School students across Moreton Bay are learning how to take care of their teeth through Metro North Hospital and Health Service’s Fluoride Varnish Program.

Staff from the Metro North Oral Health team recently visited local schools at Kippa Ring, Bribie Island and Morayfield to chat with kids about simple preventative dental treatment, and provide fluoride varnish treatment.

Oral Health Therapist Consultant Alison Dickinson said the Fluoride Varnish Program had grown from only Morayfield East State School in 2015 to 19 state and special schools in the Caboolture and Redcliffe areas.

“The program targets children from low socio-economic areas who had limited access to preventative oral care and are at risk of poor dental behaviours,” Alison said.

“Evidence shows that a community-based Fluoride Varnish Program is a cost effective preventative measure that can reduce decay rates in children by up to 37 per cent.

“The Caboolture and Redcliffe areas are among the most socially disadvantaged in Australia.

“We know that by the time they reach school age young children living here have over three times the odds of experiencing dental decay than children living in more advanced areas.”

The Metro North’s Fluoride Varnish Program is simple to implement because it doesn’t require the children to attend a dental clinic; a multidisciplinary team of dental therapists, oral health therapists and dental assistants visit the children at their school.

“We see the kids where they learn and play to provide them with oral health education and apply the varnish to their teeth,” Alison said.

“They are seen in groups in their own environment where they are comfortable. They are with their friends and because minimal dental equipment is needed, the littlies don’t get frightened.”

The program provides a dental referral pathway to public sector oral health care facilities and other children in the family are welcome to attend with their sibling.
Message from the Board Chair and Chief Executive

Dear colleagues,

Spring is in full swing, marking the end of flu season. We came through the traditional winter surge in good shape, with influenza numbers lower this year than in recent years. This is a testament to how hard our staff worked and continue to work behind the scenes to ensure we are always flu-ready. We would also like to say thank you to our staff and to everyone who contributed to the reduced flu season by getting the vaccine.

Over the past few months we have done significant work to develop a new Safety and Quality strategy and our digital transformation strategy, known as Digital North. Thank you to everyone who has had input to these strategies. Your feedback and ideas have helped shape the strategies which will help us plan and deliver excellent care into the future.

The 27th annual RBWH Research Symposium was an immense success, recognising Kaa’th a’ Pul many iyan pul (Women’s and baby’s journey) as part of the Royal’s 80 years of caring for women and babies. It was a pleasure to see Phyllis Yunkaporta and Sandra Bowenda travel from Aurukun to Herston to share their experience with us as female leaders in their community.

Regards,

Dr Robert Stable AM
Chair, Metro North Hospital and Health Board

Shaun Drummond
Chief Executive, Metro North Hospital and Health Service

Keeping Kidneys clinic care

An innovative health clinic is providing special care for Caboolture locals with chronic kidney disease (CKD).

Metro North Kidney Service Director Dr Helen Healy said there was an increased demand for local kidney care in Caboolture and the number of people suffering from CKD was a lot higher than in areas closer to Brisbane.

“Twenty-five per cent of our Metro North Kidney Service patients, who are diagnosed with CKD, are from Caboolture and the surrounding region,” Dr Healy said.

The new Keeping Kidneys clinic focuses on identifying people with kidney disease and working with them to interrupt how the disease progresses.

Dr Healy said that CKD often goes under-diagnosed, with 90 per cent of people not knowing that they have the condition until it is well advanced and harder to manage.

“When kidney disease progresses, it may eventually lead to kidney failure, which requires dialysis or a kidney transplant. It can also lead to life threatening cardiovascular conditions,” Dr Healy said.

“Earlier we are able to start this work with people here in Caboolture, the more successful we will be in slowing the progression of the disease and avoid invasive treatments like renal dialysis.”

It is anticipated that the outpatient clinic will initially see up to 200 patients in its first year, with that number continuing to grow following a 12-month trial period.

Staff are continuing to embrace our Values in Actions events, with the Metro North Soccer Tournament yielding a fantastic turnout. We were thrilled to see friendly rivalry between facilities on display and plenty of talent. Congratulations to the winners.

In mid-November we will have our final Values in Action event for the year, the Family Fiesta. This end-of-year celebration will showcase our cultural diversity with workshops, food and entertainment from around the world.

