



# Year in Review 2023

### Acknowledgement of Country

The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Leadership Team pays respect to the Dalungbara/Djoondaburri, Gubbi Gubbi/Kabi Kabi, Jagera/Yuggera/ Ugarapul, Jinibara/Jiniburi, Ninghi, Turrbal and Undumbi people of Metro North Hospital and Health Service area, on who's lands we walk, work, talk and live. We also acknowledge and pay our respect to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elders both past and present.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander readers are warned that this publication may contain images or names of people who have passed away.

### Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Leadership Team

If you have any feedback regarding Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander services, programs and initiatives, you can contact the following:

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#### On the front cover:

Better Together artwork by Elaine Chambers-Hegarty

# BETTER TOGETHER

A BETTER LIFESTYLE THROUGH OUR HEALTH CARERS

BY ELAINE CHAMBERS-HEGARTY



My design has the inspiration of the Moreton Bay region, and concentrates on the Closing the Gap Plan and what it delivers for our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in our community and the positive outcome it brings to the health and wellbeing of our mob.

Four icons that flow across the artwork, shows a timeline from the care and strong start to life when a child is born, then onto a healthy heart beat and hands to embrace showing the care of our people to influence a healthy lifestyle to reduce the burden of disease. The next icon shows the tree and represents growth and complex care of those in need. There are two message stick symbols that represent the communication with cultural awareness given from the staff during times of crisis. Whilst the last icon which has the medical cross and the shape above of a gunya to represent care at home or elsewhere, and living longer with the care provided, taking into account the social, emotional, and mental wellbeing of clients and their families.

Circle markings represent the gathering areas and the coming together in community. The crosshatching in my artwork represents the structure and support of the policies established amongst the plan - similar to the crosshatchings on a weaving and how it all holds combines together. Whilst the middle image of the people show them as enjoying the healthy outcomes. I have added the two animals that are relevant to this area, and was a food source for the people many years ago.

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## EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S FOREWORD

In 2023 we focused our efforts on the development of the [Metro North Health Equity Implementation and Evaluation Plan 2022–2025](#) in partnership with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elders, community stakeholders, our Executive team within Metro North Health and external partner organisations.

The actions outlined in the Implementation and Evaluation Plan are designed to demonstrate a commitment to the health equity reform agenda and improve health outcomes of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples across the whole health care system.

We successfully delivered our first two rounds of evaluation reporting for the Metro North Health Equity Strategy. A total of 24 actions were due for completion in 2022-2023 and 2023-2024 and I was pleased that majority are completed or well underway to create meaningful change across the organisation.

The Health Equity Strategy continues to be our direction and focus of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health agenda as this is our guiding plan developed with and for community. This plan is not just ours to create system impact and change, it is the foundation for all our work and direct reflection of the voices of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community.

I would like to acknowledge and thank our valued Elders, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community members, staff, and partnership organisations for continuing to walk this journey with us. We are privileged to have you turn up to each of our Health Equity workshops, cultural events, and yarning gatherings, this ensures we continue to co-design and meet our community expectations.

This acknowledgement extends to our Metro North Health Board, Chief Executive Jackie Hanson, Chief Operating Officer Jane Hancock, and Executive Leaders, who continue to advocate for our mob at the highest level and provide supportive leadership to enact organisational change.

I am humbled each year to read the stories featured within our annual 'year in review' as a reflection on our exceptional services, programs, and community successes. As this report will be formally launched at our Metro North Health Equity Showcase on December 6, I look forward to the opportunity to thanking Elders, community members, staff and partnership organisations in person. This event provides us the opportunity to learn about the achievements over the past 12 months, and the opportunity to sit and reflect together on our successful journey and learnings.

I look forward to working with you again in 2024 and hope you enjoy a well-deserved break with family and friends over the Christmas/New Year period.

Until next time, stay safe and deadly.

**Sherry Holzapfel**  
Executive Director  
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health

# EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S FOOTPRINTS



## JANUARY

- Meet and Greet with Wellbeing Queensland
- Inaugural meeting – First Nations Health Leads Forum



## FEBRUARY

- 10 February – Clinical Directorate Leadership mini tour of Caboolture Hospital
- 14 February – Yarns with Sherry at Redcliffe Hospital
- 27 February – TPCH 'Turrbal Country' First Nations Community and Consumer Connection



## MARCH

- 1 March – Metro North Health's Journey to Health Equity – Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Showcase
- 6 March – SEQ First Nations Health Equity (FNHE) Workforce Symposium
- 7 March – A&TSILT Team Building and Planning Day
- 17 March – Yarns with Sherry at Royal Brisbane and Women's Hospital
- 21 March – MN Executive Leaders Program 2023 (ELP)



## APRIL

- 17 April – Filming for Helix Hub Introduction film
- 18 April – Metro North Health Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Staff Forum



# EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S FOOTPRINTS (CONTINUED)



## MAY

- 1 May – Metro North Workforce Reform Summit
- 3 May – First Nations Health Leads Forum
- 9 May – Operations Executive Planning Workshop
- 31 May – Gwandalan Workshop



## JUNE

- 9 June – Helix Hub Launch
- 13 June – Yarns with Sherry at The Prince Charles Hospital
- 14 June – Mabo Day celebrations at Brighton Wellness Hub
- 26 June – Deadly Start School Based Traineeship Orientation
- 26 June – Elders Yarns



## JULY

- 3 July – NAIDOC Elders Luncheon
- 4 July – Police Headquarters NAIDOC Week Flag Raising Ceremony and Morning Tea
- 4 July – Northside NAIDOC Family Fun Day Celebration
- 5 July – NAIDOC Week VIDCAST with CE
- 6 July – NAIDOC Week guest speakers "The Domo Boys"
- 24 July – Elders Monthly Yarns
- 31 July – Caboolture Satellite Hospital Community Open Day



## AUGUST



- 16 August – Workshop with Glenn Singleton, Founder and Chief Executive Officer, Courageous Conversation
- 23 August – Health Equity External Partners Workshop at The Prince Charles Hospital



## SEPTEMBER

- 7 September – Staff Listening Post at The Prince Charles Hospital
- 18 September – Elders Monthly Yarns
- 19 September – Health Equity Measures Workshop 2 – Community Engagement



## NOVEMBER

- 3 November – Official Launch of People and Culture Health Equity Committee
- 13 – 17 November – The Leadership Institute, Indigenous Leadership Summit in Sydney
- 20 November – Elders Monthly Yarns
- 21 November – Kallangur Satellite Hospital Elders Tour
- 23 November – Executive Leaders Program 2023, Cohort 9 Graduation and Networking
- 30 November – QuaRRIES Awards Ceremony



## OCTOBER

- 11 October – Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Women's Cultural Gathering Day at Bribie Island
- 12-13 October – 2023 South East Queensland – First Nations Health Equity in Action Conference
- 25 October – Australian Indigenous HealthInfoNet Brisbane Roundtable (representing CE)

## DECEMBER

- 6 December – Metro North Health's Journey to Health Equity Showcase
- 15 December – Staff Excellence Awards
- Metro North Chief Executive, Chief Operating Officer and Elders Christmas lunch with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Leadership Team
- 20 December – Metro North Health Equity Vidcast with Chief Executive

## KEY HIGHLIGHTS FROM 2023

### 358 HEALTH PROMOTION MESSAGES

shared via the Better Together social media platforms



\*Metro North Health Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander (MOHR) headcount, for 2022/2023 financial year has increased from

**312 to 389**

(19.79% increase as opposed to 5.44% increase in 2021/2022)



# 23



### STUDENTS GRADUATE THE DEADLY START PROGRAM

\*Birth rates FY 2022/23

\*Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Women who gave birth in Metro North facilities -

**504**

\*Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Babies born in Metro North facilities -

**721**



\* Number of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander patients accessing Metro North Health (FY 22-23)

**OUTPATIENTS**  
**18,094**



**INPATIENT**  
**74,302**

**EMERGENCY**  
**21,393**



# OUR JOURNEY TOWARDS HEALTH EQUITY



On July 4, 2022, Metro North Health created history as the first HHS to launch our Health Equity Strategy under the new amendments to the Hospital and Health Boards Act 2011 and the Hospital and Health Boards Regulation 2012.

The [Metro North Health Equity Strategy 2022-2025](#) describes our commitment to drive health equity, eliminate institutional racism across the public health system and achieve life expectancy parity for Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples by 2031. The strategy also describes our commitment for cultural change and consists of five priority areas for inclusion in our local strategy:

1. Actively eliminate racial discrimination and institutional racism within the service.
2. Increasing access to healthcare services.
3. Delivering sustainable, culturally safe and responsive healthcare services.
4. Influencing the social, cultural and economic determinants of health.
5. Working with First Nations peoples, communities and organisations to design, deliver, monitor and review health services.

Highlights successfully led by the Health Equity Program Team during the 2022-23 period include –

## UPSKILLING THE WORKFORCE

- Delivery of Virtual Courageous Conversations about Race workshops.
- Health Equity training to over 750 Nurses (grade 6, 7 and 8).
- Health Equity yarning circles and workshops with Executives and Senior Leadership teams across Metro North Health directorates.
- Development of directorate level Health Equity Implementation Plans.
- Co-design workshops with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff and community to develop qualitative measures.
- Development of an internal Health Equity Committee to support the Health Equity actions aligned to the People and Culture Unit.



## OUR JOURNEY TOWARDS HEALTH EQUITY *...continued*

- Continued commitment to authentic engagement with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elders, patients, consumers and community members.
- Social and Emotional Wellbeing Officers supporting the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workforce as we embed health equity across Metro North Health.
- Development or re-alignment to have a Health Equity Committee within each Directorate.
- Health Equity Research Officer position established within the Research Unit.
- Temporary Identified position within the People and Culture Unit to focus on Health Equity.
- Launch of a Metro North Health Statement of Commitment to Reconciliation unveiled at the March Health Equity workshop.
- Senior Indigenous Health Worker at Caboolture, Kilcoy and Woodford Directorate – with a focus on engaging and offering culturally responsive health care services in the Emergency Department to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander patients and families.
- Outreach clinics – Deadly Feet – engaging with our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community with non-Government Organisations, with a focus on engaging with patients who are disengaged with Metro North Health.
- Co-design and workshops with our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community to gain a better understanding of how Metro North Health can better collect patient and community feedback – development in process of new measures for feedback.

### CLINICAL IMPROVEMENTS

- Addition of an Identified nurse position working in the Caboolture, Kilcoy and Woodford Directorate outpatients to decrease 'Did Not Attend' to offer culturally responsive services.
- Increased Indigenous Hospital Liaison services at Redcliffe Hospital.

Plans for the Metro North Health Equity program team in 2024 include the development of a compulsory 1-hour training module on the Health Equity Strategy and journey for Metro North Health staff, further training modules for Metro North Staff relating to the key priority areas, ongoing co-design workshops, development of a consumer group for health equity and a mental health consumer group.



# Health Equity Roadmap 2023

## Metro North Health

### January

- Redcliffe Hospital Expansion Project (12/01/23)
- Metro North Health Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Oversight Committee (12/01/23)
- Redcliffe Hospital Health Equity Steering Committee (17/01/23)
- RBWH Health Equity Committee (23/01/23)
- Health Equity implementation discussion - Metro North Mental Health (25/01/23)

### February

- Caboolture and Kilcoy Hospitals and Woodford Corrections Health (CKW) in-service planning (06/02/23)
- TPCH Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Services Steering Committee (09/02/23)
- Presentation to People & Culture team (14/02/23)
- Health Equity in-service for Metro North Health Nursing and Midwifery service (16/02/23)

### March

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Showcase (01/03/23)
- TPCH Health Equity implementation planning (15/03/23)

### April

- CKW Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Equity in-service (03/04/23)

### May

- Metro North Health and Queensland Ambulance Service Health Equity discussion (03/05/23)
- Health Equity Workshops:
  - Community and Oral Health (11/05/23)
  - RBWH (17/05/23)
  - CKW (23/05/23)

### June

- CKW Health Equity in-service (21/06/23)

### July

- STARS Health Equity Workshop 1 (11/07/23)
- COH Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Equity Working Groups (17/07/23)

### August

- Metro North Health Health Equity Measures Workshop 1 (03/08/23)
- STARS Health Equity Workshop 2 (31/08/23)

### September

- Nurse Grade 7 and 8 Health Equity workshops and training (01/09/23, 27/09/23, 29/09/23)
- Follow up yarns and mapping - Health Equity Consumer Groups (13/09/23)
- Metro North Health Equity Measures Community Workshop 2 (19/09/23)
- Inaugural Yarning Circle - People and Culture Health Equity Committee (19/09/23)

### October

- People & Culture Health Equity Committee yarning circles and workshop (10/10/23)
- Nurse Grade 7 and 8 workshop (31/10/23)

### November

- People & Culture Health Equity Committee launch (03/11/23)

### December

- Metro North Health Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Showcase (06/12/23)

# HEALTH PREVENTION PROGRAMS



## Sistas Shawl initiative shines

**Breast cancer remains the most common cancer diagnosed in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women; however, many women are not attending for regular breast screens with screening participation rates lower for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women compared to non-Indigenous women. Reasons for this may be due to the shame and discomfort women feel when having to undress in front of a stranger, or the fear of receiving bad results.**

Breast Screen Queensland (BSQ) Brisbane Northside Service introduced the Sistas Shawl initiative in October 2022, in an effort to increase the screening rates of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women, and alleviate the shame and discomfort experienced when attending for a breast screen.

The Sistas Shawl initiative has so far proven successful, with many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women, such as proud Tharawal woman Colleen (pictured), expressing their gratitude for the shawl.

“Wearing the Sistas Shawl when screening helped me to feel more comfortable, and less exposed. The Sistas Shawl gave me that little bit of extra dignity when having my breast screen done,” said Colleen.

When attending for her recent breast screen, not only did the Sistas Shawl provide a sense of culturally safety for Colleen, but she was also pleasantly surprised to see

artwork encasing one of the walls from top to bottom when she stepped into the screening room.

Colleen was one of the first few women to see the new mural on display at the BSQ Redcliffe clinic, featuring the artwork ‘A Woman’s Dreaming’, by Aboriginal artist Sharon McAvoy.

The Sistas Shawl, along with the addition of the new mural aims to help Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women feel culturally safe and more comfortable during their breast screen.

A breast screen is recommended every two years for those aged 50 – 74. Free screening is also available for women in their 40s and those over 75 years. Regular screening and early detection remain important factors in improving survival rates for those diagnosed with breast cancer.



Increasing access to  
healthcare services

### Aligns to Health Equity KPA 2

**Action 2.5 B:** Explore and implement opportunistic screening in the community healthcare teams including cervical cancer, bowel cancer, diabetes and chronic kidney disease.

