

primary focus

**North Queensland's
growing paediatric
specialist hub**

page 9

A photograph of a smiling couple holding their newborn baby. The woman is on the left, wearing a black top, and the man is on the right, wearing a white polo shirt. The baby is in the center, wrapped in a light blue blanket. The background is a plain, light-colored wall.

what's inside

- + New specialists accepting referrals
- + Tips on managing complex adolescent health needs
- + Improving outcomes for women with diabetes in pregnancy

In this issue

04

Upcoming
GP Education events

05

Meet our new
specialists

06

A new era in healthcare
for the Gold Coast

07

Bridging the gap for young
adults with chronic illness

09

North Queensland's
growing paediatric hub

10

Surgical capacity expands
at South Brisbane

13

Cancer care services
in Redland

14

Foot and ankle orthopaedic
expertise in Rockhampton

15

Supporting shared
palliative care in Mackay



Diabetes management—what GPs should know

This sMater episode explores the latest developments in diabetes care, including screening and prevention strategies, emerging therapies and managing diabetic kidney disease.

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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Strengthening our care and *partnerships*

We are now in the second half of a defining year for Mater. For the GPs who partner with us, it means more capacity, more specialists and more options for patients across Queensland.

Last month, Mater acquired Gold Coast Private Hospital, now officially Mater Private Hospital Gold Coast, adding 339 beds and 12 operating theatres to our network.

For referring GPs on the Gold Coast, it is very much business as usual—but now backed by Queensland's largest not-for-profit hospital network. Your patients will continue to see the specialists they know and trust while benefiting from Mater's scale, clinical expertise and commitment to service.

Over time, you will see expanded services and greater specialist choice, and we will keep you informed at every step.

Mater Private Hospital Gold Coast is the 13th hospital in our network, joining us only months after the opening of Mater Hospital Springfield. For GPs in the western corridor, Springfield is already making it easier for patients to access private specialist care close to home.

Across the state, Mater's investment in healthcare infrastructure continues to expand referral pathways and capacity. New maternity and renal units are now open at Mater Private Hospital Townsville. This month, three new operating theatres open at Mater Private Hospital Brisbane through our Priority Pathways Program, helping reduce surgical wait times. In Bundaberg, six additional beds, due to open in late 2026, will further increase access to care across the Wide Bay region.

Referring to Mater also connects patients to Mater Research, where clinical trials and breakthroughs are translated into everyday care. Through our renewed research strategy, we are exploring new ways to extend the benefits of research across our private hospital network.

Thank you for your partnership. Together, we are improving health outcomes for our communities, with a commitment to compassionate care, timely communication, and supporting patients' return to your care. If you would like to connect with a specialist, tour a facility or meet our GP liaison team, we would love to hear from you.



Julia Strickland-Bellamy



Every breakthrough in medicine starts with research, and research needs the support of generous donors to make it possible.

Thanks to Mater Foundation supporters, patients like Jan can access life-changing clinical trials that not only offer hope today but help shape the treatments of tomorrow.

When Jan Mundt was diagnosed with stage four lung cancer in 2018, she feared she would miss watching her young grandson grow up. Referred to Mater Hospital Brisbane, Jan enrolled in a Mater Research clinical trial led by Dr Vikram Jain, testing a pioneering combination of immunotherapy and chemotherapy for advanced lung cancer.

More than seven years later, Jan has celebrated family milestones she once feared she would never see, including walking her grandson through the school gates on his first day of Prep and welcoming a second grandson.

The treatment she received through the trial has since become a standard treatment on the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS), helping more Australians access the same therapy.

"Lung cancer treatment has come a long way in the last six years, and much of that is down to the success of clinical trials and the participation of patients like Jan," Dr Jain said.

Mater Research is currently conducting more than 200 clinical trials across cancer, neuroscience, women's and babies' health and other specialties, helping bring promising new treatments to patients while generating the evidence needed to improve healthcare. Clinicians interested in exploring current studies or referral opportunities can

view Mater's active clinical trials at materresearch.org.au/clinical-trials/mater-clinical-trials.

This vital work is supported by the generosity of Mater Foundation donors, whose philanthropy helps advance medical research and expand access to innovative clinical trials that have the potential to transform patient care.



