Australia’s first digital health service

Celebrating our consumers
Supporting patients in Emergency
State-of-the-art command centre opens
At Metro South Health, our clinicians and support staff work incredibly hard to ensure that our patients receive high quality, person-centred healthcare. We are very proud that Metro South Health is Australia’s first digital health service and we thank our clinicians and staff members who have gone above and beyond during this transformation.

This is a major achievement for our health service and we will continue to find ways to progress, innovate and improve access to health services and deliver person-centred care for our community.

New facilities such as the Patient Access Coordination Hub and the extension of our telehealth services are just some of the initiatives making a real difference to our patients.

We are constantly looking ahead to ensure these facilities can meet the demands of our fast-growing community. With admissions set to double in the coming years at Logan Hospital, it is essential to plan now to deliver more beds and treatment spaces. We are consulting with staff and the community throughout the planning process.

Metro South Health is committed to working in partnership with our communities and listening to our local community members, organisations and stakeholders. This will help us understand our community’s unique needs, and ensure our services are equipped to meet those needs.

One way we are doing this is by hosting an NDIS Provider Forum in August. As the NDIS rolls out in our region, we want to help patients to access and plan for the scheme. Developing an understanding of the disability service providers in our area, and establishing ongoing relationships with local providers, will help achieve these outcomes.

Another way we are doing this is by listening to our volunteers and consumers. In this issue, we celebrate the achievements of our volunteers and consumers in making positive changes in our hospitals and community centres and ensuring patient-centred care.

You will read about Warren Stubbs, one of the hundreds of consumers across Metro South Health, who gives his time and expertise to improve our local health service. On behalf of the Board I’d like to give a very special thank you to all our volunteers and consumers for their dedication.

For news, events and for information about our services, please visit our website or connect with us on social media.

Metro South Health is the major provider of public health services in the Brisbane south side, Logan, Redlands and Scenic Rim regions. We employ more than 14,000 staff who provide specialist health care to a population of more than 1 million people, 23 per cent of Queensland’s population. We have five major hospitals—Beaudesert, Logan, Princess Alexandra, QEII Jubilee and Redland—as well as a number of community and mental health centres and dental clinics.
With QEII Hospital ‘going live’ in early June, all five hospitals in the region are now digital hospitals, making Metro South Health (MSH) the first digital health service in Australia.

This ambitious project launched in 2014 when the Princess Alexandra Hospital (PAH) began implementing integrated electronic medical records (ieMR). Logan, Beaudesert, QEII and Redland hospitals, as well as the Wynnum-Manly Community Health Centre, are now all digital facilities.

“Metro South digital hospital system benefits our patients by providing seamless healthcare and access to up-to-date information across our region,” MSH Chief Executive, Dr Stephen Ayre said.

As a digital hospital, your doctors, nurses and healthcare team document and access your medical information—such as who you are, reason for admission, medical history and any allergies—on computers instead of using paper files.

Digital bedside patient monitoring devices automatically upload vital signs and observations, such as blood pressure, temperature and heart rate, directly to a secure electronic medical record.

“This enables faster response times for deteriorating patients. From August 2015 to August 2017 at the PAH, we saw an incredible 59% increase in the early identification of deteriorating patients,” Dr Ayre said.

New data also shows that medication errors and healthcare associated infections are down by a third at the PAH, with an almost 20% reduction in emergency readmissions within 28 days of discharge.

“Digital systems are transforming the way we deliver healthcare by supporting our clinicians to be more responsive and make better informed decisions. It’s making a real difference to our patients, and in some cases, helping save lives,” Dr Ayre said.

“We are incredibly excited to see what’s to come, and how we can provide the highest quality care for our patients.”

DIGITAL HOSPITAL TIMELINE

» 2015: Princess Alexandra Hospital (PAH) becomes Australia’s first large-scale digital hospital
» 2017: Logan Hospital becomes the first public hospital to install the digital hospital system in a single stage
» 2018: All Metro South hospitals ‘go-live’
  » Beaudesert Hospital
  » Redland Hospital
  » QEII Jubilee Hospital.
New therapy makes a splash

Princess Alexandra Hospital’s (PAH) new paddle board therapy is making a splash with spinal injuries patients.

PAH Advanced Physiotherapist Emilie Gollan said the new physical therapy, introduced this month, was a great way for patients to build their strength and fitness while having fun.

