

healthy *territory*

SPRING 2010 | ISSUE 28



Neuro-surgery suite opens

***Construction commences on Women's
and Children's Hospital***

Walk-in Centre wins awards

Lets Talk for suicide prevention



From the Chief Executive

BUILDING A BETTER HEALTHCARE SYSTEM

Welcome to your new look 'Healthy Territory' magazine.

Like many health services around the world, we're encountering a number of current challenges: an ageing population and growing demand for our health services; increased prevalence of chronic diseases; workforce challenges; and ageing buildings and infrastructure.

To address these looming challenges, we're building a better healthcare system, with a focus on improving the patient journey and enhancing our linkages with primary healthcare agencies.

We've embarked on a \$1 billion plus 'Your health – our priority' program to develop our capital assets, which encompasses new facilities and new models of care; contemporary infrastructure services, including a range of e-health initiatives; workforce planning and development; and change management.

We're also currently reviewing the ACT Health organisational structure and internal governance processes, to ensure we have a framework that best supports the organisation to meet these numerous challenges.

At the same time, implementation of the Australian Government's national healthcare reform will place a greater emphasis on health promotion, preventative health, primary healthcare and enhanced self management of health conditions. The end goal of these reforms is to deliver a more efficient and effective health sector, with greater transparency and accountability.

At ACT Health, we're building a better healthcare system to meet the future needs of our region. At the centre of these endeavours remains our goal of delivering patient-centred care that espouses our values of care, excellence, collaboration and integrity.

Dr Peggy Brown
Chief Executive, ACT Health

Contents

From the Chief Executive	2	Hearing loss	16
Neuro-surgery suite opens	3	Best health equipment scheme	17
Lets Talk for suicide prevention	4	Walk-in centre wins award	18
\$360,000 funding announced	5	Public sleep laboratory	19
Building the capacity of allied health	6	Connections@Cooleman	20
Construction commences	7	Get Healthy service	21
Prostrate cancer website	8	Breast Cancer report	22
Expertise in demand overseas	9	Newborn care	23
Art unveiling	11	Free vaccine continued	24
Women's Health framework released	12	PhD Bursary awarded	25
Harmful impacts of drug impacts	13	Home dialysis support	26
Laws regulating tanning units	14	Wealth of health	27
ICU new information management systems	15		



Neuro-surgery suite opens

Canberra Hospital joined a select group of hospitals around the world when its new state-of-the-art Neurosurgical Intra-operative Magnetic Resonance Imaging (IMRI) suite opened in September.

The new neurosurgical suite is among the most advanced in the country and Canberra Hospital is one of just four hospitals in the Asia-Pacific region— two in China and one in India— to include a movable MRI that allows surgeons to image patients in the operating room during brain surgery.

The new facility is a two-room suite that includes *IMRISneuro*, which in the hands of the staff and surgeons at Canberra Hospital will provide patients with the highest standard of treatment and care.

The new facility will provide state-of-the-art healthcare in an integrated suite of technology. It includes a five tonne magnet that can be moved into the operating theatre to provide the ability for surgical imaging and evaluation within the operating room.

It will enable the equipment to be moved around the patient, minimising movement of the patient during brain surgery.

Director of Neurosurgery, Dr John Fuller, said the new facility aimed to enhance neurosurgical procedures.

“This fantastic new facility will allow us to conduct medical imaging during surgery,

meaning we can update images intra-operatively, increasing the extent and accuracy in certain tumour resection,” Dr Fuller said.

During August a Nurse Clinical Trainer from Canada has been at the Canberra Hospital to train staff on the *IMRISneuro* system, how the software works and on the clinical application of the system in a neurosurgical operation.

Sixty one staff including medical officers, nursing staff, MRI radiographers, allied health staff and wardspeople have received *IMRISneuro* training while 81 staff have received MRI safety training. This includes nursing staff, medical officers, allied health staff, wardspeople and cleaning staff.

The Neurosurgical IMRI suite is a part of the *Your health - our priority* \$1 billion plus health infrastructure program which will overhaul and expand all aspects of the health system in order to meet future demand.

The total cost of the Neurosurgical IMRI suite is \$10.5 million.



Let's Talk for Suicide Prevention

ACT Health's Let's Talk suicide prevention campaign was held in the four weeks leading up to World Suicide Prevention Day.

The Let's Talk campaign culminated with 40 volunteers dressed in orange and white t-shirts converging on the Civic Bus Interchange to share in a free BBQ, raise public awareness and distribute information about suicide and suicide prevention. The purpose of the event was to provide a focal point where members of the community could engage with the campaign.

Trained counsellors were available at the bus interchange for anyone who may have been touched by suicide and felt the need to talk. There was also information on hand for people who may want to know more about the services available in the Territory, either for themselves, friends, family members or bereaved loved ones.

On average, more than 30 deaths in the ACT can be attributed to suicide each year with each one having a ripple effect, impacting on the individual's family, friends and colleagues.

This campaign aims to let people know how they can help a friend or family member who is feeling suicidal, and raises awareness that there are no simple reasons why people take their own life.

The Let's Talk campaign encourages the community to get connected through talking and supporting individuals who might be feeling suicidal and those who have lost someone to suicide.

The themes of the Let's Talk campaign include: It's okay to talk about suicide; You can help someone who is feeling suicidal; Why do people take their own life; and How to help a friend bereaved by suicide.

A range of suicide prevention services are available in the ACT, including Lifeline, Kids Helpline, ACT Crisis and Assessment Team, Mensline Australia, headspace and Standby.



