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Your local health news | October/November 2015

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Gold Coast Health
Building a healthier community

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Cover Image: Paediatric surgeons, Drs Richard Thompson and Deborah Bailey (see page 4)



Board News

Message from the Chair – Ian Langdon

In recent years Gold Coast Health has been given increased autonomy in the management of its operations. This has been especially the case in respect of employing its own staff. As at 30 June Gold Coast Health employed 7668 staff spread over all of our hospital and community facilities. This number includes a staggering 971 new employees during the last year alone.

As the largest employer of staff on the Gold Coast this provides an opportunity, indeed an obligation to provide employment opportunities for all segments of our community.

Recently the Minister for Health, the Hon Cameron Dick indicated to the Chairs of all 16 Qld Hospital and Health Services that we should have an awareness of the needs of the disadvantaged members within our communities. In reflecting on this reminder from the Minister I have formed the conclusion that Gold Coast Health could and should be more pro-active in this field.

Thus over coming months I have asked our Chief Executive, Ron Calvert to report to the Board on the proactive initiatives that can be introduced to ensure that we, as the Gold

Coast largest employer play our role in improving employment opportunities for the disadvantaged. My own experience is that integration of the disadvantaged into a workforce is not only an obligation of all employers, it also introduces unique skills and attitudes that are of a positive benefit to the organisation.

I look forward to reporting to the community progress over the next 12 months.

Service redesign a win-win for patients



Clinical Nurse Consultant,
Helen Bower

Clinical Nurse Consultant, Helen Bower from Endoscopy Services knows what good process and training can do to improve our patient experience. Helen said that their patients often come to them anxious about their pending procedure.

“We are continually looking at better ways to do things which can help our patients to speed up their access to treatment and be more at ease” Helen said.

“Our primary aim is to be leaders in endoscopy services on the Gold Coast and that means a modern, creative and innovative approach when looking after our patients” she said.

Quality improvement is always top of mind for Gold Coast Health. Program lead Ellen Judd said that meeting our patients and clinical expectations was important.

“Our patients’ expectations, and that of our staff regarding quality and safety, are most important to each and every person that works in this service” Ellen said.

Endoscopy Services will be redesigned by the end of this year. If you have used the service and would like more information or supply input you can email the program manager at ellen.judd@health.qld.gov.au.

Annual report showcase

A record number of babies being delivered, elective surgery waiting lists reducing and increasing staff numbers at Gold Coast Health are just some of the details listed in this year’s annual report.

Board Chair Mr Ian Langdon said the past year has been one of consolidation and continued growth for Gold Coast Health. It has also been a year of remarkable clinical performance achievements.

“The pace of change and demand on our local health services is relentless. Thankfully the 7668 people that make up Gold Coast Health are up to the challenge,” Mr Langdon said.

Many of the highlights in the Gold Coast Annual Report 2014-15 are evidence of the commitment, enthusiasm and dedication of clinicians, managers and support staff across our hospitals and community health services.

Thirteen babies were delivered each and every day of the year and 12,500 presentations came to the emergency department each month. Add to these 15,878 elective surgery procedures which translate to Gold Coast community members receiving more of the care they need.



Paediatric surgeons, Drs Richard Thompson and Deborah Bailey, Neonatologist Dr Manbir Chauhan, and Paediatric Anaesthetists Drs Naomi Pearson and Erin Corcoran operate on GCUH's smallest patients.

Caring for the most vulnerable – premature babies

In a first for Gold Coast University Hospital, the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU) has performed an urgent operation on a tiny baby in the ward.

There are times when complex surgery is required to give premature babies a fighting chance. The NICU staff have proven they possess the drive, the ingenuity and the skills needed in challenging circumstances.

Clinical Director Speciality and Procedural Services (SAPS), Professor Deborah Bailey said the team's ability to do surgery in the ward is giving young babies their best chance.

"Recent surgery on a baby born 12 weeks prematurely is another major milestone for the NICU," Prof Bailey said.

At times the babies are so fragile, that they cannot be moved for surgery into main operating theatres without arresting. The team has the capacity to perform major surgery in the NICU ward with the same dedication and safety procedures that exist in our operating theatres.

"We are a specialised medical and nursing team highly-trained to deliver this care and we are still in awe of the wonder of modern medicine and the skilled people who make it possible," she said

The doctors, specialists and nurses face life-threatening challenges on a regular basis. However the difference in the NICU is that their charges are aged as little as 28 weeks and can be the size of a 'pump' drink bottle.

