

# healthwaves+

Your local health news | Feb/Mar 2018



## Commonwealth Games preparation in full swing

Gold Coast Health gets ready p.3

## Help for women's health

Virtual consultations increase access p.4

## Getting set for surgery

New program helps patients prepare p.5

## Inside this issue

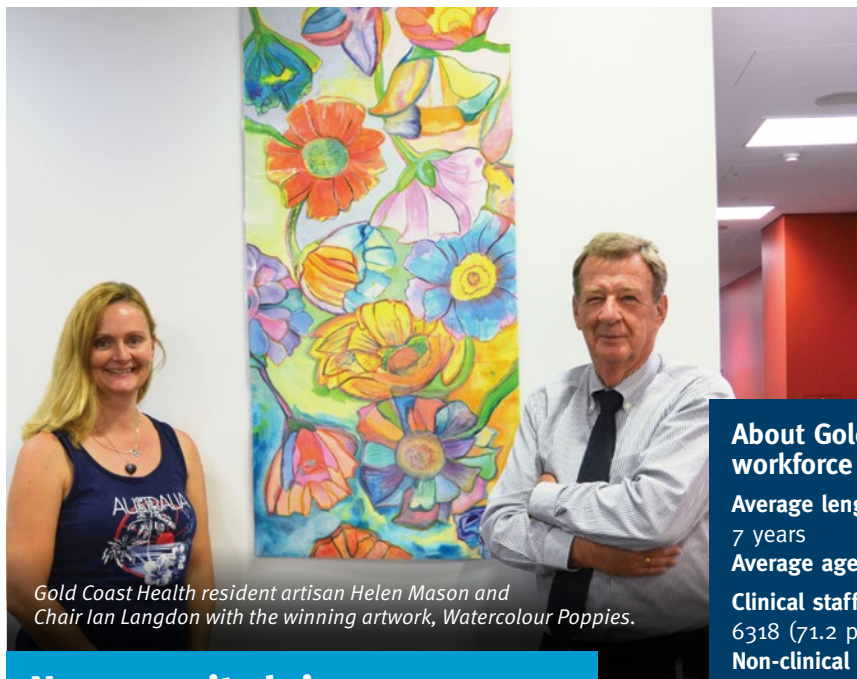
- 4 Women's health made easier thanks to telehealth
- 5 Many patients getting set for surgery
- 6 Research funding drives innovation
- 7 Scholarship program supports nurses
- 8 Community bands together

Cover: Staff with the Commonwealth Games Queen's Baton when it visited Gold Coast University Hospital. See story page three.



# Board News

## Message from the Chair – Ian Langdon



Gold Coast Health resident artisan Helen Mason and Chair Ian Langdon with the winning artwork, Watercolour Poppies.

### New recruits bring new energy

#### About Gold Coast Health workforce

**Average length of service:**

7 years

**Average age:** 42 years

**Clinical staff:**

6318 (71.2 per cent)

**Non-clinical staff:**

2557 (28.8 per cent)

#### A new generation of medical staff have started the next exciting phase of their careers at Gold Coast Health.

Ninety new doctors, 110 graduate Registered Nurses and 18 graduate midwives are among the new recruits to join Gold Coast Health in recent weeks. They join our skilled and committed workforce of nearly 9000 people who work at 19 facilities across the city, servicing the Gold Coast community.

In addition to these new recruits, we recently welcomed 200 Griffith University and Bond University medical students for an orientation day ahead of their clinical placements. We now train more medical students than any other hospital in Australia. It is pleasing to see that Gold Coast Health's fast growing reputation continues to draw high calibre candidates from across Queensland.

Gold Coast University Hospital and Robina Hospital are recognised as excellent training grounds where new staff learn from very capable and respected clinicians in a rich and dynamic learning environment.

They also benefit from the strong support system that we have in place to help them successfully transition professionally as well as personally. For example, we are the only health service in Queensland to offer a comprehensive two-week medical intern orientation before they begin rotations through a variety of units such as general medicine, surgery and emergency medicine.

While Gold Coast Health is a world of opportunity for these young people, it is our organisation, our patients and our community who also benefit.

I am always excited at this time of year when our

hospitals are abuzz with groups of students and new medical and nursing staff.