Regards,

Dr Robert Stable AM
Chair, Metro North Hospital and Health Board

Shaun Drummond
Chief Executive
Metro North Hospital and Health Service

Dr Gary Chang (GP Special Interest), Dr Adrian Kark (Senior Staff Specialist) and Dr Vinod Lal (GP Special Interest) ready to help renal patients in the new Keeping Kidneys clinic.
Ten years of supporting breast health across Redcliffe and the Bay

BreastScreen Queensland Kippa-Ring Service celebrated a great milestone by reaching 10 years supporting local women with free breast screens recently.

BreastScreen Queensland Brisbane Northside Service Medical Director Dr Jane Brazier said eligible local women have been taking advantage of the free breast cancer screening service with nearly 49,000 women attending the Kippa-Ring facility since we relocated to this site in 2008.

“Having our Kippa-Ring service located in the Kippa-Ring Shopping Centre is of great benefit for those women who live and work in Moreton Bay,” Dr Brazier said.

“A breastscreen is the most effective way of detecting breast cancers early, well before they can be seen or felt by a woman or her doctor. “Finding breast cancer at an early stage could save a woman’s life.”

Kippa-Ring resident Alison Sewell started attending the Kippa-Ring service and is one of their first clients.

“It was lovely to be able to help celebrate the Kippa-Ring Service’s birthday as I have been coming here for my breast screens for years,” Alison said.

“I always have my regular breast screens because they are just one of those important health checks women need to do and having a local service makes it so convenient.”

Breast cancer is still the most common cancer diagnosed among women and over 75 per cent of women who develop breast cancer are over the age of 50.

BreastScreen Queensland provides free breast cancer screening for women aged 50 – 74 years, as increasing age is the biggest risk factor in developing breast cancer.

Dr Brazier said women from the age of 40 are also eligible for a free breastscreen and a doctor’s referral was not necessary.

For convenience, women can now book online at breastscreen.qld.gov.au or they can ring 13 20 50 and talk to one of our friendly staff.

Anaesthetic Technician returns from second Mercy trip to Africa

Anaesthetic Technician from The Prince Charles Hospital (TPCH) Esther Gollan is back at work after a recent trip to Central Africa to volunteer her time and skills on board the world’s largest civilian hospital ship for the second time.

Having previously served with Mercy Ships, the international medical charity that operates the Africa Mercy, in Madagascar in 2015, Miss Gollan this time joined the hospital ship’s volunteer crew of over 400 for four weeks in Cameroon.

“When on the ship inevitably someone will say, “Wow, Australia. You guys have to come a long way!” Yeah, it’s a decent journey, but worth it in my opinion,” Esther said.

Esther worked at TPCH as an Anaesthetic Technician since 2014. “The skills that I use every day in my work are the same skills that I utilised on the ship,” she said.

“The unique thing about the ship is what it is made up of - people from different countries, different walks of life, with different experiences to your own, but with the same goal in mind.

“The atmosphere on the ship is like nothing I’ve ever worked in before.

“But it’s not just that feeling of accomplishing something worthwhile that is so special, it’s how those results are achieved. The people that come to the ship to work are all volunteering their time and expertise, they want to be here, they want to bless others.”

The Africa Mercy arrived in the port city of Douala, Cameroon, in August 2017 with plans to provide almost 4,000 thousand life-changing surgeries on board, to treat over 8,000 at a land-based dental clinic as well as providing health care training to local medical professionals during 10 months in port.

“I had already served with Mercy Ships previously, so I knew what I was getting myself in for work wise to a certain extent. I did however do a fair amount of Googling ‘Cameroon’ before I left Australia, but that doesn’t really prepare you fully for what you are actually heading into,” Esther said.

From what I learned while I was there and what I observed, obviously poverty is a huge difficulty. It seems that there is no such thing as the ‘middle class’. You have the extremely wealthy, and the extremely poor.

“There is very limited access to proper healthcare and even those that have access and the money to pay for it, the stories I was told from the local hospitals made me shudder.”

“To see the impact that these surgeries have on the people we are serving, words just cannot express the joy and wonder that can been seen on their faces at what has been done for them. It’s super special.”
Telehealth heart beats out west

Queenslanders in regional areas can see a heart specialist without travelling to Brisbane, thanks to a new telehealth service.

