

SILVER Award Winner

Covering 80,000 square metres, Grey's Hospital situated in Pietermaritzburg offers regional and tertiary services to the western half of KwaZulu-Natal – a catchment area of 3 million potential customers.

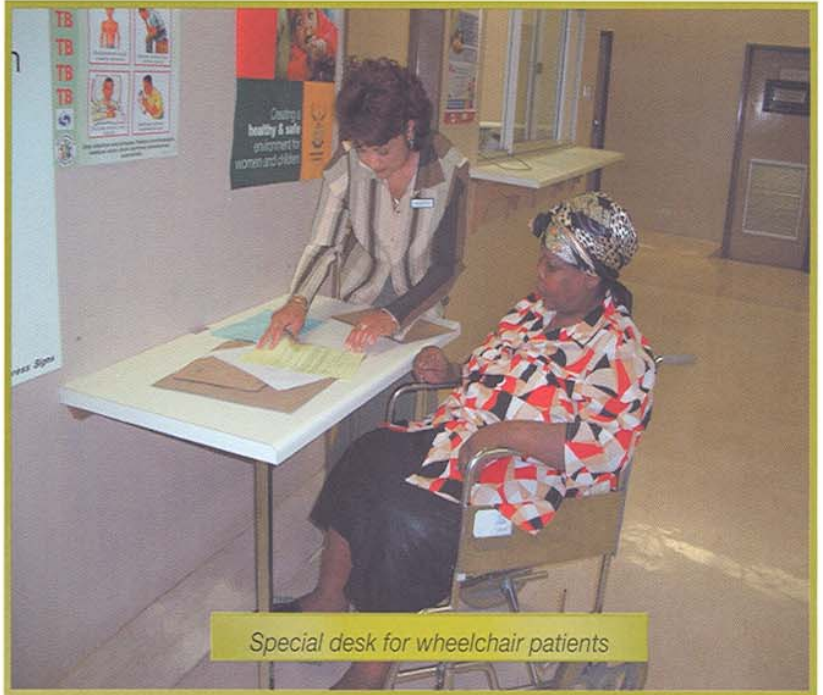
With a total of 530 beds and a staff of 1,500, this large institution still manages to give each patient the care and attention one would expect from a Premier's Service Excellence Awards finalist.

The wall in the Outpatients Department displays hand painted posters of most of the Batho Pele principles and surrounding these are a number of innovative strategies for making life easier for their clients.

Access is made easier by: a separate registration desk for the elderly and those with disabilities, which includes a low table suitable for wheelchair patients; a food trolley provides refreshments to customers while they wait; an information centre supplies helpful advice to clients on health matters; and the management organisation chart is on display, giving further access to the patients.

The standards Grey's Hospital has achieved in the comprehensive Quality Improvement Programme are also on display along with a very extensive code of conduct for customer care. Each department also displays its own version of Service Standards so that customers know exactly what to expect.

The hospital uses posters, flyers, pamphlets and radio to educate patients, and persuade them to use clinic and district hospital facilities for very minor problems.



Special desk for wheelchair patients

Caring staff donate blood every two months during their working hours. Another innovation was the research into venous ulcers pioneered at Grey's Hospital, which has saved the amputation of many limbs. Many of the patients previously had no hope as they suffered from a condition that was thought to be untreatable.

Outsourcing the catering, the security services, gardening, lift maintenance and the air conditioning has given value for money and the Cash Flow Committee meets regularly to discuss further savings.

There is a well established and utilised complaints system in place, and a complaints committee regularly analyses all the contents of the suggestion boxes. Graphs are compiled to show the relationship between compliments and complaints.

An area in the children's outpatients department has been allocated as a playroom. This keeps the

younger customers occupied while they wait and helps to lower stress levels.

There is also an active outreach programme. Therapists visit Havelock Home for abandoned children, providing speech, audiology and occupational therapy to stimulate the children and empower the care-givers. The street kids at Khagaletu are screened for development and behavioural problems and the hospital tries to find placements for them. A cerebral palsy clinic is held once a week for both patients and care-givers. The hospital also assists care-givers and parents with obtaining government grants and pensions.