\$360,000 funding announced

The ACT Government will provide \$360,000 in funding in 2010-11 to sponsor sporting, recreational, arts and cultural organisations which promote the Government's priority health messages.

The funding is provided through the ACT Health Promotion Grants Program 2010-11, Health Promotion Sponsorship Funding Round.

One of the ways ACT Health contributes to good health in the community is through the sponsorship of sports, recreation, arts and cultural activities which promote positive health messages and healthy choices.

The goal of the Health Promotion Sponsorship Funding Round is for sponsored organisations to deliver a priority health message to their participants and support healthy lifestyle choices through the creation of healthy environments.

Daramalan College students at the launch of 2010 Youth Dance Festival

Applicants are required to clearly demonstrate how their organisation plans to use the funding to deliver targeted promotions of one of the following key health messages – smoking reduction, physical activity, healthy eating, or water as the drink of choice – to participants and spectators during their activities and events.

Funding for the grants program was open to all ACT sporting, recreational, arts and cultural organisations with an interest in promoting good health and wellbeing through their activities.

Forty-five applications were submitted for the 2010-11 Health Promotion Sponsorship Funding Round, with 25 applications granted funding.

Successfully sponsored organisations include:

- Females in Training (FIT) is a group for women of all abilities who want to enjoy safe, competitive training and exercise in a supportive and fun atmosphere. FIT will provide support for women who are commencing or recommencing their involvement in physical activity. FIT will use its networks to promote physical activity as a lifestyle choice to women in the ACT.
- Capital Football is the governing body of football in the ACT. The organisation will use the funding to plan, promote and initiate a new "Get active" Parent/Child soccer program. The program is designed to promote physical activity to new parents of young children while engaging their children (aged 3 to 5) in activity.

- Ausdance ACT promotes dance participation and healthy behaviours including physical activity, good nutrition, positive body image and smoke free lifestyles. The annual program includes the Smokefree Youth Dance Festival, Dance Week and Master School.

The ACT Health Promotion Grants Program supports and promotes healthy lifestyle choices, improved health outcomes for people experiencing the greatest disadvantage, promotes positive self-image, strengthens and enhances community support networks; provides for safe and supportive environments; reduces health risk factors; and influences public policy.

ACT Health building the capacity of allied health

Allied health professionals play a key role in our multidisciplinary healthcare team, providing quality care to clients and their families.

The Allied Health Postgraduate Scholarship Scheme has been in operation since 2005, and over the past five years assisted a diversity of allied health professionals to support their further learning and development.

Full scholarships enabling reimbursement of postgraduate study fees for the 2010

ACT Health will deliver more than \$130,000 in funding this year to support the professional development of the ACT's allied health professionals.

study year were awarded to twenty-nine allied health professionals including occupational therapists, pharmacists, sonographers, respiratory scientists, medical laboratory scientists and social workers.

Similar to their medical and nursing colleagues, allied health professionals are in high demand. The Scholarship Scheme not only reinforces the culture of learning within ACT Health, but also strengthens the recruitment and retention of these valued professionals.



Construction commences on Women's and Children's Hospital

Construction of the ACT's new Women's and Children's Hospital took a major step forward in July with ACT Minister for Health, Katy Gallagher MLA turning the first sod to officially celebrate the commencement of construction.

'I am very pleased to be able to turn the first sod and to officially get things underway on what will be a world class facility for women, children and their families from Canberra and the surrounding region,' Ms Gallagher said.

Ms Gallagher joined staff, stakeholders and representatives of the project team to celebrate the important milestone. The new hospital will be built surrounding the existing Maternity building at the northern end of the Canberra Hospital campus.

The new hospital is a part of ACT Health's *Your health—our priority* health infrastructure program and will see the collocation

ACT Minister for Health Katy Gallagher, patient Sarah Crowther, and business manager of the construction division of Leighton Contractors Tony Sheppard turn the first sod of the new Women's and Children's Hospital.

of services including Paediatrics at the Canberra Hospital (PatCH), maternity services, the neonatal intensive care unit, gynaecology and fetal medicine and specialised outpatient services.

Leighton Contractors was recently appointed as Project Manager for the new hospital. Mr Tony Sheppard, NSW/ACT Business Manager, Construction Division of Leighton Contractors, said the company was very proud to be a part of this significant health project.

Continued over page

"The Women's and Children's Hospital has been referred to as the flagship of the ACT Government's health infrastructure redevelopment and we very much look forward to producing one of the nation's most progressive health projects which will set the benchmark for women's, paediatric and new born care within Australia," Mr Sheppard said.

The new three-storey hospital will provide 146 beds, an increased number of ambulatory care (outpatient) consult rooms, clinical office space, education and training facilities, and family accommodation.

It will also incorporate a play ground, café and landscaped spaces.

Construction will be conducted in two stages. Stage one will involve an extension to the existing Maternity building and is expected to be completed in late 2011.

Stage two will involve a major refurbishment of the existing building and is expected to be completed in late 2012.

The total budget for this innovative new facility is \$97.37 million.

Prostate Cancer website launched

Prostate Cancer Awareness Month was marked by the launch of a new website for the ACT local support group.

ACT Minister for Health, Katy Gallagher used the occasion to thank the Prostate Cancer Support Group ACT Region for their support for four nurses with their post-graduate study through La Trobe University. The further education has enhanced the nurses' skills and knowledge specifically in prostate cancer care.

