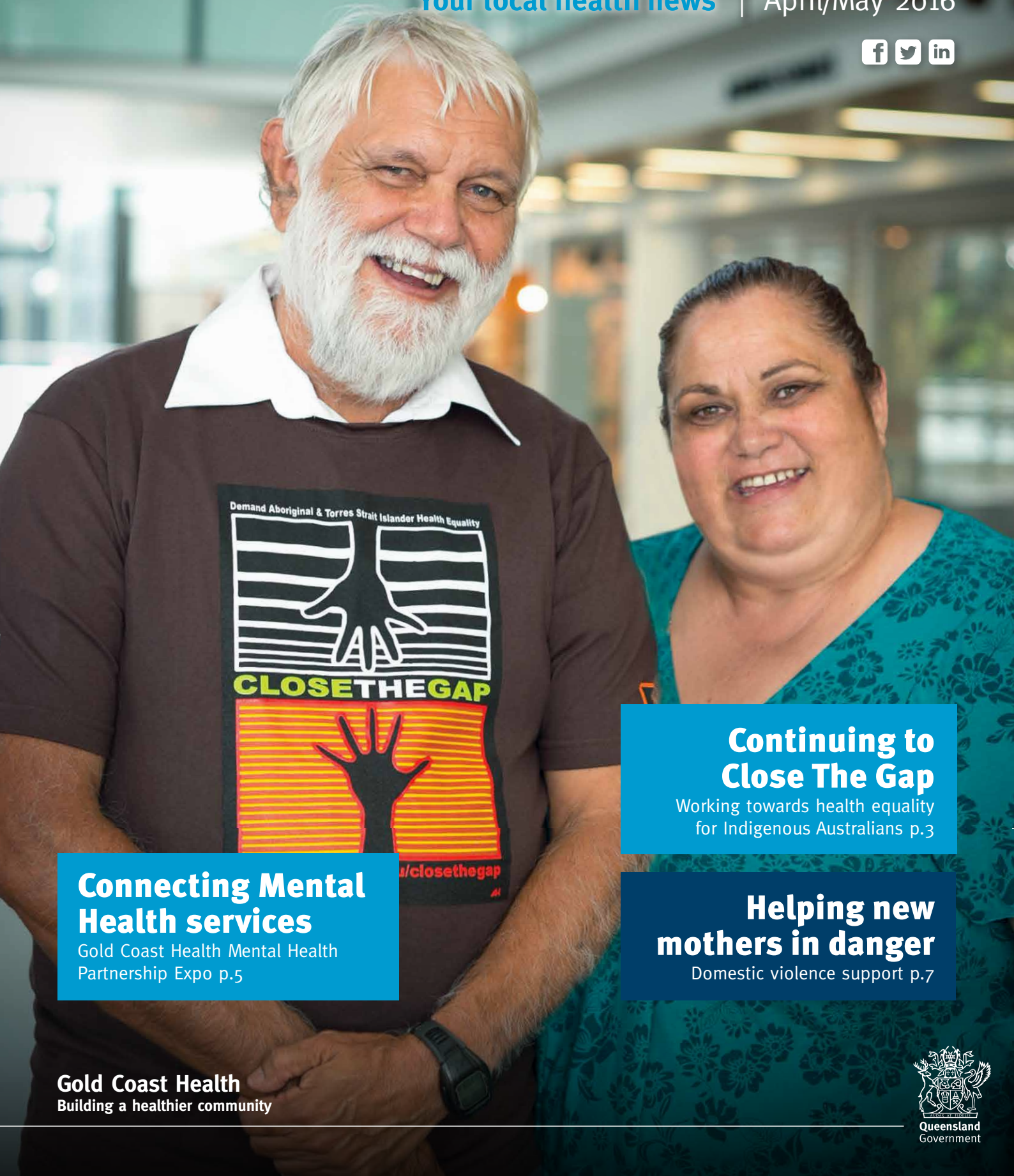


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Your local health news | April/May 2016



