

# Health matters

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Helping people  
to better  
health and  
well-being

## New guide on privacy

Guidelines for Queensland Health's privacy scheme – Information Standard 42A (IS42A) – were released last month at the Privacy Contact Officers Training Day.

The guidelines provide a more detailed explanation of the National Privacy Principles (NPP) in IS42A and how these requirements will be put into operation within Queensland Health.

Key areas covered in the guidelines include:

- collection of personal information – when and how personal information can be collected and our responsibilities to inform individuals when we collect information about them
- use and disclosure of personal information – the circumstances in which personal information (eg. about patients or staff) can be used within Queensland Health or disclosed to someone outside Queensland Health
- guidance on ensuring that information collected, used or disclosed by Queensland Health is accurate, complete and up to date
- security of information held by Queensland Health and the policies that guide how information is protected against misuse, loss and unauthorised access, modification and disclosure
- the circumstances in which Commonwealth identifiers (such as Medicare number and Health Care Card Number) can be used

The guidelines identify key legislative provisions that override the NPP.

The guidelines, which apply to all Queensland Health staff (permanent, temporary or casual) and contract employees, are available at:

<http://qheps.health.qld.gov.au/privacy/resources.htm>



Pictured with patient, Carmela Noyes and baby Kyna, are, from left, Midwives Jenny Vass, Mary Curtis, Debbie Trehearn, and Eva VanHonste.

## Midwives celebrate caring success

The midwives at Cairns Base Hospital's Maternity Unit have celebrated five years since the successful introduction of 'team midwifery'.

The concept behind team midwifery provides for continuity of care throughout a woman's pregnancy – from antenatal care through to labour and postnatal care.

Ideally, when an expectant mother goes into labour, she will be cared for by a familiar midwife.

Nursing Director of Women's Health, Josie Duffy, said the team concept was popular with women and gave them added confidence during labour.

"We have also found that women's levels of satisfaction with

their care is much higher by offering continuity of care," she said.

"Women who are expected to have an uncomplicated pregnancy are offered the option of team midwifery care at their initial booking interview."

If women choose this option, they then nominate a day of the week that suits them to attend antenatal care and in this way are allocated to a team – 'Silky Oak' (Monday), 'Pandanus' (Tuesday), 'Lilly Pilly' (Wednesday) or 'Waratah' (Thursday).

Throughout their pregnancy, women attend the appropriate antenatal clinic day and see the midwives of that particular team.

Each of the four teams comprise five to seven midwives. With

complexities of rostering and unpredictable times that women will go into labour, the maternity unit has pleasingly and consistently been able to ensure 60-70 per cent of women are attended to during labour by one of their team midwives.

The concept for team midwifery care was first investigated in 1996 during the planning of the hospital's redevelopment, which offered an opportunity to assess hospital practice, including midwifery care.

Following a pilot of the concept, team midwifery was officially introduced with the Pandanus Team in February 1998. Midwife Jo Taylor has been team leader since the inception of team midwifery.

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## Liver surgeon pioneer honoured

After practicing medicine for more than 30 years, Princess Alexandra Hospital's Professor Russell Strong was officially recognised last month for his dedication, service, and pioneering techniques in liver transplantation.

Health Minister Wendy Edmond formally announced the naming of the hospital's auditorium, the "Russell Strong Auditorium" during a day-long event acknowledging the professor's contributions to surgery, both clinically and academically.

"Professor Russell Strong has earned a national and international reputation in his field and has greatly enhanced Queensland's reputation as a leader and pioneer in surgical practice," she said.

The 1986 Queenslanders of the Year, Professor Strong was responsible for the first Australian liver transplant, performed at the Princess Alexandra Hospital in 1985, and was instrumental in establishing the internationally recognised Queensland Liver Transplant Service at the hospital.

Professor Strong led his surgical team in refining the technique of reducing adult livers for transplantation into children.

Brisbane was the first centre to widely apply this technique, saving the lives of children who would have otherwise died while waiting for an appropriately sized donor liver.

The technique is known as the Brisbane Technique and is used throughout the world today.

In 1989, the Brisbane Technique was further expanded to include the use of part of a living donor's liver, resulting in the world's first successful live-related



Dr Hidetoshi Matsunami, from Japan, a Fellow in Liver Transplant, with Professor Strong, holding a special portrait.

liver transplant between a mother and her child by Professor Strong and his team.

The resultant technique has been applied in countries where the donation rate is extremely low and has saved the lives of thousands of people, including hundreds of Queenslanders.

Ms Edmond said that as a result of these and other surgical

developments and the excellent outcomes Professor Strong and his team have achieved, The Queensland Liver Transplant Service has set the benchmark for liver transplantation services throughout the world.

"This service is an outstanding example of the quality health care services provided by Queensland Health," she said.

## Workshop boosts teamwork

Queensland Health's Collaborative for Healthcare Improvement is hosting the workshop 'Developing teams working for clinical effectiveness' to be addressed by Dr Carol Borrill in Brisbane on Tuesday, 26 August.

The National Institute for Clinical Studies is sponsoring Dr Borrill's attendance with its inaugural Evidence to Excellence in Emergency Care conference to be

held in Sydney on 28-29 August 2003.

Dr Borrill is the Executive Director for the Aston Centre for Health Service Organisation Research, and a senior lecturer in work and organisational psychology, based at the Aston University in Birmingham, United Kingdom.

Any team interested in participating, should contact Kate Quigley on 3636 9083 or [kate\\_quigley@health.qld.gov.au](mailto:kate_quigley@health.qld.gov.au)

Preparing for the 2003-4 Budget has been a hectic time. As many have heard me say, we try to get \$1.50 worth of health services for every dollar we receive from Treasury.

One of the ways we can achieve the best value for every health dollar is make our health services safer and more effective.

Many Queensland Health staff have participated in the Quality Improvement and Enhancement Program. Funding for the program will conclude at the end of June with the expiry of the Australian Health Care Agreement 1998 - 2003.

In four remarkable years, Queensland has established a sound record of achievement. In health care industries and communities, quality is always about 'safety and patients first'.

I am a strong supporter of quality improvement projects because they seek to reduce the occurrence of adverse events in



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

the health care setting: a very important objective for both the patient and the health care system.

