Medical Research Week 2016 shines spotlight on SCHHS research

A Sunshine Coast Hospital and Health Service (SCHHS) study BEaRRS all in the health of patients undergoing kidney support in the Intensive Care Unit (ICU).

The BEaRRS (Base Excess and Renal Substitution Solution) study will be in the spotlight as part of the SCHHS Medical Research Week 2016 (2 to 10 June).

Director of Intensive Care Dr Chris Anstey said the study aims to decrease the patient’s length of stay in ICU by designing a better, less complex system for patients on kidney support.

Dr Anstey said BEaRRS looked into using lower concentrations of citrate (salt) as the blood thinner for patients needing kidney support and has proven the SCHHS ICU to be a leader in its field both nationally and internationally.

“The study examines the biochemical effect of two concentrations of citrate when used as blood thinners for patients undergoing kidney support in the ICU,” he said.

“Our research showed patients using one solution (Namsol) showed a range of improvements, including the ability to be weaned off a ventilator earlier, and had a lower level of sodium in their blood levels.

“As a direct result of this research, we now use Namsol exclusively, and our kidney support practice is simple, safer and highly effective,” Dr Anstey said.

Dr Anstey is now developing a protocol for kidney support in the ICU.

“While these studies aren’t very glamorous, they are good basic science which translates into significant practice changes.

“We also use them as teaching examples for any of our junior staff who wish to learn about conducting research,” Dr Anstey said.

The BEaRSS study, which was undertaken in the Intensive Care Unit between October 2013 and February 2015 and it enrolled 50 patients, has been finalised and accepted for international publication.

Medical Research Week is a celebration of Australia’s contributions to medical research. The week includes a speaking tour, public expositions, lectures and debates, radio shows school events and much more.

SCHHS staff are currently undertaking about 200 active research projects.

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