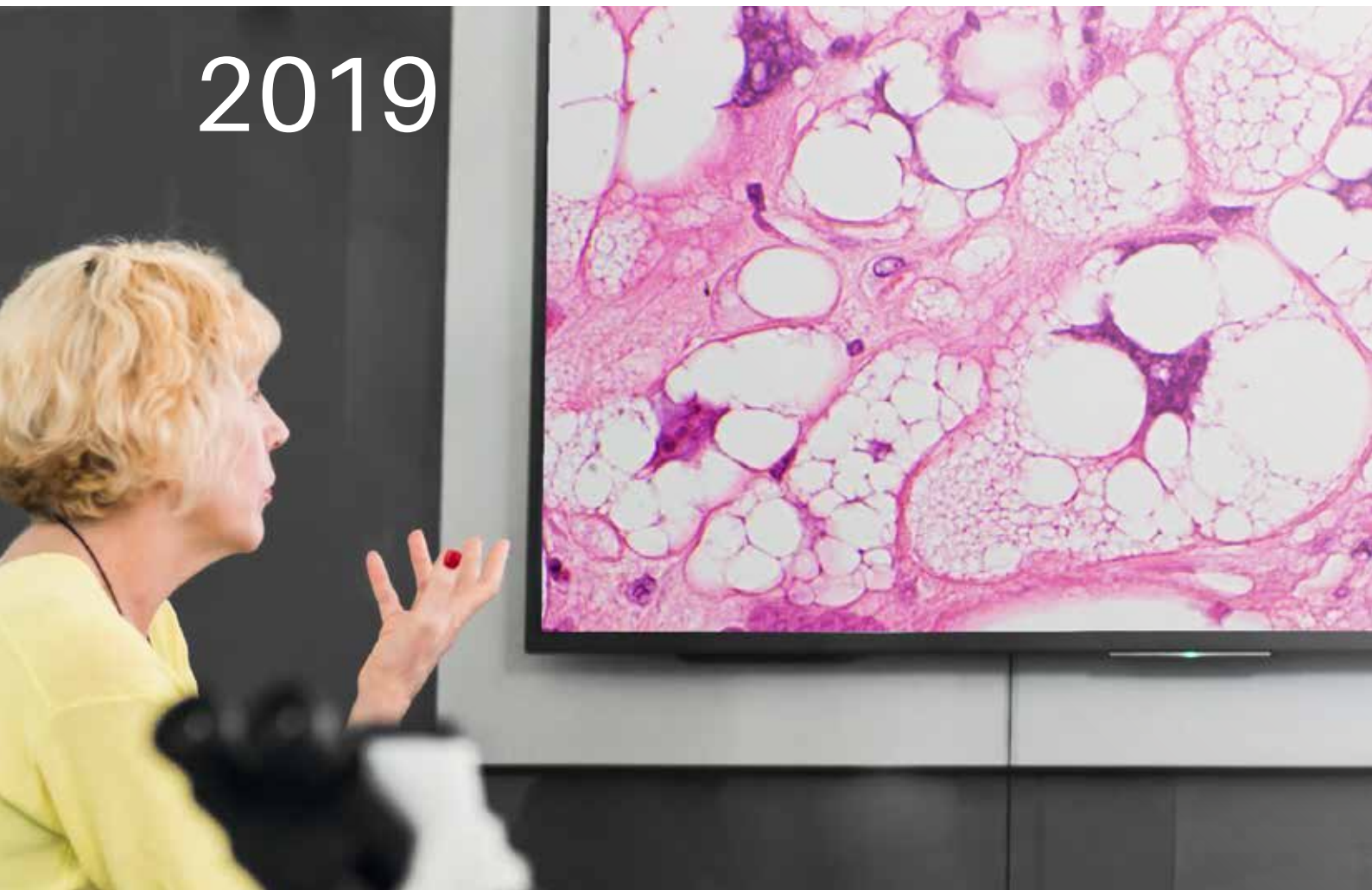


# Corporate Responsibility Report

2019



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## Verification of unaudited information in this report

Sonic Healthcare's 2019 Corporate Responsibility Report ('the Report') has been prepared to provide a general overview of Sonic's performance with respect to environmental, social and governance (ESG) topics. It should be read in conjunction with Sonic's 2019 Annual Report and other documents, such as Sonic's policies, which are published on the Sonic Healthcare website. The Report has not been subject to independent assurance, however, the information and data contained in the Report have been subject to various levels of internal review and validation to ensure the disclosures are materially accurate, complete and prepared on a consistent basis.

## Cover

Dr Suzanne Danieleto,  
Anatomical Pathologist,  
Douglass Hanly Moir Pathology  
in Sydney, Australia, discussing a  
case study on liposarcoma, a  
malignant tumour of soft tissue  
arising from the body's fat cells.

# CEO Message



Developing and sustaining a strong corporate culture generates obvious benefits for organisations – financial, operational and social. It creates a shared sense of purpose and contributes to employee wellbeing and satisfaction.

Sonic Healthcare's corporate culture is predicated on a deep understanding of the importance of medicine, and the privilege that all staff feel in helping to deliver the highest quality healthcare.

From our earliest days as an emerging healthcare provider, we sought to codify how we wished to behave as an organisation, both in terms of how we wish to treat our fellow staff members, as well as how we wish to be perceived by stakeholders outside of our company. We achieved the former by asking the people who knew us best – our staff – surveying them to distil the essence of our code of conduct into five different statements that became known as Sonic's Core Values. These values include demonstrating responsibility, treating each other with respect and honesty, and maintaining confidentiality.

Sonic's core values are supported by our Foundation Principles, a set of overarching guidelines designed to provide staff with a clear understanding of the interaction between Sonic's people and its external customers – primarily patients, doctors and healthcare organisations. These principles, which include operational excellence and company conscience, provide the foundations for our culture of Medical Leadership.

Medical Leadership has become the defining element of Sonic Healthcare's culture. The belief that a healthcare company is best run by leaders with a deep understanding of the medical profession has proven to be the cornerstone of our growth and success as a company. It has also served to attract and retain some of the leading practitioners in the field, with the tenure of Sonic's staff, particularly at senior level, outstripping industry averages.

Instead of nicely worded mission statements, we have found that our commitment to a culture of Medical Leadership has worked naturally as a globally unifying force to inspire our people to achieve outstanding outcomes at quality, service and financial levels.

Sonic Healthcare lives and breathes its corporate culture with every test and every patient interaction. We understand the vital importance of the work we do. We know that doctors and patients rely on our quality, accuracy and expertise. They also rely on the care of our front-line staff, and the unseen and often heroic work of the vast network of trained professionals within Sonic who are charged with providing different modalities of patient care.

This care doesn't just reside in our laboratories, imaging centres and patient clinics, it also extends to the local and global community work that we do. From training and education, through to outreach work in developing countries, Sonic's culture and commitment to best patient care has remained an unwavering constant in an ever-changing healthcare landscape. It is a culture of which I am immensely proud, and a culture that will help us to remain true to the principles of good medicine well into the future.

The 2019 Corporate Responsibility Report captures some of the many activities in which we participate each year, in order to support communities near and far. It gives me great pleasure to present it to you for your reading.

**Dr Colin Goldschmidt**  
CEO – Sonic Healthcare  
October 2019



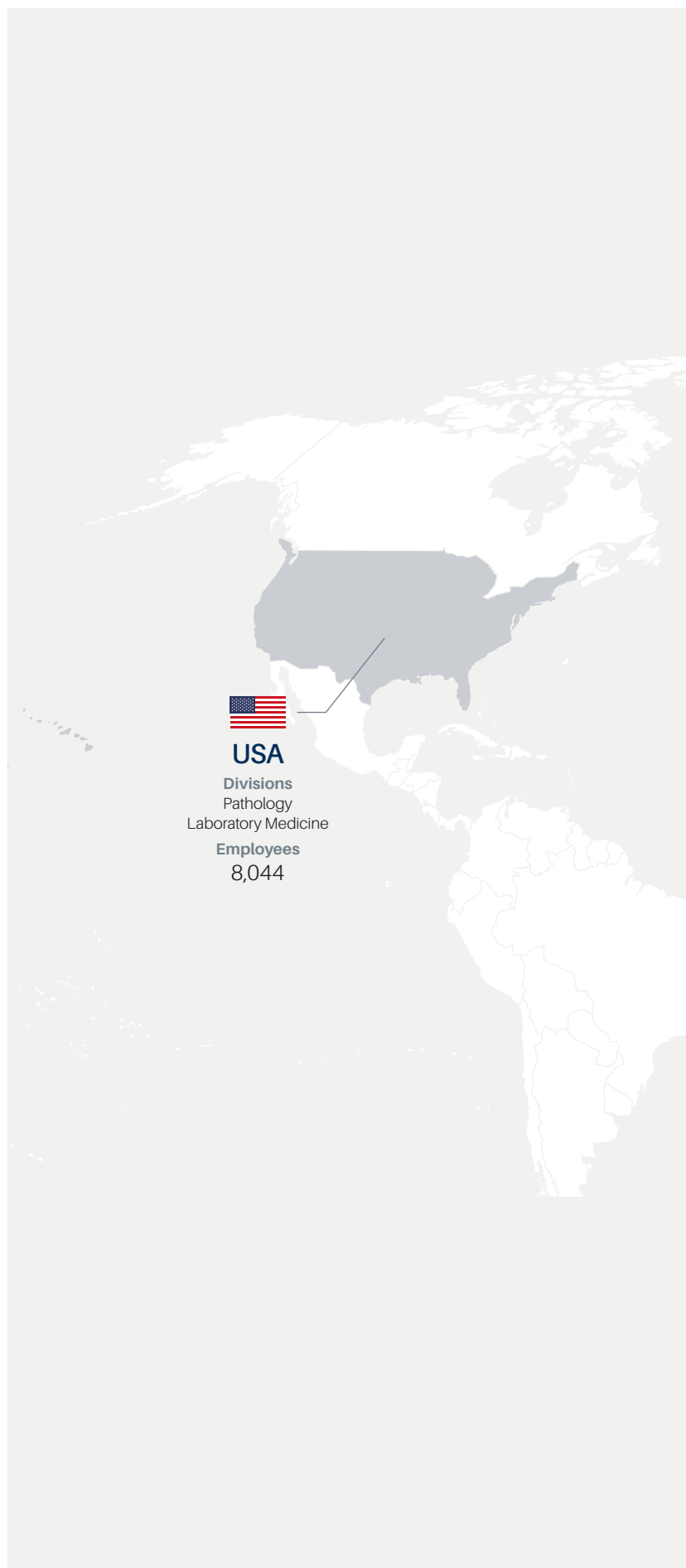
# About Sonic

Sonic Healthcare is an internationally renowned healthcare provider with specialist operations in pathology/laboratory medicine, radiology, general practice medicine and corporate medical services.

Under the leadership of a pathologist CEO, and supported by a Board of Directors with deep medical, legal, financial and operational expertise, Sonic's success stems from the belief that our global culture of Medical Leadership leads to the delivery of outstanding medical services. Medical Leadership starts at the Board level and permeates through to the day-to-day management of our subsidiaries.

Headquartered in Sydney, Australia, and listed on the Australian Securities Exchange (ASX), Sonic has grown to become one of the world's leading healthcare providers, with operations in Australia, Germany, the USA, the United Kingdom, Belgium, Switzerland, Ireland and New Zealand. We employ more than 36,000 people globally, including 1,000 pathologists and radiologists, and thousands of medical scientists, radiographers, sonographers, technicians and nurses, all of whom are led by medical personnel. Together, we proudly deliver high-quality medical and diagnostic services to more than 117 million people annually.

Our staff are supported by ongoing investments in state-of-the-art medical technologies and facilities, as well as proprietary information systems that are customised to meet the specific needs of our organisation and its stakeholders. This is backed by a firm commitment to maintaining uncompromising ethical standards in the areas of both business management and medical practice.



  
**Ireland**  
Divisions  
Pathology  
Laboratory Medicine  
Employees  
67

  
**UK**  
Divisions  
Pathology  
Laboratory Medicine  
Employees  
2,219

  
**Germany**  
Divisions  
Pathology  
Laboratory Medicine  
Employees  
7,530

  
**Belgium**  
Divisions  
Pathology  
Laboratory Medicine  
Employees  
523

  
**Switzerland**  
Divisions  
Pathology  
Laboratory Medicine  
Employees  
1,131

  
**Australia**  
Divisions  
Pathology  
Laboratory Medicine  
Radiology  
Clinical Services  
Employees  
16,933

  
**New Zealand**  
Divisions  
Pathology  
Laboratory Medicine  
Employees  
245

# The Sonic Difference

Every organisation operates by a set of values and guiding principles. However, organisational culture is more than just what you say you do. It's about what you actually do – how you treat your staff, your customers and the communities in which you serve; the frameworks you use for decision-making and the approach you take to growing your business.

Like many companies, Sonic has a set of Core Values and Foundation Principles. More than that, we have an abiding philosophy of Medical Leadership, whereby our people are empowered to act in the best interests of clinicians and patients at all levels of our organisation. We also employ a federated structure of management, where every practice has autonomous decision-making from a medical perspective, to ensure they continue to provide services in line with the expectations of their local communities.

It is the combination of these four ingredients – Medical Leadership, Core Values, Foundation Principles and Medical Sovereignty – that make us different, because it's not *what* we do, it's *how* we do it. Over many years, the consistent culture of acting in the best interests of doctors and their patients, together with putting our people first, has helped Sonic to solidify our well-earned reputation for medical excellence, as well as being a highly desirable place to work.



## Medical Leadership

At Sonic Healthcare, we understand and respect the practice of medicine. Our unique culture of Medical Leadership inspires our people to deliver superior healthcare outcomes for both doctors and patients.

Our leaders are doctors or experienced healthcare professionals who are empowered to act in the best interests of clinicians and patients at all levels of our organisation.

We acknowledge the trust that clinicians place in us and strive to mirror their commitment to medical excellence in everything we do.

Medical Leadership has always been enshrined in Sonic's corporate culture. It reflects our understanding that medicine is a profession rather than a business, and is responsible for our continued global success.



## Our Values

Sonic's global network of companies is united by a set of Core Values that reflect the care and expertise required to consistently deliver exceptional medical services.

Our Values were established in early 2000, after broad consultation with 5,000 employees across all of our practices. Their collective responses were distilled into a set of core values that act as a roadmap of how we want to behave as a company. These values apply to every single Sonic employee, regardless of their role or country of operation.

