

ΥΓΙΕΙΑ



REWIND: HMSA 2016 COCKTAIL PARTY

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Save the Dates Upcoming events 2025

Thursday 20th February
"New Frontiers in Fertility Medicine"
Member dinner

Thursday 13th March
International Women's Day
"Celebrating Leaders in Health"
Member dinner

BE INVOLVED:

Position opening - Admin Assistant

HMSA is seeking a suitable person to fill the position of Administrative Assistant.

This is a paid contractor position with flexible hours and would suit a student.

Tasks include newsletter design, website updates and email broadcasting.

Anyone interested please email through a short introduction and resume to:

info@hmsa.org.au



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PRESIDENT'S LETTER *by* **Associate Professor Marinis Pirpiris**



The Hellenic Medical Society of Australia (HMSA) has had an impactful and dynamic 2024, marked by significant contributions to healthcare, education, and community development. Some of our key highlights included:

Cultural and Professional Events: HMSA organized several high-profile events promoting health education and professional networking, fostering collaboration among healthcare professionals of Hellenic heritage. One of the highlights was the visit of Kostas Vlasis, Representative of Arcadia in the Hellenic Parliament and former Deputy Foreign Minister. He was a part of a Greek parliamentary delegation that paid visits to the Australian Hellenic War Memorial, the Archdiocese of Australia, and the Pan Arcadians and also participated in the National Day Parade. It was wonderful to meet with Hellenic parliamentarians Mr Vlasis, Asimina Skondra, Theodora Tzakri and Evangelia Liakouli and discuss issues relating to the health and welfare of the diaspora and the opportunities for closer clinical and academic collaborations between Australia and Greece.

Community Outreach: Through targeted health initiatives, the Society addressed pressing health issues within the Greek-Australian community, including chronic disease prevention, mental health awareness, and culturally tailored healthcare access. It was wonderful to meet with the Prime Minister and members of his Cabinet in March and discuss issues affecting the welfare and well-being of patients affected by chronic diseases. I was privileged to meet with Clare O'Neil MP and Steve Georganas MP and discuss the crucial contributions of doctors of Hellenic descent to the welfare of culturally and linguistically diverse communities.

Mentorship and Education: The Society continued its commitment to supporting emerging healthcare professionals by providing mentorship programs, scholarships, and academic workshops, bridging the gap between traditional and modern medical practices. Seeing the support and engagement with the next generation of young friends and future leaders who attended the HMSA Careers Day at the Greek Community of Melbourne was terrific. The Careers Day was an engaging event that included talks, questions and answer sessions and one-on-one conversations between some of Victoria's leading academics and business leaders and secondary school students with Hellenic backgrounds from across the State of Victoria. I would like to thank Mr Bill Papastergiadis OAM, and the Board of the Greek Community for their support of this event. I would also like to thank Dr Athina Pirpiris, HMSA Board member for her tireless commitment to making this day and great event.

Collaborations and Partnerships: Strengthened relationships with other cultural and medical organizations to enhance global health dialogues and community engagement. It was our pleasure to host Professor John Chrysoulakis, President of AHEPA and former Secretary General for Greeks Abroad of the Hellenic Parliament and discuss the development of strategic partnerships with Hellenic Universities. I was also honoured to meet with several Greek politicians and academics including Mr Kostantinos Tasoulas, President of the Hellenic Parliament, Adonis Georgiadis, Minister of Health in Greece, Giorgios Kotsiras Deputy Foreign Minister and Former Minister of Justice for International Cooperation and Human Rights in Greece, Professor Gerasimos Siasos Rector of the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens, Professor Sophia Papaioannou Vice Rector for Academic Affairs of the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens and Professor Nikolaos Arkadopoulos, Dean of the School of Medicine at the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens to discuss the legislative and regulatory changes required to grow academic and clinical collaborations between Greece and Australia.

Sustainability in Healthcare: Advocated for environmentally sustainable practices in medicine, reflecting HMSA's dedication to responsible and forward-thinking healthcare delivery. We were blessed to have a visit by the Head of the Patriarchate of Constantinople and of the Holy Synod, Archbishop of Constantinople, New Rome and Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew. On behalf of the HMSA, I was privileged to be an organiser of an excellent reception at Government House. It was a delightful evening with speeches by the Governor of Victoria, Her Excellency Professor the Honourable Margaret Gardner AC, the Premier of Victoria, Ms Jacinta Allen MP and the Ecumenical Patriarch. Hearing his commitment to justice, social welfare, and sustainability was inspiring. It was also a privilege to discuss the importance of sustainability in healthcare with the Patriarch and Archbishop Makarios of Australia.

