

New hospital ward improves care for heart and lung patients



A new state-of-the-art health care facility at The Prince Charles Hospital (TPCH) will mean improved care for patients with complex heart and lung conditions.

The new Heart Lung Complex Care Centre is a modern, purpose built centre providing care primarily to patients with cystic fibrosis (CF) as well as those with adult congenital heart disease. The 14-bed single room centre allows patients to receive care in a modern, patient-friendly setting suitable to their clinical condition.

TPCH Director of Cystic Fibrosis, Professor Scott Bell said patients with CF have very specific clinical requirements due to the nature of their condition.

“CF is a genetic condition resulting in chronic lung disease, reduced nutrition and reduced life expectancy. Patients with CF are susceptible to bacterial infections and in some, possible cross-infection occurring between patients,” he said.

“In a normal hospital ward setting, the opportunity for patient-to-patient contact naturally increases, particularly if patients are in hospital for a period of time. Patients with CF can have up to four admissions each year, with some admissions lasting 14 days or more.

“The new Centre will ensure our patients continue to receive the best care in a comfortable setting specifically tailored to their clinical needs.

“Each patient room has a shared ensuite, television, fridge and exercise equipment,” Professor Bell said.

The growth of patients with CF in the last 20 years has been significant. Since 1996, the number of patients with CF cared for by TPCH has almost tripled.

As the state’s centre for adult CF care, the service today cares for around 300 patients from around Queensland and northern NSW, achieving world-class results. It has a strong research program, currently supported by the NHMRC, Queensland Health Research Fellowships, Australian Infectious Diseases Research Centre/QIMR Berghofer Medical Research Institute, TPCH Foundation, Queensland Children’s Hospital Foundation, 65 Roses, among others. These partnerships enhance evidence for the best ways to deliver care and treatments.

“The rapid increase in patient numbers over the years provided us with an opportunity to study ways infection can be spread and to review our current accommodation, and custom build a facility in line with international CF care standards,” Professor Bell said.

“This is amongst the best facilities for adults with CF nationally and provides an ideal opportunity to efficiently improve the health of our patients. Optimising the healthcare experience will enhance the quality of life of adults living with CF in Queensland.”

Six months on, patients are delighted with the new facility and the research team is actively studying the impact on infection control of single room accommodation.

Importantly, through the CF Centre’s Patient Advisory Committee, established in June 2013 in collaboration with the TPCH Foundation, \$34,000 has been raised for resources to improve facilities especially gym and exercise equipment.

Above: Patients like Ben Austin have benefited from dedicated Heart Lung Complex Centre.