

SCOPE

Spring 2013

Surgical
skills on
show



Exceptional People. Exceptional Care.



Welcome from the Editor

Who can believe that we are already in September? Once again the year has flown by so in case you missed something along the way at Mater, we have got it covered in this spring edition of *Scope*.

In this edition we get an insight into the new Mater Adolescent and Young Adult Centre led by Professor Brett McDermott; it's an exciting new service that really speaks to our Mission of meeting unmet needs in the community.

Mater is also looking at ways to further engage with the community; in addition to our social media pages, we have also introduced live chats with health experts for our maternity audience through our website, which you can read about on page 15.

We also meet some new recruits, celebrate award-winning services and you can read about Lucy Cooke's journey to The Great Wall of China in aid of the Neonatal Critical Care Unit.

Finally, we hope those who attended the Mater Doctors' Alumni Dinner in August had a fantastic night. From all accounts it was an exceptional evening, highlighted on pages 12 and 13.

I hope you enjoy this edition.

Best wishes

Miranda



On the cover

A new surgical skills DVD for the Royal Australasian College of Surgeons has been filmed at Mater. It was the first time the filming had taken place outside Melbourne.

See page 18.

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Thank you to those who contributed to the current edition of *Scope*.



Scope welcomes your opinion. If you have an interesting patient case or a topical issue you would like to share with your colleagues, write to us.

Please email your contributions to the Editor, Miranda Hunt at miranda.hunt@mater.org.au. Names will be published unless otherwise stated.



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A message

from our CEO

“How rapidly the days, weeks, and months are passing. Another month ended, that seemed but a few days begun...”

- Catherine McAuley in a letter to de Sales White February 28, 1841

While the world may have changed dramatically since Catherine McAuley penned these words; the feeling that time is escaping us is something many of us can relate to.

I imagine Catherine was so engrossed in the delivery of her Mission that time not only passed her by; but prevented her the opportunity to reflect on the incredible impact of her dedication to those around her.

Thankfully, each edition of Scope gives us a small chance to pause and reflect on the happenings around our complex and the impact our services are having on the world around us and this edition is no different.

We recently announced plans to move ahead with the development of a specialised adolescent and young adult service following the transition of paediatric services to Queensland Children's Hospital in late 2014 (page six).

Up until now, the specialised needs of adolescents have been somewhat forgotten and, as per our values, we have decided to move ahead with plans to meet this need and to become a national leader in the provision of care for young people.

In other clinical news, the surgical skills of a number of Mater staff have been highlighted with the release of a DVD by the Royal Australasian College of Surgeons (RACS) which will be used as

part of the Australian and New Zealand Surgical Skills Education and Training (ASSET) course (page 18).

We also acknowledge the great work being done by our team of staff, specialists and researchers including Mater Adult Hospital Director of Surgery Dr Richard Lewandowski who was recently awarded The University of Queensland's Vice-Chancellor's Diversity Award for Alumni for his work with children with craniofacial deformities (page 20) and Deputy Director of Neonatology Lucy Cooke who walked the Great Wall of China to raise funds for the Neonatal Critical Care Unit (page 23).

I'd also like to thank those who attended this year's Mater Doctors' Alumni Dinner at Customs House in August. As well as catching up with past and present colleagues, the night was a chance for us to farewell Dr Barbara Hall, Dr Geof Hirst, Dr Joe McCormack and Dr Michael Redmond who have contributed more than 135 years of service to Mater (page 12).

Dr John O'Donnell
CEO, Mater Health Services



“Each edition of Scope gives us a small chance to pause and reflect on the happenings around our complex.” - Dr John O'Donnell

Health and Wellness has moved

Mater's private allied health service, Mater Health and Wellness, has relocated to Level 1 of the Corporate Services Building.

Mater staff and patients can access:

- audiology
- massage
- nutrition and dietetics
- occupational therapy
- physiotherapy
- psychology
- social work
- speech pathology.

To refer a patient to Mater Health and Wellness, please visit wellness.mater.org.au for a referral form and the full list of services available for adults, children, mothers and babies.



For more information, please call 07 3163 6000.



Brisbane Lions players Daniel Rich and James Polkinghorne with Ezra McCarthy and Matilda Beveridge.

Brisbane Lions players meet Mater Mothers' new recruits

Brisbane Lions players Daniel Rich and James Polkinghorne were left holding the baby in early July when they visited Mater Mothers to announce that Mater Foundation would be the club's official charity partner for the next three years.

Mater Foundation Executive Director Nigel Harris said the Lions helped support Mater Foundation programs include Mater Prize Home, Mater Little Miracles and Mater chicks in pink.

August delivered a bumper month of births for Mater Mothers this year, with more than 900 babies delivered across Mater Mothers' Hospital, Mater Mothers' Private Brisbane and Mater Mothers' Private Redland.

Throughout the month there were 926 babies born at Mater, with a spike of 48 babies delivered on Thursday 15 August.

Congratulations to all our happy parents and also to the teams who delivered our newest little miracles.



Record-breaking months

Mater Private Hospital Redland (MPHR) recently experienced some record breaking months with 510 patients discharged through the Day Procedure Unit in May and 432 theatre cases in July.

"This is the largest number of patients to be discharged through the Day Procedure Unit in a one month period so well done to our team," MPHR Director of Clinical Services Tracey Hutley said.

In May the hospital also recorded 425 surgical procedures in the month along with 802 admissions, 808 discharges, 305 endoscopy cases, 36 births and 27 day rehabilitation patients.

Entertainment for \$10 per day

Patients at Mater Private Hospital Brisbane, Annerley Road and Redland and Mater Mothers' Private Brisbane can now access a wider range of in-room entertainment options for \$10 a day.

Using the latest in touch-screen technology, patients can access in-room entertainment using Mater's fully adjustable bedside screens to view more than 100 recent release movies, music videos, Foxtel channels (including all three major sports channels), local radio, audiobooks on-demand plus online access to popular sites including Facebook, YouTube and Twitter.