These values remain as relevant today as they did at the turn of the millennium, and act as a unified point of reference for Sonic Healthcare in all its internal and external interactions.



## Foundation Principles

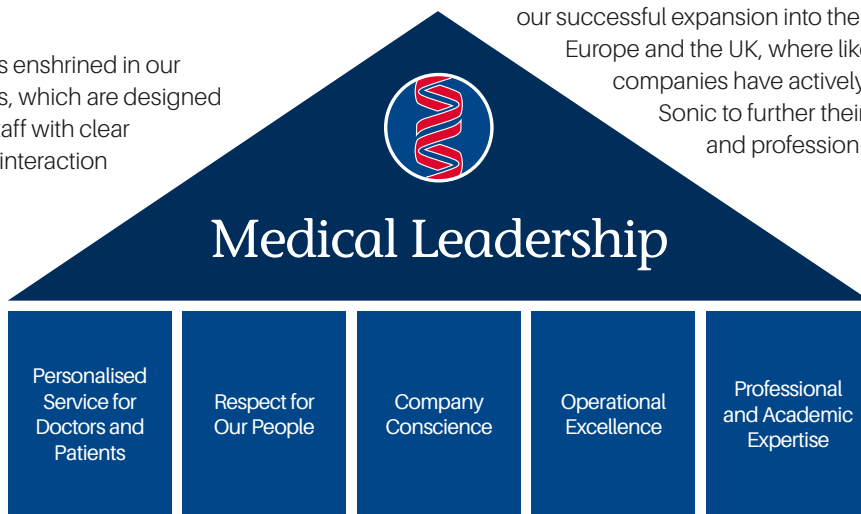
Medicine is a complex profession that requires insight, sensitivity and a lifelong commitment to learning, in order to provide the best possible patient care and clinical outcomes.

Sonic believes that Medical Leadership facilitates the highest standards of clinical and operational excellence for the doctors and patients we serve. It also reflects a deep understanding of the special complexities, obligations and privileges of medical practice.

Medical Leadership is enshrined in our Foundation Principles, which are designed to provide all Sonic staff with clear guidelines about the interaction

between Sonic's people and its external stakeholders – doctors, patients, other customers and our local and global communities.

This commitment to quality for its own sake is what makes Sonic such a sought-after healthcare provider. It is something that we are incredibly proud of and something that we continue to celebrate. It has also been instrumental in our successful expansion into the USA, continental Europe and the UK, where like-minded diagnostic companies have actively chosen to join with Sonic to further their medically oriented and profession-based operations.



# Pathology/ Laboratory Medicine

## What is pathology/ laboratory medicine?

Pathology or laboratory medicine is the branch of medicine that studies samples of blood, urine, tissue and other bodily fluids to identify patients at risk of disease, to determine the cause and nature of disease, and to guide and monitor treatment and progress.

Laboratory medicine provides clinicians with the information they need to manage patients in a timely and appropriate way, enabling optimal health outcomes for both the individual, as well as the community as a whole.



**Dr Bernard Conrad**  
Chief Medical Officer  
Genesupport  
Switzerland



## My Story

### Dealing with the unexpected

Over the past 10 years, non-invasive prenatal testing (NIPT) has quickly become one of the most commonly used genetic tests when screening pregnant women for early indications of whether their fetus is likely to have Down syndrome (trisomy 21), Edwards syndrome (trisomy 18) or Patau syndrome (trisomy 13). The straightforward blood test can be performed at 10 weeks gestation and doesn't pose any threat to the fetus.

Sometimes, however, unexpected results occur that require further investigation and follow-up. This was the case one Friday afternoon for Dr Bernard Conrad, Chief Medical Officer at Genesupport, the specialist genetics laboratory within Medisupport, one of Sonic's Swiss laboratories.

Dr Conrad was contacted by his colleague, Dr Marco Belfore, who had seen some unexpected results while reviewing a routine NIPT report. Multicopy gains of chromosomal material at 4q25 and at 9p24-9p21 were evident in the result – a strong indication of the presence of a maternal cancer, despite a completely normal fetal result.

On seeing the unusual result, Dr Conrad enlisted the support of Dr Jean Benhattar, Medisupport's expert molecular pathologist, to see whether he could determine what type of cancer the mother may have. After reviewing the literature, he came back an hour later, explaining that the result was consistent with Hodgkin lymphoma. Dr Conrad immediately called the patient's gynaecologist who contacted an oncologist to examine the patient over the weekend. This resulted in a confirmed diagnosis of Hodgkin lymphoma.

The pregnancy progressed without chemotherapy, resulting in a healthy baby. The mother started chemotherapy immediately after birth, and is now in full remission.

"In genetic medicine, nothing is routine. You always have to be looking for the unexpected. We are glad that we were able to help diagnose this patient, even though we weren't testing her for that condition. More than that, we are thrilled that both mother and baby are doing well," said Dr Conrad.

## Why is it important?

Laboratory medicine informs almost every aspect of modern medicine and is necessary in 70% of all medical diagnoses and in every single cancer diagnosis. It provides doctors with vital information about what is affecting the patient, so they can determine the best course of action. This can range from understanding which type of antibiotics to prescribe for a particular infection, through to guiding the surgeon to ensure complete removal of a tumour, as well as the follow-up treatment that is required.

## How does it contribute to the community?

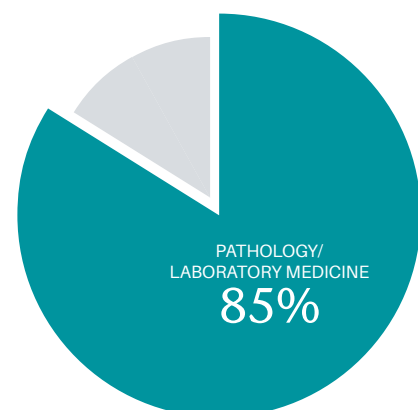
Laboratory medicine is often referred to as the engine room of medicine. Without it, we would still be treating patients based on 'best guesses'. It is impossible to imagine modern medicine without the insights provided by this vital diagnostic service.

Laboratory medicine tests enable earlier and more accurate diagnosis of disease, allowing for earlier treatment. This has obvious positive social and economic outcomes.

Laboratory medicine also allows for monitoring of conditions to determine whether a prescribed treatment is being effective.

More than that, advances in molecular and genetic pathology now give us much more targeted information about how to best treat different forms of cancer and other diseases.

FY 2019 Revenue



# Diagnostic Imaging

## What is diagnostic imaging?

Diagnostic imaging or radiology is the branch of medicine that uses non-invasive technology to create images of bones, tissues and organs within the human body. These images are interpreted by a radiologist or nuclear medicine physician to identify or monitor diseases or injuries. The findings are then included in a written report to the referring doctor.

Diagnostic imaging technologies include X-rays, computed tomography (CT), magnetic resonance imaging (MRI), ultrasounds, nuclear medicine, positron emission tomography (PET) and more.

Imaging methods are also used to help radiologists perform procedures, such as biopsies, fine needle aspirations and image-guided treatments known as interventional radiology.

## My Story Life as a radiographer

Tom Hanna is a man who exudes enthusiasm for his job.

"I get to help people for a living. There is nothing better than that. I get to provide a service to the patient and look after my local community," he said.

Tom has worked for Sonic's Castlereagh Imaging in Sydney, Australia, for the last nine years, joining the practice as a fresh Medical Imaging graduate from the University of Sydney. During that time, his dedication and hard work have seen him acquire skills in many areas of medical imaging, including X-rays, CT and MRI scans. These days, he spends most of his time working in MRI. He has also worked his way into a leadership position and is now second-in-charge of the comprehensive Penrith practice.

Medical Imaging combines two of Tom's loves – people and science. "I get to build a rapport with patients – especially the ones with more serious conditions, such as cancer – and I get to work with all this brilliant machinery that operates on really cool physics."

Tom is technically excellent at his job, but from a customer service perspective he always goes above and beyond to help patients and referring doctors. Castlereagh Imaging constantly receives feedback about how helpful he is, and much of this comes down to his empathy toward his patients.

"Quite often they are very anxious. They don't know what the procedure is going to involve and they may be feeling claustrophobic about having an MRI. Our job is to win them over and help them to relax."

Tom has a special soft spot for cancer patients. "They go through so much and yet they are the ones who are the most appreciative and are the most likely to tell you how happy they are with what you have done for them."

He often gets to build a close relationship with these patients, who frequently return every two to three months for scans that will help inform their doctors about the progress of their treatment. "Often these are the more fragile patients and it's up to us to reassure them and make them feel comfortable."



**Tom Hanna**  
Radiographer  
Castlereagh Imaging  
Australia

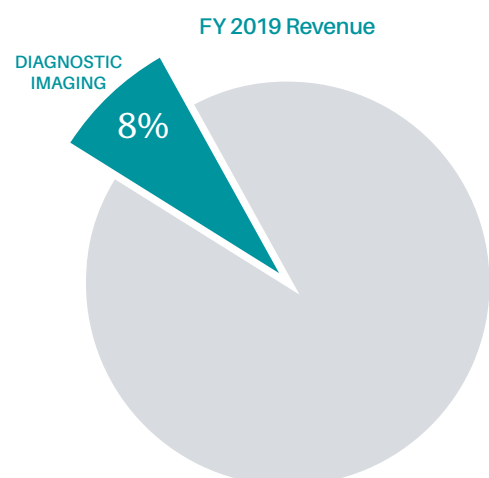
## Why is it important?

Diagnostic imaging is central to the practice of modern medicine. It is used for the diagnosis of many serious and life-threatening conditions, including cancer, neurological disorders and orthopaedic soft tissue injuries. The information contained in the image and radiologist's report expands the referring doctor's knowledge of the disease process and guides the treatment of the patient.

## How does it contribute to the community?

Diagnostic imaging allows many diseases and conditions to be detected at a treatable stage (for example, CT now provides data that assists in the earlier detection and treatment of colon cancer). This allows for earlier and less intensive treatment.

Diagnostic imaging is also used to monitor the progress of disease, the delivery of treatments, and to determine whether those treatments are working effectively. If the treatment is not working as planned, it can be adjusted, changed or stopped. Once treatment has concluded, diagnostic imaging can help to monitor for any disease recurrence over the ensuing years. This results in cost savings for our health system, and helps patients return to work and family sooner.



# General Practice

## What is General Practice?

General Practice is the medical discipline that delivers primary healthcare in the community. General Practice is usually the first point-of-call for patients, and deals with everything, from colds and flu through to acute and chronic illnesses. General practitioners also provide preventive care and health education to patients.

The holistic approach of General Practice aims to consider the biological, psychological and social factors relevant to the medical care of each patient. The discipline is not confined to specific organs of the body and involves treating people with multiple health issues.



**Dr Malcolm Clark**  
GP/Medical Director  
Camberwell Road Medical Practice  
IPN Victoria, Australia

## My Story

### Helping my community

Dr Malcolm Clark works as a general practitioner at Camberwell Road Medical Practice in the suburb of Hawthorn East, Melbourne, Australia. Malcolm has practised in the area for more than two decades, and is firmly embedded in his local community. "I see the same patients I've been seeing for 25 years. I see their children and their grandchildren." This continuity helps Malcolm and his colleagues to better service their patients, as they are able to use their combined experience and knowledge to refer to other doctors within their own practice, providing peace of mind for both the doctor and the patient.

Malcolm describes his work as 'lovely' and says that the best part of his job is the human interaction. "I enjoy the people. I like my patients. I like to talk to them and to be able to help them," he explained. "I like it when patients come back and say that the person I sent them to treated them well, because that reflects nicely on me."

Malcolm has seen considerable change in general practice medicine. "When I was a young GP, a lot more people came in for 'on the day' urgent appointments. These days, my work has changed substantially, to be chronic disease and mental health management," he said.

There has also been a huge change in the information available to both doctors and patients, as well as the number of different treatments available for managing health problems. "I'm a general practitioner, but I need to know about everything."

There is no such thing as a typical day for Malcolm. Each day brings its own rewards and its own challenges. "Yesterday I ran on time for most of the day because I didn't get as many complicated patients as I usually do," he said. About 80% of his day is devoted to working with patients requiring chronic disease management, which includes both physical and mental illness.

Malcolm's patient mix is typical of a doctor who has been practising in the same area for a long time. "The longer a GP stays at a practice, the more of these patients you accrue. But I like being available to people and being able to help them and their families."

## Why is it important?

General Practice delivers cost-effective, personalised medical care in a community setting, and is usually the first point of call for people seeking medical advice. This also helps to take the pressure off hospital emergency departments.

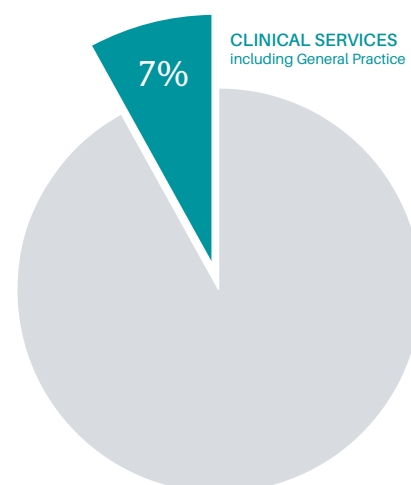
General practitioners often develop long-term, trusting relationships with their patients, who return to them for management of their care.

## How does it contribute to the community?

General Practice is firmly embedded in the community.

A General Practice not only serves to deliver immediate and chronic care to its patients, but also serves to educate patients and safeguard the health of entire families and communities.

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# Respect for Our People

Sonic's success is built on the steadfast belief that when we look after our people, they will look after everything else – doctors, patients and everything that is required to operate a successful healthcare organisation.

This respect for our people manifests itself in the need to be more than just an employer. We strive to create workplaces that are secure and fulfilling, and our culture is built on the strength of our people.

Sonic employs more than 36,000 people in an environment of professionalism, ethical behaviour, equal opportunity and reward based on merit.

## Creating a fulfilling work environment

'Respect for Our People' is one of the key pillars of our Foundation Principles, while 'Treating each other with Respect & Honesty' is one of Sonic's Core Values. Respect for our people is also embedded in a range of policies ensuring that our diverse workforce operates in safe, legally compliant workplaces that meet all operating requirements. The philosophy of treating each other with respect and honesty is further encouraged by our Diversity Policy, Labour Standards and Human Rights Policy, and Code of Conduct.







