



health matters



Healthy food in the lunch box was one of the health messages delivered at the Punyahra Indigenous Health Expo at Eagleby by Logan-Beaudesert District staff. Pictured are lunch box warriors (right) Valma Close, Indigenous Child Nutrition, and Simone Johnson, nutritionist. Several hundred people, including many school children, attended the Expo.

Kate's in the country and loving it

"Country change – and loving it," is the sentiment of Kate Allen, a graduate from the Queensland Health Rural Scholarship.

"When I commenced the scholarship, I did not imagine that I would have my own home on a mountain top, with a fantastic job, in a community that I love," Kate said.

A graduate of Queensland University of Technology, B Nursing/Health Science (Public Health), Kate was awarded a Queensland Health Rural Scholarship in 2000.

"Upon graduation in 2002, I relocated from Brisbane to the South Burnett for my two-year secondment," Kate said.

"During my graduate program with the South Burnett Health Service District,

It has been an interesting first 100 days for the new Minister for Health, Gordon Nuttall.

I accompanied the Minister on visits to hospitals around Queensland – PA, RCH, the Mater, Eventide Nursing Home, Mt Isa, Emerald, Bundaberg, Hervey Bay, Gympie, Nambour, Caloundra and Townsville – to name only some.

And there is more of the same to come until as much of the State as possible has been covered. The visits are far from cosmetic tea and sympathy affairs, unveilings or winning of hearts and minds. They are a constructive series of "listen, talk and do" schedules at hospitals, health centres and other venues of significance to the health of Queenslanders.

In a nutshell, they reflect the recognition of the vital importance of our staff, their enthusiasm and a lot of good work happening around Queensland.

The visits have been very well received, particularly as our itineraries have been designed to provide the Minister with as much information as possible on his new portfolio.

His wish to get to know people by talking face-to-face about local problems and issues, observing at first hand and sharing the enthusiasm of hos-

pital staff at all levels, has been greatly appreciated.

Valuable local knowledge was gained, for example, on reducing the length of stay, continuity of care and avoiding the complications of hospitalisation, being implemented at Nambour Hospital by Dr Rohan Grimley.

Wherever we have travelled, the new Minister's message is constant: Public perceptions of Queensland Health should reflect the incredible professionalism out there, performed against the odds of worldwide shortages of medical and clinical staff.

I believe that in every aspect of the work we do, we, all 65,000 of us, should see ourselves as ambassadors for Queensland Health, presenting the best possible image to our clients.

In our attitudes and behaviour toward the community, and specially to patients, let's reflect the fact that Queensland Health, with its enormous dedication and sheer hard work, continues to deliver one of the best health services in the world.



I rotated through four health care facilities.

"This has given me a broad perspective on health service provision in rural Queensland and the challenges of rural nursing.

"Now in my second year, I am a registered nurse at Cherbourg Hospital, South Burnett Health Service District, where my skills are developing well and I feel settled in my workplace.

"I am having a fantastic time at the moment. Rural living is clean, calm and meaningful for me.

"I have recently purchased my first home at Boat Mountain, just outside Murgon. I have the best of both worlds, a challenging and dynamic job and a quiet life away from the hustle and bustle of the city."

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Step forward in reform



Executive Manager Bill Peplinkhouse meets with Consumer Consultants Trish Blair, Troy Almond and Denise Ryan in the new mental health facility.

Official opening of the new \$10.4 million mental health facility at the Princess Alexandra Hospital is another step in the continuing reform of Queensland Health's metal health services.

The 64-bed unit, the latest stage of the hospital's \$310 million redevelopment, was officially opened on 30 March by Health Minister, Gordon Nuttall.

District Manager, Deb Podbury, said: "This new mental health facility is visible and tangible evidence of the continuing reforms that are changing the way we deliver mental health services, changes that are designed to improve outcomes for mental health consumers and carers.

"The transition to the new facility has involved extensive staff training and service reviews, including full audits of all procedures, policies and practices.

"Staff continue to receive a broad range of training, including placement at other facilities to ensure that best practice options are adopted here as they are in other

areas."

Deb said the hospital's mental health service played a lead role in clinical teaching and research within the Southern Zone. She said that with the new facility, the Princess Alexandra Hospital Health Service District was now able to provide contemporary in-patient services that complement the community mental health services remodelled over the past two years.

"Mental health service provision has changed significantly since the current mental health building was opened in 1978," Deb said.

"Institutional care is a thing of the past, and building psychiatric hospitals that are 'out of sight and out of mind' is no longer acceptable.

