

Connections

THE CABRINI HEALTH MAGAZINE Issue 09 December 2011



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May the love, peace and hope of the Christmas story touch and inspire you in the coming year.

~ The Cabrini community ~

A message from the Chief Executive

As 2011 draws to close, I look back at a very rewarding year for our multi-site health service. Once again, our pivotal focus has been our patients and their families and the improvements we have made to their care and experience of Cabrini Health.

It began with a significant boost to our award-winning maternity unit to accommodate more delivery suites and a private room for each patient. We also invested in new technology including an advanced Magnetic Resonance Imaging machine and a third-generation da Vinci Si HD Surgical System, known as the 'da Vinci robot'.

For me, the highlight has been the support we have received from the community. In these difficult economic times, I have been gratified by the generosity and willingness to help us, especially our fundraising campaign for the da Vinci robot. Because we don't receive direct financial support from the Government or the Catholic Church, community support is always welcome and put to valuable use.

I hope you enjoy the articles in this edition of *Connections*. We present an overview of a research study into the effects of prolonged stays in the intensive care unit which shed light on patients' quality of life after their return home. Featured, too, is some of the work we have been doing to reduce our carbon footprint and also how technology has eased patient waiting times and improved scheduling, giving doctors more time with their patients.

I look forward to keeping you informed of our efforts and advances during 2012. In the meantime, I take this opportunity to wish you all the blessings of the Festive Season.

Dr Michael Walsh
Chief Executive

Greening Cabrini's healthcare

Protecting our environment and reducing our carbon footprint is a hot topic and raises the question of what Cabrini Health is doing to minimise its environmental impact.

Operating 365 days of the year and generating nearly 700 tonnes of solid waste annually, Cabrini Health cannot ignore its impact on the environment. The nature and turnover of our business highlights the fact that we are a large consumer of energy and produce large volumes of waste.

Scott Fraser, Cabrini Health's first Environmental Engineer, has been challenged with driving our environmental focus.

"We have already made improvements in the areas of energy, waste and water consumption, but there is still much more we can do," said Scott.

"It is equally important that environmental solutions or systems put in place are sustainable."

Investment in an environmental management system (EMS) is the first step in understanding our energy and waste consumption and enabling us to measure trends and set key performance indicators.

During the past 12 months, output of everything from light fittings and refrigeration to air-handling systems and plant operation has been monitored and improved. Installation of energy efficient LED light fittings in the hospital foyers and Terrace Café at Cabrini Malvern has reduced carbon emissions by 71,000 kg.

Upgraded air-handling systems have not only reduced electricity consumption by 25 per cent but also carbon emissions.

"We will adopt the highest environmental standards in all areas of our operations and we plan not only to meet legislative requirements, but to exceed them," said Scott.



ENVIRONMENTAL ENGINEER, SCOTT FRASER, IS REVIEWING WASTE MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS.

FRONT COVER: MAYOR OF STONNINGTON, CR MELINA SEHR, HAS A HEALTH CHECK DURING CABRINI'S OPEN DAY



ERN ON A DAY OUT IN HIS PRECIOUS JEEP.

Always looking ahead

Ern Ireland, a vital 89-year-old, has a simple reason for committing a bequest to Cabrini Health on behalf of himself and his late wife Jean.

“I am alive because of Cabrini Health.”

Also, the Irelands’ bequest is made in recognition of the care Jean received at Cabrini Malvern.

The Irelands made their home in Malvern more than 20 years ago, just a stone’s throw from the hospital.

“Both Jean and I have been to the emergency department, where the care is wonderful, and these days I am at Cabrini Malvern regularly for blood tests and the like,” said Ern.

While he misses his late wife, Ern has a full life with two grown children, two grandchildren and now a great grandchild.

Ern and Jean shared a keen interest in water sports and travelling to places ‘off the beaten track’. For Ern, sailing

and diving have been particular passions. In fact, it was at Royal Brighton Yacht Club that Ern and Jean met. They had a whirlwind romance lasting three months before eloping to marry. Prior to starting a family, Jean had trained as a mothercraft nurse.

