



Media release

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MEDIA RELEASE

New service for breast surgery patients

Two RPH nurses have developed what may be a world first – a digital image gallery designed to give women undergoing breast cancer surgery a more accurate picture of what to expect.

According to specialist Breast Care Nurse Counsellors Lesley Kydd and Sheryl Reid, women often believed breast cancer surgery had the same achievable cosmetic outcome as breast enhancement surgery.

Their response was to create Australia's first Breast Surgery Gallery – an electronic picture gallery of real women who have undergone different types of surgery.

“We found some women were disappointed following their breast cancer surgery,” Sheryl said.

“We think the reason behind a lot of this was that a lot of women were comparing their surgery results to the cosmetic breast surgery often seen in glossy women's magazines.

“The lack of ‘real life’ images available led to unrealistic expectations about the appearance of the breast following surgery.”

So far, use of the Breast Surgery Gallery has paved the way for greater understanding and improved patient consultation.

“When women and their partners see the gallery it raises many other issues for them, including body image, sexuality, relationships issues and their current life styles,” Sheryl said.

“We allow an hour for this consultation to consolidate information provided by their surgeons and to explain the images they are viewing.

“Images selected for each woman will be matched to her age, bra size, surgery type, and where ever possible, ethnicity.

“The gallery includes pre-operative and post-operative images at one week, six months and one year to show the healing process.”

The Breast Surgery Gallery is a free service and is offered to women diagnosed with breast cancer or those considering prophylactic mastectomy.

Photographs available on request

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