**SEQ Measure** - Increase number and proportion of BreastScreen participation.

## Better Together Medication Access Program delivers enhanced access to discharge medications for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander patients

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander patients at Metro North Health continue to 'opt in' to the Better Together Medication Access (BTMA) program designed to provide discharge medication at no out of pocket expense to the patient and assist their healing journey back home.

BTMA, launched in October 2020, is a co-payment subsidy program to provide Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander patients with access to discharge medication from the hospital pharmacy.

Patients that identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander origin upon admission to a Metro North Health hospital or facility are given the choice to opt-in to the BTMA program. If they do so, the discharge medication script is taken to a Metro North Health pharmacy and the medication is supplied with no out of pocket cost to the patient.

Since implementation, BTMA has been accessed 5700 times on discharge – an average of 5 discharges a day across Metro North Health.

16,500 medication items have been covered under BTMA, with Metro North Health covering patient co-payments.

All-cause readmissions to hospital within 28 days of discharge has dropped by 50% for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander patients since the program was implemented and this has been a sustained reduction over the years.

This is suggestive of patients being kept healthier for longer after discharge, and therefore not needing to come back to hospital.

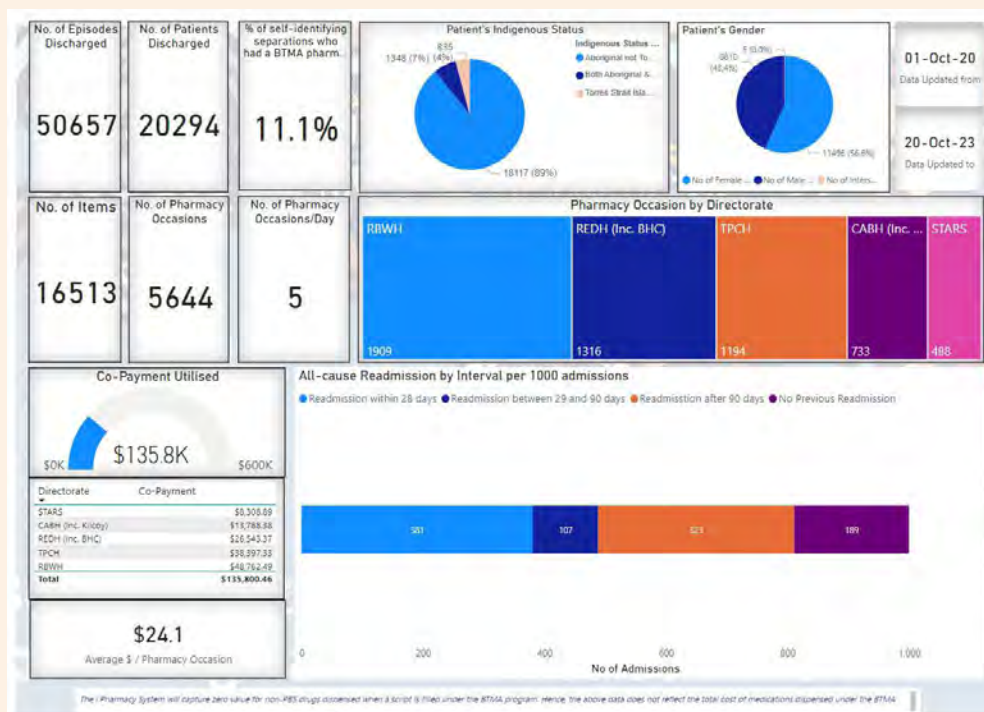
A stakeholder information toolkit and a series of



educational films have been developed to support the roll-out of the program to other Hospital and Health Services across the State.

The program has not only led to improved patient outcomes but allowed Metro North Health to improve cultural capability and staff relationships, links to services upon discharge and created future collaboration opportunities.

Further information and the educational films can be accessed via the Better Together Health Van website – <https://metronorth.health.qld.gov.au/better-together-van/healthcare-services>.



Influencing the social, cultural and economic determinants of health

Aligns to Health Equity KPA 4

**Action 4.2 E:** Evaluate the impacts that current Metro North Health programs like Deadly Start, Women's Business Shared Pathway and Better Together Medication Access have on improving the social and cultural determinants of health and ensure the learnings are implemented broadly.

## Deadly Feet making steps to providing care closer to home

Deadly Feet is a co-designed multidisciplinary outreach model improving clinical pathways and outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander patients with foot disease through early detection of disease, implementation of risk modification plans and treatment of foot conditions. This is achieved by delivering podiatry, vascular sonography, and vascular specialist services to patients in a culturally appropriate manner, closer to home and with the support of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workforce.

As a result of extensive consultation with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander patients, communities, leadership, and peers during implementation, Deadly Feet developed a sound understanding of community need as well as the barriers community face accessing vascular health care, and modifications to the model of care were made. These changes include the addition of education and opportunistic screening by Deadly Feet at local community events, assistance with transport costs associated with attending the clinic, a second service delivery site based at a primary care facility and established processes to support self-referrals into the service.

Relationships developed between Deadly Feet and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander leaders and peers provided opportunities for the Deadly Feet team to attend 12 local community events. At these events staff engaged with over 300 community members, provided preventative education about foot disease, opportunistically screened 144 community members via the Metro North Health Better Together Health Van and referred 45 of those into Deadly Feet clinics for formal review.

In April 2023, Deadly Feet successfully commenced delivering a culturally responsive multidisciplinary foot assessment and treatment service at Redcliffe Hospital and in September 2023, with encouragement from the Metro North Health Aboriginal and Torres Strait



Islander Leadership Team and in partnership with the Institute for Urban Indigenous Health (IUIH), Deadly Feet established a second service at Caboolture Moreton Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community Health Service (MATSICHS). Both clinics run once a month with 126 eligible referrals received, 112 appointments scheduled, and 89 patients formally reviewed since their commencement.

Early feedback indicates positive patient experience and outcomes. To date, 64 patients have kindly provided feedback on the program. Importantly, 64 out of 64 consumers felt Deadly Feet was culturally appropriate and would recommend the Deadly Feet program to family, friends, and community, demonstrating success. Specific feedback received from patients regarding the program (see next page).

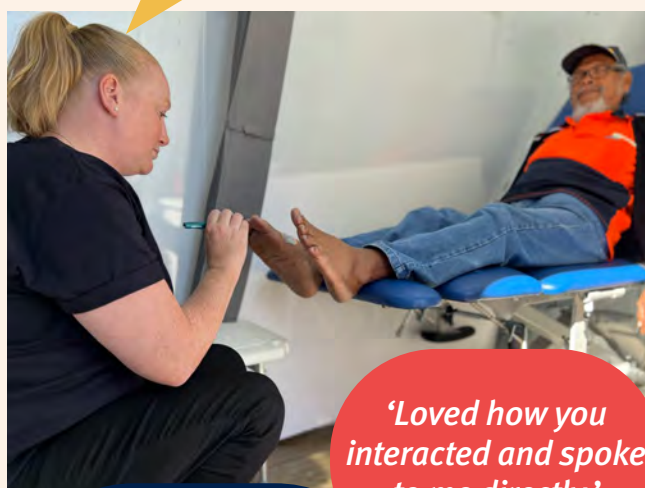
Deadly Feet will remain guided by the voices of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities it provides care for and look forward to the opportunity to continue to meet with and learn from community while exploring opportunities to expand the service.





*'You've got a good team in there. Everybody explained everything properly.'*

*'You were kind and helpful and very respectful.'*



*'Loved how you interacted and spoke to me directly.'*

*'Happy with scan of arteries - good to know what's going on, so you can keep an eye on it.'*



Increasing access to healthcare services



Delivering sustainable, culturally safe and responsive healthcare services



Working with First Nations peoples, communities, and organisations to design, deliver, monitor and review health services

#### Aligns to Health Equity KPA 2, KPA 3 and KPA 5

**Action 2.7 A:** Establish models of care that deliver care closer to home in partnerships with, and/ or by commissioning from Community Controlled Health Services: e.g. Hospitals in the Home and shared specialist clinics and satellite hospitals.

**Action 2.5 A:** Create an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Worker/ Practitioner outreach program to deliver intervention and prevention programs.

**Action 2.5 B:** Explore and implement opportunistic screening in the community healthcare teams including cervical cancer, bowel cancer, diabetes and chronic kidney disease.

**Action 3.2 A:** Implement culturally safe and responsive services.

**Action 5.1 A:** Build and strengthen relationships with community before, during and after healthcare is needed.

**Action 5.3 A:** Contribute to existing successful community networks and partnerships and share resources to deliver services that meet community needs.



The Urban Indigenous Respiratory Outreach Clinic (UROC) provides specialist Indigenous respiratory outreach clinics, including same day lung function testing at Margate and Morayfield Moreton Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community Health Service (MATSICHS) centres in partnership with the Institute for Urban Indigenous Health (IUIH).

People identifying as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander who are requiring specialist respiratory care are given the option to attend at a culturally safe and respectful IUIH clinic. UROC's aim is to improve attendance to specialist appointments, connect with primary health providers for ongoing management and redirect referrals from Metro North acute care facilities into the community.

Since UROC's establishment in October 2022, 121 referrals have been received, 105 referrals have been accepted as appropriate by UROC clinicians and 83 new patients seen over the 36 clinics that have been completed.



One hundred percent of patients that completed the consumer experience survey rated the care they received during their appointment as either good or very good. One hundred percent of patients who completed the survey also stated that their cultural and spiritual needs have been met.

UROC is continuing to transition to business as usual, and is in the process of recruiting a full-time administration officer to work across both UROC and Heart Outreach Program for Health Equity (HOPE) clinics.



Increasing access to healthcare services



Delivering sustainable, culturally safe and responsive healthcare services



Influencing the social, cultural and economic determinants of health



Working with First Nations peoples, communities, and organisations to design, deliver, monitor and review health services

#### Aligns to Health Equity KPA 2, KPA 3, KPA 4 and KPA 5

**Action 2.7 A:** Establish models of care that deliver care closer to home in partnerships with, and/or by commissioning from Community Controlled Health Services: e.g. Hospitals in the Home and shared specialist clinics and satellite hospitals.

**Action 2.9 V:** Monitor the effectiveness of cardiac care including the Indigenous Cardiac Outreach Program.

**Action 3.2 A:** Implement culturally safe and responsive services.

**Action 4.5 D:** Contribute towards building the capacity of Community Networks, Not-for-Profit and Non-Government Organisations within community through the establishment of joint ventures, partnerships and service delivery to meet the cultural, social and economic determinants of our community.

**Action 5.3 A:** Contribute to existing successful community networks and partnerships and share resources to deliver services that meet community needs.

## HOPE

The Heart Outreach Program for Health Equity (HOPE) initiative aims to improve Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples heart health by providing specialist cardiology Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander clinics at the Institute for Urban Indigenous Health (IUIH) community centres.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples who attend the HOPE clinic will have access to specialty cardiac investigations (including ECG, holter, and echo services) and see a specialist cardiology physician, avoiding the need to attend an acute Metro North facility. Timely, culturally safe and responsive access to specialty cardiology assessment and intervention for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples will facilitate early diagnosis and management of cardiovascular conditions.

HOPE project planning, recruitment, and procurement as of October 2023 is continuing with an estimated clinic start in November 2023.



Increasing access to healthcare services



Delivering sustainable, culturally safe and responsive healthcare services



Influencing the social, cultural and economic determinants of health



Working with First Nations peoples, communities, and organisations to design, deliver, monitor and review health services

Aligns to Health Equity KPA 2, KPA 3, KPA 4 and KPA 5

**Action 2.7 A:** Establish models of care that deliver care closer to home in partnerships with, and/or by commissioning from Community Controlled Health Services: e.g. Hospitals in the Home and shared specialist clinics and satellite hospitals.

**Action 2.9 V:** Monitor the effectiveness of cardiac care including the Indigenous Cardiac Outreach Program.

**Action 2.9 U:** Deliver on the five key priority areas outlined in the Ending Rheumatic Heart Disease: Queensland's First Nations Strategy 2021- 2024.

**Action 3.2 A:** Implement culturally safe and responsive services.

**Strategy 3.3:** Strengthen partnerships with the primary healthcare networks, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community Controlled Services and other agencies for culturally safe and responsive shared care, transitions and discharge for patients and their carers.

**Action 4.5 D:** Contribute towards building the capacity of Community Networks, Not-for-Profit and Non-Government Organisations within community through the establishment of joint ventures, partnerships and service delivery to meet the cultural, social and economic determinants of our community.

**Action 5.3 A:** Contribute to existing successful community networks and partnerships and share resources to deliver services that meet community needs.

**Action 5.4 A:** Invest in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Worker positions to coordinate health promotion and early intervention outreach activities in partnership with community organisations and communities to improve access to healthcare and deliver holistic care.



## IUIH Cardiac and Pulmonary Rehabilitation

The Institute for Urban Indigenous Health (IUIH) are delivering a new service that provides specialised cardiac and pulmonary rehabilitation for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. The service is a culturally safe alternative to hospital rehabilitation and is for high acuity Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander patients who could subsequently transition into the IUIH service.

This service is delivered in partnership with Metro North Health, Metro South HHS, West Moreton HHS and Gold Coast HHS, and is funded by the Connected Communities Pathway (CCP) program.

The program's aim is to deliver rehabilitation services closer to home, provide culturally appropriate care, support hospital discharge, and reduce emergency department presentations.

The Cardiac Rehabilitation and Pulmonary Rehabilitation services have received 166 and 126 referrals respectively since their commencement in February of 2023. Collectively, 40 referrals have been received from the HHS's and 117 assessments have been conducted, with 26 clients graduating from a total of 89 participants thus far.



Increasing access to healthcare services



Delivering sustainable, culturally safe and responsive healthcare services



Influencing the social, cultural and economic determinants of health

Aligns to Health Equity KPA 2, KPA 3 and KPA 4

**Action 2.7 A:** Establish models of care that deliver care closer to home in partnerships with, and/or by commissioning from Community Controlled Health Services.

**Action 3.2 A:** Implement culturally safe and responsive services.

**Action 4.2 B:** Strengthen current pathways and co-design models of care with other Government and Non- Government organisations.

## Tamaya - (First Nations Health Equity Council)



The Tamaya (Tago magul yadeni) Heart Lung First Nations Health Equity Council was started in 2021 to provide advice and offer guidance and direction to Metro North Heart Lung Stream health services and projects.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and their carers, who have experience of Metro North Health services (consumers), are invited to be members of Tamaya to work together with Metro North Health staff to journey towards health equity for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

The purpose of Tamaya is to be the messengers and voices to the Heart and Lung Stream, embedding health equity into their knowledges and practices by working with community. Tamaya will address the current health inequities and disparities across heart and lung clinical services and address the social and cultural determinants of health to inform the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander initiatives outlined but not limited to the Heart and Lung Clinical Stream Workplan. It is acknowledged that lessons from the COVID-19 pandemic response and experiences will further impact Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health outcomes and the work of this council.