Royal Brisbane and Women’s Hospital’s (RBWH) Tele-Cardiac Investigation service is enabling patients to access high-quality cardiology testing and connect with metropolitan clinicians through live audio and video links and health monitoring devices without travelling extreme distances.

RBWH Director of Cardiac Sciences Adjunct Professor Adam Scott championed the program.

“This fact that some of these people had to drive 1000 kilometres to get a procedure done is unacceptable, we focused our efforts to create a solution that results in Queenslanders being able to access the same level of healthcare regardless of their geographic location,” he said.

Currently, rural and remote Queenslanders have a 25 per cent higher death rate than people living in metropolitan areas. The new program allows people to access cardiac exercise stress testing at their local hospital and 24-hour holter monitoring with real time support from specialists in Brisbane.

“This Tele-Cardiac Investigation service is all about taking the city to the country and making healthcare equitable and accessible,” Adj Prof Scott said.

The program has also enabled rapid access to test reporting, with a signed cardiology report from an RBWH specialist completed within 27 minutes of a test.

The program was started as a pilot study with Longreach hospital in 2016, and later received $1.6 million over three years from the state government to provide a state-wide solution.

Tele-cardiac investigation services are now provided at 16 locations across rural and remote parts of Queensland, as far north Mornington Island and Normanton.

Further planning is currently underway with the Royal Flying Doctors Service to broaden the range of service provision to towns such as Jundah, Camooweal and Boulia.

Thoughtful transformation for RBWH memorial garden

Sensitive landscaping of the Baby Memorial Garden for Early Pregnancy Loss at Royal Brisbane and Women’s Hospital (RBWH) was recently completed and blessed at a service in August.

The Memorial Garden which is located in the heritage protected Green Heart, was thoughtfully landscaped to create a more inviting space for reflection and remembrance for bereaved families.

The garden was sensitively filled with soil and replanted with new shrubs, and a sandstone arbour and decorative fencing were installed to enclose the quiet and peaceful space.

RBWH Chaplains said they were delighted to see the beautiful space that has been created.

“The memorial garden is a very important place for many families who regularly visit to grieve and remember their precious little ones,” Chaplain Carol O’Ryan said.

“On behalf of those families we are thankful that this sacred space has been cared for and protected, and sensitively landscaped with the highest respect.”

The garden was blessed by Chaplain Reverend Iris Reedman at a service attended by RBWH Chaplains and representatives from the Herston Quarter project team.

An annual memorial service for the Interment of Ashes is held in the garden in May for all bereaved families to attend. A bi-monthly service is held in the RBWH Chapel throughout the year.

Top: Garden - Landscaping works complete in Green Heart memorial garden
Above: RBWH Chaplains attend a blessing of the garden in August
Healthy ageing all the rage at Brighton

The third annual Brighton Healthy Ageing Expo drew up to a thousand people of all ages and backgrounds from across the Moreton Bay and North Brisbane region.

Community and Oral Health Executive Director Tami Photinos said it was great to see so many people taking full advantage of the activities on offer, from Tai Chi to a Heart Foundation walking group, to hearing and blood pressure checks.

“We are helping people live the best life they can as they grow older. By bringing the community and health service providers together in one place, we hope we are inspiring people to make good choices about their own health,” Ms Photinos said.

As part of the Expo, around 50 different health organisations and community groups were on hand to offer free health checks, and important health information for people interested in ways to age well and remain active, physically, mentally and socially.

“Visitors gained a great deal of information and guidance on preventing falls, managing wounds, infections, continence, dental hygiene, advance care planning and nutrition, as well as seeing the latest allied health aids to support independence,” Ms Photinos said.

The Expo included the opening of a new Wellbeing Garden at the Brighton Health Campus, which involved many people from across the community.

Below: Sandgate District State High School students Janine and Liam, and Brighton Health Campus resident Uncle George added some creative Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artwork for a fabulous new Wellness Garden.

Hospital in the Home shares patient experience

A new Hospital in the Home video has been developed for patients and clinicians to showcase the ease and benefit of being cared for in the home.

Community and Oral Health Executive Director Tami Photinos said Hospital in the Home provided care in the home for common conditions that can be easily and safely be treated at home.