Upcoming GP Education *events*



Navigating breast cancer care

Wednesday 21 October

Statewide online webinar



GP Maternity Shared Care Alignment—Seminar 1

For GPs wanting to provide shared maternity care with Mater Mothers' Hospital. Learn current best practice maternity care from Mater Mothers' specialists in obstetrics, midwifery, obstetric medicine, maternal fetal medicine, pharmacology and physiotherapy.

Brisbane

Date: Saturday 29 August

Time: 8am–1pm

Venue: Corbett Room, Level 1, Whitty Building, Annerley Road, South Brisbane

CPD: Self-record via RACGP App



Evolving guidelines in general practice: Update on bone health, Type 2 diabetes and recurrent chest pain

Springfield

Date: Thursday 20 August

Time: 6pm–8:30pm

Venue: Brookwater Golf and Country Club, 1 Tournament Drive, Brookwater

CPD: Self-record via RACGP App



General medicine update

Redland

Date: Wednesday 14 October

Time: 6pm–8:30pm

Venue: Wellington Point Farmhouse Restaurant and Cafe, 625 Main Road, Wellington Point

CPD: Self-record via RACGP App



2026 Central Queensland GP Conference

Rockhampton

Date: Saturday 22 August–
Sunday 23 August

Venue: Rockhampton Leagues Club, Cambridge Street, Rockhampton

CPD: Self-record via RACGP App



Introduction to Young Adult Health workshop

Brisbane

Date: Friday 23 October

Time: 8am–4pm

Venue: The Dome, Level 4 Salmon Building, Raymond Terrace, South Brisbane

CPD: Self-record via RACGP App

More information: 1300 070 350

GP Pulse

What was your greatest challenge when you joined a new practice?

For me, it was rebuilding my referral pathways after moving to Brisbane from Mackay, where I had practised for almost 10 years. Despite being an experienced GP, I suddenly found myself navigating an unfamiliar healthcare landscape—learning local hospital services, outpatient pathways and specialist networks.

That experience led my team to develop a practical resource for new GPs joining our practices, with information on hospitals, outpatient services, specialists, radiology providers and other key community resources, and most recently, mental health crisis services.

Even now, I often reach out to colleagues for advice. General practice can feel isolating at times, but one of our profession's greatest strengths is the willingness of colleagues to share their knowledge and experience.

Co-hosting the sMater podcast has also expanded my professional network—connecting with specialists, understanding their expertise and gaining insights that ultimately benefit patients. If there is a specialist or topic you would like featured, we would love to hear it—email us at comms@mater.org.au

So, how do you build your professional network? Is it through conferences, meetings, podcasts, or perhaps you invite colleagues to present education sessions in your practice?

Looking back, working alongside specialists during my GP training helped me understand their expertise and foster strong professional relationships. Building those connections takes time, but they are invaluable—both for us as clinicians and for the patients we care for.



