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Your local health news | December/January 2016

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Cover Image: Doctor Justin Wong  
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# Board News

## Message from the Chair – Ian Langdon

**Gold Coast Health was subjected to a rigorous accreditation inspection by a panel of eight experts over a week long period in November. This is a normal process for all Hospital and Health Services as a periodic review to ensure hospitals health care standards meet Government expectations.**

The panel's assessment still needs to be formalised however the Chair of the panel verbally presented the outcome of the inspection to a large forum of staff at the completion of the survey. They indicated that not only

did Gold Coast Health pass the accreditation but additionally commented upon the excellent patient standards that were achieved.

He did signal out a number of areas for special mention and we will detail those when the report is formalised and published, however I am pleased to highlight that our mental health services were especially recognised as a service providing outstanding service.

The Board is proud of the advances made by Gold Coast Health throughout recent years. Research is at an all-

time high and a range of new services have been successfully implemented removing the need for patients to travel to Brisbane. Also the growth in patient services numbers continues to grow at a breath taking rate.

Importantly there is a positive staff culture and pride in performance. This was recently demonstrated when approximately 600 staff paid their own cost to attend the inaugural staff awards night to recognise the achievements of their peers.

## Pouring cold water on a devastating disease

**A few brave staff at GCUH have been doused by an icy bucket of water, but it was all in a good cause.**

Initiated by the Neurology Department, the challenge was to help raise awareness of Motor Neurone Disease (MND) – a progressive, terminal neurological disease that affects around 1,900 Australians.

Director of Neurology Dr Arman Sabet said more people needed to understand that MND was a terminal condition.

“MND is a really devastating disease for which there is no effective treatment or cure,” Dr Sabet said.

“We are currently managing 50 MND patients through our clinic which has been running for four years. In this time we've seen approximately 300 patients come through the clinic.”

### Key facts about MND in Australia:

- MND is a progressive, terminal neurological disease.
- Each day two Australians die with MND.
- In most cases the cause is not known.
- People with MND progressively lose the use of their limbs and ability to speak, swallow and breathe, while their mind and senses usually remain intact.



Neurologist Dr Peter Bailey gets involved to raise awareness of motor neurone disease with 50 patients currently being managed through the Gold Coast Health clinic.



Executive Director People Systems and Performance Damian Green and doctors Justin Wong and Sid Sharma proudly showcase their win

## OnCallogist Mobile App takes out award

**Gold Coast Health Doctor Justin Wong has received the 2015 Premier's award for Fostering Innovation with his team's development of the OnCallogist mobile App.**

Dr Wong and his team, including Dr Siddharth Sharma developed a smart phone App for after-hours on call doctors to respond to requests for patient attention, prioritise responses and then log their completed patient visits in real-time.

The new system has reduced completion times by 41 per cent and saved both time and valuable resources while improving the patient experience.

Dr Wong said that in a facility the size of Gold Coast University Hospital the efficient use of time and doctor resources is paramount.

"As of February 2015, we have attended to more than 10,950 requests and sent out 20,420 push notifications to relevant staff, improving the response times dramatically for our patients," he said.

"The smarts contained in the OnCallogist App make it simple for both doctors and nurses to use and improves record keeping and reporting."

The development of the App was made possible via the annual Gold Coast Health Improvers event where staff submit projects for funding patient service enhancement projects for people under care in Gold Coast Health facilities.

The Premiers' awards recognise initiatives, teams and individuals of the Queensland public service, who have demonstrated excellence by striving to work smarter, do things better and set the best practice for others to follow.

The OnCallogist mobile App was also recognised at the Australian Council on Healthcare Standards Quality Improvement Awards and received a Highly Commended spot in this year's awards campaign.

# Awards celebrate everything golden

Gold Coast Health's finest staff were recognised at the inaugural Golden Gala Awards night on 26 November.

Nearly 600 staff celebrated the achievements of individual staff members and teams recognised for their commitment to patient care and service delivery.

Chief Executive Ron Calvert said the awards were a way to formally recognise those staff that go above-and-beyond every day.