From earlier research, it has been estimated that the cost to Queensland Health of preventable adverse events is about \$95.5 million a year.

Who wouldn't argue that this amount would be much better spent on additional patient services.

Even a five per cent reduction in preventable adverse events would generate a saving of around \$5 million a year for Queensland Health, as well as reducing suffering and loss of income experi-

enced by patients and their carers.

The main legacy of the Quality Improvement and Enhancement Program is in establishing and following procedures that reduce risks for both patients and staff.

Examples are The Primary Clinical Care Manual and The Handbook for Collection, Storage and Transport of Pathology Specimens in Rural and Remote Queensland, which are now "bibles" for rural and remote nurses, health workers and doctors.

It's great that Queensland has set the national agenda in several key areas which supports our Smart State reputation.

More importantly, we know the projects are going to keep on working for the benefit of Queensland patients because of the skills and dedication of the people behind the program.

May I take this opportunity to thank all the staff members who have contributed to the program.

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



Dr Robert Stable  
Director-General

I have been impressed with the generally positive staff response to the new Queensland Health process that will ensure that our health plans and strategies are implemented in our daily operations.

It is clear that the majority of staff do think carefully about the services they provide to the community. Most realise that services must be tailored to identified health needs and we do not have unlimited resources to do whatever we want.

While we rightly should be proud of the high quality health services we provide, we must remember that the public - our patients - expect us to focus our efforts on their health needs.

Public health service providers are always subject to public scrutiny and never more so than at this time of year, when Commonwealth and State Governments announce their health Budgets for the next 12 months.

We should realise that over 60 percent of the funds we receive from the State Government go towards attracting, retaining and developing a dynamic, professional health care workforce.

That fact alone imposes an obligation on all of us to make sure the public gets value for the investment they have made in our future.

As discussed during a recent staff satellite broadcast, the Integrating Strategy and Performance Process (ISAP) will reposition Queensland Health to meet the challenges of the future, identified in the Health 2020 Directions Statement published earlier this year.

The evidence proves our future strategies need to put a stronger emphasis on illness prevention and primary care, to develop new models of care and to think very carefully about what we do with the resources we have been given.

By measuring our actual performance against what we set out to achieve in important areas like these, ISAP will help us to maintain a sustainable health service which is better organised to meet emerging and future community demands.

Please keep in touch with ISAP developments through your team leaders or direct from the intranet site at <http://qhps.health.qld.gov.au/odg/ISAP/home.htm>.

Dr Robert Stable  
Director-General

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# Helen wears her heart on her arm

**H**elen Allsop took a well-earned weekend away after five months of hard work and the successful launch of the Early Intervention for Safe and Healthy Families Initiative (EISHFI) in the Bayside District Health Service.

Helen, project officer with EISHFI, returned with a tattoo.

Not so extraordinary maybe except the tattoo is in the shape of a heart and says "EISHFI Rocks". Helen is very quick to

point out that it is a temporary one.

"When we first heard about EISHFI, we believed it would be an initiative that would help our local community," Helen said.

She believed the short, but intense, implementation time was due to the enthusiasm and support of her colleagues.

"They immediately saw the benefits that it would give to families at risk and they were keen to see it start as soon as possible," she said.

Bayside District is the first expanded child health site to launch the initiative.

Manager Bayside Family Health and Rehabilitation Services Karen Hayes said the tremendous work of the team had positioned Bayside very well to commence the EISHFI program.

"It's a terrific addition to the range of child health services we can offer our local families," Karen said.

As for Helen and her tattoo – she hopes it wears off quickly.



Helen Allsop and her "EISHFI Rocks" tattoo!

# Evidence Based learning on-line

**A**n on-line Evidence Based Practice learning program for clinicians was launched last month by Director-General, Dr Robert Stable.

The program was developed as part of the Quality Improvement and Enhancement Program's Clinician Development Program Area.

Program Area Manager Margaret Marshall said Queensland Health clinicians could access the Evidence Based Practice on-line learning program at any time, day or night, from work or from home.

"The program was designed to be extremely user friendly," she said.

"It will suit both the clinician who has had no previous

exposure to the topics of Evidence Based Practice, as well as the more experienced person who wishes to explore critical appraisal in some depth or the process of developing clinical guidelines."

Margaret said the learning program included 15 different modules that learners could explore at their own pace and in a sequence to suit individual learning objectives.

She said participants could learn by doing, so they improve their skills in applying current evidence to clinical decisions.

"A person logging into the program immediately joins a learning group, working anywhere within the State, which cre-

ates an enjoyable small group learning experience," Margaret said.

"They can discuss and share comments or issues that arise as they progress on their learning journey.

"In each module, the learner meets a friendly facilitator who provides comment and support on a regular basis, and sources answers to questions raised by participants.

"The facilitators are all Queensland Health staff who are evidence based practice enthusiasts and have been trained to assist learners."

Queensland Health staff can access this program by logging into [www.health.qld.gov.au/cdp](http://www.health.qld.gov.au/cdp) using the password "evidence".

# Doctors funding research

**Q**ueensland Health's Visiting Medical Officers have donated \$40,000 to the Queensland Institute of Medical Research's Good Manufacturing Practice (GMP) laboratory to assist further cancer research.

Scientists at the laboratory are working in specialised cell therapy suites to create cloned immune cells to recognise, attack and kill cancer cells.

Each year since 1998, interest

earned on the VMO's salary sacrifice fund has been donated to a worthy cause.

The institute's assistant director, Professor Andrew Boyd, said the GMP facility offered opportunities for research that was unique in Australia and rare around the world.

"Our research scientists have the potential to revolutionise cancer treatments and treatments for a host of other serious diseases," he said.

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# Mobility scheme offers executives experience

The second round of the Senior Executive Service Mobility Program has begun.

The program provides executives with the opportunity to work for temporary periods in other agencies within the Queensland Public Sector, exposing them to different managerial development, cultural and learning experiences.

In early April, Nick Ryan, Executive Director, Regional Communities, began a six-month placement as General Manager, Strategic Development in the Department of Natural Resources and Mines.

Nick's position at Department of Premier and Cabinet (DPC) will be occupied by Jenny Clark, General Manager, Public Housing & Housing Systems Initiatives in the Department of Housing.

