



### Queen Elizabeth II Family Centre now operating at full capacity



On Friday 2<sup>nd</sup> October 2015, Minister for Health Simon Corbell officially opened six new beds at the QEII Family Centre, meaning that we are now operating at full capacity.

This expansion of our service means that we can now receive up to 500 extra admissions per year, which is an increase of more than 30 percent. The funding has provided an extra 5.4 full-time equivalent staff.

“We will now be able to respond in a really timely way to families in Canberra and the surrounding region to provide the service,” said Mary Kirk, Director of Nursing and Executive Officer at QE II.

This live-in service helps families and babies with anything from breastfeeding to settling and ensuring the child thrives and the family unit remains strong during a stressful time.

### From the President and Executive Officer

As we experience the warm weather, we can't help but revel in joy of Canberra in the autumn. We are also revelling in the fact that the QEII Family Centre is open to full capacity. The main effect is that we are once again in a situation to be immediately responsive to those families who need us the most. Since Minister Corbell announced the opening, we have been able to immediately offer a place at QEII to families of very young infants who are struggling to establish or maintain breast feeding or infants who are not thriving. This immediate intervention can make the difference between breast feeding or not and, for the infant who is not thriving, it most often circumvents admission to an acute facility.



On Saturday 30th April, CMS held it's annual Mother's Day Stall at the Curtin shops. We especially thanks our two board members who organise the stall Wendy Saclier and Lynne Johnson, as well as the CMS Wednesday Knitters for the fabulous items that were on sale and snapped up by our local community.

We have a small wooden donation box at QEII, that dates back to the original CMS meetings in the 1920's, with the inscription “Every little counts”. The sentiment is as valid today as it was back then. Our annual Mothers Day raffle is reliant on generous donations and once again the *Thursday Friendship Group* from *Addicted to Fabric* so very generously provided a beautiful quilt as the first prize in the raffle. We are also most grateful to the *CMS Wednesday Knitters* for a knitted quilt as well as Shirley Cooper for her beautiful knitted rag doll.

Finally, and most important of all, we wish all mothers and grandmothers a very happy Mothers Day. The first Mothers Day was proclaimed on the concept of peace and in that spirit we also wish you all peace and joy for you and your families for the year ahead.

## Introducing Board Member, Lynne Johnson



I was invited onto the Board of CMS in 1997-98 as a community representative. There was much interest in the community while the 'new QEII' was being built on the playground of what had been the site of the North Curtin Primary school. Several of us got together to run a Craft and Fine Item auction at the Statesman to raise funds for our new neighbour and to welcome them to Curtin. Along with the staff and board, we have continued to engage with the community in many different ways, including our Mothers and Fathers Day stalls, our connection with the Richmond Fellowship house and the wider Canberra community through the Wednesday Knitters – a group that grew out of our response to the bushfires in 2003.

In my professional life, I was always involved with children and young people through my work, first as a speech pathologist, later a teacher, and then a school counsellor. In all of these settings I've been privileged to work with a range of other professionals in collaborative activities and programs firmly based in the communities we were part of. It has been a real privilege to have been able to establish similar working relationships with the staff and board members of CMS and QEII during the years I've been connected. That, along with the fun of having grandchildren around as they grow up, has underscored this next stage of my life as a stimulating and hopefully useful retirement.

## The Hydrangeas

On 3rd March, we had our first Hydrangeas get together for the year at the Botanical Gardens. It was fun to catch up with friends and chat. There was much interest too in hearing about the opening of the extra rooms for clients at QEII and the progress of the Community Development Fund that will enable the extension of programs such as *Relaxing into Parenting* and *Baby Makes Three*.

For those of you who are new to CMS and QEII, 'The Hydrangeas' group welcomes any past or current staff and CMS members and friends for friendship, news of QEII staff and programs, overall organisational matters and of course a cup of tea or coffee. The group meets three times a year and the next meeting is at 10.30am on Thursday 7<sup>th</sup> July at the kiosk in the Gardens.

For further information, please get in touch with: Robyn Steele, [robyn.steele22@gmail.com](mailto:robyn.steele22@gmail.com) or Lynne Johnson, [lynnejohnson@grapevine.com.au](mailto:lynnejohnson@grapevine.com.au)



## THE WHARF REVUE 2016

We have 50 A. Reserve seats available for the Sydney Theatre Company's *The Wharf Review* at the Canberra Theatre on Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> September.

\$60 each – bookings close 5pm Monday 22<sup>nd</sup> August 2016.

