

Health matters

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Queensland
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helping people
to better health
and well-being

Actors add theatrical reality to trauma exercise

A team of medical emergency staff treating the victims of a multiple vehicle accident outside the entrance to Hervey Bay Hospital caused a stir among startled passers-by who watched the action unfold.

But the gathered medical professionals were not dealing with a real-life emergency.

The injured victims were all actors taking part in a trauma training day at Hervey Bay Hospital, part of the statewide Pre-Hospital Trauma Life Support Program.

The actor patients, recruited from the local Pied Piper Theatre Company, exercised their theatrical muscle to give a realistic performance that fooled those witnessing the exercise as much as the participating medics.

The emergency drama, organised by Fraser Coast Health Service District Medical Education Officer, Julie Harris, was aimed at both seasoned and newly qualified medical professionals to give them practice in coping with real life emergency situations.

"It is part of the professional development of hospital staff," Julie said.

"The district undertakes this type of training twice a year in order to meet new staff intakes.

"The aim is to get staff and other participants up to speed with Australian standards in trauma management."

Julie said a number of different scenarios were acted out, but they primarily focused on motor vehicle



All hands to the rescue... (from left) Registered Nurse Dierdre Ross, Dr Martin Byrne and Registered Nurse Shane King stabilise actor patient Charlie Hall during the trauma training day.

trauma, both single and multi-vehicle.

Participants found the mock-up emergency very interesting.

Julie said it gave them an ideal opportunity to practice their skills and to manage patients in a real life trauma situation.

And participants were not let off lightly by their actor patients.

"In one scenario I played a distressed mother who came running out from behind a bush and tried to pull the medics away from my injured child," Julie said.

Knee surgery computes

A new computerised image guided surgery system to assist orthopaedic surgeons performing knee replacements at Brisbane's Queen Elizabeth II Jubilee Hospital is a first for Queensland public hospitals.

The \$500,000 infra-red computer technology re-creates the mechanics of the human knee to pinpoint the precise location and angle for the surgeon to cut the knee bone and insert a prosthesis.

The use of the computer will

help improve the accuracy and efficiency of this surgical procedure. During 2000-2001, about 50,000 hip and knee replacements were done in Australia, with 7500 of these in Queensland.

Last year, Queen Elizabeth II Jubilee Hospital performed 211 total knee replacements and 161 total hip replacements.

Orthopaedic surgeons will study the results of this computer technology to refine surgical techniques.

Now on
QHEPS



United effort
helps
reunite
family

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\$510m hospital
projects
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Nursing practitioners start trials

Queensland Health's new nursing practitioners took part last month in a two-day orientation course. The nurse practitioner role is being trialed from this month in four sites across the State. Pictured from left are Jill Carroll (Morven); Shirley Petrie (Laura); Rosita Van Kuilenburg - Princess Alexandra Hospital; and David Hughes (Nanango). The six month trials will look to see how the role can improve the health outcomes of patients in community and hospital settings.



DIRECTIONS



Dr Robert Stable
Director-General

Every minute of every day there are Queensland Health staff and volunteers doing enormously important things for patients and the health of Queenslanders.

It gives me great pleasure to take opportunities to recognise these people and show appreciation of their efforts.

The most recent form of recognition was the presentation of Australia Day Achievement medallions to staff and volunteers across the State.

This is an annual event, where nominations are sought and received from District Managers, State Managers, Zonal Managers and Branch Directors.

It is always pleasing to read these nominations detailing the wonderful things our people are doing. This year 32 medallions were awarded.

I was fortunate enough to be able to present a number of these medallions personally in Bundaberg, Hervey Bay, Roma and Corporate Office.

I was particularly honoured that one volunteer, Mrs Joan Brownlie, travelled from Mungindi to Roma so that I could present her with her medallion.

For this reason, I make special mention of Mrs Brownlie's contribution to our health system.

Mrs Brownlie was nominated by the District Manager, Roma, who is very appreciative of Joan's support and enthusiasm through her membership on the Roma Health Service District Council and the Local Health Advisory Group.

She has demonstrated excellent leadership in the community of Mungindi and has supported the District Manager in cross-border issues including the provision of dental services.

Another important initiative that Mrs Brownlie instigated was the development of a hospital garden in Mungindi - a project that the District Manager believed yielded flow on benefits by galvanising the community and hospital staff.

Well done, Mrs Brownlie and congratulations to all recipients.

I urge you to keep the nominations coming in for the range of opportunities to recognise staff, for example, the Queensland Health Excellence Awards, and the Premier's Excellence Awards.

Dr Robert Stable
Director-General

Stand on e-mail misuse supported

A worldwide survey has supported Queensland Health's hard stance in e-mail and internet misuse, says Michael Schafer, Director of the Audit and Operational Review Branch.

Michael said Queensland Health's stance was in line with most companies, who viewed this as the most serious workplace offence and one of the top three reasons for dismissing an employee.

He said 212 firms took part in a survey that revealed nearly half of all reported cases of e-mail or internet misuse lead to dismissal, ranking in seriousness only behind dishonesty and violence.

Two thirds of the people who were disciplined for misusing e-mail or internet were detected accessing or distributing pornography and/or sexually explicit

material while at work.

While almost 100 per cent of the surveyed firms had policies and guidelines in place to deal with this issue, less than a quarter monitored their employees' usage on a daily basis.

Michael said that while this was a serious issue, it seemed employers were still not making use of the detection software available.

He said only half the companies surveyed had purchased software to prevent staff accessing inappropriate sites or misusing their e-mail accounts.

To ensure that e-mail and internet is not being misused, Queensland Health has installed the *Image Manager* software (formerly Pornsweeper), to detect any inappropriate material that is transmitted or accessed by employees.

The Audit and Operational

Review Branch is responsible for monitoring this software and to date has detected hundreds of offenders who are misusing their e-mail and/or internet accounts.

"Officers who have been disciplined for e-mail and internet abuse have received penalties including formal warnings, official reprimands, fines and demotions in pay," Michael said.

"A number of Queensland Health employees have also been dismissed for this offence, showing that the department considers this a serious workplace breach.

"Queensland Health is committed to ensuring that e-mail and internet is used only for appropriate purposes and is continuing to refine the procedures and systems in place for monitoring misuse by employees."

