

primary focus

**Mater Neurosciences
reach new heights**

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what's inside

- + Navigating orthopaedics with robotic precision
- + Rehabilitation for regional cardiac patients delivered in their homes
- + A new hospital soon to come to Springfield

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Building blocks to a healthy you.

In this issue we take a deep dive into our leading specialist care areas of **Neurosciences**, **Orthopaedics** and **Cardiology**. Making your health our specialty.

Reconciliation

In the spirit of reconciliation, Mater acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of country throughout Australia and their connections to land, sea and community.

We pay our respect to their Elders past and present and extend that respect to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples today.

 Learn more about our Reconciliation Action Plan at mater.org.au/rap

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We recommend obtaining professional medical advice from an accredited practitioner before relying on the information in this publication.

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Welcome to Mater's refreshed magazine for Queensland's medical community.

Primary Focus is a quarterly update on the latest services, programs and specialists at Mater's 11 hospitals across Queensland.

As the needs and expectations of patients continually change and evolve over time, so too must we transform and innovate healthcare services to ensure the best possible outcome for every patient, every time.

Having cared for Queenslanders for more than a century, Mater has always strived for continuous improvement, informed by patient needs, medical community feedback, new technologies and the latest research findings.

Mater aims to keep you updated on new and upgraded facilities, services and specialists across our state-wide network, along with the most up-to-date findings from our world-renowned research institute, Mater Research, and dedicated GP education and engagement events.

From operating Australia's largest private maternity service provider, to performing pioneering in-utero spina bifida surgery, Mater has a long and proud history of breaking new ground to improve the health and wellbeing of Queenslanders.

In this issue, we focus on the building blocks of a healthy body: Neurosciences, Orthopaedics and Cardiology.

Supporting the brain, bones and beats of our bodies, these fields are among Mater's specialties with life-changing and life-saving treatment options now available for patients.

Happy reading!



Peter Steer

Dr Peter Steer
Group Chief Executive

As doctors, you are the first port of call for Queenslanders seeking or requiring access to specialist healthcare services, and so it is for you that this quarterly publication has been created.

Mater at a glance



11
hospitals



1553
beds



578 378
patients seen
each year



8 609
Mater People



32 814
Mater at Home
consultations
each year



82 093
emergency attendances
each year



12 000+
babies born
each year



1 in 5
Queensland babies
are born at Mater



2 312
Mater Education
Diploma of Nursing
Graduates



\$23.2 m
new research
project funding to
Mater Research

Mater Neurosciences reach *new heights*

Mater Neurosurgeon Dr Martin Wood has been pioneering minimally invasive techniques for spinal surgery since the early 2000s.

Part of the team that performed Australia's first in-utero spina bifida surgery in 2016 at Mater's Maternal Fetal Medicine Centre in South Brisbane, Dr Wood continues to push boundaries to improve patient outcomes.

And the sky is the limit. Dr Wood has been a pilot since the age of 16 and has flown himself throughout rural Queensland and New South Wales over the years to deliver neurosurgery consultation services.

An old hand when it comes to navigation equipment in an aircraft, he now turns his hand to precision-enhancing surgical robots for intricate spinal surgery. Mater Hospital Brisbane has recently added the Globus ExcelsiusGPS robot to its suite of surgical technologies, the first of its kind to be installed in a Queensland hospital.

Much like a planned route on a car GPS, the robotic arm guides the surgeon to the exact location in the spine requiring treatment.

The ExcelsiusGPS enables surgeons to separate the muscles surrounding the spine and operate through small incisions, rather than disrupting the tissue.

The robot enables better patient outcomes through less tissue damage, smaller incisions, reduced scarring and shorter hospital stays.

Dr Wood is a founding member of Brisbane Clinical Neuroscience Centre (BCNC), a large multidisciplinary team located at Mater campus at South Brisbane. He consults to Queensland Children's Hospital, Mater Children's Private Brisbane and Mater Private Hospital Brisbane.

After training in neurosurgery in Australia, he completed subspecialty training in Europe, including skull base neurosurgery and paediatric neurosurgery.

The father of four is also a proud co-founder and former chair of the children's brain tumour charity, Brainchild Foundation.