Tamaya is led jointly by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander consumers, Metro North Health Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Leadership Team and Metro North Heart Lung Stream. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander leadership is essential, and we work Better Together.



Influencing the social, cultural and economic determinants of health

### Aligns to Health Equity KPA 4

**Action 4.2 B:** Strengthen current pathways and co-design models of care with other Government and Non- Government organisations.

## IUIH Post Operative Rehabilitation

The Adult Post Operative Rehabilitation Service through the Institute for Urban Indigenous Health provides clients over the age of 18 with recent (up to 12months) surgery to access allied health and equipment support for safety and recovery.

The service supports clients physical recovery after surgery, share knowledge of surgeries and healing to provide reassurance and empowerment, and gives clients an option to participate in rehabilitation closer to home (e.g. clinic, local park, gym, pool or at home).

Delivered in partnership with Metro North Health, Metro South HHS, West Moreton HHS, and Gold Coast HHS, and supported by the Department of Health Making Tracks funding, this program aims to:

- Offer a rehabilitation service closer to home
- Provide care and support in a culturally responsive, timely and flexible way
- Decrease concerns and empower clients in their recovery
- Support clients to achieve their goals

The Adult Post Operative Rehabilitation Service has received 84 referrals and 257 occasions of service since commencing the service in March 2023.



Increasing access to healthcare services



Delivering sustainable, culturally safe and responsive healthcare services

### Aligns to Health Equity KPA 2 and KPA 3

**Action 2.7 A:** Establish models of care that deliver care closer to home in partnerships with, and/ or by commissioning from Community Controlled Health Services.

**Action 2.8 C:** Support establishment of community controlled and Metro North Health aftercare services upon discharge from hospital and improve coordination of care between our partners.

**Action 3.2 A:** Implement culturally safe and responsive services.



## Caboolture Satellite Hospital opened to community

The new Caboolture Satellite Hospital opened its doors to the public for the first time in August.

This new facility offers a variety of healthcare services for the local community including walk-in urgent care for common injuries and illnesses like broken bones, infections, strains and sprains, minor head injuries, minor eye issues, wounds and fevers, hospital dental including dental surgery, sleep services clinic, mental health care and an exciting new Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Hub.

With the three new satellite hospitals up and running – Kallangur and Bribie Island Satellite Hospital due to open later this year and early next year - Metro North Health hope to reduce some of the pressure on local hospital emergency departments and provide healthcare quickly and closer to home.

Through the development process of the new satellite hospitals, local Traditional Owner artists were engaged to create beautiful artwork telling the story of the local areas and healthcare journeys on which the facilities are located. Each hospital will display their own dedicated artwork throughout the building structure to provide a culturally welcoming environment upon entry and navigation through the facilities health services.

Each facility will have their own dedicated Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Hub. The new health hubs will provide a culturally safe space for health services to conduct assessments and improve access to care closer to home for the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community and their immediate family. They will be supported by an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Nurse Navigator, Health Worker, and a male and female Community Engagement Officer to support Men's and Women's business.

The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Nurse Navigator service is a referral and linkage service to connect tertiary, primary and community health networks to the needs of the patient. This patient centred teamwork approach forms and develops an effective team that delivers exceptional culturally safe care to patients and community.

Other services provided at the health hub, including the Ngarrama maternal health and perinatal mental health, will connect community to an appropriate healthcare provider such as GPs, hospitals or community health centres through a referral pathway providing ease of access and support to the patient's healthcare journey.

For more information about the Caboolture, Bribie Island and Kallangur Satellite Hospital's visit: [www.metrnorth.health.qld.gov.au/hospitals-services/satellite-hospitals](http://www.metrnorth.health.qld.gov.au/hospitals-services/satellite-hospitals)



Increasing access to healthcare services



Delivering sustainable, culturally safe and responsive healthcare services



Working with First Nations peoples, communities, and organisations to design, deliver, monitor and review health services

### Aligns to Health Equity KPA 2, KPA 3 and KPA 5

**Action 2.4 A:** Provide private rooms in hospitals (including satellite hospitals) for families with access to necessities.

**Action 2.7 A:** Establish models of care that deliver care closer to home in partnerships with, and/or by commissioning from Community Controlled Health Services: e.g. Hospitals in the Home and shared specialist clinics and satellite hospitals.

**Action 2.8 E:** Explore opportunities for after-hours support from the satellite hospitals currently under development.

**Action 3.2 A:** Implement culturally safe and responsive services.

**Action 5.1 A:** Build and strengthen relationships with community before, during and after healthcare is needed.

**Action 5.1 F:** Develop regular yarning sessions between Traditional Owners and hospital staff around planned areas and settings.

# HOSPITAL ENVIRONMENT

The Redcliffe Hospital Reconciliation Action Plan Working Group has worked hard to continuously review their environment and promote the message ‘acknowledge the past, create the present, inspire the future’.

Message boards have been placed throughout the hospital campus to support both staff and community members. Messages include:

- Clinicians leading change for our community.
- Meet our team: Indigenous Hospital Liaison Services.
- Partnering with local organisations and understanding our community.



## Yarns with Redcliffe

The Redcliffe Hospital Cultural Capability Officer has led many yarning sessions throughout 2023 with hospital staff and community on key topics of interest and focus areas. Engagement with staff and community members continues to grow and strengthen together through these yarns.

There have been both official and more relaxed yarns, but the key messaging has always been consistent with Redcliffe Hospital reiterating their goal to ensure Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who access their healthcare services receive high quality and culturally appropriate care.

Yarning sessions in 2023 with community and staff have included:

- National Apology Day
- National Close the Gap Day

- Acknowledgement of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in armed services for ANZAC Day
- National Sorry Day
- National Reconciliation Week
- MABO Day
- National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children's Day



Actively eliminating racial discrimination and institutional racism within the service



Delivering sustainable, culturally safe and responsive healthcare services



Working with First Nations peoples, communities, and organisations to design, deliver, monitor and review health services

### Aligns to Health Equity KPA1, KPA 3, and KPA 5

**Action 1.2 D:** Develop a cultural events calendar to increase awareness of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander days of significance and support localised events.

**Action 1.5 B:** Develop a Metro North Health Statement of Commitment to Reconciliation supported by localised Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) Committees across each facility and directorate.

**Action 3.2 D:** Develop concierge roles/service to help people navigate and create a welcoming safe and responsive environment.

**Action 5.1 F:** Develop regular yarning sessions between Traditional Owners and hospital staff around planned areas and settings.

**Action 5.1 E:** Support and remunerate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community members, including Traditional Owners, Elders and consumers who partner with Metro North Health.



## Co-designing with our community

The Redcliffe Hospital Expansion Project has commenced in 2023 and includes the construction of a new clinical services building and refurbishing some of the existing hospital to deliver additional capacity across both clinical and facility support services.

The hospital expansion will improve the overall functionality and aesthetic of the facilities in line with modern standards, and meet the healthcare needs of the Redcliffe and surrounding communities.

To support the development of the project, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community members were engaged back in 2021 through the concept design consultation phase where two sessions were held. This information was included in the business case for the new development.

Redcliffe Hospital are currently in the schematic design stage of the expansion project which identifies the overarching layout of clinical and supporting areas including the emergency department, outpatients, birth suites and inpatient areas. User Groups have been established for key areas and community members have been engaged to participate. There are fifteen user groups with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community members working alongside clinicians and management to co-design service areas for the future.

As a result, there will be major inclusions to support a safe environment and safe access to health services at Redcliffe Hospital for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander patients, families, and visitors. This includes:

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Services and Liaison Services centrally located at the front of hospital.
- A dedicated Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander family room with access to an outdoor area located close by.
- Culturally friendly family area within Women's Health.
- Family, viewing and outdoor area supporting families of deceased patients.
- Open green space for meeting and gathering at the front of the hospital.

Through working together and co-design, our goal is to establish and embed a safe environment for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to have equitable access to high quality, culturally safe healthcare that meets theirs, their family and their carer's needs.

Work will continue into 2024 with community members to support more detailed planning including the models of care and services within Redcliffe Hospital.



## Redcliffe Hospital Reconciliation Action Plan

In September 2023, Reconciliation Australia formally endorsed Redcliffe Hospital's inaugural Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP). The development of the plan was led by the RAP Working Group which was established with staff and community members of Redcliffe Hospital who have a genuine interest in learning and understanding Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture and making reconciliation everyone's business.

This has supported the strong foundation and continuously working towards the vision to 'acknowledge the past, create the present, inspire the future'. The RAP Working Group has been strongly supported by Redcliffe Hospital leadership, and together have identified reconciliation initiatives and actions that support the hospital.

To date there have been many positive responses and now the hospital moves towards strongly and successfully implementing and embedding the initiatives and actions into everyday services.

Redcliffe Hospital launched the Reconciliation Action Plan on 2 November 2023 which was celebrated and supported by Traditional Owners, local Elders, community members, Metro North Health staff and executive.



Actively eliminating racial discrimination and institutional racism within the service

### Aligns to Health Equity KPA1

**Action 1.5 B:** Develop a Metro North Health Statement of Commitment to Reconciliation supported by localised Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) Committees across each facility and directorate.

# Health Equity funding supports new role for Mental Health and Alcohol and other Drugs (MHAOD) directorate

A new state-first position will be introduced at the Metro North Mental Health and Alcohol and other Drugs (MHAOD) directorate thanks to health equity funding.

The full-time position of Cultural Capability Officer (CCO) is unique in that it is new to the directorate and new to Queensland.

The role will support the delivery of projects targeted towards improving the health outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, working collaboratively with staff from across Metro North Health and in genuine partnership with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community.

Metro North Health Indigenous Mental Health Professional Lead, Chris Henaway, said the role would provide cultural leadership throughout Metro North Mental Health (MNMH) and lead activities to ensure services are culturally appropriate.

“This will include the coordination of continuous quality improvement initiatives, consumer engagement and liaison, staff education, review and monitoring of improvement, risks, and performance indicators to ensure optimum standards and outcomes for consumers and compliance with regulatory and accreditation standards,” said Chris.

The role will be responsible for the contribution to the Queensland Health Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultural Capability Framework 2010 – 2033 within MNMH and the Metro North Health Equity Strategy 2022-2025.

“The ultimate aim is to provide specialist cultural consultation to build capacity and knowledge for MNMH staff and continue to affect change in health outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples,” said Chris.

*“The ultimate aim is to provide specialist cultural consultation to build capacity and knowledge for MNMH staff and continue to affect change in health outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples,”*

The recruitment process is currently underway with a good response from applicants. MNMH is also hoping to recruit a temporary Project Cultural Capability Officer from the CCO applicant pool to work with the Mental Health Crisis Reform team.

Core duties of the Mental Health Cultural Capability Officer will include:

- Deliver the Cultural Practice Program across MNMH.
- Help launch programs, clinics, health equity initiatives, planning days and target areas for various teams and services.
- Be integral in the selection and recruitment process for all identified positions in MNMH.
- Contribute and attend community events such as NAIDOC week to ensure cultural safety and sensitivity and to be a representative of MNMH.
- Develop and maintain strong working relationships and partnerships with staff across MNMH and community.
- Provide ongoing cultural consultation to support manager in implementing the Metro North Health Equity Strategy and finding creative and innovative ways to address the 5 key priority areas.
- Drive health equity through involvement in the local Reconciliation Action Plan working groups and providing education to middle managers.
- Contribute expert cultural knowledge to redevelopments and building renovations as well as grounds and gardens with guidance and advice.
- Facilitate Cultural Audits and deliver on ‘Are you of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander origin’ Identification training.



Increasing access to healthcare services



Delivering sustainable, culturally safe and responsive healthcare services

## Aligns to Health Equity KPA 2 and KPA 3

**Action: 2.9 M:** Deliver culturally appropriate mental health services.

**Action 2.9 N:** Embed social and emotional wellbeing models of services and delivery in mental health and alcohol and other drug services within Metro North Health and with our partner organisations.

**Action 3.2 I:** Incorporate wellness, healing, and spiritual factors in all staff training packages to enhance care experience and deliver responsive service delivery.



(L-R) Artist Troy Little, with Geoffrey Binge, next to his artwork at RBWH's main entrance.

## Art creates cultural safety for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander patients and visitors

**Aboriginal artist Troy Little has created welcoming and calming artwork at the main entrance of Royal Brisbane and Women's Hospital (RBWH). Mr Little is from Bundjalung Country (Northern Eastern NSW) and now lives by the water in Brisbane, often incorporating whales and other marine life in his art.**

Having created art for at least three decades, Mr Little is the only Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander artist he is aware of who incorporates glow-in-the-dark effects into his works. "Every animal has its spirit," Mr Little said, "making the work glow is how I can bring that spirit to life without changing the animal."

The large whale artwork is a copy of Mr Little's original artwork that glows in the dark and is on display in the Gynaecological admissions area of the Emergency and Trauma Centre.

"I used blues because they are calming colours, to help calm people down who find themselves in the hospital."

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artwork on the walls of RBWH creates a calming and welcoming place for all, but it also assists in creating a culturally safe

place for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander patients and visitors.

"This art helps say, 'welcome'," RBWH Cultural Capability Officer Geoffrey Binge said. "It also says to our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander patients that this is a culturally safe place for them."

Cultural safety is an important part of improving Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' health and wellbeing outcomes.



Delivering sustainable, culturally safe and responsive healthcare services

### Aligns to Health Equity KPA 3

**Action 3.2 A:** Implement culturally safe and responsive services.

**Action 3.2 D:** Develop concierge roles/service to help people navigate and create a welcoming safe and responsive environment.

## Getting to know the Indigenous Hospital Liaison Office

The RBWH Indigenous Hospital Liaison Service supports and advocates for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander patients, their families, and carers, which can include ensuring an understanding for the reason of hospitalisation and the importance of treatment.

In 2011, each Hospital and Health Service (HHS) established their own Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health teams. And since 2019, the RBWH Indigenous Hospital Liaison Office has been located on level 1 of the Ned Hanlon Building, however getting there was a winding road.

Many years ago, the service's office sat on level 5 of the Ned Hanlon Building and was called the 'Aboriginal and Torres Strait Health Liaison Service'. Then later in 2015, it was called the 'Community Indigenous Subacute Service' and formed part of Metro North's Community and Oral Health division.

However, since a major consultation in 2019, the Indigenous Hospital Liaison Service now sits under the governance of the Executive Director of Allied Health Professions.