"The use of advances in modern drug therapies, new therapies, and patient-focused service delivery models allows people to be treated with dignity and within an appropriate and caring environment."

Nurses facing challenge

Nurses will get their heart rates pumping when they take to the court to celebrate this year's International Nurses Day on Wednesday, 12 May.

The University of Queensland will host the inaugural Nursing Australia Netball Challenge at its St Lucia campus to coincide with the anniversary of Florence Nightingale's birthday. Nursing Australia Senior Nurse Consultant Kirsty Keating said the inaugural Netball Challenge pres-

ents a unique way to celebrate International Nurses Day.

"Nurses are one of the public's most highly regarded professions and International Nurses Day is an important day that acknowledges the contribution nurses make to the community," she said.

"Nursing Australia wanted to support a new event that brings together nurses from all areas to have a little fun and celebrate this special day on our calendar."

\$1.5m boost for Mt Isa

Tenders have been called for the construction of a \$1.5 million staff accommodation block at the Mt Isa Hospital. The new block, a 28-room project, will provide upgraded living areas for health care professionals.

The \$1.5m, part of the Smart State Building Fund initiative, is in addition to the \$2.7 million spent on stage one of staff accommodation at Mt Isa Hospital. It will bring to 60 the number of accommodation units available to health staff in Mt Isa.

The new units will provide staff with greater privacy

and more personal space with each unit having an ensuite and built-in cupboards. There will be a common dining and lounge space shared between eight units and the building will be fully air-conditioned.

Provision of quality staff accommodation in remote areas is vital to attracting and retaining clinical and professional staff. This allocation is part of the \$8 million initiative to upgrade staff accommodation as an incentive to retain and attract nurses and health professionals to regional and rural areas.

Medical scientists gain recognition for work



Medical scientists from Gold Coast Hospital-based QHPS laboratory, Penny Toland looks on as Fiona Hardy examines blood films in a multi-header microscope.

Queensland Health medical scientists will celebrated the inaugural National Medical Laboratory Science Week held this month to give medical scientists recognition for the crucial role they play within our health care system.

The week, organised by the Australian Institute of Medical Scientists, is already an annual event in other countries.

Queensland Health medical scientists, employed by Queensland Health Pathology and Scientific Services, provide quality-certified services to both the Australian and international market through its three operational units.

These are Queensland Health Pathology Services, Queensland Health Scientific Services, and Biomedical Technology Services.

The scientists of Queensland Health Pathology Services are spread across 33 laboratories throughout Queensland, ranging from small rural facilities to major metropolitan laboratories in Brisbane.

This network forms the principal provider of public sector pathology services in Queensland.

The medical scientists providing this service are responsible for the laboratory analysis of blood, body fluids and tissues.

This analysis assists doctors in making a diagnosis, monitoring treatment and initiating disease prevention. Thus scientists greatly influence the immediate health care of patients on a daily basis.

Despite this crucial involvement in the everyday management of patient care, the public and even some of those employed in Queensland Health, have little knowledge of the existence of medical scientists and the role they perform.

These roles are as diverse as those existing in medicine and as such are also broken up into specialised disciplines.

There are eight disciplines in pathology:

- histopathology – preparation of tissue for the detection of disease processes and malignancies, eg. cancer diagnosis of in a breast lump
- microbiology – analysis of a variety of samples (blood, body fluids, tissue) to detect bacteria, viruses, fungi and parasites, eg. diagnosis of meningitis
- cytology – analysis of cells to detect cancer, eg. Pap smear
- blood transfusion – blood typing and compatibility testing, eg. provision of compatible blood for transfusion
- immunology – diagnosis of viruses, eg. HIV testing
- haematology—analysis of blood cells, eg. diagnosis of leukaemia
- clinical biochemistry—analysis of blood and body fluids to detect chemicals, hormones and/or drugs, eg. pregnancy testing
- genetics—diagnosis of genetic diseases through the analysis of chromosomes, DNA and RNA, eg. pre-natal testing

New hi-tech system for oral health

An enterprise computer system is being introduced to support Queensland Health oral health services across the state. It will replace the aging DecAid oral health system used in most adult dental clinics, and could potentially replace The Dentist used at Brisbane North Oral Health Services.

The Information System for Oral Health (ISOH) was developed by the Western Sydney Area Health Service (WSAHS) and has been used successfully throughout NSW Health for the past three years.