I recently had the pleasure of meeting the four nurses who will take part in the Nurse Practitioner trial commencing this month in Laura, Morven, Nanango and the Princess Alexandra Hospital.

Nurse Practitioners are highly skilled registered nurses who are authorised to order tests and investigations, initiate and supply some medications and refer patients to other health practitioners.

In this advanced role, nurses who have specialised clinical expertise and educational preparation, work as part of a team to provide a comprehensive health service.

While I believe that Queenslanders throughout the State have access to excellent health care, we are always looking at ways of improving our services.

Over the next six months, the trial will look at how the role can make a difference and improve



from the Minister

Wendy Edmond
Minister for Health and
Minister Assisting the
Premier on Women's
Policy

the health outcomes of patients in community and hospital settings.

The acute care trial will involve a completely new model of collaborative practice developed for the Oncology/Haematology Unit at the Princess Alexandra Hospital.

The rural locations were chosen because they involve differing types of medical support available to the nurse practitioner.

In Laura, support is through the Royal Flying Doctor Service; at Morven, the doctor is in a town 90km distant; and at Nanango, medical support is on site.

Some of the practical benefits expected for patients during the trial include providing health services closer to the patient's home, improved coordination of care, and improved monitoring and management of chronic diseases.

Many months of rigorous preparation of clinical guidelines, policies and implementation plans have gone into the trial.

It will be overseen by a steering committee comprising members of the Queensland Nursing Council, the Queensland Nurses' Union, Australian Medical Association, Queensland Divisions of General Practitioners and Queensland Health

This is an important step for nursing in Queensland as it represents evolving practice for the profession as well as providing professional development, career challenges and the opportunity for more job satisfaction.

I am looking forward to seeing the results of the trial, which will help us to determine the future of the program.

Wendy Edmond
Minister for Health and
Minister Assisting the
Premier on Women's Policy

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United effort reunites family

A partnership between Charleville Health Service District and Toowoomba Health Service District Renal Unit has enabled a Charleville mother to be reunited with her nine-year-old son after a 15 month separation.

Karen Edwards, 34, who had been undertaking lifesaving renal treatment in Toowoomba, returned to Charleville in time to enjoy Christmas with her son, Zachary, who had remained in Charleville with his grandparents.

Diagnosed with IgA Nephropathy disease four years ago, Karen is on the waiting list for a transplant.

With less than five per cent kidney function, Karen has to undergo regular dialysis treatment to remove toxins and excess fluid from her body.

When she suffered life-threatening kidney failure in September 2001, she was sent to Toowoomba for treatment.

Since then, she had only been home for a one month stint before ill-health saw her return to Toowoomba.

Staff in both health service districts worked tirelessly in their bid to enable Karen to return home.

Charleville District Health Service purchased an \$18,500 dialysis machine, and a \$68,000 water treatment plant to set up a self-care haemodialysis service in the Charleville Hospital. Staff



Karen Edwards with her son Zachary at Charleville Hospital.

from all areas of the hospital worked together to outfit a room for Karen's treatment.

The Toowoomba Renal Unit intensively trained Karen in self-care haemodialysis, which was a requirement to enable her to go home to Charleville.

The two health service districts work cooperatively supporting Karen's ongoing health care, using telephone and telehealth link-ups to communicate between medical staff in the two centres during Karen's four treatments a week.

Telehealth services enable patients to receive the best care via videoconferencing across the Queensland Health network.

Acting State Manager for In-

formation Services, Debra Hornsby, said Queensland Health used these facilities to assist many health districts to return patients to their home town.

"Additional telehealth systems are being installed statewide to expand renal service capability," she said.

Karen's care is supported by a team that includes medical, nursing and allied health workers, Aboriginal health workers, general practitioners, transplant team members, pharmacists, pathologists, maintenance staff, and ward staff across the districts.

Acting District Manager for Charleville, Rob Pulsford said Karen's successful transition to Charleville was due to the excellent partnership formed between the two health service districts.

"Toowoomba and Charleville Health Service Districts have cemented a strong and successful partnership to ensure the well-being of this patient," he said.

agenda included:

- updating Queensland Health's Privacy Plan and Personal Information Digest
- finalising the guidelines to IS42A for approval
- developing a comprehensive collections policy for the department

Sue said education and training would be a strong focus during this year.

"One of the key findings from the consultancy review was that awareness of IS 42A is low," she said.

"This is not surprising given that the Standard has yet to be implemented.

"Pricewaterhouse Coopers also questioned pilot site interviewees about awareness and working knowledge of existing legislation or rules concerning confidentiality.

"While staff were able to talk about confidentiality rules, they often had limited understanding of legislation underpinning confidentiality.

"The report recommended ongoing staff awareness and training to address these issues."

Glynis Schultz, formerly from Kilcoy Hospital, has been appointed to coordinate and undertake training and education activities.

Telehealth boosts care

A new telehealth link in Cherbourg will enable more people to seek consultations and treatments within their own community.

Telehealth enables patients and health care professionals throughout the State to see and talk to one another using a television screen, camera and microphone.

"Telehealth is an excellence resource enabling people to stay within their own community while accessing specialist care as required," she said.

The Cherbourg telehealth link started in mid December, when a patient underwent a medical procedure normally only undertaken in a major centre.

A specialist nurse from Nambour Hospital will provide guidance to Cherbourg staff.

"Telehealth benefits both patients and staff," Ms Edmond said.

"While the patient would previously have spent up to three days travelling and staying in Brisbane while undergoing the procedure, telehealth will enable them to receive the same care in an hour in their own community.

"Telehealth also provides staff with access to specialists when needed, which is a great resource for staff working in rural and remote areas."

Fortnightly telehealth education sessions for families will be introduced in Cherbourg.

Families will be able to talk with a specialist about particular diseases such as renal disease and diabetes.

Aspects such as exercise, diet, lifestyle changes and blood-glucose levels will be discussed.

PPP starts in work place

A Triple P in the work place program has been started by the Community Child health service of the Royal Children's Hospital Health Service District.

The initiative involves extending Triple P seminars to Queensland Health staff in their place of work.

This included a Triple P seminar in Queensland Health Corporate Office and another seminar at the Royal Children's Hospital.