Jenny has been responsible for Public Housing Planning, Policy and Procedures and has also been leading a range of new housing initiatives in Queensland including the implementation of the Affordable Housing Strategy and the Brisbane Housing Company Project.

DPC's participant in the pilot phase of the program last year was Mike Goodman, Director of Ministerial Services.

Mike spent six and a half months at Queensland Health as operations manager for Statewide and Non-Government

Health Services.

Mike believes his mobility program placement was very successful and provided direct benefits to Queensland Health, DPC and himself.

"I've been able to bring back to DPC a greater understanding of issues impacting on line agencies, improved management strategies and a broader knowledge of public sector issues," Mike said.

"Just working in an agency employing over 60,000 people meant I was exposed to many different management strategies.

"I was impressed by the dedication of staff I worked with, their depth of understanding of health issues and strong focus on service delivery."

During his time on the program, Mike saw significant movement in senior management in Queensland Health with both Deputy-Directors General and his line manager changing.

"This was an excellent experience in its own right because I was directly exposed to the process currently underway to refocus Queensland Health's priorities and ensure a more sustainable operating environment for the department," Mike said.

On returning to DPC, Mike has already noticed the benefits of having a fresh set of eyes overseeing his work area and the staff development that occurred under a new manager.



Rebecca Helland (left) and her mother Lyn Fields with a mannequin dressed in an older-style nursing uniform.

## Family connections show how nursing has changed

The face of nursing and midwifery has changed dramatically over the years, and few can testify to the changes as much as Ipswich Hospital staff.

The hospital's nurses and midwives have joined forces to focus on their valuable professions and the changes that have taken place in clinical care over the years.

The strong family connection of health services were echoed last month in nursing mother-and-daughter duo Lyn Fields and Rebecca Helland as part of the International Nurses Day and International Midwives Day.

A nurse since 1967, Lyn has been a witness to the evolution of nursing from the days of 'Matrons and the white veil', to contemporary practices. Her work in the Outpatients Department allows her to 'get to know people from all walks of life'.

"Nursing would have to be one of the most rewarding professions around, though it's hard work," Lyn said. "It's great to see the younger generations are still passionate, energetic and dedicated to nursing."

Lyn's career was the inspiration for daughter Rebecca to follow in her nursing footsteps, albeit working as a clinical nurse in the Intensive Care Unit.

Rebecca also believes that training and continual education is also vital to advancing

the profession, so she will shortly be undertaking a teaching and training position for nurses in the Intensive Care Unit.

Helping profile the dramatic changes in midwifery were husband-and-wife midwives Richard and Karen Hayes.

Richard, who as a male counts himself 'definitely in the minority among midwives', joined the profession close to 10 years ago, and Karen a little later. Both are passionate about promoting and advancing the profession.

"The changes in midwifery over the years has been simply phenomenal," Richard said. "In particular this year we look at the way professional partnerships we form have led to improved health for mothers and newborns."

Acting Executive Director of Nursing, Colleen Glenn, said promoting nursing and midwifery - and providing practical training opportunities such as the Nursing Re-entry Program and transitional programs - is extremely important given the critical nation-wide shortage of nurses at the moment.

"Nurses and midwives play a vital role in the well-being of the community," Colleen said. "We wanted to join forces on one day to acknowledge the hard work and dedication they show every day in caring for and working with their patients and clients."

**The deadline for the July edition of Health Matters is: FRIDAY 6 JUNE**

# Unit boost for dialysis

Patients in Princess Alexandra Hospital's Nephrology Unit who require dialysis will now have access to new and improved training facilities.

The hospital's new \$240,000 Home Haemodialysis Training Unit, was officially opened in April, by the Member for South Brisbane and Minister for Education, Ms Anna Bligh.

Ms Bligh said the building was important for the ongoing development of patient care and would provide the infrastructure for essential support and education for those living with kidney failure who perform haemodialysis in the home.

She said international research showed regular haemodialysis was most effectively achieved in a home setting and was a good way to foster greater patient involvement and allow patients to continue in the workforce.

The new unit would teach patients and their carers how to confidently and safely perform haemodialysis in the comfort and convenience of their own home.

"The unit will provide an improved capacity for patients to receive ongoing technical and medical support as well as being a more flexible and cost effective measure for patients and their carers," she said.

The hospital has a notable track record of home haemodialysis training, having educated and trained the largest number of home-trained patients in Queensland since the unit's establishment in the early 1970s.

Currently, 150 patients are receiving haemodialysis in their homes or in the centre at PA Hospital. Of these, 38 patients are either at home or in training to do home haemodialysis.

Every year, almost 1800 Australians develop renal failure, with the majority of these patients requiring dialysis treatment.

The main causes of kidney failure are nephritis (immune diseases of the kidney), diabetes, and vascular disease.

## Tender success

Maryborough company, Select Medical Equipment, is part of a successful tenderer to supply 60 patient trolleys worth \$400,000 to Queensland hospitals.

The contract has been awarded to Elite Medical Supplies, Queensland agent for Select Medical, following an open tender process that involved equipment trials to ensure the products put up for tender stood up to a range of issues.

The trolleys will be manufactured by Select Medical at their Enterprise Street factory in Maryborough.

## Hospital's new role, name

The \$4.69 million redevelopment of Keperra Hospital, to be renamed the North West Community Health Centre to reflect its new role, will begin in April next year.

All current services will continue to be provided at Keperra until the end of March 2004, a nine month extension on the original commitment to keep services operating until June this year.

For safety reasons it will not be possible to keep any part of the facility operating during construction, which will take about six months.

The new facility will provide

a comprehensive range of services including independent/self care renal haemodialysis, adult community health, women's health, child community health, sexual health, and child and youth mental health.

Health Minister, Wendy Edmond said the North West Community Health Centre would give residents access to a wide range of community health services in the one location.

"The new development will provide a pleasant and client focussed environment with additional services and facilities for clients and staff," she said.

## Future planning for water

A master plan for the urban management of water - recycled water, wastewater, water supply and stormwater - is to be launched next month on the Gold Coast.

Queensland Health's South Coast Public Health Unit is one of the organisations involved in the planning processes for the Gold Coast City Council's Water Futures Project at Pimpama Coomera.

The focus of the plan will be on efficient use and reuse of water and reduction of the amount of water needed by the

community without affecting quality of life.