This offer is available by simply following the on-screen prompts.



For more information contact the Patient Entertainment Support Team on 07 3163 8800.



Drivers David Wall, Fabian Coulthard and Jason Bright meet patient Harrison

V8 Supercar drivers bring smiles to sick children

Mater Children's Hospital's Circus of Dreams was turned into a race track in late July to celebrate a visit from three of Summit Fleet Leasing's V8 Supercar drivers.

As part of the visit, patients were able to challenge drivers Jason Bright, Fabian Coulthard and David Wall in slot car racing and other activities.

The drivers also took a tour of the wards, stopping to talk to those children who weren't able to make it to the Circus of Dreams.

The visit coincided with a donation from Summit Fleet Leasing of \$5000 towards Mater Research.

Mater Foundation Executive Director Nigel Harris said Mater was thrilled to have the drivers visit the children.

"Patients can spend anywhere from hours to months in hospital so it is a great delight for kids to have special visitors to make their stay a more cheerful experience," he said.



Addressing a need in the Vietnamese community

In the lead up to World Hepatitis Day on Sunday 28 July, Dr Mazhar Haque and Mater's liver team led an information session at the Inala Community Centre, discussing the prevention and treatment of hepatitis.

"After discussions with our staff, we identified a need within the Vietnamese community to provide more information on effective treatments for Hepatitis B and C," Dr Haque said.

"Unfortunately, many members of the Vietnamese community are turning to herbal medicines and detox diets which can cause further harm to their health."

Mater to launch Queensland's first dedicated adolescent service

Mater Health Services has announced it will open a ground-breaking new service for adolescents and young adults, offering an efficient transition for patients requiring ongoing clinical care from paediatric to adult services.

The Mater Adolescent and Young Adult Centre (MAYAC)—the first service of its kind in Queensland—will follow the transition of Mater's paediatric services to the new Queensland Children's Hospital (QCH) in 2014.

Mater Child and Youth Mental Health Executive Director Professor Brett McDermott—a long-time advocate of the need for specialist adolescent services—has been appointed Director to the new centre.

"We are looking to create a service that is an Australian leader and world-notable in the delivery of adolescent-friendly health services, integrated across the spectrum of medical-surgical-mental health disorders," Prof McDermott said.

"Our interest is not just in symptom reduction but also improving quality of life and promoting engagement in useful and fulfilling education and occupational activities."

Prof McDermott said there had been 'very few' Australian or international services for the adolescent/young adult age group.

"To this end, they have been somewhat forgotten so providing this service is consistent with the Mater values of meeting unmet needs."

He said the cultural differences and stressors involved with the age group would be taken into account when planning the delivery of services.

"They are more technology savvy and we should utilise this and we also know they are more reluctant to leave a new job to attend clinics, so we will look to schedule some of these after hours," Prof McDermott said.

"In the first instance, MAYAC will concentrate on our strengths and in services such as diabetes, cardiac, gastrointestinal, cystic fibrosis, respiratory and sleep, developmental and mental health services.

"With time it is hoped all sub-specialities will have a potential home at MAYAC."

Mater Adults, Women's and Children's Health Services Executive Director Sean Hubbard said Prof McDermott's commitment to child and adolescent health, coupled with his vision for the centre, was well aligned with the strategic direction of Mater Health Services as we move towards the transition to Queensland Children's Hospital.

"Over the next year, 40 per cent of Brett's time will be allocated to the development of the new MAYAC service, with the balance of his time covering his existing role," Mr Hubbard said.



Professor Brett McDermott

A time for growth

By Don Murray



Spring is here once again; a time that is synonymous with new growth and beginnings. As much as the season is favoured by many for the reawakening of nature it is also seen as a time to take stock, reevaluate and 'spring clean'.

Mater has certainly seen its share of new growth lately, with the opening of the Mater Cancer Care Centre, a record breaking number of patients cared for at Mater Private Hospital Redland and, after significant groundwork, approval for the new Mater Springfield Central Campus—a master-planned campus within Health City at Springfield Central.

The seed has also been sown for the opening of Mater's ground-breaking new service, the Mater Adolescent and Young Adult Centre.

Whilst it is appropriate to look forward to Mater's future and new growth, it is also vital to honour those individuals who have put down their roots at Mater and helped shape our organisation. I recently attended the Mater Doctors' Alumni dinner where retiring specialists Dr Barbara Hall, Dr Geof Hirst, Dr Joe McCormack and Dr Michael Redmond

were acknowledged for their services to Mater. It was fantastic to see these individuals recognised for their exceptional careers and contributions in their chosen specialties.

In this edition of Scope you will also read about our current crop of new and talented specialists—I am thankful for the perennial support that we receive from the doctors who choose to make Mater their primary clinical 'patch'.

In the ever changing landscape of health care, it is reassuring to know that Mater has cultivated an environment that attracts talented individuals to support our growth and Mission in the years ahead.

I wish you all a fruitful spring.

Plans approved for Mater Springfield

Ipswich City Council has approved the Master Area Development Plan application for Mater Springfield Central campus—within Health City at Springfield Central.

Mater Health Services has secured an 8.878 hectare site to deliver a range of health services for the local community starting with Mater Private Hospital Springfield—an 80-bed, \$85 million hospital with a Cancer Care Centre.

Work on the new hospital is due to begin in October 2013.

The hospital will form phase one of the master plan with future plans for the fully-developed campus to include up to 1200-bed hospital facilities and an expanded cancer care centre, along with related and supporting services.

Ipswich City Council Planning and Development Committee Chair Councillor Paul Tully said he was pleased the application had been approved.

"The development of a health precinct at Springfield Central is exciting progress which will bring much-needed health facilities to the growing Springfield region," Cr Tully said.

"Once complete, Mater Springfield campus will enable local



residents to take advantage of first-class health facilities and services on their doorstep."