By providing seminars in the work place, Triple P becomes accessible to staff who have children themselves, which improves access to preventive parenting advice for busy parents — both

mothers and fathers and the occasional grandparent as well.

Following the first seminars there has been continued demand.

More seminars have been organised to cater for this demand.

The next seminar at Royal Children's Hospital will be delivered over the lunch period to enable staff the opportunity to take time for PPP without interrupting their work commitments.

By providing Triple P in the work place, the Community Child Health Service aims to make parenting a whole lot easier and values the importance of supporting staff who are parents, grandparents and carers in their parenting roles.

Privacy review reveals high compliance level

Queensland Health is comparatively well placed to achieve a high level of compliance with the National Privacy Principles in IS42A, although there are some areas that will require further attention.

This is the finding of the external work practice review of Queensland Health's information handling practices completed in October with the consultants, Pricewaterhouse Coopers.

Acting Project Manager, Sue Edwell, said the six pilot sites in the review were selected on the basis of their general representativeness of the department's services and facilities.

She said the consultants flagged the fact that the number of sites was small in comparison with the total number of services and facilities.

"To ensure a high degree of compliance by 8 September, the Information Privacy Project will be undertaking further targeted on-site audits," she said.

"Fiona Jackson, who started with the project in December, will be responsible for this process."

Sue said the project's

\$510m 'hospital for the future'

The largest hospital redevelopment in the Southern Hemisphere reached completion in December with the official opening of the last of three major buildings in the \$510 million Herston hospitals redevelopment.

Work on the redevelopment of Royal Brisbane and Royal Women's hospitals started in 1995.

The first phase included construction of a Central Energy facility, and the second phase was the construction of The Ned Hanlon Building (Centre Block), which was completed in 2000.

The Dr James Mayne Building (East Block) was opened in October last year.

Construction of The Joyce Tweddell Building began in September 2001 and was officially opened in December last year.

The buildings are named after:

E M (Ned) Hanlon, the former Queensland Premier and Minister for Health and Home Affairs;

Dr James Mayne, Registered Medical Officer at the Brisbane Hospital, and then Superintendent from 1898-1904;

Joyce Tweddell, a nurse and radiographer who started and ended her career at the then Brisbane General Hospital. She gave a lifetime of service to cancer patients.

All three new buildings offer significant improvements on the old buildings which were built as long ago as 70 years.

The new high intensity wards are now fully air-conditioned and have either single or multiple bedrooms and patient treatment areas.

Along with state-of-the-art buildings, the new hospital has the most advanced medical equipment, allowing for better monitoring and treatment of patients.

New high-tech cabling links the new equipment with other clinical areas, giving clinicians instant access to patient information across the campus.

Underground and aerial walkways link The Joyce Tweddell Building with other acute services and support departments in the Ned Hanlon Building and the Dr James Mayne Building.

Stage One of the redevelopment comprised enabling works, including the new Central Energy Plant (\$34m), relocation of Central Stores, the construction of a



*Dr J O'N. Mayne
1898-1904*

1000 station car park (\$11m), and the Herston Medical Research Building (\$7m).

Stage Two provided for the construction of the \$196m Ned Hanlon Building, consisting of 73,000 sq m over 11 levels for inpatients, clinical services, and clinical support.

As part of Stage Three, The Joyce Tweddell Building was erected on a site previously occupied by the Royal Women's Hospital.

It accommodates emergency, cardiology, intensive care unit, burns unit, and clinical support services for Royal Brisbane Hospital.

The six-storey \$40 million building, incorporates state-of-the-art radiation therapy facilities, including four brand new linear accelerators with dual energy capabilities, allowing for more accurate treatment of complex cancers.

Extensive new diagnostic and planning equipment and facilities have also been included to ensure that patients with cancer are offered the best work up for their condition before undergoing radiation therapy.

The new cancer wards have been specifically designed for the care and comfort of patients, including special isolation facilities for patients needing bone marrow transplantation and the administration of radioactive pharmaceuticals.

The infectious disease ward has 16 individual bedrooms, some of which have additional complex isolation facilities to manage the rarer and more highly contagious infectious diseases.

Incorporating sophisticated information technology systems and equipment, the new hospitals facilities include:

- dedicated lift systems for the separate movement of visitors, staff and goods, with express lifts to the upper floors to minimise waiting times
- a roof top helipad to provide direct access to emergency, critical care, theatre, delivery and neonatal units
- central atrium space containing shops and restaurants in an informal atmosphere
- extensive landscape gardens to the new entry forecourt, and roof top gardens for the use of patients and staff.

The Project Design Team for the hospitals recognised that shifts in health care would result in changes to standards, work practices and policies.

As a result, the facilities have been designed as a dynamic, flexible and efficient framework to facilitate future change.

The design strategy was developed for low maintenance and operational costs, with the capability to meet development of medical technology by providing maximum flexibility of infrastructure.

Continual consultation was held during the planning and construction of the facilities with architects, engineers and the Hospitals' User Groups.



A perspective of the new hospitals complex from the corner of Bowen Bridge Road and Butterfield Street.



An aerial view of the overall Herston Hospitals complex before development started.



Flashback to the hospital circa 1870.

Artworks create special atmosphere

Major artworks have been incorporated into the new hospitals to create a calm, soothing and healing atmosphere.

Special attention has been given to patients and visitors of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander descent.

Two major Indigenous artists were commissioned to create works which celebrate life.

Aboriginal artist Reg Knox has used a striking large bedrock formation to create a painting illustrating that "life is precious".

The painting is called "The Spirit that is Turrbal", celebrating the Turrbal people who are the traditional owners of the land on which the hospitals are built.

The painting depicts a family celebrating the birth of baby with the women lovingly looking on the new-born infant, while the men celebrate in dance and song.

"The whole focus is the togetherness of the family and respect for the family," Reg said.

"A baby born into a family is always a reason for celebrating. What a beautiful



A segment of the rock art work, The Spirit that is Turrbal.

thing to reflect on at a hospital."

A massive mural covering almost the entire wall of the ground floor corridor of The Joyce Tweddell Building depicts the diverse cultures of Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders in Queensland.

The mural, measuring 8.3 by 5.2 metres, features six canvas panels surrounded by a wide timber frame studded with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artefacts.