A broad cross-section of the community has been involved in planning stages of the project, which could become the blueprint for new urban areas developed in Australia.

Pimpama Coomera is set to be the next growth area on the Gold Coast and the plan offers the opportunity to implement new systems on a large scale in greenfield development areas for an estimated population of 150,000 people.

# Special nursing training initiated

Nurses from 12 Queensland Health hospitals are part of the first phase of a program to improve standards of care for children, young people and their families in hospitals and community services.

The program was devised to develop a critical mass of specialty trained nurses providing the best care possible to these clients.

Mark Bensink, Program Coordinator of the Queensland Health Transition to Paediatric and Child Health Nursing Education Program, said the program was introduced in February 2003.

"The program is designed to support nurses in developing the clinical competence and confidence required in these challenging environments," he said.

"It is based on the contemporary health problems faced by the Australian child and family and the exploration of nursing interventions that enhance adaptation and health.

Developed by the Royal Children's Hospital Health Service District, the program provides a flexible mechanism to meet the needs, both of nurses new to the

area of paediatrics and child health, and to support more experienced nurses in developing their practice."

Mark said participants were given the option to complete the program for articulation with one unit of credit towards a Graduate Certificate in Paediatric, Child and Youth Health Nursing.

He said that in this way the program aimed to support the standard of care provided, professional development opportunities and professionalism of nurses across Queensland.

Nurses from 12 Queensland Health hospitals are part of the first phase of the program's implementation with other hospitals and community services to be part of future program provision.

Successful implementation was focused on mutual support and recognition of the individual circumstances of the facilities involved.

"We have had to acknowledge that caring for children, young people and their families is a challenging and intensive role for nurses," Mark said.

"This requires very personal

support to ensure nurses develop competence and confidence in this type of work.

Nurses are faced with many situations that not only challenge them professionally but also personally. This program aims to meet these challenges openly and with sensitivity for all involved."

Mark said that while the program was developed by the Royal Children's Hospital Health Service District its ongoing relevance and effectiveness would be reliant on the collective feedback, discussion and improvement from all involved in its implementation and use.

"We now have a core group of committed and enthusiastic nursing professionals across Queensland who will promote the standards and development of paediatric and child health nursing with this program as its foundation," he said.

"In this way the program will develop and evolve as nurses and the nursing profession develops and evolves to ensure we provide the best in health services for children, young people and their families."



## One-stop health centre

A range of 23 health professionals from a range of health disciplines are available under one roof in the newly opened Helensvale Community Health Centre.

The centre is staffed by community health and child health nurses, social workers, physiotherapists, occupational therapists, a dietitian, home care, speech pathologists, psycholo-

gists, and mental health workers.

An extra funding of \$281,000 has been allocated to the Gold Coast Health District towards operation of the new centre.

Pictured at the Helensvale Baby Clinic are Clinical Nurse Gwen Bode with, left, Nikki and Ethan O'Riley; and Michelle and Coda Cox.

## Seminars on nutrition to aid elderly patients

More than 160 nurses and food services staff from nursing homes, retirement villages and hostels around the Darling Downs have taken part in a seminar to help staff members address malnutrition and dehydration in the elderly.

Toowoomba Hospital Nutrition and Food Services Acting Director, Karen Abbey, said the response from Darling Downs aged care facilities had been very encouraging and she hoped that this could be repeated around the State.

"Darling Downs public and private nursing homes and other aged care facilities are all doing their best to ensure residents are nourished and hydrated, she said.

"However, it can be difficult to maintain nourishment because of a number of factors.

"These include medications affecting nutrition, inability to chew, poor fitting dentures, changing tastes as a person ages and decreased absorption of nutrients.

"There are other social changes which can affect eating, especially if a resident has lost a partner or is feeling depressed about their loss of independence.

"With our four seminars held in March and April, we hoped to promote nutrition as an important part of care.

"We found that this was already present in public and private aged care facilities and the screening tools would just progress and refine the work already being conducted."

Karen said Toowoomba Hospital and St Vincent's Hospital

dietitians worked together last year to develop simple screening tools which identify residents at risk of malnourishment or dehydration.

"We had anticipated that we would deliver education sessions and provide manuals to the public nursing homes in our area, Mt Lofty Heights Nursing Home and AEF McDonald Nursing Home at Oakey, plus a few private nursing homes.

"However the response has been overwhelming.

"We have attracted more than 160 participants from both the private and public sector and they have come from all over the Darling Downs including Miles, Jandowae, Millmerran and Warwick."

Karen said the malnutrition screening tool involved aged care facility staff asking residents seven questions and calculating a score out of seven.

"If the resident gains a score of one, the screening tool recommends a fluid/food intake chart be established, with a score of two the screening tool recommends starting supplements in the diet and a score of three or more recommends referral to a dietitian," she said.

"Similarly for the dehydration screening tool there are 10 questions and depending on the score, a number of recommendations are made for treatment."

Anyone interested in finding out about the malnutrition and dehydration screening tools can contact Karen Abbey at Toowoomba Hospital 4616 6133 (ask for Karen to be paged).

## Perioperative care strengthened

Queensland Health has strengthened its position as a leader in the development and provision of nursing education, with the recent Statewide implementation of the Queensland Health Transition to Perioperative Nursing Education Program.

Gill Lewis, Program Coordinator, said the program provided training for nurses entering the highly specialised area of perioperative nursing, supporting nurses as they enter the specialty and helping them to provide care based on the best available evidence.

Gill said the program has been successfully implemented in 17 Queensland Health hospitals across the State.

"Implementation of the program has been flexible enough to allow individual facilities to integrate the program into their own educational and organisational systems," she said.

"Participating hospitals have the option of implementing the program in either a staff development or articulation framework.

"Challenges have been overcome during implementation, including industrial issues relating to role demarcation and the rotation of new graduate nurses through perioperative as part of an all-round graduate hospital rotation."

Gill said she recognised the work that had led to the successful implementation of the transition program.

She said the program had links to the Queensland Perioperative Nursing Education Series, developed in 1998 as part of the Government's Surgery on Time Initiative.

Intensive development by Cath Walker (Registered Nurse) in 2001 delivered the initial Transition to Perioperative Nursing Education Program, which was piloted last year in a number of Queensland Health hospitals.