Mater Private Hospitals Executive Director Don Murray said the Master Area Development plan incorporated a number of expansion stages designed to meet the growing demands of the region.

"The staged development approach has allowed Mater to zone the site to include hospital, commercial, research, education and support services within the master plan," Mr Murray said.

"A 'green spine' will provide public recreation areas and parkland to enable staff, patients and visitors to access and enjoy a link to nature outside of the hospital environment."

The initial development of Mater Private Hospital Springfield will provide a 10 000 m² facility which will include theatre space, inpatient wards, a day surgery unit and a cancer care centre, initially with a linear accelerator and 15 medical oncology treatment bays, to be further developed in a partnership between Mater and Radiation Oncology Queensland.

Mission



Mater helps build rehabilitation centre

A small community in Kitgum, northern Uganda, will soon be able to provide ongoing care to disabled children through a rehabilitation centre, the construction of which is being funded by Mater corporate partners.

Mater Biomedical Engineering Manager—and organiser—Graham Carter said Kitgum, near the South Sudan border has been the site of unrest for more than a decade, with more than two million Ugandans living in refugee camps during rebellion waged by Joseph Kony.

“While the camps have now closed; there are little or no health institutions in the area, and people who require serious treatment are forced to travel eight hours by bus to the capital city, Kampala, in the South,” he said.

Mater provides support to various African communities, mainly via the provision of used medical equipment (in partnership with DHL shipping).

We also support a local Kitgum orphanage which was established in 2004 by Lois Ford who wanted to focus on caring for disabled children who are often shunned by family.

“With more than 100 children currently in her care, one of the big problems Lois and her colleagues face is the lack of physiotherapy services in the district, seriously hampering their efforts,” Mr Carter said.

Mater is helping to address this issue through the establishment of a Rehabilitation Centre to care for disabled children.

“We are well on the way to raising the required \$25 000, through relationships with external suppliers who have agreed to support this worthy cause,” Graham said.

“Many children with a disability are hidden away because of stigmatism, shame and lack of knowledge.

“Unfortunately, there will always be disability as long as children are born in this impoverished society with a lack of access to suitable antenatal care, and the prevalence of diseases such as malaria which cause physical and mental impairment.

“I’ve seen many children with hemiplegia (paralysis of the arms, legs and torso) due to cerebral malaria. With physiotherapy access they would regain mobility fairly quickly and be able to play normally,” Lois said.



For further information about this initiative, please contact Graham Carter via graham.carter@mater.org.au. Any financial support can be directed to Lesley Ray at Mater Foundation via lesley.ray@mater.org.au.

Adolescents in focus

By Sean Hubbard



It has been a busy few months since my first Scope column with significant focus on gaining an understanding of the breadth and depth of Mater's services as well as considering what opportunities and challenges the future holds.

One such opportunity is the Mater Adolescent and Young Adult Centre (MAYAC); a ground breaking new service which will provide excellence in transition from paediatric services, care during the adolescent and young adult period and subsequent transition to adult services. Whilst there are some limited services offered in parts of Australia, Mater will be the first to offer a specialised Adolescent and Young Adult Service in Queensland.

Professor Brett McDermott commenced as Director of Mater Adolescent and Young Adult Centre (MAYAC) on 22 July 2013. Many of you will know Brett in his current role of Director, Mater Child Youth Mental Health Service Queensland.

Over the next year, 40 per cent of Brett's time will be allocated to the development of the new MAYAC service, with the balance of his time covering his existing role.

Care at MAYAC will feature new innovative service models for adolescent and young adult patients and their families that will emphasise their primary condition as well as emotional health and lifestyle.

The long term goal is to improve their adherence and compliance and reduce the long term burden of their disease on them as an individual, their family and support networks and the wider health system.

Services will:

- Primarily be focused on the specific needs of patients aged 16 to 25 years of age;
- Concentrate on clinical areas where there is an identified need and an evidenced clinical benefit from providing transition and ongoing services when patients move from paediatric to adult services;
- Establish Mater as the tertiary centre of excellence in adolescent and young adult medicine.

This is an exciting development for Mater and clearly aligns with our core value of putting the patient first.

New concierge service at Mater Mothers' Private Brisbane

Families birthing at Mater Mothers' Private Brisbane now have access to a concierge service.

A three-month trial of the service—aimed at providing an improved experience for patients and visitors—commenced in early June, with a welcome response from families.

From 9 am to 1 pm Monday to Friday, Mater volunteers are available kerbside at the main entrance to Mater Mothers to provide a warm welcome and friendly farewell to patients and visitors.

The specially-trained volunteers can assist new parents with luggage and flowers, escort visitors to the volunteer information desk inside the hospital or even take a family photo before departure.



A complimentary valet service for new parents at Mater Mothers' Private Brisbane is also being trialled.

It is hoped the valet service will assist in making the discharge process as easy as possible for new parents, and alleviate congestion in the drop off zone during its busiest times.



For further information about the Concierge Service, contact Russell Williams from Mater Volunteer Services on telephone 07 3163 1238 or email russell.williams@mater.org.au

Dr Richard Lewandowski awarded Diversity Award



Story and image courtesy of UQMedicine Magazine

Mater Adult Hospital Director of Surgery Dr Richard Lewandowski has been awarded The University of Queensland's Vice-Chancellor's Diversity Award for Alumni for his work with children with craniofacial deformities.

The award honours a University of Queensland (UQ) alumnus who has demonstrated a commitment to diversity and has made significant contributions to meeting contemporary challenges within society through professional or community endeavours.

After completing his education and training with UQ, Dr Lewandowski travelled to America and joined Operation Smile—a not for profit organisation that provides reconstructive surgery to children and young adults born with facial deformities in developing countries.

Upon returning to Australia, Dr Lewandowski was motivated to create Operation Smile Australia, which has now been sending Australian and New Zealand based volunteers on cleft

lip and palate missions, craniofacial missions and bringing children to Brisbane for treatment for more than 13 years.