Connecting Mental Health services

Gold Coast Health Mental Health Partnership Expo p.5

Continuing to Close The Gap

Working towards health equality for Indigenous Australians p.3

Helping new mothers in danger

Domestic violence support p.7

Inside this issue

- 2 Board news
- 3 Gold Coast Health continues to Close The Gap
- 4 Founding Board members say farewell
- 5 Delivering patient and family first care
- 6 1000th patient for GCUH Children's Critical Care Unit
- 7 Helping new mothers in danger
- 8 Interpreters making valuable contribution to health care

Cover Image: Yugambeh descendant Ted Williams and Indigenous Liaison Officer Lisa Cook



Board News

Message from the Chair – Ian Langdon

Mental health care – a centre of excellence

Gold Coast Health takes very seriously the importance of its reputation for providing excellent quality care to the community it serves. It is most important that individuals seeking assistance have confidence in the service they are going to receive. That is why I have spoken out very strongly in recent months against what I consider unfair and negative commentary in respect of our mental health services.

The mental health services provided by our specialist staff are very broad. They embrace services provided to inpatients and outpatients as well as care in the home setting. In a typical year there is in excess of 157,000 client contacts with

Gold Coast Health expending approximately \$90 million annually on mental health care. Staff are based at GCUH, Robina Hospital and a very large contingent operating directly within the community.

The community at large may not appreciate the range of services provided, for example adolescents with eating disorders, parents struggling to cope with the loss of a child, others struggling with depression, anxiety and drug dependency. Patients are typical members of the public. They can be your next door neighbour, your co-worker, your child or your parent.

Our mental health staff are amongst our very best, providing a level of care and expertise sometimes in very trying and challenging circumstances. The many thousands of patients who avail themselves of these services annually appreciate the skills and dedication of our staff.

Providing effective mental health services relies on a professional network of treatment and support staff to deliver a holistic response. And we thank those organisations for their services.

Social workers – a key partner in healthcare

Social work services are often perceived as a short-term service but in practice they can lead to longer term support services being set up for patients and their families. For people diagnosed with cancer, they often require help with everyday needs plus emotional and psychological support, all while they manage the complexities of their treatment.

This support can help patients and their families acquire important information to guide their decision making and build their knowledge of what practical support and services are available to them while in hospital and after they go home.

Social Worker Emily Plunkett said her role in Cancer Services was diverse and challenging.

"The ability to reduce the impact of cancer on the lives of our patients and their families is of great importance to me," she said.

Maintaining quality of life and minimising the psychosocial impact of cancer and its treatment is a major focus of a social worker in this field. To do this effectively requires the skill and support of staff to establish a trusted connection with patients and their families.

Allied Health Assistant Jennifer Hitchcock said providing backup support to the social work department helps to provide a complete and sustainable service to our patients.



Social Worker Emily Plunkett with Allied Health Assistant Jennifer Hitchcock.

"We have a good partnership with social workers to make sure that the patient always has a person to talk to" she said.

Health consumer Russell said maintaining his quality of life and independence was very important to him.

"The first time we met Emily we were in a pickle but after speaking to Emily and Jenny we had a plan and my accommodation and care was all set up," he said.

Social workers regularly partner with Doctors, Nursing and Allied Health plus external agencies to provide the best solutions to patients and their families.



Chloe Bond, William Bond and Calla Adams from Merrimac State High School.

Gold Coast Health continues to Close The Gap

The next generation has shown they are in tune with the national initiative to Close The Gap on health equality for Indigenous Australians.

Primary students from Nerang State School sang in the Gold Coast's traditional Aboriginal language 'Yugambeh' and three dancers from Merrimac State High School showcased a Bangarra-inspired traditional dance at the annual National Close The Gap day that was held at Gold Coast University Hospital.

The initiative seeks Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health equality by 2030.

In his welcome address, Yugambeh descendant Ted Williams said the annual initiative was a reminder to people our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander citizens die 10-17 years younger than Australians of other descents.

"Just like Anzac Day on April 25, just like Christmas Day on December 25, mid-March is when we emphasise the Close The Gap day as a reminder that even though our reconciliation

period is going gangbusters in some people's minds, there are some aspects of it that need to be continually reminded of," Mr Williams said.