This was followed by a workshop with representatives from all Queensland Health facilities to examine the success of the pilot program and ensure ongoing growth and development.

The workshop, funded from the Surgical Access Program, endorsed further modifications to the program and allowed its implementation across the State.

Gill said that while the program was primarily about improving patient care and promoting evidence-based treatment, it had major benefits for participating nurses.

"The Perioperative Transition Program has allowed the development of links with the university sector and the creation of a Statewide in-service education network to develop standards of practice within an evidence-based framework," she said.

"This will promote the use of evidence-based practice and research - features that will continue to be supported by the use of video-conferencing technology.

"The program has successfully achieved university articulation of two units of credit towards a postgraduate certificate in perioperative nursing, and so provides a means of low-cost postgraduate education for nurses.

## Spouse super scheme offers benefits

QSuper has come up with a suggestion for Queensland Health staff looking for ways to boost their retirement savings in the most tax-effective way.

Linda Apelt, QSuper Trustee, says that one strategy that might be worth considering involved contributing to spouse's superannuation.

"As a QSuper member, you could contribute for your spouse by opening a QSuper account for them," Linda said.

"Your spouse would then enjoy many of the same benefits you enjoy as a member of QSuper. Your spouse could take advantage of QSuper's low management fee and range of investment options."

Linda said that as a bonus to encourage us to save for retirement, the Commonwealth Government offered a tax offset for spouse contributions.

She said that should your spouse have annual income of less than \$10,800, the first \$3000 of any spouse contribution entitled

you to an 18 per cent taxation offset (\$540 maximum offset per year).

The level of offset decreased if the spouse's assessable income was more than \$10,800 per annum and phased out once the income was \$13,800 per annum.

Linda said there might be other tax advantages for both spouses to enjoy in retirement.

For more information phone QSuper on 1300 360 750 or the QSuper website at [www.qsuper.qld.gov.au](http://www.qsuper.qld.gov.au)

# Shared Services transfer begins

The State Government's new Corporate Technology Office, to be known as CorpTech, will welcome 34 Queensland Health staff when Shared Services Initiative (SSI) begins officially on 1 July.

The staff, from Health's Finance and Materials Management Information Systems (FAMMIS) unit, are among around 350 staff across government whose positions have been selected to form the new centre.

To be hosted by Queensland Treasury, CorpTech will provide information and communication technology support for the seven new shared service providers established by SSI.

CorpTech was formerly known as Corporate Applications Support Unit and Corporate Infrastructure Services Unit.

The staff were formally advised of the move in May by

Staff with questions or concerns about shared services should contact the SSI team via Queensland Health's new Shared Service website. Enter the site from the QHEPS home page and click on the FAQ button, or send the team an e-mail at [QH\\_SS\\_Infoline@health.qld.gov.au](mailto:QH_SS_Infoline@health.qld.gov.au)

Director-General Dr Robert Stable.

Shared Services Steering Committee chair Tony Hayes said the staff would play important roles in implementing SSI across the Queensland public sector.

"The FAMMIS team contains technology specialists, configuration specialists, business and systems analysts, administrative staff, trainers and help desk staff," he said.

"They have made vital contributions to the health portfolio. Queensland Health will still have the benefit of their expertise through CorpTech."

Acting FAMMIS team leader Carlo Terribile is among staff who will join the new centre.

"When we first heard about shared services through the ASAP Review back in September last year, we made a commitment to ourselves that we would keep everybody as up-to-date and fully informed as we could," he said.

"Having that open communication has certainly helped people manage the change process."

Although the FAMMIS staff will officially become employees of CorpTech, they will continue working out of their Bowen Hills premises for the time being.

CorpTech will be headed by Executive Director Geoff Waite, formerly Assistant Under Treasurer.

## Statewide consultations under way

Consultation to help plan Queensland Health's shared service model is now well under way across the State.

Shared Service Coordination Unit Manager Jim Sams said workshops with district managers and corporate services staff will begin this month and continue next month at key centres around Queensland.

A draft model is expected to be available by late August.

"These workshops have been

a great opportunity for us to get staff in regional and metropolitan areas involved in creating a model that works for Queensland Health," he said.

"As well as working out how Shared Services is going to look for our organisation, we've been looking at service delivery and reporting relationships.

"From these workshops and the April briefing sessions in Brisbane, Cairns, Rockhampton and Toowoomba in April, we know that staff are concerned about

these and many other issues.

"While Shared Services itself is something new, we know that many districts have actually been sharing corporate services functions for some time now, and we'd like to capitalise on that existing best practice.

"I urge staff who have any questions whatsoever about how Shared Services might affect them to talk things over with their managers, or to contact us direct on the Shared Services e-mail hotline on QHEPS".

## Workshop maintains the momentum

The second Quality Use of Medicines Initiatives Workshop - *Maintaining the Momentum*, was held last month in Brisbane.

The Quality Use of Medicines (QUM) Initiatives Project is one of seven sub projects in the Quality

Improvement and Enhancement Program - QUM Program Area.

The goals of the QUM Initiatives Project are:

- improve QUM through the implementation of pharmacy driven quality and safety initiatives
- enhance medication-related

services though a comprehensive and coordinated multidisciplinary approach.

Funding (up to \$32,000 per district) has been provided to implement local QUM Initiatives in 33 health service districts.

An interesting and wide range of innovations is being implemented, and many projects incorporate multiple activities.

Most projects address continuity of care issues including medication histories and discharge medication processes but other topics include newsletters and policy and procedure development.

Many projects include patient/staff education. Several districts have projects associated with adverse drug event monitoring and reporting.

A "Summary of Local QUM Projects" is available on the QUM web site <http://qheps.health.qld.gov.au/qum> or from the QUM office.

To provide an opportunity for collaboration among districts, the QIEP-QUM Initiatives project has conducted two workshops.

Representatives from 35 districts attended the first workshop last year, including doctors, pharmacists, nurses, project officers and quality coordinators.

Participants shared tools and resources developed during the course of their projects.

## Scheduled mobile services

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 6 June, St. George; 17-18 June, Mungindi; 19-24 June, Dirranbandi; 26 June, Bollon; 28-30 June and 3-6 July, Cunnamulla; 8 July, Thargomindah; 10 July-early August, Charleville.