"These awards celebrate the achievements of individuals and teams who embody the Gold Coast Health values and are committed to the delivery of quality patient care across all professions within the health service," Mr Calvert said.

"As a health service that has seen exponential growth in recent years, we have not lost sight of our primary objective to deliver world-class healthcare and the recipients of these awards are testament to our vision.

"Throughout the awards process, I've been overwhelmed and proud of the outstanding number of exemplary staff working for Gold Coast Health and I congratulate all 225 staff that were nominated in 2015."

The awards recognised individuals and a team across seven categories. The recipients of the Golden Gala Awards 2015 are:



**Research Project of the Year  
 ROTEM led by Dr James Winearls**

The ROTEM® research project is multifaceted incorporating both cardiac surgical, multi trauma and critical bleeding patients. There are currently four research projects underway.



**Nurse of the Year  
 Pamela Day, District Ed LinQ Co-ordinator,  
 Child and Youth Mental Health Service**

Pam is an innovative, engaging and contemporary nurse who works diligently engaging with our school communities. She is an absolute role model for our mental health nurses.



**Student of the Year  
 Anna-Maree Klein, former student  
 now Social Worker, Rehabilitation Unit  
 Robina Hospital**



**Doctor of the Year  
 Dr Ben Chen, Medical Director  
 Rehabilitation Services**

Dr Chen demonstrates daily the highest level of personal and organisational values and is a highly respected clinician amongst peers and his team. You can read more about Ben Chen on page 6.



**Allied Health Worker of the Year  
 Kym Tighe, A/Assistant Director of  
 Social Work**

Kym is a relentless advocate for women experiencing domestic violence and intimate partner violence. She brings a committed social justice approach to the area of domestic violence and goes above and beyond her role.



**Support Services Member of the Year  
 Tracey Barker, Team Leader Food Services**

Tracey demonstrates compassion and a genuine desire to deliver high quality food services to our frail and elderly patients.



**Team of the Year – Food and Nutrition Services**

Since the health service menu changed from pre-cooked frozen food to mainly fresh cook patient satisfaction, meal accuracy, nutrition complaints and wastage have all seen impressive changes and responses.

## Patient positives

### Patient one

I was recently admitted into your amazing Robina Hospital, suffering from diverticulitis and an infection in my bowel. Whilst in your hospital I was cared for by some amazing nursing staff and doctors. I take care of myself and prefer not to be looked after by anyone if I am sick. So to come across some of your nursing staff, who just went out of their way to make me feel comfortable, clean and happy just blew me away.

Nothing was too much trouble for them and they were so busy,

especially on the Monday when more patients were admitted into the ward.

I hope if I am ever in your hospital again I will be lucky enough to be looked after by these three nurses again.

### Patient two

To all the wonderful staff at GCUH Dialysis Unit and the Ward C3West – Thank You. We very much appreciate the care that you have given to our Father and Poppy over the past few years. You have allowed us to have extra time with him. The unit became his second home and he formed many friendships with the staff and patients. We thank you all.

## Facebook following on the rise

**The new Gold Coast Health Facebook page is making friends at a raging pace in the short period it has been active.**

The page is rich in content with interesting videos, photos, discussions and links to useful resources.

Senior Director Amanda Noonan said the new online engagement channel was a boon for staff and community to keep up to date with their local health service.

“At any given time it is the place to access timely information about our services, the broad variety of news updates, success stories, service announcements and public health notices,” she said.

“The page is not only a tool for showcasing why we are a leading health care provider and employer, but it will play an increasing role in our online engagement activities in the future.

“Every Wednesday a staff member is featured, giving employees and the broader community insight into the different experiences and backgrounds of the people behind our large workforce.”

#FridayFlashback is also proving popular, with the weekly trip down memory lane resonating well with our audience as we reflect on past events in the context of where Gold Coast Health is today.

You can join the Gold Coast Health social media community by following [www.facebook.com/GCHealth](http://www.facebook.com/GCHealth) and tell us which content you'd like to see more of by 'liking' and sharing our stories. Stay tuned as we expand our social media presence into other channels such as Twitter in the coming months.