Gold Coast Health has a number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health staff including Hospital Liaison Officers and Health Workers who work closely with Allied Health, Nursing, Medical and other health professionals to provide a range of culturally appropriate programs, resources and services to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander patients within the health service.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Service Coordinator Melissa Browning said in the past decade Gold Coast Health had made great progress in key areas such as increasing access to services, building a culturally competent workforce and improving identification.

"There is still a great deal of work to be done and we can only achieve this by working together," Ms Browning said.

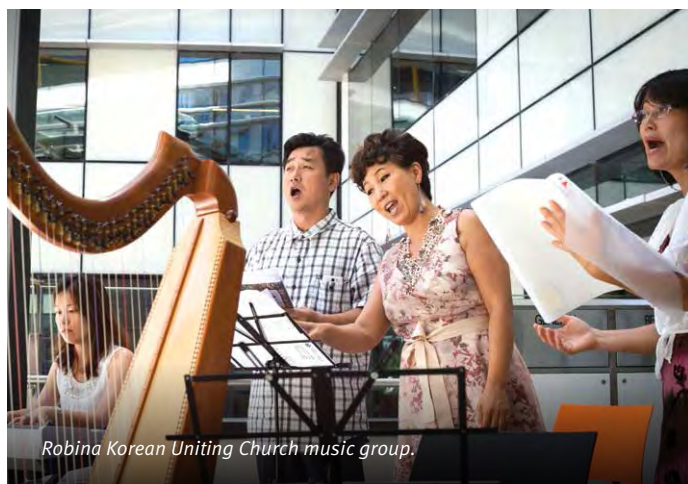
Engaging our community through music

Music is the universal language and speaks volumes for the value of the ongoing community engagement program at Gold Coast Health.

Acting External Communication and Stakeholder Engagement Manager Tony Matheson said this engagement program was all about encouraging the local community to interact and take pride in their local health service.

“Gold Coast Health is a local health service and we want local people to share their skills and talent to connect with staff, patients and visitors via music and the joy it brings.”

The Robina Korean Uniting Church, joined with onlookers, showcased some lovely vocals, harp and other musical instruments with songs that ranged from ‘Waltzing Matilda’ to ‘You Raise Me Up’. You can view the performance on the Gold Coast Health Facebook page.



Founding Board members say farewell

Ken Brown and Pauline Ross are retiring from the Gold Coast Health Board in April.

Both Ken and Pauline were appointed as inaugural members of the Board in 2012

and have helped transition our health service from the old Gold Coast Hospital to the world-class facility of today.

Ken has brought a wealth of executive experience to the Board, having previously held Chief Executive positions in large NSW hospitals and recently as a member of Queensland Health's Audit Committee.

Pauline has had extensive experience as a nurse and held senior clinical executive positions across a number of jurisdictions. She served on three committees—the Executive Committee, Finance and Performance and Safety, plus the Quality and Engagement Committee.

Board Chair Ian Langdon said both Ken and Pauline had brought a depth of knowledge that was of great assistance to a Board that needed to face the unique challenge of being the first board in a new system.

“With Ken's passion for preventative health initiatives and Pauline's relentless drive to promote excellence in our service they will be greatly missed,” he said.



Pencil in your own health check first

Many women are far too busy looking after work and family before their own health. They should stop and make time for regular breast screening which can help save lives through early detection.

BreastScreen Queensland provides free breastscreens to women from the age of 40. Those aged between 50 and 74 are especially encouraged to attend every two years. Eligible women can take advantage of a new BreastScreen Queensland Online Bookings system soon to be launched.

Gold Coast Health Promotion Officer Julia Foreman said that when completed it would enable women to register online, book and reschedule their appointments, manage their contact details, and view their rescreen date and notifications such as invitations, reminders and results.

“The new system will provide Queensland women with more convenience to make their breastscan appointment any time of the day or night irrespective of where they live or work,” she said.

“Working women or those with language barriers or particular disabilities will all benefit by using this booking system.”

Women can make an appointment now at their preferred location by phoning **13 20 50**.

Early detection saves lives

A breastscan every two years is a good way to maintain your breast health and the most effective way to detect breast cancer early.

BreastScreen Queensland encourages women over 50 to attend free breast cancer screenings every two years. Women in their 40s are also eligible for a free breastscan.

Making an appointment is easy. Simply phone 13 20 50 and talk to one of our friendly staff. No referral needed.