Image Mater Neurosurgeon Dr Martin Wood with a six-seater, twin-engine Beechcraft Baron.



Life-changing Parkinson's treatment for regional patients

Northern Australia's only Deep Brain Stimulation (DBS) service is being provided at Mater Private Hospital Townsville for people with Parkinson's disease and other neurological conditions.

Trained by leading specialists Professor Matt McDonald and Professor Rob Wilcox in Adelaide, Mater Private Hospital Townsville Neurologist Dr Craig Costello began offering the service earlier this year.

It is the only DBS service in a regional location in Australia, with most patients previously forced to travel to capital cities for the treatment.

Dr Costello, with a team of neurosurgeons, neurologists, anaesthetists and scientists, has performed several successful DBS procedures over the past 12 months, resulting in noticeable symptom relief for all patients.

"DBS is always on, unlike medication which can wear off or fluctuate," Dr Costello said. "In addition, DBS can deliver therapy differently to each side of the body which is vital for people with Parkinson's, a disease that affects each side of the body differently."

Image Neurologist Dr Craig Costello with DBS patient Rob Jorgensen.



The procedure involves safely inserting electrodes in the patient's brain to relieve tremors, stiffness and other debilitating symptoms.

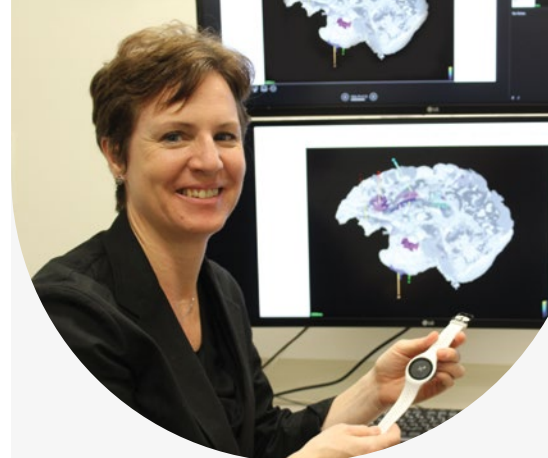
DBS works through electrical stimulation that regulates the abnormal signals which cause tremors and other symptoms of Parkinson's disease. Many patients experience an instant result from the procedure.

Former electrician Rob Jorgensen, 63, of the Burdekin region, was forced to retire when tremors caused by Parkinson's Disease became severe.

"The surgery has really helped me," he said. "I used to have involuntary movement in my arms and legs and I've noticed an improvement in my speech since the surgery," he said.

Rob said having access to DBS close to home prevented the need for costly travel and accommodation in Brisbane to receive the procedure.

Dr Costello said having evidence-based care available locally removed a large geographical barrier to better disease management for people living in regional Australia.



Mater gets smart for epilepsy patients

A study by Mater Research and The University of Queensland is investigating the use of smartwatches to help people living with epilepsy to better anticipate seizures.

This study looks specifically at how the brain and body react to stress in epilepsy, with chronic stress known to increase seizure frequency in some people.

Honorary Professor of Neurology at Mater Research and Queensland Brain Institute, Aileen McGonigal, is leading the study.

"Epilepsy is characterised by the tendency to have recurrent seizures—caused by intermittent disturbances of brain rhythms—that can provoke falls, lack of awareness, even convulsions," Dr McGonigal said.

"By tracking these brain rhythms, combined with the heart rate variability and electrodermal activity picked up by smartwatches, we hope to capture signatures to individual personalised stress responses and possibly even personalised seizure information.

"These 'stress signatures' could be used to refine wearable devices for seizure detection and even alert a patient to periods of high seizure risk."

The study aims to improve quality of life for people living with epilepsy.

"By looking at how brain signals relate to the activity measured on the device, and how both of these relate to psychological profile in epilepsy, we're breaking new ground, so the potential of this is truly exciting," Dr McGonigal said.

"Any positive step we can make to improve the health and wellbeing of the 150,000 people living with epilepsy in Australia is worthwhile."

Image Honorary Professor of Neurology at Mater Research, Aileen McGonigal, is tapping into smartwatch technology to help epilepsy patients.