I have had the opportunity to speak with many of these young people and they are sponges ready to soak up knowledge. They bring an energy, enthusiasm and a desire for learning. This

brings a lot of value and reward to our other staff and, importantly, our patients.

It is clear that we are engaging tomorrow's leaders and innovators today. As they grow and advance their careers, it will be exciting to see their contributions to Gold Coast Health and to our society.

One of the wonderful services we provide at Gold Coast Health is music and art therapy workshops for our mental health inpatients as part of their treatment and recovery.

Each year during Mental Health Week we celebrate the creative strengths of people living with mental illness with the ArtBeat Music and Arts Festival.

This year more than 120 artworks created by current and previous patients of Gold Coast Health Mental Health Services were displayed in the foyers of Gold Coast University and Robina hospitals.

The recent exhibition included some inspiration artworks ranging from charcoal sketches and watercolours to collage and sculptures.

The winning artwork was Watercolour Poppies, a wonderful piece created over several sessions with patients in creative art groups and completed by a patient who took the piece home upon discharge as she was determined to finish it. She returned it to the hospital to hang in the exhibition and it ended up being our overall winner.

# Health planning for Commonwealth Games



Chief Operations Officer  
Kimberley Pierce

**Preparations to manage any impact on Gold Coast public health services as a result of the upcoming 2018 Commonwealth Games are well advanced.**

Gold Coast University Hospital and Robina Hospital are the designated hospitals for the Games, which has required the health service to undertake detailed service planning which has been underway for the past three years.

“The community can have confidence in the extensive planning we’ve been doing in preparation for the Commonwealth Games,” Chief Operations Officer Kimberley Pierce said.

“We’ve been working closely with partner agencies since 2015 and we have a Gold Coast Health medical team seconded to GOLDOC to ensure that our service planning has been done in lock-step with those charged with organising the Games.

“Essential public health services for the community will operate as usual during the Games period, including 24/7 access to Gold Coast University Hospital and Robina Hospital emergency departments,” Ms Pierce said.

Elective surgery will be unchanged at Robina Hospital and Varsity Lakes Day Hospital. The Gold Coast University Hospital will focus on emergency and category one elective surgeries during the

Games period, with other routine surgeries rescheduled to either before or after the Games.

“In the main, it will be business as usual for the health service with a few changes enabling us to be ready to respond in the event of a major incident during the Games period.

“It’s also worth noting that modelling from GOLDOC and anecdotal evidence from previous Commonwealth Games events in Melbourne and Glasgow shows we can expect our presentations to emergency to be on par or slightly more than we would see during peak holiday periods on the Gold Coast,” Ms Pierce said.

Patients will be advised of service changes and will have the opportunity to reschedule health service appointments booked during the Games period.

Changes to Gold Coast Health services during the Commonwealth Games include:

- transferring some outpatient clinics from the Gold Coast University Hospital to Robina Hospital and Varsity Lakes Day Hospital and rescheduling non-urgent appointments
- temporarily relocating some community services to other Gold Coast Health facilities
- increasing all surgical activity pre and post Games to ensure that our elective surgery patients are seen within clinically recommended timeframes
- redeploying staff in some operational areas to manage the redirection of services and increased demand.

If members of the community are required to attend Gold Coast University Hospital or Robina Hospital during the Games period, please allow additional time for travel.

# Queen’s Baton visits patients and staff

**A group of Gold Coast Health patients and employees got up close and personal with the Commonwealth Games Queen’s Baton when it visited Gold Coast University Hospital (GCUH) recently.**

During the school summer holidays, the Queen’s Baton visited major events, iconic landmarks and hospitals before it hits the road again for the traditional relay through communities around the country.

At GCUH, the baton visited patients in the children’s ward before a staff meet and greet in the parklands overlooking the Games village.

Gold Coast Health Chief Executive Ron Calvert was among the excited staff members who were given a rare opportunity to have a photograph taken holding the baton.

