29 February, 2016

Patients and families the winners

The Pitch returned for 2016 with four entertaining presentations which captured the audience and the judging panel.

All four pitches received their full funding request, including three projects which proposed vital improvements to the experience of patients and families while in hospital.

The highest funding of $32,437 went to the Concord palliative care service to develop a customisable multilingual patient assessment communication tool (CoMPACT) for patients who speak minimal English.

CoMPACT will play and display a pre-recorded and verified translation of important questions, such as pain levels, on an iPad for the patient to answer via a touch screen.

In her pitch, palliative care staff specialist, Jessica Lee, noted the importance of communication in an area where many patients were frail and could have hearing or cognitive impairments.

“Almost half of the District’s population speaks a language other than English at home and almost eight per cent speak little or no English. It is not feasible to use face-to-face interpreters for every clinical interaction,” she said.

A pitch from RPA intensive care senior staff specialist, David Gattas, to develop a way of capturing the already successful ECMO program’s activity and outcomes received $20,000.

“RPA is already a leader in ECMO clinical practice, saving cardiac arrest patients who would have died in the past. The problem is data collection. With this database, we can become a local and international leader,” he said.

RPA intensive care will also receive $6,853 to install coloured lines on the floor leading from reception to the four intensive care units, alleviating the stress and confusion often experienced by family members trying to find their loved ones.

The judges also supported the refurbishment of a lounge on level seven of RPA to create a comfortable space for patients, families and carers to spend time away the wards.

The District’s Chief Executive, Dr Teresa Anderson, was thrilled at the talent on display.

“Once again, these projects are a great example of what the Pitch is all about - taking the good ideas from staff and investing in them.”