Fast access to specialist advice

Mater Hospital Brisbane offers a Request for Advice (RFA) service to support GPs seeking specialist general medicine, endocrinology and dermatology advice for their patients.

Not a referral, RFA delivers timely diagnostic and/or treatment advice that could eliminate the need for a face-to-face consultation.

The service uses a secure messaging platform and GPs receive feedback from the Mater eConsultant team within three business days.

eConsultants

Endocrinology

Professor David McIntyre trained in Australia and Belgium and is the Senior Staff Specialist in Endocrinology and Obstetric Medicine at Mater, specialising in medical complications during pregnancy.

Image Mater's Dr Caroline Nicholson with Professor David McIntyre, operating the eConsultant program.



Dermatology

Associate Professor Jim Muir, Director of Mater's Department of Dermatology.

General medicine

Dr Narelle Fagermo has extensive experience as a hospital-based general medicine specialist, reviewing and treating patients with chronic and complex conditions.

How Mater eConsultant works



Partnership delivers specialist care in Bundaberg

Wide Bay patients requiring public urological care may no longer have to travel to Brisbane for treatment, thanks to an agreement between Mater Private Hospital Bundaberg (MPHBg), Mater Hospital Brisbane (MHB) and the Wide Bay Hospital and Health Service.

Under the agreement, eligible public day procedure patients will be recommended for surgical transfer to MPHBg.

MPHBg General Manager Catherine Hackney said the partnership will be a game-changer for patients seeking care for bladder difficulties and other urological conditions.

"This is an exciting collaboration to improve the health and wellbeing of those in our community, and is a great demonstration of how Mater can draw on its expertise and resources across all of its health services in Queensland," she said.

Urologist Dr Andrew Strahan consults at Mater Private Hospital Redland and will visit MPHBg every two to four weeks under the agreement.

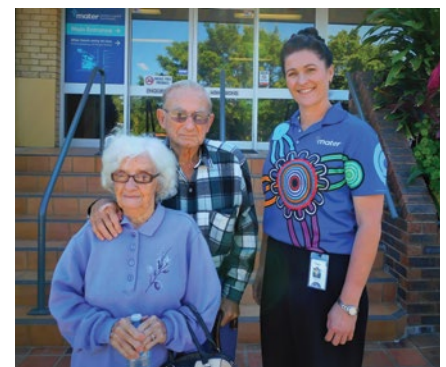


Image Mater Private Hospital Bundaberg General Manager Catherine Hackney with patient Fay Steel and her husband John.



Delivering care *where it counts*

As rising numbers of Queenslanders voice their preference to access healthcare services outside the four walls of hospitals, Mater is responding to the call.

Leveraging its century of healthcare delivery experience, Mater is providing services to people in their own homes and communities.

Mater at Home, comprising teams of experienced clinicians, delivers a range of care from blood infusions and wound treatments to speech pathology and rehabilitation.

It's a registered NDIS provider and also works across the Commonwealth Home Support Programme and Home Care Packages.

Mater at Home Direct, another service which started last year, accepts referrals from South East Queensland community sources, such as the Queensland Ambulance Service.

By responding quickly, lower acuity patients are managed safely in their homes, avoiding unnecessary ambulance callouts and emergency department admissions.

GPs can find further information and refer patients who live within the Mater at Home catchment area (40 km radius from the Mater South Brisbane campus) by visiting materonline.org.au/quick-referrals/mater-at-home

Delivering care in the home

Mater at Home and MND Queensland have partnered to improve the health and wellbeing of people with Motor Neurone Disease, like Kemal Omar and his family.

Thanks to ground-breaking assistive technology, Kemal is once again able to feed himself and send emails and texts.

With the **Obi** eating device, the Omar family is able to have dinner together again, with Kemal operating a robotic arm using fingertip controls.

He can also use the **NeuroNode Trilogy** system with eye movements, allowing him to browse the internet, watch TV shows and movies, and send and receive SMS and email messages.

Image Motor Neurone Disease patient Kemal Omar reclaims his independence with the help of Mater at Home and new technologies.