Dr Maria Boulton

Meet our new *specialists*

📍 South Brisbane



Dr Petrina Duncan
Obstetrics and
Gynaecology

07 3543 6111



Dr Robert Gilmore
Gastroenterology

07 3010 5788



Dr Elizabeth Goode
Gastroenterology
and Hepatology

07 3163 7820



Prof Ashish Gupta
Orthopaedic
Surgery: Shoulder

07 3208 5552



Dr Georgina Hodges
Haematology

07 3737 4700

📍 Rockhampton



**Dr Prathyusha
(Prath) Nakka**
Breast, Endocrine
and General Surgery

07 3010 5788



Dr Ellie van der List
Gastroenterology
and Hepatology

07 3030 5788



Dr Shashank Desai
General Surgery

07 4922 8426



Dr Brett Travers
Neurology

07 3107 4830



Dr Ruth Varrall
Orthopaedic Surgery:
Foot and Ankle

07 4801 4321

📍 Redland



**Dr Prathyusha
(Prath) Nakka**
Breast, Endocrine
and General Surgery

07 3010 5788



Dr Daniel MG Winson
Orthopaedic Surgery:
Foot and Ankle

07 3050 3333



Dr Hany Ibrahim
General Surgery

07 3107 4888



Dr David Lan
Breast and
Endocrine Surgery

07 3199 3286



**Dr Jeewaka
Wickramasinghe**
Gynaecology

07 4863 2001

📍 Springfield

📍 Mackay

📍 Townsville



Dr Simon Arnett
Neurology

07 4725 0042



Dr Ela Hyland
Paediatric Surgery

07 4426 2896



Dr Trupti Jadhav
Paediatric Neurology

1300 894 684



Dr Yasaman Samadi
Rheumatology

07 4728 8288



Dr Berna Venter
Obstetrics and
Gynaecology

0476 980 271



**Specialist expertise,
delivered to you.**

Bring Mater specialists and tailored clinical education
to your practice. Contact our GP liaison team.

A new era in healthcare for the Gold Coast

The first baby arrives at Mater Private Hospital Gold Coast: Newborn Dusty, with mum Ali Mulligan and sister Nellia

The Gold Coast healthcare landscape has entered an exciting new era with the transition of Gold Coast Private Hospital to Mater Private Hospital Gold Coast on 1 August.

For GPs across the region, Mater's acquisition of the former Healthscope facility at Southport will provide access to expanded healthcare services for patients—close to home.

The hospital's specialists are continuing to practice at Mater and existing referral pathways remain the same.

But Mater Private Hospital Gold Coast will bring enhanced access to leading specialist expertise across a range of fields, including complex maternity and neonatal care.

Mater Mothers' Hospitals at South Brisbane is the centre of Australia's largest maternity service, with one in every five Queensland babies born at a Mater hospital each year.

The renowned Mater Mothers' Centre for Maternal Fetal Medicine is a national leader in the management of high-risk pregnancies and the only centre in Australia and New Zealand to provide in utero surgery for spina bifida repair.

Its Fetal Growth Clinic, which provides intensive monitoring and support for the smallest 10 per cent of unborn babies, has achieved impressive results in reducing stillbirth rates and improving neonatal outcomes.

Mater Private Hospital Gold Coast and Grace Private, the Gold Coast's largest and most experienced private maternity and women's health team, is now an integral part of our maternity network—and we're looking forward to welcoming a new generation of Mater babies at our new Southport home.

Research and innovation to improve patient care is also at the heart of Mater.

Mater Research—one of a select group of hospital-embedded research institutes in Australia—will provide patients and clinicians with access to clinical trials of new treatments and therapies, with a special focus on cancer care.

As Queensland's largest not-for-profit network of hospitals and healthcare services, Mater is not driven by profits—but by its Mission to address unmet healthcare needs in the community.

Mater Foundation plays a vital role in that Mission, ensuring that our partnerships and community support deliver life-changing investments in research, services and equipment.

Working with the exceptional specialists and staff at Mater Private Hospital Gold Coast, we are certain Mater will make a difference to the health and wellbeing of Queensland's second city.

GP contact

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GP Liaison Manager

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 narelle.morrison@mater.org.au

Bridging the care gap for young adults with chronic illness

For many young people with chronic illness, the transition from paediatric to adult healthcare can be challenging.

During this period, some may disengage from care, experience declining health outcomes, develop mental health concerns, or struggle to participate in education, employment and daily life.

Mater's Young Adult Health Centre is a specialised service for young people aged 16–25 years whose chronic health conditions are affecting their wellbeing, functioning or engagement with healthcare.

Professor Simon Denny, Director of Mater Young Adult Health Centre, says successful transition requires more than good planning.

"Even the best transition planning won't succeed if the adult system isn't ready for young people," said Professor Denny.

The growing recognition of adolescents and young adults as a distinct patient group is reflected in the Royal Australasian College of Physicians' Position Statement on Youth Appropriate Care and the Adolescent and Young Adult Medicine Advanced Training Curriculum, both led by Professor Denny.

These initiatives highlight the importance of developmentally appropriate care, psychosocial assessment and coordinated support for young people with complex health needs.

GP tips for youth-focused care

When supporting adolescents and young adults with chronic illness:

- Spend part of each consultation with the young person independently to build trust and support their growing autonomy.
- Use psychosocial assessment tools such as the HEEADSSS framework.
- Be alert to declining school or work attendance, missed appointments, reduced functioning or social withdrawal.
- Consider the broader context of a young person's life, including mental health, education, relationships and social circumstances.
- Refer early when medical, mental health and social needs intersect to help prevent disengagement and improve long-term outcomes.