Ern says he has heart trouble and his first visit to Cabrini Malvern was 15 years ago. He has a pacemaker fitted, which will be replaced early in 2012.

While some of Ern’s interests are historically based – he chairs the Australian Army Signal Historical Foundation (an interest sparked by his army involvement in signals during the Second World War) – he says he has always looked ahead and encourages others to do the same.

“Most of my life, I’ve done what I’ve wanted to do.

“The past comes and goes but the future is my interest.

“I am looking ahead still – my mother was over 100 before she died so I may have a chance to keep going a few more years.”

Ern believes research is of the utmost importance and hopes that the Irelands’ bequest will help Cabrini Health in providing care for others.

Currently Ern is participating in a long-term international research study on older drivers called Ozcandrive, being funded by the Australian Research Council. The study is designed to examine the experiences of 200 drivers aged 75 or older, in order to describe the characteristics of safe older drivers.

A data recording device is placed in the participants’ vehicles, in order to examine their health and driving patterns over a five-year period.

The study, being conducted by Monash University Accident Research Centre with support from Eastern Health, La Trobe University, VicRoads, the Department of Justice, Victoria Police, Transport Accident Commission, Road Safety Trust New Zealand, Ottawa Hospital Research Institute and Candrive, aims to help reduce motor vehicle-related injuries and deaths among older drivers.

Intensively. caring

for our patients and their families

JAMES RANKIN IS
GRATEFUL FOR THE
CARE HE RECEIVED
WHILE A PATIENT IN
CABRINI'S ICU



“Out of this world” is how patient James Rankin (known to friends as Jimmy) described the care he and his family received during a long stay in Cabrini Malvern’s intensive care unit in June-July 2011.

It’s also an apt description for the vivid dreams and visions he experienced while he was in a coma for some 30 days.

Jimmy, 73, is a retired import textile agent who travelled extensively for work. Now his lifestyle is based closer to home in Carrum Downs and it was there that he contracted an infection through a lesion in his skin, which affected his heart, while clearing away bushes at his property. The infection left him feeling “freezing cold” but with few other symptoms.

While Jimmy has little personal recollection of his time in hospital, other than his technicolour dreams, he understands he underwent surgery to replace an aortic valve in his heart following a previous operation in 2007.

While he still has a few aches and pains, Jimmy says he is “in the pink” and “doing extremely well”. He has maintained a healthy weight, eats well, walks 5 km a day and performs daily exercises using light handweights to help strengthen the diaphragm, which is part of his rehabilitation.

“I should have been dead – it’s an absolute miracle and I cannot thank the staff at Cabrini Health for what they did for me and how they treated my family;” said Jimmy.

Jimmy has plenty of living to do yet.

During his working years, he spent much of his time travelling to Korea, Japan, Taiwan and Hong Kong, but now has the time to enjoy his hobbies and interests, among them a long involvement with the RSL, where he served as President of the Aspendale and Edithvale sub-branch for eight years and has been a member for 50 years.

Four adult children and eight grandchildren keep Jimmy and his wife Patricia “pretty busy”.

“There is only one place to go if I get crook again – Cabrini Health and I will take myself there,” said Jimmy.



JIM AND PAT AT HOME

STUDY LOOKS AT PROLONGED ICU STAYS

Cabrini Health’s intensive care unit (ICU) was established in 2003 and is a busy unit, providing care for approximately 1410 patients every year. These patients are the sickest of the sick, requiring around-the-clock monitoring and care.

Recently we completed a follow-up study on the quality of life in patients who had undergone a long admission in our intensive care unit (that is, more than 21 days). The study has allowed us to more accurately inform patients and their families about likely outcomes in the event of a prolonged ICU stay.

Prolonged admissions in ICU are burdensome to patients, families, healthcare workers and the community. There is a concern that such treatment may be futile and that patients who survive long admissions in ICU experience a poor quality of life afterward.

From July 2008, we gathered data on patients admitted to our ICU (which now numbers approximately 3500).