Cutting edge care

Mater has always been a leader in innovation and the adoption of new health technology—because improved patient care is at the heart of our Mission.

That's why Mater is continuing to make major rolling investments in new robotic-assisted orthopaedic surgical systems across our network of Queensland hospitals.

Our first robotic system, the ROSA orthopaedic knee guidance system, was commissioned at Mater Private Hospital Brisbane in 2016.

Enabling greater precision in knee replacement surgery, the system has proved its value to surgeons and hundreds of Mater patients over the past seven years—and has paved the way for a rapid expansion of robotic-assisted surgery across our hospitals.

As well as Brisbane, the ROSA is now operating at Mater's hospitals in Townsville, Mackay, Bundaberg, Redland and Springfield.

The ROSA system is now just one part of a suite of robotic systems that Mater has purchased to support its orthopaedic specialists.

Since 2021, hip and knee replacement patients at Mater Private Hospital Townsville have benefitted from surgery assisted by the Stryker Mako Robotic-Arm system, which enhances surgical precision following pre-operative CT scanning. The system was also launched at Mater Private Hospital Mackay last year.

Last year Mater Private Hospital Brisbane became the first hospital in Queensland to operate the VELYS Robotic-Assisted Solution.

The VELYS system utilises advanced real-time, infra-red optical tracking to allow surgeons to make high-precision, guided cuts during the procedure.

The system also helps surgeons verify they have achieved the correct alignment and tension of soft tissues surrounding the patient's new synthetic knee joint.

"This is an exciting time for robotic-assisted surgery technologies, particularly in the area of orthopaedic care," said Dr Peter Steer, Mater Group Chief Executive.

"These systems are enabling our dedicated medical specialists to perform complex procedures with unprecedented precision, improving outcomes and reducing the time patients spend in hospital.

"Mater has a strategic vision for our orthopaedic services to become early adopters of technology and evidenced-based innovations."

Orthopaedic surgeon Dr Cameron Cooke was among the first specialists to train on and utilise the VELYS.

"The navigational component of the system allows the surgeon to get optimal implant positioning during surgery and the accuracy obtained has been exceptional," Dr Cooke said.

"Surgeons always remain in control during a robotic-assisted procedure, but the technology gives us a huge helping hand in the operating theatre—and it's changing the face of surgery."

Image Mater Private Hospital Redland surgeon Dr Sanjay Joshi with the ROSA system.





ROSA orthopaedic knee guidance system (Zimmer Biomet)

Operating in Brisbane, Townsville, Mackay, Bundaberg, Redland and Springfield

The ROSA knee system supports the surgeon to achieve greater precision. The system is designed to work with a patient's individual anatomy and help orthopaedic surgeons tailor the placement of knee implants.

The system is used to perform:

- **Total Knee Arthroplasty**



Stryker Mako robotic-arm assisted technology

Operating in Townsville and Mackay

The Stryker Mako robotic-arm assisted surgery system enables surgeons to have a more predictable surgical experience when performing joint replacement surgery. A preoperative CT scan is used to create a 3D virtual model to develop a personalised preoperative plan.

This system can be used to perform:

- **Total Knee Arthroplasty**
- **Unicompartmental Knee Arthroplasty medial**
- **Unicompartmental Knee Arthroplasty lateral**
- **Patello-Femoral Joint Arthroplasty**
- **Total Hip Arthroplasty**



VELYS digital surgery (DePuy Synthes)

Operating in Brisbane and Rockhampton

The VELYS is an integrated operating platform that assists with the optimisation and digital precision of surgical cuts and implant placement. The system includes an infra-red special camera and optical tracking to provide real-time, exact information.

This system is used to perform:

- **Total Knee Arthroplasty**



CORI surgical system (Smith+Nephew)

Operating in Brisbane

The CORI surgical system features robotic-assisted technology integrating handheld robotics. The system maps the patient's knee in real time, meaning there is no need for a preoperative CT scan.

This system is used to perform:

- **Total Knee Arthroplasty**
- **Partial Knee Arthroplasty**
- **Total Hip Arthroplasty**



Marisela kicks goals after three years of surgery

A Mater specialist orthopaedic surgeon has enabled a schoolgirl born with dwarfism to fulfil her dream of competing at the World Dwarf Games.