Refer to Mater Young Adult Health Centre

Specialist support for complex health needs

As one of only a few dedicated adolescent and young adult medicine services in Australasia, Mater Young Adult Health Centre bridges the gap between paediatric and adult healthcare through coordinated, developmentally appropriate care.

Multidisciplinary care includes:

- Diabetes
- Gastroenterology
- Cardiology
- Rheumatology
- Mental health and psychosocial support.

Telehealth available for patients outside South East Queensland

Enquiries: 07 3163 8111

Appointments: 07 3163 3000



The team at Mater's Young Adult Support Unit supports teens and young adults with complex medical conditions to thrive

Australian-first model improves outcomes for women with diabetes in pregnancy

Research embedded in clinical care is improving pregnancy, birth and neonatal outcomes.

For women with pre-existing Type 1 or Type 2 diabetes, pregnancy carries increased risks for both mother and baby, including prematurity, neonatal complications and higher rates of intervention. New Mater research shows a continuity-of-care model combining specialist obstetric medicine with dedicated midwifery support significantly improves outcomes while enhancing the patient experience.

Published in the Australian and New Zealand Journal of Obstetrics and Gynaecology, the study evaluated Mater Mothers' Hospital's Obstetric Medicine Midwifery Group Practice (OMGP)—an Australian-first model providing women with access to specialist obstetric medicine care, together with the continuity of a known midwife throughout the pregnancy, birth and the postnatal period.

Led by Associate Professor Shelley Wilkinson and Associate Professor Jo Laurie, the research compared women with pre-existing diabetes receiving standard care with those enrolled in the OMGP model.

A/Prof Wilkinson said the model addresses a common challenge in complex maternity care.

"Traditional hospital care often involves multiple clinicians, which can lead to fragmented communication and leave women feeling less involved in decisions about their care. Our model was designed to keep the woman at the centre of her care team while maintaining access to specialist clinical expertise."

Springfield mother Nicole Lloyd, who lives with Type 1 diabetes, received care through the OMGP model across two pregnancies and said having a dedicated midwife who understood her medical history and birth preferences made her feel supported and empowered throughout her care journey.

Women in the program reported greater trust in their care team and felt more supported and seen throughout their pregnancy and birth.

Mater is now exploring opportunities to adapt the model for women with other chronic and complex health conditions, supporting its commitment to translating research into improved clinical care.

? How to refer

Refer to the Mater Mothers' Hospital Antenatal Clinic, noting participation in the OMGP program.

☎ 07 3163 1968

Significant improvements in neonatal and postnatal outcomes were found



Improved neonatal outcomes

0% small-for-gestational-age infants vs 10.7% with standard care



Better preparation for feeding

76.3% antenatal colostrum expressing vs 33.9% with standard care



Higher breastfeeding rates

71.1% exclusively breastfeeding at discharge vs 58.9% with standard care



Greater patient understanding

86.4% said induction decisions were clearly explained vs 41.2% with standard care



Enhanced postnatal support

100% received dedicated postnatal care at home

Giving Queensland's *tinkest twins* a fighting chance

Diagnosed with twin-to-twin transfusion syndrome (TTTS) at 16 weeks' gestation, identical twins Ivy and Lily Hutchinson faced significant odds before birth.

TTTS occurs when twins sharing a placenta experience unequal blood flow, causing one baby to receive too much blood and the other too little. Without specialist assessment and intervention, the condition can be life-threatening.

As her pregnancy progressed, mum Jenna was closely monitored by Mater Mothers' Hospital's fetal medicine service.

"I was being monitored twice a week and every time I went back it was getting worse and worse," she said.

At 22 weeks, doctors attempted fetal surgery to address the condition, but the twins' umbilical cords were so entangled that the procedure could not be performed safely. Two weeks later, Jenna went into preterm labour and required an emergency caesarean section.



Ivy in hospital shortly after she was born

Born at just 24 weeks and weighing less than 500 grams each, Lily and Ivy were immediately admitted to Mater Mothers' Neonatal Critical Care Unit (NCCU). Despite their extreme prematurity, both babies cried at birth and, remarkably, did not require immediate resuscitation.

