

Your Voice at the Royal

A consumer newsletter from Royal Brisbane and Women's Hospital

April 2021

This newsletter is written by consumers for consumers and brings you all of the latest news and important information from Royal Brisbane and Women's Hospital (RBWH).

In this issue we get an update from the RBWH Consumer Advisory Group Chair Gary Power, talk about World Autism Awareness Month this April, hear a snippet of the exceptional story of strength, recovery and resilience by RBWH Consumer Dale, learn more about the RBWH Consumer Engagement and Patient Experience Lead Aileen and so much more!



Gary Power
Chair, Consumer Advisory Group,
Royal Brisbane and Women's
Hospital

A message from Gary

Hi everybody,

Welcome to our April 2021 edition of Your Voice. I hope I'm not alone in wondering how we're already one quarter of the way through the year! This "new normal" seems to me to be abnormally fast-moving! I hope you are coping as best you can, but I hope you are also remembering that Australia's response to the horrible threat of COVID-19 has been amongst the most successful in the world. Australians have shown great faith in their researchers, scientists and healthcare providers by following their guidance and advice, which has been communicated by our elected government representatives at every level. Our Victorian cousins deserve a special mention here for their terrifically disciplined response to very long periods of lockdown.

I hope the "new normal" includes a continuation of that excellent mind-set which has stood our nation in such good stead. That mind-set is demonstrated in how we have become more willing to be part of our own medical treatment. We have become very responsive to medical advice; and medical advisors have become very responsive to the need to explain complex matters in ways that are easily understood. Perhaps the "new normal" communication between health care providers and their patients will see benefit across the board. I know that as consumers will certainly benefit from being more involved in our own medical journey.

I can't forget to mention the vaccination wave that has begun to break on our shores! Again, I hope that the "new normal" mind-set will lead all of us to have our jab when the opportunity arrives, so that we can all present a united front against COVID-19 (remember to shout "QUEENSLANDER!" after you get your jab!). You can be assured that there has been an immense amount of work done at RBWH to prepare for the vaccination program. Many of the frontline staff members have already received their vaccination which will help keep you, and them, safe! I know that there is a great deal of respect among RBWH staff for the good nature being shown by consumers who responsibly visit us for testing purposes. I expect that this good nature will extend to the vaccination program.

Finally, I wish all our consumers, carers, families and friends all the best in the coming months, which will inevitably throw us challenges, but which we will meet and beat.

Regards,
Gary

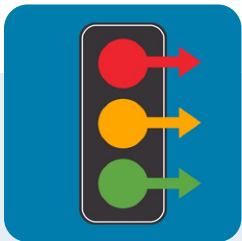
DID YOU KNOW?

**During COVID-19
the RBWH increased
telehealth delivery
of outpatient
appointments from
37% to 60%**

AUTISM AWARENESS MONTH



April 2 is World Autism Day and marks the beginning of World Autism Awareness Month this April. Once again, Autism Queensland is running their 'Go Blue for Autism' campaign, which encourages Australian's to host a fundraising morning tea to help raise awareness for autism. You can find out more via their [website](#). Even if you are not able to fundraise, you can wear blue to show your support and start a conversation about Autism with your loved ones, community or colleagues.



Julian's Key Health Passport

Julian's Key Health Passport is available on Google Play, the App store and through the Queensland Health Website ([click here](#)) where you can print or save as a PDF. You can fill this in and give it to health professionals when you go to outpatient clinics, the emergency department and when you are an inpatient in the ward. This is a consumer-controlled document, so you will be able to communicate what you think is most important in a way that you understand.

QUICK FACTS

What is Autism?

Autism is a complex, lifelong developmental disability that affects a person's ability to communicate, interact with others and cope in everyday situations. You may also hear autism referred to as 'ASD' which stands for Autism Spectrum Disorder.

What is the cause of Autism?

The cause is not fully understood; however, a significant difference can be made in the lives of those with Autism through early intervention, therapy and education delivered by health professionals and teachers with expertise in autism.

What is the purpose of World Autism Awareness Month?

This awareness month aims to increase greater understanding, acceptance and inclusion of people on the autism spectrum.

How does the RBWH support people with Autism?

For those consumers who find it challenging to communicate their healthcare needs, RBWH encourages the use of 'Julian's Key Health Passport' as a tool to easily communicate important health information and preferences with health professionals.

This month we heard from Dale, one of the RBWH Consumers making a huge impact on healthcare delivery state wide. Dale teaches us that a positive outlook and following doctors' recommendations – no matter how challenging – creates great outcomes...