Ten-year-old Marisela Hebsen, from Redland, was born with achondroplasia, the most common type of short-limbed dwarfism.

After undergoing multiple medical procedures to straighten her legs, she was able to travel to Germany to compete in swimming, soccer, athletics and basketball at the largest international sporting event held for athletes with dwarfism.

Mater Private Hospital Brisbane orthopaedic surgeon Dr Ivan Astori began the process of straightening Marisela's limbs in 2016, after she presented with extreme bowed legs.

In the first of more than 10 procedures to strengthen Marisela's legs over three years, Dr Astori used hemiepiphyodesis—also known as guided growth—to gradually correct her limb deformity.

"Her pain was extreme in her knees. We were able to modulate the growth around her knees, allowing her own growth to straighten her legs. As she grew her legs straightened over time," Dr Astori said.

In 2019, Dr Astori performed an osteotomy to reshape and realign Marisela's ankles.

Dr Astori, who also performs surgeries at Mater Private Hospital Redland, said he was not surprised by Marisela's sporting achievements.

"I am very proud of her, she's an absolute go-getter," he said.

"Without the surgeries she would have struggled with pain and her disability would have worsened."

Image Redland school girl Marisela Hebsen has competed in the World Dwarf Games, after multiple surgeries for bowed legs.

Mackay and Rockhampton mothers lead the way

Twins born at Mater Private Hospital Rockhampton (MPHRn) have been the first to benefit from an Australian-first virtual care program now available for expecting families in Central Queensland.

The neonatal virtual care program—developed by Philips and Teladoc—provides 24/7 access to neonatologist expertise in the event of complications during or after child birth.

The virtual care program was recently used during an urgent delivery of preterm twins at MPHRn.

Mother-to-be Kloe Lewis was 32 weeks pregnant when clinicians decided to deliver the twins by emergency c-section.

Mater's Director of Neonatology Dr Pita Birch was able to be virtually present in the birth suite, and assisted in diagnosing one of the babies with a heart condition.

Image Kloe and Matthew Lewis with their babies and Mater Midwife, Bev Freeman.



Growing Queensland, one baby at a time

Mater Mothers is the largest women's health service and private provider of maternity services in Australia.

It is also the largest provider of public-funded services in Queensland, with more than 12,400 babies born at a Mater hospital across the state last year.

Renowned for delivering comprehensive, co-designed care from pregnancy through to early parenthood, Mater Mothers has been a provider of choice for Queensland families and GPs for more than six decades.

Committed to continuously improving services to meet the ever-changing and evolving needs of Queensland families, Mater Mothers has recently introduced two new offerings:

Bundle of Joy

A program that bundles together the additional costs associated with giving birth. The premium card covers routine blood tests, two routine ultrasounds, hospital car parking and partner meals during hospital stays. The card also provides access to discounts on services such as parenting classes, breast pump hire, allied health visits and more.

Find out more at matermothers.org.au/bundle-of-joy

My Mater Midwife

The My Mater Midwife program offers mums-to-be their own dedicated midwife when having their baby at Mater Mothers' Private Brisbane.

The program ensures mums-to-be receive the support they need from the moment they choose to have their baby at Mater Mothers through to the first few weeks after their baby is born.

When a pregnant woman chooses the program, their Mater midwife will provide them with a booking visit, up to seven antenatal visits, attendance at birth, and up to four postnatal visits.

Find out more at matermothers.org.au/my-mater-midwife



Image Mater Mothers' Midwife Alison Broderick with Melika Tavakolian, Armin Milanian and baby Omid.

Quick stats

12 000 births a year

120 000 outpatient occasions of service

1 in 5 Qld babies are born at a Mater Mothers' hospital

750 nurses and midwives

2 000 nursery admissions

70 employed medical officers

61 000 occupied bed days

60 Visiting Medical Officers

Image (main) Mater Mothers' Hospital Brisbane mother Natasha Van Nunen with baby Amelia.

Mater Maternal Fetal Medicine

Nation and world-leading specialists provide expert diagnosis and management of complex cases.

