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Your local health news | August/September 2014

Preventing falls

The new falls video educating patients at the bedside

Are you immunised?

Why immunisation is so important on the Gold Coast

Endoscopy program saving lives

Patient waiting lists slashed through new initiatives.



Board News

Message from the Chair – Ian Langdon

Public confidence in the service provided by Gold Coast Health is obviously important and whenever there is media coverage of “bad news stories” that confidence can be put at risk. Unfortunately in a service that encounters approximately 150,000 presentations to the emergency departments, over 4,000 births and over 100,000 surgical procedures annually plus delivery of countless other medical procedures it is inevitable that some issues will arise. The challenge is to learn from such instances where our service could have been better.

As chair of Gold Coast Health I have been proud of the way

in which our clinicians and executives have responded to a media environment continuously searching for sensational news. I am proud because in the face of such external pressure there is a firm commitment to maximise disclosure and to accept public scrutiny and accountability to continuous improvement.

It is essential that our clinical staff at all levels know that they have the support and confidence of the Board and the executive management as internal and public disclosure of instances of concern is fundamental

to building a culture of continuous improvement. Indeed as reporting of issues of clinical concern increases my confidence in our services also increases as such reporting highlights the determination of our clinicians to self examine and to adjust.

The strength of a health service is determined by its commitment to governance and improvement, its determination to identify shortcomings and to address them. What the public does not have sight of is the daily clinical handovers that occur in all wards where clinicians review all patients, their treatment, their responses

to such treatments and the changes that may improve outcomes. However the public can see our open disclosure of our waiting lists, our surgical service timelines, our emergency average treatment time waits and a host of other clinical performance details

Gold Coast Health is fortunate to have highly skilled clinicians of the highest integrity and I want them to know that the Board appreciates the work they do often under considerable pressure; I especially wish to congratulate them for committing to a culture of transparency despite the public criticism that such transparency generates.



The Jaran Dancers entertained the audience at NAIDOC week celebrations in July.

Celebrating our culture

Gold Coast University Hospital hosted a rich cultural event during NAIDOC week in the first week of July.

NAIDOC week is a time to celebrate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and an opportunity to recognise the contributions that Indigenous Australians make to our country and our society.

Staff and visitors witnessed performances by the Jaran Dancers who entertained the crowd with a taste of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural ceremonies and included

some audience participation which brought many a smile to those in attendance.

This year's theme, Serving Country: Centenary and Beyond, honours the service and sacrifice of all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander men and women who have fought in defence of country. This sacrifice extends back to over 200 years.

A Welcome to Country by Yugambah descendant, Uncle Ted Williams opened the celebrations and was completed with a celebratory wattle seed NAIDOC cake.



Endoscopy program saving lives

A \$3 million investment is helping to slash endoscopy waiting lists

Gold Coast Health has embarked on a major initiative with a \$3 million investment targeted at reducing the number of patients waiting for an urgent endoscopy.

Chief Executive Ron Calvert said any patient worrying about whether they have cancer expects to be treated as quickly as possible.

“Our program ensures patients receive the care they urgently need and saves lives,” Mr Calvert said.

“For some of our patients, waiting too long for their colonoscopy could mean the difference between being diagnosed with bowel cancer in its early stages, or finding out - too late - that they have cancer.

“By prioritising our urgent endoscopy patients, known as Category Four, we have made significant improvements reducing the number of patients waiting longer than clinically recommended and reducing the time they wait for an operation booking.”

In February this year only two out of five of our urgent endoscopy patients had an operation booked, but that has now increased to two out of three of our urgent patients. Ninety percent of the remaining urgent endoscopy patients have been offered a booking as part of our endoscopy “opt-in” strategy.

The “opt-in” strategy means patients can choose a time better suited to their needs which in turn reduces the number of people who fail to attend their appointments.

The Gold Coast Health Endoscopy Program is designed and led by clinicians and staff. Reforms aimed to identify high-risk patients who have been waiting too long for their endoscopy procedure and ensure they receive the urgent care they need. The program involves a mix of in-house service changes and out-of-house (private sector and Queensland Health's Surgery Connect service) additional capacity, where needed, at no cost to patients.

“Prior to the advent of this program, a similar waiting list initiative dealing with long wait endoscopy patients found six per cent had developed cancer, with one third of these having developed secondary metastases. Once this stage is reached prognosis is poor,” Mr Calvert said.