“Hospital in the Home provides care to patients across North Brisbane and Moreton Bay for conditions such as blood clots, pneumonia, and a wide variety of infections and medical conditions,” Ms Photinos said.

“Hospital in the Home treats thousands of patients each year and helps them avoid being in the hospital for longer than necessary.”

The new Hospital in the Home video explores three patient experiences with the Hospital in the Home service and includes our professional nurses, doctors, physiotherapists and occupational therapists.


Our great Hospital and the Home service is captured on a new service video as told by our patients.
Emergency doctor honoured

RBWH’s Professor Tony Brown was named in the 2018 Queen’s Birthday honour list (AM) for significant service to Emergency Medicine as a clinician, author and educator, and to professional organisations. Pictured with Dr Amanda Dines and Adam Scott.

I was so excited. Lorna worked really close to me and Mum. I never knew how exciting it was to have a new home. “Move,” I would say to everyone I meet who stopped to talk to me.

On the Friday, the day before my move, Lorna came to talk to me. “Clay, I have some news, the move has been delayed,” she said.

The following day was my birthday. Over the next few weeks I wasn’t myself, I smiled but those who knew me best looked into my eyes and knew the twinkle had gone. I tried to keep positive, and my Halwyn friends had a huge celebration morning tea for me. There were lots of laughs and a few tears but every day I was waiting for someone to say the home was not there.

The day had come, Monday 16 July I moved to my new home. It is at Logan, not far from Mum – the traditional owners of the land are the YUgum Bear people. I have my own unit in a house shared with three others.

On 14 August we had a big house warming celebration, Mum came and I invited my friends from Halwyn – Roseanne, Pam and Lorna. As Lorna was leaving she asked me, “Clay are you happy?” I said “Yes”.

To read more of Clay’s story please visit https://metronorth.health.qld.gov.au/ or find out more about the NDIS.

Award Recognises Metro North Traineeships

Metro North has been named Large Employer of the Year for the North Coast Region at the Queensland Training Awards.

Co-ordinator of Education and Youth Engagement, Kylie Boccuzzi said being named Large Employer of the Year for our region was a reflection of the hard work that so many of our trainees and students were putting into the program.

School-based traineeships are supported by Redcliffe, Caboolture, and Kilcoy Hospitals as well as Oral Health and Community, Indigenous and Subacute Services.

“Across those facilities, we currently have around fifty school-based trainees who are working for Metro North, and at the same time earning certificate level qualifications” Ms Boccuzzi said.

“Along with those school-based trainees, at Caboolture Hospital, we have another 42 Healthcare Academy Students who are earning their qualifications as well.”

“So, this award was recognition of their success, and of the program that has been running for 13 years now.

“It’s also recognition of how many of our students and trainees have gone on to launch their careers in healthcare and with Metro North.”

Ms Boccuzzi said the recruitment for next year’s trainee intake was well underway with another 30 traineeships available in 2019.

“There’s strong community support and interest in what we offer students and trainees. At a recent information session at Caboolture, we had around 450 people come along to find out what our traineeships offer.”

Clay Loft has transitioned from residential care at Red Hill to a new home with support from the NDIS.

I am Clay and I am a proud Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander man.

Please understand, I can hear what you say and can comprehend, I see what is going on around me. Please don’t ignore me, when you walk into the room say hello. Look at me when you speak to me. I love to chat and I will let you know how I am.

If I am happy or agree I will smile and laugh. If I don’t agree or don’t want to talk I will frown or not respond. I love having a laugh and a joke.

I love watching sport, especially NRL and will never miss a Cowboys or Broncos match. It is even better when I get to go to a game. For me there is nothing better than going out with my friends and I play the drums with a group every weekend at New Farm Park and I sing.

I first came to the Halwyn Centre on respite, but in 2016 I became a resident as Mum was unable to care for me at home. Mum has always wanted me to live closer to the family home as it was difficult for her to travel to Halwyn. I missed Mum terribly, I am usually a very happy person but some days I felt down.

I had my name on a waiting list for a home for years and last year I was offered the opportunity to move to a brand new home. Mum was so happy and we started the countdown to the move. In May this year, Lorna (a nurse) let me know I would be moving in June.