Artist Eddie Nona has called the mural, Dadha Buth, which is a Torres Strait Island word meaning Space.

He said the mural depicts how the land and space from the islands and rainforests to inland and coastal areas influenced the culture and survival of the different tribes.

The six panels portray traditional lifestyles as well as European influences such as the pearling and fishing industries.

New name for hospitals

Completion of the redevelopment program has also seen a new name for the Royal Brisbane and Royal Women's Hospitals – officially merging to become the Royal Brisbane and Women's Hospital.

The name change came after

the hospitals moved into the new buildings.

The merger also means the establishment of a combined Royal Brisbane and Women's Hospital Foundation, along with a single auxiliary, instead of one group for each hospital.

Partnership project gains award

A Queensland Health mental health partnership project with the Queensland Police Service has won a major award for excellence in police practice.

Queensland Police Commissioner Bob Atkinson announced in December the Gold Coast Integrated Mental Health Service (GCIMHS) and the Gold Coast Police had won the inaugural Gold Award for Excellence in Operational Policing.

Commissioner Atkinson presented the trophy to Sharyn Hopkins, Clinical Nurse with the GCIMHS, and Senior Sergeant Ken Becker, Officer in Charge of the Southport Watchhouse, who received it on behalf of both agencies.

He said the external consultants who analysed the award entries had chosen the Mental Health Partnership Project protocols initiative because of its statewide implications for two large and complex organisations.

The GCIMHS and the Gold Coast Police District last year trialed locally developed protocols and procedures to promote a coordinated system of care for people with a mental illness.

Successful evaluation of the Gold Coast trials and similar protocols in other districts resulted last year in Commissioner Atkinson and Queensland Health Director-General, Dr Robert Stabile, signing a Memorandum of Understanding to improve service delivery for people with a mental illness, particularly in crisis situations.

The Director of Mental Health, Dr Peggy Brown, said the Mental Health Unit (MHU) of Queensland Health was very proud to be recognised publicly for its development of successful partnerships to continue reform of mental health services.

"This award acknowledges



Pictured (left to right) are Inspector Peter Savage, QPS Organisational Improvement Unit; Sharyn Hopkins, GCIMHS Clinical Nurse; Commissioner Atkinson; Kay McInnes, MHU Senior Project Officer; and Senior Sergeant Ken Becker, Officer in Charge of the Southport Watchhouse.

that new attitudes and approaches are being adopted as we change the cultures of both organisations — in the mental health services and the Police Service," Dr Brown said.

Senior Project Officer with the MHU, Kay McInnes, said the Partnership Project was designed to ensure that people received services from the most appropriate agency.

She said both agencies improved their capacity to provide sensitive and effective responses to mental health crisis situations.

The framework was intentionally broad to allow for specific arrangements to be developed at the local level to suit district arrangements and available resources.

The four key elements of the Partnership Project are:

- clarifying roles and responsibilities of the two services through a Memorandum of Understanding at the statewide level and developing guidelines for protocols and operating procedures at the local level
- exploring legislative and policy options to enhance information sharing
- developing clear processes for the prevention and safe resolu-

tion of mental health crisis situations

- improving knowledge, skills, attitudes and values of members of both services.

Kay said the Gold Coast protocols had covered procedures for referrals between the two agencies.

Other districts had expressed interest in developing formal arrangements for particular procedures relating to specific issues.

Logan-Beaudesert had looked at procedures for Revocation of Leave; the Prince Charles Hospital on interface between the mental health unit and the watchhouse; and Toowoomba the lines of communication between police and various mental health service teams.

The decision to award the Police Commissioner's Gold trophy to joint recipients from both agencies had one unexpected consequence.

Commissioner Atkinson made special arrangements for a second, identical trophy to be delivered to the Mental Health Unit so that the award could be displayed in both the Gold Coast Watchhouse and the offices of the Integrated Mental Health Service.

Protocols frameworks set service standards

Partnership agreements have been signed between Queensland Health and the Queensland Police to improve protocols when dealing with mental health patients.

They include agreements between Queensland Police Service North Coast Region and the Queensland Health Redcliffe-Caboolture Health Service District; and between Queensland Police and the Royal Brisbane and Women's Hospital.

The protocols framework provides a coordinated system of care to ensure effective and efficient delivery of services to meet the needs of people with mental illnesses.

Queensland Police Service North Coast Region, Inspector Stacey Pitman, and Dr Louise Harvey, District Manager, Redcliffe-Caboolture Health Service District, signed off the protocols framework.

The local protocols were developed by Redcliffe Police District, the Redcliffe-Caboolture Health Service District Mental Health Service and the Emergency departments at both Redcliffe and Caboolture Hospitals.

Dr Chandran Segkar, Clinical Director of the Redcliffe-Caboolture Health Service District Mental Health Service, said that the protocols would be of great benefit to people in the

district who, as a result of their mental illness, may require the assistance of all three services in arranging their treatment.

"The framework encourages a close working relationship between the three services, and by implication, this means people can be treated with respect and dignity during what is often a very difficult time," he said.

"The framework will also form the basis of an ongoing training program for all staff in the three services."

The protocol for the Royal Brisbane and Women's Hospital Health Service District was signed off by Assistant Police Commissioner, John Banham, and the District Manager, Dr John Menzies.

Dr Menzies said Queensland Health had been keen for a long time for a greater working agreement to help staff and the police work better with mental health patients.

"This will help clarify issues and how we manage them effectively," he said.

Commissioner Banham said the protocols provided an important model and framework when police were dealing with mental health patients.

"These protocols go a long way to setting up a cooperative response with mental health services and the police," he said.

"From here we can only go from strength to strength."



Inspector Pitman and Dr Harvey signing the protocols framework.

Work starts on final stage

Work will start this month on the last major construction project in the redevelopment of Princess Alexandra Hospital.

Queensland Health awarded Brisbane-based firm A W Edwards Pty Ltd the contract to build the mental health unit at the hospital.

Health Minister Wendy Edmond will mark the start of construction when she turns the first sod this month.

With an estimated construction cost of \$8.5 million, the mental health unit will provide 64 inpatient beds,

high dependency unit, dedicated support facilities, teaching and administration areas.