Put yourself at the top of your to-do list and book your free breastscan today.



Gold Coast Health – connecting mental health service providers

The recent Gold Coast Health Mental Health Partnership Expo has brought together government and non-government workers to share information and enhance relationships among those who provide services for mental health consumers and their families.

Gold Coast Health is leading the way in strengthening relationships between service providers to improve community care for people with mental illness. Some of the exhibitors included representatives from recovery and rehabilitation, physical health and wellness, employment and housing service providers.

Gold Coast Health Adult and Older Person Mental Health Service Director Vicki Green said demand for mental health services on the Gold Coast was at an all-time high with more than 7000 people seeking treatment in the past year. This included the Gold Coast Health team making more than 157,000 contacts with people in the community.

“We provide services to people with a broad range of needs, whether that is community-based support from a social worker or people in crisis with a need to be hospitalised,” she said.

“By ensuring strong connections across local industry organisations we are enabling mental health workers to provide relevant, accurate and timely information to patients and health consumers.”

Gold Coast Health has a 24-hour specialist mental health phone service. If you need support phone **1300 MH CALL (1300 64 2255)**.



Gold Coast Health staff Michelle Edwards, Angela Davies, Lauren Reid and Madeline Bridgland with Kristina Mamic from Lives Lived Well.

Delivering patient and family first care



Gold Coast Health staff join Advisory Board International guest speakers Katrina Hartman (left) and Phil Beauchene (right).

Gold Coast Health hosted a workshop in March for nurses, midwives and allied health staff to focus efforts on improving the patient experience while in our care. The main aim was to help these staff to develop a new professional practice model (PPM) around patient-centred care.

Magnet Program Coordinator Samantha Clayton said the PPM incorporated elements which supported professional practice, collaboration, communication and professional development.

“These are all critical elements to provide the highest quality care for our patients and their families,” she said.

“The first workshop paved the way for further development and planning with the Magnet Program, an international credential recognising excellence in healthcare services”.

USA Advisory Board Company representative Phil Beauchene spoke on the day to explore new ways of improving the patient experience within Gold Coast Health. Three key areas were identified for staff to explore: patient and family focus; developing a culture of compassion and developing a culture of collegiality. The professional practice model will be completed by June 2016.

Patient positives

Patient One – ED

On March 5 my daughter went to Robina Emergency and was in the Clinical Decision Unit. Their team was brilliant. They were so caring with wonderful bedside manners and very professional. My daughter was quite frightened of having the procedure. Doctors worked well as a team and so did the nurses keeping us calm, telling us jokes to relax us. Thank you so much. The staff are to be highly commended.

Patient Two – Gynaecology

In the last 4 weeks in the public health system I have had ultrasound, pathology PAP Smears tests through the Emergency Department and now a colposcopy at the Outpatients client. The actual medical services I have received have been professional, prompt and effective. Thank you so much.

1000th patient for GCUH Children's Critical Care Unit

A nightmare health scare turned into a night to remember for the Walker family.

Four-year-old Mylie was struggling to breathe when she arrived at Gold Coast University Hospital's Paediatric Emergency Department.

When she didn't respond to treatment clinicians transferred her to the Children's Critical Care Unit (CCCU) where she became the team's 1000th patient.

The dedicated children's critical care team has been an invaluable addition to GCUH since opening in February 2014, with countless families spared the heartache of having to travel or relocate to Brisbane to be near their sick children.

Mylie reunited with the team who presented her with a certificate and teddy bear for being the 1000th patient. She immediately named the soft toy after her favourite CCCU nurse Loren Chapman.

GCUH Children's Critical Care Unit Director Dr Phil Sargent said providing highly specialised paediatric care on the Gold Coast had made a significant difference to local families at an already stressful time of their lives.

"While no parent wants to see their child in a unit such as ours, this milestone does highlight the enormous impact we are having on the lives of so many Gold Coast families," he said.

"Every patient we are able to care for at GCUH is one less family that has been forced to endure the emotional and financial turmoil of having to travel to Brisbane to be with their loved one."

Dr Sargent said demand for the unit had been driven by a high number of referrals from neighbouring regions, an increase in surgical activity at GCUH and the implementation of an early intervention approach.

