



Media release

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MEDIA RELEASE

Pillow invention wins National Award

Staff at Royal Perth Hospital Shenton Park Campus have pulled off a national design prize for an innovative pillow used in the care of spinal patients.

Sir George Bedbrook Spinal Unit (Ward 11) Ward 11 staff members won the award for its "aeroplane pillow", a posture pillow that eliminates the full spinal lift used to reposition patients in Halo traction.

Clinical Nurse Manager Anne Watts will head to Sydney next week (November 23), to receive the Australian Council of Healthcare Standards Quality Improvement Award in the Support category.

The pillow has been contoured and is longer than an ordinary pillow and has replaced the need for the patient to be lifted to change the pillows.

Ms Watts said the pillow made work much easier for staff nursing spinal injured patients.

"We can now turn them over onto their side without the need to lift them," she said.

"This means the patient is not as distressed and it also means better and safer handling for nursing staff.

"It is used for any person with an acute spinal injury that requires immobilisation of the cervical spine."

Earlier this year, the Spinal Unit won a Worksafe award for the same device.

Ms Watts said the pillow was also reducing the likelihood of lift-related injuries for hospital staff.

She said statistics involving injuries related to this lift were collected before the pillow was implemented, during a trial period and since the full implementation, and results have been extremely encouraging.

A further analysis of the staff time lost per injury related to lifting is currently underway.

WA WorkSafe Commissioner Nina Lyhne presented an award to the ward earlier this year.