The twins spent more than 100 days in NCCU where they received highly specialised neonatal care, with Ivy critically unwell in the early days after birth and Lily later requiring resuscitation following a serious viral infection.

Now 18 months old, Lily and Ivy are thriving toddlers, weighing more than 20 times their birth weight.

Mater Mothers' Hospital's integrated fetal medicine, obstetric and neonatal services provide coordinated care for Queensland's highest-risk pregnancies, helping to optimise outcomes for mothers and babies when every week of gestation counts.



Twins Lily Belle and Ivy Grace Hutchinson are thriving after more than 100 days in Mater Mothers' Neonatal Critical Care Unit

Growing a paediatric *hub* in North Queensland

Mater Private Hospital Townsville is expanding access to specialist paediatric care, with new subspecialists joining the hospital to help meet growing demand across North Queensland.

Acting General Manager Anna Olson said the appointments further strengthen Townsville's role as a growing regional hub for specialist paediatric services.

"We are delighted to welcome new specialists in paediatric cardiology, gastroenterology, general surgery, neurology and rheumatology, complementing our established team and expanding access to care closer to home for families.

The expanded service aims to reduce the need for families from Townsville, Mackay, Cairns and surrounding communities to

travel long distances for consultations and ongoing care," Ms Olson said.

Mater is also enhancing its maternity offering through the new Bundle of Joy package at Mater Mothers' Private Townsville.

The optional package provides families with additional clinical and practical support, including a private lactation consultation, pre and post-birth women's health sessions, partner meals and parking vouchers.

Mater Mothers' Private Townsville Midwifery Unit Manager Rebekah Barrie said the package builds on positive feedback received since the maternity unit relocated to its purpose-built facility in February, where it has welcomed more than 260 babies.

"Bundle of Joy is designed to make the maternity journey easier for families, with practical benefits and additional clinical support from admission to discharge," Ms Barrie said.

Meet our paediatric specialists

Now welcoming referrals:

A/Prof Dan Carroll
Paediatric Surgeon 07 4727 4020

Dr Ela Hyland
Paediatric Surgeon 07 4426 2896

Dr Trupti Jadhav
Paediatric Neurologist 1300 894 684

Dr Mangesh Jadhav
Paediatric Cardiologist 07 4427 5817

Dr Janani Krishnan
Paediatric Surgeon 07 4427 5817

Dr Courtney Samuel
Paediatric Rheumatologist 07 4426 2896

Dr Rosh Samuel
Paediatric Cardiologist 07 4426 2896

Surgical capacity expands at *South Brisbane*

Mater Private Hospital Brisbane has expanded its surgical and procedural capacity with three new operating theatres now open and two additional endoscopy suites, online by September.

The expansion represents the final stage of Mater's \$70 million investment in upgraded infrastructure and services for South Brisbane, enhancing access to surgery and specialist care for patients across South East Queensland.

The new semi-digital operating theatres feature advanced Stryker I-Suite technology and can accommodate all surgical specialties, increasing the hospital's total number of theatres to 17.

Mater Private Hospital Brisbane General Manager Tracey Hutley said the expansion would provide greater access to care for both specialists and patients.

"We are thrilled to welcome new specialists to the Mater team, expanding the range of procedures we can perform and enabling us to treat more patients while reducing wait times for the community," said Ms Hutley.

The additional capacity will support growth in general and orthopaedic surgery, as well as increased activity across urology, gynaecology and plastic surgery.

Orthopaedic surgeon Dr Stephen Torbey said the expansion supports a growing demand for orthopaedic surgical services.

"Additional theatre capacity allows us to treat patients sooner—for orthopaedic patients earlier access to surgery can make a significant difference to mobility, function, and quality of life," he said.

The new endoscopy suites will support endoscopy and colonoscopy procedures, as well as urology, respiratory and specialised interventional services including ERCP, EUS and EBUS. The suites are equipped with AI-guided technology to enhance the detection of polyps and lesions and will support the growing demand for procedures.