"For some Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander consumers, the experience of coming to hospital can be re-traumatising because the physical environment bears resemblance to the facilities where they were forcibly taken as children of the Stolen Generation," Layla Scott, Manager Health Equity Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Leadership Team said.

Indigenous Hospital Liaison Officers support their mob during their journey through the hospital, and the Indigenous Hospital Liaison Office is an important part of creating a culturally safe place in the hospital environment. Delivering sustainable, culturally safe and responsive healthcare services is one of the priorities of the Metro North Health Equity Strategy.

## Giving connection on Giving Day



RBWH Health Equity committee members Vashti Beetson, Susie Toolis, Kate Houghton, Sangita Costello and Catherine Pepper pictured with new 'Giving Connection' artwork.

Each year Royal Brisbane and Women's Hospital (RBWH) Foundation celebrates the exceptional patient care and life-saving research as part of Giving Day, raising much-needed funds towards research and patient care initiatives.

This year the RBWH Health Equity subcommittee, who are committed to improving, increasing, and expanding access to health care services for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, joined together in the celebrations and fundraising initiative.

Subcommittee members Vashti Beetson, Susie Toolis, Kate Houghton, Sangita Costello and Catherine Pepper hope that by raising funding for the RBWH Foundation, they can form a partnership to support breaking down barriers to access of care for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

Beautiful artwork titled 'Giving Connection' created by proud Wiradjuri and Gubbi Gubbi woman Vashti Beetson, with the assistance of Catherine Pepper, was on display during Giving Day celebrations with the opportunity for staff and patients to contribute towards the creation of the piece. 'Giving Connection' is an artistic representation of what can be created when people come together, contribute, and connect with each other to achieve the common goal to improve patient care and further medical research.

Approximately 200 staff members and patients added their fingerprint to the bright and colourful artwork, and the subcommittee team raised around \$4,500 for the great cause.

Patients and visitors can now view the artwork proudly on display at RBWH for everyone to enjoy.



Increasing access to healthcare services

Aligns to Health Equity KPA2



RBWH commemorates National Reconciliation Week

Reconciliation Week is important for RBWH to commemorate as the hospital continues its journey toward health equity for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. Reconciliation Week is a time for all Australians to learn about our shared histories, cultures and achievements, and explore how we, as a hospital and as individuals, can contribute to achieving shared reconciliation in Australia.

## RBWH recognises Reconciliation Week

Royal Brisbane and Women's Hospital (RBWH) Executive and staff created a Sea of Hands as part of National Reconciliation Week, which ran from 27 May and 3 June 2023. The Sea of Hands is Australia's symbol for reconciliation – the mutual commitment to one another's wellbeing and a way for all Australians to engage in reconciliation. The theme of this year's Reconciliation Week was 'be a voice for generations', encouraging all Australians to act for today for a reconciled tomorrow.



Actively eliminating racial discrimination and institutional racism within the service

### Aligns to Health Equity KPA1

**Action 1.2 D:** Develop a cultural events calendar to increase awareness of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander days of significance and support localised events.

**Action 1.5 B:** Develop a Metro North Health Statement of Commitment to Reconciliation supported by localised Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) Committees across each facility and directorate.

## Nursing and Midwifery Scrubs unveiled

On Close the Gap Day, Metro North Health proudly announced a new suite of nursing and midwifery scrubs featuring dedicated localised artwork by esteemed Aboriginal artist Elaine Chambers-Hegarty. The original concept for nursing scrubs featuring Aboriginal artwork was created by the Royal Brisbane and Women's Hospital Transforming Emergency Departments towards Cultural Safety (TECS) working group.

The group has been working successfully with local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities to understand their concerns and look at ways to make the department culturally safe and welcoming for all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander consumers.

With broader interest from staff wanting to show their support for working towards improved health outcomes for mob, and positive community feedback, Metro North Health created a suite of scrubs for all nursing and midwifery staff to wear if they choose.

Each Metro North directorate has their own localised and specialised artwork telling the story of their local

area. The artworks have been showcased throughout each of the hospitals – Royal Brisbane and Women's Hospital, Surgical, Treatment and Rehabilitation Service (STARS), The Prince Charles Hospital, Redcliffe Hospital, Caboolture Hospital, Kilcoy Hospital and Community and Oral Health Services, and will now be showcased through the new nursing and midwifery scrub uniforms.

The scrubs, which can be seen across the health services, are a culturally inclusive display within Metro North Health and an opportunity to celebrate the culture, history, and achievements of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.





## RBWH Emergency Department receives Al Spilman Award for Culturally Safe Emergency Departments

The Royal Brisbane and Women's Hospital Emergency and Trauma Centre (ETC) was recently awarded the Al Spilman Award for Culturally Safe Emergency Departments from the Australian College of Emergency Medicine (ACEM).

The award recognises the outstanding efforts of ACEM accredited emergency departments to provide cultural safety for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and Māori patients, visitors, and staff.

The RBWH ETC was proud to receive the award for their ongoing work to improve the cultural safety of the department for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander patients and their families.

The initiative has been pioneered by the Transforming Emergency Departments towards Cultural Safety (TECS) committee in partnership with members of the RBWH Reconciliation Action Plan working group. The RBWH TECS committee was formed in 2019 and is led by proud Torres Strait Islander woman and Emergency Nurse Kiris Reis.

The TECS team has worked to secure funding to implement a number of initiatives to make the ETC more culturally safe and welcoming. The team work

closely with local community groups such as the Brisbane North Elders to ensure the initiatives they pursue make a valuable difference to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.



Delivering sustainable, culturally safe and responsive healthcare services

### Aligns to Health Equity KPA 3

**Action 3.2 A:** Implement culturally safe and responsive services.

**Action 3.2 B:** Establish coordinator roles in targeted clinical areas to support culturally safe and sustainable services.

**Action 3.6 B:** Employ Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in front line positions. e.g. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural health workers to partner with and respond when ambulances are called to emergencies or when in hospitals and utilise the Emergency Department Ambassador role.



Mykahlia (left) and Olivia (right) pictured with TPCH Executive Director Tami Photinos.



Mykahlia Douglas



Olivia Brown

## Career Trackers High School Program supports students identify deadly work choices

Earlier this year, The Prince Charles Hospital (TPCH) became the first hospital in Australia to establish a partnership with the Career Trackers High School Program, supporting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students to make informed future career choices.

The partnership provides students from grades 9-12 with industry exposure and assistance to identify their professional aspirations.

Brisbane-based high school students, Olivia Brown and Mykahlia Douglas undertook a three-day long placement at TPCH accompanied by various members of the hospital's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Service. During their placement, the young women had the opportunity to speak with senior leaders from different departments including emergency, wards, operating theatres, outpatients, medical imaging and corporate services.

Former Assistant Director of Nursing, TPCH Aboriginal Torres Strait Islander Health Service, Kirsty Leo said that the Career Trackers High School Program was an excellent initiative to support students gain experience in different fields of work.

"We wanted to give the young women some exposure to what it's like working in a busy hospital environment, with the view to choose a possible career in health," said Kirsty.

"Having members of our team support the students through their placement, gave them a sense of security during what can be a confusing time, especially with so many career choices available.

"It's about guiding younger members of our First Nations community to identify and follow their dreams."

The partnership has had a positive influence on both students with Mykahlia currently undertaking her first year of a Bachelor of Nursing at the University of Queensland and Olivia about to graduate year 12.



Mykahlia and Olivia pictured on the ward at TPCH.



## Community and Consumer Council co-designing a path to Health Equity for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples

Earlier this year, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elders, community, and consumers of The Prince Charles Hospital (TPCH) were invited to join the hospital's first ever Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community and Consumer Council, to help improve the care provided to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander patients at TPCH.

In establishing the Council, TPCH Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Service hosted a full-day forum to discuss and gain feedback from consumers and community around how the hospital can improve the outcomes and experience of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander patients as part of its health equity journey.

Candice Meaghan, Acting Team Leader, Indigenous Hospital Liaison Service TPCH said that clinically effective and culturally safe care for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people can only be achieved through genuine co-owned and co-designed services.

"TPCH has continued to engage with Elders, local community members and consumers in various ways across the hospital to ensure their lived experience and local cultural perspectives are recognised and respected in shared decision making that impacts the health and wellbeing of First Nations people," said Candice.

"The forum was a chance to yarn and engage with our consumers and community and learn about their personal experiences about coming to hospital.

"Yarning with our local community gave the team an opportunity to strengthen our relationships and build trust with our local community.

"The Council will play an important role in supporting shared decision making that will help build more culturally safe and responsible services for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people at TPCH."

## Patient videos highlight strength of country

A series of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander patient videos have brought home the significance of healing on country for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander patients who live remotely and receive care on country.

The suite of four videos, coordinated by TPCH's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Service, features the personal stories and experiences of various consumers who have received care through TPCH's Connecting Care to Country Indigenous Cardiac and Respiratory Outreach Programs.

TPCH's Indigenous Outreach Clinics provide health care on country to patients suffering from cardiac and respiratory symptoms and diseases. The Indigenous Outreach Clinics visit multiple locations throughout rural and remote areas of Queensland including Mornington Island, Doomadgee, Cherbourg and Palm Island.

The videos highlight the views and feelings of consumers living in Thursday Island, Birdsville, Winton, Rockhampton who have accessed cardiac and respiratory outreach services provided by teams from TPCH.

Winton consumer Geraldine said the outreach clinics were very important to the local community.

"The staff are all really nice people, they're like family coming home. A lot of the doctors that have been coming here over the years, you get to know them and make friends with them. They make you feel welcome, even though they're coming out to our place," said Geraldine.

"My kids live away in South Australia and when they feel that they have no energy, they come home and we go out into the desert and they're reenergised. The very next day, you wouldn't believe that they were crook the day before.

"Going out, sitting in the sand and reenergising, the best place to heal is on country."

Cultural Capability Officer Rebeckah Mooney said the videos illustrated the important role that country plays in the healing process for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

"For many First Nations people, being able to access health care close to home can be determining factor in whether they decide to see a health care professional. Our people feel at peace when they are close to their natural environment, and this helps with their overall health and well-being," said Rebeckah.

"The videos show that our Indigenous cardiac and respiratory outreach services are extremely beneficial to our patients. They allow them to access the necessary treatment close to where they live, rather than travelling hundreds of kilometres to a busy city hospital."

# SHARING THE VOICES OF OUR PATIENTS

## Respected Elder overcomes fear of healthcare system



Uncle Rodney sharing his positive experience with A&TSILT staff members a few months after discharge from hospital

**When Pastor Uncle Rodney Minniecon, a Gurang Gurang and Kabi Kabi man from Bundaberg Queensland, travelled to Brisbane as a Minister, he fell severely unwell for the first time in over 60 years. Living in a small town in Cairns called Deeral, Uncle Rodney had limited knowledge and exposure of the healthcare system. A fear of hospitals deterred Uncle Rodney from accessing the medical care he urgently needed, and he tried everything in his power to avoid a trip to the hospital.**

“I was scared of the hospital. I was scared of needles and scared of the nurses. If I got sick, I tried my hardest to cure myself,” said Uncle Rodney.

At 78 years young, Uncle Rodney became so unwell that a trip to the hospital could no longer be avoided. The pain Uncle Rodney was experiencing was so severe that he wasn’t able to attend church as he normally would, so he rang his daughter Kim, and asked her to take him to the hospital.

Fortunately for Uncle Rodney, his daughter Kim worked for Metro North Health, at the time positioned within the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Leadership Team, and was able to provide Uncle Rodney with reassurance that he would be safe and taken care of in the hospital.

Upon arrival at The Prince Charles Hospital (TPCH) Emergency Department, Uncle Rodney was admitted right away, with his daughter Kim still close by his side. The fear that Uncle Rodney once had of hospitals and healthcare staff quickly disappeared thanks to the kind, patient, and gentle care he received by staff at TPCH.

“I felt instantly that a lot of the fear had left me. They fussed over me a bit, and the way I was treated, I felt like I was treated like somebody very special,” said Uncle Rodney.

Attending ongoing appointments to monitor his health, Uncle Rodney now has a lot of confidence when attending the hospital thanks to the care he received from staff, and his daughter Kim, who helps coordinate his appointments, ensures he gets there safely and offers to stay by his side when needed.

What initially felt like bad news, having to attend hospital, soon turned into a positive and joyous experience for Uncle Rodney, who now has the confidence to seek medical care and engage with healthcare professionals.

“When they were going to release me from hospital, I didn’t want to come home. I asked them ‘can I stay another night?’” said Uncle Rodney.

By sharing his positive experience, Uncle Rodney hopes to encourage other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, particularly men, to seek the medical care they need.

“I can recommend to any of the old fullas, don’t be afraid of the hospitals. I know that some things did happen in the past, but this hospital is one hospital that took all the fear out of me and gave me a lot of confidence in the medical system,” said Uncle Rodney.

Uncle Rodney would like to thank the staff at The Prince Charles Hospital, and all Metro North Health staff, for the kindness they showed him, and for making him feel safe and cared for.



Uncle Rodney receiving fantastic care at TPCH in late 2022



## Culturally safe care through Ngarrama Maternity Service

Proud Gadigal woman Sarah, and husband Leslie recently accessed maternity care through the Ngarrama Maternity Service at Redcliffe Hospital when they welcomed their little bub Harry into the world on February 26, 2023. Harry, the newest edition to the blended family, is doted on by his eight older brothers and sisters, two half-sisters and two half-brothers.

Sarah's recent experience, and third time accessing the Ngarrama Maternity Service at Redcliffe Hospital was amazing, and she received great support by Redcliffe Hospitals Aboriginal midwife and health worker, Yvette and Jemma, the maternity social worker Vanessa, and Indigenous Hospital Liaison Officer, Cessa.

"When I first meet new people, I normally shut down. This was not the case with Jemma. Jemma and I clicked, and I felt straight away that I could trust her. Jemma became an amazing help and support throughout my pregnancy," said Sarah.

After a very quick labour and some after birth complications, Sarah and Leslie felt they were both listened to, and their worries were put to ease thanks to the kind and compassionate staff who supported not only them, but little Harry.

Sarah's first time accessing Ngarrama was back in 2011 when she was pregnant with her second child, and the second time was when she gave birth to her eighth child in 2021.

"My favourite thing about Ngarrama is having the same midwife, feeling safe, and being able to trust them, knowing they are looking after myself, my baby, and my family," said Sarah.

As a father and partner accessing support through the Ngarrama service, Leslie's favourite things about the service were getting to know the staff and being able to have a joke and feel comfortable, whilst supporting his wife and new baby.

Sarah and Leslie are grateful for the culturally safe care and support they received when accessing Ngarrama and thank the staff who supported them on each occasion, without whom Sarah believes her experiences would not have been the same.