The Society remains committed to integrating Hellenic values of philanthropy, community spirit, and excellence into its mission of advancing healthcare for all.

The HMSA held its Annual General Meeting on Tuesday 23rd April at the Greek Community of Melbourne. The HMSA welcomes its newest Board members Dr Athina Pirpiris. Dr Con Giannellis and Professor Dennis Velakoulis. The night was followed by a talk on Medicinal Cannabis presented by Professor Vicki Kotsirilios.

The year was closed with a wonderful end of year celebration, where over 100 members and esteemed guests including Bill Papastergiadis OAM and representatives from Pronia, Fronditha, Accountancy Group and our media partners Neos Kosmos and the Greek Herald enjoyed an evening of discussion and networking. The event was held at the Victorian Artists Society in East Melbourne. Mr Emmanuel Kakavelakis, Consul General of Greece was thanked for his support and commitment during his tenure. On behalf of the HMSA Dr Arthur Kokkinias wished him all the very best with his new post as Ambassador of Greece in Syria. Plaques were also presented to Zapparas Lawyers for their longstanding commitment to education and their support of the HMSA. One of the highlights of the evening was unanimous applause for Professor James Tatoulis, who shared his reflections over a career that spanned decades. The HMSA recognised his commitment to patient wellbeing as a pioneering Cardiothoracic Surgeon and leader at the Royal Melbourne Hospital.

As we reflect on the global health landscape, we are reminded of the profound interconnectedness of our world. In 2024, challenges such as equitable access to healthcare, addressing the mental health crisis, and managing the impact of climate change on health have underscored the importance of resilience, innovation, and unity. These hurdles call upon us as a global community to transcend borders, harness collective expertise, and advocate for the well-being of every individual. The ongoing suffering and conflict in the Middle East also remain profound reminders of the fragility of peace and the enduring impact of division. As we reflect on this suffering, let us reaffirm our collective responsibility to advocate for a peaceful resolution.

During this festive season, let us embrace the spirit of renewal and compassion. It is a time to celebrate our shared humanity and to extend hope and support to those most in need. The festive period reminds us of the importance of giving—whether through kindness, knowledge, or resources—and inspires us to look toward the future with optimism. By working together, we can navigate these challenges and create a healthier, more equitable world for future generations.

I would like to express my heartfelt gratitude to my fellow Board members for their unwavering support and dedication throughout the year. Your commitment has been instrumental in achieving our shared goals and vision.

I also extend my sincere thanks to our valued sponsors, whose generosity and partnership have been pivotal to our success. In particular, I wish to acknowledge Zaparas Lawyers for their continued and steadfast support, and a special thanks to Manuel Tsirmiris, Managing Director of the Accountancy Group, for his invaluable expertise and guidance in all the HMSA accounting matters.

As the year comes to a close, I wish you all a joyful and meaningful festive season. May your Christmas and holiday celebrations be filled with warmth, happiness, and peace. I look forward to an exciting and prosperous New Year, and I wish you all good health, success, and safety in the year ahead.

Associate Professor Marinis Pirpiris
President, HMSA

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GREEK INDEPENDENCE DAY WREATH LAYING CEREMONY | SHRINE OF REMEMBRANCE

MAR 24

The Victorian Council for Greek National Day in conjunction with the Consul General of Greece in Melbourne hosted the official ceremony commemorating Greek Independence Day held at the Eternal Flame, Shrine of Remembrance. An annual event on the Greek calendar marking an important day in history commemorating the Greek War of Independence and the fight for freedom.

HMSA President Associate Professor Marinis Pirpiris laid a wreath in honour of those who fought and sacrificed for the freedoms we have today. Many esteemed guests attended including politicians, students representing their schools, Greek community associations and the Greek Community of Melbourne were also present.