Data from the Australian Institution of Health and Welfare suggests that prostate cancer is the second greatest cause of cancer deaths in men with almost 20,000 men expected to be diagnosed with the cancer in Australia in 2010.

Almost 3,000 men will die as a direct result of prostate cancer during the same period. That's why awareness and early detection is so important.

Through its website, the Prostate Cancer Support Group is able to provide specific information and support for this type of cancer.

The website provides a range of information for those affected by prostate cancer and those wanting to know more about the disease, as well as details of the Group's regular monthly meetings.

The new website can be found at <http://prostate-cancer-support-act.net/>



ACT Health expertise in demand overseas

ACT Health's successful locally developed COMPASS training program is attracting attention interstate and overseas.

This program has seen improvements in documentation and communication in relation to patient deterioration at both public hospitals in the ACT.

Two members of the Early Recognition of the Deteriorating Patient Team travelled to Oman in March to deliver the COMPASS education program that has been developed locally by ACT Health staff.

The education package is innovative and incorporates an interactive CD, training manual and face to face training including case studies, all aimed at the early recognition of deteriorating patients.

Following interest nationally, ACT Health established a website in early 2009 to allow other facilities to access the training package.

Sarah Mamootil and Heather McKay from ACT Health with Elizabeth Reid-Darwish, Critical Care Manager, the Royal Hospital, Muscat, Oman

A request was received late in 2009 from the Royal Hospital in Muscat, Oman for trainers to assist them in introducing the program there in conjunction with introducing a critical care outreach team.

Heather McKay (Program Manager) and Sarah Mamootil (Program Officer, Canberra Hospital) travelled to Oman in late March and delivered three days of training at the Royal Hospital. The training was well received and there was a great deal of enthusiasm for the program.

This is the first international COMPASS training session that ACT Health staff have conducted, though the program has also been used in facilities in Queensland, New South Wales, South Australia, Victoria, the Northern Territory and New Zealand.

The aim of the Early Recognition of the Deteriorating Patient Project was to implement a framework that ensured the early recognition of deteriorating patients, the initiation of appropriate medical review and the instigation of timely medical management to reduce the morbidity and mortality of patients.

The project arose from evidence in the existing literature that there is failure to recognise and manage deteriorating patients on the general ward.

This is evidenced by delays in admission to the intensive care unit, unexpected referrals to the intensive care unit and unexpected deaths often preceded by significant physiological disturbances.

The ability to detect deterioration in patients early allows early appropriate intervention. Early interventions can reduce unplanned admissions to the intensive care unit and unexpected deaths.

An ACT Health sponsored project commenced to address this problem in 2006. Within the context of quality in healthcare, this project contains aspects of harm minimisation for patients and systems support for effective clinical care.

The project introduced three interventions:

- colour coded observation charts
- a track and trigger system (MEWS)
- the COMPASS education package.

Recognition of Compass

The project has been recognised both locally and nationally with the following awards:

- Team Excellence Award 2009 Canberra Hospital for Paediatric working group
- National Australian Institute of Project Management Awards 2008: Community Service and/or Development Project of the Year
- ACT Australian Institute of Project Management Awards 2008: Community Benefit Project of the Year
- ACT Australian Institute of Project Management Awards 2008: Community Service and/or Development Project of the Year
- Guan Chong Award for best oral presentation ASMR, Canberra Region ASM 2008
- Research Excellence 2008, 2008 ACT Midwives and Nurses Awards
- ACT Quality Awards 2007: Innovative models of Care
- ACT Quality Awards 2007: Overall winner
- Dubbo Base Hospital received the Judge's Award for GWAHS Quality Awards for 2008 for their pilot of the program and was a finalist in the NSW Health Baxter Awards.



Art unveils captivating insight into a personal struggle

Mental Health ACT has acquired a series of paintings depicting the personal struggle of an artist with mental illness.

Artist Luiza Urbanik, who recovered from schizophrenia through the public mental health system, has captured her personal experiences in a suite of evocative images.

'As an artist I am happy for this opportunity,' said Ms Urbanik.

'I also want to put mental health in the spotlight where it needs to be, for better recognition in the community,' she said.

ACT Health will permanently display her images *Horrible mess just horrible*, *Feeling sick*, and *Everything gos quit fast* at its Mental Health facilities.

Acting Director of Mental Health ACT Dr Peter Norrie said that Ms Urbanik will continue to give us a unique and captivating insight into her very personal struggle through her art.

'Her pictures also give us a valuable opportunity to remember the personal struggle that mental health consumers face every day. We wish her well as she continues to develop her artistic career,' Dr Norrie said.



New Women's Health Framework released

ACT Health has released a new strategic framework to facilitate women's access to health care services and information.

The strategy *Improving women's access to health care services and information - A Strategic Framework 2010–2015* identifies key objectives for raising awareness about women's health and improving the health and wellbeing of women.

The health of ACT women and girls is not just a women's issue. All individuals have a vested interest in the health of women. By encouraging, facilitating and enhancing women's wellness, we are also promoting the wellbeing of the community.

The strategy comes at a time as we build a new \$97 million Women's and Children's Hospital, which will provide world class services, including safe and supportive birthing, newborn and paediatric care, healthy parenting, and excellence in women's health care.

The new Women's and Children's Hospital is being built around the existing Maternity building at the northern end of the Canberra Hospital campus, and will see the collocation of services including Paediatrics, maternity services, the neonatal intensive care unit, gynaecology and fetal medicine, and specialised outpatient services.