"I would hands down recommend Ngarrama Redcliffe. Mums and families will get 100 percent care and respect," said Sarah.

## Samuel's courage and faith guides his recovery to get his vision back

**Content Warning – The following article contains graphic details of an injury which some readers may find triggering.**

It's not every day that you hear a patient say, 'Every time I have a hospital appointment I can't wait to come'. For Lama Lama and Gugu Yimithirr man and Palm Island resident Samuel Coutts these are his exact words, and the ordeal that led him to feel this way is as equally unbelievable.

What began as a kind gesture of helping to fix a friend's car quickly turned into something from a horror movie when Samuel ended up accidentally piercing himself in his right eye with his pocketknife while attempting to cut some zip ties loose from a valve on the motor of his friend Zina's vehicle.

"At first there was no pain, I was in shock. I didn't believe this was happening," said Samuel.

After standing around dazed for a few minutes, Samuel soon came to realise what was happening, and that he did in fact have a knife lodged in his eye. Samuel's mate Pauly, and brother to Zina, raced inside to his sister to call for help.

By the time Pauly and Zina rushed back over to Samuel, he had already removed the knife from his eye and tossed the knife to the ground. Overwhelmed by the shock of what had just occurred, and the pain he was experiencing, Samuel was unable to open either of his eyes and was carefully led inside by Zina.



(L-R) Lawrence Coutts (father), Samuel Coutts (patient) and Acting RBWH Nurse Navigator Cathy Maher.

Sitting on a chair inside the house, Samuel waited for the ambulance to arrive. Zina's son, and godson to Samuel, Ataevias, had come into the room to see what was going on. Despite the immense pain Samuel was experiencing, he courageously held himself together and put on a brave face in front of Ataevias.

"I was worried if I showed him the pain I was feeling that I may traumatise him. I asked him to place his hand on my shoulder and told him that I was going to be ok," said Samuel.

In what felt like forever, Ataevias helped to distract Samuel from the pain he was feeling and was Samuel's strength through what he has described as the most agonising pain he has felt in his life.

Once the ambulance arrived and Samuel was on his way to the Townsville Hospital, he expressed to the paramedics the unbelievable pain he was in, who then immediately provided him with pain relief.

He immediately went to emergency surgery at Townsville Hospital, with doctors reassuring Samuel they will do all they can to save his eye, however they also told Samuel what they would need to do if they couldn't.

A devout Christian who attends church every Sunday, Samuel told the doctors that he had faith in them, and that he believed everything would work out fine and that he would wake up with his eye intact, which is exactly what happened.

After coming out of surgery, his eye now stitched up, Samuel was advised that he would need to be flown down to the Royal Brisbane and Women's Hospital (RBWH) to undergo further surgery.

The next day Samuel boarded the plane, alongside his father Lawrence who has been by Samuel's side every step of the way. Upon touching down safely in Brisbane and arriving at the RBWH, Samuel was admitted and taken immediately for more surgery.


Coming out of his second surgery, Samuel was placed in the Ophthalmology ward, alongside other patients who were also in recovery.

"I have never received care like they provided me at the RBWH. I'm in the room and they're just caring for me, constantly checking up on me," said Samuel.

Samuel said the support he received from the Indigenous Hospital Liaison Officers (IHLO) and the Nurse Navigator, and his willingness to stay in hospital and receive the care he needed was instrumental in his recovery.

"I was made to feel so comfortable and cared for," Samuel said.

*"I was made to feel so comfortable and cared for,"*



“Caleb [IHLO] took me to the shops and back, that stuff is unheard of in other hospitals. You would have to do that by yourself. Being away from your community and your comfort zone, and to get that type of help, it was such a blessing”.

As Samuel’s recovery was during the height of COVID-19, visitor restrictions meant his father Lawrence could only visit him at certain times during the day.

“Yashni [Nurse Navigator] organised for my dad to get a special pass that allowed him to visit me,” he said.

“I was feeling really alone, so to have my dad be able to just sit there and yarn to me eased my mind and my pain. Things like that, she [Yashni] just helped out, she knew I wanted my father there and she just basically made it happen. Yashni is a legend.”

Yashni would often check in on Samuel to see how he was going, and supported Samuel in obtaining medication when he was in immense pain. The medical staff caring for Samuel in the Ophthalmology ward also made his time at the RBWH one to remember.

*“Everybody cares for you. Whether it’s a different nurse who is taking over, they just care for you. I honestly felt really cared for and loved, and felt like I was an actual person, and not just a patient,”*

“Everybody cares for you. Whether it’s a different nurse who is taking over, they just care for you. I honestly felt really cared for and loved, and felt like I was an actual person, and not just a patient,” Samuel said.

“If I wanted extra blankets, because I wasn’t used to the cold, and it was winter, they would give me extra blankets and pillows so that I was comfortable. It was like I had a motel room in a hospital, and my father was the butler, who would do anything for me.”

Samuel rated the care he received at the RBWH a 15 out of 10.

“Honestly, from my point of view, I can’t really put a number on it. For us Indigenous people, we don’t really like going to hospitals because we feel frightened, and don’t like getting rejected. The care I received at RBWH was beyond anything I thought hospitals do,” said Samuel.

Due to his need of ongoing medical treatment and plans to have a lens inserted into his eye to improve his

vision, Samuel will continue coming to the RBWH for another year or two to receive care.

“‘You’re looking good to get your vision back’, that’s what the doctors said to me. To me that is hope. That keeps me going,” said Samuel.

His shining positivity through such a traumatic time in his life is nothing short of inspiring, and Samuel hopes by sharing his story he will encourage Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to access health services and hospitals and seek health care when they need to.

*“Don’t be frightened to go to this hospital [RBWH], and don’t be frightened to ask for help, because you will get help. Somebody will help you. And if they don’t, I will ring my girl Yashni up, and she will be able to fix it up,”*

“Don’t be frightened to go to this hospital [RBWH], and don’t be frightened to ask for help, because you will get help. Somebody will help you. And if they don’t, I will ring my girl Yashni up, and she will be able to fix it up,” said Samuel.

To this day Samuel says when he enters the front doors of the RBWH and heads up the escalator, he feels like he is treated as if he is someone special.

“I would like to thank all the staff that ever helped me, even if they pushed me up to the room or operating theatre, I want them to know how grateful I am of the care they showed me,” said Samuel.

“That hospital has honestly won my heart over. I will vouch for that place. The RBWH has been an absolute blessing.”

*“That hospital has honestly won my heart over. I will vouch for that place. The RBWH has been an absolute blessing.”*



## Aunty Helenor's Journey with the Deadly Feet team

**One of the first Deadly Feet clinics to be held for 2023, in collaboration with the Better Together Health Van, was at a local Caboolture event held by Buranga Widjung Justice Group called 'Strength in Community'.**

This event laid the foundation into collaboration opportunities and outreach clinics with local community organisations, which came to fruition after Deadly Feet attended a few meetings with the Caboolture based Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community organisation, Buranga Widjung Justice Group.

During the meetings, Traditional Owners and community Elders were present and gave their blessing for the team to facilitate outreach services after learning about the program, which aims to improve clinical pathways and outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander patients with foot disease through early detection of disease, implementation of risk modification plans and treatment of foot conditions.

Throughout the Strength in Community event, the Deadly Feet team had numerous interactions with the community, providing education and sharing in stories. However, it wasn't until the team met Aunty Helenor, who had travelled down from Innisfail to visit her family, that they learned how impactful this program is to community.

Aunty Helenor Rassip's brother had noticed the Better Together Health Van and Deadly Feet team at the event and encouraged her to get her feet checked.

Arriving at the van, Aunty Helenor started yarning with the Deadly Feet team about some concerns she was experiencing with her foot health. With her brother in support and close by, Aunty Helenor was happy sharing her story and felt relaxed in the environment surrounded

by community. Aunty later mentioned that the session was amazing and she had never felt more comfortable with an appointment or discussing her health.

During the assessment, the team had noticed some signs for concern and coordinated a referral for Aunty to receive further investigations. At the time of the follow-up investigation through Metro North Health, it was determined Aunty Helenor was experiencing circulation issues in her feet and that minor surgery would be required.

Throughout the whole process and ordeal, Aunty Helenor was amazed and grateful for the care and support she had received with priority and importance. When talking with staff, Aunty Helenor shared that she had been so used to going to appointments and waiting months for outcomes.

During an interview with the Metro North Health Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Leadership Team, Aunty Helenor gave glowing reviews about the Deadly Feet program, and the need to have more programs like this in the community to make access easier. She spoke of the importance of having service and care closer to people's homes.

"One of the hardest things is finding out about programs that may be able to help you, however, if you're coming out and can be seen at events or in local area's that what will make a difference in creating connection," Aunty Helenor said.

The care she received, and the conversation she had with the team gave Aunty Helenor all the trust she needed to feel safe.



L-R Aunty Stephanie Button Community Liaison Officer - MATSICHs Deception Bay, Edwina Powe Service Coordinator - Women's Business Shared Pathway and Hayley Matthew Community Liaison Officer - MATSICHs Strathpine.

## Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Women's Business Shared Pathway expands

The Metro North Health Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Women's Business Shared Pathway (WBSP) provides culturally safe, responsive, and targeted care to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women residing in the Metro North Health catchment. It provides specialist gynaecology outpatient and surgical services, cultural support and allied health intervention including physiotherapy and dietetics.

The service was established as a means of improving care delivery for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women. It directly targets high failure to attend (FTA) rates, long waitlists across both gynaecology and allied health, and endeavours to improve collaborative care models with community controlled Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health services.

Working collaboratively with the Institute for Urban Indigenous Health (IUIH), the WBSP provides culturally safe care directly targeting identified barriers to accessing health services.

The holistic, interprofessional care approach endeavours to target persisting health disparities including cervical cancer, sexually transmitted infections, persistent pelvic pain including endometriosis, and bladder and bowel dysfunction.

Since commencing in December of 2020, the WBSP has expanded from the original two outpatient clinics per



Aunty Pearl Trynes and Renyce McCoy, Administration Officer - Women's Business Shared Pathway.



L-R: Aunty Kay Long with Grace Adams, Clinical Nurse - Women's Business Shared Pathway.

month to the current five that operate from four different locations including Nundah Community Health Centre, Pine Rivers Community Health Centre and Moreton Bay Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community Health Service (MATSICHS) Morayfield and Deception Bay clinics.

WBSP Coordinator, Edwina Powe, said the service has expanded from one day per week to two days per week and successfully appointed a full-time service coordinator and a weekly dietetics clinic.

“We continue to co-create our services with our community to be led by our community in how the WBSP grows and evolves, ensuring it delivers the care our women want and need.

“The WBSP is the only model of care of its kind in Australia. It has demonstrated the success that can be achieved by doing things differently, working with not for our community, and prioritising the importance of building and maintaining strong partnerships with community organisations,” Edwina said.



The community engagement events have linked multi generations of women and seen support and cultural connection emerge. These events have provided wonderful opportunities to build strong relationships with our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community and contributed to building a culture of inclusion and collaboration that endeavours to connect women to the services they want and need, when they need them.

## Highlights

Over the past 12 months:

437

gynaecology  
outpatient  
appointments

73

elective  
surgical  
procedures

183

allied health outpatient  
appointments (physio and  
dietetics)



Recent feedback received includes:

90% =

strongly agreed that staff  
were culturally appropriate  
and respectful

90% =

strongly agreed that they  
would recommend the  
Women's Business Shared  
Pathway to family and  
friends

90% =

rated their experience as  
excellent

Failure to provide (FTA) rate is:

6.86%

= gynaecology  
outpatients

17.5%

= allied health

When asked what was great about attending the WBSP comments given include:

- “Everyone that I met today at the Pine Rivers Community Health Centre was ever so kind, caring and respectful in the care they gave. I felt so comfortable and grateful. Thank you.”
- “Being told of things that were not discussed previously or was tabu.”
- “Very personable. Culturally safe space. The staff listened and researched to help me.”
- “Dr Pip, Gracie and Renyce were all genuine and caring and made a gynae appointment seem comfortable!”

## Yarning Circle – Community and Oral Health

As the longest sustainable and regular community engagement forum across Metro North Health, the Yarning Circle is driven by respected local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elders and is facilitated by the Community and Oral Health Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Team.

The Yarning Circle was established to bring together local Elders and community to help identify and address gaps, develop recommendations and influence health priorities, policies and practices in Community and Oral Health Services. It also provides a forum for the Elders to learn about available services and priorities as well as receive information about various health topics such as chronic illnesses and diseases.

The Yarning Circle is held on the last Thursday of the month with the next agenda set the previous month by the Elders and is currently held at the Brighton Wellness Hub located on 19th Ave, Brighton, unless otherwise advised.

### PURPOSE

Establish a culturally safe place for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elders and community to meet, be heard and influence health services.

- To disseminate information regarding health services to the wider Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community and provide a safe place to learn more about various health topics, chronic illnesses/diseases.
- Develop recommendations and influence health priorities, policy and practice in Community and Oral Health.

### 2023 TOPICS, DISCUSSIONS, AND PRESENTATIONS

A variety of topics, discussions and presentations were held throughout the year with an average attendance of 12–15 Elders each month. The Elders are provided with transport to attend upon request and served lunch, tea, and coffee. Any staff member across Metro North Health services are always free to attend and often there is attendance from other community members, organisations, and Government Departments. The Yarning Circle participants have also been invited to primary schools and other organisations to participate in cultural activities and significant events.

## Community and Oral Health – Health Equity Dashboard

The Community and Oral Health (COH) Health Equity Dashboard was created to monitor and report service activity and outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander patients across all COH services. The dashboard was created late 2022 with additions made throughout 2023. All data is currently sourced from Hcare data.

