

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

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### **Hospital snags win in Carnival of Flowers gardening competition**

The Oakey Hospital has bagged a win in its first year of entering the Toowoomba Carnival of Flowers competition.

The hospital and residential aged-care facility took first place in the 'Country Nursing Home' section of the competition.

Recreation Officer Lynda White said the hospital's gardens were different to others in the competition.

"The gardens are quite extensive but most of the work is done by volunteers and many of the materials have been donated by local businesses as well as families, in comparison to some of the other entrants who might have smaller gardens but employ a paid gardener to maintain them.

"The garden is coming into its best now and as you can see, the patients and residents are enjoying coming out to sit in the gardens and enjoy a bit of quiet.

"Once the roses start blooming, we will be able to cut flowers and put them on the tables inside," Ms White said.

Acting Director of Nursing Michelle Crawford said the garden has received visitors from all over, so much so that it now has its own visitor book.

"Some families have donated specific plants to the gardens, so they like to come and see how those are going.

"We had a busload of visitors turn up to see the gardens in the rain on the Carnival of Flowers weekend.

"We also have some staff members who are planning on getting married in the gardens next year," Ms Crawford said.

With the competition only just wrapping up and more rain predicted in the coming days the team are yet to say whether they plan to defend their title in the competition next year. However, they do have plans to tackle a new section of gardens at the facility soon.

"We'd like to do something with the gardens for the West Wing, which is the secure wing of the hospital, so that will require some planning and thought," Ms White said.

Caption: Recreation Officer Lynda White and A/Director of Nursing Michelle Crawford proudly display their gardening competition trophy in the prize winning gardens at Oakey Hospital.

**Ends**

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