Gold Coast Health is offering increasingly complex care in neonatal intensive care, paediatric anaesthetic and paediatric surgery as it matures. Families requiring complex care no longer have to travel to Brisbane to deliver followed by months of travel to visit their babies in a Brisbane hospital.

Silent achievers make a big impact



Kate Boundy (right) (Clinical Nurse) at one of Community Child Health's Newborn Drop-in Clinics—here Kate is providing a new mum with reassurance around her baby's weight gain and sharing a smile with baby.

Clinical Nurse, Kate Boundy, Child Youth and Family Health Services is just one of many silent achievers that reach into the community on a daily basis to provide help and advice to families.

Kate said their contact with new parents was welcome at a time when their confidence may be a bit low.

“Our team has clinical professionals with many years of expertise and we welcome the opportunity to help new mums and their families” Kate said.

Clinical Nurse Ashleigh Young said much of what we do for families comes at a time when they are anxious and looking for quick solutions to sometimes complex problems.

“We use a family partnership approach to help identify problems before they need escalating and if required, help families navigate the different healthcare services” Ashleigh said.

The service provides child health checks, health promotion, early identification and intervention for developmental delays. It also provides information and education to parents and school aged children plus one to one counselling for young people across 18 State High schools.

For more information see the Community Health section on the Gold Coast health website.

Anaesthetists win recognition for increased safety



Dr Paul Slocombe

Anaesthetics Deputy Director, Dr Simon Pattullo and Anaesthetic Registrar, Dr Paul Slocombe have received recognition for their research into safety improvements for patients undergoing surgery.

Dr Pattullo’s project was designed to prevent wrong-sided nerve blocks by having anaesthetists perform a simple double check similar to a surgical time-out before performing these blocks. This was based on an initiative from the UK titled “Stop Before You Block”.

Dr Slocombe said he built on “Stop Before You Block” to develop a local campaign for an Australasian clinical audience.

“We used PowerPoint presentations, posters and with the help of the Communications and Engagement unit, we directed a demonstrational video to support the messages that will be promoted to anaesthetists across the country in coming months” Dr Slocombe said.

“Gold Coast Health Anaesthetists cover 35 theatres across two hospitals with patients undergoing operations of all surgical specialties and it is common for anaesthetists to perform nerve blocks for procedures and/or post-op analgesia” he said.

Dr Slocombe presented his project findings at the annual Australian and New Zealand College of Anaesthetists meeting in Adelaide where he received the prize for his presentation and the project. He has also received queries from other anaesthetists on how to implement the initiative at their respective hospitals.



Dr Deborah Bailey

In focus with Dr Deborah Bailey

As a paediatric surgeon I guess you could say I’m a rare breed as there are only about 70 of us active in Australia at the moment. We perform surgery on babies and children such as bowel and abdominal, urology, gynaecology, thoracic, neck and skin. We also reconstruct children born with congenital defects and when things go wrong such as trauma, appendicitis, ovarian cysts, hernias and lumps in the neck.

I was always interested in fine technical surgical work but chose Paediatric Surgery over Plastics and Reconstructive Surgery or anything else, as corny as it sounds, for the joy of sending children as well as possible on their life journey. Besides that, I like talking to the kids and families! Sometimes this conversation goes from the time of their birth to their first “formal”.

I also love being in a team of extraordinary nurses, allied health staff and fellow doctors who work with me caring for children. All our staff at Gold Coast Health from porters to Service Directors go the “extra distance” for their patients. That is why many of us get up in the morning!

My journey has taken me from the 1970’s at the University of Queensland medical school when there were still quotas on the number of women allowed to train in medicine, to when I was the only woman training in surgery at the Royal Brisbane Hospital and now, when more than half the trainees in the field of Paediatric Surgery are women.

I spent my first year training in Adult General Surgery in the 80s at the old Gold Coast Hospital before returning in the eighties with my own family to set up Paediatric Surgery on the Gold Coast.

Robot changes face of Pharmacy at Robina Hospital



Max – aka Robina Hospital's specialist pharmacy robot

Robina Hospital has become only the second public hospital in Queensland to implement a specialised robot to dispense pharmacy medicine.