The patients treated on these missions are often unable to eat, drink, breathe, or speak properly with one-in-ten children born with a cleft dying before they reach their first birthday.

The operations take around 45 minutes and to date, Operation Smile has been able to treat more than 200 000 children worldwide.

"In joining Operation Smile I committed myself to a notion of equal rights regardless of socio-economic backgrounds, race or gender," Dr Lewandowski said.

Leap
into learning with
Somerville House
Pre-Prep

LEARN ENGAGE ACHIEVE PLAY

Somerville House introduces Pre-Prep for Girls and Boys

Enrol now for the Somerville House 2014 co-educational Pre-Prep program in the new state-of-the-art Early Learning Centre.

The Somerville House Early Learning Centre offers:

- Play-based indoor and outdoor curriculum which embraces the Queensland Kindergarten Learning Guidelines
- Early literacy and numeracy learning in readiness for formal schooling
- Specialist classes in Music, the Arts, Foreign Language and Physical Education
- Highly qualified teachers and assistants
- Convenient on-site parking facilities for Pre-Prep parents and secure access to the centre
- Before and after school hours care specifically designed for Pre-Prep students
- Application in process for CCB and CCR accreditation.

Somerville House offers the unique opportunity for girls and boys turning 4 years old by 30 June 2014 to experience one year in a quality early learning program before progressing to their formal schooling.



SOMERVILLE HOUSE
THE LANDMARK IN GIRLS' EDUCATION

A school of the Presbyterian and Methodist Schools' Association.
The PMSA is a mission of the Presbyterian and Uniting Churches.

For further information or to register your interest in attending Pre-Prep at Somerville House please call our Registrar, Mrs Diana Chaundy, on 07 3248 9267 or email: enrolments@somerville.qld.edu.au.

Mater Body Balm for pregnancy proven suitable for sensitive skin

Dermatological testing has shown Mater Body Balm for pregnancy is a non-irritant formulation that is suitable for sensitive skin.

An independent testing authority in the United States has undertaken a dermatological evaluation of Mater Body Balm for pregnancy using the Repeat Insult Patch Test (RIPT) method.

"RIPT is a practical 'real world' demonstration of how well a product is tolerated. Skin reactions to cosmetic products are not uncommon and even moisturisers can sting and irritate, especially if the skin is sensitive or already inflamed," Dermatologist Dr Jim Muir said.

Due to heightened sensitivity that can occur during pregnancy it was critical for Mater's product development team to design a gentle product that was suitable for sensitive skin. To ensure Mater Body Balm for pregnancy met this requirement a sensitive skin panel was selected to represent the percentage of the population who self-nominate as having sensitive skin.

For the RIPT, balm was applied as an open patch challenge to a designated area of an individual's back in nine consecutive 24 hour exposures of product. This was followed by a repeat test on a previously unexposed area of skin 10-14 days later. Fifty volunteer participants (96%) completed the sensitive skin test panel.

Panel members were monitored for the duration of the study and no adverse reactions of any kind were reported—this result supports Mater Body Balm for pregnancy is a non-irritant formula suitable for sensitive skin.



Facts and figures

- 52 per cent of panel members self-described as having sensitive skin
- 77 per cent of panel members were female with 81 per cent self-described as having sensitive skin



Mater Body Balm for pregnancy is available from Mater Pharmacies, Mater Florists, online via www.matermothers.org.au and selected Terry White Chemists stores. Mater Baby Wash and Baby Moisturiser launch in September. Proceeds from Mater Products support Mater Little Miracles.

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CanvasSouthBrisbane.com.au

*Prices correct at time of printing. ^Visit www.osr.qld.gov.au



Mater Doctors' Alumni Dinner 2013



Dr Lily and Dr Marosh Vrtik and Dr Alex Chen and Sara Yeap



Dr Martin and Mrs Nicole Wood

Oh, what a night!

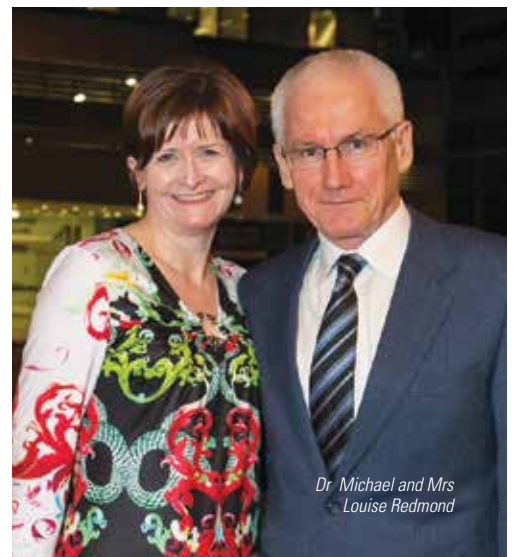
Brisbane's iconic Customs House was recently turned into a medical wonderland as doctors, colleagues and friends gathered for the annual Mater Doctors' Alumni Dinner.

The night—Friday 23 August—was used as a chance to farewell four specialists who, collectively, have dedicated more than 135 years of service to Mater.

Farewelled were Dr Barbara Hall (Gynaecologist); Dr Geof Hirst (Urologist), Dr Joe McCormack (Infectious Diseases) and Dr Michael Redmond (Neurosurgeon).

Guests enjoyed award-winning cuisine accompanied by the musical delights of the Australis Jazz Trio.

Special thanks to Mater Private Hospital Brisbane Emergency Care Centre Director Dr Steve Costello who led the evening as Master of Ceremonies.