The 64 inpatient-beds will include 52 general beds, four 'swing' beds for either general or high dependency use based on demand, a five-bed high dependency unit and three special purpose beds

A key feature of the new mental health unit will be the domestic style accommodation which provides much improved facilities for mental health customers in line with contemporary care models.

Consortium gives vocational support

The Park - Centre for Mental Health is a major partner in a new consortium designed to provide vocational support for people with a disability or disadvantage.

Queensland Consortium for Multiple Opportunities in Vocational Enterprise (QC Move) was launched late last year under the Federal Government's Personal Support Program.

The program helps people with severe and multiple non-vocational barriers participate in economic-focussed activities such as employment or vocational education.

The Park plays a major role in the QC Move consortium through its Nyunda Park Cooperative, which provides remunerated vocational enterprise opportunities for the centre's own clients.

The cooperative joined

forces with the Mental Health Association (Queensland) Inc, Drug Arm and Work Solutions under the auspices of QC MOVE to provide a range of services including advocacy, counselling, rehabilitation, drug and alcohol services, pre-employment training, skills identification, work trials, and direct on-the-job support.

The Park - Centre for Mental Health's Executive Director, Kevin Fjeldsoe, said the consortium was a significant step in community and private agencies working together to enhance the lives of people 'sidelined' from the community.

"To people who face the hardships associated with these barriers, the assistance of a network of public and private providers helps remove serious obstacles from their path to recovery," he said.

"QC Move is an intelligent and integrated approach to assess

individual's needs, and plan and deliver strategies that are outcome-focussed.

"These strategies help to reduce the emotional distress and social isolation of individuals and their families."

QC Move's current total case load is more than 260 people across metropolitan South-East Queensland, making it the biggest service provider of its kind in Queensland.

The program has the potential to receive up to \$750,000 over a two-year period.

The Park's Rehabilitation Services Coordinator, Scott McMullen, said initiatives like the QC Move consortium and Nyunda Park cooperative were critical components of the long-term vision to involve disadvantaged people in the social life of the community and to 'open the doors' to vocational options.

Theatre attendants upgrade skills

Ipswich Hospital operating theatre attendants are sharpening up their skills following their recent graduation as qualified theatre technicians after 12 months study.

Six theatre attendants undertook the hospital-funded external course to gain formal qualifications and enhance their existing knowledge of theatre procedure and technique.

Ipswich Hospital's Nursing Director (Surgical) Rosie Laidlaw said the investment in funding and time had more than paid off, by enhancing the attendants' competencies and increasing their knowledge base.

"Four years ago, the hospital

started a project to provide funding for such external studies and now the last staff member to take the training has passed, so it's quite a milestone," she said.

Nurse Practice Coordinator of Operating Theatres, Elizabeth McNalty, said the outreach studies were a 'confidence booster' for the graduates, who had been largely trained 'on the job' and had not previously undertaken any formal studies.

"Gaining the certificate as a theatre technician has helped reaffirm the graduates in the work they already do, as well as adding to their knowledge base," she said.

The course has so inspired technician Leonie Wichton – the

only female in what has traditionally been a male-dominated role – that she has set new study and career goals to become a registered nurse.

"Given the state-wide shortage of nurses, it is encouraging to see people are still dedicated to such a rewarding career," she said.

Leonie said funding of such training was part of the hospital's commitment to ongoing education and training that help develop clinicians' knowledge and skills.

She said improving staff skills was a fundamental part of improving the delivery of local health services throughout the community.

Lyn saw 'an era of evolution'

Little did 16-year-old pharmacy apprentice, Lyn Scott, know when starting her career in Ipswich Hospital over 45 years ago, that she would be witness to an era of significant evolution in Queensland Health's services.

Lyn finally put away the old 'mortar and pestle' to retire on 20 December from her work as Director of Pharmacy, Ipswich Hospital.

"We moved to Ipswich when I was 16 and I started here [at the hospital pharmacy] in 1958," she said.

"I also spent time at community service downtown and then polished off my qualifications at the technical college in Brisbane.

"By the time I was 21, I was a qualified pharmacist and working back in the West Moreton District."

Lyn returned to the hospital in 1971 and has been the powerhouse in pharmacy for the past 31 years.

Lyn recalls some impres-

sions of the hospital in what she calls the 'days of matrons, white gloves and veils'. It was the days when the famous David Trumpy was medical superintendent.

"Looking back, I realise there was just about nothing, only two pharmacists and a wardman," she said.

"And before the wardies were full-time, my colleague and I would often have to go down to Union St Station to pick up the big shipments of drugs, opening all the parcels at night."

Lyn has been witness to significant advances in drug manufacturing and treatments.

"In the old days, we pharmacists would often make many of the medications and ointments ourselves from 'recipes' or formulae," she said.

"The image of a pharmacist was someone mixing a big batch of medication up in a pot, one part science and one part

artist.

"Now of course there are greater advances in testing and quality control."

Far from causing the decline of pharmacists, Lyn considers these advances to have been pivotal to the role of pharmacists in hospital settings.

"Now our role is also very much focused on information, not just medication," she said.

"I get out and about and meet patients to tell them about their medicines.

"It de-mystifies things and people feel more empowered to keep on with their treatment after they leave hospital. They get to take health into their own hands."

Lyn was also instrumental in developing and piloting a pharmacy dispensing system that is now in use in 29 facilities throughout Queensland.

"I have really seen the evolution from the typewriter age to the computer age; it's been a quantum leap."



Peter Kajewski (second from left) accepting the ACHS award, pictured with Warren Green and John Blayney (right of picture), all from Supply Services (Newmarket).

Hard work rewarded

Royal Brisbane Hospital's Supply Services won the service delivery section at the Australian Council on Healthcare Services (ACHS) Quality Improvement Awards.

The Materials Manager, Peter Rushbrook, said Supply Services won the award against 23 other submissions received from around Australia.

The prize included accommodation and travel costs to Sydney for staff representatives from Supply Services to attend the award presentation night at the ACHS annual dinner.

Peter said the award was recognition of hard work over a number of years.

"Staff from within Supply Services have adopted a continuous improvement approach to delivery of services to their customers," he said.

"The department has used feedback from customers to drive the development and implementation of cost effective and efficient supply services."

Peter said supply focused on

developing those activities that add value to the supply function.