Going Home – Clay Loft’s Story

Written by Gai-Maree Cain as told by Clay Loft

I had my name on a waiting list for a home for years and last year I was offered the opportunity to move to a brand new home. Mum was so happy and we started the countdown to the move. In May this year, Lorna (a nurse) let me know I would be moving in June.
RBWH pregnancy program celebrates its first graduate

Royal mums-to-be can now use the Living Well During Pregnancy (LWDP) free telephone coaching program to help them keep their pregnancy weight under control and make healthy lifestyle choices.

We all know how challenging it can be trying to find time to make healthy meals and be active while juggling family, work and other commitments. The free program makes it easier by being available over the phone with flexible hours, to ensure care and advice is accessible and convenient.

Brisbane mum-to-be Mamila Maharjan was the first to complete the program, successfully reaching her pregnancy weight gain goal and avoiding gestational diabetes.

With a family history of Type2 diabetes, Mamila said she was terrified of the condition with her first pregnancy.

“I was really worried about diabetes because my dad and my grandfather both had it, there was an increased risk for me,” Mamila said.

“I was already overweight and I was conscious that I shouldn’t put on too much weight during the pregnancy. But I loved food, I love eating, I never say no to food.”

RBWH maternity dietitian Hilary Powlesland, who leads the program, said by making the program a telephone service, she could talk to women from the comfort and privacy of their own home or workplace.

“Starting pregnancy at a higher weight can increase the risk of high blood pressure, gestational diabetes and Caesarean sections, so this program is designed to give women the support they need to achieve a healthy pregnancy and reduce these risks,” Hilary said.

“Success stories like Mamila’s are exactly why these programs are important. We got the best result possible for her and her new little family.”

Brisbane mum Mamila Maharjan and her partner with RBWH maternity dietitian Hilary Powlesland

Living Well During Pregnancy is available to RBWH mums-to-be who start pregnancy above a healthy weight, or who are gaining weight more quickly than recommended.

To join the program Royal mums-to-be can ask their midwife or self-register instantly online at https://tinyurl.com/rbwhlivingwell

An innovative approach for young Caboolture mothers

Young mothers in Caboolture now have access to an exciting new parenting program that will build their confidence as parents.

The Caboolture Young Mothers for Young Women (CYMYW) program consists of a small team of peer workers and a midwife who provide intensive support to young mothers to help them navigate community and hospital services offering antenatal and postnatal care.

CYMYW Team Leader Kylie Bolland said early feedback and outcomes from young women and their children were already showing that the innovative model worked.

“We are seeing young women access antenatal care and health services that they otherwise would not,” Kylie said.

“These same young women are finding permanent housing and setting up and planning for the birth of their baby and parenthood.”

Caboolture Hospital Service Partnerships Lead Wayne Middleton said that the CYMYW team can make a big difference in the life of young families.

“It enables transition of pregnant young women to hospital services earlier and follow-up to GP care afterwards,” he said.

The innovative program is a joint initiative between Caboolture Hospital and community-based, not-for-profit organisation MICAH Projects, funded by the Department of Communities.

“This is early intervention and prevention work that can only be done when government and non-government organisations work together,” Kylie said.

“It’s great to have the opportunity to partner with a hospital willing to try something new and demonstrate real innovation and push the boundaries.”

The CYMYW is located at 2 Oakland Drive, Caboolture South. Phone 5495 7270.
The Geriatric Outreach Assessment Service (GOAS) was trialled over 12 months in 24 Residential Aged Care Facilities (RACFs) across The Prince Charles Hospital (TPCH) catchment.

GOAS is an innovative model-of-care aimed at improving the quality of medical care for acutely unwell RACF residents while also preventing their unnecessary hospitalisation. It is a joint service between Metro North Hospital and Health Service and Brisbane North PHN.

An internal evaluation found GOAS had potentially prevented 638 Emergency Department presentations to the TPCH, equating to 66 per cent of the 960 episodes of care provided over the life of the project.

Brisbane North PHN’s Executive Manager for Aged and Community Care, Michele Smith, said GOAS had delivered a significant cost saving to the health system.

A single point of contact for GPs and staff of residential aged care facilities (RACF) is now available to streamline access to Metro North Hospital and Health Service (MNHHS) residential hospital based and outreach services.