These initiatives are being driven by the committed clinical leads and staff of Gold Coast Health's endoscopy unit; measures taken include increasing the treatment time available, increased doctors and nurses, partnering with Surgery Connect program and improving the booking process.

“Our commitment to invest in the endoscopy service will continue to be a priority in the 2014-15 financial year.”

The importance of immunisation

The Gold Coast Public Health Unit are reminding parents of the importance of vaccinating their children as a simple, safe and effective way of protecting themselves as well as the community from vaccine-preventable diseases.

The message serves as a timely reminder given the recent increase in some vaccine-preventable diseases, such as measles. Since the beginning of the year, there have been 51 cases of measles in Queensland, while the average number of cases at this point of the year has been 12 in the last five years.

Immunisation rates on the Gold Coast are slowly improving but data for the first quarter of this year has shown that the immunisation rates are just under 90% for 1-year olds.

Dr Satyamurthy Anuradha, a Public Health Registrar at the Gold Coast Public Health Unit said a higher rate of immunisation is needed at the Gold Coast and urges parents to get their children vaccinated on time.

"The Queensland Immunisation Strategy 2014-17 was launched in July and one of the goals is that 95 per cent of all Queensland children are fully immunised," Dr Anuradha said.

"Parents need to be aware of the very real risk of not immunising their children against diseases such as measles and whooping

Vaccination history

Parents unsure of their child's vaccination history can visit a Medicare Office or phone the Australian Childhood Immunisation Register on **1800 653 809**.

Where to get immunised?

For enquiries on immunisation, including the closest immunisation clinic, contact the Gold Coast Public Health Unit on **5668 3700** or email gcphucc@health.qld.gov.au

For more information on immunisation, visit: www.qld.gov.au/health/conditions/immunisation/

cough. Measles is a highly infectious disease which can cause serious complications such as pneumonia (lung infection) and encephalitis (inflammation of the brain). Vaccination is the best way to prevent measles.

"Immunisation protects not only those who get the vaccine, but also those who are unable to get the vaccination such as babies who are too young for some vaccines and can be most vulnerable to the serious effects of these diseases."

In response to low vaccination coverage as identified by the 1996 Australian Bureau of Statistics, the position of Immunisation Coordinator for the South Coast Public Health Unit was created. I was appointed to this position in May 1997.

Immunisation is not only one of the most significant achievements in public health but also the most cost-effective of public health interventions.

I am part of the immunisation team who constantly strive to maintain high vaccination rates within the Gold Coast area. We also work with special groups of people at greater risk of vaccine-preventable diseases such as those with medical risk factors, indigenous people, refugees and pregnant women. We support vaccine service providers by providing clinical advice and running educational workshops.

Since 2013, Gold Coast Public Health Unit has moved from being part of a state-wide service to being locally managed by the Gold Coast Hospital and Health Service.

In recent years, immunisation has seen a great deal of change with the introduction of new vaccines such as the Human Papillomavirus vaccine and the Meningococcal vaccines, all of which have significantly impacted on the morbidity and mortality of our population. In fact, Australia was the first country in the world to introduce a national government-funded school vaccination program to prevent cervical cancer and I am proud to be working on it currently.

The old saying "prevention is better than cure" best describes the Public Health Nursing philosophy which is the greatest good for the greatest number.

In focus with Lynne Waters Gold Coast Public Health Unit



Lynne Waters is the Immunisation Coordinator and advocates that prevention is the best cure.



Volunteer Catherine Ellenford played patient with registered nurse Tamirin Darch during filming for the falls video.

Falls on film

Elderly patients admitted to Gold Coast Health facilities are now better informed of their falls risks directly at the bedside.

Every day, 133 older Queenslanders have a fall requiring medical attention, even though falls are mostly preventable. They are the leading cause of unintentional injury for Queenslanders aged 65 years and over.

The falls avoidance video will be accessible by all patients and will help to inform and protect the patients in our care.

Clinical Lead for Falls and Injury Prevention, Belinda Real said: "Joan Mutch and I received \$10,000 out of more than \$250,000 from the Improvers staff funding initiative to develop a short film on falls injury prevention.

"This has been a real community engagement exercise with input from all levels including the funding panel; our star of the video and long-standing hospital volunteer, Catherine Ellenford; and finally a review of the finished product by our consumer advisory group."