Fondly known as Max, the robot will reduce pharmacy turnaround times by storing and retrieving up to 40,000 pharmaceutical items and delivering them to an area within the pharmacy such as the dispensing bench or ward box.

Gold Coast Health Director of Pharmacy Liz Coombes said the introduction of the robot would deliver considerable benefits to patients and staff.

“As well as improving turnaround times and reducing dispensing errors, it will allow our staff even more time to perform important tasks such as educating patients and nurses about medication,” she said.

“This is a major investment for Gold Coast Health and the Pharmacy team is already seeing benefits with the robot dispensing about 300 medicines every day,” she said.

Other benefits of the technology include improved inventory control, improved after-hours dispensing capability and reduced pharmaceutical inventory holdings.

The pharmacy dispensing robot underwent more than five weeks of commissioning and testing before launching, with a similar system set to launch at Gold Coast University Hospital in the near future.

Have your say?

Gold Coast Health wants you to have a say. A say in what your health service will look like in five years.

Executive Director Strategy and Planning Toni Peggrem said good health services come from careful planning and community involvement.

“We need to know what our community thinks is reasonable in the way they access our services and the way they wish to interact with our staff” Toni said.

“One of our key values is ‘*Serving the community*’ and to do this well we need to know what the community expectations are now and what they may need in five years to make their patient experience as smooth as possible” she said.

Gold Coast Health has two major hospitals, a health care centre and multiple community health services.

Community input guides our decision making so please have your say in your local health service as we develop our 2016-20 Strategic Plan.

Visit <http://yoursay.goldcoast.health.qld.gov.au> consultation-hub and tell us what is important to you or email GCHStrategyFeedback@health.qld.gov.au with your thoughts.

Local artist donates inspirational painting

Local artist, Shelena Russell, has generously donated her artwork to comfort and instil hope in ladies visiting the BreastScreen Queensland Gold Coast Service.

“I remember the anxious time waiting for the test results after I found a lump in my breast 14 years ago, which thankfully was benign,” Shelena said.

“The fear of breast cancer terrified me and I remember freaking out at the time,” she said.

“Recently I faced similar fears, while sitting in the BreastScreen waiting room with other ladies like myself, which inspired me to create an art piece to express the emotions I was feeling,” she said.

The three-dimensional painting—“*Sometimes you have to fall before you fly*” will hang proudly in the Southport waiting room of the local breast screening clinic to share with other ladies. “I feel it would comfort them and give them belief and hope,” she said.

October is Breast Cancer Awareness Month—Please see your doctor if you notice any new or usual breast changes which concern you. Women 40 and older can attend a free breast screen at BSQ services by phoning **13 20 50**.



Local artist, Shelena Russell (left) presents her donated artwork to BreastScreen Queensland Gold Coast Service Director Dr Ellen Doorsis.

Immunisation – a community safety net

Gold Coast Health Public Health Unit will take over free immunisation clinics from City of Gold Coast in 2016. Community clinics will be provided in six locations across the coast to enable families to receive immunisation services in child friendly spaces.

In addition the Public Health Unit will take over the School Immunisation Program delivering vaccinations to over 13,500 Year 7 and 8 students in public and private secondary schools.

Gold Coast Health Public Health Medical Officer, Paul Van Buynder said that immunisation is in the best interest of all who live in our community.

“Immunisation cover is only as strong as our weakest link and parents who immunise their babies strengthen that link for the safety of our next generation” Paul said.

Gold Coast Health will provide families with information on the importance of immunisation in order to help them to protect themselves and their children from preventable diseases. The new clinics will be setup to meet the needs of families following feedback from parents and immunisation supports will be in place in Gold Coast Health antenatal and maternity services.



Paul with superhero little boy

Locations and times of the new clinics can be found at www.health.qld.gov.au/immuniseGC and will be placed at relevant locations around the city from October to December in conjunction with Gold Coast City through community centres and libraries.

A Gold Coast Health clinician is revolutionising medical training using GoPros



Dr Victoria Brazil and Nurse L'Oreal Steytler have embraced GoPros in medical training.

Dr Victoria Brazil, a senior emergency physician at Gold Coast University Hospital and Robina Hospital, uses footage taken from patients and family members in simulation sessions to give doctors a more well-rounded perspective of the patient journey to improve patient care.

