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# Richard suffers as

# Bay waits on surgeon

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RICHARD Hall is pinning his hopes on a new orthopedic surgeon who will start work at the Hervey Bay hospital next month.

It is not that Mr Hall knows anything about the new surgeon or his ability, he just hopes that once he starts work the waiting list for elective surgery will start to shrink.

Mr Hall has been waiting for two years for a surgeon to have a look at his back to see if they can do anything to stop his constant pain.

"I am on pain killers and antidepressants," he said. After waiting two years he was told this week he would

have to wait another year to see a surgeon.

Mr Hall's problems started 10 years ago when he broke a collar bone in a mountain bike crash.

"I must have put my back out at the same time," he said.

He now has constant pain and a tingling sensation down his right leg and both arms.

In December 2000 Mr Hall's GP referred him to the hospital's orthopedic section which confirmed in December 2000 that he was on the waiting list.

"My GP said I would have to wait a year so in 2001 I rang to find out what was going on.

"They said I was a category two patient and the wait was two years.

"That was okay, I was prepared to wait. This week I rang to find out what was happening to be told I am now a category three patient and will have to wait another 12 months at least.

"How do they know what category I am? They haven't seen me."

The demand for elective surgery was high on the Fraser Coast, the district manager of the Fraser Coast Health Service, Mike Allsopp, said.

He said the demand by cate-

## New doctor to attack waiting list

gory one patients and a lack of orthopedic surgeons had caused some patients to be pushed back in the waiting list.

"Unfortunately we have been limited by the number of surgeons," he said.

Mr Allsopp said an orthopedic surgeon had been recruited and another was due to start next month so waiting lists should start to shrink.

He said the health district plan had recognised the importance of orthopedics and ophthalmology (eye) and an extra \$300,000 had been channelled to elective surgery to reduce waiting lists.

### Fast News

#### Spotlight on boat house

STAN Pappin's boat house is still being closely examined by the Queensland Transport Department and the Environmental and Protection Agency. "We are still working with the landholder to resolve the environmental issues," Damien Lewis from EPA said.

#### Carrots, videos for readers

A BAG of carrots and a weekly or three-day video hire is available to readers for next week's Super Tuesday special. Chronicle readers can cut out the Super Tuesday coupon from page one of Tuesday's papers and take it either to the Hervey Bay Fruit world for the carrots or Maryborough's Walker Street Store for the videos. One coupon is allowed for each reader and they are valid only for Tuesday.

#### Water use drops slightly

AFTER nearly two weeks of restrictions Maryborough residents have not reduced water usage by much. City council chief executive officer Noel Corrie said consumption had only dropped by one megalitre a day since the introduction of tighter restrictions on January 9. He said the council would closely monitor the usage.

#### Drivers unhurt in collision

TWO DRIVERS of two vehicles walked away uninjured yesterday when their cars collided on the corner of Albert and Pallas streets, Maryborough, at 11.50am.

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