

# healthwaves+

Your local health news | Aug/Sep 2017



## Patient perspective

Shout out from appreciative patient p.3

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Cover: Dr Martin Wullschleger, Director of Trauma, and the Trauma team at Gold Coast University Hospital were among the many staff who received thanks in a patient's heart-warming message of appreciation. See story page 3.



# Board News

## Message from the Chair – Ian Langdon

### Employee innovation in the spotlight

**Gold Coast Health staff recently received more than \$200,000 to fund innovative ideas.**

In the past four years, staff-initiated projects have received more than \$1 million under The Improvers program, designed to bring innovative projects to life and cut red tape.

I attended The Improvers presentation along with 200 Gold Coast Health employees at Gold Coast University Hospital and was impressed by the ideas from our staff that help deliver improved care and outcomes for our patients.

Minister for Health and Ambulance Services Cameron Dick led the judging panel to determine which ideas will make the biggest difference to quality patient care.

This year, 13 finalists were selected from more than 150 entries with winners including:

- Get Set for Surgery program to empower patients waiting for elective surgery to be proactive during their waiting time
- Purchase a vitamising machine to allow pureed food to be moulded into more appealing food that patients are happier to eat
- Installation of digital information screens in key high-traffic hospital areas
- Alternative nurse call bells for patients with limited, or no, arm and hand function; for example, a bell triggered by breath
- A queen-size cuddle bed for comfort for end-of-life patients

### Reporting recognised

I was pleased to hear that Gold Coast Health's 2015/16 annual report was recognised at the 2017 Australasian Reporting Awards in Melbourne recently.

Our report received a Silver Award and judges said it was a "highly readable" report, well-written, easy-to-read and navigate. The report design, financial accounts and disclosure were also commended.

Many people across Gold Coast Health contribute to the annual report.

We are proud that our report has been recognised for providing a clear and balanced explanation of our annual performance.

The 2015/16 annual report can be viewed here: <https://publications.qld.gov.au/dataset/gold-coast-health-annual-report/>

## Healthy boost for Gold Coast

**Gold Coast residents will continue to receive quality health care and hospital treatment with a \$107.3 million funding boost to Gold Coast Health as part of the 2017-18 State Budget.**

The new budget of \$1.391 billion is 8.4 per cent more than the 2016-17 operating budget of \$1.283 billion.

Gold Coast Board and management are pleased with the result which will enable investment in significant initiatives including:

- \$35.9 million in growth funding to meet projected increases in activity, addressing increasing emergency

department presentations, outpatients and elective surgery

- \$6.2 million state funding to support initiatives aimed at the reduction of specialist outpatient long waits including a focus on patients waiting for an Ear Nose and Throat appointment
- \$5.9 million to deliver additional gastrointestinal endoscopies to meet the growth in demand associated with the national bowel screening program
- \$4.6 million for the new Lavender Mother and Infant Inpatient Unit (4 beds)
- \$3.0 million to support the fourth and final year of the Integrated Care pilot program.



# A patient view of caring staff

Gold Coast resident Haydn Simmons said he wanted to “shout from the roof tops” the “unbelievably amazing” care he received at Gold Coast University Hospital after a bike riding accident. Haydn wrote to Gold Coast Health to show his appreciation. More than 60 nurses looked after Haydn during his stay and he said they all exhibited the same positive attitude.

*I write this letter regarding my recent stay at the Gold Coast University Hospital (GCUH). It is an unfortunate element of our society that too often, only the people who complain get heard, but I would like to change that.*

*I want to shout from the roof tops about how unbelievably amazing the care and attention I received while under care at the GCUH.*

*I was taken by ambulance on Monday afternoon, 17th April, and spent just over 10 days in hospital being treated for a ruptured large intestine as a result of a bike accident while out riding with my kids. From every step, and sequence of events that followed, I had nothing but caring, wonderful and attentive support from all the staff who helped me.*

*The ambulance drivers were calm and reassuring, and when I arrived and went into a resus room, surrounded by 12 or more people, I knew I was going to be OK. My nurse in A&E (Emergency Department) was Chris Dhu. I need to give him special mention. He has an impressive ability to provide comfort and care, while delivering the required treatment. A simple grip of my hand, or pat on the shoulder would seem so minor, but he has mastered the ability to express his genuine care while going about his duties. Even to the point that at the end of his shift, he came and found me to see how I was doing. Remarkable. Every transfer from a bed or area to another, I was greeted by a positive and happy ward staff.*

