21 October 2014

There’s no place like home

Suitable patients in the Sunshine Coast Hospital and Health Service (SCHHS) area can now receive care traditionally delivered in hospital, but in the comfort of their own home, or a residential care facility.

Hospital in the Home (HITH) is a new service being funded by the Queensland Government and offered by the SCHHS in a public-private partnership with Silver Chain, a not-for-profit health and community care organisation.

SCHHS HITH Project Manager Sandie Pott said the service would allow more patients the choice to receive health care in their own home.

Several national and international reviews have prompted the use of HITH as a model that:

- has the potential to provide patients with greater choice in their care
- improves access to health services
- provides equal or better patient care outcomes
- improves efficiencies in service delivery.

Marianne Parry, a resident of Southern Cross Nursing Home at Caloundra, received intravenous antibiotics every day for 32 days in the nursing home for treatment of an infected elbow through the HITH program.

Her husband John said the fact that his wife was treated by a doctor without having to leave the nursing home was a blessing.

“Marianne was able to remain with her friends and there was minimal disruption to her daily routines and also my ability to visit her,” Mr Parry said.

HITH patients remain classified as hospital patients for the duration of the episode of care.

Silver Chain HITH team and their consortium partners provide 24 hour a day hospital-level care, within the home or nursing home environment. Admission to the
HITH arrangements is under the medical governance of highly skilled and credentialed medical officers.

Patient reviews are conducted either via telehealth or as a scheduled clinic review.

Moira Goodwin, Silver Chain Group Queensland State Manager, said Silver Chain was excited to give the Sunshine Coast community the option to receive safe, sustainable, high quality hospital level care at home.

“HITH provides patients with greater choice in their care, equal or better patient care outcomes, improved access to health services and improved efficiencies in service delivery,” Ms Goodwin added.

**Media opportunity: Wednesday 22 October at 11.00am** - Interview with patient Mrs Marianne Parry, Dr K McQuaid and Dr C Wilkinson at the Southern Cross Nursing Home, Caloundra.

ENDS

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**Fast facts:**

- To date, 41 patients of the SCHHS have received HITH services through the arrangement with Silver Chain since it commenced in 2014.
- Hospital in the Home is a publicly funded service, free to eligible patients.
- Participation in HITH is voluntary, with access depending on the patient’s condition and treatment.
- Some patients may be directly admitted from the emergency department or may have a stay in hospital first, and then be transferred into HITH to continue their treatment at home.
- Hospital level treatment will be provided at home under the care of a medical practitioner for conditions including infections of the skin, urinary tract and lungs as well as blood clots in the legs and lungs.
- HITH is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week.
- The service is available to patients who reside in the Sunshine Coast Hospital and Health Service region.
- HITH is a priority commitment for the Queensland Government and the government’s *Blueprint for better healthcare in Queensland*, launched in 2013, encourages the increased use of HITH.