

John Fawkner Private Hospital, Melbourne, Victoria

Overview of the organisation

John Fawkner Private Hospital (JFPH) is a 147-bed private general hospital located in the inner northern suburbs of Melbourne. JFPH provides a broad range of general and specialist medical and surgical services, including critical care and emergency care. JFPH is part of Healthscope, a leading private healthcare provider comprising 45 hospitals and 48 medical centres across Australia.

JFPH was established in 1939 by the Missionary Sisters of the Sacred Heart and operated as the Sacred Heart Hospital until its transfer to commercial ownership in 1992. A strong local identity and connections with the community continues to be a feature of JFPH and its approach to person-centred care today. JFPH cares for privately insured patients from a broad range of cultural and linguistic backgrounds, reflecting the diversity of Melbourne’s inner north. With a relatively older local population, an increasing proportion of JFPH’s care is focused on chronic and complex conditions.

Figure 1: About John Fawkner Private Hospital



Person-centred care at John Fawkner Private Hospital

Within one of Australia’s largest national networks of private hospitals, JFPH has developed a reputation as a leader in person-centred care. JFPH has overcome the challenges of an ageing physical facility and the space constraints of an inner urban location through the development of a person-centred culture, strong leadership and a distinctive model of consumer involvement that works in a private hospital context.

JFPH’s achievements in person-centred care have been recently recognised by being asked to participate in an Australian Council on Healthcare Standards Exemplar Award Pilot for Consumer Involvement.

The team at JFPH recognise there are many more opportunities for improvement and are 'not there yet' on their person-centred care journey. As the organisation looks forward to a major facility redevelopment and expansion, the team is enthusiastic about the benefits that an improved physical environment and new technologies can add, while also being alert to the need to protect its strong culture and sense of 'family' during the transition.

During these important changes, the workforce and management recognise that it will be vital to maintain and further develop the culture, teamwork and leadership attributes which have underpinned JFPH's achievements in person-centred care so far.

Key features of person-centred care

JFPH has many attributes across the organisation that support the delivery of high-quality, person-centred care. This case study is not intended to be a comprehensive account of all these attributes. Rather, it seeks to highlight some key examples that other health services can learn from.

A strong team and person-centred culture cares for patients as 'part of our family'

Members of the workforce from all areas of JFPH identify a positive culture and great teamwork as being fundamental to their approach to person-centred care. Everyone understands they are working towards a shared goal and that each member of the workforce has an important role to play in the experience and outcomes of every patient at JFPH. They value the contribution made by each of their colleagues and celebrate the positive feedback received from patients and families. The person-centred culture and team approach evident at JFPH has been developed over many years. A relatively small workforce size (compared to larger tertiary hospitals) and a high retention rate are identified as contributors to the current environment. A range of programs are in place to sustain and advance teamwork and culture, these are set out in **Table 1**.



“Communication comes first – it means the patient sees a unified team with a consistent message”

Manager

Table 1: How JFPH builds team and culture

Shared ownership of person-centred care	Hospital leadership consistently communicate the importance of a team in person-centred care.
Recognition of great person-centred care	JFPH has partnered with Australia’s largest private health insurer as part of the BUPA Patient Choice Awards. Based on patient experience feedback, the program recognises members of JFPH’s workforce who are delivering great patient care. The monthly award-winners are acknowledged and celebrated by JFPH and the Healthscope group.
‘Happy team, happy patient’	A comprehensive workforce wellbeing program is in place, including individual supports and services, team events and social programs.
Comprehensive training	All members of the workforce are involved in training on person-centred care to equip them with appropriate skills. A growing number of e-learning packages are tailored to align with the culture and values. Extensive support is provided for further training and skills development.
Inclusive team structures	Support staff are incorporated into each clinical unit. Unit meetings are open to all members of the workforce to attend, ask questions and share ideas. Complaints and compliments are shared and discussed with Visiting Medical Officers.
Values-based recruitment	Recruitment and selection processes emphasise the importance of alignment with values and cultural fit equally with the need for technical skill and experience.

Leadership is practical and supportive

Senior management have a strong commitment to person-centred care that is evident to all members of its workforce. A visible presence in clinical settings, regular communication of key messages and the explicit prioritisation of patient needs in management decision-making reinforce this commitment. Leaders are readily accessible and supportive of the frontline workforce on issues concerning patient experience.

At all levels, members of the workforce value their capacity to engage with the leadership team, and note the leaders daily engagement with practical patient care decisions, which support the workforce to provide high-quality care.

Equally, the senior leaders are consistent in taking action and making difficult decisions where performance or behaviour does not meet expectations for person-centredness. Important examples of person-centred leadership identified at JFPH are summarised in **Table 2**.



“Our managers are very collaborative and hands-on, staff feel supported and this translates to patient care”

Clinician

Table 2: How the leaders at JFPH inspire person-centred care

Executive rounding	Senior management engage frequently with patients, carers and families at the point of care to gain a first-hand appreciation of the patient experience. They participate regularly in key clinical meetings and take an active role in resolving patient complaints and concerns.
‘Secret shoppers’	Group management visit the hospital to experience the patient journey, first-hand. They recognise good experiences equally with the opportunities for improvement.
Person-centred decision making	Management decision-making processes and resource allocation explicitly considers and prioritises the improvement of person-centred care.
An open door	There are a minimum number of organisational layers between the General Manager and the patient. The General Manager is accessible to all members of the workforce on issues concerning patient satisfaction.

Consumers are involved in the private hospital setting

Involvement of consumers has often been more limited in a private-hospital setting, yet JFPH has established extensive involvement through the establishment of Consumer Consultant positions with a broad range of responsibilities.

Three Consumer Consultants, each bringing different consumer perspectives and experiences, are involved throughout the hospital governance structure, including monitoring and performance, improving care and planning future services. The collaborative culture at JFPH means that they are approached by members of the workforce to get involved informally in all aspects of the organisation.



The establishment and ongoing development of the Consumer Consultant positions have been championed by the JFPH Quality Manager. Clearly defined roles, responsibilities and work plans have been developed for each Consultant, aligning with their skills and capabilities.

The contribution of the Consumer Consultants is widely recognised across the organisation and has been acknowledged externally by the Australian Council on Healthcare Standards Exemplar Award Program. Table 3 summarises key areas of involvement for the JFPH Consumer Consultants

“Our role is respected and valued by the patients and the staff. Together we’ve achieved a lot in the last few years”

Consumer Consultant

Table 3: Consumer Consultant initiatives at JFPH

	<p>Health literacy resources Consumer Consultants work with members of the workforce to develop and review patient education materials to ensure language is easily understood and accessible.</p>
	<p>Person-centred care training Consumer consultants are involved in the production of training materials that provide insight to the workforce on the patient perspective. Recent materials include e-learning videos on bedside handover.</p>
	<p>Involvement in patient experience improvement projects Consumer consultants contribute to reviewing issues and implementing improvements in areas such as complaints management, customer service improvement and the physical environment.</p>