*The ED doctors were clear and comprehensive about what was happening and why. I always felt informed, reassured and never rushed.*

*Up on the Ward C4 West, the nursing staff all displayed one consistent trait. Compassion. It was genuine, not forced, and a real sense they like their work environment. Over the stay I would have had over 60 nurses looking after me, and the*



*Haydn Simmons, (left) thanks some of the staff who helped in his time of need (from left) Trauma Nurse Coordinator Leah Blandford, Dr Sophie West, Dr Tenzin Lamdark, Dr Hobia Silva and Director of Trauma Dr Martin Wullschleger.*

*same characteristics in their care shone through. They all listened, they all cared.*

*My highest respect must go out the trauma team that looked after me. Dr Martin Wullschleger and his team were outstanding. They all took time to sit, time to understand my needs, and time to show genuine care. I never felt rushed by the fact that they are incredibly busy people.*

*Dr Tenzin, Dr Sophie and Dr Hobia were fantastic in the communication and process of giving me the care I needed. The case managers in Sol and Leah made me feel like I was special. They would pop in regularly to make sure I was OK and to take the time to explain things in more detail as I or my wife were comprehending my surgery and recovery.*

*All this credit cannot go unnoticed and it cannot be present if the administrators and directors of the facility are not doing a great job. From the top down there seems to be a culture of camaraderie and respect between all staffing levels.*

*So my sincere thank you to all those I have come in contact with in my recent stay in hospital. You have made what has been a traumatic experience for me and my family, actually feel like a positive and uplifting event in my life.*

*Please share this letter with everyone that needs to hear it. From our government officials to the cleaners that kept the rooms and wards so neat and tidy. I can't thank you enough.*

*Our TV and radio stations and our society in general need to focus and acknowledge more of the outstanding things that we have in our society, and the Gold Coast Hospital for me has been an outstanding example of something that needs to be celebrated.*

*Thank you sincerely,  
Haydn Simmons*

## We value your feedback

Letting us know about your experience at Gold Coast Health helps to identify what is working well and the areas that may need improvement.

You can share your valuable feedback by:

- talking to staff including the ward Nurse Unit Manager
- submitting a feedback form (ask staff for a copy)
- contacting the Patient Liaison Service via [GCPLS@health.qld.gov.au](mailto:GCPLS@health.qld.gov.au) or (07) 5687 2048.

Here's some feedback the Patient Liaison Service has received recently.

### Gold Coast University Hospital

Everyone who assisted in my surgery and care was not only professional but genuinely cared for my recovery. Working as a volunteer I have gotten to meet some very impressive staff and wish to advise what a very positive experience I had in your wonderful health facility.

### Oral Health

I would like to say a huge thank you to the dentist, nurse and administration staff at Oral Health. I left feeling very welcome and would not have any hesitation in recommending this service to anyone.

### Transition Care

Keep on doing what you accomplish so well. Thanks to everyone from the caring nurses through to the rehabilitation team, occupational therapists and all others.

## Celebrating research success

**More than 200 research projects have been authorised at Gold Coast Health in the past 18 months.**

This work has contributed to new and innovative treatments for patients and revenue of about \$1.7 million, according to Clinical Governance, Education and Research Executive Director Marianne Vonau.

Speaking at the recent launch of the Research Review publication, Professor Vonau said research was making a clear contribution to achieving Gold Coast Health's vision of being recognised as a centre of excellence for world class healthcare.

"Due to the collaborative nature of research, we have partnerships with more than 40 national and 22 international organisations," she said.

The Research Review profiles staff and students within each department, research projects, grant funding, awards and achievements.

Other highlights for the Research Office in the past 18 months included 300 peer-reviewed publications; more than 50 higher degree students working on clinically-based research projects; examples of how research has changed practice; and a Research showcase event.