The re-habilitation centre makes assistive devices, for example chairs for the cerebral palsied, and non-nursing staff and elderly people knit blankets and hats for the babies in high care.

Since the catchment area is so large, many patients cannot afford

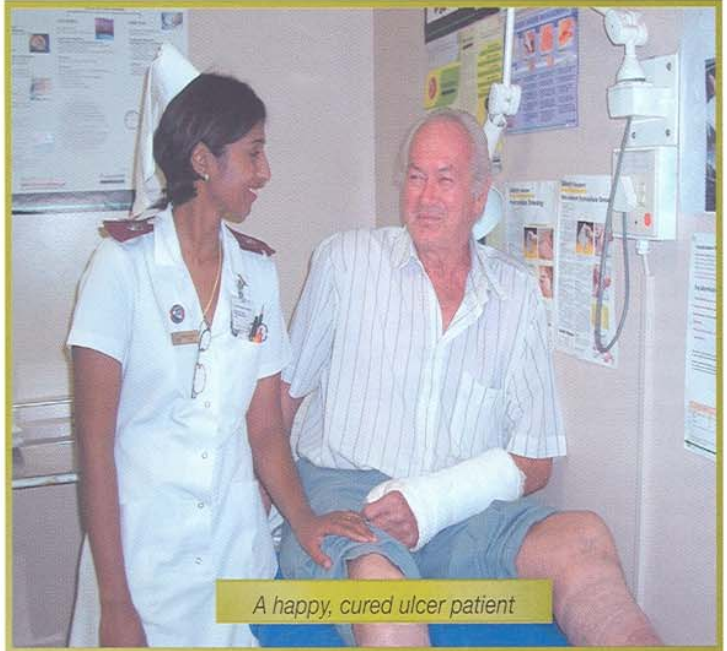
Grey's Hospital Department of Health

to visit on a daily basis, especially in cases where they may be well enough to return home but their babies are still in ICU. To solve this problem, Grey's hospital opened a "Lodge Mothers" section, where mothers can stay and breastfeed and bond with their babies until they are well enough to be discharged.

The 30 beds in the neo-natal ward are state of the art. Staff take Polaroid photographs of babies to show mothers who are not able to visit. In the case of a bereavement, a photo, footprint and handprint of the baby is taken for parents to remember them by.

The staff crèche is also state of the art. It is open from 6.30 am until 7.00 pm to allow nursing staff complete peace of mind while they work.

A new system implemented in the pharmacy, has seen waiting times drastically cut from several hours



A happy, cured ulcer patient

to about 30 minutes. Here too, there are leaflets and pamphlets on display for patient's benefit, and most are in both English and isiZulu.

Grey's Hospital is run under a

dynamic leadership which filters right down to the lowest levels. Everyone performs their work with a sense of pride and dedication, and they truly deserve to have reached the finals of the Service Excellence Awards in 2004.

Why did they enter the Awards this year?

- *This is the first time that Grey's Hospital has entered for the Premier's Service Excellence Awards, and I think that we deserve to win because of the consistently high quality of care that we continue to provide through the dedicated and committed efforts of the staff.*

What have our most important achievements been this year?

- *Establishment of the Thoracic Clinic and a Haemophilic clinic.*
- *Strengthening of the genetic counselling clinic and the stroke unit.*
- *Installation of the MRI scan Unit, Neuro-Angio Suite and the Cath laboratory will soon be operational.*
- *Appointment of a full complement of Executive Committee members.*
- *The appointment of a Public Relations Officer and the establishment of an information desk.*
- *Accredited as an Anti-Retroviral Site. Roll out commenced in August 2004.*
- *Ultrasound training courses for doctors and radiographers from KwaZulu-Natal.*
- *Our involvement in the Performance Assessment Tool for Hospitals project and the Health promoting Hospitals projects*