Townsville: 16 June-2 July, Cloncurry; 6 July-10 October, Mt Isa; 13-17 October, Julia Creek; 20-24 October, Richmond; 27 October-7 November, Hughenden; 10-12 November, Pentland; 14 November-23 January, Charters Towers.

Rockhampton: 23-27 June, Theodore; 7-9 July, Rockhampton Indigenous Health.

North Brisbane: until 11 July, Brighton.

**Relocatable Services**

Gold Coast: until 12 June, Broadbeach; 16 June-31 July, Robina.

Bundaberg: until 12 September, Harvey Bay.

Cairns: until 10 June, Ravenshoe; 12-17 June, Mt Garnet; 19-20 June, Greenvale; 23-25 June, Croydon; 3-9 July, Mornington Island; 14-18 July, Karumba; 22-24 July, Doomadgee; 25-28 July, Burketown; 29 July-6 August, Normanton.

Toowoomba: until 6 June, Dalby.

**Statewide Service**

2-6 June, Tin Can Bay; 10-20 June, Kilcoy Hospital; 23 June-2 July, Maleny.

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.



Dr Van Erp pictured after receiving her doctorate.

## Attitude change needed

Clinicians need to change their attitudes toward physical disability and realise that often people with disability see their new life situation as a personal triumph rather than personal tragedy.

Toowoomba Hospital physiotherapist Dr Ans Van Erp received her Doctor of Philosophy recently from the University of Southern Queensland following her seven-year research into physical disability.

Her research is entitled "A Life Changing Experience - A Rural Perspective on Living with Physical Disability".

Dr Van Erp conducted an in-depth literature search and undertook research following 35 clinical interviews with her patients who all have physical disability as a result of a medical condition including stroke, multiple sclerosis, Parkinson's Disease, osteoarthritis and spinal cord injury.

She said: "I started the research in July 1996 because many of my patients were saying that health professionals couldn't answer questions about disability eg. - what's it

like to live with a disability? What will happen when I return to my rural home? Will I be able to cope? How do I ask for help?

"I think some health professionals try to address these issues but lack the knowledge to answer those questions.

"Knowledge about 'living-with-disability-at-home' is not found in medical textbooks. It often remains hidden at home. For this reason, I turned to 'experts' ie. people who actually manage disability in everyday life and asked about their experiences.

"Their answers helped me to realise the importance of helping patients return to a sense of confidence and of relieving the worry patients' feel.

"Health professionals can make such a difference in this area by reassuring patients, simply by discussing future possible scenarios and ways to deal with these."

Having attained her doctorate, Dr Van Erp's enthusiasm has not waned - she wants to promote her research at conferences, seminars and in journals.

## Visit by ulcer pressure expert

Techniques for reducing pressure ulcers were learnt by Queensland Health clinicians from one of the field's pioneers during a recent visit by an international clinical expert.

United Kingdom-based, Judy Waterlow, is renowned for a flexible risk-assessment tool she developed to help clinicians prevent pressure ulcers.

During her visit Ms Waterlow assisted Queensland and interstate public and private

clinicians to apply her tool more effectively.

She worked with Queensland Health pressure ulcer prevention project facilitators and wound care consultants to apply her tool to risks pressure ulcer development, identified as part of the Quality Improvement and Enhancement Program.

Her tool is now the most widely used risk assessment tool used in the United Kingdom and Australia.

# Faster access to job vacancies

**A** Queensland Health Staff Search initiative has provided staff with faster and easier access to advertised positions in the Health Services Bulletin and the Queensland Government Gazette via Queensland Health's Intranet site QHEPS.

Access has existed for some time through the Queensland Government Printer web page.

"Now you no longer need to wait so long to access the Health Services Bulletin," said the Manager of Employment Relations and Strategies, Nigel Cumberland.

"It is now published directly on QHEPS making for faster and easier access for all. Simply select the "Employment Menu", "Jobs", and then "Health Services Bulletin".

"Anyone interested in the positions outside Queensland Health, can select the "Queensland Public Service Vacancies Gazette" from the "Jobs" Menu."

Staff Search has undertaken an 'On-Line' project for all Health Services Bulletin vacancies for on-line information on advertised positions by district, classification or occupational stream.

Nigel said once the positions were displayed, there was a hyperlink to the relevant position description and application kit, which could then be down-loaded to computers or printed from the web page.

"It is very similar to the GovNet Jobs On-Line Service but where only a few districts are currently able to make use of that system, the Queensland Health system will present all positions advertised in the Health Services Bulletin each week," he said.

"This will be a great timesaver for staff when considering applying for positions within Queensland Health."

Contact: Joe Scharf from Staff Search Data Services on 3006 5113.

## PEOPLE MATTER

### Achieving work life balance

**T**he Flexible Work Arrangements Guide is now available for all staff.

The easy access guide has been developed to bring together for the first time in one booklet all options available to staff to assist in balancing work and family life.

A/Team Leader, Employment Relations and Strategies Unit, Anne Crossland, said that while part-time work, job sharing, parental leave and family responsibilities leave were fully detailed, there were newer options available.

She said these included career breaks for a negotiated fixed period away from work to undertake a variety of activities while maintaining a guaranteed job at the end of the term, as well as extra leave for proportionate salary allowing access between one and four weeks unpaid leave in addition to annual leave.

A copy of the Flexible Work Arrangements Guide and further information can be obtained by contacting your local HR unit or on QHEPS by going to the "Employment Relations and Strategies Home Page", click on "Resource Page" and then under "Guidelines and Manuals", click on "Flexible Work Arrangements Guide".

### New advanced role in nursing

**T**he role of Advanced Assistant in Nursing (AAIN) has been successfully introduced into the majority of State Government Nursing Homes within Queensland Health.

Manager, Employment Relations and Strategies Unit, Nigel Cumberland, said the AAIN role was greatly enhanced through an extended career path, an increase in commensurate salary and broader scope of duties as well as training in various competencies.

Advanced AAINs are encouraged to obtain the Certificate III in Community Services - Aged Care, he said.

### Training to aid HR program

**A**n extensive new training program designed specifically for Human Resource (HR) practitioners within Queensland Health is now available.

The HR Foundations Program is aimed at new and existing employees, who work within the specialist HR function.