Opened in 2025



New Coronary Care Unit



New Cardiovascular Unit



New Intensive Care Unit and new premium suites

Opened in 2026



New operating theatres



New endoscopy suites



Dr Stephen Torbey with the perioperative team at Mater Private Hospital Brisbane

eConsultant connects GPs and specialists to enhance *rural healthcare*



Roma patient Ivy Bowen with her GP, Dr Rosemary Geraghty from Maranoa Medical Centre

How Mater Queensland eConsultant works



Mrs Bowen said the service had saved significant travel time and provided rapid access to specialist advice.

"It's been a wonderful thing for me because it saved me all that time travelling to Brisbane, which is very difficult at my age, and we got the results back in less than two days," she said.

According to Prof McIntyre, the service supports GPs to deliver high-quality care locally while maintaining access to specialist expertise when needed.

"In our experience, GPs are very skilled in deciding which patients and conditions can be effectively managed via the eConsultant program," he said.

"Patients who need in-person consultations still receive them, but in most cases Mater specialists are able to provide GPs with guidance that enables patients to be treated locally."

To access the service, Queensland GPs can submit a secure request for specialist advice through the Consultmed platform.

Rural and regional Queensland patients are gaining faster access to specialist expertise through Mater Queensland eConsultant—an Australian-first initiative helping GPs manage more complex cases locally and reducing the need for patients to travel long distances for specialist appointments.

Funded by the Queensland Government and delivered by Mater, the service enables Queensland GPs to securely seek advice from Mater specialists through the Consultmed platform.

Since launching in October 2025, more than 1,048 patients have benefited from the service via 278 GPs across the state, with specialist responses typically provided within one business day.

Importantly, 90 per cent of patients using the service have avoided the need for a face-to-face specialist consultation, allowing care to remain closer to home while ensuring those who require specialist review are referred appropriately.

The impact is already being felt in communities such as Roma, where 99-year-old Ivy Bowen previously faced an 11-hour round trip to Brisbane for specialist diabetes care. Instead, her GP, Dr Rosemary Geraghty, sought advice through eConsultant and received guidance from Mater endocrinologist and clinical lead Emeritus Professor David McIntyre.

"I was given extremely good advice on how to manage Ivy's difficult-to-control diabetes and changed her medication as a result," Dr Geraghty said.

"This has led to reduced episodes of low and high blood sugar levels, which can be extremely dangerous for someone of Ivy's age."

eConsultant specialties

- Adolescent and Young Adult Medicine
- Cardiology
- Dermatology (Adult and Paediatric)
- Endocrinology
- Geriatric Medicine
- Haematology
- Immunology
- Infectious Diseases
- Nephrology
- Neurology
- Obstetric Medicine
- Paediatric General Surgery and Urology
- Rheumatology
- Respiratory and Sleep Medicine

Springfield's first 100 days: easing pressure on hospital and health services

Assistant in Nursing Jade Grant (left), Dr Rebecca Huey and Dr Ari Miramo outside the new Mater Hospital Springfield emergency department

Mater Hospital Springfield has been fully operational for several months now and is easing pressure on neighbouring hospitals in the West Moreton and Metro South catchments.

Since its maternity ward opened on 11 May, the facility has delivered more than 205 babies and seen more than 1,084 Pregnancy Assessment Centre presentations.

Mater Hospital Springfield Deputy Director of Obstetrics and Gynaecology, Dr Alison McDougall, said the services were made possible thanks to the ongoing collaboration with the local medical community.

"Mater Mothers' Springfield was fortunate to open with GP Shared Care already embedded as a model of care, with so many of our local GPs aligned to deliver this service in partnership with Mater," Dr McDougall said.

"We've had more than 34 babies delivered through the GP Shared Care model to date—a model that we know mothers really appreciate, with the full-circle support of their GPs as their primary healthcare provider."

The Springfield Emergency Department was the final service on site to open on 25 May—and has already seen more than 7,000 patients, with an average of 115 presentations to the department daily.

Mater Hospital Springfield General Manager Suzanne Hawksley said it was fantastic to see the full-circle care available for both private and public patients in Greater Springfield.

"Our local residents are now able to access more care closer to home—from emergency department presentation through to admission, treatment, rehabilitation and discharge," Ms Hawksley said.

