

# HealthMatters

health • care • people



**Queensland  
Government**  
Queensland Health

# Fulbright scholarship for Leanne

**Professor Leanne Aitken**, Chair in Critical Care Nursing at Princess Alexandra Hospital and Griffith University, has been awarded a Fulbright Senior Scholarship to develop collaborative research in trauma care.

Professor Aitken, one of only four Australians chosen this year for the scholarships, will carry out research focusing on improving pain relief and management of sedation in intensive care and trauma patients.

"Severe, penetrating trauma, such as gun shot injuries, are much more common in the US," she said.

"As a result, they have very experienced trauma networks and a well developed understanding of what systems make for effective trauma care.

"This is an opportunity to grow research on a multinational basis and find solutions which are potentially applicable to both health care systems."

Professor Aitken said effective management of trauma patients relied on multidisciplinary teams of medical, nursing and allied health professionals.

She said trauma care could not



*Professor Leanne Aitken: focus on trauma patient care.*

be limited to one particular area, such as the emergency department or the intensive care unit.

She said that while technological advances had improved survival for many critically ill patients, there was room for improvement in long-term out-

comes and quality of life.

There was some evidence that the management of pain and sedation could affect patients' psychological recovery.

"However, if we can improve clinical care during the acute phase of treatment, hopefully we can also improve their long-term recovery," she said.

Professor Aitken will visit the University of Pennsylvania for four months next year, working with Associate Professor Therese Richmond, who is recognised internationally for her expertise in the field of trauma nursing.

She said the number of trauma patients in Australia was low compared with many other countries and trauma nursing was a relatively new specialty.

"Access to an extensive team of trauma advanced practice nurses will provide me with new insights and perspective," she said.

*directions* Michael Reid, Director-General

The invaluable contribution of Queensland Health staff towards high standards and performance in health care reforms will be recognised this month with the inaugural Queensland Health Awards for Excellence.

The awards have attracted an impressive array of entries, and the award ceremony, to be held in Brisbane on 24 April, will showcase Queensland Health's best ideas and work in a range of fields.

Director-General Michael Reid said the awards offered a great chance to demonstrate Queensland Health staff are working hard to improve health care and the health of Queenslanders.

"The awards celebrate the dedication and innovation of Queensland Health teams who develop and deliver high quality health programs and systems in Queensland," he said.

"On a daily basis, Queensland Health staff are focused on maintaining safety and sustainability in our facilities, meeting the health needs of patients, improving service delivery, developing and supporting staff and creating and maintaining beneficial partnerships with the community.

"Strong teamwork and commitment are vital to the continuing development of a health care system which will meet the demanding challenges of providing first-class health care for Queenslanders.

"The Queensland Health Staff Awards provides a valuable opportunity to publicise the benefits of innovative projects which have been developed by groups of committed professionals throughout the health system."

The award categories are structured to align with the Queensland Health Strategic Plan and are divided into two divisions, Performance Awards and Project Awards.



*Michael Reid*

Performance awards will be made for health service districts and for hospitals. These awards will be assessed against indicators which are also used in Queensland Health Hospital Performance Reports.

The Performance Division is broken into five categories:

- smaller rural health service district
- major health service district
- major non-metropolitan hospital
- major metropolitan hospital
- principal referral and specialist hospital.

Project Awards will recognise innovative, sustainable approaches to health care with demonstrable improvements that have real-life impacts and can be readily taken up by other health service districts within Queensland Health.

The project award will be broken into six categories:

- excellence in safety and sustainability
- excellence in meeting health needs
- excellence in service delivery
- excellence in developing and supporting staff
- excellence in developing beneficial partnerships
- excellence in improving the health and wellbeing of Queenslanders.

There will also be peak awards made for improvement in patient safety, the Director-General's Encouragement Award and the Minister's Innovation Award.

For more information on the Staff Awards call 3234 1081.

## Mt Isa work on schedule

**Work is planned** to start in July on electrical upgrade, lift upgrade and kiosk demolition as part of the \$65.2 million redevelopment of Mount Isa Hospital, scheduled for completion in 2011.

The redevelopment will include a single storey ambulatory/community health building, refurbishment and extension of the emergency department/short-stay ward, upgrade of lifts in Block

C, together with minor refurbishment of the medical and surgical ward floors in the building.

It will also deliver new outpatients, primary health and community health facilities in a new building on the current hospital site.

