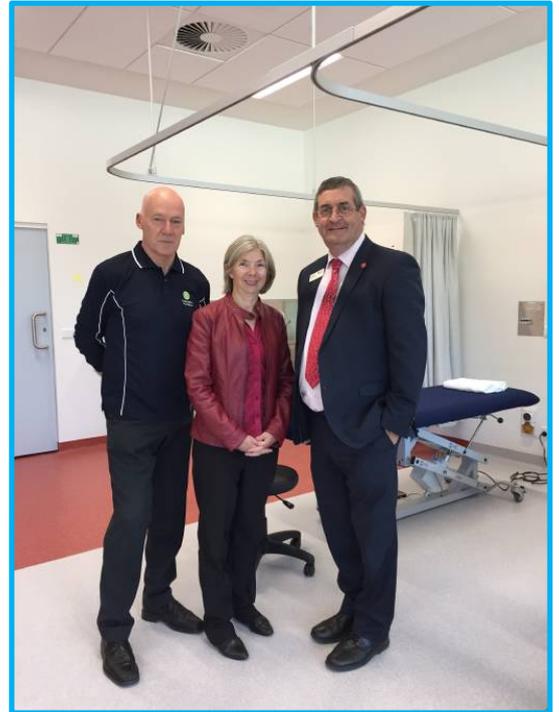


ACU'S PHYSIOTHERAPY 'GAME-CHANGER' MOVE

Aquinas Campus Dean Joe Fleming says the first intake of physiotherapy students in Ballarat would be a real “game-changer” for regional health in this state. Australian Catholic University’s first physiotherapy students at Aquinas were officially on campus last week, ahead of classes starting on Monday, February 27. The program was launched at an ACU School of Physiotherapy networking event, in what was the first official function in the modern, purpose-built St Brigid’s Health Sciences building.

“What this means for students and regional health is extraordinary...lots of students study in Melbourne and particularly for regional centres, it can be hard to get them back,” Associate Professor Fleming said. “It’s been a long journey to get to this point, but it’s all worthwhile.”



Students will undertake a range of work placements, predominantly in Ballarat and across the region with some international opportunities. The first-year class also features a large proportion of regional students. Physiotherapy courses are on offer at La Trobe University in Bendigo and Charles Sturt University in Albury-Wodonga but Associate Professor Fleming said the Aquinas course was well-positioned in western Victoria.

Physiotherapy Board of Australia chairman Charles Flynn said there was a growing interest in the discipline from students wanting to study physiotherapy and in patients and services using physiotherapists. “When I talk to young students they see a lot more physios involved in sport now, running out on the ground to players,” Dr Flynn said. “Physios are a lot more common in hospitals, they’re now working in emergency medicine departments...There is greater exposure and awareness for what we do and it is such an expanding field to work in.”

St Brigid’s Health Sciences building will formally open this semester.

Photo: Physiotherapist Charles Flynn, ACU National Head of School of Physiotherapy Suzanne Kuys, Aquinas Campus Dean Joe Fleming in the new classrooms.