The Maternal Fetal Medicine Centre at Mater in South Brisbane pioneered in-utero spina bifida surgery in Australia and offers intricate surgery on unborn babies for other conditions such as Twin to Twin Transfusion Syndrome.

The centre delivers a comprehensive range of antenatal screening, diagnostic and therapeutic services, counselling and more, and is located near Mater Mothers' world-renowned Neonatal Critical Care Unit

(NCCU), where more than 2,000 babies from around Australia receive round-the-clock care each year from a team of experienced clinicians.

New technology introduced this year to Mater Mothers' hospitals in Mackay and Rockhampton enables NCCU specialists in Brisbane to be virtually present in the birthing suite to support regional clinicians and provide an extra layer of confidence when managing complicated births.

New service for mums in crisis

Queensland's first dedicated centre for new parents experiencing anxiety, depression and other mental health challenges opened at Mater's South Brisbane campus earlier this year.

Catherine's House for Mothers, Babies and Families provides urgently-needed specialist perinatal mental healthcare to Queensland mothers and fathers diagnosed with mental health conditions around the arrival of their new baby.



Images Above: Sister Angela Mary Doyle welcomes new parents in need to the refurbished convent, now called Catherine's House. Below: Mothers (L-R) Mary-Anne Richardson, Rachel Thaiday and Harriett Sutton welcome perinatal services for mums.

One in five Queensland mothers and up to one in ten fathers experience perinatal mental health challenges in the first year after their baby's arrival, and existing services are unable to meet demand.

A partnership between Mater and Queensland Health has enabled Catherine's House to deliver a dedicated unit with 10 rooms where public and private patients with acute perinatal mental health diagnoses can stay with their babies for up to three weeks while receiving treatment and care.

The facility, which is next to the world-leading Mater Mothers' Hospital, also supports hundreds of new Queensland families each year through a range of day programs, group and individual treatments, home-visiting services and emotional well-being support.

Apart from the urgent need for parents, perinatal health issues also place babies at risk of many complications, such as low birth weight, premature birth and increased risk of conditions such as asthma.

Community donations to Mater Foundation enabled the former Sisters of Mercy convent to be converted into a contemporary, purpose-built facility.

The State Government contributed \$7m in capital funding and is providing \$11m in annual operational funding to provide eight public beds in the in-patient unit.

Premier Annastacia Palaszczuk hailed the service a 'landmark' for perinatal mental health in Queensland.

Patient services

- **In-Patient Unit**—Providing assessment and treatment for primary carers diagnosed with postpartum psychosis, schizophrenia, bipolar disorder, severe anxiety and/or depressive disorder and complex mental health problems that may include a history of trauma, personality disorder and substance misuse that is impacting their parenting.
- **Day Programs**—Delivering individual and group therapy treatments on-site to new parents.
- **Parent Support Centre**—Providing early parenting guidance in the first six months after birth, including support with breast-feeding, feeding, sleep, emotional well-being and other issues to Mater mothers.
- **Parent Aide Unit**—Providing at-home support with trained volunteers to improve the health and wellbeing of Mater families.
- **Individual Consultation**—Public and private consultations with a comprehensive range of practitioners based at Catherine's House.



Mater expands *refugee care* in GP practices

A partnership between Mater and the Queensland Government will enable dedicated nurses in 10 GP surgeries across Brisbane, Ipswich and Logan to deliver medical care to up to 1,000 people from multicultural backgrounds.

The Multicultural Health Coordination Program, which recently received \$930,000 from the State Government, is tailored to meet the needs of refugees and asylum seekers who face major systemic barriers when accessing medical care.

The program builds on the success of a two-year pilot program that has operated at five GP surgeries in suburbs with a high proportion of non-English speakers.

Almost 28 per cent of South East Queensland residents were born overseas, many of whom speak a language other than English at home.

The nurse led-service will work with patients referred by GPs, hospitals and other social services, who identify as having a CALD/refugee background, low English proficiency and unmanaged complex health needs.

Mater has been operating the Mater Refugee Complex Care Clinic for more than 20 years, ensuring refugees and asylum seekers who lack entitlement to Medicare are still able to access essential health services.