GREEK INDEPENDENCE DAY WREATH LAYING CEREMONY | AUSTRALIAN HELLENIC MEMORIAL

The Greek Sub Branch of the RSL hosted the annual ceremony commemorating Greek Independence Day a historical and significant day on the Greek calendar. This day is to commemorate the Greek War of Independence and the fight for freedom. The ceremony was held at the Australian Hellenic Memorial where many key individuals from the Greek community attended. On behalf of the president of the HMSA Associate Professor Marinis Pirpiris Dr Ben Filipopoulos laid a wreath in honour of those who fought and sacrificed for the freedoms we have today. Many esteemed guests attended including politicians, students and members of the Greek community associations. Present were General Consul of Greece in Victoria, Mr. Emmanuel Kakavelakis, Mr Lee Tarlamis OAM MP and students from Alphington Grammar.

Many then made their way over to the steps of the Shrine of Remembrance where they marched collectively into the Shrine for a further ceremony where some key organisations paid respects and laid wreaths



Become a HMSA member today

By joining the HMSA network members will be part of a community of learning and networking.

Your membership includes:

- * Access to HMSA & other events including:
 - Member educational dinners
 - Social functions including end of year celebration
 - International conferences
- * Connect, share knowledge, experience & network with a wide range of medical professionals eg physicians, surgeons, GPs, hospital doctors, doctors in training
- * HMSA Doctor Directory listing
- * Communications including 3 newsletters per year
- * Inclusion on our social media groups

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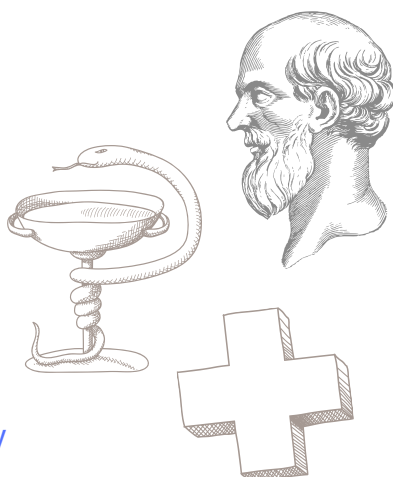


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ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING | GREEK CENTRE

APR 24

The Hellenic Medical Society of Australia held its Annual General Meeting on Tuesday 23rd April 2024 at the Greek Community of Melbourne. Members gathered to enjoy a Lenten meal and to socialise before the proceedings.

The AGM was informative with updates and reports presented by the key office bearers of the HMSA including President Associate Professor Marinis Pirpiris, Secretary Dr Arthur Kokkinias and Treasurer Associate Professor Arthur Nasis. Highlights of the previous few years including the successful conference and gala ball as well as other educational events were discussed. The HMSA also welcomed its newest board members Dr Athina Pirpiris, Dr Con Giannellis and Professor Dennis Velakoulis. Retired officer bearers were also thanked for their tireless contributions.

The night was followed by HMSA member Associate Professor Vicki Kotsirilos who impressed with her informative presentation on “Medicinal Cannabis – what is all the rage?”. The ensuing discussion and Q&A was engaging with many of the attendees participating.

Members also had the opportunity to network and mingle at the end of the formalities with the discussion continuing from the earlier presentation.

Click [here](#) to read the full article



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THE INAUGURAL HMSA CAREERS DAY | GREEK CENTRE

SEP 24

The Inaugural HMSA Careers Day was successfully held on Saturday the 7th September 2024 at the Greek Centre, Melbourne, a collaboration between the Hellenic Medical Society of Australia (HMSA) and the Greek Community of Melbourne (GCM). The aims of the first Greek-Australian Careers day included helping young Greek-Australian senior school students make good decisions to forge burgeoning careers of their own, as well as connecting them to esteemed Greek-Australian professionals. There was strong messaging throughout the day from Mr Bill Papastergiadis, president of the GCM, as well as the panellists, regarding the importance of networking and connecting with their peers and professionals alike.

The HMSA Careers Day featured over 30 leading Greek-Australian professionals, representing a number of fields including medicine, law, business, creative arts and more. Prominent panellists included Yianni Zaparas (managing partner of Zaparas Lawyers), Manuel Tsirmiris (Managing Director of Accountancy Group), Ross Savas (Managing Director of Kay and Burton Real Estate Agency), Kathy Tsaples (author, chef, owner of Sweet Greek) and Melissa Pateras (Founder and CEO of Meleros Cosmetics).