It was successfully trialed in five dental clinics in the Sunshine Coast and Gympie health service districts between June 2003 and September 2003, before the decision was made to implement it throughout the state.

The Acting Director General, Dr Steve Buckland and his NSW Health counterpart have exchanged letters confirming the two states' commitment to a five-year agree-

ment to share the benefits and costs of the ISOH Software application, its development and its support team.

Errol Evans, the State Manager of Queensland Health's Oral Health Unit, said there were the expected major benefits, some of which would be realised in future associated projects.

"There is an improved ability to provide continuity of care throughout a patient's lifetime and an improved ability to standardise clinical practice, policies and procedures across Queensland resulting in more effective use of resources," he said.

"It provides greater accuracy in the determination of demand on waiting lists and the ability to spread the workload between clinics to better meet that demand.

"It will support the Oral Health Call Centre where patients call a central phone number and are screened (triaged) over the phone to determine the most appropriate priority and location of treatment."

Oakey kicks up to dispel boredom



Nick Kearney (left) and Mark Campbell climb to great heights on the Vertec Climbing Wall, with Adam Rose (left) and Sam Skerman keeping a close watch, during the Oakey Youth Expo. More than 300 people attended the Expo.

“Bored?” Nothing to do? The answer is at your doorstep.” This was the challenge thrown out by health workers, community groups and the high school to dispel the myth that there is nothing to do in small country towns.

To put the myth to flight community members from Oakey held an action-packed free afternoon of activities, music and fun. The Oakey Youth Expo, now in its second year of operation, was held last month at the Oakey High School.

The program featured a number of activities including live music from Brisbane Bank “Rookie”, rock climbing tower, sumo wrestling, mechanical bucking bull, local drama performances, free sausage sizzle and displays from youth organisations.

The idea for a youth expo began last year when Youth Health Nurse Sonia Muller conducted an informal Alcohol, Tobacco and Other Drugs survey at the school in December. She believed many students were turning to alcohol and drugs out of boredom.

Sonia, during her two years as a school-based youth health nurse, she has helped students deal with issues including conflict at home, peer conflict, bullying, and relationship issues which can contribute to alcohol and drug use in young people.

“In response to the survey we established a local drug summit committee including police, ambulance, health professionals, parent and citizen representatives and our Local Member of Parliament Ray Hopper, to identify some actions the community could take,” she said.

New flu virus found by our scientists

Queensland Health scientists have identified a new strain of the influenza virus which has been included in a new influenza vaccine.

The new virus strain, known as Influenza B/Brisbane/32/2002, was isolated at Queensland Health Scientific Services (QHSS) Virology Laboratory in Brisbane.

B/Brisbane was isolated from samples sent to QHSS from hospital and private pathology laboratories throughout Queensland as part of their pandemic surveillance system. Influenza B-Brisbane can protect against the new influenza type-B viruses which have emerged in Australia and other countries over the past 12 months.

QHSS Scientist Bruce Harrower said that after performing preliminary testing, samples were referred to the World Health Organisation’s Collaborating Centre for Reference and Research on Influenza in Melbourne for high-level analysis to confirm the Queensland discovery would provide an excellent match for the most recent influenza B strains. Bruce said specific characteristics

“This committee is now called the Oakey Youth Focus Group. Our first step was to hold a youth expo, not only to bring all sorts of entertainment to Oakey, but to showcase to young people the types of sporting groups and organisations that are right at their doorstep, that can be used as alternatives for drug and alcohol use.”

Sonia said the Oakey Youth Expo, which is sponsored by Jondaryn Shire Council, Boeing Aircraft and Oakey Lions Club, provided an afternoon of youth-orientated activity and entertainment.

She said parents and other community members were invited to come and view school policies, procedures and education programs, and encouraged comment on these initiatives.

“There was a special climbing tower where people could take the challenge to climb free hand up to ten metres,” she said.

“An even bigger challenge was people putting on sumo wrestling suits for people to have a go at wrestling.”

Sonia said the guest speaker, Allan LeMay from Teen Challenge, had long been involved in youth welfare and was a keen advocate for all local youth.

She said Allan was passionate about helping young people overcome drug and alcohol issues and his work in Teen Challenge was recognised throughout Queensland.

The main aim of the expo was to showcase the numerous activities young people could enjoy without alcohol and drugs.

of B/Brisbane made it a good candidate for vaccine production.

“A virus itself can die very easily, but we found that B/Brisbane grew easily as a culture,” he said.