Dr Michael and Mrs Louise Redmond



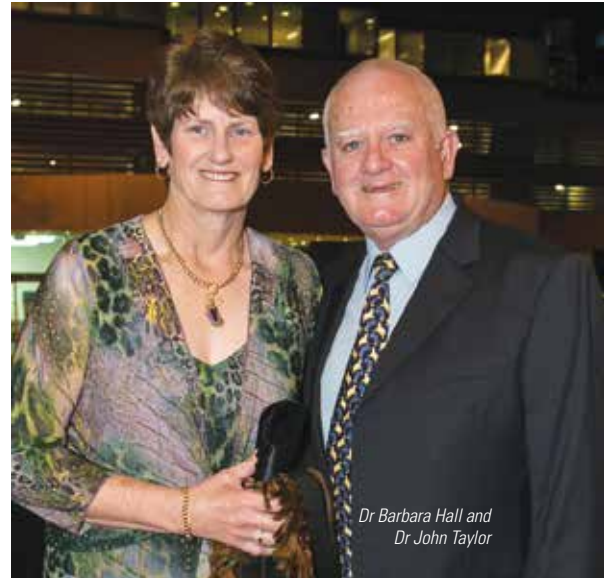
Dr Lewis and Mrs Fiona Perrin



Dr Steve Costello and Sr Angela Mary Doyle rsm



Dr Mazhar and Mrs Fabrina Haque and Dr Paul Atkins



Dr Barbara Hall and Dr John Taylor



Dr Chris and Mrs Julie Allan



Prof David Tudehope and Bronwyn Tudehope and AProf Peter Gray and Dawn Gray

Malignant spinal cord compression in a patient with metastatic lung cancer

Background:

Spinal cord compression is a serious complication in patients with metastatic malignancy that can adversely affect survival and significantly diminish quality of life.

It affects approximately five to 14 per cent of cancer patients with breast, lung and prostate cancers representing about 50 per cent of cases.

Paraplegia is the most serious consequence and the goal of treatment is to maintain ambulation and quality of life.

Presentation:

Mrs MR was a 58 year-old lady with known metastatic non-small cell lung cancer who had previously been treated with palliative chemotherapy with good response.

She had a good performance status and was living at home with her husband.

She presented with sudden onset back pain and moderate leg weakness after mild activity at home.

Assessment:

On examination, Mrs MR was obviously distressed with her back pain and was tender to palpation in the thoracolumbar vertebral area.

She had moderately reduced power in both lower limbs; the right slightly worse than the left, with sensory changes on the right side at the level of the L1/2 dermatomes. Her anal sphincter tone was normal.

An urgent MRI of the spine showed a solitary vertebral metastasis within L1 with associated pathologic compression fracture and retropulsion of bone causing compression of the thecal sac and spinal cord at that level.

Management:

The patient was commenced on high dose steroids (8 mg dexamethasone BD) and urgent opinion was sought from both the

spinal and radiation oncology teams.

Given her good performance status, well-controlled metastatic disease elsewhere and the solitary nature of her vertebral disease, she was offered up-front surgery to decompress the vertebral canal and stabilize the spine.

She underwent an anterior surgical decompression and stabilisation the day following her admission.

This proceeded without complication and she had an uneventful post-operative recovery.

Within a few days she had complete resolution of her neurological symptoms and her pain was well managed with low-dose opioids.

Four weeks after Mrs MR's surgery she underwent radiotherapy planning and two weeks later commenced radiotherapy to the spine, with fields encompassing the site of initial disease but also the entire operative site.

Over two weeks she received 30 Gy in 10 fractions, delivered with parallel-opposed anterior and posterior fields. She tolerated the radiotherapy with minimal side-effects and remained ambulant and continent.

Learning Points:

- Metastatic spinal cord compression is a devastating complication for cancer patients and represents an oncologic emergency.
- Back pain can be one of the earliest signs of metastatic spinal cord compression and should always be thoroughly investigated.
- Early intervention increases the chance of maintaining ambulation and can impact on survival.
- Management can include steroids plus urgent palliative radiotherapy alone, or when appropriate, surgery followed by post-operative radiotherapy.



T2-Weighted MRI scan showing malignant crush fracture of the L1 vertebral body with cord compression at that level



Digitally-reconstructed 3D images from the post-operative CT scan



Boxed area represents the radiotherapy field encompassing the surgical bed.



If you would like to submit a Case by Case article, please email Brooke.Falvey@mater.org.au.



Mater Bronchiectasis study published internationally

A recent study by Mater Research's respiratory specialist Dr David Serisier has shown that low-dose macrolide antibiotics can significantly reduce pulmonary exacerbations in non-cystic fibrosis bronchiectasis.

Bronchiectasis is characterised by widening of the airways—specifically, the small and medium-size bronchi—mucosal thickening, and bronchial inflammation. Sufferers are usually dogged by a chronic cough and sputum production, impaired lung function and infection-related exacerbations and often require long hospital stays.

As part of the Bronchiectasis and Low-Dose Erythromycin Study (BLESS) 117 outpatients with a history of two or more infective exacerbations in the past year were treated twice-daily with erythromycin (400 mg) or placebo.

The mean ages of the antibiotic and placebo-treated patients were 61.1 years and 63.5 years, respectively.

Dr Serisier said the results showed that the annualised mean rate of pulmonary exacerbations per patient per year was 1.29 in patients treated with erythromycin, compared with 1.97 in those given placebo.

"This is a 43 per cent relative reduction in the mean annualised exacerbation rate. Exacerbations also were significantly decreased in a pre-specified subgroup of patients with *Pseudomonas aeruginosa* airway infection", Dr Serisier said.

Furthermore, erythromycin reduced 24-hour sputum production and attenuated lung function, he reported.

Dr Serisier's results were recently published in one of the world's most prestigious international peer-reviewed medical journals—the *Journal of the American Medical Association*.

"Once I saw that the study results were positive, I knew it would be published in a top-tier journal," Dr Serisier said.

"The reason I initiated my research on the effects of erythromycin on non-CF bronchiectasis was because of the unmet need for effective therapies for this condition," Dr Serisier said.