## Open communication sets the PACER

**A Patient and Carer Executive Rounding (PACER) trial earlier this year has now been included as standard business practice in Specialty and Procedural Services (SaPS) due to its exceptional results.**

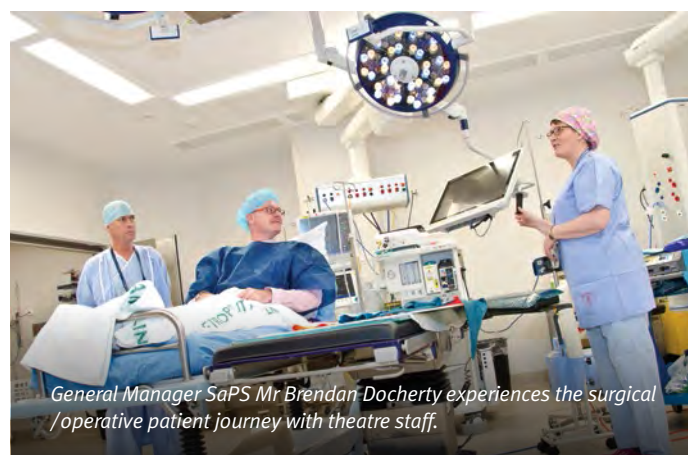
The PACER program has promoted a culture of safety and quality and improved dialogue between clinicians, patients and executives. It has also allowed staff to field ideas and concerns they may have with current work or environmental practices within Gold Coast Health.

General Manager SaPS, Brendan Docherty said the program was a great success in engaging staff and Executive to promote areas for improvement.

“Over 75 percent of our staff found that talking to the Executive team was helpful and they gained information on safety and quality issues by participating in the PACER program,” he said.

“A wrap-up survey confirmed staff were committed to the program with a number of areas of excellence already within each clinical area.”

The program has been extended to incorporate additional informal Executive visits to highlight the patient journey through the service.



*General Manager SaPS Mr. Brendan Docherty experiences the surgical /operative patient journey with theatre staff.*



*Gold Coast Health Dentist Bradley Campbell, Oral Health Director Shane Johnstone and Oral Health Operations Manager Marie-Anne McNamara show off one of the 26 chairs at the new Southport Health Precinct dental clinic.*

## Gold Coast Health opens multi-million-dollar dental clinic

**Gold Coast Health has opened a state-of-the-art dental clinic in the heart of Southport as part of a \$4 million investment in public oral health services.**

The 26-chair clinic and associated dental laboratory is based at the Southport Health Precinct, which provides the community with a one-stop centre for a range of health and community services.

About 70 dental and oral health specialists are expected to attend to more than 140,000 appointments each year.

Oral Health Director Shane Johnstone said the two-floor dentistry hub meant a higher calibre of services for the thousands of people who visit Gold Coast Health dentists each year.

“This has been a rare opportunity to design the dental clinic the Gold Coast community deserves from scratch and we are extremely pleased with the result,” he said.

“The cutting-edge dental laboratory means we are now able to make dentures on-site, while we have also established stronger links with Griffith University in terms of learning opportunities for students.”

Established in 2014, the \$12.5 million Southport Health Precinct has improved public access to health services and service coordination in the same way Robina Health Precinct does at the southern end of the Gold Coast.

To contact Oral Health, phone 1300 300 850 or visit [www.health.qld.gov.au/goldcoasthealth/](http://www.health.qld.gov.au/goldcoasthealth/)

# Music and art send powerful message during Mental Health Week

Hundreds of people celebrated the power of self-expression in mental illness, health and wellbeing when Gold Coast Health hosted its second annual ArtBeat festival in October.

ArtBeat, held in the parklands of Gold Coast University Hospital, featured live entertainment, an art exhibition, information on mental health services, a barbecue and more. It was part of Queensland's Mental Health Week celebrations.

Gold Coast Health Music Therapist Madeline Bridgland, who works in the Mental Health Recovery Service, said the ArtBeat festival aimed to raise awareness of mental health and wellbeing in the wider community.