He said activity that did not add value was overhauled, processes streamlined and productivity within the department improved.

He said the department's commitment to quality improvement was reflected in its key performance indicators.

Performance indicators met, and in some cases exceeded, industry benchmarks."

"This is no more clearly reflected than in the upgrading of Supply's ISO certification to the new ISO9001:2000 standards," Peter said.

"Supply Services is keen to share its successes with others, and would welcome visits and discussions with other district supply departments to exchange ideas.

"Supply Services is not resting on its laurels and there are still many opportunities to improve service delivery to our customers."

Historic hospital enters new era

The renovated historic Mossman Hospital has been given a new lease of life after 72 years service to the community with the opening of the Douglas Shire Multi Purpose Health Service.

The service, officially opened by Health Minister, Wendy Edmond, and the Member for Cook, Steve Bredhauer, integrates a range of key health services from acute care to high level residential care for the aged, as well as primary and community care services.

Jointly funded by the State and Commonwealth Governments, the service is seen as an ideal way of dealing with the changing health care needs and health care services in the community.

Ms Edmond said the service provided the opportunity to refocus on how best to deliver primary health care services in the area.

She said the Multi Purpose Health Service was driven by the need to establish a high care residential aged care service within the shire.

"The best way to do that was by pooling State and Federal funding to provide the equivalent of 15 high level care places," she said.

"This enables the Service to provide appropriate levels of care for an increased number of clients either in the hospital or at home.

"The Multi Purpose Health Service now brings together all of the hospital services we have come to expect as well as community health and aged care services."

The service has an eight-

bed aged care facility as well as enhanced admission, emergency and outpatients sections.

It includes relocated community care services which provide health promotion and protection, early identification and intervention programs such as immunisation, family health, Indigenous health liaison and outreach.

The service was a four year project costing more than \$750,000, of which the Federal Government provided \$100,000 for capital works, and was the result of community initiative and drive.

The Federal Government will provide \$1.7 million over four years and the State Government \$740,000 over three years to run the service.

Barcoo Living launched

A major milestone was reached for the Blackall community in December with the start of work on Barcoo Living, the new multipurpose service in Blackall.

Barcoo Living evolved through extensive cooperation between the community, the Churches of Christ, the Commonwealth Government and Queensland Health.

Announcing the start of the service, Health Minister, Wendy Edmond, said the Blackall community had worked long and hard to develop the service.

"Barcoo Living is very much a community-driven initiative and Queensland Health is pleased to be a partner and supporting the new service," she said.

Under the joint Commonwealth/State MPS Program, Queensland Health operated

multipurpose health services in 12 small rural communities.

Barcoo Living is the first time that a non-government organisation – the Churches of Christ Care – has been funded to administer a multipurpose service in Queensland.

Queensland Health will allocate about \$440,000 to Barcoo Living from the Home and Community Care Program over the next three years.

Funding from Queensland Health and the Commonwealth Department of Health and Ageing will be pooled to improve the community's access to health and aged care services and respond to community needs in a more flexible and coordinated way.

Churches of Christ Care will administer the new service, which will be integrated with the Barcoo Living Retirement Village.

Support program goes interstate

The Pre Hospital Trauma Life Support (PHTLS) Program has been updated and is to be introduced from Queensland to other States and territories.

The program was introduced by Queensland Health in 1997 with the endorsement of the Royal Australasian College of Surgeons, as part of its commitment to improving the health of people living in rural and remote Queensland.

The course is an intensive multidisciplinary continuing education program for rural and remote health staff involved in front line pre-hospital major accident care.

Accident response teams are trained in the life saving techniques they use from the time they arrive at the scene of an accident to arrival at the point of definitive care.

The update of the international course was released to a group of Queensland-based

PHTLS instructors in November, via an interactive video-conference from Nashville, America.

The fifth edition of the course will be delivered across Queensland from this month.

One of the most significant new features of the fifth edition text is the inclusion of a CD-Rom which demonstrates skill discussed in the text and a multiple choice examination which will help prepare patients for the course.

The PHTLS course is currently delivered in 29 countries.

Queensland has a total of 138 advanced provider courses and has seen 2241 providers trained.

While the majority of these providers have been health professionals in Queensland and other States, doctors and nurses from hospital in Papua New Guinea, New Zealand and Brunei have taken part.

Founding Medical Director of the PHTLS Program in Queens-

land/Australia, Dr Nikki Blackwell has resigned and has been succeeded by Dr Mark Elcock.

Dr Blackwell, who benefited from the program when she suffered serious spinal injuries after she fell from a horse in October 2000, was honoured recently for her significant contribution to development of the program.

She was awarded the Dr Scott B Frame Service Award by the executive of PHTLS International during the National Association of Emergency Medical Technician conference in Nashville.

Dr Blackwell's successor, Dr Elcock, is employed by Queensland Health as an emergency physician in the emergency department at Townsville Hospital and is Principal Zonal Clinical Coordinator, Northern Zone.

He is the Regional Medical Officer for the Queensland Ambulance Service in Townsville.



District managers of the Prince Charles Hospital, Royal Brisbane and Women's Hospitals; and the Royal Children's Hospital with representatives from the Central Zone, Aboriginal Islander Community Health Service and ATSIC showing the signed partnership agreement.

Partnership agreement to boost health services

Representatives from Aboriginal and Torres Straight Islanders agencies have signed a partnership agreement with district managers from three central zone districts to better plan health services.

District managers from the Prince Charles Hospital, Royal Brisbane, Royal Women's and Royal Children's hospitals signed the partnership agreement with the Central Zone Aboriginal Islander Community Health Service and the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission (ATSIC).

The agreement will form the basis for ongoing cooperation for the planning, development and delivery of appropriate and effective health services for Aboriginal and Torres Straight Islanders in the North Brisbane region.

District Manager of the Prince Charles Hospital, Deb Podbury, said it was an important agreement.

"The districts recognise their responsibilities in partnering and supporting Aboriginal and Torres Straight

Islander health services, and the regional council in the planning for and the provision of appropriate health services across south-east Queensland," she said.

ATSIC Regional Counsellor Graeme Dillon said he was heartened by changing attitudes towards Indigenous health.

"It's refreshing that the government says we should get into a partnership," he said.