“Our custom-made board is designed for people with spinal injuries who might not have the use of their stomach and back muscles, or legs,” she said.

“It’s more stable, has extra grip and padding, and has been designed to allow more arm and shoulder movement.”

Jordan Williams, the first patient who gave it a go, loved it so much he’s planning to start paddle boarding as a hobby.

“Having a spinal injury, there’s a lot of things you can’t do anymore. It’s nice when you’re told there’s something new you can do,” he said.

“It was fun to change up the normal hospital routine, and awesome to get in the water.

“There’s a lot of people around the world with disabilities who are excelling at paddle boarding so that’s really inspirational to me.”

Ms Gollan said paddle boarding would now be offered as both a physical therapy and leisure therapy to inpatients in the PAH Spinal Injuries Unit.

Telehealth outreach for indigenous patients

A new dementia telehealth service based at Princess Alexandra Hospital (PAH) could help close the gap for Indigenous Australians who experience dementia at a rate three to five times higher than the non-Indigenous population.

The Dementia, Regional and Remote, Empowering, Aboriginal and Torres Strait, Medicine, Telehealth (DREAMT) project will provide earlier diagnosis and better treatment options for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander patients living in rural and remote communities.

A PAH-based geriatrician will provide consultations via videoconference with Indigenous Health Workers supporting patients and their carers in each community. The health workers receive support from the DREAMT team to provide education, awareness and prevention programs.

The DREAMT team will also supply and install telehealth equipment and provide ongoing technical support.

The project, run by the University of Queensland’s Centre for Online Health, was funded by the Department of Health, Dementia and Aged Care Services Fund.

Queen’s Birthday Honours List

Congratulations to the five Metro South Health staff members who were recognised in the 2018 Queen’s Birthday Honours.

Member (AM) in the General Division of the Order of Australia:

» Professor Lawrence Hirst, Medical Director of the Queensland Eye Bank, for significant service to medicine in the field of ophthalmology through the development of clinical care techniques and eye disease management.

» Professor B. Mark Smithers (PAH) Director, Upper Gastro-intestinal and Soft Tissue Unit / Chair, Queensland Melanoma Project, for significant service to medicine in the fields of gastrointestinal and melanoma surgery, to medical education, and to professional organisations.

Medal (OAM) of the Order of Australia in the General Division:

» Adjunct Professor Iyla Davies (Board Member) for service to education as a legal academic.

» Mr William Dobbin (formerly a PAH chaplain) for service to the community as a hospital chaplain.

» Professor Stephen Margolis (Logan Hospital) Consultant, Emergency Department, for service to rural medicine, and to medical education and research.
Every year, hundreds of dedicated volunteers help our staff and patients across Metro South Health. Many of these volunteers have been patients themselves and give their time to improve our local healthcare service.

From answering surveys, to sitting on hospital committees, their contribution promoting the voice of our patients and shaping our health system is invaluable.

Metro South Health is committed to a person-centred and holistic approach to healthcare. This means caring for each person as an individual and recognising their mental, social, emotional, spiritual and physical care needs.

“Engaging our local consumers is critical to ensure we are listening to the patient voice and translating their feedback into tangible outcomes,” Metro South Health Senior Director of Stakeholder Engagement, Debbie Cowan said.

Feedback from consumers has led to direct improvements in Metro South Health services and the development of more accessible information for patients.

“Our restful environment video was developed as a direct result of patient feedback. Our visitation policy is currently under review based on the responses from consumers and changes have been made in our hospitals and services to provide healthier food choices for patients.

“These are just some of the improvements made to our healthcare service over the past 12 months as a result of community consultation,” Ms Cowan said.

Warren gives back to Metro South Health

Warren Stubbs is the Co-Chair of the Consumer Partnership Committee at Redland Hospital and has been instrumental in formalising the role of consumers in the decision-making process of the hospital.

Just over two years ago, Warren was an oncology patient at the Princess Alexandra Hospital.

“I have such respect for the nurses and doctors who looked after my cancer treatment - the professional exactness they demonstrated was always complemented by real concern and compassion,” Warren said.

“They took the time to explain my treatment, tell me what to expect in my recovery and always went the extra step.”

Prior to falling ill, Warren was the Deputy CEO and Director of Corporate Services in the Isaac Regional Council.

“My doctors suggested it was time to step back from my stressful career and focus on getting well.

