

# Health hub art to stir discussion

TALENT ON SHOW AT GALLERY

Damien Ractliffe

A GALLERY space at a Sunbury health centre is hoping to showcase homegrown talent and spark talking points in the wider community.

The Sunbury Community Health Centre gallery will host exhibitions from artists and photographers and hopes to give those who haven't walked through the centre's doors a reason to.

Sunbury Community Health executive manager Bernadette Hetherington said the gallery was a way of engaging the wider community in a discussion or conversation, as evidenced by Mike Reads's Boundless Plains photographic exhibition.

"The space will have themes that people can have broad conversations about in the community," Ms Hetherington said.

Boundless Plains, which ran in June and July, featured photos of refugees and asylum seekers who were living in limbo in Indonesia.

Ms Hetherington said the display sparked a community conversation about issues faced by asylum seekers.

The gallery is currently featuring work by Sunbury artist, Paloma Francis, based on the theme of hyper-feminism.

"In my work, I wanted to embrace all that I see as feminine – the strength, gentleness, beauty, and wisdom that I feel creates the feminine side of this world," Francis said.

"I think the community gallery is a terrific idea. It opens the artist up to a greater audience. In the community health centre (there) are people with different needs.

"Art soothes the soul, and being exposed to art as part of the treatment is therapeutic."

In October, the gallery will host work by indigenous artist, John Patten, and later in the year will feature art celebrating International Day of People with Disability.



Bernadette Hetherington at the new gallery space at Sunbury Community Health Centre. Picture: DENNIS HANKTELOW