ACT Health recognises that women and girls have specific needs and challenges throughout their lives and women are required to balance a number of

commitments simultaneously, very often to the detriment of their health status.

By incorporating a gender perspective in health and health care, the aim is to ensure that women are not disadvantaged by virtue of their gender and that women are encouraged to actively participate in health decision making.

A number of preliminary strategies are listed in the framework to guide the work necessary for achieving the objectives. A women's health advisory network for the ACT will be established to oversee the implementation of the framework.

Consumer representatives will be encouraged to partner with ACT Health to raise awareness of issues that are at times not clearly visible or understood in the public domain.

Planning for the delivery of health services to women of the ACT will ensure that the specific health issues experienced by women and girls are considered and addressed at these times of considerable changes occurring in the health sector.

In 2009, it was estimated that the ACT female population was 177,892, with women making up just over 50% of the total ACT population.

The framework can be found on the ACT Health website under Policies and Plans <http://www.health.act.gov.au/policiesandplans>

New Strategy to continue reduction of **harmful impacts of drug use**

The ACT Alcohol, Tobacco and Other Drug Strategy 2010-2014 was released in June during Drug Action Week.

The Strategy aims to improve the health and social well-being of the community, minimise the harm from alcohol, tobacco and other drugs, and help develop evidence-based policies and initiatives.

The measures outlined in the new Drug Strategy aim to build upon the success of past strategies in reducing the harmful impacts of drug use in the community.

Tobacco and alcohol are the drugs that cause the most harm in Australian society. Together, they account for 92 per cent of Australian drug-related deaths, 84 per cent of the drug-related burden of disease and injury, and 83 per cent of the drug-related social costs. This new Strategy focuses on the drugs associated with the greatest harms and responds with measures understood to be the most effective.

The Strategy's guiding principles include harm minimisation, enhancing health promotion and early intervention, increasing access to services, recognising the social determinants of health and well-being, and strengthening partnerships and collaboration.

A broad approach is required to respond most effectively to drug use and related harms - one that includes liquor licensing and road safety reform, drug education with both drug prevention and harm reduction approaches, and more accessible drug treatment.

Issues like drug use can impact upon some population groups differently. Where appropriate, this Strategy identifies priority population groups for special consideration in the implementation of the Strategy Action Plan.

The Strategy identified eleven priority actions including improving access to a range of smoking reduction and cessation programs particularly for people in detention, those with mental health issues, workers in the community sector and ACT Health employees. Other priority actions include working with ACT Policing to implement the Alcohol Early Intervention Pilot Program, and progressing the establishment of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander residential rehabilitation centre.

For more information, or to download a copy of the ACT Alcohol, Tobacco and Other Drug Strategy 2010-2014, visit www.health.act.gov.au/publications

New laws to regulate tanning units in solaria

Amendments to the Radiation Protection Regulation 2007 will regulate the use of tanning units in Solaria in the ACT.

The effect of the amendments is to require that tanning units, commonly referred to as sun beds, will need to be registered as a source of radiation. Furthermore, persons who possess a tanning unit used in a solarium, whether as owner or as a lessee, will require a licence, as will operators of tanning units in a solarium.

The amendments impose a range of obligations on those in the solaria designed to protect the public, and have been based on a proposed national model that is still awaiting endorsement from the Australian Health Minister's Council.

Under the new laws the use of tanning units by persons under 18 will not be permitted. The use of tanning units by people with a skin type that burns rather than tans (pale white skin) will also not be permitted.

Obligations imposed on persons operating a tanning unit in a solarium include a requirement to:

- Perform a skin assessment of every customer before the customer can use a tanning unit,
- Ensure that all persons using tanning units are required to read and sign a consent form that advises them of the risks associated with use of the units and precautions to be taken,

- Ensure the customer's level of exposure from the tanning unit is limited, as is the frequency of the customer's exposure, and
- Ensure appropriate eyewear is worn by the customer when using a tanning unit.

The holder of a solarium licence also has a range of obligations, which includes a requirement to:

- Ensure operators of tanning units to appropriately trained,
- Display appropriate warning notices in the solarium; and
- Keep and retain certain records.

The obligations under the new laws are similar to those imposed by NSW legislation, but a crucial difference is the requirement to hold a licence.

This achieves cross border consistency in regard to the obligations and penalty levels imposed. It also ensures, however, that ACT Health as the Regulator has information about the existence of each solaria in the Territory, and has adequate mechanisms to regulate those businesses.

The new laws will commence later in the year on a date yet to be fixed. In the meantime, however, ACT Health will be writing to affected businesses to inform them of the new laws, and what action they must take to be compliant.



ACT Health announces new information management system

A new digital information management system is to be introduced for Intensive Care Units (ICU's) at Canberra Hospital and Calvary Public Hospital.

ACT Health has signed a contract with Vision Software Solutions Pty Ltd, an iMDsoft company, to provide a fully integrated clinical information system, MetaVision, that will enable paperless management of patient records in an ICU.

The \$1.7m contract forms part of the ACT Government's commitment to e-health projects in the region's health system.

The MetaVision information management system was specifically designed for the critical care environment. It captures, displays and stores the large amount of data generated in the ICU and builds an electronic record covering the entire patient stay.

The new system will enable ICU staff to manage clinical records and documents electronically.

This will mean a single, secure source of information for each patient, and staff spending less time on paper records.

