



National First for hospital as solar electricity and hot water installation begins

Work is underway to install the largest solar energy system on any hospital in Australia at the Friendly Society Private Hospital.

The 1320 individual 435w panels will be installed during the next three months on all available roof space, with a total system size of 575kW

Friendly Society Private Hospital Business Development Manager Stuart Bonnett said the solar system was an investment of more than \$1M, and with the cost savings in electricity, would pay for itself in just four years.

“We believe that environmental sustainability is the only way forward, through solar electricity, solar hot water and LED lighting,” Mr Bonnett said.

Mr Bonnett said solar energy was something the hospital had started looking at in the past few years, but it wasn't until the hospital received news of a 30% increase to its \$80,000 per month electricity bill that The Friendlies decided to move forward with the project, with GEM Energy.

“This system will save The Friendlies millions of dollars. As a not-for-profit hospital, that is millions of dollars that go back into services for our patients and this

community. We will be able to reduce our impact on the environment at the same time,” he said.

While the system is believed to be the largest ever put on a hospital in Australia, it will still only be enough to power about 25.6% of the hospital's electricity needs.

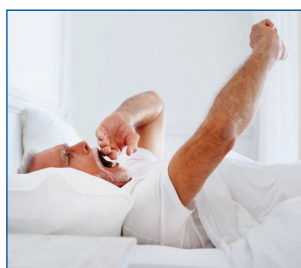
“While 25% doesn't sound significant, it will save the hospital \$3.1M in the first 10 years and \$6.9M by 20 years. That kind of money is so important for a regional community,” he said.

The solar panels will cover about 75% of the hospital's footprint, utilising all suitable roof space. Mr Bonnett said as the hospital grows, all future development will be designed with the ability to incorporate more solar panels.

In terms of environmental sustainability, electricity usage in the first year will be reduced by 919,900kWh from the solar electricity and 229,000kWh from the installation of LED lighting, a total 1,148,000kWh.

As part of the solar installation project, The Friendlies, through SolarArk, will convert all four hot waters systems, each with five containers, to solar hot water.

After installation, the hospital's gas hot water bill will be zero, saving \$84,000 each year.



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The Friendlies set the highest air quality standard in operating theatres

The latest in operating theatre advancements has been installed at The Friendlies, with a renovation of Operating Theatre 3 being completed in July.

The refurbished Theatre 3 has been fitted out with a state-of-the-art laminar flow air-conditioning system, which helps to provide a shroud of air surrounding the patient, reducing infection points.

It is also designed to maintain optimal comfort levels for the surgeon and to ensure normal air is removed from the room with HEPA filtered air being returned.

The lamina flow system creates three different air velocities in the room, that work to ensure clean air is directed from the area where the operating table is to the perimeter of the room. This ensures maximum patient protection.

Operating Theatre 3 will now become the second dedicated orthopaedic theatre at The Friendlies, which accommodates five orthopaedic surgeons, covering specialities from general orthopaedics to specialised areas of the spine, shoulders, hips and knees.

The operating theatre will have one of the highest accreditation levels for theatre air quality, ISO5, a standard set by the International Standardisation Organisation as a benchmark for hospitals worldwide.

In addition, the hospital has upgraded the surgical lights to LED, which give off minimal heat, that also cast no shadows.

This upgrade comes on top of the Friendlies relocating all scope procedures to the dedicated Endoscopy Unit, which was opened in March.

New PET/CT scanner a breakthrough in disease detection for Wide Bay residents

Wide Bay patients and doctors now have access to a new state-of-the-art PET/CT scanner thanks to an installation at the I-MED Radiology clinic at the Friendly Society Private Hospital in Bundaberg. The scanner provides a welcome service to the community – alleviating the need for long distance travel for patients and improving doctors' ability to diagnose and monitor a range of conditions.

The new GE Discovery PET/CT scanner which began service in the beginning of August, is a region-first – delivering exceptional image quality, improving disease detection and allowing doctors to accurately assess how organs and tissues in the body are functioning.

Regional Manager for I-MED Radiology, Keri Kamau, says the radiology group is excited to make such important technology available to local patients particularly those at risk of, or suffering from, cancer.