"This has allowed us to treat children early rather than wait several hours for transfers to Brisbane hospitals," he said.



Mylie Walker with Children's Critical Care Unit Director Phil Sargent, Nurse Unit Manager Sarah Brown, Clinical Nurse Vanitha Thandamparambil and Registered Nurse Irene McDerment.

"We are also not only meeting our community's needs but also the needs of other regions, with about 20 per cent of our patients being retrievals conducted from outside our boundaries including Ipswich, Logan, northern NSW and other facilities such as Pindara and Gold Coast private hospitals."

Mum Casie Walker said the Merrimac family was grateful to be able to receive treatment in high-quality facilities minutes from home.

"All the staff in the Children's Critical Care Unit engaged really well with Mylie and made her feel at ease, which is the most important thing," she said.



InFocus with Intensive Care Unit Director Jon Field

What do you love about working in the ICU? I feel incredibly privileged to do what

I do, to work with the people I work with. The job itself is incredibly rewarding because you literally save people's lives every day. It's a melting pot of emotion and ethical and moral dilemmas. It's cutting edge. It's cutting edge of technology, cutting edge of medicine and it's the pointy end of life and death, literally.

You have a highly demanding role. How do you stay emotionally balanced and what keeps you going? The most important thing as far as sharing that emotional burden is perhaps two-fold. Firstly, the support you have with one's work colleagues is really crucial and we are really lucky here at GCUH because we have a really close-knit, hand-picked team that work really closely together.

Not just the medical specialists but we also have a fantastic team of nurses and we all work really well together. It makes the difficult stuff we have to do so much easier because everybody is on the same page and supporting each other.

Then of course there is home. When you get tragedies at work, you can go home and hug your wife and kids, and everything is a lot better. The work-life balance is crucial and fortunately over the years I've had good teachers in terms of that balance and our ED Director Dr David Green would be one of them.

Why did you choose to work at GCUH? Firstly we have a brand new unit and state of the art infrastructure. We have a busy, well supported unit with every specialty including cardiac surgery, major trauma (major trauma now drains from right down into northern NSW), a helipad on the roof, and lots of new technology we are taking advantage of. We do really good things here. We've got a great team. There's a lot to be said for working here and I would never consider working anywhere else.

So what's next for the ICU team? We're in a rapid growth phase. We've got more beds that are opening in the near future and we are trying to stay ahead of demand, so it's going to get bigger and busier. We are going to be doing new things and it's all very exciting.

Helping new mothers in danger



Left-right: Kym Tighe, assistant director, Social Work Gold Coast Health, Dr Kathleen Baird, Amy Compton-Keen, director, Domestic Violence Prevention Centre Gold Coast Inc.

Maternity health professionals see women at their happiest and their most vulnerable. They are in a position to engage with women and assist them with referrals to get support, but many staff have not had the confidence or felt sufficiently supported to ask women about domestic violence.

In response to this gap, Gold Coast Hospital Foundation has funded a series of workshops for midwives, neo-natal nurses and

obstetricians, to help them understand how to offer support or seek help for women and children facing domestic violence.

Director of Women's and Newborn Services Education and Research, Dr Kathleen Baird, is leading the workshops to coordinate responses to domestic violence.

Kathleen said that working with a number of other agencies was the key aspect of this program.

"It is so important to get a comprehensive response to this problem and this workshop will help our staff immensely," she said.

"The participants meet and hear from people who are working together to provide domestic violence support and these same people will be part of their referral network".

Hearing about the effects of domestic violence on women and children had a powerful effect on the workshop participants. High levels of cortisol, the stress hormone, stimulated by their domestic situation leads to premature births and low birth weights. They also have an adverse effect on the neurological development of children.

One hundred midwives, neo-natal nurses and obstetricians will attend these workshops. They will gain greater knowledge of the problems their patients face at home and the ability help them find support.

Cruise ship glamour sails in for fundraising Gala

All aboard the good ship Jupiters Gold Coast for a night of fundraising on the high seas for the 2016 Gold Coast Hospital Foundation Gala.