The project includes better training facilities for medical and nursing students at James Cook University's Mount Isa Centre for Rural and Remote Health.

### Cover photo



**Artist** Catherine Dowden puts the finishing touches to her mural in the children's ward treatment room at Mackay Base Hospital. Research has shown that art in hospitals creates a comfortable, caring environment and contributes to quality healing and well-being. Story P3.

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#### Timeframes

Lodge articles for June with the editor before 1 May.

If you have an item you consider newsworthy or require further information on articles in this edition, phone (07) 3234 1090.



Christine Parker: fond memories of Middle East.

## New group's busy time

One of Queensland Health's newest groups, the Performance and Accountability Division, is busy getting down to business at its office in Melbourne St, South Brisbane.

The division, created in December last year, aims to strengthen accountability and governance frameworks across Queensland Health.

With a small yet dynamic team, the division is working across several areas, including performance reporting and monitoring, Queensland Health's governance framework and performance agreements for district and divisional chief executive officers.

Terry Mehan, Deputy Director-General, Performance and Accountability, is the driving force behind the new division.

Terry said strong accountability and governance frameworks were essential in helping Queensland Health achieve its objectives.

"These frameworks help ensure

staff members have a clear sense of their role and how they can contribute both personally and as a team in providing the quality of service we believe our community deserves," he said.

Terry said the division was revising the Queensland Health Strategic Plan, with a renewed focus on national priorities and Queensland's Toward Q2 plan.

He said the updated strategic plan, due for release in several months, would include departmental obligations and provide the sole strategic direction for Queensland Health districts and divisions.

He said the revision would ensure a clear understanding of priorities under the strategic plan and form the basis of performance agreements for district CEOs and the Executive Management Team.

For information on the strategic plan revision or division activities, phone the division on 3895 3194, e-mail [panda@health.qld.gov.au](mailto:panda@health.qld.gov.au) or web <http://qheps.health.qld.gov.au/panda>

## Asthma grants available

Applications close on 1 May for 2010 research grants from the Asthma Foundation of Queensland to assist researchers carry out investigations into either basic asthma medical sciences or asthma clinical fields

Grants will be awarded only to individuals and institutions with access to appropriate research facilities under the supervision of a responsible investigator.

Funding may cover salaries for research, technical, or other assistance as well as the cost of minor

equipment materials and other necessary items.

A portion of the grants is available to newcomers commencing their research careers. Grants have ranged over the past five years from \$15,000 to \$96,000, but applications above and below these values will be considered and assessed upon merit.

**Contact:** Asthma Foundation of Queensland, phone 3252 7677 or 1800 645 130, fax 3257 1080, or web <http://www.asthmaqld.org.au>

## Cultural change a career challenge

Christine Parker, a nurse manager of staffing, got the opportunity – along with millions of other people living in the Middle East – to watch five sets of conjoined twins separated when the operations were streamed live to television.

Although she was ducking in and out of the operating theatre during the procedures many other pairs of eyes were glued to their televisions.

"They were broadcasting the operations live to TV to promote the expertise of the doctors and nursing staff," Christine said.

Christine travelled back to Australia in 2006 to have her son,

but she has fond memories of her 18-months as a clinical director in the Middle Eastern hospital.

"It was such a change and a cultural experience," she said.

"It doesn't matter where you work in the world – the same difficulties and issues arise – but it's all about looking at those difficulties and coming together to find a solution."

Christine began her training in 1979 and spent most of her career in tertiary hospitals in New South Wales, before her stint in the Middle East.

Christine has a Bachelor of Health Service Management and as clinical director looked after

200 beds.

She moved to Queensland after she was encouraged by friends and began at Bundaberg Hospital in January as nurse manager of training.

"I'm looking forward to being part of the team of nursing staff and getting to know my new environment," Christine said.

She said her passions in life include her two-year-old son, photography and travelling.

"I love doing things with my two year old," she said. "It takes me back to how simple things can be – it's such a wonderful time watching him experience things for the first time."

## Nils goes sailing for a good cause

Dr Nils Wagner, Mackay Base Hospital Director of Surgery, has made a sea change for a good cause.

The avid yachtsman will be taking part in the Brisbane to Vanuatu Rally to raise funds for medical and educational supplies for the people of Aore Island and the Banks Islands.

The two villages on Gaua and Vanua Lava Islands have been chosen to benefit from the rally.

Dr Wagner left Mackay in late February to ready his yacht *Muskat* in Brisbane for next month's rally.