The Residential Aged Care District Assessment and Referral (RADAR) Service will help GPs and RACF staff navigate the hospital system and coordinate care for acutely unwell patients living in RACFs. RADAR is a Nurse Navigator led service facilitating access to hospital-based and outreach services including:

- emergency department alternatives
- facilitating hospital admissions
- RACF resident post discharge medication review
- advice for navigating hospital services.

Each MNHHS hospital has developed its own services that provide inpatient and outpatient care to RACF patients. The RADAR Service provides one point of contact to facility-based residential outreach services including:

- Older Persons Acute Assessment Service – Royal Brisbane and Women’s Hospital
- Geriatric Outreach Assessment Service – The Prince Charles Hospital
- Residential Care Liaison Services – Redcliffe Hospital
- Geriatric Emergency Department Invention Outreach – Caboolture and Kilcoy Hospitals
- specialised outreach care services for various conditions such as palliative care, behaviour management and mental health.

Results from more than 1,700 survey responses showed GOAS had improved quality of care for RACF residents, with 98 per cent of consumers likely to recommend the service to others.

“Our evaluation confirms GOAS provides responsive, high quality and person-centred medical care at the right time and in the right place,” Ms Smith said.

The evaluation has recommended an expansion of GOAS across all hospitals in Brisbane North to ensure a regionally-consistent approach to the provision of healthcare to unwell RACF residents.

Metro North Executive Director of Clinical Services Dr Elizabeth Whiting said engagement at the interface between acute and aged care had been critical to project success.

“While more time is needed to assess the long-term effects of GOAS on acute care, surveys show a majority of aged care workers are now more confident in managing an acutely unwell resident,” Dr Whiting said.

“Going forward, we will continue to offer GOAS as part of Metro North’s Residential Aged Care Assessment and Referral (RADAR) Service.”
More alcohol and drug support for Queenslanders

Queenslanders struggling with alcohol and drugs will be able to access all their treatment options in one place with the launch of a new website.

The new Alcohol and Drug Information Service (ADIS) website provides a suite of information and resources for people, their families and health professionals.

Allied Health Manager at ADIS Dr Hollie Wilson said ADIS had provided 24/7 support, information and advice to Queenslanders for more than 30 years.

“Over the past three decades, ADIS counsellors have supported more than two million callers, providing numerous services to the public as well as existing clients of Alcohol and Other Drugs (AOD) services including anonymous after-hours support, brief interventions, referral, and advice and guidance on treatment options and suitability,” Dr Wilson said.

“We hope the new website will expand our service’s presence and access to support services across Queensland.”

Minister for Health and Ambulance Services Steven Miles said the new website had been developed as part of the State Government’s Action on ice plan, which was launched in February.

“Queenslanders made it clear there was a need for a central point of truth with information and support about alcohol and drug abuse,” Mr Miles said.

“The ADIS website is designed to be just that and will support Queenslanders and their families in need of assistance with their alcohol and drug consumption.”

The website will include self-assessment quizzes so people can gauge if their alcohol intake or drug use is putting them at risk.

It also provides a list of alcohol and drug treatment options available across the State and helpful resources for health professionals.

This site will complement the existing 24/7 confidential alcohol and drug phone service 1800 177 833 that helps people who are concerned about their own or someone else’s alcohol or drug use.

You can view the new website at: www.adis.health.qld.gov.au

NDIS improving patient outcomes through Rehab Engineering Centre

The National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) is allowing Queenslanders with a disability to explore more possibilities to enhance their health and wellbeing through Metro North’s Rehabilitation Engineering Centre.

“Our service has been focused on seating, posture, and pressure ulcer management but with the rollout of the NDIS new opportunities may be available,” said Rehabilitation Engineer Oliver Mason.

“Now when patients meet with their NDIS planners to discuss their goals, if they want to cycle again, shoot a Nerf gun or play video games, we can help them.”

The more fun sounding items are vitally important in motivating patients to achieve their rehabilitation goals and get them back to community.

“We’ve created a musical aid for a patient who couldn’t play the cello, and even a nerf gun mount for a patient’s wheelchair,” Oliver said.

“We’re currently collaborating with QUT students to help a boy with cerebral palsy play his Xbox.”

The centre is one of only three in Australia, working with patients to navigate their needs which are varying and complex.