The video was produced in consultation with the Multicultural Communities Council Gold Coast and translated into the top three languages of clients identified over 65 years old.

For more information on falls prevention, visit: www.health.qld.gov.au/stayonyourfeet/

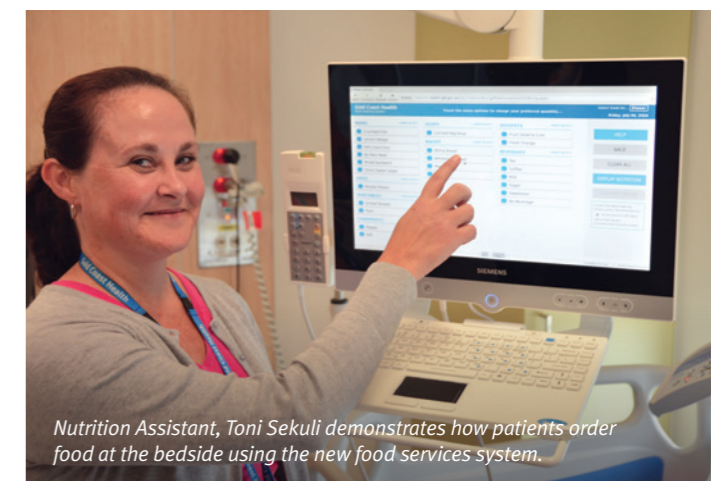
Ordering improved

A new food services system launched at Gold Coast University Hospital (GCUH), Robina Hospital and Carrara Health Centre in July has changed the way patients order their meals from the bedside.

The system allows patients to order up to seven meals in advance through bedside Patient Entertainment Systems at GCUH, with the menu display filtered specifically to match a patient's diet and allergies. Patients at Robina have their personalised printed menu selections scanned into the system avoiding manual ordering.

Director of Nutrition, Alan Spencer said the new system supports a number of key business functions, including patient meal management, menu and recipe management, food production and inventory, and nutrient management.

"This system provides data that will assist in improving patient safety due to its ability to only present meal options based on the most up-to-date patient information regarding what is and is not an acceptable diet, including allergy information."



Nutrition Assistant, Toni Sekuli demonstrates how patients order food at the bedside using the new food services system.

Mums make midwives feel at home

The Maternity Home Visiting Team made up to 12,000 visits to Gold Coast mums and bubs last year – a 22 per cent increase.

The Maternity Home Visiting Team (MHVT) provides post-natal services, including lactation support, seven days per week. Most families receive an average of two home visits after mums and their newborn leave the hospital and is a key performance indicator of Queensland Health's Blueprint for better healthcare in Queensland.

Midwifery Unit Manager Ambulatory Postnatal and Lactation Services, Helen Green said the service, which has been running for 24 years, is beneficial for mums and their babies.

"Providing home visits means that mums can go home feeling confident hands on midwifery and practical support is available," Ms Green said.

"The Gold Coast University Hospital birthed 4,376 babies in 2013/2014; up by more than 15 per cent from last year and close to a 25 per cent increase in births over the last six months."

Julie Kopeikin from Southport had her baby Hunter Jeanes pre-term and is very happy having this service available in the home.

"Having the maternity home visit has been really helpful as it was quite overwhelming having a pre-term baby and being unsure if we were doing the right thing," Ms Kopeikin said.

"The midwife has been lovely and reassuring – I'm very happy with the service."



Midwife Robyn Green weighs baby Hunter Jeanes under the watchful eye of mum Julie Kopeikin in her home at Southport during a maternity home visit.



GCUH hosts Taiwanese nurses

Gold Coast University Hospital welcomed six undergraduate nursing students on 15 July from the Department of Nursing, Tzu Chi College of Technology in Taiwan to tour the facility and learn more about the Australian health care environment.

The students were guided through different areas of the hospital including; the emergency department, neonatal intensive care unit and the helipad.

Dr Sylvia Chu presented a lecture to emergency department staff on the Taiwanese Health Care system giving the students and staff an opportunity to discuss clinical and travelling experiences and plans for the future.

Associate Professor of Emergency Care, Dr Julia Crilly who hosted the group said the visit provided a mutually beneficial insight for the students and staff.

"This visit demonstrates an excellent example of how health care staff can have opportunities to learn from each other and understand health care differences between countries," Dr Crilly said.

"This way, when looking after patients from culturally diverse populations who pass through our health care environment, we can understand a little bit more about their culture."

