

MEDIA RELEASE

August 24, 2017

Extending our REACH

The NSW Clinical Excellence Commission is urging more NSW hospitals to embed its REACH program across their adult, paediatric and mental health units as the program officially extends its early work and aims to become a key patient safety tool across the state's hospitals.

REACH stands for: Recognise Engage Act Call Help is on its Way. REACH is a rapid response program that encourages patients and families to phone for urgent medical review if they feel a patient's condition is deteriorating and clinical staff are not responding. The program was developed by the Clinical Excellence Commission in 2013 and as REACH extends across the NSW public health system it encompasses adult patient, mental health and paediatric units as well as an increasing number of rural hospitals.

Clinical Excellence Commission Director of Patient Safety Dr Bernadette Eather said pivotal to the expansion of the REACH program were Grant and Naomi Day whose advocacy for the program, since their young son Kyran passed away in 2013, had been remarkable.

"We are forever humbled by the spirit of co-operation, advocacy and determination they have shown since the tragic passing of their young son," Dr Eather said.

"REACH is about listening to families and empowering them to speak up when they bring their loved ones into our hospitals. REACH was born out of the concern that patients and families were not empowered to raise concerns when they felt worried patients were deteriorating.

"Families know our patients best, and they often notice small changes in a patient's condition before staff."

Two new REACH posters and a number of REACH [resources](#) are now available in hospitals to support patients and their families and to promote the REACH program. The [paediatric poster](#) features an image of Kyran and shares his story.

Dr Eather said an important aspect of REACH was that it links with existing escalation processes within hospitals and it embeds in clinical culture the need to work with patients and families.

"REACH is active in more than 100 NSW public hospitals across adult, mental health and paediatric units. We want to see the number of hospitals using REACH continue to grow because we want to encourage families and carers to raise their hand if they feel something is wrong," she said.

"We also want to remind staff to think about care from the patient and family's point of view. REACH is only made possible when we all work together," she said.

Hear the Days tell [Kyran's story](#) and learn about their powerful advocacy work.

Media contact: Sharon Hogan 0434 308 924