*Celebrating research success are (from left) Greta Ridley (Office for Research Governance and Development), Prof Allan Cripps (Board Research Committee Chair) and Prof Marianne Vonau.*

## Staff wellness front of mind in Emergency Department



*Gold Coast Health Emergency Physician Shahina Braganza (right), paramedic Gary Berkowitz and emergency registrar Angela Burgett.*

**A wellness initiative being developed by Gold Coast Health clinicians has attracted international interest.**

Since being presented at Stanford University recently, the 'oneED' program has also been warmly received at the Queensland Emergency Medicine autumn symposium, and most recently at a Queensland Department of Health Staff Wellbeing forum.

Originally designed to ensure Emergency Department (ED) staff maintain connectedness in a busy and growing hospital, the evolving 'oneED' wellness program focuses on using group mindfulness practice to maintain empathy, compassion and communication, with the ultimate goal of enhancing patient care.

The program is being developed by Gold Coast Health Emergency Physician Shahina Braganza and ED Medical Education Officer Jessica Young, who hope it will help foster a collective culture of positive growth, so all clinical and non-clinical staff can be nurtured to thrive.

You can watch the 'oneED' video on Gold Coast Health's YouTube account at [www.youtube.com/user/GoldCoastHealth](http://www.youtube.com/user/GoldCoastHealth).

## Don't miss booking a breast screen

**A breast screen only takes 30 minutes and is a must every two years for women aged between 50 and 74.**

Finding breast cancer early provides the best chance of surviving the disease. Since BreastScreen Queensland began, over 19,000 breast cancers have been detected.

With the help of early detection, the five year breast cancer survival rate has increased to 90 per cent.

Book your breast screen today. Call 132050 or visit the website [breastscreen.qld.gov.au](http://breastscreen.qld.gov.au).





## World recognition for respiratory virus clinical trial

A Gold Coast Health clinical trials program has been recognised internationally for its role in a drug trial for patients suffering from the common yet untreatable Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV).

Clinical Trials Sponsor Gilead and Pharmaceutical Product Development have named Gold Coast Health as the Highest Site Recruiter in Australia and in the top seven sites globally.

The study, led by Internal Medicine Staff Specialist Dr Srinivasa Nama, is the first of its kind to provide patients suffering from RSV with the drug Presatovir to treat the respiratory virus — which can be life threatening to children and the elderly.

With the number of incidents of RSV comparable to influenza, the trial's outcome could have a significant impact on a patient's length of stay and the health system generally.

Dr Nama said the recognition helped to put Gold Coast Health on the map internationally for clinical trials.

"This clinical research award raises the profile of clinical trials expertise and facilities at Gold Coast Health," Dr Nama said.

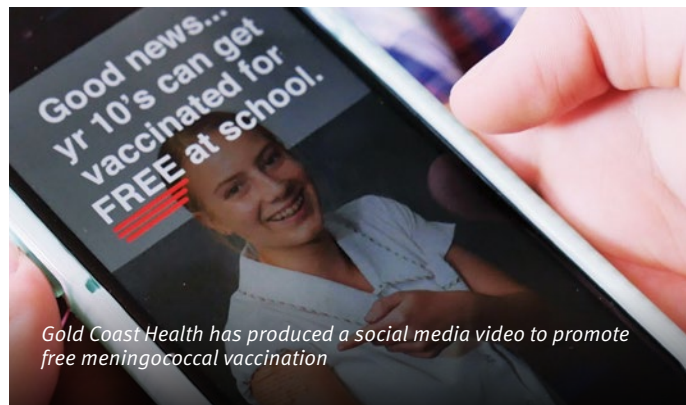
"We are now attracting attention from major research organisations for internationally collaborated trials. This is an achievement we can be very proud of."

The large team behind the trial includes Dr John Gerrard, Dr Shameen Beebeejaun, the DEMS Clinical Trials team and Pathology.



Dr Srinivasa Nama (second from left) pictured with some of the RSV clinical trial team.

## Teens urged to take up free meningococcal vaccine



Gold Coast Health has produced a social media video to promote free meningococcal vaccination

**Gold Coast teenagers aged 15 to 19 are being encouraged to receive free vaccinations against four strains of meningococcal disease.**

The State Government has committed up to \$6 million for a 12 month state-wide vaccination program, following an increase in meningococcal serogroup W and Y notifications in 2016.

Every Queensland Year 10 student will be eligible for the vaccination through the School Immunisation Program in the 2017 school year.