Dr Kelvin Grove, Deputy Director of the Intensive Care Unit at Canberra Hospital, said staff are looking forward to the introduction of the MetaVision system.

'In the last 12 months, 2350 patients spent time in the Intensive Care Units at Canberra

Hospital and Calvary public hospital,' he said 'This new system will provide an integrated and complete view of patient health information at the point of care, and enhance patient safety by reducing transcription and documentation errors,' Dr Grove said.

iMDsoft CEO Phyllis Gotlib said 'iMDsoft is delighted to add the ACT's Canberra and Calvary hospitals to the growing list of Australian medical centres choosing MetaVision for their ICU's.'

'MetaVision's single platform and staging mechanism will enable the two hospitals to maintain uniformity in the structure of their data, and to enforce protocols and best practices,' she said 'We are confident that the hospitals will rapidly realise benefits such as enhancements to overall care quality, streamlined administrative processes and improved financial performance,' Ms Gotlib said.

iMDsoft is a leading international provider of Clinical Information Systems for acute and general care. The MetaVision Suite of solutions was first implemented in 1999 and is now a market leader, used in hospitals in Asia, Europe and the US.

Expo highlights hearing loss

ACT Health was among a group of services working in partnership to provide free hearing assessments to the ACT community at the Deafness Resource Centre's Hearing Expo during Hearing Awareness Week in August.

The theme of Hearing Awareness Week was 'ACCESS ALL AGES - Education, employment, technology, communication.'

The ACT Deafness Resource Centre held its Hearing Expo 2010 at the Hellenic Club in Phillip, with a Nurse Audiometrist from ACT Health's Child Youth and Women's Health Program in attendance to promote the services available in Canberra.

One in six Australians has some form of hearing impairment.

Identifying hearing loss early is important because of its impact on a child's ability to develop language, socialise, learn and communicate.

Shortly after birth all parents are offered the opportunity to have their child's hearing assessed through the newborn hearing screening program.

In their first years, a child's hearing is screened at regular intervals during routine visits to a Maternal and Child Health Nurse. During these visits children are observed and parents are asked questions about their child to determine if there is any cause for concern.

If necessary, they are referred to other specialist areas for review, areas such as Australian Hearing or the Nurse Audiometry clinic where children from 18 months old have a complete hearing assessment.

In the ACT, all Kindergarten students have the opportunity to have their hearing screened when the Child, Youth & Women's Health Program, School Health Team visits the school.

ACT Health now offers **best health equipment scheme** in Australia

Significant positive changes to the ACT Equipment Service, now make it the most comprehensive and accessible equipment scheme in Australia.

These reforms, arising from the Keen Review, aim to increase access and equity for Canberrans that require health equipment.

The ACT Equipment Subsidy Scheme has now become the ACT Equipment Scheme. This means all equipment will be fully funded. Canberrans who use this scheme will not be financially disadvantaged.

All children under 16 residing in the ACT can access the ACT Equipment Scheme, regardless of their parents' income. This means that no young person requiring equipment in the ACT will be disadvantaged.

In addition, the range of equipment available through the ACT Equipment Scheme has been enhanced to more appropriately meet the needs of Canberrans.

Low income earners and some self funded superannuants who do not hold a health care card will now be eligible for supply under the ACT Equipment Scheme dependent only on their income level.

More than 80 stakeholders, including individuals and groups from the ACT community, have provided input to the 'Keen' Review from which the changes arose.

The scheme provides vital health equipment to many Canberrans and the equipment makes a huge difference to the quality of life for many people in the Territory.





Innovative ACT Health Teams win prestigious awards

The ACT Health Walk-in Centre project team and the Asset Management Systems Improvement team have scooped multiple prestigious Project Management Awards.

In October at the Australian Institute of Project Management Awards the Walk-In Centre project won an astonishing three national awards, including National Project of the Year, National Project Manager of the Year and National Project Development. The Walk-In Centre project is the first ACT project that has ever won this award.

At the prestigious Project Management Awards in August, The Walk-in Centre team won a total of four awards including Project of the Year, Product Development Award, Community Benefit Award, and the Project Manager of the Year, while the Asset Management Systems Improvement team won the organisational change award.

The ACT Walk-in Centre project team developed the model of care for Australia's first public nurse-led Walk-in Centre within the short space of nine months.

The primary challenge for the project team was to facilitate a change in attitudes both within the health care sector and in the community to ensure that the new and untested model of care was embraced and

would provide better health services for the people of the ACT.

The project was highly complex and involved the management of innovation and service design for the development, building, implementation and marketing of a cutting edge model of health care.

The Walk-in Centre, which opened in May, uses a unique workforce model, combining advanced information technologies with the latest medical evidence to build a ground-breaking nurse-led health care service.

The Centre, located near the Emergency Department at the Canberra Hospital, provides free treatment to people for one-off minor illnesses and injuries such as cuts and sprains, skin complaints, coughs and colds, and minor infections.

The Walk-in Centre has had over 3,400 attendances to the end of July, which is an average of 45 people per day.

The asset management systems improvement team established a new framework to support future growth and reduce resource commitment to manage assets within ACT Health.



First ACT Public Sleep Laboratory opens

Canberra Hospital's new \$750,000 Sleep Laboratory was officially opened in July.

This is the first public Sleep Laboratory in the ACT and will reduce waiting times for patients suffering from sleep disorders and those who require urgent assessment for respiratory failure.

It will also contribute to a reduction in hospital length of stay, admissions to the Intensive Care Unit and interstate patient transport.