"We will visit the Island of Aore where a clinic and dispensary for the Ni-Vanuatu people is operated by Dr Alan Profke," said Dr

Wagner.

"He is the organiser of the Brisbane to Vanuatu Rally and it is the plan for the rally to support medical and educational needs of the people of Aore Island and the Banks Islands.

"The clinic on Aore is financed by a Charitable Association called 'The South Pacific Association' which is registered in Vanuatu.

"I will be treating patients as well as looking at the feasibility of supplying surgical support as one of the clinics has a theatre with questionable functionality."

Dr Wagner late last year called for Mackay Health Service District staff to donate obsolete medical supplies, sporting goods, pencils

for school children as well as basic fishing supplies to be ultimately be donated to the village communities.

He was inundated with donations which will go to good use at hospitals at the isolated villages.

Dr Wagner is also hoping to travel to Moto Lava Island, to Ra Island and the Torres Island.

"We will be conducting clinics in each of the isolated villages and this is an opportunity for a first-hand donation which will directly benefit the people," he said.

"We will transport them with our yacht and no middle people or administration costs will be involved."

## Mural helps sick kids

Artist Catherine Dowden has painted a stunning marine mural, complete with tropical island spanning four walls, to help distract sick kids and brighten up the Mackay Base Hospital children's ward treatment room.

Helen Alvers, Mackay Base Hospital Child and Adolescent Unit Nurse Unit Manager, said the children loved the room's new look.

"We've all been watching Catherine's work progress over the past month," she said

Catherine volunteered to paint a mural in the kids ward

treatment room after reading in a newspaper about an idea to give the room a facelift. She said she had been more than happy to take on the project for sick kids, having created similar murals elsewhere in Mackay.

Nurse Gillian Wright said Catherine had done wonders to improve the environment of the children's treatment room.

"Having children in hospital is difficult for any family, and it is generous donations and offers like this that help make their stay less stressful while we continue to ensure they receive the very best care," she said.

## Picky eaters

Two United States experts will address a Queensland Health sponsored workshop on feeding difficulties, weight and growth problems in Brisbane in July.

The conference, organised by the Children's Nutrition Research Centre, University of Queensland, will be held on 28-30 July at the Education Centre, Royal Brisbane and Women's Hospital.

The keynote speakers are Dr Kay Toomey (paediatric psychologist) and Dr Erin Ross (speech/language pathologist and clinical research fellow in nutrition).

**Contact:** Children's Nutrition Research Centre, phone 3636 1981, or e-mail [cnrc@uq.edu.au](mailto:cnrc@uq.edu.au) or web <http://www.som.uq.edu.au/cnrc.htm>

## Nurses refreshed for Esk return

A Queensland Health initiative to encourage nurses to return to the health workforce has seen two nurses fill positions at Esk Hospital.

Queensland Health's Rural Return to Nursing campaign was developed to encourage and assist out-of-industry qualified nurses to return to work in rural facilities.

Pam Lane, District Chief Executive Officer, Darling Downs-West Moreton Health Service District, said the project used innovative recruitment strategies to attract nurses to Queensland Health's rural facilities.

One of the successful candidates in the refresher program, Diane Britten, is a registered nurse who came back to nursing because it was a career she always admired and enjoyed being involved in.

"I returned to nursing to improve my professional and clinical skills," she said.

"Doing the nursing refresher program at Esk Health Service was great. The atmosphere was pleasant and they are all such lovely, patient people.

"I would recommend anyone thinking of coming back to nursing to do the same; the rewards are out there, you just need to reach out and get them."

Pam said the district could assist nurses to re-establish their careers, through specialised Queensland Health refresher and re-entry programs, and the Federal Government's Bringing Nurses Back into the Workforce program.

"The refresher and re-entry programs are a combination of

educational modules and supervised clinical practice, designed to help people return to their nursing careers," she said.

"It's the perfect way to get your nursing career back on track, and to reconnect your skills and experience with the local community.

"Benefits of returning to work as a nurse in a rural facility include family-friendly or flexible work arrangements, professional development opportunities, qualification allowances and tax and superannuation benefits.

"The project is an initiative of the Queensland Health People Plan 2007-2012, developed to recognise the strategic workforce priorities such as the attraction, recruitment and retention of staff."



The Griffith University medical students at the special welcome function.

