
From the Chair and Chief Executive

From the Board Chair

The financial year of 2020–2021 delivered many challenges to Gold Coast Health and I want to start by recognising the achievements of the clinical and non-clinical staff, Chief Executive and Executive Directors in managing the increase in demand for services whilst also responding to COVID-19. This year saw Gold Coast Health administer the first COVID-19 vaccinations in Queensland, and the world-class facilities in our dedicated COVID-19 ward were kept busy treating COVID-19 patients from Papua New Guinea and other parts of Queensland, as well as caring for those people whose cases were detected in hotel quarantine.

Our organisation's agility and adaptability to respond to the Gold Coast's healthcare needs is underpinned by our dedication to providing person-centric care guided by our *Always Care* philosophy. This philosophy recognises that the simplest acts of compassion have a significant impact on patients, staff, the community, and our partners in healthcare delivery.

I would like to make special mention of the achievements of the Gold Coast Health Consumer Advisory Group (CAG). Its 19 members lead consumer engagement across the health service with consumer engagement activities continuing to expand. I'm pleased to say that 50 governance, safety, and quality committees across the health service having consumer representation around the table. They also represent the consumer voice in a range of special projects including service co-design, facility and infrastructure planning, video and content production, research and review of patient information. It's worthwhile noting that Gold Coast Health staff undertook more than 500 external engagement activities involving the wider community in 2020–2021. Ensuring positive patient experiences and outcomes remain at the forefront of healthcare delivery is a key focus for the CAG. The Chair, Professor Margaret Shapiro, makes a significant contribution in advocating for improvements in health literacy efforts within the health service.

My thanks is further extended to the Gold Coast Hospital Foundation who, despite facing a challenging landscape for fundraising during the period, raised close to \$4 million through the generosity of its community and corporate supporters.

I would also like to highlight the progress we have made to closing the gap in health outcomes for First Nations Queenslanders. On National Reconciliation Day, we launched our Board's Statement of Reconciliation where we committed to eight actions across the health service to improve health equity for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in our community. We have also launched a dedicated Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health website and commissioned a variety of artwork for our various facilities by First Nations artists, which provide us all with a visual reminder of these commitments. More work remains to be done, but we are committed to walking in partnership with all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in our community in a spirit of reconciliation, and in line with our *Always Care* philosophy and our values.

As you will read on page 41 of this report, significant steps were made this year to support an inclusive and diverse workforce. I'm delighted to report that we continue to lead the way, with our successful DisTinct Pathways Program employing a further 24 people with disabilities.

Finally, I would like to thank my Deputy Chair Judy Searle and my Board colleagues for their commitment throughout the year, and our Chief Executive Ron Calvert and his executive team for their diligence and focus in 2020–2021.

Ian Langdon



Board Chair, Gold Coast Health

From the Chief Executive

This annual report documents the progress of Gold Coast Health during the 2020–2021 financial year as it strives to improve health outcomes for the Gold Coast community.

COVID-19 continues to dominate our agenda. Gold Coast Health led the way with the opening of Queensland's first COVID-19 vaccination centre, and we're pleased that the majority of our staff have now stepped forward to get vaccinated.

Earlier this year, we were honoured to be recognised by winning the Premier's Award for Excellence for our innovation and initiative in our COVID-19 response. The Gold Coast Health team dealt with the realities of COVID-19 before any other Hospital and Health Service in Queensland.

Gold Coast Health worked tirelessly to meet the public's infection control expectations, care for COVID-19 patients, create a safe environment for other patients and build confidence in Queensland Health's overall response to the pandemic.

I have now heard literally hundreds of stories of how individual staff members and teams went above and beyond to serve the Gold Coast community. The world-class facilities at Gold Coast University Hospital were put to good use treating COVID-19 patients from Papua New Guinea and other parts of Queensland.

Looking to the future, we will need to continue careful monitoring of our hospital bed capacity and ensure the appropriate streaming of patients. I congratulate our team for their focus on the recovery of services that were delayed during the intense COVID-19 preparation period. It was a tremendous effort to have our elective surgery department back to full capacity at the beginning of the reporting period. Given the growth in demand we've experienced, ongoing efforts to reduce waitlists for elective surgery and specialist outpatient appointments have been impressive.

During the year, we also worked on developing new services to meet the increasing health needs of the Gold Coast community. This included opening Queensland's first Adolescent Day Program, which transforms the lives of teenagers by blending school with mental health treatment. Construction also commenced on a Crisis Stabilisation Facility, an Australian first, where we will provide acute crisis mental health support in a more therapeutic environment than the Emergency Department.

Finally, I wish to thank Chair, Ian Langdon, Deputy Chair Judy Searle, and the rest of the Board for their ongoing leadership and support. While the challenges have been great, our *Always Care* philosophy has shone through, our values have been lived out every day, and our staff have made us all proud to be a part of Gold Coast Health.



Chief Executive, Gold Coast Health