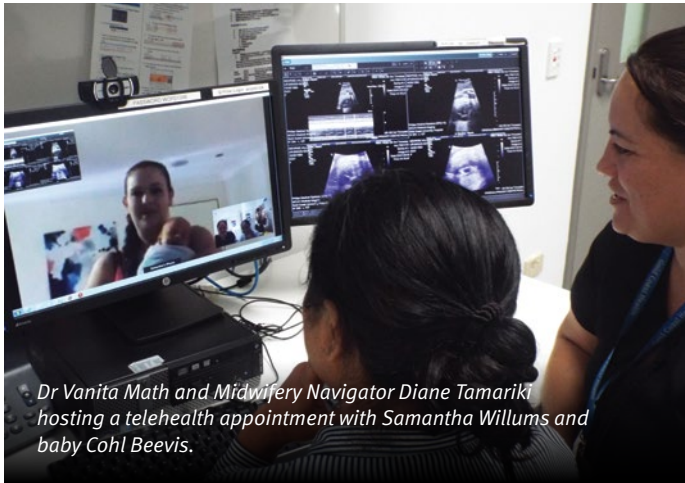
The Queen’s Baton Relay started on 13 March 2017 at Buckingham Palace when Her Majesty placed her message inside the baton.

The Queen’s Baton arrives on the Gold Coast for the Commonwealth Games opening ceremony on 4 April 2018, when Prince Charles will remove Her Majesty’s message from the baton and read it aloud to declare the Games open.



Ten year-old Kayden MacDonald and Captain Ta Da with the Queen’s Baton during a visit to the children’s ward.

## Women's health made easier with telehealth



*Dr Vanitha Math and Midwifery Navigator Diane Tamariki hosting a telehealth appointment with Samantha Willums and baby Cohl Beevis.*

**Gold Coast Health's Midwifery and Obstetric team has implemented specialist telehealth gynaecology and obstetric consultations which are making life easier for women.**

The convenient skype-like appointment by video increases access to women's health services for eligible women, reduces travel to the hospital, parking costs and the inconvenience of a face to face appointment.

Midwifery Navigator Diane Tamariki, together with Specialist Obstetrician and Gynaecologist Dr Vanitha Math, have so far delivered more than 20 consultations via telehealth since the project was introduced in October 2017.

"The patient can now receive continuity of care in the comfort of their own home or in a local midwife clinic through telehealth contributes to improved efficiency for individualised care," said Diane.

The virtual consultations allow for multiple specialists to join at one time, and both medical staff and the patient can see their records during the video link, which is delivered using secure Queensland Health connection.

The Queensland Health Clinical Excellence Division recently awarded \$10,000 to Gold Coast Health's Maternity Services. These funds will be used to purchase additional equipment to assist in the expansion of telehealth.

## Volunteers celebrate achievements

**More than 100 Gold Coast Health volunteers, chaplains and spiritual carers gathered for their annual Christmas party and to celebrate International Volunteers Day.**

Chief Executive Ron Calvert and Board member Colette McCool joined the group for an afternoon of celebration and reflection on highlights of 2017.

Volunteer Coordinator Dale Tatterson said one of the biggest highlights for Volunteer Services was being finalists in the International Volunteer Day Awards in the categories of Volunteer Organisation of the Year and Volunteer Coordinator of the Year.

"To be nominated and chosen as finalists in the category of Volunteer Organisation of the Year has made a real impact to the volunteers and their sense of pride working at Gold Coast Health," Ms Tatterson said.

"This recognition for the volunteers is testament of the compassionate work they provide throughout multiple areas of the health service and the difference they make to our patients and staff on a daily basis."



*GCUH volunteers with a gift hamper donated by the staff of ANZ Bank Runaway Bay.*

## Being emergency prepared starts at home

**Living in one of the most beautiful parts of the world can also bring its hazards. Severe floods, storms, bushfires, cyclones and heat waves are the kinds of major natural incidents our city can face every year.**

Knowing what to do before, during and after an emergency situation helps you to avoid panic, cope with the unexpected and minimise the risk to your family and pets.

The best protection is to be prepared. Don't wait until it's too late — now is the time to sit down and prepare your written

emergency and evacuation plans, pack your emergency kit and make a list of emergency contacts.

Essential items to include in your emergency kit are: non-perishable food and water; personal hygiene items; medications; torch with extra batteries; communications such as radio and batteries; a phone charger; pre-paid phone cards; important documents; and a first aid kit.