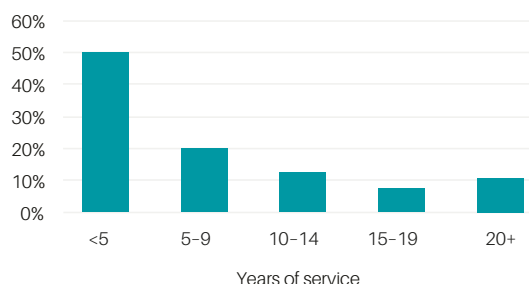
Scientists performing PCR testing at Sullivan Nicolaides Pathology, Brisbane, Australia

## Employee turnover

Sonic is considered an 'employer of choice' due to our professional reputation within the communities in which we operate. Our commitment to Medical Leadership, as well as the respect we show our staff, is reflected in our low employee turnover rate, especially at more senior levels of the organisation, which includes executive managers, line managers, pathologists and radiologists, who comprise 7.2% of Sonic's global workforce.

Employee turnover for our global workforce			
	2019	2018	2017
Senior leadership turnover rate	6.7%	6.9%	6.7%
Total employee turnover rate	16.5%	16.8%	16.5%

## Length of service for the total workforce



## Douglass Hanly Moir Pathology named as top 20 employer in Australia

The 2019 Randstad Employer Brand Research Awards polled 10,861 Australians about their workplace experiences and sentiments, and used the results to list the country's most sought-after employers. NSW-based Sonic laboratory Douglass Hanly Moir Pathology was listed in the top 20 places to work in Australia, among well-known brands such as Qantas, Apple and Virgin Australia.

## My Story

### Embedding a culture of trust and respect

Corporate culture is often used as a business buzzword, but the creation of a cohesive culture that resonates with staff and customers alike requires constant nurturing and attention.

Virginia Re is the Head of Sonic Connect, the global learning and development arm of Sonic Healthcare. Her department exists to help foster staff appreciation of Sonic's unique culture, which is often referred to as 'The Sonic Difference'. A key component of her work is the facilitation of workshops with Sonic Healthcare leaders worldwide.

Each workshop begins with an explanation of Medical Leadership, which is at the heart of 'The Sonic Difference'. For staff, the practice of Medical Leadership incorporates care for our people and a commitment to support all staff in the pursuit of professional excellence.

Despite there being a range of workshops on offer, they all have a common thread that runs through them. "Emotional Intelligence is the focus of all leadership training at Sonic Connect. Emotional Intelligence refers to the skills associated with identifying and managing one's own emotions and the abilities to manage relationships and teams effectively. Sonic has always believed that it is essential for our leaders to develop and model these abilities," Virginia explained. More than 3,500 Sonic employees from around the world

have now attended Sonic Connect's Emotionally Intelligent Leadership workshop. Emotional Intelligence resonates with staff because it aligns with all components of Sonic's culture. One example of this is the foundation principle 'Respect for Our People'.

"'Respect for Our People' has always been a crucial part of the culture of Sonic Healthcare. This is demonstrated by the importance we place on Our Values which include the value of treating each other with respect and honesty," Virginia said.

"To feel that we are respected, and to be treated accordingly, is a fundamental need for all people. Many of our Sonic Connect programs are underpinned by an appreciation that culture is about our behaviour – that is, what we do is more important than what we say. So, fostering Emotional Intelligence in our leaders is about more than just what Emotional Intelligence means, but about how we behave and treat each other."

Sonic Healthcare operates in eight different countries. Despite geographic and regional differences, Virginia sees a commonality to the Sonic culture. "Wherever I travel in the Sonic world, I consistently see staff enthusiasm and commitment towards training and development. It is viewed as the ultimate demonstration of our 'Respect for Our People'. For many staff, just the fact that they are invited to a workshop to talk about some of these topics demonstrates the culture on its own. As one staff member recently commented "This workshop really demonstrates what Sonic is all about."



**Virginia Re**  
Head of Sonic Connect  
Sonic Healthcare  
Australia

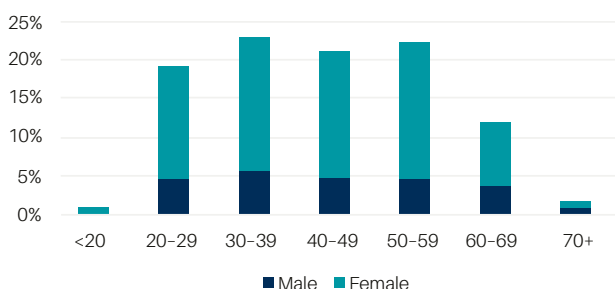
## Employee diversity

Our Diversity Policy outlines the principles that ensure we have a broad range of experience, talent and viewpoints in our businesses, across age, gender and ethnicity. Women comprise 74.8% of the overall workforce, and represent 53.3% of senior leadership, which is defined as manager level and above.

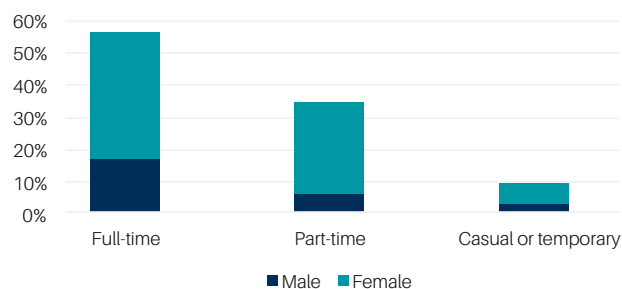
Although we don't collect specific figures on ethnicity, we also enjoy an ethnically diverse and harmonious workforce.

Employees by gender diversity			
	2019	2018	2017
Women on the Board of Directors	25.0%	25.0%	28.6%
Women in senior leadership positions	53.3%	53.3%	52.7%
Women in the workforce	74.8%	75.3%	75.3%

Employees by age bracket



Status of employment



## Parental leave and returning to work

During FY2019, 1.7% of staff took parental leave, with 83% subsequently returning to work. Sonic recognises the importance of family and that, following parental leave, staff may need to adjust their work patterns to assist them in handling their family responsibilities. To this end, Sonic promotes flexibility in both job functionality and hours of work, where possible, to assist staff returning from parental leave.

## Retaining staff from new acquisitions

Sonic has a long and successful history of growth through the acquisition of existing medical practices. When achieving synergies from these acquisitions, our general approach is to rely on natural staff turnover to generate savings over time, rather than wide-scale redundancy programs. This preserves staff morale and helps to maintain the goodwill of the acquired businesses.

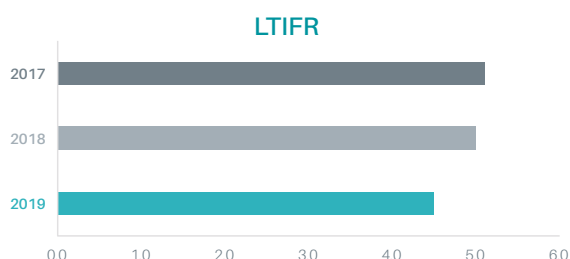
## Working with employee representatives

Sonic engages with unions and other employee representative groups in a positive manner, and hasn't experienced any significant industrial action in our 32-year history. We support the right to freedom of association for all our employees, including their right to join trade unions and to be represented by those unions for the purpose of collective bargaining. Sonic does not discriminate against, or deny access to, workers' representatives in the workplace, and a significant proportion of our global workforce are currently members of unions or other employee representative groups.

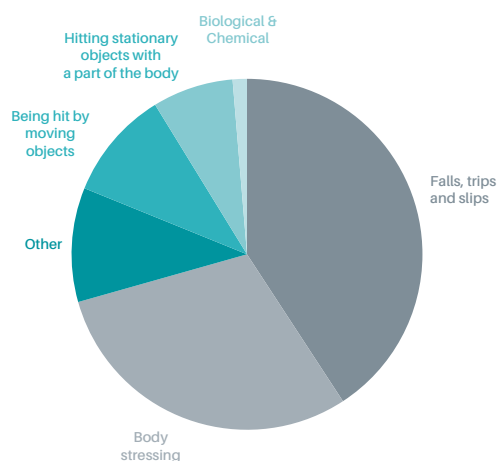
## Staff health, safety and wellbeing

Sonic is committed to the health, safety and wellbeing of our staff, contractors and visitors. Our Workplace Health and Safety Policy recognises our responsibility to ensure that staff enjoy a work-life balance, are provided with opportunities to develop professionally and are assured of Sonic's concern in promoting their health and safety. Our commitment to a positive safety culture and proactive approach to safety management is reflected in the SonicSAFE Improvement Program, which aims to achieve a zero-harm workplace.

No work-related fatalities occurred during the year across Sonic, and our lost-time injury frequency rate (LTIFR) for the 2019 financial year was 4.5 per one million hours worked, which was a decrease of 10% on the previous year.



### Injuries by causation



Sonic supports and invests in a number of wellness and other programs across its operations, to improve the health and happiness of its employees, which contribute to low absenteeism rates. Additionally, Sonic's proactive approach to improving employee engagement is a key factor in the high availability rate.

Sonic's workforce availability during the year was 97.1%.

## Queensland X-Ray receives 'Employer of the Year' Award at ASA Conference

Queensland X-Ray was named 'Employer of the Year' at the 2019 Australasian Sonographers Association (ASA) conference. The conference highlights ultrasound innovation and promotes education and excellence. Queensland X-Ray won the award for commitment to patient outcomes and care, commitment to clinical excellence, quality service and assurance, initiatives that promote career development, WHS management programs and flexible work practices.



Deb Moir and Pat Sullivan, Queensland X-Ray, Australia

## Mental Health Ambassadors

Sonic Healthcare UK understands the importance of mental health and wellbeing both at work and in the home. As part of Mental Health Awareness week in May, Sonic Healthcare UK ran a series of workshops for staff to gain new understanding and skills in this important area.

The workshops were delivered by 'Rethink Mental Illness', a mental health charity based in Camden. People who experience mental illness, and those who care for them, are at the heart of everything they do. On this basis, Rethink delivered three full-day workshops that highlighted the experiences and concerns people face when their mental health is not as robust as it could be.

Sonic Healthcare UK has introduced approximately 45 Mental Health Awareness Ambassadors within the organisation as a first point-of-call for staff who are experiencing difficulty and are unsure where to access help. The Mental Health Ambassadors can direct staff to the most appropriate support available.

The initiative has been very well received, with staff from all levels and departments volunteering to become Mental Health Ambassadors.





Castlereagh Imaging and Illawarra  
Radiology Group administration  
teams, Sydney, Australia

## R U OK?

"Are you okay?"

It's a simple question that has spawned a national movement across Australia, aimed at addressing mental health issues and suicide prevention. Established in 2009, the premise of R U OK Day is straightforward – the simple act of reaching out to someone who is struggling mentally may literally change someone's life.

R U OK Day encourages people to meaningfully connect with those around them and start a conversation. All it takes is a willingness to ask the question, then to listen, encourage positive action and keep checking in.

Throughout Australia, many Sonic Healthcare practices embrace R U OK Day, with morning teas, information packs and staff being encouraged to dress in yellow.

Sonic Healthcare places great importance on mental wellbeing in the workplace, and also works with the Black Dog Institute to implement managerial training in this area.

Castlereagh Imaging and Illawarra Radiology Group truly embraced the sentiment of this year's R U OK Day, donning yellow clothes and decking their practices out with posters and yellow balloons.

The initiative was very well received and the feedback from staff was overwhelmingly positive. "To be honest it's been quite humbling to see how well the staff embraced the day by reaching out to each other," said Donna Press, Business Manager for Castlereagh Imaging & Illawarra Radiology Group. "As a group, we have faced several challenging situations this year with mental health issues, so to see everyone come together was just fantastic."

These sentiments were echoed across Sonic Healthcare Australia, with R U OK Day activities held across the length and breadth of the country.



## Professional development

As part of our strong commitment to continuous professional development, Sonic has established its own Sonic Pathologist Academic Meetings in Australia and Germany, a research and development symposium in the UK and a Sonic Imaging Conference in Australia. These regular conferences provide a forum for our pathologists, radiologists and other scientific and technical staff to meet in a collegiate environment and to exchange ideas and best practices. The conferences are recognised as premier events of their kind, and attract hundreds of Sonic doctors and other medical staff per meeting, along with international and national guest speakers.

Our medical staff are also given conference leave and allowances each year to ensure that they remain at the forefront of their medical specialties.

Sonic also provides ongoing training for staff across all divisions and disciplines. This can range from the training of technical staff and pathology collectors through to leadership development workshops on emotional intelligence and conflict management.



**Dr Theresa Power**  
Anatomical Pathologist  
Clinpath Pathology  
Adelaide, Australia



### HSL 4th Annual Research and Innovations Symposium | The future of pathology, today

Pathology is entering an exciting new age. New molecular technologies are transforming the way we define, diagnose and treat disease, while advances in data science are helping us to process and interpret complex patient information quicker than ever before. New analytical techniques, such as artificial intelligence (AI), are already beginning to assist the diagnostic process and aid clinical decision-making. The digital future has well and truly arrived.

The way in which these digital developments will impact the future of healthcare was a key theme of Sonic Healthcare UK's Health Services Laboratories' (HSL) 4th Annual Research and Innovations Symposium, held at the Wellcome Collection, London, in November, 2018. Opening the symposium, Professor Michael Patton emphasised the importance of collaboration in translating research from the laboratory into clinical practice, citing HSL's partnership with the National Institute for Health Research (NIHR) University College London Hospitals Biomedical Research Centre as a prime example. Together, these institutions support more than 500 research projects and clinical trials, many of which are already having a direct impact on patient care.

The symposium covered a range of topics, including genomic profiling in encephalitis, tracking epidemics with nanotechnology and how research hospitals may work in the future.

With the UK's outstanding hospitals, world-leading universities and top academic institutions, Professor Bryan Williams, Chair of HSL's Research and Innovations Board, made a convincing case for why the NHS should lead this diagnostic revolution. And, judging by the expert innovation on display at this year's symposium, it's clear that HSL and its partners are at the forefront.





Dr Sanjay Dhupelia is the Sonic Imaging Conference Convenor and is also a radiologist at Queensland X-Ray, Brisbane, Australia

## 14th Annual Sonic Imaging Conference

As part of its commitment to continuous education, the Sonic Imaging division hosts an annual staff conference aimed at sharing knowledge, experiences and best practices among our radiologists and technical staff. This year's program featured 50 speakers, including 37 Sonic Imaging staff, and ran concurrent sessions covering all aspects of diagnostic imaging. It also boasted the largest ever attendance, at 430 participants.