Wound management program receives national recognition

A training resource developed by Gold Coast Medicare Local and the Bundall Chronic Wound Clinic has been named runner up in the National Lead Clinicians Group 2014 Awards for Excellence.

The clinic offers training in innovative wound management techniques and incorporates a multi-disciplinary approach including vascular specialists, the Gold Coast University Hospital and allied health providers. The clinic offers education and practice skills to General Practitioners and General Practice Nurses.

Clinic Director Dr Stephen Yelland is delighted that the clinic has been acknowledged.

"Nurses who come here to learn take their learnings back to their practice. Nurses who have done the training are more confident in compression therapy and managing wounds, with better outcomes for patients across the Gold Coast," Dr Yelland said.

"It's innovative, hasn't been done before in General Practice and the education component is translating evidence into practice, spreading skills and knowledge in an area of primary care often neglected."

For more information about the wound management program please contact bevkgcml.com.au or the Bundall Wound Clinic on 5656 4800.



Dr Stephen Yelland and Cheryl Frank from the Bundall Chronic Wound Clinic receiving the award

A collaborative stakeholder reference group has been set up to assist Gold Coast Health with its commitment to investigate improved access to child care services for staff members.

The inaugural meeting of the Child Care Project Stakeholder Reference Group was held in July involving Health Service staff, key partners including local child care operators and industry experts. The Group will assist and advise the ongoing investigation and planning process and will play a key role in developing a clear definition of what will constitute a 'Centre of Excellence' for child care services.

Child care was identified as a factor that would 'make your life more enjoyable at Gold Coast Health' through feedback provided as part of the "Love your work" staff survey conducted by the Gold Coast Hospital and Health Board in mid-2013.

The group will meet bi-monthly, providing a forum for local child care providers to engage with the health service about their services.

Aspiring to excellence



Planning for future child care services for Gold Coast Health staff has commenced.

Foundation awards staff grants

Staff have benefited from a \$130,000 increase in the Gold Coast Hospital Foundation's education and research grants this year.

The Foundation received 97 applications for more than \$170,000 in funding for staff-led projects – four times the applications from last year.

Forty-two projects received funding thanks to significant contributions from Jupiters Hotel and Casino, Wiltshire Family Law the Ko-Cheng Lin Family and community donations.

With the grants, staff have the opportunity to improve the work environment, processes, care and experience for patients.

Successful staff grants were announced in a special award presentation on 14 July 2014.

You're invited to our Gala Dinner

This year marks the Foundation's 20th Anniversary and we will be celebrating in style at our Annual Gala Dinner on Saturday 23 August.

Held at the newly refurbished Southport Sharks Event Centre, this unique black tie event presented by EC Pohl and Co is the hottest ticket around with a M*A*S*H theme including a decadent three course meal, beverages and live entertainment. (M*A*S*H themed dress optional)

Guests will also be given the chance to purchase raffle tickets, take part in our auction – which will include the opportunity to purchase medical equipment and much, much more!

This event is a major fundraiser for Gold Coast Hospital Foundation and is a wonderful opportunity to join us and other like-minded members of our community who are dedicated to helping us raise crucial funds for identified and priority projects, programs and equipment for services in our Gold Coast community.

Tickets for this event and more information can be found at www.gchfoundation.org.au/events

GM54K fundraising reaches the mark

The 2014 Give Me 5 For Kids campaign in partnership with 92.5 Gold FM has reached its goal of raising more than \$150,000 to purchase vital funds for sick children in hospital.

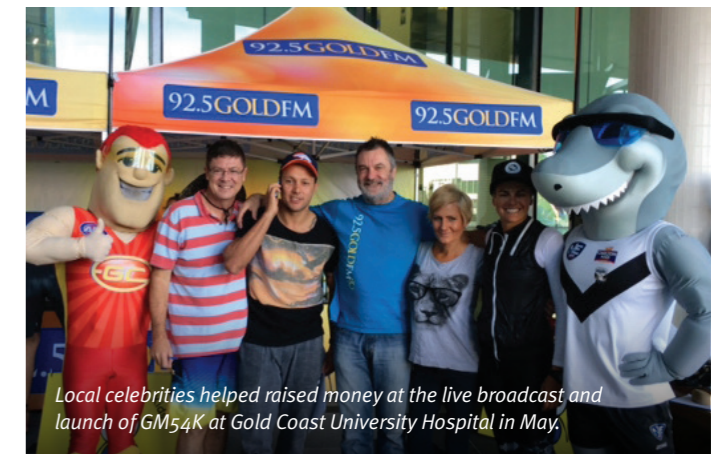
The annual campaign, which runs through June, raised the funds through a number of fun events, activities and visits in and around the Gold Coast region.