The HMSA thanks the members involved including:

- Dr Arthur Kokkinias (Adult Psychiatrist and secretary of the HMSA),
- Dr James Dimou (Neurosurgeon, Director of Junior Surgical Training at the Royal Melbourne Hospital, secretary elect of the Neurosurgical Society of Australia),
- Adjunct Professor Paul Eleftheriou (Principal Consultant at Nous Group),
- Dr Athina Pirpiris (Urologist, HMSA Board member),
- Dr Ben Filipopoulos (Cardiology Registrar, Research Fellow and HMSA Board member),
- Dr Stefanos Hadzakis (Anaesthetics Resident Medical Officer).
- Associate Professor Marinis Pirpiris (President of the HMSA) helped and supported the development of this innovative and inclusive platform to provide students with the first Greek-Australian Careers Day.

According to Dr Athina Pirpiris, 'the event was an exemplar of the strong bond Greek-Australians of all generations continue to have with their heritage and traditions. Furthermore, it was also a timely reminder of the enormous contribution Greek-Australians have made to the Australian socioeconomic fabric, and the importance of imparting our community's collective wisdom and insight to the Greek-Australian leaders of tomorrow.'

According to Dr Ben Filipopoulos, 'the careers day was a thoroughly enjoyable event and it was fantastic to see so much involvement from both students and professionals, united together through a common love for their Hellenic heritage. We hope it offered students guidance and assistance in their decision making'.

Following the introductory panels, there were breakout sessions focussing on students' particular areas of interest, concluding with networking. The event certainly engendered a great deal of enthusiasm throughout the day and received overwhelmingly positive feedback from students, parents and professionals alike, with plans to hold similar events in the future.

SEP 24

Some of the feedback from students included: 'great collaboration between all the professionals', 'it was helpful to network with the professionals. This has really helped me plan what to do next year'.

Effie Papaioannou who attended as a parent commented, 'such a distinguished and inspiring group of panellists and mentors for the students to learn from and engage with. As a parent, I was very grateful for the immense effort made by the HMSA and GCM to curate such a special day'.

There was significant support from the sponsors and the HMSA and GCM thank them for their contributions to the event. The event sponsors included Oasis Coffee and Bakaliko Oakleigh in addition to HMSA's sponsor partners which include Zaparas Lawyers, Accountancy Group and the Commonwealth Bank.

We also thank our event media sponsors for supporting the event, including Neos Kosmos, The Greek Herald, Ta Nea, Greek City Times and Greek Beat Radio.

All photos supplied by Mr Kosta Deves.

Article by Neos Kosmos - click [here](#)

Article by Greek Herald - click [here](#)

Article by Greek City Times - click [here](#)



BE INVOLVED!

Do you have an interest that you would like to share with HMSA and assist on or contribute at either sub-committee or board level?

Email your expression of interest to HMSA at info@hmsa.org.au

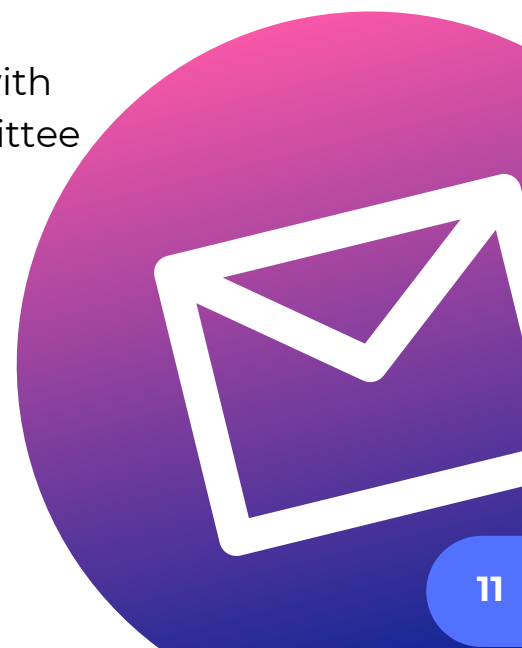


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OXI DAY - AUSTRALIAN HELLENIC MEMORIAL

OCT 24

On October 28, 2024, the Hellenic R.S.L. Sub Branch held the OXI Day commemorative ceremony at the Australian Hellenic Memorial and the Shrine of Remembrance to honor this significant event in world history. On behalf of the president of the Hellenic Medical Society of Australia Associate Professor Marinis Pirpiris, Dr Benjamin Filipopoulos, proudly attended and laid a wreath. The ceremony was attended by key representatives of the Greek community, including Consul General Mr. Emmanuel Kakavelakis, Greek Community of Melbourne President Mr. Bill Papastergiadis OAM, and students from Alphington and Oakleigh Grammar Schools. Also in attendance was Grace Bishop Kyriakos of Sozopolis.