The program provides employees with the training and resources to gain basic but practical knowledge and skills in human resources.

There are 15 modules available within the program with topics ranging from 'HR within the Queensland Health Context' and 'Queensland Health Awards and Agreements' to 'Discipline' and 'Grievance Dispute Management'.

Developed in conjunction with the Open Learning Institute of TAFE, the specially designed program is available on-line, and is accessible through QHEPS - click on 'Organisational Development', then 'Employment Relations and Strategies' and then 'HR Foundations'.

Contact: Program Coordinator, Lyndel Jones on 323 41371 or e-mail to the 'hrfoundations' address on Groupwise.



### New appointment for pathology

**D**r Michael Whiley (pictured left) has been appointed Director of Queensland Health Pathology Services. Dr Whiley, pictured with Dr Peter Lewis-Hughes, State Manager, Queensland Health Pathology and Scientific Services, is from the ACT,

where he has been the Director of Chemical Pathology for 10 years and acting director for the past 12 months. He has also been the Supervising Pathologist for six regional laboratories in New South Wales (known as South East Public Pathology Service).

### Quality program praised for major achievements

**T**he Quality Improvement and Enhancement Program (QIEP) closes as an entity on 30 June.

The program was established to meet the requirements of the Australian Health Care Agreement (1998-2003).

Quality Strategy Team Leader, Elizabeth Garrigan, said the program made significant achievements in reducing variation in health care, clinical and non-clinical risk management, consumer participation, information management, distance management, quality systems, and change management.

"The hundreds of staff involved in QIEP across the State should be congratulated on their achievements, which have been recognised at the local, State, national and international levels, particularly by the Australian Council for Safety and Quality in Health Care," she said.

"Other jurisdictions have picked up some of the work done in Queensland, for example in the areas of the credentialling and clinical privileges, falls prevention, informed consent and pressure ulcer prevention.

"Queensland's achievements will also inform about our direction into the next Health Care Agreement."

A number of the 23 QIEP program areas will formally cease on June 30. The continuation of any of the areas or segments of their content is subject to decisions to be taken by Dr

Steve Buckland, General Manager (Health Services) in early June.

"There will be a great opportunity to showcase our achievements over the past three years at the second QIEP Forum to be held on June 17. Program area staff, sponsors, and board members will be able to see products and hear summaries of their own and other program area outcomes," Elizabeth said.

Program sponsor General Manager, Health Services Dr Steve Buckland said: "On behalf of the governing body of the Quality Improvement and Enhancement Program - the Queensland Health Council on Safety and Quality in Health Care - I extend the deepest appreciation to Program Area Managers and their teams for their dedication, vision and commitment over the past three years.

"The QIEP has been a significant and strategic body of work conducted in very tight timelines. Outcomes may take several years to see changes in a culture of safety and in the quality of Queensland health services, but the foundations have been laid solidly.

"The QIEP established a rigorous governance structure, well tested over the past three years to now be regarded by Queensland Health as "best practice" for future large-scale programs of work.

"The program has also been instrumental in introducing a rigorous program management approach into the department."

## Ombudsman project under way

**Q**ueensland Health joined nine other State and local government agencies recently for the launch of the Queensland Ombudsman's Effective Complaints Management Project.

The department's involvement in the project has been progressed in the past few months between Director-General, Dr Robert Stable, and Ombudsman, David Bevan.

David said the commitment given to the project by Dr Stable followed Queensland Health's work since 2001 to develop a complaints management model that aligns people, structures and systems with its complaints management practices.

He said Queensland Health has introduced a standardised approach for managing complaints with 101 district nominated complaints coordinators trained across the State.

The complaints management process has been established as part of the Integrated Risk Man-

agement Framework to assist in prioritisation and in developing appropriate response actions.

The Ombudsman's Office used Queensland Health's system as a case study of excellence.

"I am very pleased Queensland Health has agreed to participate in the initial phase of our project," David said.

"The department's knowledge and experience in this field will prove to be invaluable for other agencies, particularly for those with a district structure.

"The first phase of the Ombudsman's project involves working with eight State government departments and two councils to develop systems that suit the needs of those agencies.

"The second phase involves encouraging all other State and local government agencies to follow the lead of those 10 agencies."

David said the essential elements, largely drawn from AS 4269-1995 *Complaints Handling* and the Ombudsman's Office's

extensive experience in this area, were outlined in a series of informative Fact Sheets prepared by his Office.

These can be accessed via the Ombudsman's website at [http://www.ombudsman.qld.gov.au/publications/fact\\_sheets.asp](http://www.ombudsman.qld.gov.au/publications/fact_sheets.asp)

"Today's community expects government agencies to operate ethically and fairly and have systems to ensure this happens," he said.

"People are well informed of their rights and more likely to complain about decisions they perceive to be unfair than previously."

Principal Internal Auditor Trevor Chippindall attended the official launch and there will be ongoing communication between Queensland Health and the Ombudsman's Office.

Contact the Queensland Ombudsman's Effective Complaints Management Team, phone 3005 7048 or Queensland Health Audit's Director, Michael Schafer on 323 40835.

# Info matters

## Summit aids telehealth technique

District staff from across the State learnt techniques to standardise and improve their use of telehealth technology at a two-day summit last month in Townsville.

The summit, held by the Telehealth program Area of the Quality Improvement and Enhancement Program, helped districts identify, plan, cost, implement and evaluate telehealth applications.

Program Area Manager, Lisa Hudson, said participants were given a Resource Kit, which was also available on QHEPS, to support them in their roles.

"It includes a planning tool, business case and service agreement templates, easy-to-understand policies and procedures, consumer materials, staff training modules and evaluation tools," she said.

"Participants at the summit split up into tutorial groups to allow hands-on, practical activities that related to their district.

"We aimed to help them set up telehealth clinical consultations in their districts according to Queensland Health's guidelines, which are available on QHEPS."

The telehealth program area (in consultation with the pressure ulcer prevention project) has also produced a standard to ensure consistent capture, storage and transfer of digital images used for clinical consultations.

## Four speakers

Four Queensland Health speakers from the Quality Improvement and Enhancement Program will address the Quality Use of Medicines (QUM) toolkit seminar at the Stamford Plaza Hotel, Adelaide, on 26-27 June.