Gold Coast Hospital Foundation CEO, Kim Sutton said the Foundation are overwhelmed by the generosity and commitment of the Gold Coast community and Gold FM's ongoing support.

"By reaching our goal, we can now purchase vitally important medical equipment which will help enhance the care and treatment provided to children, infants and babies within Gold Coast Health's region," Ms Sutton said.

"We are delighted that this equipment will help to make lasting changes in the care, treatment and quality of care that is provided to the children in our region."

This year's wish list included items such as baby broncho-oesophagoscopes which are very small telescopes that can view a baby's airway and remove any foreign objects; and transport monitors specifically designed for children monitoring heart rates, oxygen saturation and blood pressure of a child while they are being transferred between sites.



Local celebrities helped raise money at the live broadcast and launch of GM54K at Gold Coast University Hospital in May.

Patient Positives

Patient 1

21 July 2014

A big thank you to all the staff that helped nurse my daughter back to health. She was very poorly and the staff took immediate action. My daughter is now home and making a very good and steady recovery.

Patient 2

2 June 2014

I would like to thank the staff who looked after my son. They were very patient and caring to him through a difficult time.

Patient 3

6 July 2014

We visited the emergency department at Gold Coast University Hospital with a suspected arm break on our child. I would like to say that the whole experience was amazing! I think it's important to praise the staff that make

a difference. From entering the hospital with a lovely young girl on the counter who observed our child right away, only a 10-15 minute wait before we were getting a scan. The lovely nurses were so lovely and accommodating and we were so happy with our treatment. Well done guys!



Jennie O'Hare says storage racks in Robina and Gold Coast University Hospital pharmacies will be a thing of the past when robots are installed next year.

Robots to help in pharmacies

Specialised robots will begin helping Robina and Gold Coast University Hospitals' pharmacies dispense medicine to patients from early next year.

The introduction of pharmacy robots will only be the second implementation of a robotic dispensing system in a Queensland public hospital.

The robot will be able to store and retrieve up to 40,000 pharmaceutical items and deliver them to an area within the pharmacy such as the dispensing bench or ward box reducing pharmacy turnaround times.

Assistant Director of Pharmacy, Jennie O'Hare said the introduction of the robots is an exciting development for Gold Coast Health and will be beneficial to patients.

"The use of robots in pharmacies is becoming more common, and we are very excited to be the second hospital to implement this innovative system," Ms O'Hare said.

"By using the robots, we will see many benefits including; reduced dispensing errors; improved pharmacy turnaround times; improved inventory control; improved after-hours dispensing capability and reduced pharmaceutical inventory holdings by 10-20 per cent.

"What this will mean for patients is faster and safer automatic dispensing of their medication which will better enable pharmacy staff to spend more time educating patients and staff on medication."

The robots will first be implemented at Robina Hospital and then at Gold Coast University Hospital by mid-2015.

Putting smiles on our Clown Doctors

Clown Doctors will continue to bring joy to sick children at Gold Coast University Hospital thanks to a generous community donation.

The colourful characters make fortnightly visits to various areas of the hospital, including the children's ward, as part of a mission to deliver the health benefits of humour to those who need it most.

Now, thanks to a \$9,290 donation from Gold Coast Community Foundation, the likes of Dr B Bubbly and Dr Colourfool are set to remain familiar 'funny' faces for patients and parents alike.

GCUH Children's Ward Acting Nurse Unit Manager Phil McKay said the effect the Clown Doctors had on young patients could not be underestimated.

"We provide wonderful care to our patients but the ability to make a sick child smile is a skill in itself and that's where Dr B Bubbly and Dr Colourfool come into their own," Mr McKay said.

Clown Doctors Fundraising Manager Ian Doig said it cost about \$54,000 a year for two professional clowns to visit a hospital one day a week.

"As our organisation does not receive government funding, we rely on the generosity of the others to keep this vital service alive," he said.



Dr Colourfool and Dr B Bubbly literally put a smile on the face of GCUH patient Alexander and mum Rebecca.

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