A sleep clinic has been operating at Canberra Hospital for three years and has seen approximately 850 patients.

A significant proportion of these patients have complex medical conditions and respiratory failure. Any diagnostic testing has required patients to be sent to private sleep studies laboratories in Canberra and Sydney.

With this first public Sleep Laboratory, the hospital will be able to diagnose breathing problems during sleep and provide quality care to sufferers. Patients will be spared the stress of travel and the expense of private laboratories.

This state of the art facility is unique in Canberra, being equipped with digital video monitoring for diagnosis of certain types of sleep disorders, a lifter for immobile patients and both beds in the laboratory rated for bariatric patients.

This Sleep Laboratory will help manage the expected increase in sufferers of breathing problems during sleep as the population

Members of the Sleep Apnoea Association at the opening, Secretary Joe Gellatly, Treasurer Angelo Barich, and President Richard Hourigan

ages and rates of obesity increase, as this disorder is more common in these groups.

The Canberra Hospital Sleep Laboratory will have the potential to perform up to 900 sleep studies a year.

The unit is staffed by a mix of full and part-time respiratory and sleep physicians, sleep scientists, nurses and other support staff specialising in sleep science.

The Laboratory will, in the future, be able to provide assistance to children.

Approximately 10 per cent of the general population in Australia suffer from some sort of sleep disorder, the most prevalent being insomnia, with breathing problems during sleep present in four per cent of the population.

The new Sleep Laboratory will allow for overnight sleep studies in the hospital, as well as ambulatory sleep studies, where a patient has diagnostic equipment attached to the body, spends the night at home and returns to the laboratory in the morning for the data to be downloaded and assessed.

Canberra Hospital intends to seek national accreditation for the Sleep Laboratory, jointly from the Australasian Sleep Association and the Thoracic Society of Australia and New Zealand. This will permit the training of future sleep physicians. The new facility will also be used for research.

Launch of Connections@Cooleman

Adults with disabilities in the Tuggeranong and Weston Creek areas now have access to an activities-based leisure and living skills program with the launch of Connections@Cooleman.

The program, aimed at adults with disabilities aged between 25 to 40 years old, provides an opportunity to develop living skills such as cooking, computer skills, arranging transport and outings, food handling and storage, and understanding personal boundaries.

It is conducted by Communities@Work and funded through the ACT Home and Community Care (HACC) Program, which is jointly funded by the Australian and ACT Governments.

Connections@Cooleman is conducted by an experienced coordinator and a dedicated team of volunteers in a small group setting.

The living skills and leisure activities are designed in consultation with the participants to ensure the program meets the needs of the group.

There is an emphasis on providing a friendly, supportive environment in which personal development and confidence can flourish.

It will offer a choice of leisure activities at differing skill levels including music, craft, dance, tennis, woodwork, games, art and Tai Chi.

Connections@Cooleman will offer coordination and supervision of activities and transport assistance to attend these activities in a supportive small group environment.



Get Healthy Service to be provided in the ACT

A new telephone coaching service is available for Canberrans seeking assistance and support to change unhealthy habits and reduce their risk of chronic disease.

The Get Healthy Information and Coaching Service is a free, confidential telephone-based service available for the first time in the ACT from 1 July 2010.

The service is designed to help people make lifestyle changes such as eating more healthily, being physically active, and achieving and maintaining a healthy weight. Many chronic diseases can be prevented through these simple lifestyle changes.

Chronic diseases such as diabetes, heart disease and some cancers are estimated to be responsible for around 80 per cent of the total burden of disease in Australia.

Making lifestyle changes is often easier said than done, and the journey can be challenging. The Get Healthy Service will support people to make these lifestyle changes.

The service provides information and ongoing personalised support designed to help ACT adults make lasting behavioural change in these areas.

The Get Healthy Service was developed by NSW Health as the first government-run, individually tailored health coaching service to be provided state-wide in Australia. The Service has been funded in the ACT through the ACT Government's Budget Initiative: A Healthy Future - Preventative Health Program.

More information can be found on the ACT Get Healthy website <http://www.gethealthy.act.gov.au> or by calling 1300 806 258.



Breast Cancer Treatment Group ten year report

The Breast Cancer Treatment Group ten year report which draws together a decade of information on the treatment and health outcomes for patients diagnosed with the disease has been released.

The ACT and South East New South Wales Breast Cancer Treatment Group was established in 1995 to conduct a community based audit of breast cancer treatment and outcomes. The report outlines the treatment of invasive breast cancer and ductal carcinoma in situ (DCIS) in the ACT and region over the period 1997 to 2007.

The ACT has the highest age-standardised incidence of breast cancer in Australia, with approximately 200 new cases of breast cancer diagnosed per year in women, and one new case per year in men.

Despite those statistics, this report indicates that breast cancer outcomes in the ACT are excellent, both in terms of disease-free survival and overall mortality from breast cancer.

Analysis of this data also shows that breast cancer treatment in the ACT and South East New South Wales demonstrates high compliance with Australian and international guidelines on the treatment for breast cancer.

The report contains a wealth of information about the treatment provided to and the health outcomes of nearly 3000 patients with breast cancer in the ACT and South East New South Wales.

The data set used in the report is unique within Australia and allows the relationship between health outcomes and treatment to be seen.

Clinicians have also demonstrated their commitment to the project with 800 General Practitioners and 37 Specialists currently contributing data to this voluntary project.