“We have to work with each individual to assess their specific requirements,” he said.

“We know what we can do for a patient in terms of equipment, but the complex part is analysing their situation and providing a solution that will improve their health outcomes and comfort.”

To provide fast-paced, responsive care, the centre consists of both a clinic and a workshop. Once a patient is assessed in the clinic, the Rehabilitation Engineer heads to the workshop to design and fabricate a prototype of the equipment for trial.

“This mean patients, especially children, don’t have to wait a long time for basic items that will improve their quality of life,” he said.

The centre also offers independent advice to patients that are unsure about what pathways are available for acquiring disability equipment.

For more information about the Rehabilitation Engineering Centre visit their page or the NDIS.
Consumers embrace digital health future

An online portal where patients can select their hospital and appointment time that suits them is just one of many innovative ideas raised at the Digital North Strategy Consumer Forum last month.

Held at The Prince Charles Hospital, the forum was an opportunity for consumers and community members across Metro North to contribute ideas and give feedback on the health service’s digital transformation strategy in development.

Our Metro North community was also encouraged to complete an online survey via the health service’s Consultation Hub webpage or post ideas on the Metro North Facebook page.

Deputy Executive Director Operations for Metro North, Dr David Rosengren, who presented at the forum was extremely impressed with how interested consumers were in seeing digital technology integrated across the health service.

“Ideas from integrating hospital records with the My Health Record, to patient online portals and virtual in-home patient care were discussed,” Dr Rosengren said.

“The transition to digital health care will deliver faster, more integrated and personalised care with the support of cutting-edge technology.

“Our consumers and community members are important partners in Metro North’s digital journey and will help shape healthcare in the future.”

The Digital North Strategy will be released later this year that will help guide the future for healthcare at Metro North Health.

If you are interested in finding out more or would like to be involved in Metro North’s digital future, please email MNHHSDigitalNorth@health.qld.gov.au

New healing garden for hospital

A new garden at The Prince Charles Hospital (TPCH) will provide a calm healing space for patients and families.

TPCH Director of Nursing Cherie Franks said the new Healing Garden was designed to make Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander patients and families visiting the hospital feel welcome and comfortable during their stay.

“Many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander patients who visit the hospital come from rural and remote areas throughout Queensland, and have never set foot in a large city hospital,” Ms Franks said.

This can make some patients feel quite anxious about their treatment. “The healing garden provides a dedicated area where patients can come and sit and enjoy a peaceful outdoor environment away from the busy hospital ward.

“For Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander patients in particular, the natural environment is an important part of their culture and heritage, and helps them feel more relaxed and at home.”

The Healing Garden includes Indigenous totem poles, a yarning circle, edible plants and wall mural created by a local Aboriginal artist. Landscape Architect from Sod Design Stuart Bull, who designed the garden in extensive collaboration with the hospital, Indigenous elders, Metro North Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Unit, and the wider Indigenous community, said that the garden aimed to create a culturally appropriate place for retreat and privacy.

“We wanted the garden to contain physical and spiritual elements that were meaningful to the culture of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people,” Mr Bull said.

“We used various natural and raw materials such as sandstone blocks and deco granite flooring, which offer an important physical connection to the earth. We also used the colours from both the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander flags. All plants included in the design are edible and many of these offer traditional healing qualities.”

Ms Franks said that the healing garden was a way for the hospital to show its continued commitment to improving the health journey of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander patients and their families. “It’s a great way to connect culture and healthcare,” she said.

The healing garden has been federally funded by The Lighthouse Project, a joint initiative of the Heart Foundation and the Australian Healthcare and Hospitals Associations, aimed at reducing the incidence and impact of discharge against medical advice for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples with acute coronary syndrome.

TPCH is one of 18 hospitals nationwide funded to be part of the Lighthouse Hospital Project.

TPCH Nursing Director Cherie Franks, Lighthouse Project Coordinator Anthea Burns and Lighthouse Project Clinical Nurse Consultant Darsha Beetson

Metro North Consumer Rachel has shared her ideas for a digital health future to help shape the digital transformation strategy for the health service.
The event featured a Welcome to Country, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander dancing, art and cultural workshops and health promotional stalls.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Unit Director Paul Drahm said NAIDOC Week was an important time of the year to celebrate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander history, culture and achievements.