"Indigenous health is a most urgent and pressing issue, with life expectancy rates of non-Indigenous and Indigenous Australians differing 20 years.

"There is a clear commitment by all signatories in this partnership to work together to develop a new and more effective health care delivery system for indigenous people of this region.

"We are all the same in God's eyes. This is not just another piece of paper, but will commit organisations to improved delivery of health services and to achieve positive change."

Suicide prevention course a 'first'

Queensland Health staff member, Jean-Claude Boulenaz, has just completed the first year of the Griffith University's new Master of Suicidology program.

A world first, the practical "hands on" course has been developed through the Australian Institute of Suicide Research and Prevention at the university's Mt Gravatt Campus.

The two-year program has been designed for anyone who has a working or research interest in the specialist area of suicide prevention.

Studied over five weekends each year, the Master of Suicidology program has been tailor-made for students wishing to obtain both clinical and re-

search-based skills and knowledge at an advanced level.

It does not require applicants to hold undergraduate qualifications, although this is preferable.

Jean-Claude is involved in the Queensland Government Suicide Strategy for both the Sunshine Coast and Coooloolo Suicide Prevention Networks.

He has been awarded the Graduate Certificate in Suicide Prevention Studies, the first year's qualifications in the new Master of Suicidology.

Jean-Claude said he has never considered postgraduate studies as he did not have previous tertiary qualifications.

"I do not have an undergraduate degree, but because of my

invaluable work experience I have been accepted to do my Masters," he said.

Jean-Claude said the course work was extremely beneficial and relevant to suicidology.

He said he had been working in the area of suicide prevention in South-East Queensland for more than 20 years and was looking forward to his future studies.

He said the material was enriching and thought provoking and it was enjoyable to do the course.

For more information on the course contact Bridget Clark, phone 3875 3377 or the university's postgraduate education centre at psscmsg@griffith.edu.au

Training for Zoe's Place volunteers

A training course for family support volunteers is being held by Zoe's Place at Mt Ommaney, Brisbane, on 22 February.

Zoe's Place volunteers provide practical assistance to parents who have a child or children with life limiting illnesses.

Volunteers receive ongoing training and support to enable them to support the family they are linked with, for as long as needed.

Volunteers need to have a special love of children, have a non-judgemental approach and able to show respect for other people's beliefs and values.

They are asked to make a commitment to volunteer for four hours a week for 12 months.

Contact: Zoe's Place Family Support Service, phone, 3376 6655; fax 3376 6466.

Breast screen service visits

Queensland Health, through the BreastScreen Queensland Program, provides dedicated and accredited breast cancer screening services through a statewide network of screening and assessment services.

Scheduled services are:

Mobile Services

Toowoomba: until 28 February, Kingaroy; 17-28 March, Millmerran; April-mid May, Goondiwindi.

Townsville: 5-7 February, Correctional Centre; 10-14 February, Upper Ross; 17-21 February, Kirwan Community Health Centre; 24 February-7 March, North Ward; 10-14 March, Cambridge St; 17 March-16 May, Ingham; 2-18 June, Cloncurry; 20 June-26 September, Mt Isa; 29 September-3 October, Julia Creek; 6-10 October, Richmond; 13-24 October, Hughenden; 27-29 October, Pentland; 31 October- January, 2004, Charters Towers.

Rockhampton: until 28 February, Gladstone.

North Brisbane: until 7 Feb-

ruary, Riverton Centre, Clayfield; 11 February-7 March, Hamilton.

Relocatable Services

Gold Coast: until 13 February, Nerang; 17 February-3 April, Palm Beach.

Bundaberg: 3-20 February, Gayndah; 25 February-7 March, Mundubbera; 10-14 March; Eidsvold.

Cairns: until 24 April, Atherton.

Toowoomba: until May, Dalby.

Statewide Service

3-4 February, Nambour General Hospital; 10-11 February, Hibiscus Retirement Village, Buderim (Mountain Creek); 17-21 February, University, Sippy Downs Drive; 24 February-4 April, Milwell Rd Community Centre, Maroochydore.

Women can arrange a free breast screen by calling 13 20 50, for the cost of a local call, and will be connected to their nearest BreastScreen Queensland Service. Individual and group bookings are also available.

Contact: Women's Cancer Screening Services on 323 41596.

Plan to lower stroke toll

A wide-ranging health outcomes plan to reduce the incidence of stroke, one of the leading causes of death in Australia, has been launched by Queensland Health.

The department has provided \$500,000 from the National Health Development Fund for the Director of Stroke Services at Royal Brisbane Hospital, Dr Stephen Read, to develop integrated stroke services across the Central Zone as a model for the two other zones by the end of this year.

Dr Read's project will involve clinical upskilling and support for local health care providers and is expected to give clear direction for practical and cost efficient approaches to networked stroke services.

Each year, about 40,000 Australians have a stroke and this is

expected to rise to 70,000 by 2016.

About 70 per cent of the annual figures at present are first-ever strokes, leading to long-term disability for many and placing great demands on family members and carers.

The Health Outcomes Plan for Cardiovascular Health: Stroke 2002-2007 complements a similar plan for coronary heart disease released in June 2000.

The stroke plan includes a comprehensive discussion of evidence based strategies to reduce the incidence and impact of stroke and outcome indicators to monitor its implementation.

The stroke plan is on the Internet at www.health.qld.gov.au/hop/default.htm and on QHEPS, <http://qheps.health.qld.gov.au/hop/home.htm>

Info matters

Record nursing scholarships granted

Queensland Health has granted a record number of scholarships for 2003 under the Nursing Scholarship Program.

More than \$90,000 has been approved to grant scholarships to 47 nurses undertaking a variety of studies.

Areas of study include rural and remote nursing, critical care nursing, community child and family health, midwifery, nephrology and infection control.

Principal Nursing Adviser, Sue Norrie, said the Nursing Scholarship Scheme, established in 1996, provides annual scholarships and is open to all registered and enrolled nurses employed by Queensland Health.

"The scholarships aim to encourage professional development in nursing by providing monetary assistance to nurses undertaking post-graduate or post-registration nursing studies," she said

Successful applicants come from a wide variety of facilities and locations across the State.

ILC schedule

The Independent Living Centre has announced its mobile outreach visiting schedule for the year.

