



Recipient

Mater Health Services

Grant Amount

\$750,000

Funding Period

2021 - 2023

Grant Overview

To provide seed funding to assist Mater Foundation leverage the funding to finance the equipment required to enable orthopaedic robotic surgery to people in regional Queensland at Mater Hospital Townsville and Mater Hospital Mackay.

CASE STUDY: SURGICAL ROBOTS

Context and Need

People in regional Queensland do not have access to robotic surgery and currently experience lesser surgical health outcomes than people living in major cities. People in regional Queensland do not have access to the same health benefits as those people in larger cities as the services and technology available to people in regional Queensland is often outdated. As a result, people in regional areas endure medical processes with inferior outcomes, extended stays in hospital, experience higher levels of infections and post-operative complications, and endure higher levels of pain and/or higher levels of pain relief (and the associated side effects). The alternative is to travel for medical advice and surgery, which is expensive and forces patients to be away from family and friends during a period of high dependency.

By providing this support, people in the regional areas surrounding Townsville and Mackay will benefit from:

1. Access to more accurate surgery, shorter stays in hospital, experience less pain, and have greater short, medium and longer term surgical outcomes.
2. Fewer secondary conditions such as infections, and fewer side effects of extensive pain medication.
3. Being close to home thereby reducing travel costs to other cities and allowing family support whilst in hospital.



Activities and Implementation

The seed funding from the Nudgee Trust was paid over three years and enabled the Mater Foundation to establish a fundraising campaign seeking the balance of funding from donors with the robots costing circa \$2m each.

Outcomes and Impact

\$9M was raised and surgical robots implemented in Townsville and Mackay. Initially six surgeons were trained with this number growing to nineteen surgeons and nurses. Residents in both centres are now able to access this technology without having to travel to Brisbane.

Mater Townsville is now becoming recognised as a centre of excellence for robotic surgery and has performed a first of its kind paediatric surgery and first shoulder surgery in Australia. The incorporation of this technology has resulted in an increased opportunity for the training and retention of local doctors and has become a focal point in attracting new surgeons to the regions.

This grant is a good example of how Nudgee Trust funds can be leveraged to create a strong outcome for a community.

Testimonial

Dale Redden underwent one of the first Stryker Mako knee replacements to be performed at Mater Mackay. Her testimony highlights the import access to this technology for regional patients.

“Before I had surgery I couldn’t walk anywhere. My husband and I are social people – we like to go out and see people and do things, and I wanted to be able to get back to doing that.

On the day I had the surgery I was standing afterwards, on a frame. It’s wonderful having this surgery in Mackay because you’ve got the support of your family here. It’s just so much easier.”