“This new PET/CT scanner greatly assists our doctors in the identification and diagnosis of cancer. Many tumours can be picked up earlier and located with increased precision using PET/CT scans. Early detection can really make a difference, so we believe this new machine will benefit local patients immensely. In addition, patients no longer need to travel great distances to the Sunshine Coast or Brisbane to access this technology,” says Mr Kamau.

Dr Jody McIvor, the clinic's Nuclear Medicine Specialist and Radiologist, says the new PET/CT scanner is particularly helpful in staging cancer and evaluating the effectiveness of cancer treatments.

“PET/CT scanners are critical for modern oncology care, in particular for staging cancer and following up to determine whether treatment has been successful or not. With this scanner we are able to detect many types of cancer. We can see if the cancer is localised or spreading and this determines the optimal treatment, whether that be through surgery, chemotherapy or radiotherapy,” says Dr McIvor.

She adds that a PET/CT scan can be useful to diagnose and monitor a range of other conditions including heart disease and brain disorders such as Alzheimer's disease.

I-MED Radiology Bundaberg is now taking bookings for the PET/CT service via referral from GPs and Specialists. Phone 07 4131 2800.

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Fundraising golf day set to tee off in September

The Friendlies Foundation will hold its second annual fundraising golf day in September, raising funds for future cardiac services at Friendly Society Private Hospital.

The golf day was a huge success last year with a lot of fun had out on the green while raising \$6000 for the charity.

This year, the day will be held on Friday, September 8, with male and female players of all experience levels welcome to join the event.

The Friendlies Foundation public relations officer Fiona Macaulay said the golf day promised to be less about the score card and more about enjoying a Friday afternoon on the green.

“We have a great time at our foundation events – it is about coming together for a cause, but having a really great time doing it,” Mrs Macaulay said.

Mrs Macaulay said the inaugural The Friendlies High Country Tour cycling event this year was another event that while physically challenging for the riders, had been about having a great time.

Twenty-one cyclists participated in the demanding ride through Bundaberg and the North Burnett over the long weekend in May, riding 100km or 200km each of the three days.

Through the bike ride, fundraising, luncheon and Art Union raffle of a Mazda 3, The Friendlies High Country Tour raised \$40,000 for The Friendlies.

Mrs Macaulay said 100% of the money raised for The Friendlies Foundation was invested back into healthcare or research.

“As the Friendly Society Private Hospital is a not-for-profit and community-owned hospital, donations of all sizes help to provide a lasting legacy to the health of everyone in the Wide Bay community,” she said.

Tickets for The Friendlies Foundation Golf Day are \$55 per player or \$200 for a team of four, which includes lunch, golf, two drinks and presentation nibbles.

Purchase your tickets by telephoning Fiona Macaulay on 4331 1024, emailing foundation@thefriendlies or buy online at thefriendlies.org.au/foundationgolfday.



Full-time Vascular Surgeon accepting new patients



Vascular Surgeon Dr Ramesh Tripathi has settled into his full-time practice at The Friendlies Medical Suites, having been consulting in Bundaberg since February.

During that time, Dr Tripathi has begun utilising both the theatres and cath lab at The Friendlies.

Dr Tripathi's experience as a Vascular Surgeon spans over 20 years, during which he has performed in excess of 5900 Vascular, 4300 endovascular procedures and 1000 Endovenous Laser treatments of varicose veins.

He has trained, worked, collaborated and tutored at leading universities and hospitals internationally in-

cluding the USA, UK, Germany, India, Australia and New Zealand.

Dr Tripathi holds FRACS, FRCS and MBBS qualifications, reviews publications for nine Journals and is an internationally-renowned leading opinion maker in Vascular and Endovascular Surgery, having made significant pioneering contributions to innovative, minimally invasive and new advances in Endovascular Surgery.

Dr Tripathi consults from Level 3 of The Friendlies Medical Suites and is accepting new patient referrals from GPs and Specialists on 4331 1093.

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The charitable fundraising arm of the Friendly Society Private Hospital, The Friendlies Foundation is a lasting legacy to the health of the Wide Bay and Beyond.



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