Image Mater has been delivering healthcare services to people from refugee and asylum-seeking communities for more than 20 years. Patient Farhan Ahmed Adan is pictured with nurse Kathryn Gregory.

Surgeon restores sight and hope for Ukrainian refugee

A Mater eye surgeon has helped restore the vision of a “near-blind” refugee who was rescued from the frontline of the war in Ukraine.

For the first time in a decade, Viktor Olepir, a 57-year-old who has Down syndrome, is able to see clearly following cataract surgery at Mater last month.

Mr Olepir was among more than 300 patients supported by Mater Refugee Complex Care Clinic last year.

Consultant Ophthalmologist and Retinal Specialist Associate Professor Anthony Kwan successfully performed cataract surgery on Mr Olepir eyes following a referral from Mater Intellectual Disability and Autism Service (MIDAS).

“He was near blind. This surgery will change his life,” Prof Kwan said.

Image Mater Refugee Complex Care Clinic patient Viktor Olepir thanks his surgeon, Associate Professor Anthony Kwan.





Players tackle the facts

As part of Mater's partnership with Queensland Reds, rugby players (L-R) Zane Nonggorr, Jock Campbell and Harry Wilson, were asked to participate in myth-busting sessions to test their heart health knowledge.



Cardiac care *at home*

For North Queensland cane farmer Stephen Fabbro, travelling to Townsville for heart surgery was a necessity, but attending regular rehabilitation sessions afterwards was not possible.

Stephen, 60, became one of the first patients to participate in Mater Private Hospital Townsville's new virtual cardiac rehabilitation program, enabling him to complete post-surgery treatment from his own home.

In a partnership with Queensland scientific technology company Cardihab, Mater Private Hospital Townsville developed the virtual rehabilitation program, including two video consultations a week with a specialist clinician.

The program also includes a phone app by which specialists track Stephen's heart rate, blood pressure, steps walked and more.

Mater Cardiologist, Dr Soniah Bigie Moloji, said rehabilitation was crucial in recovering from cardiac events and preventing readmission.

Dr Moloji said patient outcomes to date suggested that access to virtual rehabilitation was improving recovery times and allowing patients to return to work sooner.

Stephen admits he would not have completed rehabilitation if it required driving the 1.5 hours from his Home Hill home to Townsville to see a clinician in person.



Mater Health Hub, Springfield

Set to open in August 2023, Mater Health Hub, Springfield is Mater's first purpose-built education, health and wellbeing centre.

The new facility in Springfield Central will deliver Mater Education's popular Diploma of Nursing, with the first course to be delivered free in October 2023.

The family-focused hub will also provide a range of health and wellbeing services outside the four walls of the hospital, including:

- Renal services
- Women's and paediatric services
- Balance classes
- Diet and nutrition programs
- Group therapy sessions
- Corporate wellness services.

Faster pharmacy services

Springfield's new Mater hospital will be equipped with a state-of-the-art robotic pharmacy system that will deliver around 100,000 prescriptions a year to patients and medical staff within minutes.

The \$450,000 investment is being made possible by Mater Foundation—the charity that enables Mater to support new cutting-edge equipment, services and research across its network of hospitals.

The BD ROWA Vmax-160 pharmacy system automatically picks and directs dispensed medicines to each pharmacist's workstation via chutes and conveyor belts.

Meeting the need in *Springfield*

Mater is expanding its world-renowned healthcare services to Greater Springfield with a new hospital under construction for the rapidly growing community.

For the first time, people living in Brisbane's Western Corridor will have dedicated public hospital services, including an Emergency Department, an Intensive Care Unit and maternity services to meet the demands of growing families in the region.

The new hospital, to open through a phased approach starting in 2026, is the result of a landmark partnership between Mater and the State Government to realise their shared goal of meeting the current and future healthcare needs of the people living in this area.

Located alongside the existing Mater Private Hospital Springfield, the new hospital will increase the number of hospital beds for public and private patients to 228, and will enable more people living in the region to receive care and treatment in their own community.

Central to the new hospital will be Mater Mothers' Hospital Springfield, bringing Australia's largest private maternity services provider to Greater Springfield families.

