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Arts and Health Australia Award for Excellence in Architecture and Design

Corbett Lyon, Director of leading architectural practice Lyons, has won the 2010 Arts and Health Australia Award for Excellence in Architecture, Design and the Healthcare Environment for work on the new Queensland Children's Hospital (QCH) in Brisbane.

Lyons is designing the QCH project in conjunction with Conrad Gargett in Brisbane.

Presenting the award at the 2nd International Arts and Health Conference at the University of Melbourne last week, Mr Naj Wikoff, President Emeritus of the Society for Arts and Healthcare in Washington DC said "the project was visionary and an inspired demonstration of the methods and benefits of incorporating the arts from the beginning of the design process.

Lyon gave one of the Keynote Addresses to the Conference on the QCH project design, which incorporates a strong cultural input to achieve more patient focussed outcomes.

Mr Lyon told the Conference there had been a disappointing trend over recent decades to continue to focus on functionalist and medico-centric models in healthcare design.

"Healthcare facilities and hospitals have too often become highly institutionalised and alienating environments.

"By adopting a more patient-focused and humanist approach centred on the integration of art and cultural programs in the design process, architects have a key role to play in helping achieve more patient-friendly outcomes.

"We need to shift away from the prevailing functionalist and medico-centric models to a new paradigm where families and patients are put at the centre," Mr Lyon said. "Art and cultural ideas are key to this success".

A curatorial panel with visual arts, performing arts and education experts are working with Conrad Gargett Lyons and Queensland Health to collaborate on the installation of fixed artworks, sculpture, video and performing arts programs at the new hospital.

“We and the extended project stakeholder group on QCH are bringing new patient-focused delivery models which link architecture, art and a range of cultural programs together in an integrated way to create a new form of supportive environment for this Statewide facility.

“With QCH a cultural priority is intrinsic to the design of the building. The design concept is inspired by a living tree narrative with local stories, local vegetation and history reflected in the art programmes and art installations which are to be built into the building.

“As a place where young children, young adults and their families come to access treatment and ongoing support they need to feel at ease in what has traditionally been a highly institutionalised and alienating environment.

“This is a major paradigm shift not only for hospital administrators but for healthcare planners and designers – but the time is right for us to rethink how our major healthcare facilities are recast in a more humanist and patient focused way through a greater cultural input. All of the worldwide research is now starting to support this,” Mr Lyon said.

Margret Meagher, Executive Director of Arts and Health Australia said “There is a strong business case for integrating arts and health programs and design principles into new health facilities. Corbett Lyon’s personal interest in art and music gives insight into the connections between creativity, health and wellbeing. He is a leader in the field as evidenced by Conrad Gettys’ vision for the new Queensland Children’s Hospital.”

The new Queensland Children’s Hospital has commenced construction and will be completed progressively by 2014.

Corbett Lyon has been invited to present the case study on QCH at the US International Art and Health Conference in 2012.

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Images of the Queensland Children’s Hospital available upon request

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