And remember, in a flood situation, there is no such thing as taking a calculated risk as conditions can change very quickly. So if it's flooded, forget it.

For information on how to prepare your emergency plan and emergency kit visit [cityofgoldcoast.com.au/getready](http://cityofgoldcoast.com.au/getready)

## Many patients now getting set for surgery

**More than 100 patients have joined Gold Coast Health's new Get Set for Surgery program, helping to reduce their health risks and improve overall health preparation while waiting for elective surgery.**

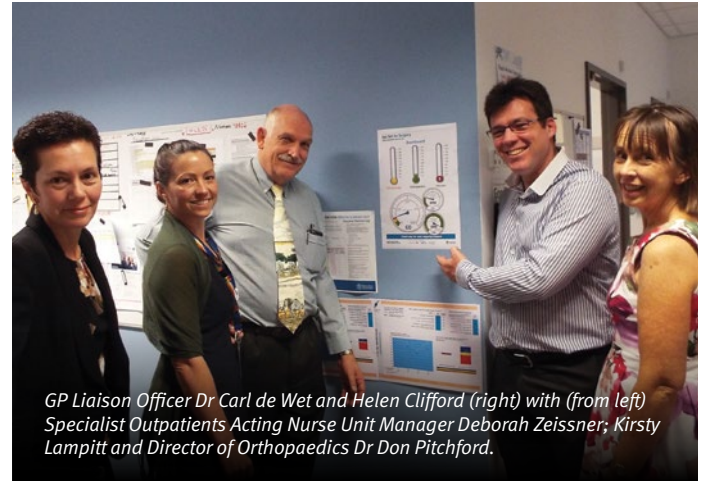
The patients are on the elective surgery wait lists for orthopaedics, gynaecology and vascular surgery.

The program, a major winner for funding in last year's The Improvers staff innovation event, connects patients with community resources and support services provided through the COACH Program, My health for life and Get Healthy. The community coaching programs are provided free of charge and participation is voluntary.

The Get Set for Surgery program was designed by the GP Liaison Unit in partnership with the Public Health Unit (PHU).

Many patients who are listed for surgery are able to contribute to the success of their procedures through small changes to their lifestyle, according to PHU Senior Health Promotion Officer Helen Clifford.

"These changes can include healthier eating, increased physical activity, social interaction and other lifestyle behaviours that reduce health risk. These programs provide additional benefit to complement other programs offered by Gold Coast Health," Ms Clifford said.



*GP Liaison Officer Dr Carl de Wet and Helen Clifford (right) with (from left) Specialist Outpatients Acting Nurse Unit Manager Deborah Zeissner; Kirsty Lampitt and Director of Orthopaedics Dr Don Pitchford.*

Program participants complete a health questionnaire as part of the consent process when booked for elective surgery.

Based on the clinical information provided in that form, a referral is made to the relevant and most appropriate program, according to Project Officer Kirsty Lampitt.

"The program reviews the referral, determines if the patient is eligible for their service and, if so, contacts them directly to explain the process and confirm they are still willing to participate before discussing their needs/goals and establish a plan to reach self-determined targets," Ms Lampitt said.

## Schoolies medical tent frees up Emergency Department

**A collaborative research study has confirmed that the Schoolies Hub health facility operated by Gold Coast Health and the Queensland Ambulance Service each year is a successful emergency department avoidance strategy.**

"We know that emergency department crowding and ambulance transportation rates continue to increase annually and mass gatherings like Schoolies and the Gold Coast Marathon can place additional pressure on our public health system," Gold Coast Health and Griffith University emergency care researcher Dr Amy Johnston said.

"We've been operating a temporary health facility at major events like Schoolies over the past decade and when we retrospectively looked at data from the 2014 Schoolies we found that out of 420 presentations to the temporary health facility, only 26 patients required transportation to a local hospital emergency department.

"There would be an incredible strain on our already busy emergency departments if 60 additional 16 to 18 year olds presented every night of Schoolies.

"Our research, supported with funding from the Gold Coast Hospital Foundation, confirmed that having an appropriately equipped health facility located in Surfers Paradise helps to reduce the impact of the already busy load within our hospital emergency departments," Dr Johnston said.