The vaccine will also be available through GPs and other immunisation providers for 15 to 19 year olds, until the end of May 2018.

Gold Coast Health recently produced a social media video to support the campaign. The video can be viewed on the Gold Coast Health Facebook site.

Meningococcal disease is a severe infection and anyone experiencing symptoms should seek urgent medical attention. Symptoms can include vomiting, fever, headache, stiff neck, sensitivity to light, drowsiness, joint pain or a rash of red-purple spots or bruises.

Meningococcal disease can lead to death or long-term health issues including limb deformity, deafness, epilepsy and possible loss of brain function. Approximately 10 per cent of cases are fatal.

For information about immunisation visit: [www.immunisegc.com.au](http://www.immunisegc.com.au)

## Gold Coast immunisation rates the highest on record

**The Gold Coast has recorded some of its highest ever immunisation rates with 93.5 per cent of all five-year-olds having received all their required childhood vaccinations.**

Immunisation rates for five-year-old Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children on the Gold Coast also continue to remain at very high levels at 98.2 per cent.

Gold Coast Health Public Health Physician, Professor Paul Van Buynder said: "Our vaccination coverage across the childhood age groups has improved remarkably over the last three years and is now near our target herd immunity level.

"However, we still have pockets of inadequate vaccination that pose a risk to the community and we are encouraging all residents to make sure their children's vaccinations are up-to-date."

Gold Coast Primary Health Network (GCPHN) CEO Matt Carrodus said the statistics showed a significant increase in rates.

"The more children that are immunised the greater protection for the community against serious and life-threatening disease including diphtheria, whooping cough, polio, pneumococcal and measles, so this is a very pleasing result," Mr Carrodus said.

"These rates reflect our work with GPs and the Gold Coast Public Health Unit, to raise awareness about the importance of immunisation, improve public access to immunisation clinics and GP services, and ensure patients are followed up by general practices so they don't accidentally miss a dose."

## Obesity on trial for community jury



Community Jury members review their discussion points during deliberations at Bond University.

### Gold Coast community representatives were brought together for two days recently to tackle obesity.

The 'community jury', a joint project with the Centre for Research in Evidence-Based Practice, Bond University and a first for Gold Coast Health, is an innovative community engagement method the health service will use to gain the community's confidence in the way it understands and responds to challenging health issues such as obesity.

The Department of Health reports 161,000 Gold Coast adults are overweight and 71,500 are obese (53 per cent of the community).

Gold Coast Health Senior Epidemiologist Deena Seesaengnom said the Community Jury aims to create a better understanding of the public's view on health management approaches through informed consultation.

"Our consumers who have a lived experience with obesity or are affected by obesity in some way, have a vital role to play and we saw that in action at our first community jury," Ms Seesaengnom said.

"We are also very interested to learn the wider community's outlook on the respective roles key health organisations are playing in the planning and delivery of these approaches."

Jury member Ms Beverly Bradbury said she wanted to take part in the jury purely to find out more information about obesity.

"We heard from a diverse range of participants with different backgrounds and conditions of obesity over the two days," Ms Bradbury said.

"It's been amazing because everyone has contributed in a different way with their own life experiences and I've learn a lot.

"The participants' positivity about trying to make changes in the Gold Coast community has been just enlightening."

Gold Coast Health, the Gold Coast Primary Health Network and City of Gold Coast have committed to reviewing the jury's advice.

## Give these palm researchers a hand

**If you live on the Gold Coast, there's a good chance you have palm trees in your garden.**

As some Gold Coasters have learnt though, if you're failing to protect your hands while handling palm fronds, there's also a chance you'll be injured and need medical attention.

The possible health risks were highlighted by Gold Coast Health at the Annual Scientific Congress (ASC) of the Royal Australasian College of Surgeons (RACS) in Adelaide.

Gold Coast University Hospital Department of Orthopaedics Doctor Anthony Silva presented the congress a series of penetrating palm frond injuries seen at the tertiary hospital over a five year period.

"Patients were identified from our emergency department records and ultrasound imaging reports," Dr Silva said.

"During that time, 45 palm frond injuries were identified. Of those, 40 were musculoskeletal and five were to the eye area."

Dr Silva said 60 per cent of those injuries occurred while people were gardening and 35 per cent took place in the workplace.

