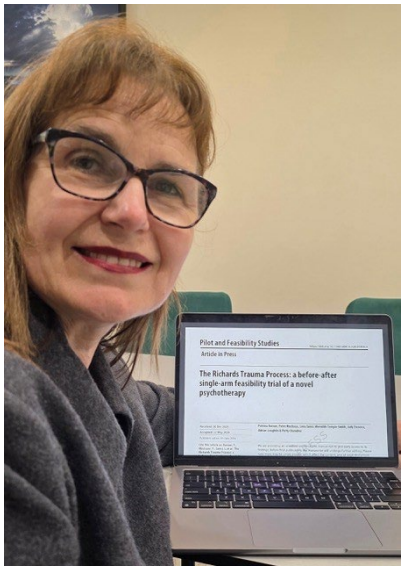
Merri-bek Family Doctors

Newsletter

August 2026

Fun Fact

How Dr Petrina keeps herself busy



Dr Petrina Barson has a number of passion projects alongside Merri-bek Family Doctors, and one has involved leading some research into The Richards Trauma Process (TRTP). TRTP aims to resolve the underlying traumatic drivers of anxiety, depression, and PTSD. Dr Petrina has taken about 200 people through this therapy over the last 8 years. She is very excited that the research has been accepted for publication. You can read more about the research here.

Health Promotion

Screens taking over your life?

While the internet is a vital part of daily life, excessive screen time can negatively impact your health and well-being. Internet addiction often shows up as neglected responsibilities, sleep deprivation, and feelings of irritability when offline.

Physically, it can lead to headaches, eye strain, and poor posture. To regain balance, try establishing screen-free zones at home, using app timers to limit social media, and turning off all devices at least one hour before bed.

If disconnecting feels overwhelming, reaching out to a healthcare professional can provide you with the right guidance and support.

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Did you know?

A free visit from our friend Frank

If you take a number of medications and are struggling to achieve one or more of your health goals, you may be eligible for a free government-funded 'Home Medicine Review'. Ask your doctor to send a referral to our trusted and highly experienced pharmacist, Frank Barbuto, who will then visit you at home at a convenient time and discuss your medications with you.

Frank will ensure that you understand what you're taking including potential side effects, how to take it correctly, and how to safely store it. Frank applies his extensive knowledge of pharmaceuticals to create a report for your doctor to help them optimise your medications.

Patients who've had a visit from Frank generally find it enormously enlightening – and maybe enjoy a nice cup of tea with him.

Heart Food

Enjoy with us this beautiful poem by contemporary US poet Aracelis Girmay. Thanks to Dr Julian Cassar for contributing it.

Consider the hands that write this letter

Consider the hands
that write this letter.
The left palm pressed flat against the paper,
as it has done before, over my heart,
in peace or reverence
to the sea or some beautiful thing
I saw once, felt once: snow falling
like rice flung from the giants' wedding,

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or the strangest birds. & consider, then,
the right hand, & how it is a fist,
within which a sharpened utensil,
similar to the way I've held a spade,
match to the wick, the horse's reins,
loping, the very fists
I've seen from the roads to Limay & Estelí.
For years, I have come to sit this way:
one hand open, one hand closed,
like a farmer who puts down seeds & gathers up
the food that comes from that farming.
Or, yes, it is like the way I've danced
with my left hand opened around a shoulder
& my right hand closed inside
of another hand. & how
I pray, I pray for this
to be my way: sweet
work alluded to in the body's position
to its paper:
left hand, right hand
like an open eye, an eye closed:
one hand flat against the trapdoor,
the other hand knocking, knocking.