With ongoing comprehensive data collection, this project should continue to provide significant information on long-term patient outcomes in the ACT and the surrounding NSW region.

Through future collaborations, data from the BCTG Project will be able to provide a significant contribution to national and possibly international research.

The report can be accessed by logging on to the ACT Health website <http://www.health.act.gov.au/BreastCancerResearch>, selecting publications and scrolling down to Reports.



Online community consultation for redevelopment of centre for newborn care

Canberra Hospital's Centre for Newborn Care will soon launch an online discussion forum for the parents of former patients to be involved in the centre's redevelopment.

The Centre for Newborn Care will involve consumers in important decisions regarding the redevelopment of the Centre under the \$1 billion 'Your Health-Our Priority' redevelopment of our healthcare system.

The Department of Neonatology at Canberra Hospital has a well-functioning user group with three consumer representatives (parents of former patients) who are outstanding in their enthusiasm and commitment to the group and the centre's redevelopment.

The user group wants to encourage participation from other groups such as young mothers and fathers and people living outside Canberra who all find it difficult to attend regular user group meetings and has established a web-based discussion forum for parents of former patients.

The online forum will be hosted by ACT Health under strict security, and parents can only join by invitation from the Clinical Director of the Department of Neonatology, Associate Professor Kecskes, who will be writing to seek their involvement in this initiative.

When parents respond they'll be provided with individual log-ins and a link to the forum, and the messages posted by the parents will be screened by a group of moderators before being released on to the website.

Parents will need to agree to a formal confidentiality and copyright statement, and the ACT Government Solicitor's Office has been closely involved in addressing legal and privacy issues.

Free whooping cough vaccine

for parents and grandparents to continue

The free whooping cough vaccination program for parents and eligible grandparents had been extended until the end of the year.

The targeted pertussis vaccination program commenced in 2009 in response to a significant increase in the number of notified cases of pertussis (commonly known as whooping cough), including an increase in the number of infants contracting the disease.

To help protect their babies from whooping cough, ACT Health strongly encourages all parents of infants under 12 months of age and grandparents who have regular contact with them to have the free vaccine.

The main objective of the targeted vaccination program is to protect infants who are too young to be immunised against pertussis as they are the most likely to suffer serious complications from the disease.

'Most babies catch pertussis from their parents or close care givers, such as grandparents. Parents and grandparents are urged to see their GP to obtain this free vaccine as this will help protect their young babies during a vulnerable time.

Data indicates that this program may have already prevented some infants from getting the disease. Since the program commenced in April 2009 there has been a reduction in the incidence of pertussis disease in infants less than 12 months of

age as well as in children under 10 years of age. Although there have been four cases of pertussis in infants in the year since the targeted vaccination program began, this represents a decrease from the six babies who suffered the disease in the 12 months prior to its commencement.

To date nearly 15,000 doses of the vaccine have been distributed to immunisation providers in the ACT.

The free program is being extended until 31 December 2010.



PhD Bursary Awarded for Research into **Chronic Disease**

ACT Health has announced funding of \$45,000 towards a bursary for doctoral research into Chronic Disease in the ACT.

The funding, matched by the University of Canberra, will support a PhD student's research through the University's Centre for Research & Action in Public Health said.

The research aims to the ACT evidence base of chronic disease.

The burden of chronic diseases such as Type 2 Diabetes and Heart Failure is increasing in the ACT community, therefore research into the detection, prevention and management of these diseases is a key priority for ACT Health.

The partnership between ACT Health and the University of Canberra will increase the up to date knowledge of chronic disease within the ACT community and strengthen the links between health service delivery and health research.

The bursary may support research to investigate

- Early detection and prevention of chronic disease throughout the lifespan
- Environmental, cultural, psycho-social and economic determinants of health
- Applications to policy, practice and service delivery for patient care and community health.

The Centre for Research & Action in Public Health will be advertising for potential PhD candidates shortly. *

The research project will be supervised by the Director of the Centre, Professor Rachel Davey, whose research expertise is in chronic disease prevention and areas related to community and population health.

Support for Home Dialysis

People wishing to undertake kidney dialysis at home can now get concessions for their extra water usage. This new concession supplements an existing concession for electricity use by these patients.

For some patients home dialysis is a viable alternative to hospital or community based dialysis, which can provide improved health outcomes, a higher quality of life and a more flexible treatment regime.

Home dialysis patients wishing to dialyse at home have previously had to personally incur the additional costs of water related to this life saving treatment.

This could be a barrier to people who would otherwise choose to have dialysis at home.

On average home dialysis costs the patient \$1,200 to \$1,500 a year in excess water and electricity charges.

Home haemodialysis for suitable patients is a mode of service delivery that is gaining in

popularity and acceptance by patients and clinicians.

It benefits patients and their family, while allowing the health system to free up acute and sub-acute dialysis places for those most in need.

The inclusion of electricity and excess water usage concessions supports this model of care and removes the issue of ability to pay when making clinical decisions about dialysis treatment.

The ACT Kidney Health Australia Consumer Committee has been a keen advocate of these changes.

Canberra has a Wealth of Health

Report on the health of ACT population shows Canberra has a wealth of health

The 2010 ACT Chief Health Officer's report shows that Canberrans are living longer than in other jurisdictions and will continue to do so.

The ACT population enjoys relatively high standard of health, the report showed.

The report, released under the Public Health Act 1997, provides information on the health and wellbeing of the ACT population over the 2006-08 period.