"Palm fronds are very sharp and can easily penetrate the skin," he said.

"That's why we use Ultrasound to find retained fronds and any other foreign bodies."

Dr Silva said simple measures could be taken to avoid such harmful prickly encounters.

"We recommend the use of leather or latex coated gloves as well as protective glasses and boots for injury prevention," he said.

"Testing of puncture resistance of gloves showed leather and latex coated gloves prevented puncture 18/20 and 19/20 times respectively, while cloth gloves were ineffective."



Data shows palm frond injuries can be avoided by wearing leather or latex coated gloves.



## Calling all hospital heroes

It's Gold Coast Hospital Foundation's biggest annual fundraiser, and this year the Hospital Heroes Ball is bringing together some of Gold Coast Health's amazing medical staff with the Foundation's incredible donors and supporters for a night of spectacular fundraising.

Please join the Foundation for a memorable, black tie evening and become one of the many heroes who help the Foundation purchase crucial medical equipment and deliver vital patient support services for the Gold Coast community.

Events like these have helped the Foundation fund and deliver more than 300 pieces of equipment and hospital refurbishment projects in the last 12 months, helping patients and their families facing uncertain times.

Tickets for this amazing event are on sale now at [www.gchfoundation.org.au/events](http://www.gchfoundation.org.au/events) or call 5594 6986 to find out more.



## Thank you Gold Coast

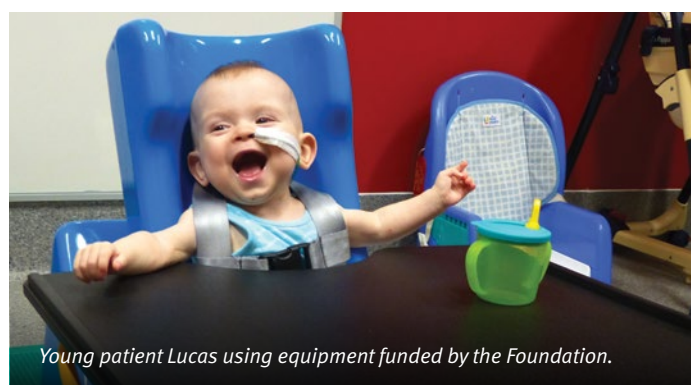
Gold Coast Hospital Foundation has just completed a record financial year of fundraising.

The Foundation's small, but passionate team have worked with so many donors and business partners across the Gold Coast this year.

Take a brief look at what the community helped the Foundation achieve in the 2016-2017 financial year:

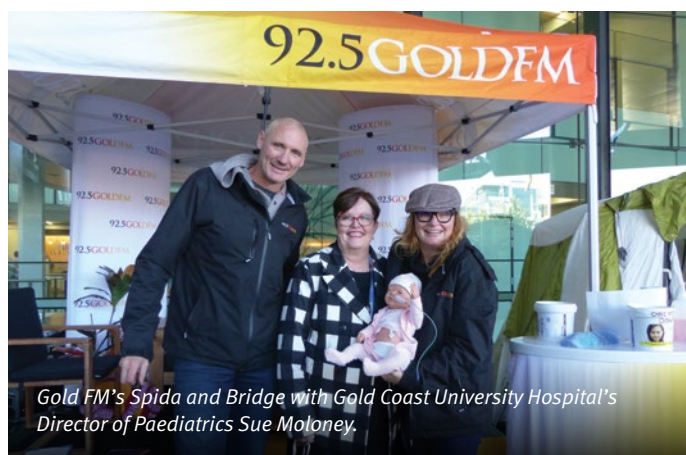
- The Cancer Patient Transport Service made more than 7,400 journeys across the Gold Coast to help people affected by cancer get to and from hospital for vital treatment
- Provided 277 nights of emergency accommodation to families affected by unexpected medical crisis
- Delivered 331 items including medical equipment and hospital enhancement projects
- Facilitated distribution of more than 1,300 toys and gifts
- Funded a total of 15 education workshops and medical scholarships for health professionals

The impact of these vital projects will reach around 100,000 people in your community. Thank you Gold Coast for making it all possible!



Young patient Lucas using equipment funded by the Foundation.