Earlier this year she was one of just three medical industry heavyweights to present at the Laerdal Simulation User Network (SUN) Conference, organised by the creator of the world's first CPR manikin and internationally leading medical equipment and training manufacturer, Laerdal.

Dr Brazil said simulation was a vital educational tool to improve skills, train teams, examine and improve existing systems, and deliver the very best in patient care.

“The patient experience can be better understood through the use of simulation training. For instance, if we strap a GoPro on a family member during a simulation session, we can use the footage to see the situation from their perspective,” said Dr Brazil.

“In the example of a paediatric resuscitation simulation, the GoPro footage taken from a parent during the simulation shows us exactly what they experience during the procedure.

“Juxtaposing what we see as doctors versus what the parent of a patient sees help us to improve our processes to make the journey less stressful for the parent or the patient.”

Dr Brazil said simulation techniques could also be used to improve communication between various different groups in the hospital environment.

“Health care can be quite a tribal industry. We tend to aggregate around our own ‘tribes’ — nurses, paramedics, emergency physicians, etcetera,” she said.

“Simulation training can be effective in breaking down those barriers, by improving the integration of communication between the various departments in a hospital.

“Simulation needs to be goal directed, not just training for the sake of it. We need to determine what are the educational outcomes that we are looking to develop, or what are the patient outcomes that we are aiming to improve.

“In the example of trauma care, we can use goal-directed simulation to specifically target the rapid transfer of a patient to the operating theatre.”

Dr Brazil leads the clinical skills and simulation program at Bond University including both scenario and screen-based simulation.

Gold Coast University Hospital open haven for youth cancer patients

A new room with all the modern conveniences including soft furnishings, a TV and DVD player, electronic games, books and a dining setting, has been set up for young adults aged 15-25 undergoing cancer treatments — providing the chance to relax in comfort with fellow patients, family and friends.

Sheehan and his mum Jo Porter have had to relocate to the Gold Coast for three weeks so that he can have his treatment daily.

Sheehan celebrated his twentieth birthday in hospital last week while he receives chemotherapy and other treatment for leukaemia. He said having a place to relax away from his bed has made his stay more comfortable.

“The haven will be good for when friends come to visit me. It’s nice to have a quiet, normal space to relax in” Sheenan said.

Ms Porter said that this type of facility is helping people cope with the problems associated with treatment for youth cancer patients that often involves long stays in hospital away from family, friends and the comforts of home.

“It is an early diagnosis and Sheehan will need treatment for the next two-and-a-half years but the prognosis is good” Ms Porter said.

This haven has been made possible with a generous donation from Emma and Andrew Baxter of Australian Investment Education, Gold Coast Hospital Foundation fundraising and the expertise and tireless effort of local interior designer, Vanessa Wood, of Vanessa Wood Interiors.

Foundation Chief Executive Officer Kim Sutton said the beautiful space was part of the organisation’s ongoing commitment to delivering an environment of less stress and making health treatment more effective.

“Gold Coast Hospital Foundation supports the services and care provided to local patients and their families by focusing on equipment, research and education projects that would not otherwise be funded,” Ms Sutton said.

“By funding health projects like this major refurbishment, the Foundation is ensuring patients have access to the best health care, when they need it the most.”

Gold Coast Hospital Foundation is a community charity that promotes health and helps improve public health care. Visit <http://gchfoundation.org.au> for more information.



Jo Porter and son Sheehan in the retreat for young adult patients at GCUH

Riley helps raise funds for other children with illness



Riley and his father with a staff member at Woolworths Robina Town Centre

At just 14 years old, Riley suffers from Crohn’s disease, a painful illness causing severe intestinal inflammation, fever, loss of appetite and many other uncomfortable symptoms.

Foundation Chief Executive Kim Sutton said that many people with similar problems have benefitted from hospital care at Gold Coast and in Brisbane as a result of a new campaign with Woolworths stores across the Gold Coast.

“I’m pleased to see Riley was happy to be the face of the recent Woolworths campaign” Kim said.

“We do so much great work when we combine with our partners in the community and in this case Gold Coast Hospital Foundation, Woolworths and the Children’s Hospital Foundation” she said

“I would like to thank our local community for supporting the campaign where we helped to raise a total of \$49,000 while shopping at Woolworths” she said.

These funds will purchase much needed equipment to help children needing physiotherapy at the Gold Coast University Hospital and for the Child and Youth Mental Health Service.

