

## **FINAL RELEASE**

### **Prestigious health industry awards announced**

Christchurch's Forte Health hospital has won a prestigious health industry award for its efforts to 'improve the paediatric experience' for patients.

Forte's entry won the clinical category of the NZ Private Surgical Hospitals Association's Leaders in Quality Awards 2021.

The project was one of three finalists in the awards' clinical category, with the judges lauding it as 'a great concept, and fantastic from start to finish. It has so many useful elements ... and it has exceeded my expectations'.

Forte Health's project saw the percentage of paediatric incidents at the hospital drop from 12.7 per cent to just four per cent between 2017, when the project began, and 2019.

It also reduced anxiety among children in care, based on patient feedback, and better prepared children for their visit to the hospital. This has made the admissions process easier for staff and has contributed to increased staff engagement.

The projects got underway when a patient survey (and the incidents percentage) showed the paediatric 'patient experience' needed to improve.

A dedicated paediatric special interest group was formed to oversee the work. As well as focussing on staff training, the group developed a unique strategy that included the creation of a Forte Health children's mascot and a specially written children's book entitled *Ra and Poppy*.

Both the mascot and the book are unique to the Forte initiative.

Another key outcome of this project is that all Forte staff can now care for children in a way that is both skilled and that focuses on children as 'individuals'.

### **Dunedin's Mercy Hospital wins prestigious health industry award**

Dunedin's Mercy Hospital won the non-clinical section of the awards for its efforts to become a certified establishment for gluten free dining under Coeliac New Zealand's Dining Out programme.

Mercy Hospital was one of three finalists for this award.

The inspiration behind Mercy Hospital's project is the understanding that for patients with coeliac disease being in hospital can be made more stressful by concerns about what they can and can't eat.

It is also important to note that 1 in 10 people are gluten intolerant, 1 in 10 people have a family member who has coeliac disease and 4 out of 5 people with coeliac disease remain undiagnosed.

The hospital therefore opted to become a certified establishment for Gluten Free dining under the Coeliac New Zealand Dining Out programme. They did this by developing systems and processes that were sustainable and able to be implemented across the campus for staff and patients alike.

"Being an accredited venue provides reassurance to gluten free diners that Mercy Hospital has made an ongoing investment in providing safe, gluten free food."

Mercy said this was a team effort, “involving the knowledge and expertise of our dietitian as well as the experience and know-how of our chefs.”

There were 27 award entries this year.

Lead judge, Philippa Pringle, said the awards aim to showcase the large number of quality initiatives across the private surgical hospitals sector.

“It was incredibly exciting to be privy to all the hard work being undertaken in the quality space by all of the participants.

“The judges were particularly impressed with the high calibre and diversity of the entries received and the superb work that is being done throughout the sector.”

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Editors’ note: The NZPSHA Leaders in Quality awards are presented bi-annually and recognise excellence across its 29 members across 41 private surgical facilities throughout New Zealand. NZPSHA acknowledges ACC’s support of the awards.