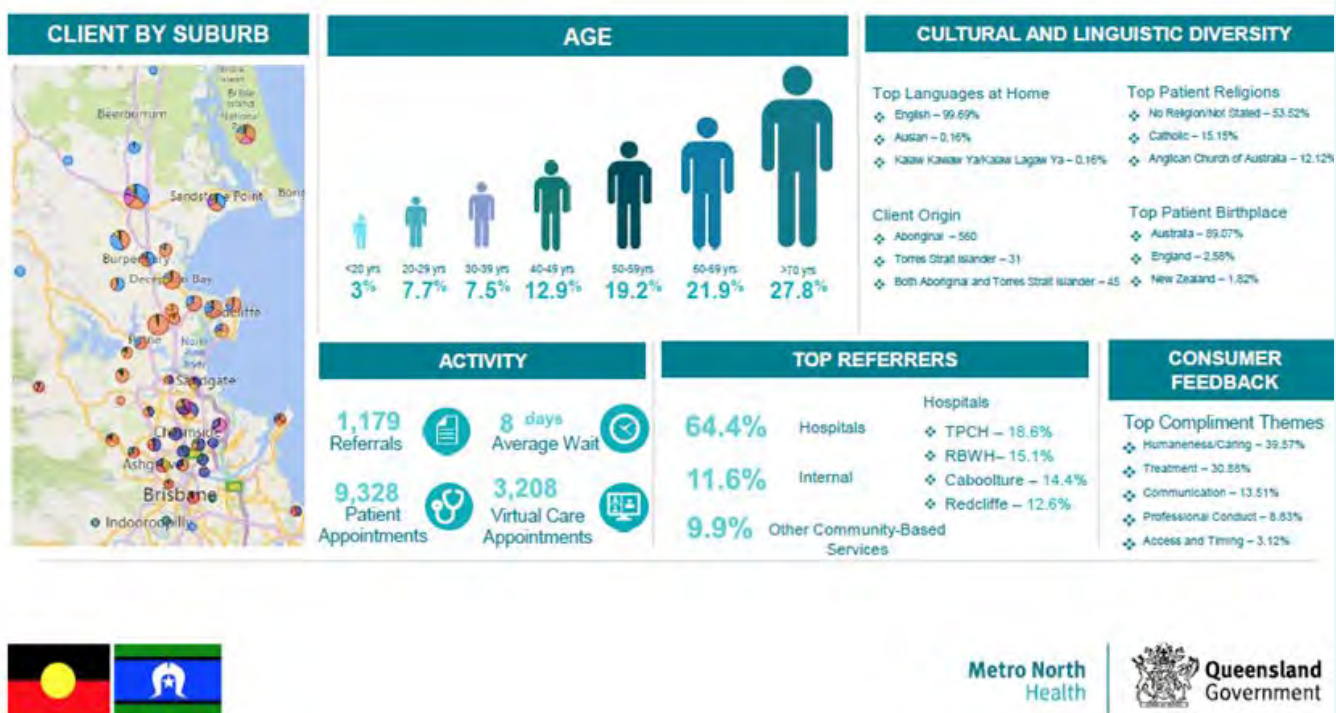
The Dashboard includes:

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander waitlists
- Demographics Heat Map
- Client %
- Discharge Against Medical Advice (DAMA)
- DAMA – Client Table
- Length of Stay
- Referrals by Service
- Referred Clients last 24hrs and 7 Days (this particular dashboard has been recently created as an outcome from the CE directive that all newly admitted Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander patients will receive cultural intervention within the first 24hrs. Although we have been implementing this approach since the beginning of the year, this dashboard has proven to be more effective for monitoring daily)
- Activity by Service
- Active Clients Identified in Hcare
- Failure to Attend/Did Not Attend rates
- Hcare Active Clients
- Indigenous Status not Stated in HCare
- MN RiskMan (Clinical Incidents and Consumer Feedback)
- Safety and Quality Capability Audit

The dashboard has improved the way COH track and monitor Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander patients and outcomes across services. Data is sourced from the dashboard and included for reporting in the monthly directorate performance meeting.



Aboriginal &/or Torres Strait Islander Clients 2022/2023



## Cultural Support Plan – Message Stick

Developed by the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Team within Community and Oral Health, The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Patient Cultural Support Plan (Message Stick) has been developed for all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander patients that are referred to any Metro North Health service and is currently being used across other Metro North Health services. The Message Stick is to be completed only by any Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander identified staff member.

The purpose of this Message Stick is to inform staff of relevant cultural information that may influence the spiritual, physical, social, and emotional wellbeing of an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander patient receiving care. The information collected is to ensure culturally appropriate care is delivered to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander patients.

Patients referred to COH are offered the opportunity for the tool to be completed by the staff with the information provided back to the relevant service area following consent.

**Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultural Support Plan (Message Stick)**

**Queensland GOVERNMENT**

**Metro North Health**

**Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultural Support Plan (Message Stick)**

**City:** (After patient identification label here)

**Family Name:**

**Given Names:**

**Address:**

**Date of Birth:** Sex ☐ M ☐ F ☐

The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Patient Cultural Support Plan (Message Stick) has been developed for all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander patients that are referred to any Metro North Health Service. The Message Stick is to be completed only by an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander identified staff member.

The purpose of this Message Stick is to inform staff of relevant cultural information that may influence the spiritual, physical, social, and emotional wellbeing of an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander patient receiving care. The information collected is to ensure culturally appropriate care is delivered to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander patients.

**Date of Cultural Support Plan:**

**Present journey**

Does the patient identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander patient?

☐ Aboriginal ☐ Torres Strait Islander ☐ Both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander

Does the patient require an interpreter? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Out of respect is it ok for staff to call the patient, Uncle or Auntie? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Urban/Rural & Remote/Discrete Community ☐ Yes ☐ No

Who are you from? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Where are you from or where do you live?

Is there anything important staff should know to support your stay or hospital journey?

**Beliefs**

Refers to the knowledge, skills and behaviours, values and respect of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture.

**Family/Kinship**

Family kinship structures usually involve input by other family members.

**Family responsibilities**

**Family obligations**

**Communication**

Language – does any contact, silence, listening, establish rapport – take time to build rapport to make issues less confrontational.

**Recommendation**

**Referral to Metro North Health**

**Referral to Metro North Health**

**Referral to Metro North Health**

Does the patient require ongoing support by an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff member? ☐ Yes ☐ No

**Additional comments:**

**Name of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff member completing the form:**

**Designation:** **Signature:**

**Date:** **Contact number:**

**Email to: Please email**

**Source: Metro North Community and Oral Health Services**

# WORKFORCE

## Training the next generation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health leaders

The Deadly Start Program welcomed a record 139 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students into the program in 2023 as it expands across the state.

Celebrating its fifth year since the program began, the school-based traineeship program facilitates healthcare career pathways for high school students with a direct focus on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander patient care.

Students will now spend one day a week employed at a number of Queensland hospitals as part of the expanded model which now boasts 12 'hubs' managed by Connect 'n' Grow in locations from Cairns to the Gold Coast.

The hospitals include Royal Brisbane and Women's Hospital, The Prince Charles Hospital, Surgical, Treatment and Rehabilitation Service (STARS), Redcliffe Hospital, Caboolture Hospital, Princess Alexandra Hospital, Ipswich Hospital, Queen Elizabeth II Hospital, Rockhampton Hospital, Mt Isa Hospital, Sunshine Coast University Hospital, Gold Coast University Hospital, Bundaberg Hospital, Mt Morgan Hospital, Mackay Hospital, Townsville Hospital and Cairns Hospital.

Metro North Health has been running its Deadly Start program since 2019, employing a significant number of students in nursing, midwifery, allied health, patient support services and other health careers each year as they have successfully completed the program.

Deadly Start Trainee Mikhalia Saltner said she's excited for her one day a week as an Assistant in Nursing, which will set her up for a future in paramedicine.

"I've wanted to be a paramedic since I was little, so I just thought this was a great opportunity," she said.

"I love the idea of doing nursing or paramedicine because you never know what's going to happen, it's so unexpected and I love that."



Metro North Health Deadly Start Trainee, Laquisha Nona

Overarching Priority of Metro North Health Equity Increase our identified workforce within Metro North Health.



Influencing the social, cultural and economic determinants of health

### Aligns to Health Equity KPA 4

**Action 4.6 C:** Support student pathways through formalisation of engagement with Education Queensland, Universities and Registered Training Organisations.

**Action 4.2 E:** Evaluate the impacts that current Metro North Health programs like Deadly Start, Women's Business Shared Pathway and Better Together Medication Access have on improving the social and cultural determinants of health and ensure the learnings are implemented broadly.



## Supporting our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workforce

**Metro North Health has employed two new Social and Emotional Wellbeing Officers to provide culturally responsive support for staff. Throughout the Metro North health equity journey, one of the key themes that arose from discussions with community and staff was advocating and supporting the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workforce.**

Metro North Health recognises the community's need to see an increase in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff in all areas and professions of the health service to provide ongoing support and cultural guidance of patients and their care, services, and other staff members. The increase in the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workforce also provides an increase in workforce opportunities within the local community.

As part of the Health Equity Strategy 2022-2025, Metro North Health identified the need to provide ongoing support systems to ensure safety of their Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workforce. It is a key priority of the hospital and health service to make the organisation a place where Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are proud and feel safe to work for and receive health care from.

In response to this priority, Jesse Blackman and Nickita Wylie joined Metro North Health in March as Social and Emotional Wellbeing Officers (SEWB Officers). Jesse is a

proud Gurang man and Nickita is a South Sea Islander and Aboriginal woman with ancestral ties to Bundjalung.

“The Social and Emotional Wellbeing program will support staff in a holistic approach as the team will work alongside a staff member to ensure their holistic needs are identified and supported. This allows staff to work in a respectful and culturally safe space where their values and beliefs are respected,” said Nickita.

Jesse and Nickita are both passionate about supporting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff within Metro North Health and building respectful relationships to get a better understanding of staff needs and how they can fulfill their role to meet these needs.

“What I am most passionate about is helping staff to keep strong in their culture and staff connected with each other. I believe as an Aboriginal man that one of our greatest strengths is our connection to one another and to Country,” said Jesse.

**Overarching Priority of Metro North Health Equity Increase our identified workforce within Metro North Health.**



Actively eliminating racial discrimination and institutional racism within the service

### Aligns to Health Equity KPA1

**Action 1.4 A:** Develop and evaluate an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peer Responder, Mentoring and Leadership program to support transfer of learnings from training to work roles, staff in educational based programs and initiatives.

**Action 4.1 E:** Develop a peer support program that is culturally appropriate for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff.

## Talent Pool developed to support workforce growth



The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Leadership Team is working in partnership with the People and Culture team to develop a talent pool platform to promote opportunities to merit list candidates. The aim is for those who may not have been successful gaining an opportunity, to be added to a talent pool if they are interested in future opportunities within Metro North Health.

Assistant Nursing Director of First Nations Clinical Innovation and Strategy team, Theresa (Tess) Symes, said Metro North Health has recently committed to the establishment of an identified Senior Project Officer role to support the development of the talent pool.

“Having a dedicated position for the development of the talent pool and other workforce initiatives, ensures meaningful and purposeful strategies that is influenced through a cultural lens.

“This supports Metro North Health MN32 aspirational benchmark that by 2025 at least three per cent of Metro North Health’s workforce will be Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people,” Tess said.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples can be added to the talent pool for future opportunities by emailing their resume to [MNH\\_A\\_TSI\\_Recruitment@health.qld.gov.au](mailto:MNH_A_TSI_Recruitment@health.qld.gov.au).

**Overarching Priority of Metro North Health Equity Increase our identified workforce within Metro North Health.**



Delivering sustainable, culturally safe and responsive healthcare services



Influencing the social, cultural and economic determinants of health

**Aligns to Health Equity KPA 3 and KPA 4**

**Action 3.6 B:** Employ Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in front line positions. e.g. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural health workers to partner with and respond when ambulances are called to emergencies or when in hospitals and utilise the Emergency Department Ambassador role.

**Action 4.3 A:** Establish recruitment processes that break down barriers and promote Metro North Health as an employer of choice for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

**Action 4.3 F:** Increase the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workforce across the clinical and non-clinical streams including nurse navigators.

## Building the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Workforce

A key part of Metro North Health’s commitment to the health equity agenda is delivering sustainable, culturally safe and responsive healthcare services.

For this to be achieved, Metro North Health recognise the community’s need for an increase in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workforce to provide culturally informed and designed services, and holistic care to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander consumers.

Through this action the Metro North Health People and Culture (P&C) recruitment team have been actively engaging with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Leadership Team (A&TSILT) and Cultural Capability teams on attraction and recruitment initiatives, such as but not limited to:

- Co-designed the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Talent Pool database with the (A&TSILT), to actively

provide employment opportunities to Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people.

- Connecting current vacant roles to match any Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community members who have sent through their Expression of Interest into the newly established talent pool register.
- Supporting the permanent placement of current Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander workforce.
- Creating and co-owning an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander recruitment email and Microsoft Teams channel with the A&TSILT to support the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community and workforce seeking recruitment opportunities.
- Metro North Health Recruitment and Programs teams connecting with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander recruitment providers to seek out opportunities to engage, encourage our local community to join our Talent Pool and to provide ongoing education and



mentoring of Metro North Health Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workforce.

- People and Culture team and the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Leadership team have co-designed and established an Identified AO6 Project Officer role to support the Health Equity Strategy and deliverables.

A key achievement for Metro North Health People and Culture (P&C) teams in 2023 was the establishment of a volunteer group of employees who identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander (and allies) to collaborate and co-design key elements of each P&C Health Equity priority action.

The new committee was formed in September and have already had one co-design workshop (held in early October) and the official launch on 3 November 2023.

Priority focus areas for the committee for the remainder of 2023-24 include:

1. Introducing paid staff leave for Sorry Business/Sad News.
2. Implementing a leadership program for emerging Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander leaders across Metro North Health with planned support mechanisms to enhance learnings.
3. Developing and rolling out a talent portal for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to apply for roles in Metro North Health – focusing on both existing employees to enhance their career options and to create a path into Metro North Health for potential employees.
4. Developing an anti-racism policy and campaign.



Actively eliminating racial discrimination and institutional racism within the service



Influencing the social, cultural and economic determinants of health

#### Aligns to Health Equity KPA1 and KPA 4

**Action 1.1 A:** Develop and implement an anti-racism campaign that incorporates existing and new legislation policies.

**Action 4.4 A:** Establish pathways so that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff are supported and encouraged to access ongoing opportunities to undertake professional development, attend University and/or TAFE and participate in leaderships courses and programs.

**Action 4.4 B:** Implement succession planning and retention processes including creation of a talent portal to focus on specific gaps for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

**Action 4.4 C:** Develop processes and systems so that Sorry Business or Sad News is understood and accommodated for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees and educate non-Indigenous people about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff ways of being and doing.

**Action 4.3 E:** Quarantine positions to increase Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workforce.

**Action 4.3 F:** Increase the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workforce across the clinical and non-clinical streams including nurse navigators.



**Melita Smith** -  
Kullilli woman with  
connections to Wakka  
Wakka Country

**Program Support  
Officer, Connecting  
Care to Country,  
The Prince Charles  
Hospital**

## Meet some of our new staff members who have joined Metro North Health in 2023

Below are some of the staff who have joined  
Metro North Health, and staff who have  
obtained new roles in 2023.