## Future needs targeted

A special welcoming ceremony was held last month at Griffith University on the Gold Coast for 50 medical students who will eventually help overcome doctor shortages in some of Queensland's areas of greatest need.

The students, who started their studies as Queensland Health Bonded Medical Scholarship recipients at the university in January, were welcomed by Pattie Hudson, Senior Director, Office of Rural and Remote Health.

The students are the fourth intake under the \$60 million scholarship scheme that will see a total of 235 medical students recruited

over a period of five years. Following graduation, the scholarship recipients will work in Queensland Areas of Priority Service.

Areas of Priority Service can be either or both geographical areas and fields of medical practice (or specialty disciplines).

The fields of future medical practice are recommended by members of a reference group, which includes Queensland Health, community and medical college representatives. Scholarship recipients will be assisted with vocational guidance and career planning throughout their medical studies and bonded service.

## First early lung cancer screening

Australia's first early detection lung cancer program is underway at The Prince Charles Hospital with the aim of recruiting 750 people this year to take part free of charge in a six year study.

The program is funded by The Prince Charles Hospital Foundation, Queensland Smart State and the National Centre for Asbestos Related Diseases.

People interested in taking part should be aged between 60 and 74

years and either currently smoke or have been 'pack a day' smokers for 30 years in the past.

Lung cancer is the biggest cancer killer in the world, with 8000 new cases and 7000 deaths per year in Australia alone.

Researcher Dr Henry Marshall said the project would use low radiation dose computer tomography (CT scans) to look for small nodules which might not be detected in ordinary chest x-rays

"In recent years lung cancer deaths have stayed at the same level, while breast and colon cancer deaths have decreased," he said

"This is because lung cancer is often not diagnosed until it is already in the advanced stages.

"We're hoping to demonstrate that CT scanning can detect lung cancer while it is still in the early stages, giving patients a better chance at recovery.

"Participants will have a free CT scan every year for three years and then continue to be monitored for the next three years.

"The CT scan takes images in slices and allows us to look for tiny nodules and potential cancers that might otherwise be too small to be identified."

The findings from the study will be compared with similar American and European studies to tailor future screening programs to the Australian public and health system. Other aspects of the project aim to evaluate gas chromatography to detect specific compounds in exhaled breath which indicate lung cancer and to analyse blood DNA to identify a possible genetic predisposition towards lung cancer.

Current smokers who wish to quit may also participate in a randomised trial of an intensive smoking cessation program to determine whether this additional effort helps more people quit.

## Amazing race to fitness

Fitness has been taken to a new fun level for staff the Prince Charles Hospital with the introduction of Amazing Races on a circuit taking in the Chermside pool, park, shopping centre and library.

Participants decipher cryptic rhyming destination clues which lead them to new destinations where they perform challenges.

The challenges may involve finding out information, performing physical tasks, treasure hunting, purchasing items or interviewing people to obtain information.

After completing each challenge participants read the next

destination clue. The adventure continues until a destination clue says to return to the starting point.

Participants can either enter as a team of 10 or five teams of two. The teams of two complete the same journey with slightly different challenges determined by a lucky or not so lucky dip at each new destination.

The teams of 10 initially receive three separate destination clues which will send them on different adventures. The race is over when all three adventures are completed and proof of all challenges being completed is brought back to the starting point.

## Safer venues rewarded

A total of 28 licensed venues have entered for the sixth year of the Toowoomba Safer Venues Awards, a project partly sponsored by Queensland Health, which aims to improve patron safety.

The project is a partnership between Queensland Health, Office of Liquor, Gaming and Racing, Queensland Police Service, Department of Emergency Services, Toowoomba Regional Council, Toowoomba Liquor Industry Action Group Inc. and the local liquor industry.

Paula Smith, from the Darling Downs Population Health Unit, said the Safer Venues project aims to reduce negative outcomes such as injury, violence and street crime by working proactively with the liquor industry to improve safety in and around licensed venues.

"It's all about making Toowoomba and surrounds a safe community to live, work and play," she said.

"Participating venues are surveyed to determine how well they comply with a predetermined set of standards that contribute to patron safety.

"The survey covers a range of areas, including responsible service of alcohol, fire safety, workplace health and safety, tobacco legislation and security.

"General requirements, such as lighting and access, are also examined. These survey tools are continually updated in accordance with legislative changes in the liquor industry."

To reward their proactive efforts, venues are eligible to receive a gold, silver or bronze award in one of three categories of CBD/live entertainment venue, suburban venue and small club.