"We have built on the success of last year's inaugural ArtBeat festival and this year's event featured about 10 performers and 50 artworks," she said.

"When you express yourself creatively it can be so empowering."

Performer Sharyn Kapiten, who has lived with mental illness for more than 20 years, said jazz singing and art had helped in her recovery.



*Singer Lou Xuereb, who works with Mental Illness Fellowship Queensland, sang for guests at the ArtBeat festival.*

"It gives you that little bit of something to hold on to, even when you are feeling depressed," she said.

The theme of this year's Mental Health Week was 'Value Mental Health' which urged individuals and the broader community to think about what mental health means to them as an individual, a corporate citizen and as a community.

"A critical part of reducing stigma is public awareness and an understanding that mental illness can affect anyone," Ms Bridgland said.

For more information on Gold Coast Health's 24-hour Specialist Mental Health Care, phone 1300 MH CALL (1300 64 2255).

## Health consumers focus on communication

Consumers took centre stage to help guide a long awaited patient information review into existing information that is given to admitted patients and their families.

Eleven consumers completed an initial survey to gauge the appropriateness of the existing material and also what their expectations were for any additional information needed when entering hospital.

Executive Director, Clinical Governance, Education and Research, Professor Marianne Vonau said that getting the right information to the right people at the right time was the key.

"Our initial consumer focus group highlighted key priorities including targeting consumers, carers and their families at admission and post-discharge," she said.

"These consumers represented a range of diverse backgrounds such as cultural and linguistically diverse, aged care and dementia, mental health, carers and health service consumers."

The current and proposed discussions over the course of 2016 will build on developing new and improved communications for patients and also inform the Gold Coast Health Literacy program which will be rolled out progressively next year.



### In focus with Dr Ben Chen

**How did you arrive professionally in your current role?** Gold Coast Health has been my first and only love as far as career is concerned. I completed my specialist training in Rehabilitation Medicine at

the end of 2006. As my parents live in Brisbane I was looking for a staff specialist position in Queensland and fortunately I was interviewed and accepted by Gold Coast Health. I suppose I arrived at a time when many changes were happening, including the planning of Gold Coast University Hospital and Carrara Health Centre, and again I had the good fortune of having bosses who supported and trusted me and I was successful in my application for the rehabilitation director role.

**What motivates you each day?** Professionally – being part of a cohesive interdisciplinary team (including the patients) which

thinks and problem solves together, having the privilege to share in another's life when it is most in need. **Personally** – to be able to serve the Lord in capacities where He places me. **In Family** – to see my wife and children relaxed and happy. **Financially** – to see the mortgage dwindle.

**What is the one take-home point you impart on your staff?** Don't go home on an empty tank, always leave something in store for your loved ones.

**What part do you think doctors play in helping patients travel their health care journey?** In rehabilitation, doctors play a relatively small but important part as members of the interdisciplinary team – good medical care forms the foundation upon which functional recovery can take place. Our roles consist of keeping the patients medically well, institute necessary preventive and treatment measures, helping the patients and family to make sense of and come to terms with their (often life-changing) disabilities, and along with the rest of the team, patients and family members, find a way forward in terms of functional recovery and community reintegration.

**Any additional points?** Cherish the moment.

## Music Therapy strikes a chord with patients

**Holly is 15 years old and at birth was diagnosed with incurable Cystic Fibrosis. She attends Gold Coast University Hospital every four weeks for a gruelling, two week treatment regime. The treatment is exhausting and painful.**

Thankfully, every Wednesday, Music Therapist Angela Delaney at Gold Coast University Hospital, visits Holly in her ward. Music Therapy is used as a powerful clinical treatment and is specifically customised for Holly's condition to help with her breathing and exercise her lungs.

For Holly and Angela the benefits are far greater than just clinical. Holly loves to sing and music therapy gives her a small opportunity to escape the isolation and pain of treatment and get lost in music.

Holly said her session time with Angela gave her the opportunity to relax and briefly forget about how much she misses her family and friends.

"It takes my mind off the treatment and I enjoy the singing," she said.