“NAIDOC Week provides an important opportunity for our staff, community members, local elders, patients and visitors to all come together to recognise the contributions that Indigenous Australians make to our country and our society,” Mr Drahm said.

“This year the event was better than ever with 2,000 people coming together from across Caboolture and the surrounding districts to enjoy the event.

“The Fun Day provided an opportunity to enjoy some food and family fun, and join together as one to celebrate our unique and diverse Indigenous culture in Queensland.”

The event featured a consumer engagement session ‘Conversations with Metro North’ allowing patients and families to provide service feedback and suggestions to Metro North Board Members and Hospital Executives.

Guests were asked to share why they are proud to identify as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

The event featured a consumer engagement session ‘Conversations with Metro North’ allowing patients and families to provide service feedback and suggestions to Metro North Board Members and Hospital Executives.

Celebrating
Children’s Day

Midwives, child health nurses and Indigenous health workers gathered at Zillmere Community Centre on August 4 to celebrate National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children’s Day.

Acknowledging the traditional owners

A new Acknowledgement to Country banner is making the emergency department of Caboolture Hospital a more welcoming and supportive environment for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

(left to right) Indigenous Hospital Liaison Robert Brown, Caboolture ED Nurse Unit Manager Nerys Brackman, Indigenous Hospital Liaison Officers Stello Laidlaw and Tyler Lea, and Caboolture Hospital Executive Director Dr Lance Le Ray
New Home for Redcliffe’s Day Procedure Unit

Redcliffe Hospital’s Day Procedure Unit has moved into the hospital’s newest clinical space on Level 6 East of the Main Building, making way for the next phase of the hospital’s once in a generation refurbishment of clinical facilities and physical infrastructure.

Redcliffe Hospital Executive Director, Louise Oriti said the ongoing series of capital works and infrastructure projects across the hospital campus were all aimed at providing the hospital with facilities and that would serve its patients and community for decades to come.

“The next big project we’re getting on with will involve renovating and refurbishing a number of services on Level 2 of the hospital, including the Day Procedure Unit,” Ms Oriti said.

“To make sure that we can do that while continuing to provide the clinical services our community relies on us for, we have temporarily moved our Day Procedure Unit out of their permanent facility on Level 2 and into a temporary facility on Level 6 East.

“This has allowed us to get underway with the renovation works on Level 2, while also allowing the hospital to continue to care for patients needing endoscopy services in the hospital’s Day Procedure Unit.”

Ms Oriti said the Day Procedure Unit’s temporary home on Level 6 East was also the latest part of the hospital to have completed renovation works.

“Once the renovations and refurbishments on Level 2 are completed, the Day Procedure Unit will move back in, and we’ll be using Level 6 East as a new ward for the hospital,” Mr Oriti said.

“We’re planning these projects carefully and doing everything we can to ensure that our patients come first.”

Char-lee paw-fect pick me up for patients

Patients of The Prince Charles Hospital (TPCH) are getting a good dose of canine care with new pet therapy dog Char-lee.

The Delta rescue dog has recently started regular visits to the hospital to help brighten the stay of sick children and older patients while they receive treatment. Each week, Char-lee will visit patients in the children’s ward, children’s emergency department (ED) and the older persons service within the adult ED.

TPCH emergency consultant, Dr Rajeev Jarugula said that having a therapy dog in the hospital was a good way of helping children and older people cope better with coming to hospital.

“Some children find coming to hospital quite distressing, particularly if they are feeling very unwell, and need to have procedures and tests,” Dr Jarugula said.

“A dog can calm children and help to distract them from any discomfort or fear they might be experiencing. Similarly, many older patients can be quite anxious about coming to hospital, as they can feel very vulnerable and helpless, particularly if don’t have any family with them.

“A therapy dog can provide them with some companionship and comfort which is important in the recovery process.”

Hospital staff are also getting a real buzz out of their new furry friend who is a much welcome addition to the workplace.

Delta’s Therapy Dog Teams support an estimated 20,000 Australians in hospitals and care facilities every week.

Poppy love - Therapy dog Char-lee laps up the attention from four year old patient, Lucy Johnson during her visit to the children’s emergency department.

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