

20,000 reasons to celebrate the Queensland Telepaediatric Service

29 May 2014

The Queensland Telepaediatric Service (QTS) celebrated its 20,000th consultation today, with Brisbane paediatric specialist "visiting" two-year-old Rockhampton burns patient Elijah Kemp.

QTS has been connecting Brisbane medical specialists with sick children in regional and remote Queensland via virtual consultations for more than 14 years, providing vital help to children like Elijah.

Established and operated by The University of Queensland's Centre for Online Health (COH) in partnership with Brisbane's Royal Children's Hospital (RCH), QTS is one of the largest paediatric telehealth services in the world.

RCH paediatric surgeon Dr Craig McBride, who treated Elijah, said he regularly used QTS to link him with regional patients, which helped improve their outcomes.

- " While we cannot complete medical operations with telehealth, we can see patients before and after their operation," Dr McBride said.
- " Almost 20 per cent of our burns patient follow-up is done through telehealth, with a network of scar management therapists throughout the state providing quality care locally, with input from us centrally.
- " Our research has shown there is a similar level of care in person and through telehealth, and patients are satisfied with the service they have been receiving from us through paediatric surgery and paediatric burns."

COH Deputy Director Dr Anthony Smith said the consultation was a landmark occasion and a proud moment for everyone involved.

- " Our mission has been to give patients in regional and remote locations convenient access to high quality specialist health services, as close to home as possible," Dr Smith said.
- " QTS has been able to save thousands of families the physical and financial burden of a trip to Brisbane to see a medical specialist at a normally stressful and emotional time."

About 210 clinicians at the RCH have used the QTS, linking them to about 105 referring regional and remote hospitals throughout Queensland.

A range of communication techniques are used to provide consultation to patients, including email, telephone and videoconferencing.

Media: School of Medicine Marketing and Communications Officer Brian Mallon, 3365 5254,

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040 362 1109 or b.mallon@uq.edu.au.

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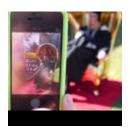
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