



Department of Health  
Government of Western Australia  
South Metropolitan Area Health Service

## PRESS RELEASE

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### Brave New World

When Margaret Griffiths is asked what she does for a living her answer usually sparks a myriad of questions.

After 30 years Margaret has retired as head of Fremantle Hospital's Sterile Supply Department (HSSD) – a specialised job sterilising theatre instruments.

The HSSD team is responsible for supplying instruments to the eight theatres at Fremantle Hospital seven days a week around the clock.

Literally thousands of surgical instruments are cleaned each day using three high tech washer disinfectors to complete the task.

When Margaret started at Fremantle Hospital in 1978 her work environment was cocooned. Staff entered a sterile zone for their whole shift and did not leave the area with all facilities encompassed in the area.

Things have changed since then and staff move around the hospital more but the department remains a bit of a mystery as it is an isolated work zone operating under strict protocols.

“Nobody knew much about this work when I first started and even today it holds an air of mystery,” Margaret said.

“The biggest change has been the introduction of high tech instruments as new operations are performed. It has certainly become more complex but technology has kept up and the system is well maintained and monitored for quality control.”

Margaret migrated from England where she ran office canteens and after finding it hard to get into similar work in Australia she applied for her first job in sterile supply and hasn't looked back since.

“I have enjoyed working full time since I was 16 and retirement will be different but I'm planning to travel interstate and overseas and to enjoy it,” Margaret said.

*PIC of Margaret in HSSD..*

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