**Rebeckah Mooney** -  
Kaanjun and Biri Widi  
woman

**Cultural Capability  
Officer, The Prince  
Charles Hospital**



**Karen Francisco** -  
Mandandanji woman

**Palliative Care Engagement  
Officer, Aboriginal and Torres  
Strait Islander Leadership Team**



**Janita Adams** - Western Arrernte and  
Inkamala woman

**Cultural Capability Officer,  
Caboolture and Kilcoy Hospitals and  
Woodford Corrections Health**



**Trina Scott** -  
Bundjalung woman

**Aboriginal and Torres  
Strait Islander Nurse  
Navigator, Community  
and Oral Health**



**Susie Toolis** -  
Torres Strait  
Islander woman with  
family connections to Erub  
(Darnley Island)

**Aboriginal and Torres Strait  
Islander Nurse Navigator,  
Outpatient Services, Royal  
Brisbane and Women's Hospital**



**Shaniqua Enoch -**  
Noonuccal and Widi  
woman

**Indigenous Hospital  
Liaison Officer (After  
hours), Caboolture  
Hospital**

**(Deadly Start school-  
based trainee Graduate)**



**William Blair -**  
Wakka Wakka and Cobble  
Cobble man

**New Graduate  
Physiotherapist,  
Royal Brisbane and  
Women's Hospital**

**(Indigenous Cadet  
Graduate)**

**Nickita Wylie -**  
Bundjalung and South  
Sea Islander woman

**Social and Emotional  
Wellbeing Officer,  
Aboriginal and  
Torres Strait Islander  
Leadership Team**



**Karen Mitchell -**  
Wiradjuri woman

**Aboriginal and Torres Strait  
Islander Nurse Navigator,  
Caboolture Satellite Hospital**



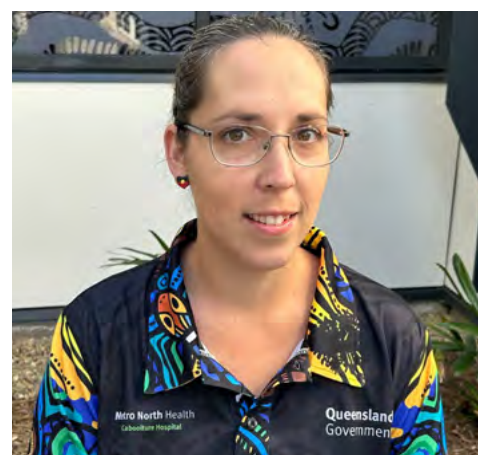
**Thomas  
Casey -**  
Garawa and  
Gangalidda man

**Community  
Engagement  
Officer, Caboolture Satellite Hospital**



**Angel Sellars**  
- Bundjalung  
and Mulunjali  
woman

**Indigenous Health  
Worker, Ngarrama  
Maternity Service,  
Redcliffe Hospital**



**Stephanie Archibald -**  
Bigambul and Gamilaroi woman

**Community Engagement Officer,  
Caboolture Satellite Hospital**

# KEEPING OUR COMMUNITY INFORMED AND ENGAGED

## Better Together – Our Health, Our Way social media platforms

The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Leadership Team (A&TSILT) communication service have worked hard to ensure Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community members stay informed and up to date by sharing factual health information via their Better Together social media platforms.

With the addition of two new social media platforms launched in March this year – Instagram and LinkedIn – the A&TSILT communication service have been able to expand their reach across Queensland and engage demographics they were unable to capture via their Facebook page.

The Better Together – Our Health, Our Way Facebook, Instagram, and LinkedIn pages have proven vital to keeping community informed and have assisted in building trusting relationships between the community and Metro North Health. The Better Together social media platforms have also supported the promotion and progress update of the Metro North Health Equity Strategy 2022-2025, showcasing the great work staff are doing across the hospital and health service towards achieving health equity for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

## Better Together social media platform insights (1 January 2023 – 29 October 2023)



### **FACEBOOK: BETTER TOGETHER – OUR HEALTH, OUR WAY** Launched in 2019

Current followers: 3,720 (75.6% women and 24.4%)

Yearly page reach: 173,128

Yearly page visits: 27,222  
(increase of 118.6% compared to 2022)

New Yearly Page Followers: 914  
(increase of 47.7% compared to 2022)

<https://www.facebook.com/bettertogetherourhealthourway>

Follow us on our journey towards health equity: Facebook, Instagram and LinkedIn.



### **INSTAGRAM: @OURHEALTHOURWAY**

Launched in 2023

Current followers: 175 (80.7% women and 19.3%)

Yearly page reach: 3,612

Yearly page visits: 818

<https://www.instagram.com/ourhealthourway>



### **LINKEDIN: BETTER TOGETHER – OUR HEALTH, OUR WAY** Launched in 2023

Current followers: 172

Yearly page reach: 58,249

Yearly page visits: 505

<https://www.linkedin.com/company/better-together-our-health-our-way>



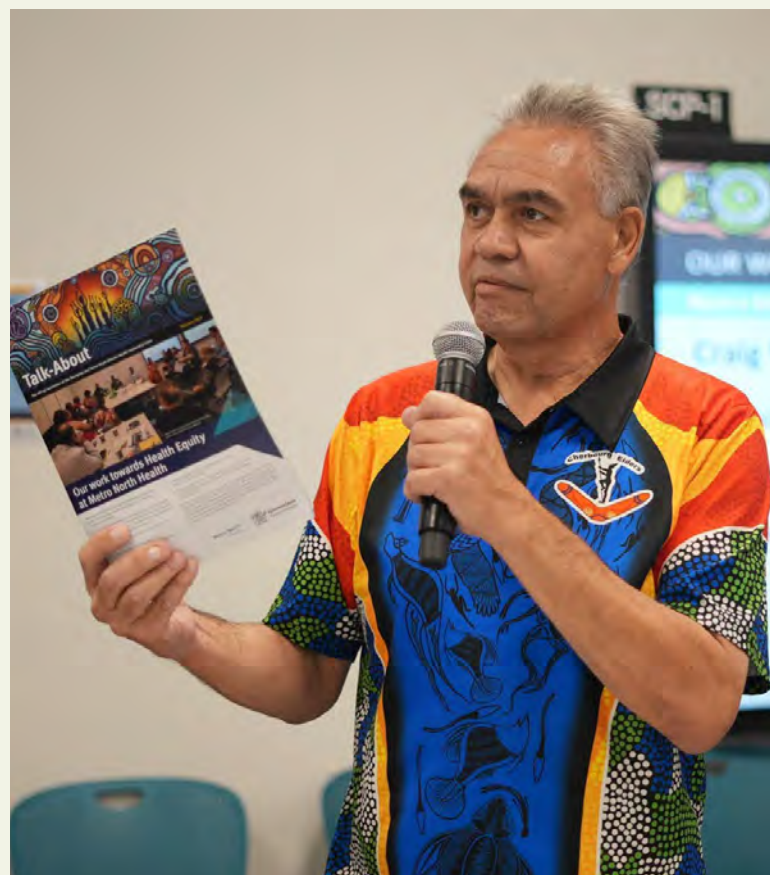
## Talk-About Newsletter

Prior to the introduction of the Better Together social media platforms, the Talk-About Newsletter enabled Metro North Health to effectively share updates with the community regarding Metro North Health programs and initiatives, good news stories, patient experiences, staff profiles, and more.

In 2023, and in its ninth year of publication, the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Leadership Team (A&TSILT) communication service have published 4 editions of the Talk-About Newsletter, with electronic copies of the publication being sent directly to the emails of 213 staff members and 127 community members, and 1,800 hard copies of the newsletter being printed and distributed to staff, community members and community organisations within the Metro North Health catchment.

You can view previous editions of the Talk-About Newsletter at <https://bit.ly/3Fxf0Q9>.

Join our electronic mailing list and receive future editions of the Talk-About Newsletter directly to your email: <https://forms.office.com/r/JV3xuVc1Q6>



## BETTER TOGETHER HEALTH VAN – OUT AND ABOUT

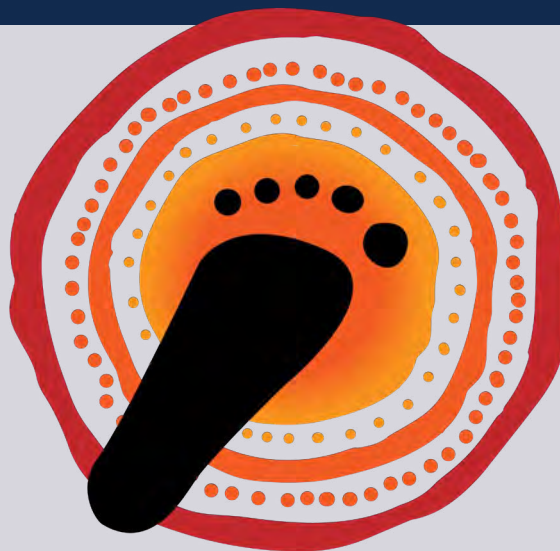
### Deadly Feet

The Metro North Health Better Together Health Van (BTHV) and Deadly Feet team have joined together in collaboration engaging with Elders, community members and services to provide health promotion and screening activities at community events and local community organisations.

The opportunity to provide screening and education about foot health in the community ensured improved access and visibility of the Deadly Feet program. This led to the program receiving invites and further partnership opportunities for Elders' at community event days and local yarning spaces.

With the use of BTHV, the Deadly Feet program engaged over 140 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community members who were formally assessed, with 44 referred into the program for further support and care.

During the engagement of community members clinicians have the opportunity to share in stories and further discussions with community. The health conversations and screening successes have been made possible by providing access in settings more



natural and comfortable for community members. It provides the opportunity to build trust and relationships where they are surrounded by safety and protective factors.

This hard work has been seen in the response and feedback from community members who have accessed the program, and the increase of new people accessing the program via word-of-mouth referral by a friend or family member that has had a positive experience with the team.



## Deadly Smiles and Hearing Health at Koobara Kindy (7-13 August)

In August, during Dental Health Week (7-13 August), the BTHV, Metro North Health Deadly Smiles Oral health program and Hearing Australia visited Koobara Kindy hosting two dental health clinics handing out dental resources containing toothbrushes, floss and toothpaste for the young jarjums (children) and providing screening to check teeth and gums. Hearing Australia were also onsite providing ear checks for the young children.

Throughout the two clinic sessions, that were carefully planned in consultation with Koobara Kindy staff and family, 25 jarjums participated with Deadly Smiles and Hearing Australia to provide an opportunity and support for referrals onto services for further follow up and investigation.

Hearing Australia Aboriginal Health Worker, Leonard Creed, came to provide hearing checks for the children after they had finished getting their teeth checked with Deadly Smiles.

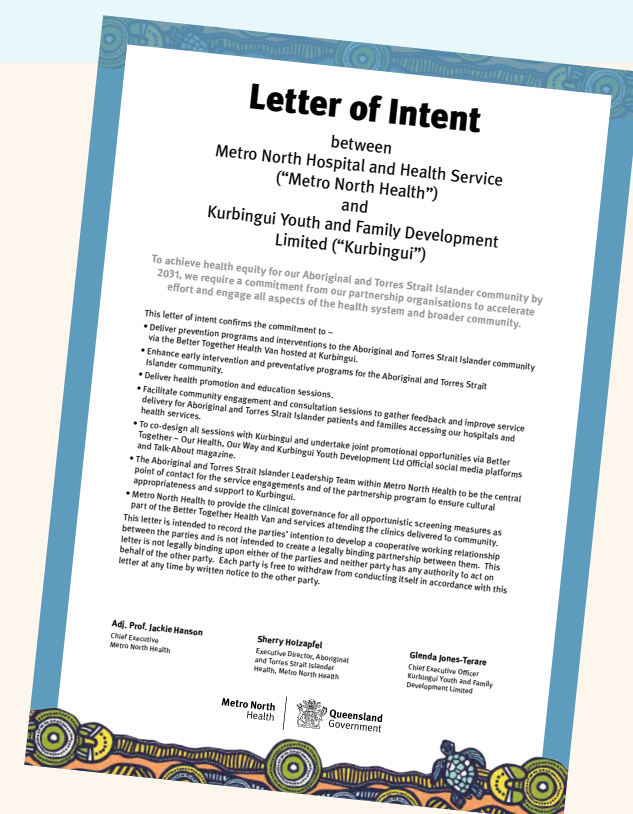
Young children who needed further investigation were referred to Caboolture Audiology for treatment and support.

## Metro North Health formalises partnership with Kurbingui Youth

In late November, Metro North Health Chief Executive, Jackie Hanson, and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Executive Director, Sherry Holzapfel, attended a special signing event with CEO of Kurbingui Youth and Family Glenda Jones-Terare to formalise the partnership delivery of clinics via the Better Together Health Van.

Based on the success of clinics held at Kurbingui over the past 6 months, the Letter of Intent formalises the partnership approach between the two organisations to deliver prevention programs and interventions to the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community. This includes the following -

- Enhance early intervention and preventative programs for the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community.
- Deliver health promotion and education sessions.
- Facilitate community engagement and consultation sessions to gather feedback and improve service delivery for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander patients and families accessing our hospitals and health services.
- To co-design all sessions with Kurbingui and undertake joint promotional opportunities via Better Together – Our Health, Our Way and Kurbingui Youth Development Ltd Official social media platforms and Talk-About Newsletter.
- The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Leadership Team within Metro North Health to be the central point of contact for the service engagements and of the partnership program to ensure cultural appropriateness and support to Kurbingui.
- Metro North Health to provide the clinical governance for all opportunistic screening measures as part of the Better Together Health Van and services attending the clinics delivered to community.



Partnerships such as these are integral to the success of the health equity agenda and ensuring appropriate access and services within a culturally safe environment for community.

## Kurbingui Youth and Family Development Service

The Better Together Health Van (BTHV), in partnership with Metro North Health services have been partnering with Kurbingui Youth and Family Development service to conduct pop up health outreach clinics and promotional activities to local Elders and community.