The vaccine formulation for each winter is updated to provide protection against the most recent strains for each of the three influenza families circulating in the human population. The new vaccine is available in time for the May to October influenza season. Alan Hampson, Deputy Director of the WHO Collaborating Centre, said B/Brisbane was selected for inclusion in this year’s vaccine because it was expected to provide the best possible protection for the type B influenza viruses expected this winter.

“Influenza viruses are characterised by two molecules on their surface,” he said.

“The type B viruses used in the influenza vaccine recently, do not match one of the molecules on currently circulating viruses. B/Brisbane has both of the correct molecules.”

Service model on trial

Queensland Health is trialing a model of demand management for allied health services to provide consistent guidelines to manage demand for outpatient services and assist in prioritising allied health services around the State.

The Queensland Health Allied Health Demand Management Project, due for completion in December, involves four health service districts – Bayside, Redcliffe-Caboolture, Rockhampton and Tablelands.

It will focus on the professions of occupational therapy, physiotherapy, podiatry, social work and speech pathology.

Ruth Cox, Acting Principal Allied Health Adviser said the establishment of strategies to manage demand on allied health services was a key recommendation of the Director-General's Allied Health Recruitment and Retention Taskforce.

"The consistent demand management model aligns allied health outpatient services to the core business of

Queensland Health and community need," she said.

"While the model will not be prescriptive, it is the endorsed framework for decision making to manage demand on services within existing resources at the local level.

"It provides an equitable and accountable method of deciding on how services will be delivered.

"The trial will look at lifespan usage of services in rural, provincial and metropolitan outpatient services.

"Community and outreach allied health services will also be reviewed in some of the trial districts, but allied health professionals in mental health services are not included in this trial."

Contact: Health Advisory Unit-Allied Health website. <http://qheps.health.qld.gov.au/odb/hau/allied/html/taskforce/workload.htm> or Cherie Hearn, Senior Project Officer, 323 41620 and e-mail: cherie_hearn@health.qld.gov.au

Hey baby, what are you looking at?



While mums chat their babies have a play (from left) Natalie Bowden, Kaden Darlington, Ebony Patchling, Jordan McAllister, Annaleese Myers and Charlie Watts.

Browns Plains Child Health has been running New Parents Groups for a number of years with major benefits for both mother and baby.

Child Health nurse, Julie Best, said new mums just loved to get together to show off and compare their babies. One of the latest groups has been meeting for the past six to eight months and have formed a network of friendships that will continue to support them in the years ahead.

"We have had such a lot of positive feedback that we decided to let other Queensland Health staff know about the benefits of encouraging new mums to be part of a New Parents Group," Julie said.

"While we have a variety of guest speakers, it is often the friendship and the support they receive from each other as well as the staff that keeps the groups going.

"At Browns Plains we have had speakers on water

safety, breast feeding, occupational therapy, social work and a specialist from Queensland Ambulance Service who speaks about car safety and car seats.

"Several mothers who have come back to see us with their second and third baby report that they are still meeting with their original group.

"We have netball teams, walking groups, play groups, baby-sitting clubs, coffee shop and dinner party groups with plenty of dads being involved too.

"Friendship and a feeling of belonging is so important to all of us especially to new mothers as they can find their life turned upside down by a new addition to the family," Julie said.

New Parents groups meet at Springwood, Browns Plains, Beenleigh, Jimboomba and Logan Central Clinics.

Contact: Maternity Services or Community Health phone 3299 9170.

Housing for Island staff

More than \$700,000 is being spent on building new accommodation for staff at Thursday Island Hospital.

Thursday Island firm Robert Clarke Builders Pty Ltd has been awarded an 18-week contract to construct the two, three bedroom town houses at a total cost of \$721,248, providing high quality accommodation for medical and pathology staff.

Staff accommodation on Thursday Island is at a premium and this is part of a two-phase commitment to ensure staff have access to high quality accommodation, helping to attract and retain quality clinical and professional staff. The next stage of additional staff accommodation will be two, two bedroom and four, one bedroom units for mental health and other clinical staff.

Patient records on track

A statewide computer client directory to provide cross-referenced records for patients/clients wherever they treated is being introduced to eventually cover all Queensland Health hospitals and health facilities.

At present everyone who receives a health service from Queensland Health has a patient/client record for the particular facility where they are treated.

Each of these individual records has a number that is unique to that site or service. This means that a person could have a number of health records which are not linked in any way if they attend more than one hospital, community health centre, or dental clinic.

Any new treating clinician would not have the benefit of knowing the patient's full medical history such as drug allergies and results of previous radiology and pathology tests.