*Dr Jeff Hooper and clinical nurse Dan Ronnfeldt setting up the GCH medical tent at Schoolies.*

A skilled team of Gold Coast Health professionals work alongside other health professionals and volunteers to operate the temporary health facility between 6pm and 2am for each day of Schoolies.

## Research funding to drive innovation



**Nine research projects by Gold Coast Health clinicians and staff will share in more than \$517,000 in funding courtesy of a partnership between the health service and Gold Coast Hospital Foundation.**

The Research Grants Scheme enables research that will improve the health of the Gold Coast community and the delivery of health care services.

Gold Coast Health's Office of the Research Governance and Development Acting Director Dr Greta Ridley said the health service was home to a growing number of health care professionals who were combining high quality research with clinical practice.

"Gold Coast Health is building a strong research culture and the Foundation is a vital supporter of that with these grants, which enable research that can directly improve the health of the community.

"We look forward to seeing the results of the selected high quality health-related projects in years to come," Dr Ridley said.

Gold Coast Hospital Foundation, the official charity of Gold Coast Health, supports the health service through a number of initiatives including this research scheme, medical equipment and aids, patient support services, scholarships, education and more.

Chief Executive Officer Kim Sutton said: "The Research Grant Scheme focuses on seed funding innovative small and large health and clinical research projects led by Gold Coast Health professionals and often involving collaboration with universities. Our aim is to fund projects with the potential to advance health care services and medical outcomes for patients."

Projects to receive up to \$100,000 over two years included:

- rapid diagnosis of sepsis in acutely ill children
- safety, tolerability and efficacy of cannabis-based medicine extract in slowing the progression of amyotrophic lateral sclerosis and motor neurone disease
- responding to domestic and family violence in the context of maternity care.

## Clinical research trials to increase at Gold Coast

**Investigating a treatment for Ross River virus infection is just one of the clinical research trials underway at Griffith University's Clinical Trial Unit designed to improve patient care and health outcomes on the Gold Coast.**

It's an arrangement made possible by the newly signed Memorandum of Understanding between Gold Coast Health and Griffith.

The trial — being run for Paradigm Biopharmaceuticals - is one of several commercially sponsored trials being undertaken at Griffith's Clinical Trials Unit. The trial is hoping to show that the tested intervention may be useful in providing relief from the often excruciating joint pain associated with Ross River virus infection, which has impacted an average of 220 Gold Coasters each year over the past five years.

Gold Coast Health rheumatologist, Associate Professor Jenni Ng is the principal investigator for the trial.

"It's a great thing for the Gold Coast community to have access to clinical trials that might improve their health outcomes, like this double blind, placebo controlled study for a new treatment for the Ross River virus," Dr Ng said.

Dr Greta Ridley from the Office for Research Governance and Development at Gold Coast Health said increasing capacity for quality research is a key priority for the health service.

"The more our doctors, nurses and allied health professionals can collaborate with academic partners on clinical research, the better our health service performance will be due to our staff increasing their skills and experience in clinical research and our service delivery being underpinned by research evidence".

Director of Griffith's Clinical Trials Unit, Associate Professor Evelin Tiralongo says the new agreement will lead to increased clinical trial capacity in the region and will ultimately improve patient care and health outcomes for Gold Coasters.

"This mutually beneficial agreement between Griffith and Gold Coast Health offers different opportunities of collaboration for academic and clinic staff on clinical trials increasing their skills and expertise, and will enable both the health service and Griffith to be involved in high end translational research for the benefit of the Gold Coast community.

"With this MOU in place we expect the Gold Coast Health clinicians' involvement to increase substantially," said Associate Professor Tiralongo.



## Scholarship program supports nurses



HESTA Business Manager Kylie Hancock, Nursing and Midwifery Scholarship recipient Susanne Pearce and Joe Hanlon from the Foundation.

### Gold Coast Hospital Foundation has awarded nursing and midwifery scholarships to six Gold Coast Health staff.

The annual scholarships allow staff to upskill and in some cases complete existing study programs where financial hardship had stalled their progress.

HESTA, the industry super fund dedicated to health and community services, has partnered with the Foundation to be the major sponsor of the Nursing and Midwifery Scholarship Program.

