

Media Release

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Pakistan's St Elizabeth Hospital forges health partnership with Mater

Mater hospitals in Australia are establishing a clinical quality collaboration partnership with St Elizabeth Hospital in Hyderabad, Pakistan, to improve healthcare in the developing nation.

St Elizabeth board member Fr Robert McCulloch visited Mater Hospital Brisbane earlier this month to sign the partnership's Letter of Intent with Mater Chief Medical Officer Professor Chris Pyke.

Mater is Queensland's largest Catholic healthcare provider, treating almost 700,000 people a year across a network of 11 hospitals.

St Elizabeth Hospital is one of just six Catholic hospitals in Pakistan, and specialises in maternity care, palliative care and the provision of free outreach medical services in rural areas.

Fr McCulloch, who has spent 35 years in Pakistan as a Columbans' missionary, has established close ties with Mater clinicians in recent years and is keen to share their expertise and experience with medical teams at St Elizabeth Hospital.

"The purpose of this collaboration is to establish a clinical quality collaboration network through which Mater will provide professional mentoring, advisory support, and guidance to St Elizabeth to assist with the adoption and strengthening of best-practice clinical standards," Fr McCulloch said.

"The partnership will support sustainable local capability, quality improvement and patient-centred care at St Elizabeth."

Regular remote meetings between Mater clinicians and St Elizabeth staff have already brought benefits to patients in Hyderabad, such as a reduction in unnecessary caesarean deliveries and an increase in low-risk natural births.

It is hoped that the partnership will lead to St Elizabeth clinicians travelling to Queensland to gain experience in Mater's leading hospital services.

Discussions leading up to the signing of the Letter of Intent began in 2024 during visits to Mater by Fr McCulloch and St Elizabeth's hospital administrator, Eric Siraj.

The signing was attended Professor Ash Menon, a general surgeon and gastroenterologist at Mater Private Hospital Springfield. Prof Menon was raised in Hyderabad and is one of many Mater clinicians who are committed to supporting the partnership with St Elizabeth Hospital.

Dr Christine Foley, Mater's Director of Clinical Governance, also serves as a member of St Elizabeth Hospital Advisory Board.

Prof Pyke said the partnership demonstrated that Mater's Mission stretched beyond Queensland and Australia.

"Mater's purpose is to meet unmet community healthcare needs, providing compassionate care to those who need it most," he said.

"Mater clinicians are passionately committed to supporting our colleagues at St Elizabeth Hospital in delivering the best possible care to the communities they serve."

Fr McCulloch said the collaboration was a significant link and engagement between Catholic Health in Australia and in Pakistan and has been recognised as such by the Australian High Commission in Islamabad and Pakistani diplomatic representatives.

Images

Letter of Intent Signing: Mater Chief Medical Officer Professor Chris Pyke (left) signs the Letter of Intent with Fr Robert McCulloch and Mater specialist Prof Ash Menon.

Mater Mothers' Hospital: Fr Robert McCulloch (2nd from right) and St Elizabeth's administrator Eric Siraj meet Mater newborn Armani-Rose Richards with (left) Mater Director of Clinical Governance Dr Christine Foley and Mater Mothers' Hospital General Manager Kerri Gane.

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About Mater Group

Mater is a Catholic, for-purpose healthcare provider and runs Queensland's largest not-for-profit network of public and private hospitals.

Mater's 11 hospitals treat 700,000 patients a year and one in every five Queenslanders is born at Mater.

Mater Research is a recognised leader in innovative and impactful medical research, while Mater Education is Queensland's largest non-government health registered training organisation.

Mater Foundation is an iconic Queensland fundraising and philanthropic institution, which helps to underpin Mater's hospitals, world-class research institute and education provider.

Founded in 1906 by the Sisters of Mercy, Mater's Mission is to provide compassionate care to those who need it most.