To address this gap, Queensland Health is introducing a computerised client directory which will eventually be used by all hospitals and health services in the state to link record numbers for the same patients in different facilities and systems by matching key identifying details such as name and date of birth.

Security of patient information is paramount. The system provides for security access groups, individual logins, and audit trails to ensure no unauthorised person

accesses patient records.

Bayside and Gold Coast Hospital health service districts are the first Queensland Health sites to use the system and already the benefits are evident. All patient records were checked for potential duplicates and identical records merged so records within each district are complete.

Health service districts are already putting in significant effort to cleanse their data and to ensure their business processes contain the future occurrence of duplicate records.

Debra Hornsby, Director of the Clinical Informatics Program, said that the directory must be in place before the other clinical systems managed by the program were implemented.

"The clinical information system, patient administration system, pathology, radiology, pharmacy, and community health systems will all rely on the client directory for complete, accurate and timely information about patient health records to ensure patients receive the best possible treatment," she said.

Townsville, Queen Elizabeth II Jubilee Hospital, Logan-Beaudesert and West Moreton health service districts are preparing to implement the directory by the end of the year.

Walk/run to beat cancer

Brisbane will take part for the first time in the annual Mother's Day Classic fundraising walk/run to start from South Bank at 7.30am on Sunday, 9 May. The National Breast Cancer Foundation hopes to raise \$1 million from the nationwide event, which is also being held in Melbourne, Sydney, Perth and Albury/Wodonga.

More than 13,000 participants are expected to take part in the event, walking, running or strolling over a 4km or 8km course.

Since its inception in 1998 by Women in Super, the event has raised \$910,000 for the foundation. Anyone interested in taking part in the classic should phone the event organisers on 5449 0711 or visit www.mothersdayclassic.org

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PA takes swimming title



The team from Princess Alexandra Hospital was the grand champion and took out the Hospital Category A section of the Combined Health Services Swimming Carnival.

Queensland Health Pathology and Scientific Services won the Category B section, while the Cheer Squad award was taken out by West Moreton Health Service District.

Pictured, from left, is the Corporate Office team which finished third in the freestyle relay - Shanelle Kropp, Catherine Borich, Leane Christie, Elizabeth Cook.

Teams from Corporate Office, Gold Coast, West Moreton, Logan, Queensland Health Pathology and Scientific Services, Princess Alexandra Hospital and Mater competed in individual, team and children's events.

The carnival was hosted by Corporate Office, with Queensland Health Pathology and Scientific Services organising next year's event.

Obituary

Staff from Oakey Hospital and EAF McDonald Nursing Home gathered for a memorial service for nurse Mary-Ann Gibbs who tragically died earlier this year in a road accident.

Oakey Hospital Clinical Nurse Consultant Rita Wyse, who spoke at the memorial service, said Mary-Ann had been working at the nursing home for a short time and staff were shocked and saddened by the news.

"Mary-Ann was well respected by both staff and residents and everyone admired her gentle and caring nature,"

she said.

"Mary-Ann had a long employment within aged care and had worked at Mt Lofty Nursing Home as well as private facilities in Toowoomba.

"She was committed to her work and very reliable, ensuring that we were never short-staffed at Oakey."

Rita and Oakey Director of Nursing, Lynn Boundy, said staff were still coming to terms with the loss of Mary-Ann. Mary-Ann's family attended the memorial service and wrote to staff to thank them for their care and concern.

Waste control shows great savings

Waste management projects introduced this year at Cairns Base Hospital have reaped savings of more than \$23,000 in the first three months.

Nick Hill-Murray, Environmental Management Coordinator, said these and other projects being considered could see the savings grow to \$300,000 a year.

"The cost benefits of undertaking waste management strategies and improvements really stacks up," Nick said.

"We have spent \$16,000 in implementing two projects and both are already showing great saving to the environment and to our bottom line.

"In January we cancelled a contract for the collection and disposal of the contents of all hospital sanitary bins and now perform the work ourselves. As this waste is not clinical waste we have been able to introduce savings of some \$2500 in just over two months.

"Another project in its early stages aims to reduce clinical waste within the hospital by up to 30 per cent of current levels, which is the target set for all hospitals within the Queensland Health Waste Management Strategic Plan.

"We have been taking a closer look at waste currently being treated as clinical waste that really does not fit the Environmental Protection Agency's definition of clinical waste. When it is not clinical waste it can be managed in different ways and this will help to achieve the targets. For example it costs \$1.56 per kilo or \$1500 a tonne to dispose of clinical waste and seven cents per kilo or \$68 per tonne for general waste disposal."