The seminar, organised by the Australian Resource Centre for



Hospital Innovation (ARCHI), has the theme Challenges for general practitioners, hospital and community.

Dr Danielle Stowasser will speak on e-medicines management and implementation challenges for a statewide program.

Dr Teresa Lynne's subject is local champions overcome challenges of facilitating medication management in fragmented system.

Rhonda Tulk's address is on quality use of medicines in a surgical pre-admission clinic, while Ian Coombes will talk on collaborating to reduce risks in the medication management process.

Contact: ARCHI, phone (02) 4985 3165, fax (02) 4985 3164, or e-mail: Admin@archi.net.au

## Papers ready

More than 100 papers, posters and presentations will be delivered at the Alcohol and Drug Foundation - Queensland's Winter School in the Sun conference at the Carlton Crest Hotel, Brisbane, on 30 June - 3 July.

The conference, held annually in Brisbane since 1988, has the theme, Trends and Options, and addresses the causes and effects of alcohol and other drug problems and trends and options for addictions, strategies and policies.

Eight leading international and domestic keynote speakers will address the conference.

Contact: Winter School in the Sun, PO Box 332 Spring Hill, Qld 4004, phone 3832 3798, fax 3832 5625 or e-mail: winterschool@adfq.org

## Policy trends

Addressing Violence Against Women: Policy, knowledge, trends and practice is the theme of a research symposium to be held at the Queensland University of Technology, Gardens Point Campus, on 4 July.

The symposium is hosted by the Faculties of Business and Health at the university, and the Domestic Violence Resource Centre, Brisbane.

The inaugural symposium is a key forum for the community, academics, practitioners and policy communities from non-government and government sectors.

Contact: Marilyn Harris e-mail: m.harris@qut.edu.au or Lisa Bradley lm.bradley@qut.edu.au

## Deadline near

Submission of abstract close on 15 June for a toolkit seminar to be held by the Australian Resource Centre for Hospital Innovations (ARCHI) in Sydney on 26 September.

The seminar has the theme, Tools, Techniques and Teams: driving innovations in quality and efficiency in hospitals.

Aims of the seminar include highlighting strategies for driving innovations in clinical management in hospitals, benchmarks for strategies and processes for quality improvement projects, and innovative processes for developing projects.

Contact: ARCHI national office, phone (02) 4985 3165, e-mail: admin@archi.net.au or on the web address www.archi.net.au

## Look at future

The Australian Healthcare Association and the Australian College of Health Service Executives will hold a joint national congress at the National Convention Centre, Canberra, on 13-15 August.

The congress is future-oriented and will explore changing populations, global influences, emerging technologies, impacts of ageing and changing societal expectations of health care systems.

The congress, which has the theme of practical system solutions today for the challenges of tomorrow will feature national and international speakers, and a mix of plenary and interactive workshop sessions.

Contact: phone (02) 6285 1690, or e-mail congress2003@aha.asn.au

## Diary...

### JUNE

- 1** Annual Service of Thanksgiving  
*Queenslanders Donate*  
Phone: 3240 2350
- 1-27** Red Nose Campaign  
*SIDS Queensland*  
Phone: 3849 7122
- 1-7** Kidney Awareness Week  
*Australian Kidney Foundation*  
Phone: 3832 2520
- 1-7** Diethylstilboestrol (DES) Awareness Week  
*DES Action Australia - NSW*  
Phone: (02) 9875 4820
- 1-8** Medical Research Week  
*Australian Society of Medical Research*  
Phone: (02) 9256 5450
- 2-8** Multiple Sclerosis Awareness Week  
*Multiple Sclerosis Society*  
Phone: 1800 308 307
- 5** World Environment Day  
*United Nations*  
Phone: (02) 9262 5111
- 6** Guide Dog Open Day Queensland  
*Guide Dogs Queensland*  
Phone: 3264 0226
- 7-28** Brisbane Pride Events  
*Queensland AIDS Council*  
Phone: 3017 1777
- 9-15** International Men's Health Week  
*Men's Health Information and Resource Centre*  
Phone: (02) 4570 1713
- 12** Clip for Cancer  
*Queensland Cancer Fund*  
Phone: 3258 2200
- 15** Treasury Casino "Brissie to Bay" bike ride  
*Multiple Sclerosis Society of Queensland*  
Phone: 3840 0820
- 16-21** Australian Crohn's & Colitis Awareness Week  
*Australian Crohn's & Colitis Association*  
Phone: 1800 071 072
- 20-29** Wonder Week  
*The Royal Children's Hospital Foundation Queensland*  
Phone: 3852 1199
- 21** Motor Neurone Disease Awareness Day  
*Motor Neurone Disease Association of Qld. Inc.*  
Phone: 3372 9004
- 26** International Day against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking  
*United Nations Organisation*  
Phone: (02) 9262 5111
- 26-27** Cardiology Conference Cairns  
*Cairns Base Hospital Cardiac Rehabilitation Department and Cairns Base Hospital Coronary Care Unit*  
Phone: 4050 8989/4050 6972
- 27** SIDS and Kids Red Nose Day  
*SID Queensland*  
Phone: 3849 7122
- 30-6 July** Epilepsy Week  
*Epilepsy Queensland*  
Phone: 3435 5000

## In retrospect...

### A review of some articles from previous Health Matters

- 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
- February** Actors add reality to trauma exercise  
United effort reunites family  
\$510 million hospital redevelopment completed
- March** Healthy heart program gains award  
Mother-daughter graduate together  
Innisfail district pilots rural project
- April** Rural vaccination campaign targets Q Fever  
Indigenous health involved in all planning  
New program explores telemedicine

## Expo to set career path

**M**aking Careers Happen - Vocational Expo 2003 for junior doctors and medical students will be held from 6.30-9.30pm, on Friday, 13 June, at D Floor Dining Area, Block 6, Royal Brisbane and Women's Hospital, Herston Road, Herston.

The Expo will answer frequently asked questions about opportunities for future training. This event has been a educational, networking, and social event for junior & senior doctors as well as medical students.

This will be the seventh year the hospital has hosted this event with support from more than 30 colleges and faculties and it has been a great success for the past six years.

To register, telephone 3636 1524/3636 7087 or e-mail jeni\_de\_hayr@health.qld.gov.au or Hazel\_Winter@health.qld.gov.au