"I made a decision that life was really worth living and that I should do everything to maximise my recovery... Every day is a wonderful gift"

In December 2016, I was burnt in a barbeque accident that left me fighting for survival with 33 percent of my body area burnt. I needed nine skin grafts that were taken from my left leg. I had to resign from my normal work to concentrate on my recovery and restoration.

Early in the piece I made a decision that life was really worth living and that I should do everything to maximise my recovery and the look of my scars in time. I did all the exercises and then some more and ate all the good stuff. I got off the hard pain killers after a year and wore amazing scar flattening pressure suits for two and a half years.

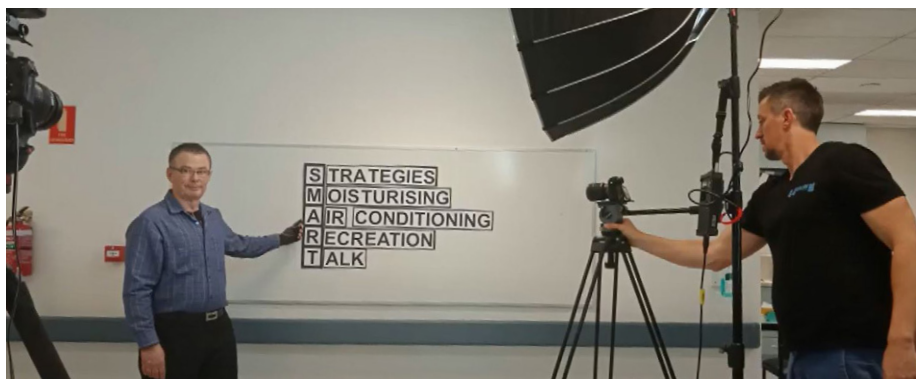
I have learnt that you need to become health literate and maximise your inputs if you want great outcomes. I want to thank RBWH and their great Surgical and Allied Health teams for staying at the cutting edge and doing their best. I now try to give back through various consumer groups.

Every day is a wonderful gift. Keep your mind in the right space and do all those little things you need to keep getting amazing results. Set your mind on doing your exercises, keeping those extra kilograms off and keeping healthy. I was able to stop for three years and concentrate on getting the best possible outcomes while at the same time trying to help others in a similar situation.

You can do the extra little things each day to improve your overall health. You can travel a long distance one step at a time. Don't stop, keep going, seek good support and don't give up. I've learnt you can do much more than you think!



BEFORE Burn Pressure Suit - Coming home from hospital (left) and NOW (right).



PREMS

A new way to communicate our RBWH experience anonymously – Patient Reported Experience Measures (PREMs)

If you have seen the posters or have been discharged recently, you may already know about the new PREMs survey.

PREMs surveys are sent out to RBWH inpatients two days after discharge and has been running since the new automated system went live in October 2020.

This is an excellent way for you to provide information anonymously about your most recent RBWH inpatient stay, with multiple choice survey questions and some written fields to express yourself.

All of this data is then used to provide feedback to the wards and lead new initiatives and service improvements. We speak, and RBWH listens to us.

We have two RBWH Consumers – Dale (featured) and Anja – who are on the PREMs Data Subgroup, discussing how RBWH can make best use of the information for service improvement.

We encourage you to complete the survey and have your say!



RBWH Foundation update

The friendly, smiling faces of RBWH Foundation Volunteers are back, thanks to the easing of COVID-19 restrictions.

The new Compassion Crew includes many familiar faces and quite a few first-timers, as RBWH Foundation expands its volunteer base to cater for the recently opened Surgical, Treatment and Rehabilitation Service (STARS).

RBWH Foundation Volunteer Phoebe signed up in January to provide a break from her University of Queensland studies and to gain insight into a hospital environment. The second-year Exercise Nutrition Science student hopes to eventually move into dietetics.

You'll spot the volunteer RBWH Foundation Compassion Crew on duty at STARS, at the RBWH Concierge Desk assisting patients and visitors with directions, in wards offering companionship and support and hosting BINGO in the Renal Ward. They also assist with the, JP Service, tea/coffee and chats in Medical Imaging, washing patient laundry and assisting in the Transit Lounge and Physiotherapy Department.

To learn more, follow the link: <https://bit.ly/2ZUFZQF>



Upcoming Events

ROYAL GIVING DAY 2021

June 23 2021

Royal Brisbane and Women's Hospital (RBWH) Foundation is excited to announce Royal Giving Day.