Dr Geetha Plandran, a final year medical student on elective rotation in ICU, with the approval of the Cabrini Human Research Ethics Committee, surveyed 22 long stay ICU patients about their quality of life after their discharge home. All but one of our former patients was still living in their own homes.

The results were interesting. Most former patients described themselves as “perfectly well”, nine people had no problems walking about, 12 had some difficulty with mobility and one was confined to bed.

A similar pattern was evident in the other activities of daily life such as housework, family and leisure activities. It was also reflected in the incidence of pain, discomfort, anxiety and depression.

Faced with the same illness again, most of these patients said they would choose ICU for their care.

The study found that approximately two-thirds of patients who had survived a long admission to ICU returned to a reasonably normal quality of life. These encouraging results serve to reassure our staff that their care of these long term patients is beneficial, vindicating the great efforts undertaken to help them recover.



Cabrini Hospital



On 12 November, Cabrini Health threw open its doors to the community for a special Open Day at our Malvern hospital, inviting people to participate in a range of activities.

Visitors were invited into areas not normally open to the general public, such as our surgical theatres in the day procedure centre, where people could interact with our surgical simulators.

One of the most popular attractions at the event, visitors used the surgical simulators to try their hand at laparoscopic and robotic surgery.

Many community members participated in the free health checks – which measured cholesterol, diabetes, blood pressure and body mass index – and received valuable nutrition advice. This was followed up by healthy cooking demonstrations with people receiving free recipes.

Children enjoyed exercising in the jumping castle and kept the face painter and balloon fairy busy all day.

Some special guests joined in including Kelly Dwyer MP, the Federal Member for Higgins and Cr Melina Sehr, the Mayor of Stonnington ... and of course the Star Wars Stormtroopers.





opens its doors



Private facilities

leap ahead

with new patient flow technology

Australia's private healthcare sector is benefiting from technology that uses web-based systems to ensure quality of care is at the core of the patient experience.

The patient scheduling technology, Q-Flow, extends beyond queue management to enable surgeons and other hospital staff to accurately monitor the time they spend with each patient to improve patient scheduling and reduce waiting times. Surgeons and other staff can check appointment schedules and patient flow remotely from a smart phone, bringing a new level of accessibility.



MANAGER OF MEDICAL IMAGING, MARION SITTER, WITH THE Q-FLOW SYSTEM

This technology has already been embraced in USA at the privately-run Centre for Orthopaedics in Louisiana. Dr John Noble from the Centre said implementation of Q-Flow two years ago has improved efficiency at all levels. With a catchment area of 300,000 people, the Centre has grown from 10,000 visits to 47,000 in the past two years and from four specialist providers to twelve.

"Q-Flow has helped us focus on providing patient-centred care" Dr Noble said.

"It's not a replacement for face-to-face interaction, but rather a way for us to drastically improve our patient flow and appointment scheduling, enabling us to spend more time with patients to recapture the personal aspect of the service, which has been lost in some areas of healthcare."

In Australia, the Q-Flow system, which is distributed exclusively by The NEXA Group, is helping staff at Cabrini Medical Imaging to manage 100,000 patient procedures annually. Marion Sitter, Manager, Medical Imaging, said the system has been in use for the past 18 months and is supporting patient care.

"With three reception areas and up to 350 patient presentations per day, the system was installed to overcome long queues and reduce stress on frontline staff," said Marion.

"Given that most of our patients are 60 or older, this technology has greatly enhanced patient care by removing the need for them to stand in long queues.

"We can track average waiting times, so there is the potential to analyse this data and improve patient scheduling sometime down the track."

Marion says patients have responded positively to Q-Flow.

"It is the same system used in Medicare offices around Australia so our patients are very familiar with it – mostly, they appreciate not having to stand in long queues."

Special thanks

Thanks to those readers who completed the recent survey. Your comments will be of great value to future editions of the magazine and our fundraising efforts.

Winners of cinema prizes included:

Rev. Mark Doecke

Ms Wendeleen McCarthy

Mr Murray Rogers



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