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**Movement disorder clinic offering hope to Parkinson’s patients**

Maleny Soldiers Memorial Hospital is helping to restore hope and quality of life for Parkinson’s Disease patients through its movement disorder clinic.

The unique specialist lead multidisciplinary clinic treats patients with complex movement problems, such as end stage Parkinson’s Disease, and determines a care plan based on individual’s needs.

Cooran resident Noel Smith has had monthly appointments at the clinic for the past two years to treat Parkinson’s Disease, and has seen a great improvement in his ability to walk and talk.

“The symptoms of Parkinson’s Disease make it feel like you are trapped in your own body, and it’s very frustrating not being able to perform simple tasks like putting on your shoes and socks,” Mr Smith said.

Through consultation with the clinic, he has been fitted with a duodopa pump, which involves surgery to place a pumping device in the patient’s stomach, to slowly administer a gel-like dual medication, to treat the effects of Parkinson’s Disease.

For some patients, this medication is proving very successful.

“I have these moments of elation now when all the joints and my arms and legs just work. Some days are better than others, but overall, I’ve had a significant improvement in my quality of life since attending the clinic,” Mr Smith said.

For Kawana resident Mrs Dianne Gray, attending the clinic and being fitted with a duodopa has allowed her to rediscover her life’s passion of painting.

Since regaining mobility throughout her body, Mrs Gray has started painting again.

“When I started painting, I felt like I came alive again. It was always something that came so easily to me, so losing the ability to paint was what hurt the most” Mrs Gray said.

The 76-year-old now paints the packaging boxes her duodopa medication comes in, as a way of showing Parkinson’s Disease that it hasn't won.

Maleny movement disorder clinic is run by Dr Tony Tampiyappa, the Clinical Director of Stroke, Neurology, Geriatric and Rehabilitation services at the Sunshine Coast Hospital and Health Service.
Dr Tampiyappa says the multidisciplinary approach to patient care is what makes the clinic so successful.

“The clinic provides a one-stop service for the assessment and treatment of Parkinson’s disease, as well as access to available community services.

“Patients see the specialist as well as the full allied health team including, occupational therapist, physiotherapist, speech pathologist, dietician and social worker depending on their need. This can occur in one visit or spread over a few days. When a patient leaves the clinic, they have a complete care plan including education and follow up packaged for them,” Dr Tampiyappa said.

Parkinson’s disease is a chronic, progressive disorder of the central nervous system which results in the loss of coordinated function of the body’s muscles and movement.

Interview/ photo opportunities with Dr Tampiyappa and patient Dianne Gray are available on request.

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