Nick said the savings were already around \$13,000 with the full year implications likely to be close to \$90,000 when we reach the desired reduction targets.

He said that once the district's draft guidelines for Infection Control Management of Clinical Waste had been approved staff education sessions would be held on the definition of clinical waste and general waste.

He said that since January the hospital had used deep bore water on all gardens with a saving of \$4600. He said that in the longer term other applications would be looked at for bore water that were both environmentally safe and carry a cost benefit to the administration budget.

Mt Lofty celebrates accreditation

Mt Lofty Heights Nursing Home staff are still celebrating the facility gaining three years' accreditation with the Aged Care Standards Agency.

Staff members felt that the accreditation would finally shake off the nursing home's old reputation that the facility was "not keeping up with the times".

Nursing Home Acting Director of Nursing, Lynn Boundy, said she was extremely proud of the Mt Lofty staff for their commitment to improving service.

"This is not just lip service – the staff members work really hard to ensure residents are comfortable and happy and receiving quality clinical care and diversional therapy," she said.

"The Aged Care Standards Agency is a Federal Government body and its assessments are very strict. It's not a matter of dusting off the policy and procedure manuals every three years.

"Nursing homes need to be on the ball all the time. Staff must audit their practice regularly and demonstrate their success in implementing recommendations. We may be inspected at any time during the accreditation phase.

"In this accreditation phase two auditors interviewed residents, their relatives and staff members. The auditors reviewed our policies, procedures, record-keeping and practice."

Lynn said there were 44 standards of care covering a range of topics including continuous improvement, staff development, planning and leadership, pain management, skin care, nutrition and hydration, privacy and dignity, cultural and spiritual life, infection control, catering and cleaning services, occupational health, and laundry services.

She said Mt Lofty was compliant in all 44 standards.

She said it was written into Federal Government legislation that the Aged Care Standards Agency would have contact with accredited nursing homes at least three times in the accreditation phase with one of the contacts being a visit by auditors.

"I'm sure this level of scrutiny will not concern Mt Lofty staff members as they are aware of the continuous improvement cycle and strive to maintain this," Lynn said.

Laurels for Bali forensic workers

By Fiona Sugden



Dr Beng Ong and Graham Flynn ... recognised for their Bali work.

"It was about being able to contribute. If I assisted in the identification of one person then there was one family that had the details of their loved one."

Graham Flynn, a mortuary attendant at Queensland Health Pathology and Scientific Services (QHPSS), feels both proud and a little shocked at the prestigious recognition he received for his work in the wake of the Bali bombing tragedy.

He assisted QHPSS forensic pathologist Dr Beng Ong, as part of the Disaster Victim Identification team (DVI), identifying the victims who lost their lives in the blast.

The two men's valuable work was recognised by Australasia's leading medical diagnostic body, the Royal College of Pathologists Australasia (RCPA) at the Annual Admission of New Fellows and Awards Ceremony in Sydney on March 13.

As a medical recipient Dr Ong received a bronze medallion, while Mr Flynn received an inscribed memento, both reading "in recognition of your expertise and tireless efforts following the Bali bombing tragedy".

In total there were 15 awards given to Australian forensic pathologists and forensic professionals for their contributions in Bali. Honours are also being awarded to laboratory managers and other forensic professionals who assisted in the makeshift Denpasar mortuaries.

Dr Beng Ong has worked at QHPSS Coopers Plains for

18 months and said he expected the tough conditions and humid climate he faced upon arrival in Bali.

"I expected the work to be different and very challenging," he said.

"We worked in partnership with the Australian Federal police and other forensic professionals from around Australia. It was a very valuable experience.

"Many people from QHPSS contributed to this award and they must also be acknowledged.

"Dr Charles Naylor, the Chief Forensic Pathologist, helped immensely, as did all the people who had to cover my workload for the two weeks that I was in Bali.

"Then there were the QHPSS counsellors who contacted the relatives of victims here in Australia and the forensic biologists and DNA scientists who were dedicated to the investigation."

Graham Flynn agrees that it was the team effort and excellent training at QHPSS that prepared him well for the challenging work in Bali.

"There was a strong sense of mateship and support between everyone," he said.

"It was incredible to work with all the Balinese volunteers who came in from the fishing trawlers and fields to help. I raised a collection for them so we could show our great appreciation for what they had done."