2021 will be held on Wednesday, June 23. Join us for a day of fun as we **Raise it for the Royal!**

All donations will support vital RBWH medical and clinician-led research, staff education and training, and patient care initiatives. Follow RBWH Foundation on **Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn** or **Twitter** for regular updates on the day-long program.



RBWH Foundation
ROYAL GIVING DAY

Raise it for the Royal

23rd June 2021

royalgivingday.com.au



TIPS, TRICKS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

What questions to ask your doctor?

Since 2017, RBWH has been a Champion Health Service for 'Choosing Wisely Australia'.

You may have seen the posters around the hospital. Choosing Wisely Australia has many resources for consumers, one of them being the '5 Questions to ask your doctor or healthcare provider before you get any test, treatment or procedure'.

These questions are important, so you have the right amount of care; not too little or too much.

1. Do I really need this test, treatment or procedure?
2. What are the risks?
3. Are there simpler, safer options?
4. What happens if I don't do anything?
5. What are the costs (financial, emotional and time)?

Five Questions with Aideen Hanly-Platz



1. Introduce yourself:

I am the Consumer Engagement and Patient Experience lead for RBWH. In my role, I have the privilege of working in partnership with consumer representatives who give up their time and energy to partner with staff to improve patient experiences and outcomes. Consumer partnerships are the very centre of person-centred care*. My role is to support both staff and consumers in effective partnerships and there are many ways to partner with consumers. Meaningful methods of partnership can range from representation on committees and boards, to contributions at focus groups, to co-designing projects and research and much more. We are always looking to recruit consumers (ex-patients/carers of the hospital) so if you are interested please email RBWH_CE@health.qld.gov.au

2. What is your favourite thing about your role?

Given my nursing background, my favourite thing about my role is that I get to work alongside consumers who have expert skills and knowledge to partner with staff, ultimately improving patient care.

3. What are you passionate about?

I am passionate about quality person-centred care.

4. What are your hobbies outside of work?

My hobbies outside of work are exercise particularly hiking, music, playing the piano and travelling (when we can again).

5. What is your favourite quote?

"The happiest people don't have the best of everything, they just make the best of everything". – Sam Cawthron

What is 'person-centred care'?

You may also hear this term used interchangeably with 'patient-centred care', 'consumer-centred care', 'family-centred care' and 'personalised care'.

What is it:

Healthcare that is respectful and responsive to your preferences, needs and values, and ensures that your values guide all clinical decisions and discussions with your treating health professional.

Elements of patient-centred care:

1. Respect for your preferences and values
2. Emotional Support
3. Physical Comfort
4. Information, Communication and Education
5. Continuity and Transition
6. Coordination of Care
7. Involvement of Family and Friends
8. Access to Care



Note from the Editor

Hello fellow consumers,

I am Anja Christoffersen, the new coordinator for Your Voice at the Royal for 2021. You may have seen a feature story about one of my inpatient experiences in the previous newsletter!

I am really excited to have the opportunity to share what is happening at RBWH from a consumer (patient) perspective with you, and to connect with so many great people who have lived experience or are working hard to improve our

healthcare experience. I have had my medical treatment and management at RBWH since I was 15 years old, and before that my care was at the former 'Royal Children's Hospital' where I spent the majority of my first five years of life.

I was born with a medical condition (congenital disability) called VACTERL – that is an acronym for different malformations in the body. I would consider myself an RBWH frequent flyer – so if you see me around the hospital feel free to say hello and introduce yourself!

If there is a story, or you have ideas for what you want to see in this publication, please reach out (details below).

Regards,

Anja

CONTRIBUTE

Do you want to share your story, recommendations or thoughts about what should be in this newsletter? We would love to hear from you – please email us at: RBWH_CE@health.qld.gov.au

Metro North is proud to recognise the cultural diversity of our community. We recognise and pay respect to the Turrbal, Dalungbara/Djoondaburri, Gubbi Gubbi/Kabi Kabi, Jagera/Yuggera/Ugarapul, Jinibara/Jiniburi, Ninghi and Undumbi People of Metro North Hospital and Health Service area, on whose lands we walk, work, talk and live. We also acknowledge and pay our respect to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elders both past and present.

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Metro North Hospital
and Health Service

Your Voice @ The Royal newsletter is written by RBWH consumers/patients for consumers and the community as a whole. If you have any content suggestions or articles that you'd like to see in this newsletter, please contact RBWH_CE@health.qld.gov.au.



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