"I had a hypothesis and a strong suspicion that my therapy would be effective; Mater had the local capacity to undertake the study and I had a great research team."

As well as being the Chairman of the Lung Foundation of Australia, Dr Serisier is also Team Leader and Honorary Senior Research Fellow of the Immunity Infection and Inflammation Program at Mater Research.

Breastfeeding web chat hailed a great success

On Wednesday 7 August, Mater Breastfeeding Support Centre midwife and lactation consultant Alex Read hosted Mater Mothers' Hospitals' first live web chat through www.matermothers.org.au.

For one hour, Alex engaged Mater Mums in online conversation, answered their questions and provided relevant advice about breastfeeding.

Mater Mothers' Hospitals Director of Women's Health Services Maree Reynolds said the web chat was a huge success for all involved with more than 30 mums taking part.

"It appears that the mums who participated in our first chat found the session informative and helpful," Ms Reynolds said.

"It was interesting to see the types of questions our new mums have about breastfeeding and it was great to see them taking advantage of this new medium as a way to talk to our midwives.

"This is just another way Mater is continuing the conversation with our mums after they leave the hospital. Following the success of this chat, we planned our next web chat on sleep and settling techniques in September."

Women who missed out on the session can now read the questions and answers online at www.matermothers.org.au.

Access to Mater Mothers' online web chats is available to all members of Mater's Mothers' Group—a free support network where parents can share their knowledge, experience and the joys of motherhood, as well as make friends with like-minded mums.



For information about the live chats or if you are interested in participating, phone Mater Marketing's Cas Hunter on 07 3163 1247.



Dr Damian Amato

Dr Damian Amato trained in neurosurgery in Australia.

His training also included research into traumatic brain injury at The University of Adelaide for which he earned a Master of Surgery degree.

He then undertook further sub-specialty training in the United Kingdom which included fellowships in skull base neurosurgery and minimally invasive spine surgery at Addenbrookes Hospital in Cambridge.

Dr Amato's special interest areas in cranial neurosurgery include skull base surgery for tumours such as acoustic neuromas and meningiomas, pituitary surgery and other endoscopic anterior skull base surgery.

Other areas of interest include trigeminal neuralgia and minimally invasive spine surgery.

Dr Amato consults with Dr Robert Campbell and Dr Martin Wood at Brisbane Clinical Neuroscience Centre at Mater Private Clinic South Brisbane.



Dr Michael Fanning

Dr Michael Fanning is a graduate of The University of Queensland.

He completed his resident training at Princess Alexandra Hospital before spending three years on the Darling Downs training in General Practice and being awarded a Fellowship of the Royal Australian College of General Practice (FRACGP).

He then undertook basic physician training at Princess Alexandra Hospital and subsequently completed advanced training in Respiratory and Sleep Medicine.

Dr Fanning's special interests include lung cancer, complex sleep-related breathing disorders, insomnia and circadian rhythm disorders.

He is currently researching the clinical utility of the detection of circulating tumour cells in lung cancer.

Dr Fanning consults from Mater Medical Centre and practices at Mater Private Hospital Brisbane.



Dr Robert Perel

Dr Robert Perel is a cardiologist who specialises in heart rhythm disorders and cardiac implanted devices.

A graduate of The University of Queensland with degrees in Medicine and Veterinary Science, Dr Perel undertook his physician and cardiology specialty training at the Royal Brisbane and Women's Hospital and Princess Alexandra Hospital.

He completed a two-year fellowship in Cardiac Electrophysiology with The University of Toronto at St Michael's Hospital in Toronto, Canada.

Dr Perel is recognised as a Certified Electrophysiology Specialist and Cardiac Device Specialist by the International Board of Heart Rhythm Examiners (IBHRE), affiliated with the Heart Rhythm Society.

Dr Perel is a member of Queensland Cardiovascular Group and consults from their rooms at the Mater Private Hospital Brisbane and within the Mater Specialist Suites at Mater Health Centre Brookwater and Mater Health Centre Redland.

Staff win professional development grants



Mater Refugee Health Clinic's Chris Allotta and Mater Private Hospital Brisbane's Joan Crystal have both received a \$2500 grant from Catholic Health Australia and Australian Catholic University to continue their professional development.

With 32 years nursing experience, Ms Allotta said she was humbled and excited to receive the grant, which she would use to visit nursing-led refugee health clinics across New South Wales and Victoria.

"Professional development provides me with the opportunity to reflect and modify existing practices so that I may continue to deliver a high standard of professionalism to patients and staff members," she said.

Australian Catholic University (ACU) Dean of Health Sciences Professor Michelle Campbell said the university understood the importance of nurses already in the workforce being able to learn new skills from other health care facilities.

"Support for the ground-breaking work that is being carried out in Catholic hospitals and aged care facilities across Australia not only facilitates nurses and midwives in learning from their colleagues in other Catholic or like facilities, but also assists in retention of those nurses," Prof Campbell said.

Health Workforce Australia estimates there will be a shortage of more than 100 000 nurses and midwives by 2025.



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National award honours health care for the homeless

The Homeless to Home Healthcare program, an initiative of Mater Health Services and Micah Projects, has won Catholic Health Australia's Outreach Healthcare Award.

The program, which was also recently recognised with a National Homeless Services Achievement Award, focuses on the health and well-being of people who are homeless or vulnerably housed.

Catholic Health Australia Chief Executive Officer Martin Laverty said global research showed homelessness or inadequate housing often leads to a wide range of serious health concerns, including chronic disease, infectious diseases, poor physical health, mental illness and high rates of drug and alcohol dependency.

"These are among society's most vulnerable people, and most are not receiving any sort of medical treatment. Mater Health Services, along with Micah Projects, recognised that was not acceptable and has made major strides in the health care of people who are homeless."

He said the Mater-Micah partnership has changed the lives of hundreds of people by delivering integrated, multidisciplinary health and community services to people who are homeless



Photo courtesy of Katie Bennett

or at risk of homelessness. St Vincent's Hospital Brisbane also joined the partnership this year.

