



Dear team,

During conversations with various staff this week, the consistent message is how busy staff are feeling at the moment because of significantly high demands on our services. I appreciate that we have staff absences across many areas due to sickness and this is also creating extra pressure on our teams. Unfortunately, these demands are expected to continue for some time, which means we will be under the pump during the coming months.

When we enter these periods of duress, it can feel like we are on a constant cycle with little reprieve or downtime. We can get tired which leads to not feeling refreshed when we come to work, and not being able to give the very best version of ourselves.

Please know that the Executive team are aware of the many pressures across the hospital. While we are not on the frontline, we are working persistently behind the scenes to escalate issues every day to ensure TPCH can continue to care for patients, and staff are supported as best as possible.

We understand that as people, there are times we can reach a point when it feels like we can't manage the demands being placed upon us. We all handle pressure differently and we need to be aware of this and do our best to keep things on an even keel for ourselves and those around us. Maintaining a respectful and civil work environment is an important part of allowing us to work together to care for patients despite the pressures we are under. We also need to be mindful that our patients are watching us and judging the quality of their care based on how we treat each other as colleagues.

If you feel like you are struggling and need support, please talk to your line manager in the first instance. The Executive team is also here to listen and support. We welcome your feedback and want to hear your concerns to identify how we can further help you. Please email me at: ExecDir-TPCH@health.qld.gov.au

Executive update

Our performance

With TPCH having been stood up to Tier 3 acute capacity several times in recent months, I would like to share a small selection of our key activity statistics to demonstrate why everyone has been so busy.

- In May 2024, TPCH emergency department reported a 0.3% increase in overall presentations compared to the same period last year, equating to 317 extra presentations.
- For the same period, the ED has seen a 29.3% increase in Category 1 presentations, and a 16.0% decrease in Category 5 presentations.
- In April 2024, TPCH reported 265,421 outpatient occasions of services, compared to the same period in the previous financial year where it recorded 262,536 occasions of service. This equates to an average increase of 289 patients per month.
- From May to June 2024, specialist outpatient long waits have been reduced by 13%, from 3,383 to 2,930.
- During May 2024, TPCH performed 667 cardiac investigation procedures, having performed 6,470 procedures from 1 July 2023 to 31 May 2024.
- From January to May 2024 – reduction of Orthopaedic outpatient long waits from 300 to 96
- Gastroenterology has received an additional 500 referrals a month since January 2024.
- From 1 July 2023 to 31 May 2024, over 9,000 surgeries have been completed in TPCH's 12 theatres. This is an increase of more than 700 cases for the same period last year.

Executive walkarounds

This week Director of Surgery and Critical Care, Melanie Dubbelde and I visited Wards 2D and 2E where we briefly checked in with staff to see how they were managing with the current level of activity. It was good to see the new sky garden in Ward 2D progressing well with final touches to be made in the coming weeks. The sky garden provides patients with a pleasant non-clinical space in the ward to visit as they recover from surgery and enjoy outdoor views of the atrium. Thanks to Ward 2E Nurse Unit Manager, Janelle Reed and team for your warm welcome. We know how busy you are, so we appreciate your valuable time.



This week is Blood Week with today marking the 20th anniversary of World Donor Blood Day. Members of the Executive team were invited to judge the Blood Week Ward Decoration competition, however due to Tier 3 acute capacity requirements, judging has been postponed until next week. I will share photos of the judging and winner details in next week's message.

Free staff breakfast

Next Tuesday 18 June, we will be hosting a **FREE** breakfast for staff to thank everyone for their hard work and efforts. The breakfast will run from 7am until 8.30am or until the food runs out, in the Café for The Common Good. We look forward to seeing many of you there.

TPCH staff forum - Car parking

Staff are invited to attend an all staff forum on Monday 17 June to learn about some of the upcoming changes to car parking on TPCH campus.

Monday 17 June

12 pm – 1 pm

[Join via Teams](#)

Staff profile

Because it's Blood Week, we will profile Nurse Practitioner Candidate, Bronwyn Pearse.

Bronwyn is part of the Blood Management team which offers advanced specialist knowledge, experience, and clinical skills in managing blood products, haemovigilance, pre-op anaemia, and blood management quality improvement activities.

Holding a PhD, Master of Clinical Practice, Graduate Certificate (CritCare) and currently undertaking a Master of Nurse Practitioner, Bronwyn commenced work in Cardiothoracic ICU at TPCH in 1993, working in data management and research before taking on a project role to implement ROTEM/Multiplate as part a paradigm shift in the management of bleeding. Following this, a Blood Management Clinical Nurse Consultant role was developed to drive the hospital-wide introduction of Patient Blood Management with the team now including Michelle Dwyer and Kylie Hobson.



Bronwyn feels fortunate to having worked in many varied roles over the past 40 years. She has always tried to ensure her practice is underpinned by knowledge that quality care for the individual patient is at the centre of all her decision making whether it is at an individual, or project level.

Shout out

This week's shout out goes to Prof Greg Scalia, Director Echocardiography for being awarded a 'Member of the Order of Australia' on the King's Birthday 2024 Honours List. Prof Scalia received this accolade in recognition of his significant service to cardiology as a clinician, mentor and

academic. Starting his career at TPCH as a trainee in 1993 and becoming a Consultant Cardiologist in 1996, Greg was appointed to the position of Director of Echocardiography in 2016. He has been very active in mentoring and educating young doctors with an interest in echocardiography, and is heavily involved in research, having published more than 300 studies. Congratulations Greg!



The other shout out goes to Professor Scott Bell, Thoracic Physician who is the recipient of the European Cystic Fibrosis Society (ECFS) Award. This prestigious award recognises Scott's outstanding contribution to the understanding, treatment and care of patients with cystic fibrosis. Prof Bell is a highly respected and internationally renowned clinician, researcher, leader and mentor who has played a leading role in developing a new global blueprint for the care of people with cystic fibrosis. Well done Scott!



Closing thought

Earlier this week, I had the unfortunate experience of finding a sick koala on the road when I was taking my regular morning walk with my dog Panda. On finding the little creature, I went and got a blanket to put over it while I phoned various rescue services to see who could come and help. Sadly, by the time help arrived, the koala had passed on. I was told it had cystitis and nothing more could have been done as its condition has progressed too far. As an animal person, the suffering of a creature like this is very upsetting, but what was comforting is that the koala was not alone when it passed. It had people and a fellow animal by its side showing care and concern. Interestingly, my fur baby Panda who would normally chase another animal if he saw it was very subdued – it was like he knew the koala was sick and he was there watching over it. The experience was a reminder that the suffering of others is an inevitable part of health care, and as health care workers, we play an important role in helping ease the suffering of patients and families through our care and compassion. This can never be underestimated.

Tami Photinos
Executive Director