"Our outpatient clinics currently cover five specialty areas, with local patients likely to be referred to Mater Hospital Springfield for general surgery, ophthalmology, gastroenterology, orthopaedics and gynaecology outpatient clinics and procedures.

"Mater Hospital Springfield is not listed for direct referral—however we encourage GPs to continue using Smart Referrals within HealthPathways and selecting the closest public provider to your patient's home address. Any patients who are clinically appropriate will be referred to our Springfield facility."

With public services now fully operational, works are continuing to refurbish Mater Private Hospital Springfield, which first opened in 2015.

"Our existing four theatres are undergoing upgrade works to ensure that all ten operating theatres on site will have access to the same technology and resources," Ms Hawksley said. "From September we expect to have more procedural capacity than ever before."

Continuity of cancer care in *Redland*

When 47-year-old Redlands mother Sheridan Dodson underwent a colonoscopy to investigate persistent abdominal pain and changes in her bowel habits, she expected the cause might be reflux or irritable bowel syndrome.

Instead, she received a diagnosis that is becoming increasingly familiar to clinicians—bowel cancer in a younger adult.

A large bowel tumour was identified during her procedure, requiring specialist assessment and colorectal surgery at Mater Private Hospital Brisbane. Post-operative pathology confirmed lymph node involvement, and Sheridan subsequently underwent six months of adjuvant chemotherapy.

While her surgery was performed at Mater in South Brisbane, Sheridan was able to continue her treatment closer to home through Mater Cancer Care Centre Redland under the care of medical oncologist Dr Vikram Jain.

Mater Cancer Care Centre Redland Nurse Unit Manager Keila Slater said the ability to access treatment locally can make a significant difference for patients and their families.



Sheridan Dodson with Mater Cancer Care Centre Redland Nurse Unit Manager Keila Slater

"Cancer treatment often involves regular appointments over many months. Accessing chemotherapy, specialist reviews and supportive care locally can reduce the burden of travel and help patients maintain connections with family, work and their support networks," Ms Slater said.

Mater's integrated cancer network enables patients to access complex surgery and multidisciplinary expertise in South Brisbane before transitioning to their local care team for chemotherapy, specialist follow-up and ongoing management.

Mater Cancer Care Centre Redland provides:

- Medical oncology and chemotherapy services
- Cancer care coordination
- Breast cancer specialist services
- Surgical and inpatient care
- Palliative care
- Nine treatment pods, including scalp-cooling technology
- Allied health services including physiotherapy, dietetics, occupational therapy and psychology
- Pastoral care and community support programs.



How to refer



Dr Vikram Jain
Medical Oncologist

(07) 3411 8559

(07) 3521 5959



Dr Paul Kalokerinos
Medical Oncologist

(07) 3153 1800

(07) 3153 1899

admin@neocancercare.com.au

First Aid for Babies, now in *Bundaberg* and online

Mater Education's First Aid for Babies course is now available in Bundaberg and online, so more families can access specialist infant first aid training.

Designed for parents, grandparents, expectant parents and other caregivers, the course builds confidence and practical skills to respond to common emergencies involving babies and young children.

Delivered through Mater Mothers' Hospital for more than a decade, the program has supported thousands of Queensland families to prepare for emergencies at home and in the community. Following

successful expansion to Townsville and Rockhampton, the Bundaberg course and virtual option makes evidence-based training more accessible.

Mater Education Lead Educator Peta Sullivan said the expansion addresses a key gap for regional families.

"This is a fantastic opportunity for families in Wide Bay, particularly new parents who may have previously needed to travel for similar training," Ms Sullivan said.

"This training can ultimately save lives, and we're pleased to now offer the program through our education hub at Mater Private Hospital Bundaberg."

Who to refer

- Patients expecting a baby
- New parents
- Grandparents/carers providing regular infant and toddler care.

Course features

- Evidence-based infant first aid training
- Delivered by Mater Education clinicians
- Covers infant CPR, choking, breathing emergencies and injury management
- Hands-on practical learning
- Available in Bundaberg and online.

Specialist foot and ankle care now at Mater Rockhampton



Mater Private Hospital Rockhampton has welcomed orthopaedic surgeon Dr Ruth Varrall to its team, providing sub-specialist expertise for complex foot and ankle conditions.