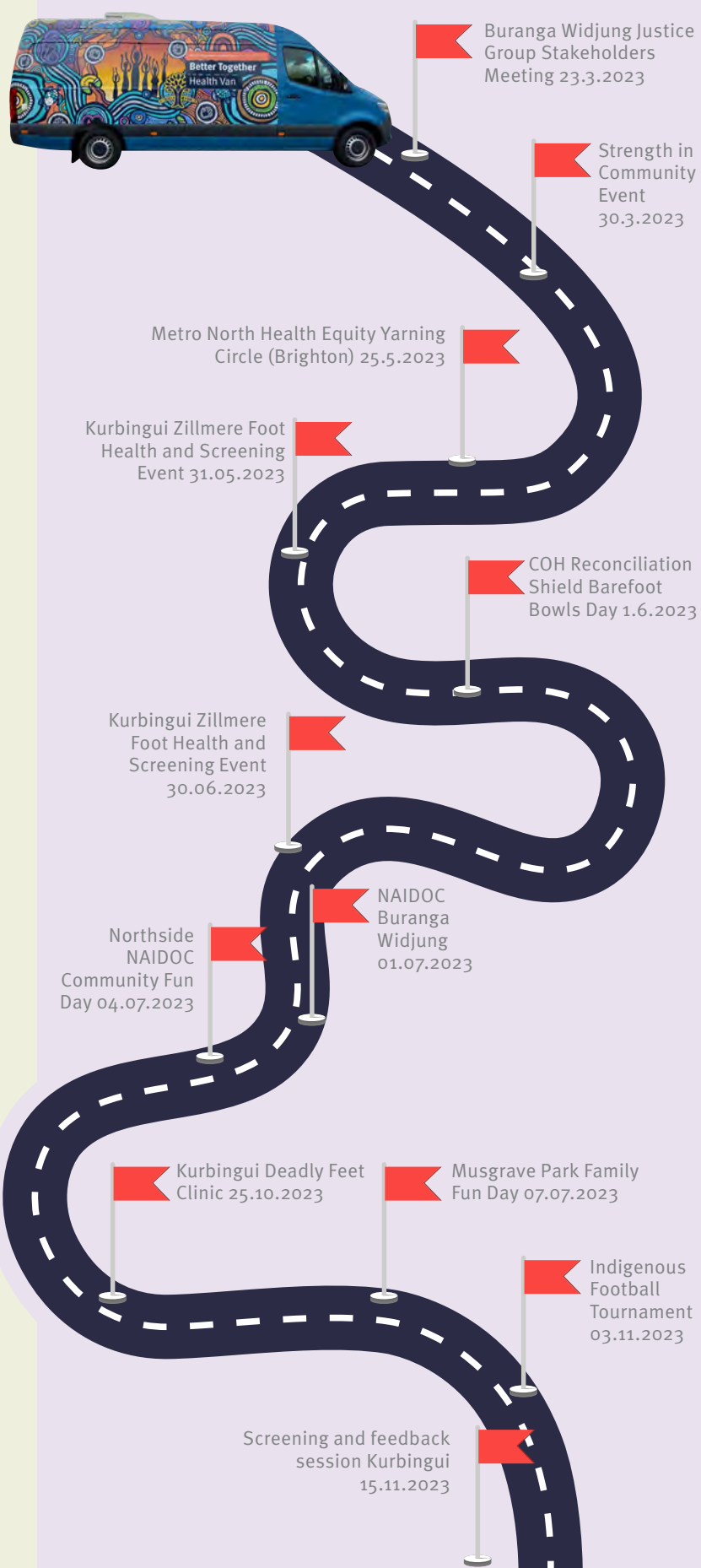
During the year the BTHV, Deadly Smiles team and Hearing Australia provided a pop-up service conducting screening, health checks and health education to local Elders and community members in attendance. The Deadly Smiles team were able to work one-on-one with attendees and map out a health plan journey to support anyone who needed additional oral health care.

Adults and children were seen on the day and were provided with resource packs to take home. For the duration of the clinic 13 community members were screened.

A local Elder spoke kindly of the support he received on the day and the follow-up support for further appointments. Due to the extensive dental work Uncle required the Deadly Smiles team provided clarity on how to move forward with treatment plans and the mapping of his appointments which gave Uncle peace of mind for an issue that has been bothering him for a while.

In early September the BTHV attended Kurbingui, alongside Metro North public health, to provide a pop-up immunisation clinic to support people with flu vaccinations and other immunisations. The highlight at the immunisation clinic was being able to provide support to a young man and soon-to-be dad in getting his immunisations up to date in time for bubs arrival, that he had been having trouble accessing prior to the pop-up clinic.

## Better Together Health Van 2023 Roadmap



# Community Engagement Opportunities

The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Leadership Team (A&TSILT) takes an active role in supporting the community and partnering for engagement opportunities.



The graph below highlights the successful partnership opportunities over the past 12 months.

Events	Type	Target Audience	Geography	Frequency
<b>A&amp;TSILT Team Building Day – Mon Komo, Redcliffe (Feb)</b>  Engagement team collaborated with the Acting Manager, Capacity and Development to develop a staff wellbeing day for members of A&TSILT.  The intent of the day was to provide staff an opportunity to engage and network with other team members by participating in wellbeing activities, connecting and yarning exercises.  The day comprised of several sessions which included both solo and group/table discussions.	Workshop/ Team Building	A&TSILT staff	Redcliffe	One-Off
<b>Metro North Health Equity Showcase – Deception Bay Community Hall (March)</b>  The Metro North Health Equity Showcase is an opportunity for community to learn about key initiatives and actions Metro North Health have implemented as part of the Metro North Health Equity Strategy.  This platform is also a key opportunity for Metro North Health staff and services to engage with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and listen to the voices of the community.	Forum/ Showcase	MNH Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workforce and MNH Executive. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elders, community members, organisation's and invited guests.	Deception Bay	Bi-Annual
<b>Metro North Health Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Staff Forum (April)</b>  The Staff Forum provides an opportunity for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff (and allies) across Metro North Health to come together to showcase programs and service updates to their peers.  The day provided an opportunity for several teams to promote and give an update on their services which included: A&TSILT, Health Equity, Social and Emotional Wellbeing program, Community and Oral Health, and Caboolture and Kilcoy Hospitals and Woodford Corrections Health .  The Deadly Start team provided a great insight into their journey so far with Metro North Health.  Guest speaker Eddie Monaei, Manager at DSDSATSIP, SE Qld (North) Region presented to staff about Meriba Omasker Kaziw Kazipa – Traditional Adoption Practices within the Torres Strait.	Forum/ workshop	MNH Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander (and Allies), MNH	Brighton	Annually



Events	Type	Target Audience	Geography	Frequency
<p><b>Mabo Day Celebration, Brighton Wellness Hub (June)</b></p> <p>This was the first celebration hosted by Metro North Health to recognize the High Court of Australia's decision (3rd June 1992) in recognizing traditional land rights (Native Title) on Mer (Murray Island).</p> <p>The case was led by Eddie 'Koiki' Mabo and was Australia's first successful native title claim.</p> <p>All Metro North Health staff, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elders and community members were invited to celebrate.</p> <p>The day comprised of traditional kai kai (food) and entertainment by the Kutaw Zoeru Torres Strait Islander Dance.</p>	Community Day	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community members, MNH staff	Brighton	Annually
<p><b>NAIDOC Elders Luncheon – Victoria Park (July)</b></p> <p>The NAIDOC theme for 2023 was 'For Our Elders' recognising the important role Elders across every generation have played and continue to play in our communities and families.</p> <p>To acknowledge this year's theme, Metro North Health decided to host an Elders luncheon to give thanks and celebrate our Elders and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community for their continued support and valued contribution to our HHS.</p> <p>The event invitation was distributed with 100 guests in attendance, including Metro North Health Executive.</p> <p>The attendees participated in a sit-down two course meal, canapes, networking and entertainment by Uncle Lance O'Chin.</p>	Lunch/Community Celebration	MNH Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workforce and MNH Executive. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elders, community members, organisation's and invited guests.	Herston	Annually
<p><b>NAIDOC Week Celebrations (July)</b></p> <p>It was decided this year to connect in with the local community run events to help build, support and nurture relationships with the local community and community organisations.</p> <p>The engagement and screening activities conducted by Metro North Health services at the local community NAIDOC events support and contribute to building rapport, trust and developing strong relationships and network opportunities with the local community, sharing important health messaging and information, awareness on Metro North Health services available to the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community and driving Metro North Health Equity Key Performance Action's.</p> <p>The Better Together Health Van also attended the community events in collaboration with the Deadly Feet Program, Deadly Smiles/Oral Health team and diabetes team.</p> <p>The four community events that were attended are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Musgrave Park Family Fun Day (Musgrave Park, South Brisbane) - Friday 7 July 2023</li> <li>Buranga Widjung Justice Group NAIDOC Community Flag Raising Ceremony – (Caboolture) - Saturday 1 July 2023</li> <li>Northside NAIDOC Community Fun Day (Zillmere) - Tuesday 4 July 2023</li> <li>Mindle Bygul Aboriginal Corporation NAIDOC Family Fun Day 2023 (Deception Bay) - Saturday 22 July 2023</li> </ul>	Community Event/Celebration	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community members and organisations, MNH Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workforce and services.	Brisbane Northside (various locations)	Annually

Events	Type	Target Audience	Geography	Frequency
<p><b>Metro North Health Equity Measures Workshop 1 – Brighton (August)</b></p> <p>The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Leadership Team (A&amp;TSILT), in partnership with Health Service Strategy and Planning, held a Metro North Health Equity Measures Workshop with staff on the 3rd of August 2023.</p> <p>The purpose of the workshop was for staff to gain an understanding of what qualitative and quantitative measures are, and to gather baseline data to be used for the Metro North Health Equity Strategy 2022–2025, with a further workshop booked for the 19th of September with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elders and community members who have been invited to participate in table yarns.</p> <p>During the workshop, small groups discussed and documented past experiences and barriers with reporting staff and consumer feedback. It was also an opportunity for staff to put forward any ideas on how providing feedback could be improved across Metro North Health.</p> <p>The A&amp;TSILT will continue to co-design our Health Equity qualitative measures with staff and community. The discussion points and outcomes from these workshops will be utilised in setting the qualitative measures for the Metro North Health Equity Strategy 2022–2025.</p>	Workshop	MNH Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workforce, MNH Staff, and MNH Executive. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elders, community members, organisation's and invited guests	Brighton	Once-off
<p><b>Metro North Health Equity Measures Workshop 2 – Brighton (September)</b></p> <p>The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Leadership Team (A&amp;TSILT), in partnership with Health Service Strategy and Planning, held a Metro North Health Equity Measures Workshop with staff on the 3rd of August 2023.</p> <p>The purpose of the workshop was for staff to gain an understanding of what qualitative and quantitative measures are, and to gather baseline data to be used for the Metro North Health Equity Strategy 2022–2025, with a further workshop booked for the 19th of September with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elders and community members who have been invited to participate in table yarns.</p> <p>During the workshop, small groups discussed and documented past experiences and barriers with reporting staff and consumer feedback. It was also an opportunity for staff to put forward any ideas on how providing feedback could be improved across Metro North Health.</p> <p>The A&amp;TSILT will continue to co-design our Health Equity qualitative measures with staff and community. The discussion points and outcomes from these workshops will be utilised in setting the qualitative measures for the Metro North Health Equity Strategy 2022–2025.</p>	Workshop	MNH Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workforce, MNH Staff, and MNH Executive. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elders, community members, organisation's and invited guests	Brighton	Once-off
<p><b>Women's Cultural Gathering – Bribie Island (October)</b></p> <p>The 2023 Women's Cultural Gathering Day was held at Yarun (Bribie Island) on Wednesday 11th October and was attended by twenty-five Metro North Health staff members including two of the Metro North Executive team.</p> <p>These gatherings provide a safe cultural, educational, engaging and networking opportunity for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women in the workforce. The aim is to strengthen and support our current workforce and provide a culturally safe space to connect, collaborate and share culture with each other and the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community.</p> <p>Staff had the opportunity to meet with Bribie Island Traditional Owners and local Elders and community members.</p> <p>The day included cultural sites tour of the island, sandpainting and healing workshop with Nigooli Designs and yarnning circle and storytelling with Bribie Island Elders and community members.</p>	Staff Cultural Day	MNH Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women's workforce, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community members and organisations.	Bribie Island	Bi-Annually

Events	Type	Target Audience	Geography	Frequency
<b>Men's Cultural Gathering - Bribie Island (December)</b>  The 2023 Men's Cultural Gathering Day is due to be held on Thursday 7 December at Yarun (Bribie Island) attended by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander men within the Metro North Health Workforce with local community.  These gatherings provide a safe cultural, educational, engaging and networking opportunity for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander men in the workforce. The aim is to strengthen and support our current workforce and provide a culturally safe space to connect, collaborate and share culture with each other and the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community.	Staff Cultural Day	MNH Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women's workforce, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community members and organisations.	Bribie Island	Bi-Annually
<b>New Satellite Hospital's – Better Together Health Van</b>  The Better Together Health Van delivered health promotion resources to community across Brisbane Northside visiting the Caboolture and Kallangur Satellite Hospital Community Open Day.  Information was provided to community about the Satellite Hospital facilities services including promotion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Hub.	Health Promotion/ Open Day	MNH staff, Caboolture community members, organisations, government	Caboolture	One-off

## Setting our sights on 2024

The year ahead will focus on leading the Health Equity agenda for all Key Performance Actions in the 2023-2024 period across Metro North Health.

The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Leadership Team will support the efforts to influence systems and governance within Metro North Health to provide innovative and culturally responsive service delivery.

This will involve building and maintaining relationships, partnerships and engaging with internal and external stakeholders to improve health outcomes, cultural capability and collaboration.

The key priorities and actions for the year ahead include, but not limited to:

- Lead the portfolio of the Queensland Health Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Cultural Capability Framework 2016-2026 into the planning, implementation, and evaluation of all strategic Cultural Capability initiatives across Metro North Health and providing support to local leads.
- Support opportunistic screening measures and projects via the Better Together Health Van through community partnerships.
- Improve patient experience in support with transport which will result in Reduced Failed to Attend appointments.
- Coordinating the roll out of Virtual Courageous Conversations About Race sessions to staff within Metro North Health to continuously upskill and support education around identifying racism.
- Promote and embed culturally appropriate screening tools, referral pathways and community linkages in priority areas such as child protection, perinatal mental health, family support, smoking and other substances.
- Development of screening tools for opportunistic screening of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people when engaging with Emergency Department's and hospital admissions.
- Integrate the Better Together Medication Access (BTMA) program into Metro North Health outpatients and state-wide.
- Establish a two-way process to report on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health outcomes/key initiatives operationally and strategically.
- Co-lead Ngarrama enhancement project child health services and paediatric care and services.
- Co-design and implement models of care and framework for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Worker and Indigenous Hospital Liaison roles.
- Lead calendar of cultural community events/ engagements (Close the Gap Day, NAIDOC Week and Mabo Day).
- Collaborate on policies and procedures to ensure Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives are incorporated.
- Commit to working in a collaborative way with Kurbingui Youth and Family Development Limited by supporting opportunistic screening, health promotion, education, community engagement and consultation sessions.
- Support the development of the Metro North Health anti-racism campaign through the co-designing of posters, communications, and resources to assist in the promotion.

If you have any feedback, requests for support or would like to collaborate on an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health program, please contact our team on [A\\_TSILT\\_MNHHS@health.qld.gov.au](mailto:A_TSILT_MNHHS@health.qld.gov.au)



[A\\_TSILT\\_MNHHS@health.qld.gov.au](mailto:A_TSILT_MNHHS@health.qld.gov.au)