

Your Voice @ the Royal

A consumer newsletter from Royal Brisbane and Women's Hospital

September 2019

Metro North Hospital and Health Service *Putting people first*

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).



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

A message from Gary

Have you ever wondered who speaks up on behalf of patients and their family and carers? Consumer Representatives do! So, what is a consumer representative, and what does she or he do?

"A consumer representative is a person who provides a consumer perspective, contributes consumer experiences, advocates for the interests of current and potential health service users, and takes part in decision-making processes." (Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care)

Consumer representatives are often former patients or carers who have their own stories and experience of healthcare. They are people who have taken up specific roles to provide advice on behalf of all consumers, with the overall aim of improving healthcare.

Patient-centred care is a key focus at Royal Brisbane and Women's Hospital (RBWH) because it improves the patient experience and leads to better care outcomes. Staff at RBWH believe that improvements in the care they provide every day can be informed by patient and carer experiences, and foster a culture where patients and their families are part of the care team and of shared decision making. Consumer advocacy plays a major role in promoting safety and quality. At RBWH our consumer representatives, including myself, help to improve the care of patients, and the health system generally by:

1. Listening to patients and their families and providing that feedback to leaders, clinicians and other staff so that over time, consumer feedback can be responded to seriously and healthcare for all is continuously improved.
2. Providing advice to health professionals to ensure the needs of patients and their families and carers are put front and centre when planning, co-designing and implementing health services.
3. Advising health staff who provide information to patients and their families and carers on how best to communicate, so that patients can fully understand and use information about their care to improve their health.
4. Providing role models to positively influence health professionals to ensure they are always providing compassionate care for all, no matter the patient's culture, religion or sexuality.

Overall, consumer representatives are an important link between patients and their families and carers and the many staff entrusted with their care. Consumer representatives give their time to help make the care of patients as positive as possible. Their voices can be loud, and their contributions are always valued by the Hospital.

Regards,
Gary



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National Bowel Cancer Screening Program

What is the National Bowel Cancer Screening Program?

We're glad you asked. Bowel (or colorectal) cancer is the fourth most common cancer and the second-highest cause of death from cancer in Queensland. However, if diagnosed and treated early, bowel cancer has around a 90 percent five-year survival rate. The National Bowel Cancer Screening Program aims to provide just that – early diagnosis. The program provides free screening for people aged between 50 and 74 years to enable us all to make decisions about whether we wish to proceed with early treatment, if the screening process lets us know that it would be a good idea. It has been estimated that, if we had a 60 percent participation rate, the number of cases of bowel cancer per 100,000 people would drop by 33 percent!

We think, in Queensland, we could be better at doing the very simple, free screening process at home and following-up on results when recommended. You may see posters and information about the screening program around RBWH – that's because our clinicians know it's extremely important and hope that everyone will participate. When your free screening kit arrives in the mail we encourage you to complete the process and return it via the post.

RBWH Executive Director Cancer Care Services Dr Glen Kennedy



Medicinewise Week 19 – 25 August 2019

The ninth annual Be Medicinewise Week was held from 19 – 25 August 2019. It's about knowing how to communicate and learn about medicines to get the most out of them, safely. This is important in both English and non-English speaking communities.

How can you learn the language of medicines?

- Know all the medicines you take and why you take them. Keeping an up-to-date medicines list is a great way to keep track of your medicines.
- Understand the instructions for taking your medicines. Medicines only work if you take them properly, and you can only take them properly if you understand the instructions.

- Check with your health professional before starting any new medicine. A health professional can help you balance the benefits of a medicine with any potential risks or side effects.
- Ask questions if there is anything you don't understand about your medicines. Seeking information from a trusted source can help you get the most out of your medicines, safely.

For more information, please visit:
www.nps.org.au/bemedicinewise





Improving mealtimes is on the menu at RBWH

Over the past ten years, staff and researchers have made improvements to food and nutrition systems at the RBWH. Older people admitted to hospital now eat 20 percent more energy (calories) and protein than those admitted in 2007. However, we know that many people continue to have poor food intake in hospital.

To better understand this and continue improvement efforts, RBWH staff and researchers have formed a consumer and staff reference group and have gathered patient feedback about the mealtime environment. We surveyed 103 patients aged between 25 and 97-years-old from five wards within RBWH. Positive aspects of mealtimes reported by those surveyed included adequate time provided to eat, availability of food, self-feeding and receiving timely assistance to eat and appearance of food. We were pleased to see that RBWH patients generally had fewer mealtime difficulties than patients completing this same survey in the UK and Canada.

Common barriers reported included difficulty opening packets, interruptions, being in an uncomfortable position while eating, temperature or taste of food and difficulty reaching food.

In addition to continuous improvement work by RBWH Food Services, we are commencing a consumer and staff co-design project to develop solutions to improve the mealtime experience for our patients, their family and carers and staff.

We welcome contact about this project from interested members of the RBWH community. For more information please contact Dr Adrienne Young on 3646 2351 or email adrienne.young@health.qld.gov.au



A word from Doug – the RBWH Surgery Department Consumer representative helping you to sleep better

In the Surgery Department, we really want to help patients sleep better. We are starting a sleep well program to help improve patients' sleep wellness, including giving patients eye masks,

sleep tea, earplugs, and increasing the availability of earphones that plug into the remote control for the television.