The upward trend is expected to continue as mortality rates are declining for many of the leading health concerns such as cancer, cardiovascular disease, asthma and diabetes.

While cancer continues to be a leading cause of morbidity and mortality in the ACT, residents have experienced a declining rate of lung cancer in males and cervical cancer in females.

According to the report, there has been a significant increase in breast cancer survival in the ACT, most likely due to early detection and treatment of breast cancer.

Smoking rates in ACT secondary students are decreasing and levels of risky alcohol consumption in both adult males and females have reduced to below national rates. There has also been an overall decline

in illicit drug use among ACT secondary school students.

According to the report, opportunities for improving the health of the ACT population, both in the short and longer term, are largely dependent on reducing the impact of known risk factors such as smoking, alcohol and other drug abuse, poor nutrition and lack of physical activity.

Health promotion programs to counter these risk factors include the Quitline Program, the Healthy kids, healthy future initiative and the Find Thirty® physical activity awareness campaign.

The report states that anxiety and depression was the disease which had the greatest impact on life, with one in ten ACT residents reporting psychological distress at high to very high levels.

ACT Health had developed the Promotion, Prevention and Early Intervention Framework which provides a model to coordinate a whole of government, whole of community approach to the promotion of mental health and wellbeing.

The Act requires that the Chief Health Officer reports biennially on such issues as trends and indicators in health status, potential public health risks and morbidity and mortality.

Accessibility

The ACT Government is committed to making its information, services, events and venues, accessible to as many people as possible.

- If you have difficulty reading a standard printed document and would like to receive this publication in an alternative format—such as large print or audio—please telephone (02) 6205 3333.
- If English is not your first language and you require the translating and interpreting service—please telephone 131 450.
- If you are deaf or hearing impaired and require the TTY typewriter service—please telephone (02) 13 3677, then ask for 13 2281.
- Speak and listen users—phone 1300 555 727 then ask for 13 2281.
- Internet Relay Users—connect to the NRS, then ask for 13 2281.

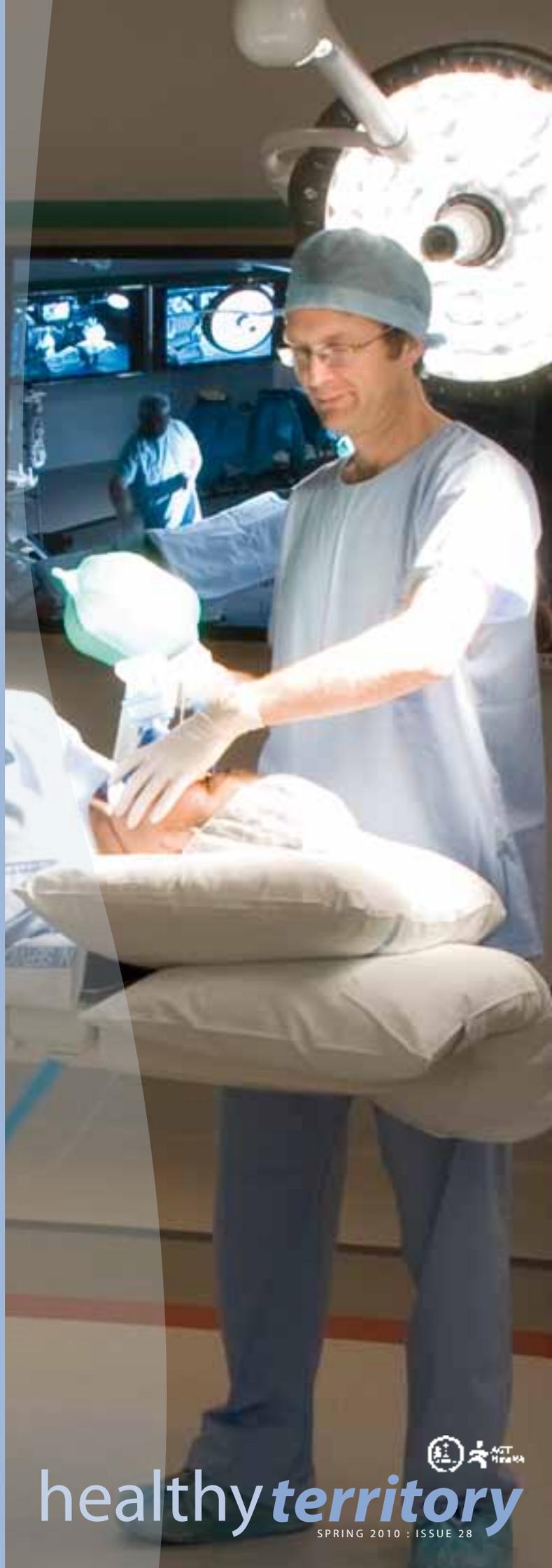
© Australian Capital Territory, Canberra, October 2010

This work is copyright. Apart from any use as permitted under the Copyright Act 1968, no part may be reproduced by any process without written permission from the Territory Records Office, Community and Infrastructure Services, Territory and Municipal Services, ACT Government, GPO Box 158, Canberra City ACT 2601.

Enquiries about this publication should be directed to
ACT Health, Communications and Marketing Unit,
GPO Box 825 Canberra City ACT 2601
or email: HealthACT@act.gov.au

www.health.act.gov.au | www.act.gov.au

Enquiries: Canberra 13ACT1 or 132281



BIG ISLAND GRAPHICS

healthy territory

SPRING 2010 : ISSUE 28

