

LEW - 14

From: Gerry FitzGerald
To: Susan Jenkins
Date: 22/03/2005 11:40:26 am
Subject: Sue

Sue

Attached is a draft resposne to the quasion in parliament

Gerry

Microsoft Word 2003 interface showing a document titled "Surgical Services at Bundaberg" and a "Surgical Properties" dialog box.

Surgical Services at Bundaberg
Suggested response

Background

- The Chief health officer was asked to investigate Bundaberg in regard to clinical outcomes in the surgery almost complete but has not been released as yet. benchmarking data from like hospitals to compare
- Dr Patel is an Indian graduate who has spent almost surgery in the USA. He was appointed as an area of Hospital about two years ago and is currently the Bundaberg.
- Concerns have been raised particularly by nursing. The allegations are that he has significantly increased outcomes, tends to take on or retain cases that are Bundaberg Hospital and is argumentative and disrespectful particularly nursing staff.

Surgical Properties dialog box:

- General | Summary | Statistics | Contents | Custom
- Title: Surgical Services at Bundaberg
- Subject:
- Author: Fitzgerald
- Manager:
- Company: Queensland Health
- Category:
- Keywords:
- Comments:
- Hyperlink base:
- Template: Normal
- Save preview picture
- Buttons: OK, Cancel

Page 1 | Sec 1 | 1/2 | At 2:50m | In 1 | Col 1 | RES: TRK: EXT: OMR: English (Aus) | Start | Microsoft Word 2003 | Surgical - Microsoft Word | Document - Microsoft Word | 100%

Surgical Services at Bundaberg


Suggested response

Background

- The Chief health officer was asked to investigate Bundaberg in regard to clinical outcomes in the almost complete but has not been released as yet benchmarking data from like hospitals to compare
- Dr Patel is an Indian graduate who has spent almost all his life in surgery in the USA. He was appointed as an area manager at Bundaberg Hospital about two years ago and is currently the Chief of Surgery at Bundaberg.
- Concerns have been raised particularly by nursing staff. The allegations are that he has significantly increased clinical outcomes, tends to take on or retain cases that are not suitable for Bundaberg Hospital and is argumentative and difficult to work with particularly nursing staff.

SURGIC-1 Properties

General Summary Statistics Contents Custom

 Surgical Services at Bundaberg

Type: Microsoft Word 97-2002 Document
 Location: D:\userdata\Barderski\temp
 Size: 33.0KB (33,792 bytes)

MS-DOS name: SURGIC~1.DOC
 Created: Monday, 3 October 2005 12:51:02 PM
 Modified: Tuesday, 22 March 2005 11:38:20 AM
 Accessed: Monday, 3 October 2005 12:51:02 PM

Attributes: Read only Hidden
 Archive System

OK Cancel

Surgical Services at Bundaberg

Suggested response

Background

- The Chief health officer was asked to investigate concerns raised by staff at Bundaberg in regard to clinical outcomes in the surgical unit. This report is almost complete but has not been released as yet. The report is awaiting some benchmarking data from like hospitals to compare outcomes with.
- Dr Patel is an Indian graduate who has spent almost 20 years practising surgery in the USA. He was appointed as an area of need doctor at Bundaberg Hospital about two years ago and is currently the Director of Surgery at Bundaberg.
- Concerns have been raised particularly by nursing staff in regard to Dr Patel. The allegations are that he has significantly increased rate of adverse outcomes, tends to take on or retain cases that are beyond the capacity of the Bundaberg Hospital and is argumentative and dismissive of some staff particularly nursing staff.
- However it is worth noting that Dr Patel is also very industrious and has significantly reduced waiting times. He is very active in teaching of junior medical staff and is well regarded by his medical colleagues. There have been no significant complaints from patients or their relatives.
- The CHO has met with members of the staff at Bundaberg and collated data on patient outcomes and am currently finalising a report which will be sent to the hospital administration as soon as it is complete.
- The key findings are:
 - Procedures have been performed at Bundaberg which are beyond the capacity and facilities of the Bundaberg Hospital. The Hospital needs to define the scope of practice and align that scope with the hospital's capacity. The Hospital has taken action to limit the scope fo surgery performed and to ensure that critically ill patients are referred to other hospitals.
 - There are concerns regarding the rate of infection and other complications. These concerns relate particularly to the more complex operations. Benchmarking data suggests that Bundaberg Hospital does not have a significantly higher rate of complications that other similar hospitals.
 - There is significant conflict within the workplace which requires attention by the hospital administration and behavioural management strategies put in place.