Each year, more than 12,000 babies are born at Mater Mothers' hospitals across Queensland. Mater Mothers' Hospital Springfield will support families from preconception through pregnancy and birth into early motherhood with personalised care and support every step of the way, ensuring the arrival of your newest family member is as safe, memorable and stress-free as possible.

Quick stats

-  **228 public and private hospital beds**
-  **Greater Springfield's first Emergency Department**
-  **Intensive Care Unit for more complex care to be treated locally**
-  **More operating theatres and endoscopy procedural areas**
-  **Pandemic-safe design for future health emergencies**
-  **Maternity and birthing services**
 - A Pregnancy Assessment Centre
 - 6 birth suites
 - Maternity beds
 - 16 special care neonatal cots
-  **More than 1,100 permanent jobs for Springfield**

Image Artist impression of the new Mater Hospital Springfield.





Mum owes life and baby to Mater Research trial

Thanks to a 'miracle drug' trialled by Mater Research, Gold Coast mother Courtney Allen has a new lease of life.

The cystic fibrosis sufferer's illness was rapidly deteriorating and, after she was ruled ineligible for a lung transplant, it seemed she had run out of treatment options—and time.

The 33-year-old owes her life, and her new baby Aston, to the drug Trikafta®. The revolutionary medication was trialled by a Mater Research team led by Associate Professor Lucy Burr, Mater's Director of Respiratory and Sleep Medicine.

Cystic fibrosis limits the flow of salt and water through cell membranes, causing mucus to form in the lungs, which triggers persistent infections and irreversible lung damage. Without Trikafta®, the average life expectancy for a sufferer is just 37.

Trikafta® works by boosting the flow of salt and water in patients' lungs, vastly improving their lung function and breathing.

"Trikafta® has now increased life expectancies probably in line with the rest of the population, particularly for kids who start the treatment young," said Associate Professor Burr.

Image Cystic fibrosis sufferer Courtney Allen has a new lease of life to enjoy baby Aston.

New RSV trial to protect preterm babies

A team of Queensland researchers at Mater Hospital Brisbane are trialling a new Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV) vaccine that could deliver single dose protection and reduce hospitalisation rates of premature babies.

RSV is one of the most common reasons for hospital admission in infants under the age of one and causes severe infections of the lungs and respiratory tract.

Mater Director of Neonatology Dr Pita Birch said the trial vaccine—if successful—would better protect babies against developing RSV infection and would reduce hospitalisations, intensive care admissions and deaths.

Mater Research Lead Clinical Research Coordinator Stephanie Guilas said preterm babies currently required up to four RSV vaccinations in the first months of the winter season.



Image Gold Coast mother Jennifer Hockings with twins Adeline and Audrey, who are participating in the RSV clinical trials.

Mater launches trial of Australian-first flu vaccine

An Australian-first vaccine trial is underway at Mater and could spell the end of yearly flu jabs.

The universal flu vaccine OVX836 targets virus proteins that are less susceptible to mutations—meaning one dose could protect recipients for years at a time.

Dr Paul Griffin, Mater Director of Infectious Diseases, is the Coordinating Principal Investigator and said the trial—if successful—could be a real game changer.

OVX836 is designed to target the internal nucleoprotein—a highly conserved antigen—that is more conservative and far less susceptible to mutations.

Our Mater Network

Operating the largest not-for-profit network of public and private hospital and healthcare services in the state, Mater brings together collective expertise across health, education, and research, with a shared vision of empowering people to live better lives through improved health and wellbeing.

Mater Health comprises all our hospitals and healthcare services across Queensland. These services combine to help Mater offer comprehensive healthcare which meets identified community need.

Mater Education is a nationally accredited, hospital-based independent Registered Training Organisation—the only one of its kind in Queensland. It offers a range of courses for students, through to highly experienced practising clinicians.

Mater Research is an internationally recognised leader in medical research, which connects its findings from bench to bedside—translating medical research into clinical practice to deliver better outcomes for our patients and the wider community.

Mater Foundation raises funds by engaging people and businesses to partner with Mater to improve health through a wide range of fundraising and philanthropy.



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