Gold Coast Hospital Foundation's Christmas appeal is raising funds to pay for over 400 hours of music therapy at Gold Coast hospitals each year and help patients just like Holly.



Holly with Music Therapist Angela Delaney



Christmas gifting tree at GCUH

## Our hospitals celebrating the spirit of Christmas and giving

**Gold Coast University and Robina Hospitals will bring some Christmas joy to their hospital visitors this festive season.**

The program is also being supported by some fabulous Foundation business partners with their generous contributions helping to deliver the Christmas Carols event this year.

CEO Gold Coast Hospital Foundation CEO Kim Sutton said this type of event is a win-win for the visitors to the hospital and for the patients who will benefit from their kind donations.

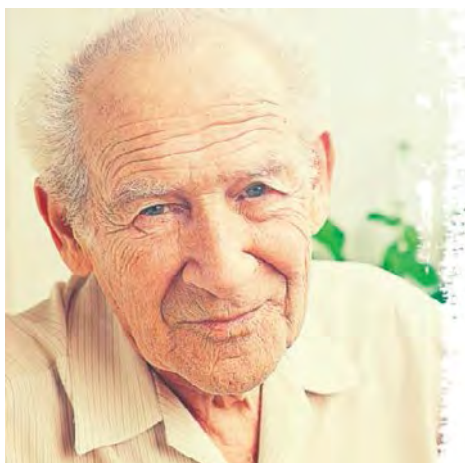
"We are very pleased to make the Christmas Gifting Tree and Carols happen again this year," Kim Sutton said.

"We invite patients, their families, hospital staff and friends to attend the Christmas Carols at both hospitals where some special Christmas treats will be handed out."

This year gold coin donations are being accepted through the collection boxes at the Christmas Gifting trees with all funds raised going towards patients and the hospitals that care for them.


**Gold Coast University Hospital Carols** – Thursday 3 December at 2.30pm to 3.30pm

**Robina Hospital** – Thursday 10 December at 2.30pm to 3.30pm



Thank you, Gold Coast.  
Your support of our recent community appeal has made it possible for Anton and other terminally ill patients to have access to specialised equipment when they need it the most.

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

Like us on 

## Local ladies leading the way

**BreastScreen Queensland (BSQ) staff have been working closely with local Elders and community members from Kalwun Health Service's Women's groups to raise the participation rates of Indigenous women in breast cancer screening.**



Together they have spread the word and are making a difference in saving lives through the early detection of breast cancer.

The local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community is currently achieving higher participation rates in breast screening than the national average.

BSQ Health Promotion Officer Julia Foreman said there was a 75 per cent increase in the number of local Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander women aged 40 and older who visited the BSQ Gold Coast Service last financial year, compared to the number of women seen across a similar period three years ago.

"This is a fantastic achievement that comes from collective efforts by local Elders, community members, Indigenous Health Workers and Service providers working together to Close the Gap in breast cancer screening," she said.

"This Program is heading in the right direction to screen even more ladies for breast cancer as we continue to work together to encourage women in the community to undergo this important health check."

**For more information on the BSQ Program call 5537 0333 or visit [breastscreen.qld.gov.au](http://breastscreen.qld.gov.au)**

## Gold Coast staff upgrade CPR skills

**Gold Coast Health has partnered with Laerdal Australia to be the first public health service in Australia to introduce the innovative Resuscitation Quality Improvement (RQI) program.**

The RQI program uses a realistic simulation mannequin and a mobile station to help healthcare professionals retain life-saving cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) skills.

Lead Project Officer Trish Luscombe said the mandatory Basic Life Support (BLS) training program had been designed for completion every three months to maintain skills.

"Research has shown that CPR skills can degrade as quickly as six months after training," she said.

"This system is taken to clinicians in their workplace and allows hands-on practice that accurately replicates the human anatomy.

"Clinicians get interactive verbal and visual feedback when performing compressions, ventilations and Automatic External Defibrillator skills."

Roll out has commenced across both GCUH and Robina Hospital and will follow through to community centres in the new year.



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