Enjoy the fun, entertainment and excitement of a night on a cruise ship, while enjoying a three course dinner prepared by the award-winning Jupiters' chefs, premium beverage package, surprise interactive performances, live entertainment, auctions, raffles and much more.

This wonderful night of cruise ship glamour is the Foundation's major fundraising event of the year and will help to care for many patients in need.

Be part of this major community event. For table bookings visit www.gchfoundation.org.au or phone 07 5594 6986.

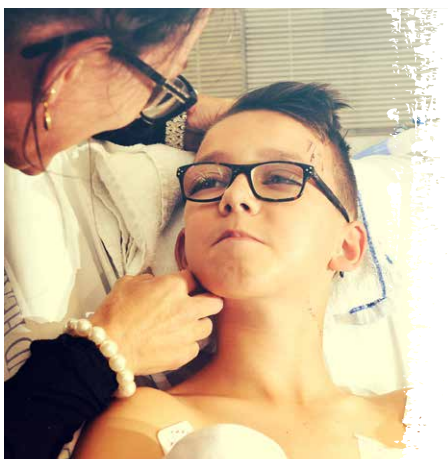


**Gold Coast
Hospital Foundation
Fundraising Gala**

**Saturday 20 August 2016,
at 6.30pm**

Pavilion Ballroom, Jupiters
Gold Coast, Broadbeach

Dress: Black Tie



Help patients in crisis.
Donate today.

Gold Coast Hospital Foundation assists families experiencing financial hardship. Providing temporary accommodation near the hospital, travel and parking support. Your gift today could help make sure an intensive care patient has their family by their side.

To donate:
5594 6986
www.gchfoundation.org.au

Interpreters making valuable contribution to health care

Gold Coast Health is delivering more interpreting services than ever before, leading to improved quality health care for patients with limited English.

A project to contract local interpreters in Mandarin, Cantonese, Japanese, Korean, Bosnian and Auslan (sign language) is currently underway. It will improve the responsiveness, cost-efficiency, quality and supply of interpreters for the health service.

Interpreter Services Coordinator Jennifer Babin is responsible for matching patients from non-English speaking backgrounds, deaf or hearing impaired, with an interpreter.

“Using interpreters improves quality of care and patient safety and also brings many business efficiencies to the health system,” she said.

“Some of the benefits include decreases in readmission rates and length-of-stay in hospital, improved communication, cost savings, accurate diagnosis and better compliance to medication instructions.”

Jennifer said staff members were trained to identify patients who struggle with English and request an interpreter.

“When a patient with no or low English proficiency is identified, staff will flag the patient in the hospital system so that clinical staff know to engaged an interpreter for future patient encounters.”



Maria Corbett, an interpreter fluent in Bosnian, Croatian, Hungarian, Serbian and English, with Interpreter Services Coordinator Jennifer Babin.

In 2015, the service received 8141 requests for an interpreter, which is almost a 10 per cent increase on 2014. Gold Coast Health has 24/7 access to interpreters in more than 150 languages and provides this service free to patients.

Between 2006 and 2011, Australian Bureau of Statistics data showed a 22 per cent population increase in the Gold Coast region that ‘speaks another language and speaks English not well or not at all’.

Professional recognition for Nurses underway

Registered Nurses at Gold Coast Health are being encouraged to further develop their experiences and qualifications to help them stay current and open new career opportunities. The Registered Nurse (RN) Professional Recognition Program is well underway with workshops being held across the health service.

The program coordinator Samantha Lavender said she had received an overwhelming number of RNs participating, with many near completion of their new qualification portfolios.

“I have received extremely positive feedback from RNs regarding the program, in particular on how their portfolio will assist them with their professional development and career progression,” she said.

“The program allows RNs to map their skills, education, career growth and more, in a program which will ensure their expertise is visible, valued and understood.”

The program is also contributing to the health services journey towards the Magnet program (an international credential recognising excellence in healthcare services).

For more information on the RN Professional Recognition Program please email RNProfessionalRecognition@health.qld.gov.au



Gold Coast Health nurses Fiona Vosti and Georgina Hutchinson.

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For feedback and distribution:

Phone: 07 5687 7485

Email: goldcoasthealth@health.qld.gov.au

Write: Healthwaves Editor

1 Hospital Boulevard Southport QLD 4215