The centre provides information and advice about equipment and building modifications for people living and working with disabilities, age related difficulties and their carers.

Scheduled visits, subject to change, are:

March: South West Queensland and Darling Downs.

April: Torres Strait Islands and North Peninsula area.

May: Gulf of Carpentaria, Western Queensland, Central West Queensland and South West Queensland.



Two scholarship holders: Krista McCalman (Gold Coast Hospital) and Kim Kaese (Ipswich Hospital)



June: South West Queensland and Darling Downs.

July: Cape York (south) and North Queensland (Cairns base).

August: Cape York (north) and North Queensland (Townsville base).

September: Mackay.

October: Central Queensland.

November: Wide Bay.

The centre's video conference program will continue this year, with the first video conference scheduled for late March.

Contact: mail@ilcql.org.au or phone 3397 1224.

Self-esteem

The Resourceful Adolescent Program is holding training days at Griffith University on 3-4 March, consisting of the RAP-A program for adolescents and RAP-P for parents.

RAP-A integrates both cognitive behaviour and interpersonal approaches within the context of adolescent development and aims to promote resilience in adolescents.

The RAP-P program for parents has been designed as a positive, resilience building program to promote parent self-esteem and emotional well-being.

The program aim to prevent problems from occurring, by focusing on and developing each individual's strengths.

Cost is \$120 for one day or \$225 for both days. Contact: the RAP office, phone 3875 3391.

Key speakers

Ben Davidson, from the United Kingdom, and Margaret McAllister, Griffith University, are the keynote speakers at the fifth annual tropical seminar to be held in Townsville on 17-19 May.

The seminar is organised by the North Queensland Sub Branch of the Australian and New Zealand College of Mental Health Nurses.

Contact: Michael Blair, phone: 4050 8346; fax: 4050 6702.

Top experts

Three international experts will be keynote speakers at the annual scientific meeting held by the Australian Society of Otolaryngology Health and Neck Surgery at the Cairns Convention Centre on 11-15 May.

The speakers are Derals Brackman, House Ear Clinic, Los Angeles, USA (ontology and neuro-otology); Daniel F Brasnu, Hospital European George Pompidou, Paris, France (laryngology/head and neck); and Ronald Eavey, Massachusetts, USA, Eye and Ear Infirmary (paediatric/ENT). Contact: website: <http://icet.im.com.au>

Joint talks

The fourth joint conference of the Infection Control Practitioners Association of Queensland and the Queensland Wound Care Association will be held at the Surfers Paradise Marriott Resort on 9-11 October.

Contact: WIC 2003, c/- Intermedia Convention and Event Management, PO Box 1280, Milton 4064; e-mail: wic03@im.com.au fax: 3858 5510; phone 3858 5538.

What's on...

Videoconference on health rights

Women's Health Queensland Wide is holding two free videoconference programs this month.

Jenny Chaves will outline the Health Rights Commission's role in improving health care services and promoting health rights and responsibilities in Queensland.

Her program, from 10.30am to 12.00 on 7 February, will be viewed at sites in Alpha, Atherton, Chinchilla, Clermont, Innisfail, Kingaroy, Moranbah, Nambour, Tambo and Winton.

Talks on improvement to emergency services' 000 service and responding to emergency calls when the caller cannot speak, will be held at 1-2.30pm on 18 February at Gin Gin, Innisfail, Kingaroy, Nambour, Quilpie, Richmond, Tambo and Winton.

Phone: WHQW on 383938 9962 or 1800 017 676 or visit the website at www.womhealth.org.au

Deadline for Churchill Fellowships

Applications close on 28 February for this year's Churchill Fellowships awarded by the Winston Churchill Memorial Trust.

Each year about 100 fellowships are awarded to Australians at an average cost of \$20,000 each.

The fellowships provide financial support to enable ordinary Australians to undertake a period of overseas study or an investigative project that cannot be done in Australia.

Contact: the national office, phone 1800 777 231 (freecall) or (02) 6247 8333, e-mail: churchilltrust@bigpond.com.

Step in right direction for diabetes

Diabetes, a step in the right direction, is the theme of the annual health professional symposium to be held at the Hilton Hotel, Brisbane, on 17-18 March.

The symposium will explore the key issues faced by health professionals when working with clients with diabetes, as well as latest research findings.

Presentations will cover diabetes and foot health, Indigenous health, men's health, diabetes and eye health, and new insulins.

Contact: Diabetes Australia - Queensland, phone: 3239 5616; fax: 3846 4642.

Program to develop leadership

The fifth annual Leadership for Clinicians program, organised by the Health Leaders Network is to be held in Brisbane on 24-27 March.

The program is designed to develop the leadership and management skills of senior clinicians from the medical, nursing and allied professions.

Run over four intensive days, the program uses a mix of presentations, small group discussions and case studies to explore the concept of leadership in its broadest context.

Contact: Sue Thompson, phone (02) 8248 8612 or e-mail: thomsons@hln.com.au

Diary...

February

2 World Wetlands Day
United Nations Organisation
Phone: (02) 9262 5111

14 International Congenital Heart Disease Awareness Day
The Prince Charles Hospital Foundation
Phone: 3350 8518

15-23 Coins for Kidney Cure
Australian Kidney Foundation
Phone: 3832 2520

17-23 Australian Organ Donor Awareness Week
Queenslanders Donate
Phone: 3240 2350

18-3 Statewide Doorknock Appeal
Guide Dogs Queensland
Phone: 3264 0226

28-2 Women's Health Conference
Women's Health Education & Research Society Inc.
Phone: 3840 8795

In retrospect...

A review of some articles from previous Health Matters

July Boeing flies with our strategic planning strategies
Order of Australia medal for Townsville doctor
Record \$4.33b allocation for State health budget

August Donor gives man 'miracle of sight'
Major changes in senior executive
Cairns \$130 million rebuilding opens

September Old mate helps Andy regain health
\$9m telecommunication boost for rural health
Design ushers in new era for aged care

October Research partnership to fight cancer
Excellence Award winners announced
Townsville Hospital gains engineering award

November Biloela vaccination move a success
Promoting healthier lifestyles
Leadership scheme's first graduates

December Emergency disaster skills put to test
Scholarship scheme praised by nurses
Bowel cancer community study in Mackay