Tickets can be purchased from reception via cash, cheque or credit card. Credit card bookings also accepted over the phone, call: 6205 2333

## Clinical programs

All residential services provided at QEII are under a service agreement between CMS and the ACT Government Health Directorate. In that Agreement, CMS provides primary health residential care for families with the following issues:

- complex lactation and other feeding problems;
- failure to thrive;
- unsettled baby;
- mood disorder;
- children at risk;
- parents with physical or intellectual disabilities;
- primary carer support;
- behavioural problems in children and families.

This article is the first of a series to showcase the clinical programs we run at QEII.

### Complex lactation and other feeding problems



The complex lactation and other feeding problems program is for those families requiring support for mother and baby, on a feed by feed basis, over a 24 hour period or longer, to ensure that lactation or an alternative suitable feeding regime is established and continued.

The significance of this program is reflected in the data. In the 2014-2015 financial year, 380 families were admitted with complex lactation and other feeding problems as the primary reason for admission. These families accounted for 23% of the total reasons for admission for the period.

***“By the end of our first night, our 4 week old son could feed without a nipple shield and by the end of our stay had a perfect latch and had put on heaps of weight. Our stay gave us the confidence that my breast milk was adequate to feed our son so that he would grown and thrive.”***

Care for these families needs to be implemented as early as possible if lactation is to be successfully established and maintained. In November 2015, the Health Minister, Simon Corbel, opened the remaining three family suites at QEII. Since that time we have been able to immediately offer a space to families with complex lactation and other feeding problems.

***“My 8 moth old son learnt to eat finger food during our stay. Staff gave us the reassurance to challenge our son to eat new things.”***

These families require intensive assessment, support, monitoring and evaluation of the strategies implemented during their admission. Early in the families care discharge, planning commences to ensure they receive ongoing support after they have been with us at QEII. We are fortunate that primary health care services are integrated in the ACT, so we can communicate effectively with our colleagues in the Women, Youth and Child Health Program. For some families, the issues cannot be resolved at the primary health care level and, again, we are able to readily tap into the resources available through the Canberra Hospital.

***“After our stay, I saw a huge improvement in my baby’s feeding issues and we feel so much more capable of helping our baby.”***

## Introducing....

### *Toni Hackett – Community Development and Health Promotions Officer*



My name is Toni Hackett. I've just started with CMS as the new Community Development and Health Promotions Officer, taking over from the very lovely and multi talented Emma Baldock.

Emma and I have a working history together, collaborating to deliver the popular Relaxing into Parenting and Baby Makes 3 group, a passion for us both. It's lovely to see so many familiar faces again, thank you all for welcoming me so warmly. I'm really excited to be a part of this small, hard working, sincere team, led by Mary's vision and enthusiasm.

Mary has wisely asked me to start by doing a gap review, so if you have any ideas that are relevant to our core business and fall under the umbrella of Community Development or Health Promotion then please be sure to bring it to my attention.

Outside of QEII / CMS I work in private practice at Dantien Integrative Health Services here in Curtin. I also consult to organisations who are seeking more holistic ways to improve staff wellness, increase productivity and staff retention.

I am a qualified Educational Kinesiologist\* (Edu-K) and licensed Brain Gym® Instructor & Consultant, an experienced Relationship Educator (group work) and hold qualifications in Interactive Drawing Therapy Counselling, Macrobiotics, Nutritional Biokinetics and Touch For Health.

\*Educational Kinesiology and Brain Gym® is a movement based learning program developed by Paul & Gail Dennison. Brain Gym is a registered trademark of Brain Gym® International/Educational Kinesiology Foundation, Ventura, CA.

### *Colleen Josifovski – Public Relations Officer*

My name is Colleen and I am the new Public Relations Officer at CMS. I work on a part-time basis.

I come to this role with more than 10 years experience in public relations and marketing, in both the commercial and not-for-profit sectors. Most recently, I have been consulting independently for clients from home, so that I could also care for my two daughters, now aged four and two, full-time. Previously, I have worked on the Australian of the Year Awards, in the marketing department of a major shopping centre and for a charitable not-for-profit organisation. I have also worked on major national events, including ANZAC Day and Australia Day.



Within this role, I will be responsible for raising the profile of CMS and QEII within the Canberra and surrounding community, through regular targeted activities. I will maintain the website, produce this seasonal newsletter and create new communications strategies and materials to promote CMS programs. I hope to solidify our brand identity in the community and engage with families in our service area in effective new ways.

#### **Stay connected**

For inclusions in upcoming editions of the newsletter (photos and articles welcomed for consideration), to opt out of the newsletter mailing list, or to **SAVE PAPER** by receiving this newsletter electronically, contact Colleen at Colleen.Josifovski@act.gov.au or phone (02) 6205-2322.