While Dr Varrall is new to Mater, she is no stranger to the region, having held a consultant role at Rockhampton Base Hospital and the position of Clinical Director of Orthopaedics since 2022.

She is the only fellowship-trained foot and ankle specialist between Bundaberg and Townsville, and treats a broad range of conditions, including foot and ankle arthritis, bunions, arch deformities, Achilles tendinopathy and complex reconstructive cases. She says many patients are surprised to learn that treatment options exist for conditions they have been told they simply need to live with.

"There are often more treatment options available than people realise. Chronic foot pain can have a major impact on mobility, quality of life and mental health, so I absolutely encourage GPs to refer for specialist opinion, as often there is a surgical solution."

GPs are also encouraged to request weight-bearing x-rays before referral.

"A non-weight-bearing x-ray is of limited value," said Dr Varrall. "I need to see what the foot does when the patient is standing, as deformity and arthritis can be significantly underestimated otherwise."

Dr Varrall works closely with podiatry to ensure patients receive personalised, evidence-based care before and after surgery, particularly with custom orthotics which make a significant difference for patients and provide support for the foot following reconstructive surgery.

? How to refer

Dr Ruth Varrall

(07) 4801 4321

(07) 3521 5959

admin@rockyfoot.com

Mater Bundaberg celebrates 80 years

Mater Private Hospital Bundaberg is marking 80 years of service to the Wide Bay community and continuing to expand local healthcare capacity for patients across the region.

Construction is now underway on a hospital expansion that will deliver six additional inpatient beds and a new staff station, with completion expected in late 2026.

The project follows more than \$4 million in recent infrastructure upgrades and reflects Mater's ongoing investment in healthcare services closer to home.

Since opening on 28 July 1946, Mater Bundaberg has grown from a hospital established by the Sisters of Mercy into a modern private facility with 59 beds and three operating theatres, providing specialist and surgical services as part of Mater's statewide health network.



Mater Private Hospital Bundaberg in 1946

The milestone is particularly meaningful for Sister Anne Slattery, whose connection with the hospital spans almost six decades. Beginning as a general nurse in 1967, she later served as a theatre nurse, Director of Nursing and Chief Executive Officer.

Reflecting on the anniversary, Sister Anne said she was proud to see the hospital continue to evolve while remaining true to the compassionate, patient-centred values that have guided its care for generations.



Nurse Unit Manager Georgia Strydom with patient

Mater *Mackay* partnering in palliative care

Many GPs value the opportunity to remain involved in their patient's care throughout a life-limiting illness. At Mater Private Hospital Mackay, credentialed GPs can continue caring for their patients during admission to the hospital's nine-bed specialist palliative care unit, helping maintain continuity of care and a trusted relationship.

"GPs play an important role in the ongoing care of patients with serious illness," said Mater Private Hospital Mackay General Manager Karen Wade.

"Our palliative care service enables credentialed GPs to remain actively involved in their patients' care during admission, working alongside a multidisciplinary team to support patients and their families."

The specialist palliative care team focuses on symptom management, comfort and quality of life, providing holistic care that addresses patients' clinical, psychosocial and supportive care needs.

The unit includes private patient rooms, a dedicated family lounge, kitchen facilities and outdoor spaces designed to support patients and their loved ones during their stay.

Mater welcomes expressions of interest from GPs seeking credentialing opportunities or looking to expand their involvement in palliative care.

For more information

 (07) 4965 5666

 mackay.stcatherineward@mater.org.au

As a credentialed GP, you can:



Continue managing your patients throughout their admission



Directly admit patients to Mater Private Hospital Mackay



Collaborate with the multidisciplinary palliative care team



Support continuity of care for patients and their families

Choose **Mater Emergency**



South Brisbane
Rockhampton
Mackay
Townsville
Gold Coast



Open 7 days
365 days a year



Minimal wait time
No referral needed



Onsite medical imaging
and pathology



Specialist
treatment or referral

There is an upfront fee for private emergency presentations.

Our Mater network

Operating the largest for-purpose network of public and private hospital and healthcare services in the state, Mater brings together collective expertise across health, education, and research—supported by Foundation—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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