Toowoomba Hospital celebrates Speech Pathology Week

Members of the Toowoomba Hospital speech pathology team are shining a light on their profession during Speech Pathology Week, which runs from 7-13 August.

Veronique Anderson, Toowoomba Hospital Acting Assistant Director Speech Pathology, said the aim was to raise awareness of the broad scope of work done by speech pathologists.

“I think there’s a common misconception that speech pathology as a profession deals almost exclusively with children’s speech difficulties, but in fact it covers treatment across the entire lifespan,” she said.

“One of our goals during Speech Pathology Week is to educate people about the various things we do and let them know how to access our services.

“There’s a wide scope of practice, with children and adults.

“We see a lot of children who have difficulty speaking, listening and understanding, or eating and drinking and we also treat adult patients, for example, people who have suffered a stroke, have a progressive disease, dementia or various other medical conditions such as cancer.”

Toowoomba Hospital Stroke Rehab Unit patient Mr Jack Hayes has been working with speech pathologist Maddy Dawson and speech pathology student Rhianna Kemm.

“The speech pathology team have been really good,” Mr Hayes said.

“They work hard to explain to me what has to be done and they’re always doing their best to help me improve.”

Ms Dawson said Mr Hayes had made good progress and responded very well to speech pathology treatment.

“Since he came in the unit Jack has done very well and his speech has improved considerably,” she said.

“From a rehab point of view we focus on a patient’s ability to eat, drink and swallow safely. We assess their ability to swallow safely and then we may need to modify their food and drinks so that they are safe for patients to eat and swallow.

“We also look at communication, particularly looking at how the patient can be understood by their family and friends, as well as communicate effectively while they’re in hospital.

“We assess a patient’s ability to use the right words, use the correct language and understand words, and we also look at how we can help patients to make their speech as clear as possible.
“It’s very rewarding to see a patient do the best they can and achieve real results when we’re working with them through their rehab treatment.”

Speech Pathology Week runs from 7-13 August. More information can be found at the Speech Pathology Australia website www.speechpathologyaustralia.org.au

Ends

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