



**Please attribute the following to Dr Michael Cleary, Deputy Director-General, Health Service and Clinical Innovation Division**

Queensland Health understands that when an adverse event occurs in a hospital it is an upsetting and distressing time for patients and families.

The overwhelming majority of care delivered at the Townsville Hospital and Health Service and its associated facilities is safe and effective and is a testament to the dedication and commitment of all staff.

In July-September 2013, the number of clinical incidents relating to serious harm at The Townsville Hospital amounted to 0.5 per cent of the total number of incidents for that quarter.

That is a rate of less than one patient in 10,000 patient stays at The Townsville Hospital.

This rate of 0.5 per cent is similar to the state-wide average – and the evidence from studies show that half of these are not preventable with current medical knowledge.

Unfortunately, clinical incidents do occur in every health system in the world and when they happen in Queensland we seek to resolve them as soon as possible.

Every time an incident occurs, we seek to learn from it and find ways to prevent its recurrence.

There are also a number of state-wide patient safety improvement programs to address the major areas in which patient harm is reported. A good example is the pressure injury, commonly referred to as bedsores, prevention program.

Since 2006 we have seen improvements in pressure injury prevention result in a 28 per cent reduction in pressure ulcers.

This amounts to about 2,300 patients who have had their pressure ulcer prevented. Our hospital staff are determined to put patients first and ensure they receive the best care available when and where they need it most.

**ENDS**