The 2019 conference, whose theme was Education, Participation, Inspiration, was opened by Associate Professor Munjed Al Muderis, who delivered an inspirational keynote speech about his personal journey from Iraqi refugee to top orthopaedic surgeon in Sydney. The program also featured presentations from Professor Anwar Padhani, a Consultant Radiologist & Professor of Cancer Imaging from the Paul Strickland Scanner Centre, Mount Vernon Cancer Centre in London, UK, and Professor Elizabeth Morris, Chief, Breast Imaging Service & Professor of Radiology, Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Centre, New York, USA.

The program was rounded out by a session from Sonic Connect's Virginia Re. Her presentation on Cultivating Effective Relationships in the Workplace was enthusiastically received by all delegates, and was a further demonstration of our commitment to foster a supportive and respectful working environment.



# Respect for Our Communities

Sonic's company conscience is evident in every facet of our organisation, with particular emphasis on our involvement with communities near and far. We recognise the responsibilities and obligations that come with medical practice, and know that improving healthcare availability and access can literally change people's lives. Providing education, assistance and expertise to others has always been an integral part of our corporate culture.

We do this in a variety of ways, including:

- Helping others – propagating our medical expertise in less advantaged areas
- Contributing to charities
- Improving health outcomes
- Education

## Helping others

Over many years, Sonic has been in the fortunate position of being able to help vast numbers of people with our local and global philanthropic activities. The cornerstone of our giving projects is Sonic's Catalyst Program, which aims to establish self-sustaining pathology and radiology services for communities in dire need. For more than 20 years, we have had incredible success in several countries, making a meaningful difference to the lives of thousands of people.

We also support many local charities and, in FY2019, donated more than \$3 million in cash and in-kind donations. This included donations supporting research into medical treatments for many different types of cancer, as well as other medical conditions and charities. We also place particular importance in supporting children, families and population groups that find themselves in difficult circumstances.





## Catalyst Program

As a medically led organisation, Sonic knows that good medical practices play an important role in helping to improve the healthcare and lives of people in some of the world's most underprivileged areas. We have made it our mission to equip hospitals with modern pathology and radiology equipment, in some of the most disadvantaged places in the world. The benefits of this assistance have been significant, allowing local doctors to correctly identify different viruses and bacteria so patients can be properly treated the first time around.

Our support also involves training local staff in modern scientific methods and techniques so they can provide the vital laboratory, pathology and radiology services that underscore modern medicine. This assistance also extends to other aid projects, supporting schools, orphanages and refugee programs through the provision of funds, materials, education and training of the community.

Most of our projects are aligned with hospitals that treat women and children – two community subsets that are vital to the future success of any nation. Our support is known as the Catalyst Program because we aspire to be one of the catalysts that will help these hospitals, and the communities that they serve, to self-sufficiency.

The Catalyst Program is supported by Sonic Healthcare staff across the world, including a team of healthcare professionals who visit the projects at least once a year for several weeks at a time.

Over the last 20 years, we have sent a shipping container to an African aid project each year. These containers are filled with laboratory consumables, such as blood collection items, gloves, specimen containers and reagents, supplies for the hospital, as well as laboratory, radiology and computer equipment. They also include equipment and materials for schools and staff donations of clothes and shoes.



## When a medical emergency lands on your doorstep

Sonic Healthcare has had a deep and productive partnership with HEAL Africa for more than 12 years, helping to equip and supply the pathology and radiology departments of this remarkable tertiary hospital in the eastern region of the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). Over the years, our relationship has continued to strengthen, and we provide regular updates to staff and stakeholders about how the hospital, staff and patients are faring.

So when an Ebola outbreak occurred in the region in August, 2018, it felt very close to home.

Ebola was previously unknown in this part of DRC, but the highly contagious disease has resulted in many tragic and profound outcomes. Initially, rumour-mongering and misinformation about the causes and effects of Ebola were rife in the region, and efforts to contain the disease were met with distrust and resistance, including instances of attacks on local medical staff working in the Ebola riposte.

Thankfully, the people of eastern DRC are now aware of the dangers posed by Ebola, especially those living in big cities, and adherence to preventative measures is quite high.

In early July, 2019, the first confirmed Ebola case was identified in Goma, a city of one million people and the home of the HEAL Africa hospital. Since then, two further cases have been confirmed, with two of these three patients subsequently dying.

As of October, 2019, the total number of Ebola cases in DRC has passed 2,700, making it the country's largest ever Ebola outbreak and the second largest ever recorded. Confirmed deaths currently stand at 1,866. Fear of infection grips nearly everyone in the region, leading to people not travelling to areas where Ebola has been identified. People no longer greet each other by hand-shaking or embracing, while those who have contracted the disease and been cured have been ostracised, often not being allowed to resume work due to the fear that these people are still dangerous to be around.

The HEAL Africa hospital, laboratory and imaging centre in Goma are directly affected by this outbreak. All front-line staff have been vaccinated and protocols are in place to restrict transmission within the hospital itself. While there have been no known cases at HEAL, the disruption of normal health services within this busy 200-bed facility would have dire consequences on the delivery of health services in such a needy location.

A year after the outbreak, the situation in Ebola-affected areas of DRC is deteriorating, with the number of confirmed cases increasing. Twenty-five health zones have reported cases of Ebola, and of these, 18 are considered active transmission areas, that is, they have had confirmed cases within the last 21 days – the maximum incubation period for Ebola. WHO has announced that the current Ebola outbreak in DRC represents a Public Health Emergency of International Concern (PHEIC).



## More than just medical help

Spending time in hospital can be hard for any parent with young children, but it is especially difficult for women in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) who come to the HEAL Africa hospital to receive treatment for fistulas and other conditions. Quite often, these patients have to bring their children into the hospital with them, as they don't have any other means of taking care of them. These women are often in the grip of extreme poverty, and can lack the key essentials for their children, such as a blanket to cover them at night.



Children receiving clothing at  
HEAL Africa hospital, Goma,  
Democratic Republic of Congo

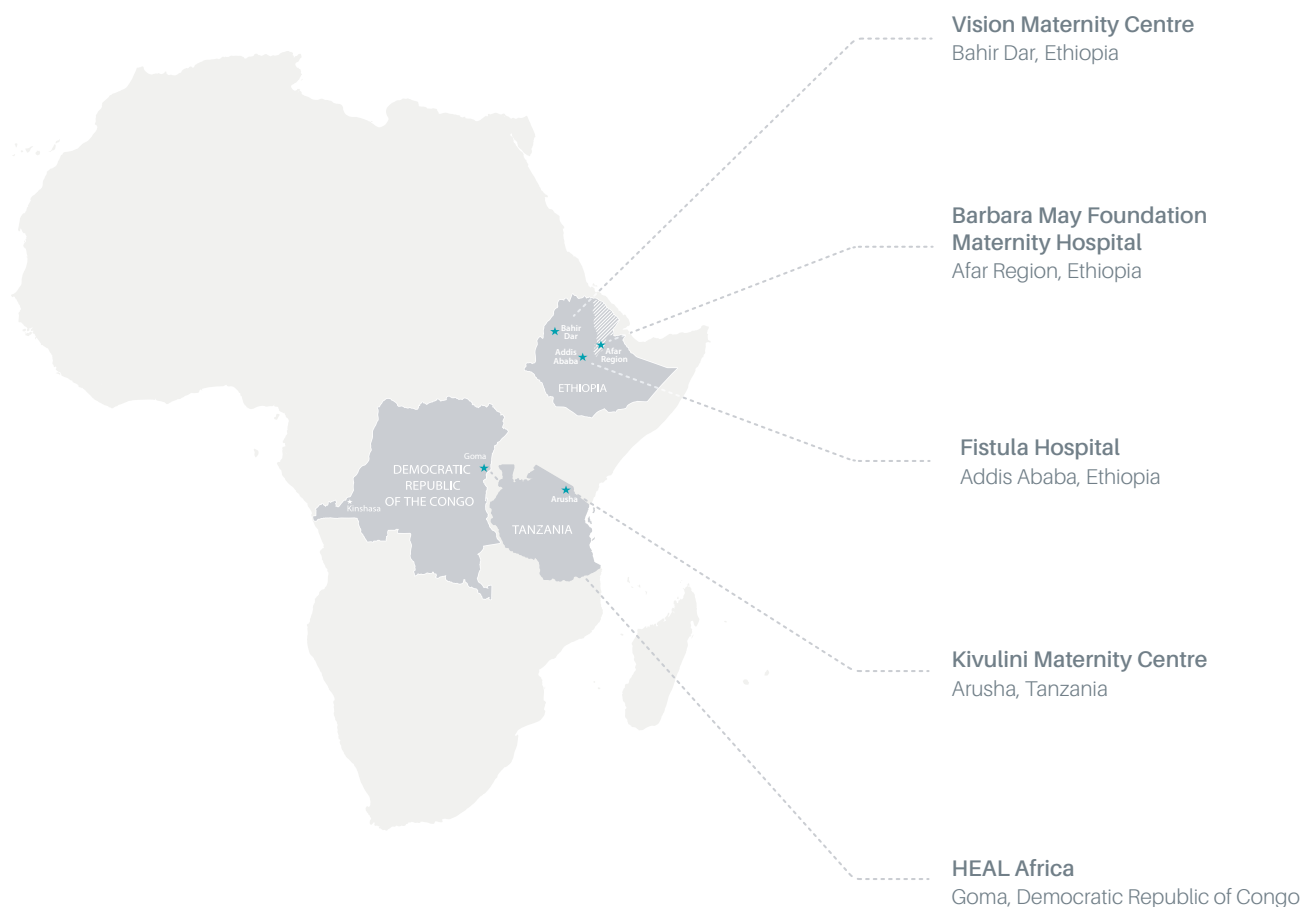


In addition to providing ongoing medical supplies and training as part of our Catalyst Program, Sonic Healthcare and Sonic staff also send large quantities of school items, toys and second-hand clothing in our container shipments to DRC. These are intended for the children of HEAL Africa patients, to help them with many of the basic necessities that we take for granted.

N.N. came to HEAL Africa earlier this year to receive treatment for her prolapsed uterus. She brought her nine-month-old son with her to the hospital so she could continue breastfeeding him, and was humbled by the additional clothing and help given to her during her stay. "May HEAL Africa and its partners be blessed for this assistance they have given us," she said. "I didn't have anything to cover my little boy while he slept, but my fear of seeing him get sick because of cold has disappeared because the problem has now been solved."

Maria K. is a patient from Kitshanga, who was also admitted to HEAL Africa hospital for a prolapsed uterus. Her child also received clothes while they were both staying at the hospital. "HEAL Africa's charity is so broad that it is hard to believe what they do sometimes. To be treated free-of-charge and be given clothes for your child, this is not usual in Congolese hospitals," she said.

## Catalyst Program participants



Catalyst Program		
Hospital	Region	
<b>HEAL Africa</b>	Goma, Democratic Republic of Congo	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Installation of pathology laboratory and radiology department</li> <li>Ongoing medical supplies</li> <li>Training of staff, including training of the first fully qualified pathologist and radiologist</li> <li>Provision of teaching and other non-medical items</li> <li>We are also in the process of replacing Sonic's previously donated 4-slice CT scanner with a Canon 16-slice unit as well as an updated digital mammography unit. This Hologic mammography unit uses a selenium detector, giving better images at a much lower dose of radiation than is currently being used. This equipment will be sent by shipping container later this year along with other needed equipment for the hospital's radiology department.</li> </ul>
<b>Fistula Hospital</b>	Addis Ababa, Ethiopia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ongoing support (laboratory is now largely self-sufficient)</li> </ul>
<b>Barbara May Foundation Maternity Hospital</b>	Mille, Ethiopia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Medical and surgical equipment</li> <li>Installation of pathology laboratory (equipment and supplies)</li> <li>Staff training</li> </ul>
<b>Vision Maternity Centre</b>	Bahir Dar, Ethiopia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Medical and surgical equipment</li> <li>Installation of pathology laboratory (equipment and supplies)</li> <li>Staff training</li> </ul>
<b>Kivulini Maternity Centre</b>	Arusha, Tanzania	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Medical and surgical equipment</li> <li>Installation of pathology laboratory (equipment and supplies)</li> <li>Planned installation of microbiology laboratory</li> </ul>



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## My story

### Josephine Farahani

#### Kivulini Maternity Centre

Nearly a kilometre from the main route between Arusha and Dodoma in Tanzania, down a dusty, unsealed road, stands a large white building that houses the Kivulini Maternity Centre. The hospital, which opened in June, 2018, is Sonic's latest Catalyst partner, with a purpose-built pathology laboratory.

Kivulini provides maternity services to the poorest women in the region and runs daily prenatal clinics, with special programs for teenage mothers, as well as family planning advice. It also provides surgery to women suffering from debilitating fistulas resulting from injuries sustained during largely unsupervised childbirth. In the near future, the hospital will also provide a vaccination clinic, postnatal services and an extension to their teenage-mother program, to include vocational and lifestyle training. The hospital is also running an accredited midwifery-training program to help fill a shortfall in the region, and will graduate 60 qualified midwives in its first year of operation.

Josephine Farahani is the senior technician working in Kivulini's pathology laboratory. Josephine was born in Iringa, Tanzania, before moving with her mother and sister to Dar es Salaam, where she completed her Diploma in Medical Laboratory Science in 2013. She currently lives in Arusha, a city of one million people, about 30 minutes' drive from Kivulini.

Josephine's aunt and grandmother were both nurses, so she wanted to work in the medical field from a very young age. She enjoys all disciplines in pathology, with the possible exception of histology. It can be difficult to keep her skills up-to-date in regional Tanzania, but she loves a challenge and takes every opportunity to develop her knowledge and expertise. She is held in very high regard by the senior staff in Mount Meru Hospital, who are very supportive of the work being undertaken by Kivulini and the laboratory in particular.

Josephine works closely with Jonas Matula, the other laboratory staff member at Kivulini, and together they run what we feel is one of the best small labs we have sponsored so far in Africa.



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**Josephine Farahani**  
Senior Technician  
Kivulini Maternity Centre  
Tanzania

Staff from The Bridge Employment assembling home-testing kits



## Helping people to shine

Sonic Healthcare was appointed as the testing laboratory for the Australian Government's National Bowel Cancer Screening Program ('the Program') in January, 2018, but our involvement is delivering benefits well beyond potentially life-saving medical testing. It is also helping to provide marginalised Australians with meaningful and valued employment, performing work that has clear importance to the broader community.

A key component of the Program is the home-testing kits that are mailed out to participants. Sonic has engaged The Bridge Employment to be one of the providers responsible for assembling these kits, millions of which are needed each year.