"One of the great strengths of the work of Mater Health Services in this field is the leadership it has provided in bringing others along with them in the pursuit of better health care for people who are living on the margins of society," Mr Laverty said.

"Mater and Micah have brought a range of groups together with different interests and areas of expertise—faith-based health care, as well as non-government and community-based organisations, and government agencies—to improve the health prospects of people who would otherwise continue to struggle with the effects of their circumstances."



Surgical skills on show

Mater surgeons Dr Matthew Carmody and Dr Simon Journeaux are featured in a new surgical skills and techniques DVD made by the Royal Australasian College of Surgeons (RACS).

The DVD is used by participants on the Australian and New Zealand Surgical Skills Education and Training (ASSET) course.

ASSET is a compulsory aspect of surgical training and is usually undertaken within the first year of training and can also be undertaken prior to surgical training.

Dr Carmody said the filming at Mater Adult Hospital was the first time filming for the DVD involved a full film crew and followed patients into the operating theatre.

"The focus was on 'one safe way' and Mater proved to be the ideal institution because of the surgical safety measures already in place," he said.

"The filming—which incorporated surgeons, nursing staff and anaesthetists—details numerous essential surgical skills, incorporated into live teaching modules.

"Both myself and Dr Journeaux are particularly grateful to the staff who assisted in making the filming such a success."

Vicki Flenady receives WHA Medal of Distinction

Mater researcher Associate Professor Vicki Flenady has been awarded the 2013 Women's Healthcare Australia Medal for her research dedicated to finding ways to prevent stillbirth.



A/Prof Flenady, a nurse and midwife with more than 30 years' experience, is Director of the Translating Research into Practice (TRIP) Centre at Mater and also provides leadership within the Mothers and Babies Health program.

"Vicki has been recognised for her outstanding contribution at a national level to improving health of women through service provision, leadership and advocacy," Mater Research Deputy Director—Research Professor Michael McGuckin said.

Prof Flenady said the award recognised not only her contribution to improving care for mothers and babies, but also the contribution of those who had worked with her and supported her over the years.

"Such recognition lifts the spirits of researchers who live with the ever-present struggle for funding to ensure our research program. It keeps us all going," she said.

"Pregnancy and the birth of a child is a wondrous and important event in the lives of parents and families but also for the health of populations. A healthy start to life is critically important for a long and healthy life."

A/Prof Flenady also recently received a PhD through Griffith University, on the subject of a systematic approach to stillbirth from a clinical epidemiological perspective.

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New Consumer Engagement Project Officer

Mater's Consumer Engagement Advisory Committee recently welcomed Angie Kendall to the role of Consumer Engagement Project Officer.

The committee (pictured above), which was established in September 2012, is tasked with guiding Mater's strategic approach to consumer engagement.

"Partnering with consumers is one of the ten National Safety and Quality Health Service Standards, which aim to protect the public from harm and to improve the quality of health

service provision," Executive Director Mission Leadership, Madonna McGahan said.

The Standard is recognised in Mater's Strategic Plan and Balanced Scorecard, and demonstrates our commitment to engaging with the community.

"As the project officer, my role will be to plan successful and sustainable engagement strategies and programs to meaningfully engage with consumers for improved health outcomes.

Some of these programs will be focused on engaging Consumer Representatives across various governance committees at the Mater, education and support for staff to engage in every day practice, and including consumers in the development and review of patient information publications".



For further information about how Angie can assist you, please contact her via Angie. Kendall@mater.org.au or 07 3163 1326.

Mater appoints new Health Promotion Officer

Dr Neil Harris has joined Mater to take on the role of Advanced Health Promotion Officer, in partnership with Griffith University.

"As a Senior Lecturer in the School of Public Health at Griffith University, Dr Harris has extensive experience leading the development and delivery of Health Promotion initiatives," Director of Allied Health services Anne Maree Buttner said.

"He is also experienced in the planning and delivery of research training and education activities suitable for staff, undergraduate and higher degree research students.

"Dr Harris' interests include settings-based approaches to health promotion; innovative strategies to protect and promote youth health; ecological approaches to aged living and health; stakeholder engagement in planetary sustainability and evaluation research."

Dr Harris said he was looking forward to the challenge of advancing the wellbeing of staff, patients and the general Mater community.



"So much great health promotion work has already been done across Mater so I'm looking forward to supporting that and continuing to build upon what is already happening to add more value," he said.



MEPIC growth in first year of operation

It has been 15 months since the opening of the Mater Education Practice Improvement Centre (MEPIC) at South Brisbane and the service has already been expanded to include in-situ simulations.

The centre facilitates immersive simulation-based learning with a family of manikins used to simulate a wide range of scenarios to which staff and students must respond as they would in a 'live' situation.

MEPIC's aim is to reduce clinical risk, improve patient safety and contribute to optimal clinical outcomes through targeted education and ongoing skill development.

The centre also provides a standardised and controlled research environment for the continuous improvement of patient care delivery.

Mater Adult, Women's and Children's Perioperative Services Education Coordinator Mel Ferguson said in-situ simulation had been extremely well received in the hospital's operating theatres.

"Staff are able to practice scenarios they rarely encounter but which require a rapid and effective response when they do occur, such as adverse reactions to medications," Ms Ferguson said.

Mater's Director Learning and Development Donna Bonney said

there continued to be high demand for simulation services with clinical simulation programs now being delivered across most services including Maternity and Neonatology, Paediatrics, Emergency and Critical Care, Perioperative, Medical, Surgical and Physiotherapy.

MEPIC has also hosted a number of simulation faculty training events such as the Harvard International Centre for Medical Simulation's 'Simulation as a Teaching Tool' course, several National Health Education and Training (NHET-Sim) Simulation Workshops and a Laerdal Mini-SUN event, all of which have involved Mater staff and clinicians from across Australia.