The People's Choice Award encourages members of the public to vote for the venue they believed to be the safest in each category.

## Breast-feeding education on-line

A computer program to encourage women to breast feed their babies is being developed by the Caboolture Hospital Maternity Unit, along with agency and community groups in the Moreton Bay Region.

The 'user-friendly' program will give easy access to current, evidence-based principles, treatment options, prevention strategies and tips on health education and promotion for breast feeding.

Marion Baker, Breastfeeding Education at Caboolture Hospital, says the program includes printable versions of each section which can be used by mothers to

help with in-home management, an extensive referral list and helpful links.

Marion said a post-birth consumer survey prepared for Queensland Health identified that the conflicting advice and inappropriate management were still very real barriers for breastfeeding women.

"As a result, representatives of major support groups and health agencies have been meeting over the past six months to design this computer tool," she said.

"It will be used by health professionals during consultation with mothers and babies who experi-

ence breastfeeding difficulties."

Marion said the program covered 12 of the common problems experienced by breastfeeding mothers and babies, and aims to help health professionals to provide better care for families.

She said the program would be loaded on to computers in about 150 surgeries, clinics, hospitals and health centres across the region.

Current figures for the Caboolture/ Redcliffe area showed breastfeeding rates at about 23-25 per cent at three months. This compared poorly to the Queensland Health targets of 80 per cent exclusive breastfeeding at six months.

## Learning package a major success

Fifty-nine Queensland Health facilities took part in the 2008 state-wide online Health-e-Learning lactation education program, with funding provided by Queensland Health Maternity, Child Health and Safety Branch.

Corelle Davies, Senior Branch Director, Maternity Child Health and Safety, said the program aligned with the goals of the Baby Friendly Health Initiative.

"The self-directed education package was designed to enhance the skills of clinicians and facilitate evidence-based infant feeding practices," she said.

"The education module was accessed by registered and enrolled nurses, Indigenous health workers, midwives, nurse educators

and medical officers in hospitals and community health facilities throughout Queensland.

"Overall participation and completion rates across the state to date have been outstanding with 76 per cent of all participants completing the module, and 25 of the 59 participating facilities achieving completion rates of between 80 and 100 per cent."

Corelle said a survey of the first round of participants suggested the additional training in breastfeeding significantly increased the confidence of clinical staff.

She said 65 per cent of staff who completed the course evaluation indicated the online education was useful to their current role, and a further 90 per cent indicated they

were more likely to change their current clinical practice as a result of the training. She said the module offered comprehensive coverage of all aspects of breastfeeding.

"The lactation education offered by Health-e-Learning is an effective way to ensure Queensland Health staff are providing the highest standard of infant feeding advice and support to all mothers and babies across Queensland," Corelle said.

"Health-e-Learning is continuing to offer enrolments for Queensland Health staff at a discounted rate with enrollees given six months to complete the course."

For information on enrolment contact Steve Fisher at [steve@health-learning.com](mailto:steve@health-learning.com)

## Two gain international recognition

Two lactation consultants, Shirley Hewitt and Charmaine Blain, from the Northern Suburbs Team, Community Child Health Services, Children's Health Services District, have gained accreditation as International Board Certified Lactation Consultants (IBCLC).

The team operates services from Pine Rivers Community Health Centre, Kallangur, Dayboro and Albany Creek child health centres. The IBCLC credential is widely recognised by employers, colleagues and consumers as the gold standard in breastfeeding expertise.

Health professionals accredited by the board have typically spent

at least four years acquiring the experience and education which are the necessary prerequisites for certification.

They have passed a rigorous certification examination and keep their knowledge and skills up to date through a compulsory recertification program. They are required to practice within a Code of Ethics.

The certification exam is an independent means of evaluating whether a candidate has reached the required level of competence to practise as a lactation consultant.

IBCLCs are the only lactation consultants recognised by the

International Lactation Consultant Association and all national professional associations for lactation consultants throughout the world.

Shirley and Charmaine thanked the Community Child Health Service management for the support and encouragement in their personal achievement and professional development.

"It is uplifting to see an increasing number of staff seeking to improve their knowledge and skill surrounding breastfeeding and lactation," Charmaine said.

"They recognise the need to protect, promote and support breastfeeding to promote better health outcomes."



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

### Scheduled services

#### Mobile Services

Rockhampton: until 1 May, Gladstone

Toowoomba: until 22 May, Dalby.