- The significant issue regarding the competency of Dr Patel appears to relate to his preparedness to take on cases which are beyond the capacity of the Bundaberg Hospital and possibly beyond his personal capacity. There is no evidence that his general surgical skills are inappropriate or incompetent.
- However the fact that he has taken on those cases may reflect significantly poor judgement to a level which may be grounds for disciplinary action by the Medical Board. Thus the CHO has recommended that this matter be referred to the Medical Board for their attention.
- I have prepared some suggested response points as below. I have also enclosed a draft of the Report..

Suggested Response:

- I have now been informed of concern raised by staff at the Bundaberg Hospital in regard to the surgical services provided at the Hospital.
- The Chief Health Officer Dr Gerry FitzGerald has undertaken a review of clinical outcomes at the hospital and is currently finalising his report.
- Dr FitzGerald has identified a number of issues of concern at the Hospital and will be making recommendations in regard to those concerns.
- There is insufficient evidence at this time to take any particularly action against any individual and to suspend anyone would be unjust and inappropriate.
- The Bundaberg Hospital has taken certain action to limit the scope of surgery performed at the Hospital which should address the majority of issues raised by staff. The report will also make recommendations regarding the management of staff conflict at the hospital.
- However the report has also identified that there is a relatively high satisfaction amongst patients and that waiting times for surgery have been reduced considerably in recent times. Junior staff have been very complementary in regard to teaching and guidance provided to them.
- However Dr FitzGerald has raised concern about the clinical judgement exercised by one member of staff and will be referring these concerns to the Medical Board for their consideration.

Mail Envelope Properties (423F778A.66C : 13 : 62571)

Subject: Sue
Creation Date: 22/03/2005 11:40:26 am
From: Gerry FitzGerald

Created By: Gerry FitzGerald@health.qld.gov.au

Recipients	Action	Date & Time
health.qld.gov.au		
Corporate-Office-PO1.CORPOR	Delivered	22/03/2005
11:40:26 am		
JenkinsS (Susan Jenkins)	Opened	22/03/2005
11:41:07 am		
	Deleted	21/06/2005
1:24:29 am		
	Emptied	28/06/2005
1:38:37 am		
	Sue	

Post Office	Delivered	Route
Corporate-Office-PO1.CORPORATE-OFFICE	22/03/2005 11:40:26 am	health.qld.gov.au

Files	Size	Date & Time
MESSAGE	659	22/03/2005 11:40:26 am
TEXT.htm	576	
Surgical Services at Bundaberg.doc		33792 22/03/2005
11:38:20 am		

Options

Auto Delete: No
Expiration Date: None
Notify Recipients: Yes
Priority: Standard
Reply Requested: No
Return Notification: None

Concealed Subject: No
Security: Standard

To Be Delivered: Immediate
Status Tracking: All Information

From: Gerry FitzGerald
To: Paul Dall'Alba
Date: 22/03/2005 1:10:18 pm
Subject: Response to Parliamentary Questions

Dr Gerry FitzGerald
Chief Health Officer
Queensland Health
Phone: 323 41137
Fax: 3221 7535
Email: Gerry_FitzGerald@health.qld.gov.au

Surgical Services at Bundaberg Hospital
Suggested response

Background

- The Chief Health Officer was asked to investigate concerns raised by staff at Bundaberg Hospital in regard to clinical outcomes in the surgical unit. The report of the review is not complete and has not yet been provided to the Senior Executive Director-Health Services. The Chief Health Officer is awaiting some peer group hospital benchmarking data in order to compare outcomes.
- Dr Patel is a graduate of the Saurashtra University, India, and has spent almost 20 years as a practising surgeon in the USA. He was appointed as an 'area of need' doctor at Bundaberg Hospital in April 2003 and is currently the Director of Surgery at Bundaberg.
- Concerns have been raised, particularly by nursing staff, in regard to Dr Patel. The allegations are that he has significantly increased rates of adverse outcomes, tends to take on or retain cases that are beyond the capacity of the Bundaberg Hospital and is argumentative and dismissive of some staff members, particularly nursing staff.
- However, it is worth noting that Dr Patel is also very industrious and has significantly reduced elective surgery waiting times. He is very active in teaching of junior medical staff and is well regarded by his medical colleagues. There have been no significant complaints from patients or their relatives.

