A new pilot project at Westmead Hospital will study and facilitate the discharge process and in-home care of elderly patients. The project partners include multidisciplinary teams and agencies that include in-home support services.

The Westmead Redevelopment is transforming health infrastructure and services across the Westmead precinct, including the spaces and services used by elderly patients. Members of project user groups (PUGs), including a Healthcare for Older People Earlier (HOPE) PUG, have been involved in planning a 12 unit bed for older people for the new hospital building. HOPE PUG members were also integral to the renovation of the HOPE unit earlier this year.

To complement this Westmead Redevelopment work, the Westmead Hospital’s Geriatric Medicine staff have developed a pilot program. The Rapid Access to Care and Evaluation (RACE) program is a person-centred model of healthcare for older patients that also aims to:

- Improve communications between patients, carers, their clinicians and service providers
- Streamline patient referral processes including improvements to the process of sharing and updating medical records between health services and agencies
- Increase access to in-home mobility devices and other medical equipment

“Patients hold onto a health record sheet that is updated on an ongoing basis by visiting doctors, other in-home specialists and service providers. This record will move to electronic records post-pilot. Patients will be able to see what is happening now, what will happen next, and who to contact if they are concerned about specific things related to their health and treatment,” said HOPE PUG member and Project leader Shalini Balram, from the Geriatric Medicine Department at Westmead Hospital.

“We aim to see four to six patients per week who can access four to six weeks of in-home support. The program also includes a patient assessment and feedback process. We will see what has worked, what hasn’t and what can be improved.”

The pilot ends after a three month trial, wrapping up reporting in December 2016. “Community members and consumer representatives will be involved in the program evaluation process. A pilot is crucial to gather the data, test the model and to make that next step to an ongoing program. A program, which also responds to patient and carer feedback,” said HOPE PUG Champion, Dr Ray Cabela.

Dr Cabela continued, “This program demonstrates the many models of care reviews happening right now across the Westmead precinct. We are using the Westmead Redevelopment planning process as a prism through which we look at everything we do and how to improve experiences and care of patients. There is much more to the Redevelopment than a new shiny hospital building and a number of renovated spaces.”

Earlier this month it was standing room only at the RACE pilot launch event, with around 100 staff and partners attending.

For more information on the RACE pilot contact Shalini Balram on (02) 9845 9250 or shalini.balram@health.nsw.gov.au.
District commissioner visits Westmead

Everything from traffic to good coffee shops was discussed when District Commissioner Ed Blakely visited Westmead last week.

Ed is part of the NSW Government’s Greater Sydney Commission formed last year and headed by Chief Commissioner Lucy Turnbull.

Ed is one of six District Commissioners leading a different approach to planning in the greater Sydney area. Ed’s area covers Parramatta and surrounds and he sees Westmead as a critical part of the district.

Ed’s goal, and the goal of the Greater Sydney Commission, is to connect local planning with longer-term regional planning and ensure that there is better coordination with State and local government planning.

Ed has been hands on in his role and spent a day last week meeting with a wide range of staff, students, researchers and clinicians at all levels in a number of organisations across Westmead.

Some of the common themes that staff and students raised with Ed were:

- Making Westmead a great place to be that staff and students want to live close by (such as activity and coffee shops open on weekends)
- The need for more quick and healthy food options for staff and students working long hours
- Making Westmead a healthy community with a campus gym that is open long hours, communal bikes like in most European cities, access to a swimming pool and other organised physical activity that could be in Parramatta Parklands
- Trains from Epping, a stop at Westmead for the trains from the Blue Mountains, reviewing the T-Way and putting in better bike paths
- Safe places to leave your push bike at train stations
- Importance of safety in Parramatta Parklands and around Parramatta CBD

Of course the topic on everyone’s mind was raised – car parking.

“I will do anything I can to help support more people into shared transport – whether that is car-pooling, buses or trains” Ed said.

Ed was very impressed with the engagement of everyone who participated and provided their ideas. Ed also took away a number of actions and ideas and looks forward to more trips to Westmead in the future.

“If we don’t succeed at Westmead, we can’t succeed at all” he said.

PSN relocates

More changes are being made in preparation for the demolition of the building that houses Pregnancy and newborn Services Network (PSN), NETS and The Children’s Hospital at Westmead helipad so that construction can commence on the new acute services building in 2017.

