RDH and Katherine Hospital ED upgrades

Work is underway on a $2.8 million upgrade of Royal Darwin Hospital’s Emergency Department (ED).

The works include two new paediatrics beds, an expanded Fast-Track Area, new look Triage and Reception desks as well as three new Clinical Initiatives Nursing beds.

The extra paediatrics beds will bring the total number of beds dedicated to the emergency care of children to five, while the larger Fast-Track Area will improve access to care for people who don’t require admission to hospital.

Spotlight on mental illness at CDN Conference

Out of the shadows into the spotlight was the theme of Darwin’s 15th annual Chronic Disease Network Conference which focussed on the management and prevention of mental illness as a chronic disease.

The conference provided two days of presentations, panel discussions, workshops and exhibitions with a strong focus on Northern Territory-based initiatives.

Representatives from Vision in Mind, Beyond Blue and the ABC participated in this year’s discussion panel. The discussion focused on the role of the media in fostering community understanding of mental health issues, and the need to further de-stigmatise people experiencing mental illness.

Work has been completed on Katherine Hospital’s $755,000 ED upgrade, including the installation of cameras in its resuscitation bays. The cameras provide fast, high resolution links to the full range of specialist physicians at Royal Darwin Hospital.

The ED’s assessment capacity has been doubled, with the addition of three extra cubicles, while the capacity of the “Flight Deck” has also doubled, with four designated work stations now available for doctors and nurses.

Installation points for gases, suction and monitoring equipment upgraded and new flooring, cupboards,
benches and curtains also installed. The upgrades are part of the Federal Government’s National Health Reform process designed to ease pressure and cut waiting times at busy emergency departments.

**Trauma Centre supports Tour de Timor**

Members of the National Critical Care and Trauma Response Centre based at Royal Darwin Hospital traveled to East Timor recently to provide medical assistance to the 450 riders taking part in this year’s Tour de Timor mountain bike race.

![NCCTRC medical tent at Manatuto on East Timor’s north coast.](image)

The NCCTRC doctors and nurses followed competitors over six days across 600km of rugged and sometimes mountainous terrain.

The 18-member team set up a field hospital at each of the five districts in Timor-Leste to provide assistance to riders suffering from heat-related illness, wounds and grazes. The NCCTRC also helped stock local hospitals and clinics, donating crates of medical supplies along the tour route, including $10,000 worth of equipment and goods to Dili National Hospital.

This is the first time a formal medical team has been invited to the tour, which came at the request of Timor-Leste’s President, His Excellency Dr Jose Ramos-Horta.

**Other category winners were:**

- Laurie Barrand and Nicola Eaton NT Bowel Cancer Screening, Chronic Disease Health Promotion/Program Delivery Award
- Jason Bonson Health Development and Carolyn Griffin Menzies School of Health, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health and Leadership Award
- Robbie Corrie Senior Aboriginal Mental Health Worker Cowdy Ward, RDH Conference Theme Award

**Palmerston Hospital Community Survey**

Residents of Palmerston and the rural area have had their first say on the development of their new $110-million hospital.

The Palmerston Hospital Survey held during September was an opportunity for residents to give input on the design, service plan, location and naming of the 60-bed facility.

The hospital will include an emergency room and in-patient beds as well as a range of specialist services.

Health Minister Kon Vatskalis launched the survey at the Palmerston GP Super Clinic, explaining the vital importance of community input on what will be the biggest health project undertaken in the Territory in recent history.

**Nguiu health bush camps**

This year, the Wangatunga Ngariwanajirri (Strong Women Elders) of Nguiu on Bathurst Island worked with CanNET NT to design three days of cancer education at the Carers NT Bush Camps.

The Bush Camps were an opportunity for young women aged between 16 and 35 to break away from the demands of community life and reconnect with land and culture.

As survivors of cancer, the Strong Women feel a responsibility to educate younger women and work in partnership with health professionals.

Over the three days of cancer education more than 20 young women visited the Bush Camps for targeted sessions with the Strong Women and health professionals.

**DonateLife NT Indigenous Education Tools launch**

A suite of educational resources has been developed by nominations from around Australia.
DonateLife NT to help improve awareness and understanding of organ and tissue donation amongst Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians.

Health Minister Kon Vatskalis with the team from DonateLife NT and other collaborators on resources at the launch of the Indigenous Education Tools.

The team, headed by Associate Professor Dianne Stephens, developed the education tools over two years, in consultation with researchers, educators and Aboriginal communities in the Northern Territory.

The resources are made up of an 18-minute documentary showing the stories of three kidney transplant recipients as well as flip books and posters which explain brain injury, organ donation and transplantation in a culturally accessible way.

Sexual health, HPV Vaccines and Alcohol and other Drugs were topics of interest for the young women who joined in conversations and activities.

The young girls work as a team on a nutrition awareness game called “Fridge or Bin”, a race between two teams to categorise foods and cooking styles.