This important occasion marks the day when the Greek prime minister, Ioannis Metaxas, rejected an ultimatum given by dictator Benito Mussolini during World War II to allow Italian troops to cross the border into Greece and occupy strategic sites within Greek territory. The Greek forces held back the Italian and subsequent Axis forces for approximately six months. Greece suffered a total of 300,000 to 800,000 civilian and military deaths during the second World War.



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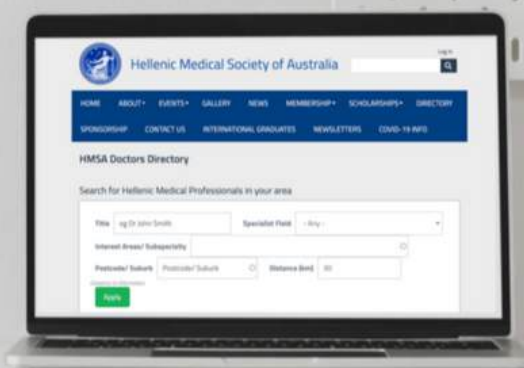
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HMSA MENTORING PROGRAM

Introducing the HMSA Mentoring Program.

'I cannot teach anybody anything. I can only make them think.' (Socrates)

The HMSA is pleased to announce the introduction of a mentoring program starting from February 2025. Mentoring has traditionally been an integral component of learning and development across all professions in particular medicine. The mentor-mentee relationship can be mutually beneficial with benefits for the mentor including improved job satisfaction, leadership skills as well as expanding their professional networks. Furthermore, it can challenge current perceptions and provoke new and innovative ways of thinking.

We are currently seeking expressions of interest from Doctors of all levels, who are current HMSA members and interested in becoming a mentor to a more junior doctor or medical student of Hellenic descent. The minimum requirement would involve meeting with your mentee three times a year either in person (eg over a coffee or at an HMSA event) or over the phone/virtually.

There has been an expressed desire from medical students and junior doctors to engage with more experienced members of the medical community in order to seek advice and discuss options regarding specialisation, hospital rotations, work-life balance as well as research and further study opportunities.

Please email your interest to: info@hmsa.org.au . More information will follow over the next few months.

References:

Ghosh, R., & Reio, T. G., Jr. Career benefits associated with mentoring for mentors: A meta-analysis. *Journal of Vocational Behaviour*. 2013; 83(1), 106-116.

Helfer, D. 5 Benefits of Being a Mentor in Healthcare. *American College of Healthcare Executives*. 2024.



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OCT 24

PRONIA's "CONNECT" BUSINESS LUNCH: A REMARKABLE SUCCESS:

In October PRONIA hosted a "Connect" Business Lunch at the Kooyong Lawn Tennis Club. Designed to encourage connection, collaboration, and the sharing of insights within the Greek-Australian and the broader business community, the event highlighted vital themes of health and wellbeing—core values of PRONIA's longstanding community programs.

PRONIA's CEO, Sylvia Hadjiantoniou, opened the day with a warm welcome, addressing attendees and emphasising the importance of raising awareness about family violence. She set a thoughtful tone for the event, highlighting PRONIA's commitment to fostering a safe and supportive community.

We were privileged to hear from esteemed speakers, including the Honourable Justice Emilios Kyrrou AO, Associate Professor Arthur Nasis, and Dr. Matthew Staios, who shared their expertise and inspiring personal journeys. The feedback was overwhelmingly positive.



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Welcome new HMSA board members

Dr Athina Pirpiris



Greetings! Dr Athina Pirpiris is a Urologist in Melbourne, working predominantly through Eastern Health. Her fellowships were completed at the Concord General Repatriation Hospital, Sydney, in Functional and Reconstructive Urology, as well as St Vincent's Hospital, Melbourne, in Robotic Oncology. Athina's interests are in pelvic floor ultrasound imaging and Functional Urology, managing both male and female urinary incontinence. In addition to her clinical work, she is working her way towards obtaining an AFRACMA and completing a PhD and MBA over the next 1-2 years.