The CHO has met with members of the staff at Bundaberg Hospital and collected data on patient outcomes. When the report is finalised it will be provided to the zonal and district managers through the Senior Executive Director-Health Services.

- The key findings to date are:
 - Procedures have been performed at Bundaberg which are beyond the capacity and facilities of the Bundaberg Hospital. The hospital executive, in collaboration with clinicians, should define service levels for the hospital using the Queensland Health Service Capability Framework which outlines the minimum support services, staffing, safety standards and other requirements to facilitate the delivery of safe and appropriately supported clinical services. The Medical Superintendent has taken action to limit the scope of surgery performed by this surgeon and to ensure that critically ill patients are appropriately referred to higher level hospitals.
 - Concerns were raised regarding the rates of wound dehiscence (break down). The data have shown that this rate is reducing.
 - Concerns were also raised regarding the rate of unplanned re-admissions. This rate also appears to be reducing.
 - With regard to other complications, these concerns relate particularly to the more complex procedures. Benchmarking data suggest that, for

one complication, Bundaberg Hospital appears to have a higher rate than other similar hospitals, however, this has not been tested for statistical significance.

- o There is significant conflict within the workplace which requires attention by the hospital administration and behavioural management strategies put in place.
- The significant issue regarding the competency of Dr Patel appears to relate to his preparedness to take on cases which are beyond the capacity of the Bundaberg Hospital and possibly beyond his personal capacity. There is no evidence that his general surgical skills are inappropriate or incompetent.
- However, the fact that he has taken on those cases may reflect significantly poor judgement to a level which may be grounds for disciplinary action by the Medical Board. Thus, the CHO has recommended that this matter be referred to the Medical Board for attention.
- I have prepared some suggested response points as below. I have also enclosed a draft of the report.

Suggested Response:

- I have now been informed of concerns raised by staff at the Bundaberg Hospital in regard to some general surgical services provided at the hospital.
- The Chief Health Officer, Dr Gerry FitzGerald, has undertaken a review of clinical outcomes at the hospital and is currently finalising his report.
- Dr FitzGerald has identified a number of issues of concern at the hospital and will be making recommendations in regard to those concerns.
- There is insufficient evidence at this time to take any particular action against any individual, and to suspend anyone would be unjust and inappropriate.
- The Bundaberg Hospital has taken certain action to limit the scope of some general surgery performed at the hospital which should address the majority of issues raised by staff. The report will also make recommendations regarding the management of staff conflict at the hospital.
- However, the report has also identified that there is a relatively high satisfaction amongst patients and that waiting times for elective surgery have been reduced considerably in recent times. Junior staff have been very complementary in regard to the teaching and guidance provided to them.
- However, Dr FitzGerald has raised concerns about the clinical judgement exercised by one member of staff and will be referring these



concerns to the Medical Board for consideration

Mail Envelope Properties (423F8C9A.F03 : 13 : 62571)

Subject: Response to Parliamentary Questions
Creation Date: 22/03/2005 1:10:18 pm
From: Gerry FitzGerald

Created By: Gerry FitzGerald@health.qld.gov.au

Recipients	Action	Date & Time
health.qld.gov.au		
Corporate-Office-PO2.CORPOR	Delivered	22/03/2005
1:10:27 pm		
Paul Dall'alba (Paul Dall'Alba)	Replied	22/03/2005
1:10:27 pm		
	Opened	22/03/2005
1:10:31 pm		
	Deleted	21/06/2005
1:50:14 am		
	Emptied	28/06/2005
2:01:21 am		

Response to Parliamentary
Questions

Post Office	Delivered	Route
Corporate-Office-PO2.CORPORATE-OFFICE	22/03/2005 1:10:27 pm	health.qld.gov.au

Files	Size	Date & Time
MESSAGE	755	22/03/2005 1:10:18 pm
TEXT.htm	602	
Responsetoparliamentaryquestions.DOC	40448	23/03/2005
9:02:42 am		

Options

Auto Delete: No
Expiration Date: None
Notify Recipients: Yes
Priority: Standard
Reply Requested: No
Return Notification: None

Concealed Subject: No
Security: Standard

To Be Delivered: Immediate
Status Tracking: All Information

