

MEDIA RELEASE

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Bundaberg hospital campaigner wins award

Embargo: 1pm Friday 17 February.

Beryl Crosby, the president of the Bundaberg Hospital Patients' Support Group, has won a prestigious legal award – the 2006 Australian Lawyers Alliance Queensland Civil Justice Award.

Lawyers Alliance president Richard Faulks said the award recognises unsung heroes who have shown a high degree of personal commitment, achieved an outcome of significance to the community and made an enduring contribution through their actions.

“Ms Crosby is an admirable recipient of the award, having devoted countless hours to assisting hundreds of former patients of Dr Jayant Patel and the Bundaberg Base Hospital in their fight for justice and proper medical treatment,” Mr Faulks said.

“Although she has no training in the law, politics or media relations she has selflessly volunteered her time, acting as the primary liaison between the hospital administration, government officials, the media and patients, former patients and their families.”

“She has organised, and continues to organise, medical treatment for those in need, counselled and consoled those who have suffered great loss and demanded answers from Queensland Health and the Queensland Government, all while dealing with her own pain and sorrow.”

Ms Crosby said she was “overwhelmed and very humbled” at winning the award.

“But this award’s not about me, it’s about the patients who have suffered and the committee of our support group.”

“Without the tireless work of the committee, who are former patients of Dr Patel, we could not have achieved everything we have and this award is as much for them as it is for me,” Ms Crosby said.

Ms Crosby was diagnosed by Dr Patel as suffering from terminal cancer, but was in fact suffering from an unrelated and non-life-threatening medical condition.

“Were it not for Beryl Crosby’s tireless fight for justice, the Bundaberg Hospital Commission of Inquiry and the most wide-ranging review of the public health system in Queensland history may never have happened,” Mr Faulks said.

Note: The 2005 Civil Justice Award will be presented at the Australian Lawyers Alliance Queensland Conference at 12.15pm, Friday 17 February at the Gold Coast Royal Pines Resort.

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