



Communication lifts our daily life

SOCIAL isolation and frustration are just some of the impacts Mackay resident with communication difficulties can experience but this week Queensland Health hopes to break down the barriers with speech pathology.

Mackay Base Hospital's senior speech pathologist Annette Butterworth said it was important for everyone to recognise the importance of communication and to raise awareness in the Mackay community for Speech Pathology Week.

"This year Speech Pathology Week's theme – Communicate to Participate – highlights how communication difficulties can impact day-to-day life," Ms Butterworth said.

"We know that communication difficulties can have a major impact on health, wellbeing and quality of life.

"Being able to communicate helps to connect with people, build friendships and participate in discussions, decisions, social events and work activities.

"Communication difficulties include problems with speech, hearing, reading, writing and using and understanding language."

Ms Butterworth said communication difficulties could have an impact upon people at any stage of their life, from birth or following an incident.

"Communication difficulties in children are often associated

with premature birth, hearing impairment, cerebral palsy and autism. A person can also develop problems later in life as the result of stroke or degenerative disease.

"Speech pathologists help to improve a person's speech and language skills. And for those who have more severe disorders, techniques including picture boards, gestures and signing assist them to participate more fully in everyday interactions and activities."

If you are concerned about a friend or family member who might have a communication difficulty, encourage them to visit a speech pathologist or make enquiries at their local educational or health service.



Mackay Base Hospital senior speech pathologist Annette Butterworth, left, and a colleague, Ursula Dixon, discuss the importance of Speech Pathology Week.

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