## Give Me 5 For Kids gives a lot to help sick kids



Gold FM's Spida and Bridge with Gold Coast University Hospital's Director of Paediatrics Sue Moloney.

The annual Southern Cross Austereo Give Me 5 For Kids appeal is over for another year with close to \$70,000 raised for the children's wards of Gold Coast University and Tweed hospitals.

Once again, 92.5 Gold FM's breakfast team Bridge, Spida and Al put on some entertaining early morning activities, all in aid of raising much-needed funds to help some special little patients.

Give Me 5 For Kids funding allows Gold Coast Hospital Foundation to purchase vital medical equipment such as a C-MAC Video Laryngoscope – used to visualise a baby's vocal chords in order to place a breathing tube into the main airway leading to the lungs.

The Foundation is extremely thankful of the local community who supported Gold FM's annual radio appeal by donating so generously this year. Bridge and Spida's iconic crazy antics, coupled with generous community donations will help hundreds of children facing medical challenges and hardship in Gold Coast public hospitals.

Please donate to support children in hospital by visiting [www.gchfoundation.org.au/donate](http://www.gchfoundation.org.au/donate)

## Docs in crazy socks for suicide prevention

**Clinicians and staff wore their boldest odd socks recently to support suicide prevention among healthcare workers.**

Socks4Docs Day acknowledges all those in the medical workforce who are twice as likely to suicide compared to the broader community.

Gold Coast Health's Clinical Council Acting Chair Penny Stabler said healthcare workers including, doctors, nurses and allied health professionals were susceptible to the same pressures as everyone in our community.

"It's important that we acknowledge that our clinicians, working in our high-pressure industry caring for patients, are humans too," Penny said.

"This means they're just as likely to face mental health, physical illness, depression, burnout and work stresses as any member of our community with the additional impact of working in a highly emotive and demanding industry.

"We need to ensure that we're doing everything we can to take care of those who are taking care of our patients."

Between 28 and 40 clinicians out of every 100,000 commit suicide in Australia, compared with a rate of 12.3 in the general population.

Gold Coast Health Radiation Oncology Dietitian Jess Abbott and her family are passionate advocates for meaningful change in the industry

following the suicide of her sister Chloe earlier this year.

"Chloe was a well-respected medical registrar in Sydney undertaking the Basic Physician Training program. The expectations of the job, as well as studying 40 hours a week for the physician exams were brutal," Jess said.

"I know first-hand the challenges of working in a busy hospital environment.

"We invest so much time in caring for others that we often don't take care of our own wellbeing and it is raising awareness on days like these that might lead to a reduction in the suicide rate by opening up important conversations."



Gold Coast Health Chief Executive Ron Calvert, Jess Abbott and Penny Stabler show their support for Socks4Docs Day.

## A marathon effort for those on the run

**Nurses and doctors from Gold Coast Health's Emergency Departments were at the frontline of medical services in the Gold Coast Airport Marathon race recently.**

The medical tent, which had 25 bed spaces, was based in the race precinct where more than 22,000 runners finished their events which ranged from 2km to 42.2km.

Twenty-two runners were treated on the Saturday with one requiring transfer to Gold Coast University Hospital's Emergency Department. On Sunday, the day of the half marathon and marathon, the medical team treated 133 participants and Queensland Ambulance Service transported two patients to hospital.

Dr Richards, the Event Medical Director for more than a decade, said that Gold Coast Health essentially provided a fully operational emergency department in the race precinct.

"Our team is equipped to manage the spectrum of presentations you'd see in a normal hospital emergency department — from fatigue, to falls, to asthma and dehydration," said Dr Richards.

"We've been involved in the marathon for over 15 years and particularly enjoy supporting an event that promotes an active and healthy lifestyle."

Not only were our staff providing medical support, many also participated in the race. Staff including Kate Morris and her daughter Taylah represented Team Health and the Gold Coast Hospital Foundation. Dressed as Team Health Angels, Kate and Taylah ran 5.7 km on Saturday and Kate followed up with the half marathon on Sunday to help raise money for the Foundation.



Gold Coast Health's Dr Brent Richards (right) with Gold Coast Airport Marathon CEO Cameron Hart and Linda Waters from Pindara Physiotherapy and Sports Medicine.

**healthwaves+**  
Gold Coast Hospital and Health Service

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