The Bridge is a not-for-profit social enterprise dedicated to providing supported employment opportunities for people with disabilities, as well as young people from culturally diverse backgrounds. They have worked with Sonic for almost two years as a vital partner in delivering the Program.

The benefits of The Bridge's involvement are compelling, with employees feeling empowered, included and valued. Ausra Wells, General Manager from The Bridge Employment, explained:

"This is the first job in Australia for several of the young women within our culturally diverse youth team. Many of them have struggled to find employment or have been marginalised because of their ethnic or religious background.

Starting their working career is a major step, and some have gone on to study courses on disability that have allowed them to take on more senior roles within The Bridge."

Supported employees are also benefiting by learning new skills and interacting with other staff, which is helping them with their confidence and abilities to take on new work.

But the positive outcomes don't stop there, with the integrated workforce creating further synergies. "An added benefit from the Sonic contract is the great collaborations we are seeing between young people from diverse backgrounds and people with intellectual disabilities when they work together," Ausra said. "They are learning about each other, and they support each other, which is creating a more harmonious team that is helping to get the job done."

Robyn Winton, Sonic Project Manager for the pathology component of the National Bowel Cancer Screening Program, has nothing but praise for the entire team at The Bridge. "Their professionalism, quality and accuracy are first-class. They are also highly flexible when they need to be and during our regular visits to their workplace, it is clear that their staff are highly valued and part of a cohesive, motivated team that is providing outstanding work. Sonic is very pleased to be partnering with The Bridge in this wonderful program."



## Indigenous health – Closing the gap

Sonic Healthcare Australia is continuing its vital work with the Clontarf Foundation, to help improve the school and work outcomes for Indigenous Australians who experience socioeconomic disadvantage and health inequality at a much higher rate than their non-Indigenous counterparts.

The Clontarf Foundation is a charitable not-for-profit organisation that exists to improve the education, discipline, self-esteem and employment prospects of young Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander men, providing them with life skills to succeed and grow.

Established in 2000, Clontarf operates 116 Academies in schools across Western Australia, Northern Territory, Victoria, New South Wales and Queensland, catering for more than 8,000 boys.

The Foundation believes that failure to experience achievement when young, coupled with a position of underprivilege, can lead to alienation, anger and more serious consequences. As a prelude to tackling these and other issues, Clontarf provides participants with the opportunity to succeed through playing Australian Rules football and/or Rugby League. The aim is to use these experiences to raise self-esteem and to encourage these youths to attend school and stay there.

Sonic Healthcare Australia has been working with Clontarf since 2017, providing medical assessments to students within Clontarf's Academies, with an additional focus on their mental health and wellbeing.

Our involvement includes a mobile clinical team made up of GPs and Registered Nurses from Sonic's general practice division, IPN, together with phlebotomists (blood collectors) from Sonic's local laboratory, who work onsite with Clontarf staff to complete the health checks. Any medical issues or concerns identified during our assessments are then followed up by the local Aboriginal Medical Service.

Medicals on more than 2,000 boys in metropolitan, rural and remote areas, such as the Kimberley, Perth, Moree, Taree, Cairns and Kempsey, will be conducted in 2019.

This year, we also had a medical team on hand at the Ross Kelly Cup – a NSW Rugby League competition between all NSW-based Clontarf Academies. Our medical team was kept extremely busy keeping up with boys needing medical attention of varying degrees. Sonic and IPN also sponsored the dinner held on the previous night for 500 boys, their mentors and supporters. This included a video message from the Prime Minister, wishing the boys well for the coming day and congratulating Clontarf on the work they had undertaken throughout the year. Rugby league personality 'Gus' Gould was there as MC, along with a number of National Rugby League stars, many of whom had been Clontarf boys.

The Clontarf Foundation is taking great strides in achieving their aim of providing young Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander men with life skills that will set them up for future success. This support extends beyond the boys' schooling years. Once you are a Clontarf boy, you remain a Clontarf member all your life. This means that if you need help with employment or somewhere to stay during your adult years, you can call on the local Academy for help. It's run like a large family with family members in every state and territory.

The feedback received from the Clontarf Foundation and its Academies continues to be extremely positive.

They are grateful that their boys are receiving such high-quality medical services that are improving their health outcomes, and the Sonic staff involved in the project all view it as an excellent opportunity to be part of a social responsibility project outside of their usual work.



Team of Sonic doctors, nurses and pathology collectors performing medicals on behalf of the Clontarf Foundation in Cairns



Dr Bruce Latham,  
President, RCPA  
(L) and Dr Colin  
Goldschmidt, CEO,  
Sonic Healthcare (R)



## Improving health outcomes

Sonic's entire operations are focused on improving the health outcomes for population groups and the individual patients we serve. We know the value of timely, accurate results, as well as the impact that a single doctor can have on a patient's life. Sometimes that impact may apply to a single patient; at other times our services benefit an entire community. And for every patient we reach, there are ripple effects through to their family, friends, co-workers and the wider community.

## Honouring a lifetime contribution

In February, 2019, Dr Colin Goldschmidt, CEO of Sonic Healthcare and CEO of Douglass Hanly Moir Pathology in NSW, Australia, was recognised with a coveted Distinguished Pathologist Award by the Royal College of Pathologists of Australasia.

This award for lifetime contribution to the field of pathology is the highest accolade that the College can bestow on a pathologist and reflects Colin's outstanding achievement and contributions to the administration of pathology in Australia, New Zealand and around the world. The award citation recognises Colin's leadership and management philosophy that values and espouses a corporate culture of Medical Leadership.

While Colin is characteristically humble and low-key about his award, it is a well-deserved honour that reflects the passion, commitment and dedication that he has brought to the profession throughout his career – a passion that has seen Sonic grow from a single laboratory in Sydney to the third-largest medical diagnostic company in the world. It's that same passion that has seeded the culture of Medical Leadership and medical excellence, and which makes Sonic the high-quality healthcare provider that it is today.

Colin, we commend you for this well-deserved accolade.

## Recognising our contributions to the community

Our people embody the ideals of Sonic's respect for the community. This is reflected in the official honours and awards bestowed on several Sonic staff members across the world for their immense contributions to their local and wider communities.

### Australia

#### Associate Professor Bev Rowbotham

Position	Haematologist
Laboratory	Sullivan Nicolaides Pathology, Queensland, Australia
Award	Officer (AO) in the General Division of the Order of Australia in the 2019 Australia Day Honours
Citation	For distinguished service to medicine through roles with professional associations, to pathology, and to medical education

#### Associate Professor David Ellis

Position	Histopathologist
Laboratory	Clinpath Pathology, South Australia, Australia
Award	Distinguished Pathologist Award from the Royal College of Pathologists Australasia
Citation	For championing the standardisation of cancer reports worldwide through his efforts at founding the International Collaboration on Cancer Reporting and driving the use of structured cancer reporting in Australia

#### Dr James Linklater

Position	Radiologist
Laboratory	Castlereagh Imaging and Illawarra Radiology Group, New South Wales, Australia
Award	Medal (OAM) of the Order of Australia in the General Division
Citation	For service to medicine, particularly as a radiologist

#### Professor Mark Khangure AM

Position	Radiologist
Laboratory	SKG Radiology, Western Australia, Australia
Award	Australian Medical Association (AMA) Roll of Fellows
Citation	For exceptional contribution to medicine and the AMA, both in WA and on the Federal stage

### Switzerland

#### Professor Stylianos E. Antonarakis MD, DSc

Position	Professor Emeritus, University of Geneva, and CEO Medigenome SA
Laboratory	Medisupport, Geneva, Switzerland
Award	William Allan Award 2019, from the American Society of Human Genetics (the top prize given by the American Society of Human Genetics)
Citation	For substantial and far-reaching scientific contributions to human genetics

### Germany

#### Professor Martin Haditsch

Position	Medical Director, Microbiologist
Laboratory	Labor Augsburg Group, Hannover, Germany
Award	Fellow of the International Society of Travel Medicine
Citation	For outstanding contribution to the educational, service and political life of the International Society of Travel Medicine (ISTM)

#### Professor Veit Krenn

Position	Managing Director/Pathologist
Laboratory	Trier Group, Germany
Award	DGOOC's Themistocles-Gluck Award
Citation	For contribution to the histological diagnosis of implant-associated pathologies

### UK

#### Ashleigh Dadson-Butt

Position	Advanced Specialist Biomedical Scientist and Training and Development Manager, Infection Services
Laboratory	Health Services Laboratories, UK
Award	RCPATH Excellence Awards, Royal College of Pathologists (UK)
Citation	For work developing a structured curriculum in laboratory practice for medical trainees

#### Professor Peter Chiodini (in conjunction with the UK NEQAS parasitology team)

Position	Consultant Speciality Lead, Parasitology
Laboratory	Health Services Laboratories, UK
Award	RCPATH Excellence Awards, Royal College of Pathologists (UK)
Citation	For his trailblazing approach to education, which has helped to improve standards of parasitology practice across the UK, Ireland and worldwide

#### Dr Rebecca Gorton

Position	Senior Clinical Scientist
Laboratory	Health Services Laboratories, UK
Award	RCPATH Excellence Awards, Royal College of Pathologists (UK)
Citation	For her role in the design of a new mycology service, transforming the care of patients at risk of invasive fungal infections

## Improving health outcomes for a generation of Australians

The benefits of world-class healthcare can be obvious to a patient and their family. But sometimes, those benefits can be felt by an entire population, especially when government screening programs result in dramatically improved health outcomes for large numbers of people.

Australia has one of the highest rates of bowel cancer in the world. Seventeen thousand people are diagnosed with the disease each year, and it is the second most common cause of cancer-related death after lung cancer.<sup>1</sup>

Bowel cancer is also highly treatable when detected in the early stages, with 90% of cases being successfully treated. Unfortunately, the disease often develops without any early warning signs, which is why the Australian Government's National Bowel Cancer Screening Program ('the Program') is such an important initiative. Launched in 2006, the Program has provided screening kits to test for abnormal bleeding in people who don't have any obvious symptoms of the disease, with the aim of finding polyps or bowel cancer early, when they are easier to treat and cure.

In January, 2018, Sonic Healthcare was appointed as the new testing laboratory for the Program. A comprehensive logistical framework was implemented across Australia to optimise testing, with three state-of-the-art testing facilities established in Sydney, Brisbane and Perth. Sonic has also worked closely with the Department of Health to help increase the participation rate, with significant work done to improve the testing instructions and screening kits, which were previously seen as two of the barriers preventing higher uptake.

By the end of 2019, all Australians aged 50 to 74 will be invited to participate in the Program every two years. Independent modelling by Cancer Council NSW shows that 59,000 lives will be saved between 2015 and 2040 at current rates of participation (approximately 41 per cent). This number is directly attributable to the Program. The same study showed that increasing participation rates to 60 per cent could save more than 83,000 lives by 2040.<sup>2</sup>

Bowel cancer screening programs operate differently in different countries, with some countries having national screening programs and other countries relying on local facilities. Sonic laboratories around the world are very involved in raising awareness of, and screening for, bowel cancer. Where government programs exist, Sonic is proud to be using our expertise and operational excellence to assist with screening, including in Ireland, where we are responsible for providing testing for BowelScreen, the Irish bowel cancer screening program, and in Germany, where we provide kits and testing services for the German national program.



- 1 Australian Institute of Health and Welfare. Cancer in Australia: an overview 2014. [Version updated 16 April 2015] Cancer series No 90. Cat. no. CAN 88. Canberra: AIHW; 2017 Nov 10.
- 2 Lew J-B, St John DJB, Xu X-M, Greuter MJE, Caruana M, Cenin DR, et al. Long-term evaluation of benefits, harms, and cost-effectiveness of the National Bowel Cancer Screening Program in Australia: a modelling study. *Lancet Public Health*. 2017 Jul 1;2(7):e331-40.





Dr Michael Harrison,  
CEO, Sullivan Nicolaides  
Pathology, Queensland,  
Australia, speaking at  
the Sonic Pathologists  
Academic Meeting

## Education

Medicine is a continually evolving discipline. As scientific and technological breakthroughs expand the boundaries of our medical knowledge, so too do the educational needs of the current and future generations of doctors. Sonic recognises the importance of contributing to the community through the sharing of our professional and academic expertise.

We employ some of the highest-level professionals in their field, and share this expertise locally and globally through our participation in different teaching opportunities in pathology/laboratory medicine, diagnostic imaging and general practice. We are actively involved in three broad areas of medical education:

- Improving the knowledge of our referrers
- Contributing to publications, craft groups, steering committees, boards and other professional organisations
- Training the next generation of medical professionals

Sonic Healthcare also provides a significant and ongoing investment in external education, research and sponsorship of medical events.

### Enhancing the knowledge of our referrers

Throughout the world, Sonic practices provide referring doctors with a variety of educational opportunities.

From seminars and newsletters, through to surgical audits, multidisciplinary meetings and conference presentations, Sonic's medical experts are continually looking for ways to share their knowledge with other medical professionals.

### Contributing to publications, craft groups, steering committees, boards and other professional organisations

Sonic's medical, technical and scientific staff regularly contribute to the broader medical community, through their involvement in craft groups, steering committees, boards and other professional organisations. This involvement helps to promote the practice of good medicine within local communities, while also raising standards nationally and globally.

Sonic's medical and scientific staff regularly publish articles in medical journals and texts as another way of sharing their unique knowledge and experiences.

## Training the next generation of medical professionals

In keeping with our commitment to medical excellence and Medical Leadership, Sonic Healthcare and its medical staff are heavily involved in graduate and postgraduate medical training in different parts of the world. This reflects the importance we place on ensuring that the next generation of doctors, scientists, radiographers, sonographers, technicians and nurses are well-trained in medical diagnostics and general practice.

Sonic has a proud history of involvement with academic training facilities and has links with many universities, including University College London, University of Heidelberg Medical School, University of Texas, Austin Community College, University of Tennessee, University of Notre Dame, University of Sydney, Queensland University of Technology and James Cook University.

Many of our pathologists, radiologists and general practitioners are also university lecturers, training the next generation in their particular specialty or subspecialty. We also provide vocational training positions for pathologists, radiologists and general practitioners, ensuring the future supply of these important medical practitioners in the community.

In FY2019, more than 900 students, registrars and fellows received formal training at various Sonic practices. In total, more than 1,900 graduates and postgraduate students attended our facilities as part of their coursework.

