At Epworth, the benefits of clinical education and simulation are not simply counted in numbers of procedures taught or teams trained in communication and non-technical skills. Simulation sessions are proving to be an effective way to analyse environmental hazards or operational defects, which in turn leads to improved patient safety.

Two recent examples for staff across all Epworth sites include interprofessional team training for paediatric resuscitation and the massive blood transfusion protocol rollout.

**Paediatric resuscitation**

Paediatric emergencies are a rare event so “road testing” the resources, people and equipment in a simulated event helps identify system and environment issues that may be individual to each site.

Fifty-five nursing and medical staff have so far participated in immersion-based team simulation sessions as: a means of training each team in paediatric emergencies; developing awareness of team resources, and importantly, to establish safety net/emergency protocols that will enhance patient safety for paediatric resuscitation. Epworth Paediatric Educator Sally Wilcox said that staff feedback highlighted the important interprofessional learnings from working together, as well as their satisfaction in relation to an individual professional development session.

The all-important debriefing that follows simulation scenarios was recognised by participants as key to what they will take back to their specific work environments.

**Massive blood transfusion protocol**

On the rare occasion that a patient is bleeding critically, an urgent, expertly-coordinated and collaborative response is needed. Massive blood transfusion protocols are present in major hospitals and relate mainly to major trauma cases. Anaesthetics and PACU Nurse Unit Manager Pauline Fogarty devoted her scholarship to the establishment of an over-arching protocol for Epworth and to the rollout of training for staff across all...
Her three key messages to staff are:
1. Call it early.
2. Ensure there is a dedicated phone line for clear communication between the haematologist and key medical and nursing staff.
3. Utilise a massive blood transfusion pack as a guideline for delivery.

Tess Vawser, director of Clinical Education and Simulation, said an education package was developed which included the production of a short trigger film to show the protocol being activated in a simulated setting.

“This provided a vital lesson. Staff included anaesthetic VMOs, hospital co-ordinators, ICU staff, anaesthetic staff, theatre technicians, midwives and PACU staff who participated in the simulation scenarios, firstly as part of their training, but secondly to identify their hospital’s issues that may not have been identified at the paper based scenario level. For example, not all locations have pathology services onsite, so specific flow charts were needed for each one. It was also recognised that the massive blood transfusion packs needed modifying for a critically bleeding patient to receive expert prompt care.

Overall, Epworth patients will continue to receive direct benefits from the thorough testing of protocols for each site and training of staff teams from those sites.

**Graduate Midwife Program**

At Epworth Freemasons, Education Manager Catherine McKellar reports that the 12-month graduate program for midwives at the 52-bed maternity unit has provided over 35 midwives since 2008, retaining 76% of the graduates at the end of their program.

Recruits for this program are those finishing either an undergraduate or postgraduate course, some of whom have undertaken their course at Epworth Freemasons in conjunction with a Melbourne-based university. The program includes face-to-face teaching, simulation, online learning and clinical support across the delivery suite, postnatal ward and the Level 2 Special Care Nursery. Preceptors, who have undertaken in-house training, are allocated to graduates providing support at the bedside on a day-to-day basis, as they rotate through the different clinical areas. Lactation consultants and childbirth educators are generous with advice and support. Above all the message to all staff caring for Epworth mothers, babies and their families is one of care and compassion, and this is reflected in patient feedback and mothers returning for their subsequent births.