“As I became healthy enough to get bored, I decided to give something back and joined Redland Hospital first as volunteer and eventually as the Chair of the Consumer Partnership Committee.”

Utilising his extensive business expertise including stakeholder and community engagement and executive management skills, Warren has since negotiated for the Chair of this Committee to be part of the Clinical Governance Committee.

“This has formalised the relationship between hospital consumers and hospital management and ensured there is a genuine dialogue and meaningful partnership.”

Having been patients within Metro South facilities, consumers provide a unique and valuable perspective for staff and clinicians to support the continuous improvement of services and patient care.

“I am fortunate that I am able to use my corporate skills to strengthen processes and facilitate buy in from all levels of the Hospital. This ensures our consumers and volunteers are engaged and valued which will ultimately deliver far better outcomes for our patients,” Warren said.

Warren encourages anyone who would like to volunteer at Metro South Health to get involved.

“When I fell ill, I felt like I had been hit by a bus, and then I was a passenger on the bus while my life passed me by. Volunteering as a consumer at Metro South Health has helped me to find a new purpose.

“I’m very passionate about the value of listening to the perspective of consumers. I have seen first-hand that working together on projects can complement clinical services and make a real difference.”

Visit the website to find out how to volunteer at a service near you:

» metrosouth.health.qld.gov.au/volunteer
» metrosouth.health.qld.gov.au/consumers
Metro South has won two statewide eHealth awards at the annual statewide eHealth Expo, reinforcing our focus on excellence in healthcare innovation.

Unlocking the power of data

Metro South’s Clinical Services Excellence Team (CSET) won the eAward of the Year for helping to integrate new computer-based interactive reports (dashboards) into ‘business as usual’ practice.

The development of ten national standards dashboards, using digital hospital data, is an Australian first destined to change the landscape of quality improvement and accreditation preparedness in healthcare settings.

The availability of up-to-date data provided through the digital hospital has enabled those making patient care or service improvements to see the results of their efforts within 24 hours.

Staff across Metro South Health can now work together to ensure key clinical tasks are happening as planned leading to improved patient care and safety.

This transformation model can be implemented at Queensland Health facilities of all sizes, and can be adapted to existing governance structures with ease. As more hospitals embrace digital systems, we expect to see this model rolled out across Australia.

Respecting patient wishes during end-of-life care

The Advance Care Planning (ACP) team won the Collaborate and Connect eAward for the ACP Tracker—an information sharing portal for clinicians.

Developed by the Office of Advance Care Planning and The Viewer team, the ACP Tracker allows clinicians to access advance care planning activity from across Queensland.

This enables an increased clinical awareness of advance care planning interactions and documents, strengthening communication between clinicians, carers and patients and ensuring a patient’s wishes are respected in the event they cannot speak for themselves.

A valuable tool for Queensland Health clinicians and GPs, the ACP Tracker is not only improving efficiencies for staff, it is enhancing patient-centred and family-centred care.

The Tracker is available on The Viewer which provides consolidated clinical information about each patient who receives treatment or care at a Queensland Health facility.

Metro South Health is NDIS Ready

The National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) rolled out across the Metro South region in July 2018, transforming the way in which the Metro South community accesses disability support.

The NDIS will enable twice as many Queenslanders with disability to participate more fully in family and community life, education and employment by providing more choice and control over how, when and where their supports are provided.

Teams across Metro South Health have been working hard to support patients to access the NDIS and ensure they have plans prepared in the lead up to the roll out.

“A number of our statewide services, such as the Division of Rehabilitation, have been working with the NDIS for nearly two years as it rolled out in regions across Queensland,” said Metro South Health NDIS Project Officer, Vivien Houston.

“Processes and procedures are now in place to ensure a consistent, patient-centred approach across the whole of Metro South Health.”

Social Work is leading the way for the NDIS rollout and social workers have been trained across Metro South to support our clinicians and patients.

Metro South Health will continue to support our patients to access the NDIS where needed and provide high quality healthcare to improve the overall health and wellbeing of our patients with disability.

If you would like further information about accessing the NDIS visit ndis.gov.au.
Fred Oostryck is the Logan Hospital ED Ambassador supporting patients and their families when they are in the Emergency Department.

“We now have activity packs for the children and it’s wonderful how such a small gesture can make a big difference.

“One way to keep parents calm is to ensure their children are calm,” he said.

Fred said the response to his presence in the ED had been amazing.

“It’s taken everyone by surprise,” he said. “I’ve been so welcomed by everyone.”