Suzanne shows ingenuity

Suzanne Wiggins, a long-time employee of hotel services at the South Burnett Health Service District, has used her ingenuity in making tools useable and user-friendly.

Corporate Office Support Services praised Suzanne for her help in implementing the Certificate II Operational Services Assessment and Training Program. Sue used an existing part of the assessment tools, the observation checklist, and adapted it for use as a third party report.

A sample of the modified form was submitted to Sup-

port Services officers who said her version of a third party report was well thought out, clarified the process, and enabled the user to avoid confusion and repetition.

The use of this document statewide is supported by TAFE and Queensland Health.

Support Services said Sue showed enthusiasm and commitment to her work and demonstrated great skill in being able to adapt theoretical material to develop a useful and effective solution to a practical problem.

BreastScreen schedule

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

Scheduled services are:

Mobile Services

Toowoomba: 5-13 May, Mitchell; 17-19 May, Injune; 21 May-29 June, Roma.

Mackay: 5-7 May, Middle Mount; 10-12 May, Tieri; 13-25 May, Clermont; 26 May-15 June, Moranbah.

Townsville: 17 May-2 June, Collinsville.

North Brisbane: until 13 May, Arana Hills; 17-20 May, Royal Brisbane Hospital; 24-28 May Brookfield.

Relocatable Services

Cairns: until 18 May, Innisfail; 20 May-17 June, Tully.

Gold Coast: until 13 May, Paradise Point; 17-20 May, Ormeau; 24 May-17 June, Broadbeach/Mermaid Beach.

Bundaberg Service: 28 May, Howard.

Nambour: until 26 May, Gympie.

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.

A Health Promotion Officer is available at each service to provide more information.

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

Top marks for complaint management



David Bevan, Queensland Ombudsman (left) with Trevor Chippendall, an investigator on secondment from Queensland Health.

Queensland Health has been assessed as having one of the best complaints management packages in the health field throughout Australia.

Acting Director-General, Dr Steve Buckland, said the assessment of Queensland Health's complaints management system, including its policy and procedures, was undertaken by the Queensland Ombudsman as part of its Complaints Management Project.

The project looks at ways of improving internal complaint handling procedures, raising standards of administrative decision-making and improving the standards of service to the community for Queensland Health and nine other state and local government agencies.

"Since becoming involved in the Ombudsman's project in March 2003, we have refined our complaints handling policy and procedures and completed an audit of the way we handle complaints," Dr Buckland said.

"Based on this audit, the Ombudsman's office subse-

quently prepared a report, which assessed our system and made a number of recommendations that will enable us to improve it."

Queensland Ombudsman, David Bevan said: "We believe Queensland Health has a comprehensive and well-structured policy, handbook and guidelines that, when fully implemented, will provide an excellent overall complaints management system.

"Our recommendations focussed on the desirability of establishing a central complaint database to enable complaints data across all districts to be collated and analysed and on ways that Queensland Health can improve awareness of its complaints management system among staff in all districts.

"It is pleasing that some of these recommendations are already being addressed. Queensland Health already has some excellent resources on complaints handling – all it needs to do now is ensure staff learn about them."



Training pays off for rowing team

Six weeks solid training was rewarded with second place in the Fours Division B Final, just missing out on first place by a whisker, for the Queensland Health entry “Health Hazard” in the annual Brisbane River Corporate Rowing Challenge last month. The team, pictured in the foreground during the race, was, from left Clare Christiansen (cox), Rose Micallef, Penny Duce, Paul Monaghan and Deb C Hill. The team was fourth in the mixed fours – plate final.

World experts

Together Towards Recovery is the theme of the eighth biennial Australian Schizophrenia Conference to be held at the Sheraton Hotel, Brisbane, from 22-24 September.

The conference is being hosted by Queensland Health, The Park – Centre for Mental Health, and the Queensland Centre for Mental Health Research.

International speakers will address each of the four major subjects for discussion at the conference.

Keynote speakers are Professor Michael J Owen (United Kingdom), Professor Lynn Jorde (United States), Professor Kathy Eagar (Australia), Dr Atalay Alem (Ethiopia), Professor Lynn Delisi (United States), Assistant Professor Deborah Becker (United States) and Professor Robert E Drake (United States).

The speakers will address each of four themes: genet-

ics, health outcomes measurements, epidemiology, and vocational rehabilitation. Goals of the conference include placing recovery from schizophrenia back on the public agenda and promoting professional and community awareness.