Through these scholarships it's estimated that the positive impact reaches more than 20,000 people in the Gold Coast community. HESTA also runs a national awards program recognising excellence in health and community services, including the HESTA Australian Nursing and Midwifery Awards.

If you know someone who deserves to be recognised, you can nominate them for a HESTA Award at [hestaawards.com.au](http://hestaawards.com.au)  
Congratulations to the all 2017 Nursing and Midwifery scholarship recipients:

- Nursing and Midwifery Scholarships — Susanne Pearce, Chelsea Cameron and Pascha Stevens
- Ged Williams Registered Nurse Award — Sarah Boreland and Jack Mutlich
- Ged Williams Enrolled Nurse Award — Nadine Clarke.

## Foundation focus on hospital-based research

During February, Gold Coast Hospital Foundation supporters will hear about health research Gold Coast Health staff are leading to improve health outcomes for patients locally and potentially nationally.

Projects such as those seeking faster diagnosis and improved treatment of sepsis in children and better pain relief for motor-neurone disease are two examples of nine cutting edge projects being funded this year.

Our aim is to inspire our community to get-behind the Gold Coast Health, Gold Coast Hospital Foundation research program and to see the real difference their donations are making.

Gold Coast Hospital Foundation is community-based charity that helps to reduce hardship for nearly 100,000 patients who are unwell, injured or disabled each year.

Please support the Gold Coast Hospital Foundation and our research program by visiting our website [www.gchfoundation.org.au/donate](http://www.gchfoundation.org.au/donate) or calling (07) 5594 6986.



Four year-old Gold Coaster Brodie will benefit from new research.

## Care for Cancer Lunch

Stand alongside local cancer patients to raise funds for vital support services

Book your tickets and help the Foundation deliver important cancer support services for Gold Coast cancer patients like Lisa.

Book now [www.gchfoundation.org.au/events](http://www.gchfoundation.org.au/events)

## Kool Kids band together to keep kids cool



Jack and Evie Forde with Tahlia Wood and Sarah Rodas from Kool Kids, Clinical Nurses Emma Larcombe and Stacey Zabarini and Dr Tung Vu.

## Operation Ouch makes special visit to GCUH

Twin clinicians turned children's entertainers, Dr Chris and Dr Xand van Tulleken, have visited sick children in Gold Coast University Hospital.

The stars of UK television show Operation Ouch were on the Gold Coast for two live performances.

Dr Chris and Dr Xand visited the children's ward and paediatric Emergency Department where they not only cheered up young patients but were also responsible for delivering a good dose of smiles to staff.



Dr Chris and Dr Xand from Operation Ouch with Gold Coast Health staff.

### A community collection of bright band-aids is helping to lift the spirits of young patients at Gold Coast University Hospital.

An idea by a young girl at Kool Kids Early Learning Centre Nerang soon grew to involve families from across the company's 12 Gold Coast and northern New South Wales centres who collectively donated more than 200 boxes of patterned plasters.

Gold Coast Health Director of Paediatrics Dr Susan Moloney said the band-aids would be used in the children's ward and children's outpatients.

"It's a wonderful concept of children helping children and I'm certain these will brighten each injured or sick child's day just a little," she said.

Kool Kids Nerang Centre Manager Tahlia Wood said a young girl came up with the idea after recently seeing a news story about a young boy with cancer who got a plain bandaid after having his blood taken.

"She thought that was no fun and wondered why the boy couldn't have fun and exciting band-aids like she gets when she hurts herself.

"It's no secret that needles are scary, particularly when you are having them every day. Kids with cancer have more needles than they care to remember. But having bright kids' Band-Aids helps children distract from the pain," Ms Wood said.

More than 5000 children are admitted to the Gold Coast University Hospital children's ward each year and in 2016 there were 13,500 appointments in children's outpatients.

Gold Coast Health it uses about 2000 band-aids each year.

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

Visit **healthwaves** online  
[www.goldcoast.health.qld.gov.au](http://www.goldcoast.health.qld.gov.au)

Published by Gold Coast Health  
Communication and Engagement Unit

For feedback and distribution:

Phone: 07 5687 4027

Email: [goldcoasthealth@health.qld.gov.au](mailto:goldcoasthealth@health.qld.gov.au)

Write: Communication and Engagement

1 Hospital Boulevard Southport QLD 4215