### Life on the lab floor

AML, Sonic's laboratory network in Antwerp, Belgium, has a well-earned reputation for providing high-level education for its referring doctors. Their medical symposia provide forums for the sharing of knowledge and expertise between pathologists, scientists and the broader medical community.

This commitment to education also extends to the next generation of laboratory medicine specialists, thanks to AML's long-standing relationships with high schools in the Antwerp region. Each year, AML hosts visits by final-year high school students, giving them a first-hand experience of what it's like working on the lab floor. This real-world laboratory experience helps to expand a love for science by many of the students, some of whom may go on to work for AML in the future.

## Life of a Biopsy at LMC Pathology Services

Most people are familiar with the concept of having a biopsy taken and sent to the laboratory for analysis. (A biopsy is a small medical procedure that involves taking a sample of tissue from the patient for examination to diagnose cancer and other diseases.) However, many people don't fully understand what happens to that biopsy from the time it leaves the physician's rooms to the time that a pathologist provides a medical diagnosis.

This is where Sonic's LMC Pathology Services in Las Vegas, Nevada, steps in. LMC are strong proponents for sharing their knowledge with their referring clinicians and healthcare partners, taking a hands-on and practical approach to teaching. Their goal is to provide meticulous diagnostic medicine services, as well as complete transparency with how those services are performed.

LMC considers it their responsibility to educate physicians and their care teams on pathology services and the critical role their interpretations play in advancing patient care. 'The Life of a Biopsy' program for medical professionals, medical students and healthcare executives is a feature of this education.

Program participants are invited to LMC's state-of-the-art central laboratory to gain insights into how a biopsy is processed. Attendees receive an overview of the entire process, including handling of tissue, introductions on the most advanced and highly sophisticated technologies, and sitting down with a pathologist at the microscope to recognise the interpretive processes used to formulate a biopsy diagnosis. LMC's board-certified pathologists also provide informative lectures on the diagnosis of common disease states and discuss interpretation of test results in the context of formulating treatment plans for the patients. The program aims to give attendees an intimate perspective and understanding of pathology and the available technologies, expertise and level of service provided by LMC to each physician and their individual patients.

These programs are the essence of LMC, which reinforces Sonic Healthcare's Medical Leadership model by being a comprehensive and essential partner to the local medical community. As a steward of continuing education, LMC has firmly established itself as a centre of excellence for diagnostic medicine advancing patient care.

Students participating in The Doctors Laboratory Outreach Program with Alayt Haddis, Senior Biomedical Scientist (centre) and Saqib Ashraf, Biomedical Scientist (background left), London, UK



## Outreach days for UK students

In April, 2019, Sonic Healthcare UK organised its first Outreach Program for young people between 16–18 years old, with the aim of delivering three programs per year.

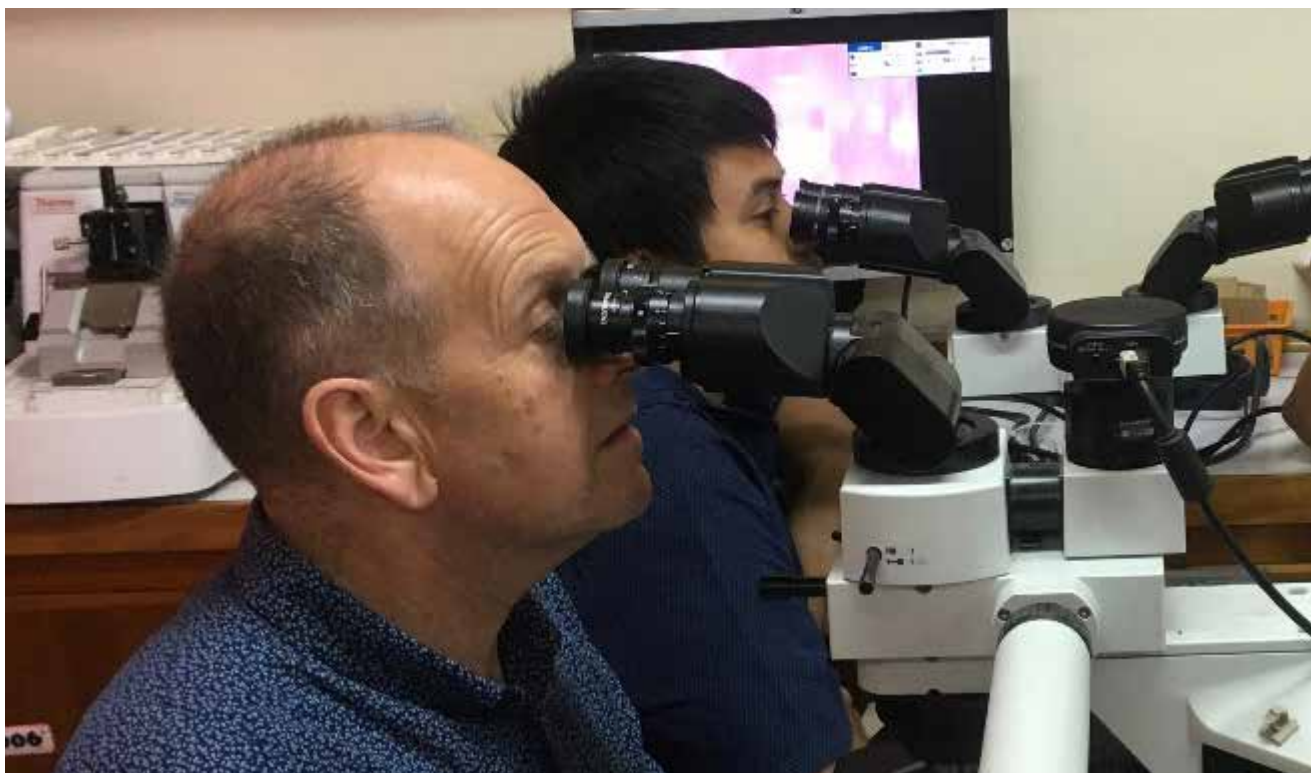
The program consists of an introduction to Sonic Healthcare UK and diagnostic pathology, and is aimed at young people currently doing 'A' levels or BTEC National Diplomas, and who are considering a career in science.

Participants have the opportunity to see a state-of-the-art laboratory in action and speak to biomedical scientists as they go about their work and understand what it means to be a biomedical scientist.

The program also includes a session on 'how to become' a biomedical scientist run by the Head of Scientific Training, and one of the infection science clinicians talks about being a doctor and specialising in one of the laboratory disciplines.







Dr Daniel Owens and Dr Penny Yarrow, from Hobart Pathology, Australia at the Colonial War Memorial Hospital, Suva, Fiji

## Sonic pathologists in the South Pacific

In May this year, Dr Daniel Owens and Dr Penny Yarrow travelled from Tasmania, Australia, to Suva, Fiji, to provide teaching and clinical support to registrars in the Postgraduate Diploma and Masters in Pathology at the Fiji National University.

Over the course of a week, the two pathologists covered a wide range of topics in both haematology and anatomical pathology.

The pair was warmly welcomed by the Colonial War Memorial Hospital pathology and clinical teams in Suva, who allowed them to be involved in some of the key clinical forums within the hospital. "It was eye opening to be involved in multidisciplinary meetings and participate in ward rounds, and to see the range of diseases that are uncommon in Tasmania, such as tuberculosis and dengue fever," Daniel said.

He also reflected on the regular difficulties in healthcare delivery experienced in the region, despite its close proximity to Australia. "The quality of clinical skills is high, but access to diagnostic testing is an ongoing challenge."

These challenges include support for both laboratory equipment and information systems, as well as education for laboratory staff.

Penny and Daniel were able to travel to Suva thanks to funding support from the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT), which was administered by RACS and the RCPA Pacific Education Outreach Committee (PEOC). They hope that by establishing and maintaining links with medical staff they will be able to provide meaningful assistance to Fijians in the future, and already have plans to return to the South Pacific in April, 2020.

## Sharing our knowledge to help prevent genetic conditions affecting blood

Haemoglobin disorders, or genetic conditions affecting the blood, are often closely associated with specific cultural groups or specific regions. Many of these can be prevented with premarital or preconception screening, so that couples are more informed about the likelihood of their offspring inheriting these often debilitating conditions.

Health Services Laboratories (HSL) in the UK has now trained more than 50 health professionals from different countries in the prevention of haemoglobin disorders. As part of the Thalassaemia International Federation (TIF) Renzo Galanello Fellowship Programme, they are also committed to training three international trainees every year.

HSL's haemoglobinopathy clinical scientists also work with teams in Pakistan and Bangladesh to develop culturally sensitive prevention programs of premarital screening, genetic counselling and prenatal diagnosis. They are also studying the knowledge, perceptions and social implications of thalassaemia in Bangladesh, and the views of at-risk couples towards prenatal diagnosis and termination of pregnancy.



## Medlab Central supports haematology workshops in Vietnam

The New Zealand Vietnam Health Trust, established in 1997, has successfully supported health infrastructure in Binh Dinh province, Vietnam, in surgery, orthopaedics, mental health and paediatrics, thanks to a program initiated by the New Zealand Government in 1967. The program is based upon a philosophy of training the trainers to facilitate independent best practice.

Medlab Central, Sonic's New Zealand laboratory, has now sponsored two visits to Vietnam by Dr Elayne Knottenbelt, Consultant Laboratory and Clinical Haematologist, and Kit Norrish, Haematologist Scientist. The two senior staff members are working in partnership with the haematology staff of Province Hospital, with an aim of achieving best practice within five years. This is being implemented via a focused training program that will ensure correct haematology results and diagnosis.

The benefits of the partnership to date have been significant. Analysers used to process specimens are being used with greater reliability and efficiency, and enhanced laboratory techniques associated with diagnosis are being implemented. The use of case-based workshops and a hands-on, realistic approach in the laboratory is resulting in enthusiastic involvement by staff who have increasing confidence to participate, ask questions and express barriers to best practice.

The Medlab team has provided recommendations to management, which have been accepted, and ensures regular follow-up throughout the year to assist with progress. Another visit is planned for 2020 to consolidate the existing learning and to address other issues, including coagulation testing and education of clinicians.



# Respect for Our Environment

## A cleaner future

Sonic is committed to meeting all environmental regulations and legislation that apply to the locations in which we operate. Our Environmental Policy actively seeks to minimise the negative impacts our businesses may have on their surroundings.

Fortunately, healthcare is not a significant polluter or energy consumer, however, we recognise the need to continually minimise our environmental footprint, and to explore opportunities that deliver long-term environmental benefits.





We achieve this through:

- Identifying opportunities for energy efficiency initiatives, including the use of renewable energy systems or low environmental impact vehicles
- Providing education and training for our staff on environmental practices, including reducing water usage, clinical waste and resource consumption
- Recycling programs for environmentally sensitive chemicals to reduce our contaminated waste volumes
- Partnering with our suppliers to reduce packaging and transport emissions
- Using digital solutions to minimise resource waste across our customer and supply chain
- Responsibly procuring products and services through understanding and evaluating the environmental management practices of our suppliers

Sonic Healthcare recognises the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change's finding that warming of the climate system has been significantly influenced by human activity. We understand that the impacts of climate change could present physical, natural and human risks for our federation of medical practices, our referrers and our patients, as well as the wider community.

We monitor our exposure to these risks on an ongoing basis, and continue to ensure our service offerings are aligned to meet any emerging needs.

Our commitment to minimising our environmental impact is monitored by the Sonic Board's Risk Management Committee, which is responsible for providing oversight on Sonic's identification and response to key environmental issues, as well as monitoring our climate change preparedness. The Board has assessed the impact of climate change on key areas of our business and has concluded there are no substantive risks to our operations.

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One of the electric courier cars operating in Berlin, Germany

## Our facilities

In recent years, Sonic has relocated several laboratories into purpose-built or refurbished premises. Environmental efficiency has been a cornerstone of our design briefs, as reflected by some of the key features of our new or refurbished facilities.

USA			
		Features	
Texas, 2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Sonic Reference Laboratory</li><li>▪ New purpose-built laboratory</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Installation of LED lighting with movement sensors to decrease power usage</li><li>▪ Variable air volume (VAV) air-conditioning system controlled by a Building Management System to reduce power consumption for heating, ventilation and air-conditioning (HVAC)</li><li>▪ Optimal use of natural light to reduce artificial light usage</li></ul>	
Hawaii, 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Clinical Labs of Hawaii</li><li>▪ Refurbishment of existing building</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Removal of all asbestos, trapped moisture and lead from the building</li><li>▪ Wastewater filtration system</li><li>▪ Installation of LED lighting with movement sensors to save on power usage</li><li>▪ Variable air volume (VAV) air-conditioning system controlled by a Building Management System to save power</li><li>▪ New reflective film placed on all windows to decrease heat load on the building</li></ul>	
United Kingdom			
		Energy rating	Features
London, 2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ The Doctors Laboratory and Health Services Laboratories</li><li>▪ Refurbishment of existing building</li></ul>	Very Good BREEAM score^	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Series of ‘green roofs’ that contribute towards the creation of a nature corridor across central London</li><li>▪ Provision of approximately 60 bicycle spaces and associated shower facilities onsite to encourage staff to cycle to work</li></ul>
<p>^BREEAM sets the standards for best practice in sustainable building design, construction and operation and has become one of the most comprehensive and widely recognised measures of a building’s environmental performance.</p>			
Germany			
		Features	
St Ingbert, 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Labdiagnostik</li><li>▪ New purpose-built laboratory</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ New gas heat pump to efficiently cover and manage the base cooling and heat load of the new building</li><li>▪ Air-conditioning, ventilation and heating systems controlled by a Building Management System to optimise the interaction of these three components</li><li>▪ Installation of LED lighting</li><li>▪ Installation of solar panels on the roof</li></ul>	
Ingelheim, 2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Bioscientia</li><li>▪ New purpose-built extension to the existing laboratory</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ New thermal power station to efficiently cover and manage the base load of the new building</li><li>▪ Installation of LED lighting</li><li>▪ Implementation of other efficient facility engineering features</li></ul>	
Berlin, 2014	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Labor 28</li><li>▪ New purpose-built laboratory</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Installation of solar panels producing an output of 33,750 kWh p.a. (saving 22,463 kilograms of CO<sub>2</sub> p.a.)</li><li>▪ Installation of LED lighting</li><li>▪ Air-conditioning, ventilation and heating systems controlled by a Building Management System that optimises the interaction of these three components</li><li>▪ New efficient heat extraction system for laboratory equipment in the clinical chemistry department, resulting in a saving of 54,600 kWh p.a.</li></ul>	