Townsville: until 29 May, North Ward.

#### Relocatable Services

Bundaberg: until 6 April, Monto; 7-17 April, Biggenden.

Cairns: until 1 May, Atherton.

Gold Coast: until 8 April, Palm Beach; 14 April until 4 June, Helensvale.

Nambour: 20 April until 7 May, Tin Can Bay.

North Brisbane: until 31 May, Nundah.

The BreastScreen Queensland Program continues to maintain extremely high standards of service and care. As age is the biggest risk factor in developing breast cancer, the program targets women aged 50-69 years. Women over the age of 40 are also eligible.

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:** Cancer Screening Services Unit on 3234 1596.

## Long service recalled

In this day and age staff members often only invest two to three years in a job before moving on, but a Gayndah doctor's 40 years of service is a remarkable achievement.

Gayndah Hospital's Medical Superintendent Dr Henry Ung has dedicated four decades of his life to the Gayndah community and, on reflection, is proud of his achievements.

When Dr Ung arrived on February 2, 1969, with his wife Elaine and two children, Linda 4 and David, 3, Gayndah was in drought.

"It was very hot and dry, the house we were to live in had been a bachelor's pad so there was no woman's touch - it was all bit of a shock especially, for the family," he said.

And there was no time to slowly settle in with his first patient being a young boy needing stitches to his leg at 4.30pm.

Then, during a public reception that night to farewell the previous medical superintendent, Dr Ung was called to the hospital at 8.30pm to deliver his first baby.

Coincidentally he still remembers both patients' names.

Dr Ung, of Malaysian and Chinese heritage, came to Australia in 1958. He completed his medical degree at Brisbane University (now UQ) graduating in 1965. He

spent two years as a resident medical officer in Maryborough from 1966-67 and then surgical registrar for one year before moving to Gayndah.

Dr Ung said he received excellent surgical training from the then superintendent Dr Alan Perina and Dr Ken Carroll.

"This training stood me in good stead for coming to Gayndah as in those early days I was able to carry out many surgical procedures at Gayndah Hospital, as there was no aerial ambulance service in those days," Dr Ung said.

As a medical superintendent, with rights to private practise, Dr Ung returned to his Gayndah surgery after six months sick leave.

When asked why he stayed in the one town for so many years ... he jokingly said "maybe I'm mad".

"Seriously, I love the place, it's not far from Brisbane or the coast ... but it's the people, they are so wonderful," he said.

The respect he has established within the community was evident last year when he suffered a ruptured spleen and "nearly died" three times.

Dr Ung received the Medal of the Order of Australia for services to the Gayndah Community as a Medical Practitioner in the Queen's Birthday Honours in 2007.

# infomatters

## Jemima enjoys a purr-fect lifestyle

**Jemima, the cat,** is one of Queensland Health's most loyal volunteers, arriving as a stray 19 years ago at Sarina Hospital and Primary Health Care Centre.

Jemima Felix, (to give her full name), was just nine-months-old when she arrived on the hospital doorstep and promptly gave birth to nine kittens.

The regal ex-stray never forgot the support she was given when she was an abandoned, heavily pregnant, under-age mum, all those years ago and decided to stay on as a volunteer. Move forward 19 years to today and Jemima can be found doing her daily hospital rounds checking in on patients and greeting visitors.

Delma Sellers, Sarina Hospital and Primary Health Care Centre Business Manager, said even visiting medical staff were aware of Jemima's fame and often brought treats with them.

"Jemima definitely runs the show," she said.

"She charms the staff, and acknowledges the staff who attend to her catering needs. As a senior citizen of the hospital, she now enjoys a soft diet, frequent visitors



*Jemima relaxing from her arduous life at Sarina Hospital.*

and listens in on the conversations as she blissfully suns herself.

"Jemima is also the only unofficial Queensland Health employee who is allowed to nod off on the job."

When she is not getting pampered by visitors and hospital staff, Jemima can be found spending her time lounging on the outdoor retreat area, or sleeping in one of the offices. No one can remember the exact date Jemima turned up

19 years ago but she had been in desperate need of a warm bed and a good meal and she found it at the hospital.

A staff member brought a spare basket for her to sleep in, another regularly brings worming tablets while yet another took Jemima to the vet and had her spayed.

## Guest speaker

**Michael Reid**, Director-General, Queensland Health, will deliver the opening address to the Alcohol and Drug Foundation Queensland's 22nd annual conference and Australian Winter School.