Mater and The University of Queensland have also utilised MEPIC facilities to undertake a joint research project studying the use of simulation in undergraduate midwifery education.

"Simulation is an important teaching and learning methodology in the clinical environment to support safe and effective practice and the delivery of exceptional care to our patients and families," Ms Bonney said.

MEPIC was funded through an Australian Government's Health Workforce Australia initiative in 2012.

New test panel for Atypical Pneumonia

Mater Pathology is now testing for Atypical Pneumonia including Legionella species, Chlamydia pneumoniae and Mycoplasma pneumoniae.

Atypical pneumonia refers to pneumonia caused by atypical bacteria. It is called 'atypical' because the symptoms and signs differ from those of pneumonia due to other common bacteria.

The new PCR panel targets Legionella species and Chlamydia pneumoniae as well as other rarer causative organisms of pneumonia including Chlamydia psittaci, Legionella longbeachae, Legionella pneumophila and Cryptococcus species (includes C. neoformans & C. gattii).

"Previously Chlamydia and Legionella testing consisted mainly of serology—Legionella can be cultured but is fastidious and takes 14 days—however may not be positive in the acute phase and follow-up serology is not always practical," Director of Pathology, Professor Deon Venter said.

"This new PCR panel will assist in better diagnosis of atypical pneumonia by allowing detection of the disease in the acute phase."

The Atypical pneumonia PCR panel can be performed on all respiratory samples although nasopharyngeal swabs are not recommended and sputum or other lower respiratory tract samples are preferred.

To order this new testing, 'Atypical pneumonia PCR' can be written on the request form or the individual organism PCR listed if appropriate.

Testing will initially be performed three times a week (Monday, Wednesday and Friday) until test numbers increase.



For further information please contact Mater's Microbiology laboratory at telephone 07 3163 8168.

Building on our commitment to a safer Mater community

From 27 October to 2 November, Mater will be participating in Safe Work Week.

This annual event aims to raise awareness of the importance of preventing death, injury and illness in the workplace, at home and in the community.

Tragically, around 25 Queenslanders die each year as a result of traumatic workplace incidents and more than 5 000 suffer a permanent injury.

These deaths and injuries carry with them a devastating and personal impact on workers and their families, with a significant financial cost to the Queensland community.

A range of events and activities will be held during the week to help Mater Health Services both demonstrate and celebrate its commitment to safety.

Mater's SafeQuest—for a safer Mater community—calls on Mater staff, patients, visitors and specialists to speak up for safety and commit to a safety culture.

Through a combination of safety initiatives, risk management strategies and communication programs, we aim to address priority issues and build on the culture of safety across the entire Mater community.

In the lead up to Safe Work Week, Mater is sponsoring



Workplace Health and Safety Queensland's Safe Work 2013 Big Breakfast.

This free community event features safety supporters, including Mater, sharing their latest safety initiatives and presentations on the importance of leadership to a successful workplace safety culture.

Safe Work 2013 Big breakfast with Mal Meninga. Friday 4 October 2013 between 7 am and 10 am, King George Square, Brisbane.



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My story

By Dr Lucy Cooke

Walking the wall

It started with an email.

“Come to China and be part of a team to trek the Great Wall. Raise money for the Neonatal Critical Care Unit,” it read.

My initial response was, “I really want to do that,” followed by a huge attack of cold feet; how on earth I was going to juggle work, kids, training (not my strongest point) and find time to raise the \$5000 needed to secure my place on Mater Foundation’s Miles for Miracles trek?

My fears were quickly laid to rest by Mater Foundation’s Director of Community Fundraising Paul Reis—aka the ‘Master of Persuasion’—who convinced me that it would all be ok.

So I paid my deposit and set up my fundraising page.

It was about then that I discovered what an exceptional bunch of colleagues I really have; the team in Mater’s Neonatal Critical Care Unit (NCCU) got behind the trek with gusto, fundraising in every way they could to help me reach my target.

Bake sales, raffles, sausage sizzles, Chinese massages and a pie drive all helped, as did the amazing circus stilt walkers who took over the Atrium in Mater Mothers one morning.

On 7 June, the team of trekkers boarded our flight to China, all a bit apprehensive about what was in store for us.

After a couple of days acclimatising in Beijing, we were at the Great Wall.

The names of towns were unpronounceable—Gubeikou, Jinshanling, Longyukou, Xizhazi—and the accommodation was definitely not five star, but the food was amazing and the people were some of the most welcoming I have ever met.

The Great Wall is every bit as spectacular as it looks in photos, although I was disappointed to find out that it can’t actually be seen from space.

What followed was both challenging and exhilarating in equal measure and while we may not always have agreed with our Chinese guides about what was ‘easy’ and what was ‘difficult’, everyone took on each challenge that was thrown at us.

The sheer number of steps on many sections of the wall was quite daunting, but we discovered that you CAN climb more than a thousand steps in one go if you put your mind to it!



The Snake’s Spine section of Wall in particular required uphill and downhill scrambling and was definitely not for the faint hearted.

After initially wondering how I would ever fundraise and whether I would even be able to complete the trek, it was with huge pride that I stood on the top of the Great Wall at the end of our fifth and final day of trekking.

One of the reasons we all managed to finish the trek was the team itself—a truly inspirational group of 21 people, who came together to support the cause and each other.

My advice to anyone considering this type of fundraising adventure would be to ‘go for it’ as you definitely won’t regret it.

The 2014 Mater Foundation fundraising challenge will be a cycle adventure from Cambodia to Vietnam. Funds raised will support women’s cancer services at Mater. For more information, contact Business Development Manager Rowan Foster on 3163 8000.

MERCY WEEK 2013

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During Mercy Week (22 to 28 September) Mater celebrates its identity and the heritage of the Sisters of Mercy.

We also acknowledge our commitment to Mater's Mission and Values. This year, we encourage you to reflect on what Mercy means to you.