Australia			
		Energy rating	Features
<b>Adelaide, 2019</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Clinpath Pathology</li> <li>New, purpose-built laboratory, offices and warehouse</li> </ul>	★★★★★ Designed to achieve a 4.5 star Australian Building Greenhouse Rating	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Designed to meet energy efficiency requirements including double-glazed, tinted windows and thermal roof and ceiling insulations</li> <li>LED lighting and sensors installed throughout</li> <li>Energy-efficient variable air volume air-conditioning system</li> </ul>
<b>Brisbane, 2019</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Queensland X-Ray Administration</li> <li>Refurbishment of existing building</li> </ul>	★★ 2.0 star NABERS Energy Rating*	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Air-conditioning controlled by Building Management System</li> <li>LED lighting with sensors installed throughout</li> <li>Double-glazed windows</li> <li>Public transport now extensively used by staff due to new location</li> <li>Three-stage waste system in staff areas (recycle/organic/waste)</li> <li>End-of-trip facilities</li> </ul>
<b>Brisbane, 2019</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Australian IT data centre</li> <li>Refurbishment of existing building</li> </ul>	Not formally rated	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Existing office floors refurbished, reusing materials such as ceiling tiles and carpet where possible</li> <li>Air-conditioning controlled by Building Management System</li> <li>LED lighting with sensors installed throughout</li> <li>Backup generator system and roof-top plant designed to comply and exceed building code requirements</li> <li>Public transport now extensively used by staff with a minibus service implemented to transport staff to and from train station and office</li> </ul>
<b>Brisbane, 2016</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sullivan Nicolaides Pathology</li> <li>New purpose-built laboratory</li> </ul>	★★★★★ 4.5+ stars NABERS Energy Rating*	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Motion sensor LED lighting</li> <li>Computer-modelled exterior sun shading</li> <li>Tinted double-glazed windows to reduce the load on the air-conditioning system</li> <li>End-of-trip facilities accommodating 94 bicycles and change rooms, to encourage staff to use transport systems other than private motor vehicles</li> <li>Rainwater harvesting and a Building Management System</li> </ul>
<b>Canberra, 2015</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Capital Pathology</li> <li>New purpose-built laboratory</li> </ul>	★★★★★ 5.0 star NABERS Energy Rating*	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>DALI lighting system</li> <li>Double-glazed windows</li> <li>Optimal use of natural light reducing the need for artificial lighting</li> <li>Recycled rainwater in toilets and showers</li> <li>Efficient heating, ventilation and air-conditioning (HVAC) system</li> </ul>
<b>Perth, 2014</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Clinipath Pathology</li> <li>New purpose-built laboratory, offices and warehouse</li> </ul>	★★★★★ Section J energy efficiency compliance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>LED lighting system with daylight harvesting and sensors</li> <li>Efficient heating, ventilation and air-conditioning (HVAC) system</li> <li>Recyclable materials used throughout</li> </ul>
<b>Sydney, 2007</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sonic's corporate headquarters and Douglass Hanly Moir Pathology laboratory</li> </ul>	★★★★★ Designed to achieve a 4.0–4.5 star Australian Building Greenhouse Rating	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Designed to reduce power consumption</li> <li>Harvest rainwater</li> <li>Filter wastewater</li> <li>Solar panels installed on roof</li> </ul>

\*NABERS is an Australian national rating system that measures the energy efficiency, water usage, waste management and indoor environment quality of a building, and its impact on the environment.





The recent installation of solar panels at Labor 28's main laboratory in Berlin, Germany, is expected to decrease CO<sub>2</sub> emissions by more than 30 tonnes per year

## Reducing our carbon footprint

Sonic's Environmental Policy outlines our commitment to understanding and minimising our environmental footprint, and to exploring opportunities that deliver long-term sustainable environmental benefits. One way this can be achieved is through identifying opportunities for energy efficiency initiatives, including the use of renewable energy systems, such as solar energy. We also place a strong focus on looking at ways to decrease emissions associated with transporting specimens and request forms to our laboratories.

Sonic reports the following data under the Australian National Greenhouse and Energy Reporting Act 2007:

Australian greenhouse gas emissions (tonnes CO <sub>2</sub> -e)			
	2019	2018	2017
Scope 1 (mainly fuel and natural gas usage)	8,380	8,223	8,124
Scope 2 (mainly electricity usage)	58,276	58,322	59,156
Energy consumed (GJ)	388,645	387,013	388,569
Reduction in energy consumed per patient	1.3%	2.8%	1.0%

In FY2019, energy consumption increased by less than 1% across our Australian businesses.

## Environmentally-friendly transport options

The transportation of patient specimens is an integral part of Sonic's operations. Every year, hundreds of millions of specimens are transported from doctors' surgeries, hospitals and patient service centres to one of our nearby laboratories located throughout our network.

Even though our business model is focused on localised testing, the logistics involved in our operations are quite substantial, and represent an area where we continue to make practical and ongoing environmental improvements.

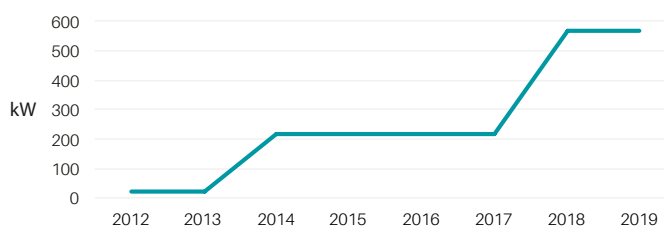
One of the key areas we have tackled is encouraging doctors to receive their reports electronically, which has significantly decreased our paper usage, as well as the carbon footprint associated with delivering results back to them by courier.

We have also implemented alternative methods of transportation for collecting specimens and delivering them to the laboratory. Depending on the physical location of each laboratory, different options have been successfully implemented, most notably the increased use of electric and hybrid vehicles across the Sonic global network.

## Investment in solar

Where possible, Sonic explores the feasibility of introducing solar energy production and other energy efficient systems into our facility design and selection. Over the last seven years, we have installed more than 2,000 solar panels across a number of our main laboratory locations, with an accumulated capacity of 570 kilowatts. In addition to this capacity, we have smaller tenancies across our pathology, radiology and general practice networks that also have solar panel installations.

Total solar panel capacity (kW) installed



## Other energy saving initiatives

In addition to the above programs, energy efficiency is a consideration in our equipment selection and building designs and fitouts, which, when combined with energy education programs to target awareness and behaviour, encourages greater energy efficiency.

## Logistical innovations

Medisupport, one of Sonic's network of Swiss laboratories, continues to adopt a variety of different environmentally friendly transportation options, which are implemented according to the varying requirements and weather conditions in their region. More than a third of the Medisupport courier fleet has been changed to hybrid cars, saving 36,000 litres of fuel each year. They are also in the process of replacing fuel-based scooters with electric scooters, and have introduced electric bicycles for use in urban areas. These bikes have the added benefit of giving staff members the opportunity to increase their physical exercise during the day. Medisupport has also recently acquired a completely electric car in Geneva for use by nurses who are visiting patients in their homes. They are also generating significant environmental benefits by using a transportation model that transports samples between laboratories via train, using bike services at either end. This accounts for 750,000 km worth of travel each year.

Melbourne Pathology in Australia has also implemented a variety of environmentally friendly transportation options. It runs a small fleet of hybrid cars, each of which travels up to 700,000 km before they are retired from use. It also uses motorbikes and scooters to service nearby hospitals, and has one courier who often walks the 1.3 km round trip between the laboratory and nearby hospitals and clinics, which is completed multiple times per day.



In the UK, The Doctors Laboratory (TDL) continues to adhere to the stringent requirements of the London Ultra Low Emission Zone, which came into force in Central London in April, 2019. This low emission zone is being expanded and rolled out to the wider London area in 2020. All TDL vehicles used in London are low emission and TDL continues to use motorbikes, push bikes and walkers in congested city areas. TDL will invest in electric vehicles when the range of these vehicles, and the means to charge them, meets the requirement of their 24/7 operation.

These are just a handful of the different solutions that are being implemented across the Sonic global network as we continue to look for environmentally sustainable options to support our business.



## Leading the way with LED lighting

Sonic Clinical Services (SCS) is the primary care division of Sonic Healthcare, and includes trusted brands such as IPN Medical Centres, Sonic HealthPlus and Australian Skin Cancer Clinics. SCS has embarked on a project with one of Australia's leading LED providers to progressively upgrade lighting in their medical centres using more sustainable lighting solutions.

Between July, 2018, and September, 2019, SCS fully replaced old, inefficient lighting systems with new LED lighting in 44 medical centres, with plans to continue the roll-out across the remainder of its Australian network. LED lighting is now standard in all new SCS builds across Australia, and a further 20 LED upgrades to existing sites are planned for completion by June, 2020.

The reaction from doctors, staff and patients to the upgraded centres has been overwhelmingly positive, citing improvements to the operating environment and aesthetic appeal of the centres, while also helping the environment.

These environmental benefits include significant reduction in energy usage, reduced heat load, removal of lighting with toxic chemicals (there is mercury in fluorescent lighting), reduction in waste disposal and better recycling, given the high-quality, long-lasting nature of LED lighting.

To date, this project has replaced more than 5,000 light fittings, reduced electricity usage by 1.2 million kW/h and CO2 emissions by more than 900 tonnes per annum.

## Helping the environment while improving patient care

In 2010, Renate Kohlhaas, a long-time medical technician at Sonic's major Hamburg laboratory, Labor Dr. von Foreich-Bioscientia, visited a referring doctor, who agreed to become the first medical practice to connect to the laboratory using star.net Labor, an order entry software application developed by a committed team of in-house IT specialists at the laboratory.

Within a few months, several more practices had signed up for the software, allowing them to order laboratory tests online, usually without the need for printed paper forms. This paperless test-ordering system delivered more than just ecological benefits – it also ensured that the laboratory received all relevant patient and test information before the patient's specimen arrived in the laboratory.

Today, more than 70 per cent of orders at Labor Dr. von Foreich-Bioscientia are received electronically. In addition to saving huge amounts of paper, and in conjunction with other laboratory improvements, the processing time for most specimens has been halved, meaning most doctors can receive their diagnostic reports, also delivered electronically, in a much shorter timeframe.

Fast-forward to 2019, and more than 6,000 medical practices now use star.net Labor across 30 Sonic Healthcare Germany laboratories. This widespread adoption has expanded the environmental benefits while also dramatically improving patient care, making it a win for everyone.

Renate Kohlhaas now leads a dedicated team who provide software support to doctors by phone and internet. "It's amazing how satisfied our referrers and their teams are when they use our electronic ordering tool," she said. "Not only do they feel better about less paper wastage and quicker result delivery, but they also appreciate the ability to order extra tests using specimens that are already in the laboratory for processing, if the need arises."





# Waste reduction initiatives

Ongoing campaigns and initiatives continue around the Sonic network to reduce water usage and waste, and increase recycling, including education and the provision of recycling facilities. Communication and training in environmental policies and procedures are an important part of these campaigns and initiatives. A few examples of these initiatives are described below.

## Breathing new life into unwanted waste

The environmental perils of polystyrene packaging are well known. Unwanted polystyrene takes up an enormous amount of landfill and takes hundreds if not thousands of years to breakdown. And when it is rendered into smaller parts, polystyrene can often make its way into waterways where it can be deadly if mistaken for food by marine life. Despite this, polystyrene is still a widely used packaging product due to its excellent insulating and protective properties. This is particularly true in healthcare, where it is often used by manufacturers transporting supplies and equipment.

Sullivan Nicolaides Pathology in Queensland, Australia, has taken a major step towards minimising their polystyrene problem through the use of a polystyrene recycling machine. The machine compresses discarded polystyrene into dense blocks, which are then sent overseas to be repurposed into plastic furniture.

The recycling machine has been in use for five years now, helping to save 2.7 tonnes of polystyrene from landfill every year. It has also reduced the storage area that was previously required to store the polystyrene prior to being collected.



### Reduction in film usage

Over the last several years, Sonic's diagnostic imaging division has worked with referring clinicians and patients to replace hard copy film images with quality digital alternatives. Images and reports can now be accessed, streamed, downloaded and archived efficiently in a variety of formats, resulting in a significant decrease in film usage over the past five years, with environmental benefits accruing from the reduction in manufacturing, transporting, processing, delivering, storing and disposing of the film products. Last year, Sonic set a target for a further 10% reduction in film usage by 30 June 2020. Pleasingly, this was met and exceeded 12 months ahead of schedule. A further 10% reduction of film by 30 June 2020 has now been set as the new target.



### Shareholder communication

Sonic encourages its shareholders to access all communications electronically to reduce the energy and water resources associated with paper and print production. More than 97% of Sonic shareholders now opt to receive an electronic version of the Annual Report, or have the option to view it online. More than 66% of shareholders also receive notices of meetings electronically.

Sonic's Annual Report and Corporate Responsibility Report is produced on recycled paper for those shareholders who still opt to receive hard copies.



### Medical waste

Medical waste is often identified as a potential environmental hazard resulting from our services. Sonic minimises this risk by contracting with reputable, licensed businesses that specialise in this field. This waste handling is subject to regular review by external parties as part of our laboratory accreditation processes. In its 32-year history, Sonic is not aware of a single issue of note arising in relation to our management of medical waste.

## Other environmental considerations

### Equipment selection

When purchasing equipment, Sonic formally assesses water usage, power requirements and consumables packaging, while the selection of significant suppliers is subject to a formal assessment of their environmental policies and credentials, in accordance with Sonic's Supplier Policy.



# Governance

## Meeting stakeholder expectations

The provision of quality healthcare requires an adherence to the highest medical and ethical standards. Sonic Healthcare not only meets these standards, but also strives to continually improve them. This commitment to quality is inherent in everything that we do. In fact, it is embedded in our corporate motto 'Quality is in our DNA', and is applied to the clinical, financial, operational and workforce processes and systems throughout our global organisation.

Our governance structures, frameworks and corporate functions help to guide effective decision-making, address regulatory impacts, and implement controls that manage safety, risk and business integrity.





## Governance structure

Guided by the Board of Directors, Sonic places great importance on the company's governance, which is integral to its wellbeing and success. Our governance ensures that all aspects of the Group's operations are conducted ethically, responsibly and with the highest standards of integrity, and the Board has adopted practices and policies designed to achieve these aims. We support the ASX Corporate Governance Council Corporate Governance Principles and Recommendations in advancing good corporate governance, and have complied with the third edition during the 2019 financial year.

