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# Quality Matters

The monthly newsletter of Hunter New England Health Clinical Governance

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Editorial team:  
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Ms Melissa Harvey  
and Ms Tracey Currie.

Comments and  
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## From the Director...

It is almost time for the 2008 Quality Exposition and Scientific Program, and planning for this event is well underway. Last year's event was a great success and we are hoping that even more will make the journey to beautiful Taree on 11 and 12 September 2008, to hear from clinical and academic leaders in quality and safety. As in previous years, we have asked our speakers to encourage us to think outside the square and to help us to see things from a new perspective. Our keynote speaker this



year is Professor Chris Baggoley, Chief Executive of the Australian Commission on Quality and Safety in Health Care. Further details about the Program are below in this edition of *Quality Matters*.

The results of the NSW Health Patient Survey for HNEH were publicly released in June 2008, and provide a valuable source of feedback from our patients and the community. HNEH facilities have recently received individual reports from the Survey, and are looking at areas where they received good feedback, as well as opportunities to enhance services. If you would like to know more about Patient Survey results for your service, your manager may be able to assist. A new page about the NSW Health Patient Survey will shortly be added to the Clinical Governance website

## 2008 HNEH Quality Exposition and Scientific Program

The 2008 Hunter New England Health Quality Exposition and Scientific Program will be held on Thursday 11<sup>th</sup> September and Friday 12<sup>th</sup> September 2008 at the Manning Entertainment Centre in Taree. The two-day program celebrates innovative projects and outstanding individuals and teams across Hunter New England Health and coincides with the annual Achievement Awards Dinner, to be held on the Thursday night.

This year's Scientific Program focuses on communication, teamwork and the linkages between clinical leadership, innovation and organisational culture. The keynote speakers are clinical and academic leaders in these fields and include:

- Professor Chris Baggoley, Chief Executive, Australian Commission on Quality and Safety in Health Care
- Professor Bill Runciman, Professor of Patient Safety, University of Adelaide
- Dr Tony O'Connell, Acting Deputy Director-General, Health System Performance, NSW Health
- Mr Kelvin Genn, Director Quality and Safety Branch, NSW Health

The Quality Exposition and Scientific Program will commence at 12.30pm on Thursday 11<sup>th</sup> September 2008 (lunch provided) and conclude at 5:30pm. The next day, Friday 12<sup>th</sup> September 2008, will commence at 8:30am and conclude at 12:45pm, with lunch to follow. Registration is now open online at

[http://intranet.hne.health.nsw.gov.au/cg/Quality\\_CPI/quality\\_awards/quality\\_exposition](http://intranet.hne.health.nsw.gov.au/cg/Quality_CPI/quality_awards/quality_exposition)

For more information please contact Dianne Dolan, Acting Area Quality Manager on 49855820 or mobile 0428 404 804 sd.67059.



## In profile

### Barbara Rodham, Area Patient Safety Manager



Barbara started her career as a general nurse specializing in midwifery before becoming Clinical Nurse Specialist (midwifery) and then Assistant Director of Nursing and Quality Assurance Manager at the Maitland Hospital. In 1992 she transitioned from nursing to

Quality and Accreditation Manager for the Lower Hunter Sector and subsequently Clinical Risk Manager and then Area Patient Safety Manager.

For the last fifteen months Barbara has been seconded to the Quality and Safety Branch of NSW Health, firstly as the Acting Director and then as Deputy Director to its new Director Mr Kelvin Genn. Barbara enjoyed working on projects such as Essential of Care with the Nursing and Midwifery Office which when introduced across the state will enhance patient safety.

When not at work Barbara enjoys her garden, frequenting the local wineries, rummaging around art galleries and antique shops and catching up with family and friends.

## Root Cause Analysis - Corridor Consultations

This month we are not reviewing an RCA but instead highlighting an important issue in the hope of preventing future need for an RCA! Recently a pathology service received a request for a test of heart muscle injury, a troponin test. A staff member had experienced chest pain whilst at work and asked a colleague to sign a request form for the test. The ordering clinician undertook no other assessment. Fortunately in this case the results were normal and the "patient" came to no harm, but what would have happened if this had not been the case?

This highlights some of the dangers of corridor consultations. It may feel like it is helping colleagues but there is risk in not following the principles of good medical care, including a thorough and well-documented medical history treatment diagnosis plan and follow up. Also, even in this kind of situation, the ordering clinician remains responsible for review and relevant action in relation to any investigations they order.

Instead of the above, Staff Health is available to provide staff with easy access to appropriate consultation, investigation and referral to appropriate health care providers. In emergencies or out of hours, access to the Emergency Department might be needed, for example, in the case of emergencies such as chest pain. And if you are contemplating a request to a colleague to fill out pathology forms or prescriptions on your behalf, please think about the implications of what you are asking of them and whether it really is the best way to go about it.

## Welcome back, Barbara

Please join us in welcoming back Barbara Rodham, who has returned to her substantive position of Area Patient Safety Manager in Clinical Governance following completion of her secondment to the NSW Health Quality & Safety Branch. Welcome back, Barbara.

Our thanks go to Dianne Dolan who took on the role of Area Patient Safety Manager for over a year during Barbara's absence. Dianne is currently Acting Area Quality Manager role whilst Tonia Easton enjoys an extended break.

## Inaugural Royal Newcastle Hospital Memorial Fellowship Lecture, in conjunction with the John Irvine Hunter Memorial Lecture

The inaugural Royal Newcastle Hospital Memorial Fellowship Lecture will take place in conjunction with John Irvine Hunter Memorial Lecture on Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> August 2008 in the Royal Newcastle Centre Lecture Theatre at 6.30pm. The inaugural lecturer, Professor David Hunter, is the Vincent L. Gregory Professor in Cancer Prevention, at the Harvard School of Public Health and grandson of John Irvine Hunter (1898-1924), Challis Professor of Anatomy at the University of Sydney from the age of 24. The **Irvine Hunter Memorial Lecture** is made possible by a generous bequest by his son, Dr Irvine Hunter, to the University of Newcastle.

The evening will commence at 6.00pm with refreshments in the foyer followed by Professor Hunter's lecture, entitled "*Do our genes forecast our medical destiny:- How genetics will change the practice of medicine*". Please RSVP for the lecture via Tracey Currie on 4921 4913. Everyone is welcome.

The **Royal Newcastle Hospital Memorial Fellowship** was established to commemorate the values and achievements of the Royal Newcastle Hospital, which was established in 1817. The hospital held the confidence of its community through a distinctive philosophy of patient care, while the hospital staff made notable innovative contributions to knowledge development in health sciences and in hospital organisation and management. The objectives of the RNH Memorial Fellowship are to recognise the philosophy of the Royal Newcastle Hospital in perpetuity through an annual Fellowship awarded on the basis of innovative and outstanding performance in health scholarship and clinical achievement relevant to the values for which the Royal Newcastle Hospital was known. Background to Professor David Hunter's work is available at: [www.hsph.harvard.edu/faculty/david-hunter](http://www.hsph.harvard.edu/faculty/david-hunter) For information on Professor John Hunter: [www.adb.online.anu.edu.au/biogs/A090405b.htm](http://www.adb.online.anu.edu.au/biogs/A090405b.htm)