30 May 2018

Make every day World No Tobacco Day.

Smoking is one of the leading preventable causes of death and disease in Australia, responsible for about 15000 deaths annually, more than 3300 of these in Queensland.

World No Tobacco Day (31 May) aims to highlight the risks associated with tobacco use.

Jane Neill, Sunshine Coast Hospital and Health Service Respiratory Nurse Practitioner Candidate, said “Smoking is known to be one of the main risk factors for chronic diseases such as cancer, lung disease and heart disease. The World Health Organisation reports that tobacco kills up to half of its users, however the disability that smoking related disease causes people is equally distressing and often not considered”.

“People are aware that smoking causes cancer however not as much attention is placed on some of the other serious conditions including Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD). It’s the fourth largest killer of Australians and smoking is the biggest risk factor,” she said.

COPD is an umbrella term covering emphysema, chronic bronchitis and non-reversible asthma.

Sunshine Coast University Hospital introduced the Respiratory Acute Discharge Service (RADS) from 28 May. This program will enable some COPD sufferers to be discharged home earlier than usual with a team of specialist nurses managing their care.

Ms Neill said: “The program is a concept that has been tried in other areas of the country and has been found to be successful in reducing the amount of time patients who have COPD spend in hospital, therefore they can avoid coming into contact with other virus’s.

“RADS will also provide ongoing education and support for patients to best manage COPD or quit smoking. For example, as the winter kicks in we urge patients to speak to their GP about having a flu vaccination and reviewing their COPD or asthma action plan.

“We are encouraging our patients to consider using the Minor Injuries Clinic (MIC) at Caloundra Hospital if they feel that might need hospital care, and referrals can be made to the respiratory nurses via this resource,” she said.

Quitting smoking is the most important intervention in COPD management. When you quit, it immediately improves your health and wellbeing:

• Within 12 hours blood levels of carbon monoxide drop dramatically,
• Within 1 year there is a large drop in your risk of heart attack and stroke and this risk will continue to gradually decrease over time
• After 10 years the risk of lung cancer is lower than that of a continuing smoker
People wishing to quit smoking should contact their doctor; the Cancer Council Helpline on 10 11 20, Quitline on 13 QUIT (13 78 48) or visit www.quitnow.info.au

ENDS

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Media contact: Alicia Temple/ Alexia Kelly | 07 5202 0083 | 0408 713 747

Media Opportunity:

When: Thurs 31st May, 2018, 10:30am
Where: Sunshine Coast University Hospital, meet at main foyer
Who: Jane Neill, Sunshine Coast Hospital and Health Service Respiratory Nurse Practitioner Candidate for interview and photos.