This is the third such role in the state designed to further support staff in the Emergency Department.

Patient compliments

“I wish to send my deepest gratitude and thanks to your nursing staff in the Emergency Department. My mother was admitted to your hospital and has since passed away. There were a number of things the staff did to ensure my mother would not suffer unnecessarily. They knew their stuff and they picked up any inconsistencies in observations and showed great care. Nurses such as these make a hospital.”

- Beaudesert Hospital patient

“The service from such a busy hospital was exemplary. I felt confident that the care being given was professional and thoughtful regarding my wellbeing. I wouldn’t have known I had a serious problem if the nurses in both areas hadn’t gone that step further. Thank you all so much.”

- Logan Hospital patient

“I was recently admitted to the PAH after an accident and would like to state that the whole time I was in the hospital was outstanding because of your people. The nursing staff were extremely professional and kind, they treated me as if I wasn’t just a number but a friend in need. I have nothing but praise for the doctor on duty, he is not just a true passionate professional but a real caring guy, you could see at the time his team held him in high esteem. I wish your people nothing but the best. Keep up the great work.”

- Princess Alexandra Hospital patient

“I would like to express my sincere gratitude to the staff working in ED and Ward 4B who looked after me during my admission for a second stroke. I was most impressed by your kindness, proficiency and the quality of care extended to me in what we termed as a “Gold Standard” quality used in making Smith’s chips. I would like to say thank you everyone from the bottom of my heart.”

- Family member of QEII Jubilee Hospital patient

“I came to the Emergency Department today with chest pain. The staff have been so kind, I just had to tell you how good they’ve been. The nurse looking after me was delightful—so kind and considerate it would be great to have more nurses like her! She has made a difficult time more bearable.”

- Redland Hospital patient
Congratulations QEI1 Nurses!

Following a rigorous, two-year application process, QEII Hospital has joined Logan, Beaudesert and Redland Hospital in achieving Pathway to Excellence® designation and being recognised as international leaders in healthcare delivery.

The QEII Director of Nursing Services, Nicki Dennis, said the Pathway Program recognised QEII Hospital’s commitment to creating a positive nursing environment that empowered and engaged staff.

“It’s all about nurses supporting nurses, taking pride in our profession and delivering excellent patient care,” Ms Dennis said.

Awarded by the American Nurses Credentialing Center, nursing staff must demonstrate that they meet six specific performance standards including seeking nurses’ input on issues related to safety, wellbeing, professional development, quality of care, leadership and shared decision making.

“The application process has helped us develop a new way of doing things, aligning us with initiatives that create the very best environments for our patients to heal and for our nurses to succeed and grow professionally.

“We expect our nurses to provide the best patient care possible and go above and beyond each day, so in turn it is our job to ensure that they feel supported, engaged, and satisfied in their workplace.

“We are extraordinarily proud of all our nurses and all their hard work over the last two years to achieve this world-renowned designation."

Princess Alexandra Hospital has been Magnet® designated since 2004 meaning nursing staff at all five Metro South hospitals have been awarded international nursing excellence credentials and demonstrate excellence in patient care every day.

I am a Senior Dental Prosthetist at Metro South Health Oral Health Services, providing removable dentures for adults.

I start my mornings very early with the alarm going off at 5.15am. I do hit the snooze button a couple of times but am always up by 5.30am.

Although breakfast is my favourite meal on the weekend, during the week I don’t have breakfast. I start off with a coffee at work around 7.00am.

A group of colleagues catch up every morning before work for a cuppa and some banter. This has us all laughing hilariously and starts the day on a good note.

A typical day sees me attending to patients with denture needs but that’s secondary to how I interact with my patients and how I make them feel. I once read a wonderful quote that I practice with every patient—“people don’t care how much you know until they know how much you care”.

I also brighten people’s days with my happy shoes—it’s my point of difference. There isn’t a patient that isn’t smiling when I go to get them from the waiting room.

At my core I love caring for people, so my work allows me to care for people and restore their smiles. Hugs from patients and a few happy tears are a regular occurrence in my surgery and I love that I’m able to make a difference.

It can be challenging saying no to a patient who turns up without an appointment or a colleague that needs assistance. This often sees me not having a break and just eating on the run.

After work, I love to walk down by the river and I do this most nights with a friend, where we solve the problems of the world. I also like to catch up with friend once a week for a local dinner.