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Sunshine Coast man given a second chance at life: “I am the luckiest man in Australia!”

When 48 year old family man, R. Cuneyt Zeren went out for dinner with his wife on Friday 12 June 2015, he had no idea life as he knew it was about to change forever.

“It was a rainy night in Maroochydore. One minute I was walking along Ocean Street with my wife, the next thing I knew I was waking up in the ambulance. I was in shock and had no idea what had happened to me,” Cuneyt said.

Cuneyt had suffered an out of hospital cardiac arrest. His heart had stopped and he required the use of a defibrillator to get his heart working again. Without the quick thinking assistance of a security officer on duty that night and an off duty cardiac nurse who performed CPR on Cuneyt until the ambulance arrived; Cuneyt might have lost his fight for life.

In further good news for Cuneyt, public patients requiring intervention for cardiac conditions no longer need to travel to Brisbane for specialist cardiac services.

Sunshine Coast Hospital and Health Service (SCHHS) is continuing to grow its services such as cardiology to better meet the community’s needs and offers a Cardiac Catheterisation Laboratory (CCL) at Nambour General Hospital.

“When the ambulance arrived at Nambour General Hospital I saw so many staff waiting for me with a patient trolley,” Cuneyt said.

“I remember the way they very quickly picked me up and I knew then there was no time to waste. I was scared, but when I arrived at the hospital I felt a confidence within me. I knew I was in good hands.”

At Nambour General Hospital, the team in the emergency department prepared and transferred Cuneyt to the Cardiac Catheter Labs. A Coronary Angiogram was performed to determine where the blockage was and three stents were deployed.

Clinical nurse consultant, Kerrie Hall was on duty the night Cuneyt was brought in. She remembers her pager beeping at 11pm that night and receiving the phone call by the after-hours nurse manager to come into the hospital immediately for a patient who was having a heart attack.

“Our dedicated team met the ambulance and emergency staff with a gentleman who was pale, sweaty and in a lot of discomfort,” Kerrie recalled.
“Within 15 minutes of Cuneyt entering our Cardiac Labs, the blocked coronary vessel was identified and opened by a stent. The procedure was completed within an hour and Cuneyt was transferred to the Coronary Care Unit with no pain, talking and very appreciative.”

Cuneyt remembers the doctor showing him the Coronary angiogram and as he saw his heart beating the doctor told him, “You are a miracle. Somehow you have been given a second chance.”

“I am so thankful about my whole experience. From the security officer and nurse in Ocean Street, to the ambulance crew, to the doctors and nurses at Nambour Hospital, I feel that everyone has done so much to care for me,” Cuneyt said.

“Even though English is my second language, I felt so comfortable in the hospital; I knew I was being helped and I was in good hands. I believed in their treatment of me, I never had any doubt.

“I believe that if someone is given a second chance, he is a very lucky man.

“I am the luckiest man in Australia!”

QUICK FACTS: SCHHS Cardiac Catheterisation Laboratory

- The creation of a Cardiac Catheterisation Laboratory (CCL) ahead of the opening of the Sunshine Coast Public University Hospital was a planned key step to ensure that a solid foundation for interventional cardiology capacity was established on which further expansion of this important service can occur.
- The CCL performed approximately 1600 coronary angiograms last year including 600 stent procedures.
- The region has one of the busiest primary stent implantation (PCI) services in the state, performing over 200 emergency interventions for the high risk heart attack patients last year.
- This service is offered 24 hours every day through collaboration with the Queensland Ambulance Service.
- The CCL has consistently exceeded international benchmark standards for this service and has undoubtedly improved the outcomes for these patients through timely intervention.

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Media contact: Kirsty Olsen | 5470 6616 | 0408 713 747

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