For the 2020 financial year, Sonic intends to report against the fourth edition of the Corporate Governance Principles and Recommendations, which was released in February, 2019. Sonic's Board believes we have been in compliance with the fourth edition from 1 July, 2019. Our website ([www.sonichealthcare.com](http://www.sonichealthcare.com)) includes a Corporate Governance section that sets out the information required by the Recommendations, plus other relevant information, including copies of all policies, charters and codes referred to in this report.

## Policies and charters

Sonic Healthcare has always had a culture of acting ethically, responsibly and lawfully. We see this as a natural extension of the responsibilities associated with delivering first-class healthcare services.

These values are codified in our broad range of policies and charters that ensure we operate in an ethical, safe and legally compliant manner.

Our policies are regularly reviewed to reflect changes in legislation and to make sure that we align with changing community expectations and values. We recently updated our Code of Conduct and added a Global Whistleblower Policy to our existing policies and charters.

The full suite of documents can be found online at:

[www.sonichealthcare.com/policies](http://www.sonichealthcare.com/policies)

### Global Whistleblower Policy

### Code of Conduct

SONIC  
HEALTHCARE  
Quality is in our DNA

SONIC  
HEALTHCARE  
Quality is in our DNA

## Workplace reporting

Sonic encourages staff to report any incidents, misconduct, illegal acts or other behaviours that could adversely impact the reputation of Sonic Healthcare. In addition to policies relating to employee conduct, our newly introduced Global Whistleblower Policy is an overarching global policy designed to protect and support people who raise concerns about wrongdoing within Sonic, without fear of being subjected to victimisation, harassment or discriminatory treatment.

Consistent training for both supervisors and staff ensures that a culture of workplace reporting is fostered throughout the organisation. The culture of no-blame also encourages an increased level of reporting, which means that errors and problems are likely to be captured more quickly.

As an organisation, we are committed to maintaining high ethical standards and conducting business with honesty and integrity. We adhere to a zero-tolerance approach to bribery and corruption. Sonic seeks this commitment from all staff, as outlined in our Anti-bribery and Corruption Policy.

## Risk

Sonic's Board is ultimately responsible for risk management, and Sonic recognises that risk management is an integral part of the good management and corporate governance practice that is fundamental to driving shareholder value across the business.

We foster a risk-aware culture in decision-making and view the management of risk as a core managerial capability. A wide range of clinical, social, environmental and economic risks are considered, from the setting of strategy, through to day-to-day operational decisions. Risk management is strongly promoted internally and forms part of the performance evaluation of key executives.

Control systems and policy compliance are reviewed by Sonic's Business Assurance Program (Sonic's internal audit function). The Head of Business Assurance reports to the Sonic Board's Audit Committee, and to the Company Secretary for administrative purposes. The Business Assurance Program liaises with, but is independent of, the external auditor, and has full access to the Audit Committee and Risk Management Committee, Sonic management, staff and records. The Audit Committee determines the scope for the Business Assurance Program each year and monitors management's response to recommended system enhancements.

Sonic's material business risks are described in detail in our 2019 Annual Report.

## Privacy and data security

Sonic Healthcare is committed to safeguarding the privacy and confidentiality of all information in our systems, including medical information and records. Data security and integrity has always been a critical strategic priority for us, and Sonic meets and often exceeds the data security and privacy requirements in each of its operating countries.

### Policies and procedures

Sonic has detailed and broadly understood policies and procedures in place to ensure data security, including policies surrounding notifiable data breaches. Sonic Healthcare's Privacy Policy is also clearly visible on our website, as well as the websites of each of our operating entities.

Our commitment to privacy and data security is underscored by induction of new staff and comprehensive training programs for existing staff. Regular newsletters are also produced several times per year to keep our staff abreast of the latest cyber security threats, as well as any changes to legislative requirements.



Brisbane data centre

### Cultural values

In addition to the rigorous data infrastructure and security procedures in place, the importance of privacy and data security is also embedded into our operating culture. 'Maintaining Confidentiality' has always been one of our core values, and is deeply understood by our staff members. Sonic continually reinforces this value through our policies and training, and by making it a highly visible component of our operating procedures.

## Practice accreditation

Achieving accreditation demonstrates a practice's commitment to delivering high-quality care and the commitment to continuous quality improvement via systems, processes, policies, culture, risk management and staff training.

All Sonic practices have external quality assurance certifications and are fully accredited by the relevant regulatory bodies in the corresponding jurisdictions. This compliance is overseen by quality management teams, which include medical, scientific, quality and administrative personnel within each business. These quality teams work objectively to ensure our medical facilities and supporting operations comply with the standards set down by relevant regulations and reflect good management and clinical practice at all times.

The quality teams also perform an ongoing 'checks and balances' function that contributes to policy-making, planning, regular peer reviews and continuing professional development. Throughout the year, more than 3,400 internal quality audits or reviews were carried out by qualified staff across the Sonic group, and all findings were resolved and fed into the continuous improvement process.

To assist in the ongoing quality improvement process, a customised quality management software system, Sonic SmartLab, has been developed by Sonic, which enables collaboration and benchmarking for quality improvement across the laboratory medicine group.

In FY2019, more than 1,000 formal quality accreditations and audits were performed across all Sonic operating entities by external quality agencies. In every instance, all Sonic facilities maintained their accreditation.



## Pathology/Laboratory Medicine

All our laboratories meet and often exceed the accreditation requirements mandated by the relevant local accreditation authority for all the testing we perform. In addition, many of our pathology laboratories in the Sonic Healthcare group are accredited to ISO 15189:2012 Medical Laboratories – Requirements for Quality and Competence (ISO 15189).

### Australia & New Zealand

Sonic's Australian laboratories are accredited to ISO 15189, and are accredited by the National Association of Testing Authorities (NATA), in conjunction with the Royal College of Pathologists of Australasia (RCPA). They also comply with the National Pathology Accreditation Advisory Council (NPAAC) requirements, which are put together on behalf of the Australian Government. The NATA and NPAAC guidelines work together to set the minimum standards considered acceptable for good laboratory practice.

Sonic's New Zealand laboratories are accredited by the International Accreditation New Zealand (IANZ). The accreditation process includes onsite peer reviews, as well as online assessments. Laboratories are fully assessed every four years, with additional activity each year. All laboratories are accredited to ISO 15189.

### Germany

Sonic's German laboratories are accredited by Deutsche Akkreditierungsstelle (DAkkS). Some are also accredited to ISO 15189. In addition, some laboratories have ISO/IEC 17025 accreditation as a testing laboratory for hygiene services or veterinarian medicine.

One of Sonic's largest German laboratories is also accredited by the College of American Pathologists (CAP) and by Clinical Laboratory Improvement Amendments (CLIA) in order to fulfil testing and other technical requirements for US clients.

### Switzerland

While it is not mandatory to be accredited to ISO 15189, all Sonic Swiss laboratories are either accredited to this standard by Swiss Accreditation Service (SAS), or are working towards it. In addition, all our Swiss laboratories are required to meet authorisation from the Office Fédéral de la Santé Publique (OFSP) if they wish to perform microbiology or genetic testing.

### Belgium

Our large central laboratory in Antwerp is ISO 15189-accredited by the Belgian Accreditation Body (BELAC).

### UK & Ireland

Sonic Healthcare laboratories in the UK are accredited to ISO 15189 by the United Kingdom Accreditation Service (UKAS), and are inspected by the Care Quality Commission (CQC). They are also accredited to the College of American Pathologists (CAP) requirements. The Blood Transfusion departments are also inspected by the Medicines and Healthcare Products Regulatory Authority (MHRA) and comply with the Human Tissue Act (HTA) and all relevant Royal College of Pathologists (RCPATH) guidelines.

Sonic Healthcare's laboratory in Ireland is accredited to ISO 15189 by the Irish National Accreditation Board (INAB).

### USA

Sonic's USA laboratories are all certified by Clinical Laboratory Improvement Amendments (CLIA) and many have additional accreditation by the College of American Pathologists (CAP) to specific technical requirements.

## Diagnostic Imaging

Sonic's diagnostic imaging practices are independently accredited against the Diagnostic Imaging Accreditation Scheme (DIAS) and guided by the Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Radiologists (RANZCR) Standards of Practice. Our practices also comply with all relevant standards regarding private health regulation and radiation safety.

## General Practice

Every Sonic primary care medical centre is accredited by the Royal Australian College of General Practitioners (RACGP). The accreditation process is based on a three-year audit cycle, and is conducted by an external provider, GPA Accreditation Plus. This process ensures that our practices meet the requirements of the government-endorsed industry standards set by the RACGP.

## Supplier selection and management

In order to maintain our global reputation for quality, safety and service excellence, Sonic requires all major suppliers, service providers and any other agents or contracted third parties to adopt an ethical and sustainable approach to business that is consistent with Sonic's high standards. These expectations are outlined in the Sonic Supplier Policy. All suppliers are required to read, understand and accept the policy before they enter into contracts with us. Sonic is currently updating our Supplier Policy, to be released in late 2019, which will include information about the Modern Slavery Act.

Through acceptance of the current policy, suppliers are required to:

- Comply with all relevant laws, regulations and governmental requirements and directions
- Conduct their business in an ethically appropriate manner
- Pursue environmentally sustainable business practices
- Treat all individuals, including employees and customers, with respect and dignity, including observing all relevant laws and regulations regarding discrimination, equal opportunity and individual and human rights
- Abide by the procedures of customer organisations

Sonic selects suppliers based on their compliance to our Supplier Policy, and on their ability to provide and maintain quality products and services that meet Sonic's needs and goals. All products are thoroughly tested by technical experts within Sonic for quality and efficacy before acceptance.

Sonic draws from an international supply chain to ensure provision of the best-quality components and supplies available for an acceptable price. Where possible and feasible, Sonic chooses suppliers from local economies, as long as they can deliver equal quality.

Sonic endeavours to develop and maintain long-term relationships with suppliers to understand future developments in the industry and to aid in Sonic's forward planning. These relationships also enable joint research projects and development of industry innovations. To maintain these relationships, Sonic has developed a formal supplier relationship management system that involves structured, regular, formal reviews of quality, supply, costs, ongoing support mechanisms and cost containment. Sonic's well-developed quality management system records staff-supplier interactions, which are also part of the formal review process.

## Taxation governance

Sonic Healthcare accepts its responsibility to pay an appropriate amount of tax.

Our approach to taxation is aligned with our business strategy, Code of Conduct and Core Values. We recognise that a large proportion of our revenue comes from governments, both directly and indirectly, and it is not in the interests of our shareholders or the communities that we serve to risk damaging Sonic's reputation by adopting aggressive or non-compliant tax practices.

Sonic pays a significant amount of tax, including corporate income tax and other business taxes, as well as taxes associated with our employees. In the 2019 financial year, we paid A\$354 million in taxes and remitted a further A\$556 million to tax authorities on behalf of our employees.

Sonic's Board approved Taxation Governance statement can be viewed on our website. Our Board Tax Policy was formally endorsed by the Board of Directors in 2015 and outlines the company's tax strategy, tax risk tolerance, significant transaction escalation process and key roles and responsibilities. The Policy also requires regular reporting and annual CEO certification.

## Animal testing

Sonic does not undertake animal testing, other than veterinary pathology in some markets. This pathology work benefits the animal by diagnosing the health, illness or disease of the animal and assisting the veterinarian with choosing the best treatment options.



# Key ESG Indicators

Operations	FY2019	FY2018	FY2017
Countries of operation	8	8	8
Countries where we are ranked No. 1 (market share)	4	4	4
Patient consultations (millions)	117	115	108
Number of laboratories	277	257	250
Number of pathology collection or patient service centres	2,953	2,982	2,923
Number of radiology clinics	107	105	105
Number of medical centres	236	238	236
Number of external accreditations, audits or reviews	1,158	764	446
Number of internal operational audits or reviews	3,438	4,250	2,040
Operations suspended due to adverse accreditation or audit findings	Nil	Nil	Nil

Economic	FY2019	FY2018	FY2017
Revenue (A\$M)	6,184	5,541	5,122
Net profit (A\$M)	550	476	428
Total assets (A\$M)	9,960	8,201	7,878
Debt cover (times)	2.1	2.5	2.7
Total payments to staff (A\$M) <sup>1</sup>	2,660	2,387	2,226
Total taxes paid (A\$M) <sup>2</sup>	354	274	282
Total taxes remitted to tax authorities on behalf of staff (A\$M)	556	444	

Employment	FY2019	FY2018	FY2017
Total employees	36,692	35,052	33,636
Women in workforce	74.8%	75.3%	75.3%
Women in senior leadership positions	53.3%	53.3%	52.7%
Employees engaged in part-time employment	34.1%	35.0%	34.0%
Temporary staff and contractors engaged within total workforce	2.6%	2.3%	2.4%
Employees with more than 10 years of service	31.0%	30.1%	29.3%
Annual employee turnover	16.5%	16.8%	16.5%
Annual senior leadership turnover	6.7%	6.9%	6.7%
Workforce availability	97.1%	97.2%	97.5%
Employees that took parental leave during the year	1.7%	2.0%	2.3%
Employees that returned after taking parental leave	83.0%	84.0%	87.0%
Lost time injuries per million hours worked (LTIFR)	4.5	5.0	5.1
Average number of days lost per incident	25.0	18.0	29.0
Fatalities	Nil	Nil	Nil

Community	FY2019	FY2018	FY2017
Donations (A\$M)	3,089	2,278	2,544
Sponsorships of medical bodies or events (A\$M)	3,279	1,727	1,286
Graduate and postgraduate students tutored at Sonic facilities	1,925	1,853	1,569
Formal onsite training of medical students, registrars and fellows	934	803	652

Environmental	FY2019	FY2018	FY2017
Energy consumed (GJ) <sup>3</sup>	388,645	387,013	388,569
Motor vehicles in the fleet	2,924	2,825	2,732
Kilometres travelled by the fleet (million kms)	125.9	124.8	116.4
Electric or hybrid motor vehicles in the fleet	3.0%	1.6%	1.7%
Vehicles in the fleet with a four cylinder engine or less	96.0%	95.4%	95.5%
Environmental fines or sanctions	Nil	Nil	Nil

<sup>1</sup> Total remuneration including superannuation and pension contributions

<sup>2</sup> Direct and indirect taxes, levies and duties including employment related taxes but excluding taxes paid on behalf of employees and GST/VAT

<sup>3</sup> Australia only





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HEALTHCARE  
Quality is in our DNA