Mr R – CRP Patient 1989
Mr R was a salesman, born in 1932, living in the Southern Highlands of New South Wales with his wife. His first cardiac event was an acute myocardial infarction (AMI) and Coronary Artery Bypass Grafts (CABG) in 1978. There was no Cardiac Rehabilitation Program (CRP) available at that time in rural NSW.

Mr W – CRP Patient 2015
Mr W was a retired builder, born in England in 1945. He was living with his wife in an outlying village in the Southern Highlands. His first cardiac event was a NSTEMI in 2010.

The Bowral & District Hospital Cardiac Rehabilitation Program (CRP) enrolled their first patient in March 1986. Advancements in medicine since that time are resulting in patients surviving their cardiac event and living longer, often with complex and co-morbidities. Whilst many elements of the CRP have changed over time, our focus remains dedicated to person centred care.

In the 1980s, core components of CRPs were based on American Guidelines and a broad framework provided by the NSW Department of Health. Current practice is guided by recommendations from professional bodies such as the Australian Cardiovascular Health and Rehabilitation Association and guidelines from the National Heart Foundation. South Western Sydney Local Health District wide eligibility criteria guide the referral and prioritisation of patients enrolling in cardiac ambulatory care programs. These case studies follow two patients participating in CRP, one from 1989 and one from 2015, highlighting the changing landscape of the patient journey.

Mr R continued to live independently with his wife. He has had a further admission to hospital with GCF. He describes effective self management strategies, including action plans. At a recent follow up he reports that his goal is still to return to driving. He is now eating daily and cardiac symptom free.

References
National Heart Foundation of Australia NSW Division (1997) How to Plan a Cardiac Rehabilitation Program. National Heart Foundation of Australia.

Mr W for consenting to share his journey. James Young Whitfield – media and technical support.

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