership of outgoing President Toni Maloney, the "friends" presented Clifford Craig Foundation chairman, Assoc Prof Don McTaggart with a donation of \$33,000 at their recent Annual General Meeting. The funds were raised from their annual calendar of events which included the annual Garden Fete, Mother's Day Luncheon, Soup & Sandwich Luncheon, Melbourne Cup Luncheon and a Spit Roast.

Thank you to this very loyal group of "Friends" for their on-going dedication. At the recent AGM, Christine Farrell was elected as the in-coming President for 2019.



The Garden Fete is a popular event for the "Friends".

# Chairman Recognised for Service

**Chairman of the Clifford Craig Foundation, Associate Professor Don McTaggart was awarded an Order of Australia Award in the recent Australia Day Honours.**

Recognised for significant service to medicine and to the community of Launceston, Assoc Prof McTaggart has dedicated his career in medicine to ensuring regional Tasmanians have access to the highest medical care.

He worked on the North-West Coast as a consulting physician for 20 years from 1963 and saw the establishment of the intensive care unit at the North-West Regional Hospital. He then moved to the Launceston General Hospital to specialise in cardiology and was the first sub-specialist at the hospital.

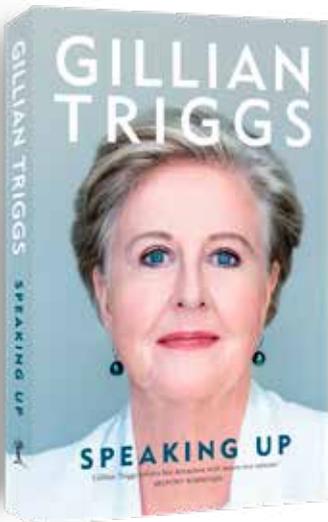
One of his proudest achievements was to see the LGH become accepted as a teaching hospital for cardiologist training, the only regional hospital in Australia at the time. An active researcher in his own right, Assoc Prof McTaggart became the Chairman of the Clifford Craig Foundation in 2006, a position he still maintains.

Outside of medicine, Assoc Prof McTaggart has contributed significantly to the community and is a past District Governor of Rotary.



*Associate Professor Don McTaggart*

## International Women's Day Lunch with Gillian Triggs



**The annual International Women's Day luncheon was held in March and featured Gillian Triggs as this year's guest speaker.**

A capacity audience attended the event at the Country Club Resort and heard a wonderful address from the former President of the Human Rights Commission. The occasion also coincided with the launch of her newly published book *Speaking Up*.

The luncheon was also attended by the Hon. Jacqui Petrusma MP whose ministerial portfolio includes Minister for Women.

Clifford Craig Foundation has organised the luncheon for 12 years in partnership with the Department of Communities Tasmania, which contains responsibility for Women Tasmania.

## Christmas Conversation with an Extraordinary Lady

**The remarkable life of one of Australia's pre-eminent philanthropists and businesswomen was the feature of the Christmas Conversations Luncheon in December.**

Susan Alberti AC was joined by Master of Ceremonies Rachel Williams to discuss her extraordinary story of determination and resilience where she openly revealed her battles in boardrooms, and personal challenges with cancer, diabetes and open-heart surgery where she lost half her body weight on the road to recovery.

A truly remarkable lady, Susan encapsulated the audience with her conversation.



# HEALTHY EATING RECIPE

## Winter Vegetable & Lentil Soup



# BIG

## Thank You To Our Donors

**We would like to say a big thank you to those that donated to the Clifford Craig Foundation in 2018.**

Together with our community, the Foundation invests in excellence in medical research, facilities and education to advance the health and wellbeing of the people of Northern Tasmania.

Medical research is a priority focus because we believe that knowledge gained through research means better patient care and improved medical treatments. Furthermore, the research funding opportunities that we provide are intended to support the recruitment and retention of medical professionals to work here in Northern Tasmania.

During 2018, the Foundation funded an extensive research program with a commitment of \$527,654. This wouldn't be possible without the wonderful philanthropic support of our donors and supporters.

If you would like to become a supporter of the Clifford Craig Foundation, please complete the gift coupon in this edition of Priceless, donate online via [www.cliffordcraig.org.au](http://www.cliffordcraig.org.au), or simply call us on (03) 6777 6010.

***Your donations help us to make a difference to the lives of all Tasmanians***



**With the nearing of winter just around the corner, our healthy eating recipe is a winter vegetable & lentil soup. When it is cold outside, treat yourself to a homemade vegetable soup packed with lovely flavour.**

Prep 10 mins

Cook 30 mins

Serves 2

## Ingredients

- 85g dried red lentils
- 2 carrots quartered lengthways then diced
- 3 sticks celery sliced
- 2 small leeks sliced
- 2 tbsp tomato puree
- 1 tbsn fresh thyme leaves
- 3 large garlic cloves chopped
- 1 tbsn vegetable bouillon powder
- 1 heaped tsp ground coriander

## Method

1. Tip 85g dried red lentils, 2 quartered and diced carrots, 3 sliced celery sticks and 2 sliced leeks into a large pan with 2 tbsp tomato purée, 1 tbsp fresh thyme leaves, 3 chopped garlic cloves, 1 tbsp vegetable bouillon powder and 1 heaped tsp ground coriander.
2. Pour over 1½ litres boiling water from the kettle, then stir well.
3. Cover and leave to simmer for 30 mins until the vegetables and lentils are tender.
4. Ladle into bowls and eat straightaway, or if you like a really thick texture, blitz a third of the soup with a hand blender or in a food processor.