Patient positives

Patient 1

I would just like to say a massive ‘thankyou’ at 42 years I thought that I would never be able to live my life to the full again! You guys have given me my life back, thankyou so much—awesome team and I will be forever grateful. Such a wonderful day for me.

Patient 2

I can not thank the ambulance officers enough for the wonderful way they treated her. Unfortunately I only got one of their names but all three were great (one was a student). They were so reassuring and made Indi feel safe. We had a bit of a wait at the hospital but when we did see the doctor he too was awesome. She was a tad hyper from the wait and the doctor was great at getting her to settle down and let him look at her head. He dressed it telling her how brave she was.

The treatment she received from the ambulance officers and the doctor was so impressive and so wonderful that something that could have been traumatic to a 4 year old was turned into a real adventure she is now telling everyone about. I just want to thank all that helped her—you are awesome.

Cardiac services don't miss a beat



Cath Lab staff preparing for a stent procedure

Clinical Director of Diagnostic Emergency and Medical Services, Dr Mark Forbes, said the team is investigating how they can improve the service they provide to their patients while also meeting increasing demand.

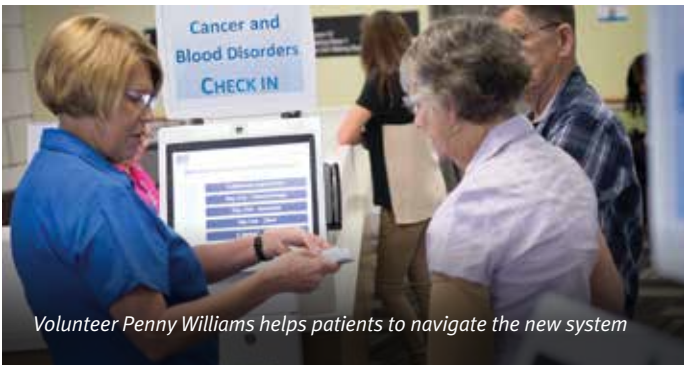
“We will use tried and tested measures to look critically at all aspects of our cardiac services with an underlying goal to deliver the best patient care, in the safest environment possible and in the most efficiency way” Dr Forbes said.

“Both clinicians and service managers within our cardiology practice at Gold Coast Health are united in their focus to review and match world class services for the local community” he said.

“There are demonstrable patient and cost benefits to honing what we do and how we do it” he said.

This exciting project will compare our model of care against the best in Australia and the rest of the world.

Q-FLOW ticket and management system a winner for outpatients



Volunteer Penny Williams helps patients to navigate the new system

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Falls prevention pays off

Executive Director, Clinical Governance, Education and Research, Professor Marianne Vonau said that one of the most expensive preventable injuries in hospital is patient falls.

“When a patient has a fall during their hospital stay it is estimated that they spend an extra eleven days in hospital with an approximate cost of \$1100 per day—equating to over \$12 thousand dollars per patient” Professor Vonau said.

The Gold Coast Health falls prevention program uses promotion and awareness campaigns, data collection and analysis, falls prevention strategies and education programs to new staff and wards to lessen the risk of falls in our hospitals.

With an ageing population the costs associated with falls will grow to absorb much of the increased funding required to care for older people. The number of hip fractures in Australia is expected to double by 2026 and increase fourfold by 2051.

Patients can view a falls prevention video during their stay at Gold Coast University Hospital and Robina Hospital. The patient education initiative was developed by clinical staff and is now in four languages across all Gold Coast Health facilities. The video provides the patient with practical information to avoid a fall in hospital.

Patients across Gold Coast Health are seeing the value of new service kiosks as they speed up waiting times and even help direct them to appointments.

Q-FLOW program sponsor Alison Ewens, said all the kiosks will be up and operational by the end of this year.

“Our volunteers will help patients in the early stages to show them how to use the system until they feel confident” Alison said.

“This means patients can sit down with a ticket instead of standing in a queue and enjoy a better patient arrival and check-in experience” she said.

Patients can also respond to automated allocation to queues for clinics and blood tests while completing their visit with improved check out processes such as bulk billing sign-off and appointment rebooking.

A total of 20 units will be installed. This system helps to process some 7800 patients who visit our facilities each week. Improved management for patients with special needs (e.g. interpreters and ambulance patients) will also be catered to in the new ticket system.

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