Doug Wright

Every day from 9 pm, ward lights will be turned down and patients and staff will be encouraged to have their mobile phones on silent. Nursing staff are encouraged to wear soft sole shoes and the sound on nursing station phones will be turned down.

There can be movement of patients in and out of the surgical wards at night time and patients will be advised of this on admission and during the course of their patient stay. Staff make every effort to keep the noise down when patients are being moved.

We know that rest is important for recovery and we hope this program will help patients to get a better night's rest.

Compassion in action at the Compassion Café

RBWH held its third Compassion Café on 15 and 16 May 2019. The café popped-up at the hospital and was run by Consumer Representatives and staff from RBWH Foundation and RBWH.

Compassion Café is a random act of kindness for patients and visitors to RBWH, providing a free tea or coffee and a cupcake, and most importantly, an opportunity for patients and their families and carers to talk to staff and consumer representatives. Consumers were also invited to provide feedback on their experience and issues important to them.

Over two days, the café served up hundreds of cups of tea and coffee!

Feedback from both consumers and staff who attended Compassion Café was overwhelmingly positive. Consumers said they appreciated the friendly, kind and caring staff and consumer representatives who served them as well as the relaxed setting within the busy hospital surrounds. Compassion Café is run twice a year – look out for more information about the next one!



Your Feedback...

Patient survey – your responses will help us deliver better care

RBWH is trialling a new way to offer patients the opportunity to provide feedback about their experience. You may receive an online survey relating to your most recent visit. This will be sent via text message after you are discharged home. The survey is optional, you don't have to complete it if you don't want to. If you do not wish to receive survey text messages for further visits, you are able to opt out via text message. The survey is available in English, Simplified Chinese and Arabic for the trial period. Mandarin and Arabic are the most common languages requested for interpreters at RBWH.

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Tell us about your experience



We ask because we care



Supported by the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Unit,
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Good News Story

RBWH continues to welcome feedback from patients and carers through its feedback systems. The hospital shares the feedback with staff. Here is an example of great feedback for staff in the Emergency and Trauma Centre:

I presented to RBWH Emergency and Trauma Centre in June with high blood pressure. All the staff I interacted with were efficient, professional, compassionate and respectful. At no time did I feel forgotten, despite the fact that the department was clearly extremely busy. At every step along the way, someone took the time to explain what was happening and to ensure that I understood. This included the triage nurse, the resident, the staff specialist, the radiographer and the nurse who took my ECG. I would like to thank all of them.

Tips for staying healthy in hospital

We understand that staying in hospital is not all that enjoyable for many people. Many people tend to think that their health is entirely in the hands of doctors and nurses. Here are some things you can do to help yourself when you are in hospital:

- Sit upright in bed if possible, this will help your lungs.
- Get up and moving about as much as you can (if possible, of course), this can help you recover sooner.
- Change your position in bed as often as you can (or about every ten minutes or so), this can help prevent blood clots and also help reduce chances of pressure injuries.
- Use snug fitting shoes or slippers with rubber soles, this will help reduce the chances of falling.
- Make sure your bed is the right height for you, this is very important and can help reduce falls.

You can reduce your risk of infection by:

- Not touching your mouth or putting your cutlery down on your bed sheets.
- Not touching any bandages, dressings or drips you may have.
- Telling your nurse straight away if your drip, wounds or anything else become painful or uncomfortable.
- Washing your hands before and after going to the toilet, and before eating meals. Also feel free to ask doctors and nurses to wash their hands.

Above all, if you feel like you need some guidance, ask your healthcare team. They're listening! Please speak up, it is your right.

Hand Hygiene



DID YOU KNOW YOU CAN HELP TO STOP THE SPREAD OF INFECTION WITH GOOD HAND HYGIENE?

At RBWH, there are big alcohol hand sanitiser pump packs in the foyer, at the lifts, in the clinics and at the ends of beds in wards. To prevent the spread of disease, it's recommended to use these when you enter and leave the hospital, when you've been to the bathroom or eaten food, and before and after you've touched a patient. Unwell patients are already much more susceptible to catching an infection.



DID YOU KNOW YOU SHOULDN'T COVER A COUGH OR SNEEZE WITH YOUR HAND?

If you don't have anything handy to cough or sneeze into, it's recommended to use the crook of your elbow. The bend in your elbow is a part of your body you're unlikely to use to touch the next door, desk, chair or person. The germs on your hands get transferred to everything you touch until you next wash or sanitize your hands.



DID YOU KNOW YOU CAN ASK STAFF TO CLEAN THEIR HANDS BEFORE THEY TOUCH YOU?



DID YOU KNOW IF YOU ARE UNWELL FROM A COLD, FLU OR GASTRO ILLNESS, YOU CAN CALL RBWH TO ASK IF THEY STILL WANT YOU TO COME IN TO YOUR APPOINTMENT?

Many clinics will be able to change your appointment to avoid you coming into the hospital and spreading your germs to others. If you need to come in, there are face masks at the reception desk which you can wear to prevent the spread of germs. And if someone is coughing and sneezing and sharing their germs with the whole clinic, you can also ask for a facemask to lessen your chances of catching them.

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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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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