The first service to move from the building is PSN which is moving from Westmead to Sydney Children’s Hospital, Randwick.

PSN is part of the Sydney Children’s Hospitals Network and its role is to improve the quality and safety of maternal and neonatal care across NSW.

“There’s been a lot of planning and consultation with PSN staff involved in the move over to Randwick,” project manager Luke Libert said. “It’s nice to see how excited the staff are to move over there.”

“PSN will have access to newly refurbished facilities - it’s a brand new fit out for the team to be moving into.”

The new facility has been tailored specifically for use by the PSN team. The space has been designed as a flexible working environment with the capacity for interstate conference visits from rural NSW midwives.

WSLHD-WestmeadProject@health.nsw.gov.au
Six new interventional laboratories are part of the Westmead Redevelopment. They will benefit both children and adults and are exciting news for cardiac specialists across the Westmead precinct.

Christian Turner is a paediatric cardiologist and electrophysiology (EP) specialist. He is focussed on paediatric arrhythmias; working with children with heart rhythm issues. He has worked at The Children’s Hospital at Westmead for the past five years as a consultant and started his career at Westmead—first in cardiology, then paediatric cardiology before specialising in EP.

Christian’s typical week involves working at both hospitals and seeing clinic patients, including children born with holes in their heart or heart rhythm issues. Some have pacemakers or implantable defibrillators—the defibrillators can shock a heart back into a normal rhythm if it goes too fast. Each week he performs a number of procedures fixing children’s heart rhythm problems using catheters (Christian holds a catheter in the photo above).

Catheters, when used for heart procedures, are an investigative tool used during surgery. A long thin tube is inserted into the veins in the groin and threaded up to the heart. Dye can be injected into the heart via the tube, take blood samples. Interventional procedures can also be undertaken via catheters, like closing holes in the heart.

The catheters used for heart rhythm procedures have electrodes that can measure the electrical conduction in the heart. Christian inserts five on average in each procedure. As a result he can diagnose the type of heart rhythm issue that is occurring and then usually fix the issue by burning or freezing the abnormal part of the heart.

Performing catheter procedures requires dedicated spaces, informally known as ‘cath labs’. At the moment, cardiologists from both The Children’s Hospital at Westmead and Westmead Hospital use an EP lab within Westmead Hospital. Six new interventional labs and high-tech suites are planned for the central acute services building as part of the new operating theatre floor.

Christian said, “With electrophysiological work you need a lot of high-tech equipment that is extremely expensive. You also need to have highly skilled staff that can use this equipment. In the new building, we will be able to undertake more procedures and we’ll have specialist rooms with access to the most cutting-edge equipment. We can train upcoming experts (doctors, nurses and highly specialised technicians) for both hospitals and have a collaborative interchange of ideas between adult and paediatric cardiologists.”

Christian is a member of a number of Westmead Redevelopment project user groups (PUGs) and is involved in planning for the central acute services building.

He continued, “I’ve shared my insights for the design of the labs and other areas, so that the spaces can be as child and family friendly. The patient journey will be smoother and there will be spaces for loved ones to be with patients before and after surgery.”

“There is a huge amount of information and knowledge-sharing already happening between both hospitals. The existing interventional cardiology service at Westmead Hospital is already a well-renowned unit. The new interventional cardiology lab will be part of a world-leading surgery and interventional centre—the largest in Australia.”

Professor Rob Denniss, Head of Cardiology at Westmead Hospital, said, “Christian Turner is a great example of the brilliant minds working at Westmead. There are only five paediatric cardiologists in Australia that do what he does. The new EP lab is a great collaboration between electrophysiology units of both hospitals and it will help us to recruit and train the best of the best.”
Important information on our works

- Please be patient, there will be disruption on the campus over the next five years.
- Check signs around your usual parking area for upcoming changes as the project progresses.
- Follow instructions from site staff.
- Walk only on marked paths.

Works On Site

- Car parking construction. Access to Oval is closed until the new car park is opened in November 2016.
- Construction works continuing in this location. Please follow the instructions of traffic wardens.
- New Children’s Hospital at Westmead car park access works underway. Works to be complete early November.