Athina looks forward to working with the HMSA board and membership to create relevant and interesting events.

Professor Dennis Velakoulis

Professor Dennis Velakoulis completed his psychiatry training in 1994 and has been Director of the Neuropsychiatry Centre Royal Melbourne Hospital since 2001. He established the Melbourne Neuropsychiatry Centre (University of Melbourne) together with Professor Christos Pantelis (2004-2024). Professor Velakoulis' clinical and research work covers all areas of neuropsychiatry including dementia, schizophrenia, brain imaging and genetics. He has a successful publication track record and been a chief investigator in numerous grants.



Dr Con Giannellis

Dr Con Giannellis is currently a practicing senior Intensivist at Epworth Richmond and was previously also the ICU Director at Epworth Eastern. He is also currently a practicing Perioperative Physician at Epworth Richmond & Eastern private hospitals. Con is an active member of multiple committees at Epworth including: Critical Care Institute; Council of Intensive Care; Internal Medicine; and Perioperative Physician's Group. He has also held the positions of elected member and deputy chair of the College of Intensive Care Medicine Victorian Regional Committee. Con has a keen interest in decreasing mortality and morbidity risk in perioperative patients. Con is also an Honorary Senior Clinical Lecture, Faculty of Medicine, Dentistry, and Health Sciences, Department of Medical Education, University of Melbourne.

HMSA AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

Sharing medical knowledge and experience
Facilitating connections and synergies between doctors and
the community
Promoting medical education and research
Supporting medical philanthropy

HMSA VISION STATEMENT

Enabling doctors to promote better health for all Australians
including those of Hellenic descent

HMSA MISSION

Unite doctors with the community to achieve better health
and inspire lifelong advancement in knowledge.



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HMSA END OF YEAR CELEBRATIONS



NOV 24

The Hellenic Medical Society of Australia officially ended the year on a hot November's night with a celebration at the Victorian Artists Society in East Melbourne. We were fortunate to host our event in the midst of the Artists of the Year exhibition. This showcased a plethora of spectacular paintings and sculptures.

The evening saw around 100 members with partners, invited VIP guests and sponsors come together to network and mingle and celebrate the year with some Christmas cheer. With a buffet of amazing Greek dishes and endless drinks the night was a resounding success.

On behalf of the HMSA President Associate Professor Marinis Pirpiris, Dr Arthur Kokkinias MCed the evening. Mr Harry Hatzis represented Zaparas Lawyers who have long been loyal supporters of the HMSA. Mr Emmanuel Kakavelakis Consul General of Greece in Victoria wished the Society ongoing success in its mission.

Guests also heard from cardiothoracic surgeon Professor James Tatoulis who shared his reflections on his illustrious career and the importance of Hellenic heritage and family.

Other esteemed guests included President of the Greek Community of Melbourne, Mr Bill Papastergiadis OAM, guests from Fronditha Care and Pronia, our media partners Neos Kosmos and Greek Herald as well as the Accountancy Group who has provided their accounting services to the HMSA for many years.



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HMSA END OF YEAR CELEBRATIONS



The Hellenic Medical Society of Australia (HMSA) recently celebrated the year with a gathering that saw doctors, colleagues and community leaders come together. The event was held on Friday at the building of the Victorian Artists Society in East Melbourne, where attendees had the opportunity to see The Hylton Mackley Artist of the Year exhibition.

SOURCE: Neos Kosmos

Read the full article [here](#) and in Greek [here](#)



Melbourne, Australia—The Hellenic Medical Society of Australia (HMSA) concluded a remarkable year with a festive celebration at the Victorian Artists Society in East Melbourne. The event gathered medical professionals, artists, and community leaders and provided an opportunity to network, appreciate art, and reflect on society's achievements.

Read the full article at the below link

SOURCE: Greek City Times

Read the full article [here](#)



The Hellenic Medical Society of Australia (HMSA) concluded another successful year with a memorable celebration on a warm November evening at the Victorian Artists Society in East Melbourne. Read the full article at the below link

SOURCE: The Greek Herald

Read the full article [here](#)



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A CLOSING

CHRISTMAS MESSAGE



Χρόνια πολλά

The board of the Hellenic Medical Society of Australia wishes you and your loved ones a joyous festive season and a prosperous 2025.

NEWSLETTER

CREDITS

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Dr Arthur Kokkinias

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