

THE BOTTOM LINE

April 2008

A publication from the Queensland Bowel Cancer Screening Program (QBCSP)

Welcome to the first edition of 'The Bottom Line' for 2008. The purpose of this publication is to keep you up to date with progress in the implementation of the National Bowel Cancer Screening Program (NBCSP) in Queensland.

Across Australia

Since the commencement of the NBCSP in Australia in August 2006, over 815,000 invitations have been distributed nationally and over 325,000 people (39.9%) have chosen to participate. Of the NBCSP participants, 24,176 have returned a positive Faecal Occult Blood Test (FOBT) result (7.8%).

Across the State

Implementation Data

As of 29 February 2008, 144,829 FOBT invitations had been sent to eligible Queenslanders. Over 55,600 Queenslanders have accepted the invitation to participate, resulting in a crude participation rate of just over 38%. Of these participants, 4,274 have received a positive FOBT result (8.5%). While this crude participation rate is lower than previous months, it is important to note that this is generally an underestimate of the true participation rate as at any point in time there are members of the population who are eligible to proceed to the next point on the screening pathway but who have not yet had time to do so. In addition, invitations were postponed over the Christmas and New Year period and it is likely that this will have also impacted on current participation rates.

1034 colonoscopies have been completed as part of the Program at Queensland Health facilities, however due to a significant under-reporting of data to the National Register, the total number of colonoscopies completed as part of the Program including those completed in private facilities, remains unknown.

What's New!

- **Evaluation**

As Phase 1 of the NBCSP approaches completion, evaluation of the Queensland model has commenced. In addition to evaluating the clinical effectiveness of the Program including adenoma and cancer detection rates, the evaluation will assess participant satisfaction, service delivery and the roles of staff unique to the Queensland model. The evaluation will use data collected by catchment staff, information provided in participant satisfaction surveys and a series of focus groups and semi-structure interviews with health professionals and catchment staff.

As the Queensland model of NBCSP differs to that adopted in other states, the evaluation will be important in highlighting the Program aspects unique to Queensland.

- **National Endoscopy Training Initiative Workshop**

The QBCSP and the Queensland Health Skills Development Centre funded and delivered a workshop as part of the National Endoscopy Training Initiative on 4 April 2008. The workshop was attended by approximately 120 delegates including gastroenterology and surgical registrars, rural and regional physician and surgeon colonoscopists, and endoscopy nurses. The innovative colonoscopy training workshop used state of the art video technology including a colonoscopy demonstration broadcast live from the Royal Brisbane and Women's Hospital endoscopy suite and virtual reality colonoscopy simulators. The workshop training was extremely valuable to support the provision of high quality colonoscopy services throughout Queensland.

- **Print Campaign**

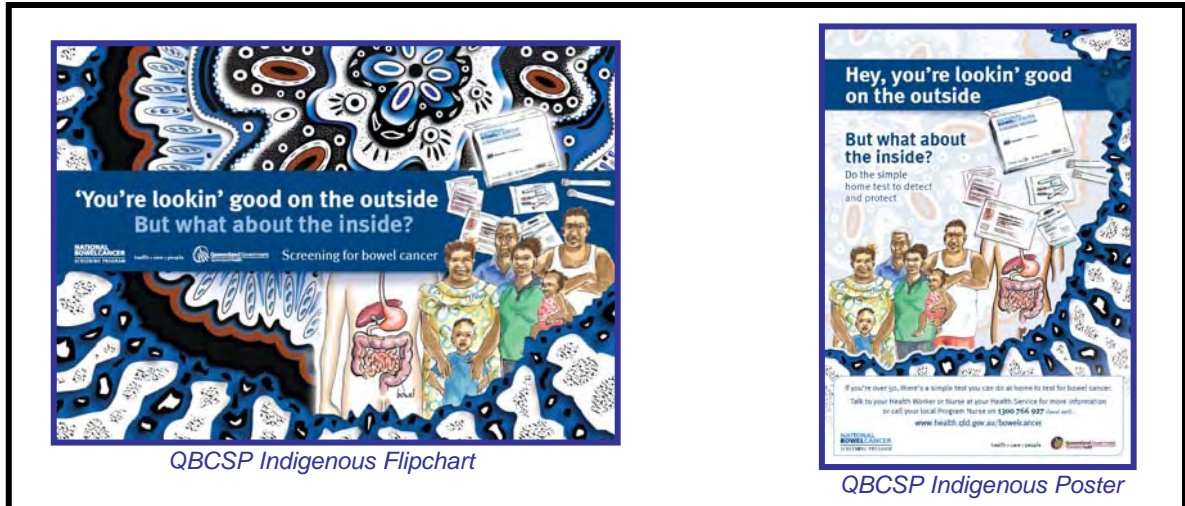
A print advertising campaign was conducted for a one month period to promote the QBCSP and encourage participation among eligible Queenslanders. The statewide campaign commenced on February 10th and incorporated newspapers targeting culturally and linguistically diverse communities. As a result of the advertisements, over 130 calls were received by the QBCSP Information Line and approximately 2,400 hits were recorded on the QBCSP website during February.

- **Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Recruitment Strategies**

With the support of the Commonwealth Department of Health and Ageing, the QBCSP has commenced implementation of the Program in a number of Indigenous communities via an alternate delivery method. Approximately thirteen communities have been identified to trial the alternate delivery method which involves the distribution of FOBT kits through local health services rather than direct mail. As part of this model, eligibility will

also vary to that of the NBCSP with all community members aged 50 to 74 eligible to take part. Communities taking part include Yarrabah, Hopevale, Lockhart River, Napranum, Mapoon, Palm Island, Doomadgee, Mt Isa, and Roma. Implementation Coordinators are being employed in Cairns and Townsville to oversee the implementation in each community.

To support recruitment strategies among Indigenous Queenslanders, resources have been developed and are now available statewide. A bowel cancer screening flipchart has been developed providing a range of information on bowel cancer including prevalence, risk factors and preventative measures as well as detailed instructions on completing a FOBT and information on colonoscopy. In addition, an Indigenous consumer poster has been developed to assist in raising awareness of the Program and the importance of bowel cancer screening.



- **GP Letters**

In February a letter from the Chief Health Officer was sent to each GP in Queensland. The letter aimed to inform and remind GPs of QBCSP processes for colonoscopies provided through the public sector, the roles of catchment staff and relevant contact details.

- **Website**

The QBCSP website has been updated. In addition to providing information about the QBCSP and bowel cancer in general, the website now also provides links to a range of clinical guidelines and standards, contact details for catchment based staff and electronic resources for health professionals and consumers including multilingual and Indigenous resources.

- **New staff**

The QBCSP has welcomed a number of new staff in 2008.

Emily Ford and Beth Wardle have commenced in new roles with the QBCSP state coordination unit. Emily is coordinating the evaluation of the QBCSP while Beth has commenced as the Program's Clinical Nurse Consultant.

Joanne Stewart and Bernie Roberts have commenced as Health Promotion Officers in the Townsville and Toowoomba catchments respectively.

As previously mentioned, Implementation Coordinator positions have been created in Townsville and Cairns to assist in the implementation of the alternate delivery model for Indigenous communities. Lisa Fletcher has been appointed to the Cairns catchment position. Recruitment for the Townsville position is pending.

Feedback

We value the input of our key stakeholders. Should you have any feedback regarding the Program in Queensland, please contact: bowelcancerscreening@health.qld.gov.au.

Want to know more?

Visit our website at www.health.qld.gov.au/bowelcancer or phone the Queensland Bowel Cancer Screening Program on 1300 766 927.