Contact: conference secretariat – ICMS Pty Ltd, phone 3844 1138, fax 3844 0909; e-mail: asc2004@icms.com.au

Careers Expo

Making Careers Happen - RBWH Vocational Expo 2004 for junior doctors and medical students will be held at Royal Brisbane and Women's Hospital, Butterfield St, Herston on Friday 18 June.

The expo, from 6.30-9.30 pm, will be held on the first floor, East Block (Dr James Mayne Building).

The expo will answer frequently asked questions about opportunities for future training.

The event has been an educational, networking, and social event for junior and senior doctors as well as medical students.

This is the eighth year the hospital has hosted this event. Forty-two organisations took advantage of this opportunity last year, and 250 medical students and junior doctors attended from across south-east Queensland.

Toregistercontact: Jeni De Hayr, Major Activities Coordinator - 3636 1525 (jeni_de_hayr@health.qld.gov.au), Hazel Winter, PGME Admin 3636 7087 (Hazel_Winter@health.qld.gov.au) Helen McKeering, Medical Education Officer - 3636 5473 (Helen_McKeering@health.qld.gov.au)

in retrospect

A review of some articles from previous Health Matters

October	Paul Taylor wins international scientific award Suicide prevention strategy top priority Three gain annual Churchill Fellowships	February	Surgery advice via cross-Tasman link Service gains gold quality award Program helps rural allied health
November	Ipswich security gains top marks Bali patient's special thanks to staff Queensland Health Strategic plan launched	March	Belinda's dual medals make history \$11m skills centre well on track Five gain Order of Australia honours
December	Unwanted cat a real “life saver” University degree boosts nursing careers Queensland Health strategy map launched	April	Colourful vision for Health Matters Get a kick and be a kid for the day Transplant specialist a major coup

Updated on-line version on www.health.gov.au (under Health Information/News & Events)

MAY

- 1-2** Relay for Life, Brisbane
Queensland Cancer Fund
Phone: 1300 656 585
- 1-16** Lifeline Appeal
Lifeline Brisbane
Phone: 3250 1950
- 1-31** Fit 4 fun
Royal Children's Hospital Foundation
Phone: 3852 1199
- 2-8** Heart Week
The Prince Charles Hospital Foundation
Phone: 3350 8636
- 2-8** Heart Foundation Heart Week
Heart Foundation
Phone: 3872 2512
- 3-16** Guide Dog Week
Guide Dogs Queensland
Phone: 1800 810 119
- 4** World Asthma Day
Asthma Queensland
Phone: 3252 7677
- 4/5-31/7** DAQ reaches Outback
Diabetes Australia - Queensland
Phone: 1300 136 588
- 9-16** Autism Awareness Week
Autism Queensland
Phone: 3273 0000
- 10-16** National Volunteer Week
Volunteering Queensland Inc.
Phone: 3002 7600
- 10-16** RFDS Week
Royal Flying Doctor Service of Australia (Qld section)
Phone: 3860 1100
- 12** International Nurses' Day
Queensland Nurses' Union
Phone: 3840 1444
- 14** Coin for a Cord Day
Inner Wheel Australia
Phone: 5526 7759
- 14** Jeanerosity Day
Cystic Fibrosis Queensland
Phone: 3359 8000
- 16-22** Speech Pathology Week
Speech Pathology Australia
Phone: (03) 9642 4899
- 17-23** Schizophrenia Awareness Week
Mental Illness Fellowship N Q (Inc)
Phone: 4725 3664
- 27** Australia's Biggest Morning Tea
Queensland Cancer Fund
Phone: 1300 656 585
- 29** White Wreath Day - In remembrance of Victims of Suicide
White Wreath Association Inc - Action against Suicide
Phone: 3219 7279
- 30** Annual Service of Thanksgiving
Queenslanders Donate
Phone: 3240 2350
- 30 - 5/6** Kidney Awareness Week
Kidney Health Australia
Phone: (08) 8334 7512
- 31** World No Tobacco Day
Queensland Cancer Fund
Phone: 1300 656 585
- 31-6/6** Macular Degeneration Awareness Week
Macular Degeneration Foundation
Phone: 1800 111 708



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excellence
awards.**

**Nominate the staff whose energy
and creativity are driving the
Smart State: Health 2020 agenda.**

Categories

- Leadership excellence*
- Excellence in partnerships*
- Excellence in innovation and creativity*
- Excellence in corporate citizenship*

Nominations close Friday 4 June 2004

Forms now on qheps or phone 3234 1135

Queensland Health staff excellence awards

