

WEEKEND EDITION

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PRISON SWEATS



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TOKEN PAGE 9 >>



Trail of despair

Revealed: The lives ruined because Queensland Health let this doctor practise



SHIRLEY BROOKS, 47 BUNDABERG

OPERATION: Entered Bundaberg Base Hospital on December 20, 2004 for a half-day visit to remove gallstones.
COMPLICATION: Dr Patel cut the tube connecting the liver to her stomach instead of cutting the tube connecting the gall bladder to her stomach. She spent four days in the emergency ward. Dr Patel "apologised" but Mrs Brooks now has to sleep sitting in a chair and is in constant pain.



FELICE PIROVANI, 61 BUNDABERG

OPERATION: First treated for stomach cancer by Dr Patel on November 26 last year. He was told he needed immediate attention but his chemotherapy was delayed for eight weeks.
COMPLICATION: Mr Pirovani's cancer has spread and he was told on Thursday that it is terminal. AMA Queensland president Dr David Molloy told his distraught family things may have been different if he was treated by another doctor.



TERRY BELLAMY, 32 BUNDABERG

OPERATION: Entered hospital for an overnight hernia operation last October.
COMPLICATION: He woke up with the hernia gone but also half a vasectomy after his small intestine fell down into his scrotal area and a plug was put in place to stop his stomach from seeping further. He then developed a blood clot that was removed in November and had a subsequent operation to put in a drain after he developed an infection.



TREVOR HALTER, 57 BUNDABERG

OPERATION: Admitted to hospital on November 17 last year for a gallstone operation. Dr Patel ordered the entire gall bladder be removed. Ultrasounds later revealed Mr Halter only had two gallstones.
COMPLICATION: Mr Halter spent two weeks on life support. He has spent a total of eight weeks in hospital and has suffered a collapsed kidney, developed an abscess on the liver, pneumonia and has a weakened heart. He is in constant pain.



BARRY JOHNSON, 57 (deceased) BUNDABERG

OPERATION: Taken to hospital in September 2003 for pancreatic cancer. Dr Patel delayed the surgery two weeks because the staff were "fresh" on a Monday.
COMPLICATION: Dr Patel told the family the growth was larger than first thought and he had performed a bypass rather than removing the cancer. Mr Johnson was placed in ICU for four days before Dr Patel said nothing more could be done. Mr Johnson died an hour and a half later.



IAN FLEMING, 50 BUNDABERG

OPERATION: Was admitted to hospital in May 2003 with severe inflammation of the colon from diverticular disease. Affected part of the colon was to be removed.
COMPLICATION: Despite the wound becoming infected, Mr Fleming was sent home. That night he was admitted to emergency. He has since had three operations with four more to come. Mr Fleming was told in January 2004 that the original problem still existed.



JUDY PETTITT, 62 (deceased) CHILDERS

OPERATION: Admitted to hospital in April 2004 for surgery to remove cancer in the bowel.
COMPLICATION: Mrs Pettitt's stomach would not heal and she was in and out of hospital for eight months with infection following Dr Patel's operation because the hole made for the colostomy bag was too small. Her family said the pain she suffered was unbearable. Mrs Pettitt died on November 28 last year.



NELSON COX, 63 BUNDABERG

OPERATION: Entered hospital last October for a simple gall bladder procedure.
COMPLICATION: Mr Cox has been in constant pain since the operation. He had his liver and heart cut and a bone in his shoulder cracked during gall bladder surgery which left him in intensive care for weeks. He now needs a hernia operation and despite being admitted for keyhole surgery he carries large scars over his torso.



DES BRAMICH, 56 (deceased) AGNES WATER

OPERATION: Rushed to hospital last July after a friend's caravan fell on him, crushing his chest.
COMPLICATION: The following day his condition worsened and family was told to come to his bedside. A retrieval team in Brisbane was told to fly north immediately but Dr Patel, who strongly resented transferring patients to the bigger hospitals, blocked and slowed down the process. When the team arrived, Mr Bramich was dead.



HANS HUHSMANN, 62 BUNDABERG

OPERATION: Admitted to hospital for a hernia operation but after complications was taken into ICU.
COMPLICATION: His wound was left open to heal from the inside because he was a diabetic. Police were called to his house after neighbours complained about him screaming in pain. A GP found a metal object was left in his stomach during the operation but after complaining, Dr Patel sent him home because "it was in his head".

RULES BENT FOR CHEAP SURGEONS
 Queensland Health is permitting up to 1000 overseas-trained doctors to perform operations in public hospitals without the specialist qualifications demanded of Australian graduates.
INSIDE PAGE 5

DR DEATH PRETENDS TO BE HIS BROTHER
 In the comfort of a grand home in Portland, Oregon, someone purporting to be the younger brother of the man dubbed Dr Death, Jayant Patel, has been giving telephone interviews to journalists.
INSIDE PAGE 6

THE WOMAN WHO EXPOSED THE FRAUD
 A nurse nicknamed Erin Brockovich blew the whistle on Dr Death two years ago but no one would listen. Toni Hoffman, a senior nurse with more than two decades of experience, is Bundaberg's overnight hero.
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- >> **2800 HOMES**
- >> **12,450 BARGAINS**
- >> **2450 VEHICLES**

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Weather

Brisbane	Shower or two	Max 27
Gold Coast	Shower or two	Max 26
Sunshine Coast	Few showers	Max 25
Townsville	Mostly fine	Max 31
Rockhampton	Fine	Max 30
Cairns	Mostly fine	Max 29
Townsville	Fine	Max 26

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