The Winter School, at The Sebel and Citigate King George Square Hotel, Brisbane on 25-27 May, brings together professionals addressing alcohol and other drugs across health, education, law enforcement, corrections, policy and research.

With the theme *Integration: Research - Policy - Practice*, the school has its major emphasis on the practical implementation of research and policy, combined with showcasing an innovative program.

**Contact:** The Australian Winter School, phone 3834 0214, fax 3832 2527, e-mail [winterschool@adfq.org](mailto:winterschool@adfq.org), web <http://www.winterschool.info>

## Funds boosting research

**Funding of \$25.65 million** over four years will support improved medical research and development under the Research for a healthier future: 2020 Health and Medical Research and Development Strategy.

A total of \$20.55 million has been allocated under the Health Research Fellowship Program to recruit, develop and retain a skilled health research workforce. The program includes four levels of fellowships, including Australia's most generous health research fellowships, the Senior Clinical Research Fellowships consisting of up to \$850,000 a year for five years.

A \$1.5 million Knowledge Transfer Initiative will promote the transfer of knowledge into improved health and wealth, to

improve the translation of research into health benefits and economic opportunities.

The Office of Health and Medical Research (OHMR) has been established within Queensland Health to provide clear leadership, direction and promote Queensland's research capability and opportunities.

OHMR will support health professionals to undertake research, and facilitating collaborations between clinicians, academia and industry.

Professor Robin Mortimer, appointed the Senior Director of OHMR, comes from the Royal Brisbane and Women's Hospital where he was Director of the Department of Endocrinology and Head of the Conjoint Endocrine Laboratory.

## diary

### APRIL

- 1-30** Great Australian Bite  
Diabetes Australia Queensland  
Phone: 3239 5666
- 7** World Health Day  
United Nations Organisation  
Phone: (02) 6273 8200
- 17** Wish Day  
Make a Wish Australia  
Phone: 3221 0725
- 17** World Haemophilia Day  
Haemophilia Foundation Australia  
Phone: 1800 807 173
- 14-27** Intensive Care Appeal  
Intensive Care Foundation  
Phone: (03) 9340 3447
- 24** National Coin for a Cord Day  
Inner Wheel Australia  
E-mail: [webmaster@innerwheelaustralia.org.au](mailto:webmaster@innerwheelaustralia.org.au)
- 24** Intensive Care Day  
Intensive Care Foundation  
Phone: (03) 9340 3447
- 25** World Malaria Day  
United Nations Organisation  
Phone: (02) 6273 8200
- 27-3** World Homeopathy Awareness Week  
Australian Homeopathic Association  
Phone: (03) 5979 1558
- May**
- 30** International Guide Dog Day  
Guide Dogs Queensland  
Phone: 1800 810 119

Updated on-line version on [www.health.qld.gov.au](http://www.health.qld.gov.au)  
(under Health Information/Events)

## Innovation in practice

**Professor Alison Kitson**, Head of Discipline of Nursing, Adelaide University, South Australia, is the keynote speaker at the 2nd Passionate about Practice conference at the Brisbane Convention and Exhibition Centre on 29-30 July.

The conference, an initiative of the Office of the Chief Nursing Officer, Queensland Health, has the themes innovation in practice, partnerships in practice, and technology in practice.

Pauline Ross, Chief Nursing Officer, said the conference was targeted at all front-line nurses,

midwives and nursing students and provided a great opportunity to network with colleagues.

"Following the inaugural conference in 2008, we received very positive feedback and great ideas for this year's conference and have developed an exciting program for delegates," she said.

"We have invited expert and passionate speakers from state, national and international specialty fields in nursing and midwifery."

**Contact:** conference secretariat, phone 3834 3333 or web [www.iamevents.com.au/qh/pass](http://www.iamevents.com.au/qh/pass)

## Family advice CD released

The second edition of *Contraception: an Australian clinical practice handbook* has been released on CD by Family Planning Queensland to give general practitioners and nurses access to latest information on contraception. The edition has a chapter helpful when prescribing in special circumstances, including to those with medical conditions of

concern, as well as to young people, those over 40 and women living with a disability. Contraceptive technologies used overseas, including those which may become available in Australia in the future, are also covered.

**Contact:** Family Planning Queensland, phone 3250 0240, fax 3250 0292, web <http://www.fpq.com.au>