

TALK-ABOUT

April 2025

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The official Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Newsletter

**Metro North
Health**



**Queensland
Government**

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Give us feedback

We welcome your feedback, contributions, story ideas and details on any upcoming events. Please contact Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Leadership Team at:
A_TSILT_MNHHS@health.qld.gov.au
or phone **07 3170 4460**.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Leadership Team

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Metro North Health would like to acknowledge the Traditional Owners and Custodians of the land on which our services are located.

We pay our respects to all Elders past, present and future and acknowledge Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples across the state.

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

Contact information

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The Prince Charles Hospital

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Redcliffe Hospital

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Forensic Mental Health Team Ph: 3234 0800

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A word from the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Executive Director



Already, this year has shaped up to be a big and unprecedented year with Southeast Queensland being heavily impacted by ex-Tropical Cyclone Alfred. I want to express my deepest appreciation and big thank you to our dedicated health care staff who went above and beyond and continued to provide care to our community during the challenging time. I hope all our community stayed safe and continue to seek support where needed.

As we hit the ground running in the first quarter of 2025, we have a lot of exciting work coming up. Our main focus is the development of the new Health Equity Strategy and Implementation Plan 2025 – 2028. Since launching our inaugural strategy in July 2022, I have been extremely impressed with the work taking place across Metro North Health, and alongside our community, to achieve health equity for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. Health Equity is an opportunity for all of us to create change, and positive and equitable health outcomes.

As Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, a holistic view of our health is fundamental. Cultural and Social determinants play a key factor in the health gap experienced by our people. A key priority in our health equity agenda is increasing our access to health care with a strong focus on mental health, alcohol and other drugs, increasing and strengthening our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workforce and providing continuity of care for mums, babies, dads and families.

Another area of focus over the next few months is the development of the Metro North Health Anti-Racism campaign. The campaign, which is a first for Metro North Health, will be created and led by the voices of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff and community members through consultation sessions, with the intention to achieve a zero-tolerance policy towards racism for both staff and patients in Metro North Health.

It is our hope that the campaign will empower staff and community to stand up and speak out against all acts of racism and discrimination towards Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, and enable timely, efficient, and culturally safe pathways to report on these incidences to ensure those who demonstrate this unacceptable behaviour are held accountable.

We have a long way to go as a health service, but I am pleased with how we are tracking. The new Health Equity Strategy 2025 – 2028 will be launched later this year in July in celebration with community, staff and key stakeholders. Keep an eye on our *Better Together – Our Health, Our Way* Facebook, Instagram and LinkedIn pages for more event details coming soon.

Adj. Prof. Sherry Holzapfel
Executive Director,
Aboriginal and Torres Strait
Islander Health

A word from Metro North Health Chief Executive



As Chief Executive of Australia's largest health service, I am proud to be leading an organisation that is committed to achieving health equity and access to culturally appropriate and supportive health care for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

This year represents another step in our health equity journey and we will continue to listen and engage with our community to understand how we can improve the outcomes and experiences of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people accessing our services.

A key priority for 2025 will be the development of an anti-racism policy to be launched in July. This policy is a key priority area of our Metro North Health Equity Strategy and reaffirms our zero-tolerance approach towards racial discrimination within our hospitals and health services. I encourage staff, patients and community members to contribute to this opportunity and be part of our efforts to actively create a more equitable environment for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples across our hospitals and health services.

I am excited to focus on the development of the next phase of the health equity journey, with the co-design and co-development of the 2025-2028 strategy to be launched by July this year. As an organisation we have been tracking our progress against key priority areas outlined in the strategy and to date, we have achieved some great outcomes, leading the way across Queensland in improving system changes to bring innovative and culturally responsive health service delivery for our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community.

But we still have a long way to go, and the next stage of the strategy will focus on key areas of mental health and women's, children, and families.

We recognise that the voices and valuable insight of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community are central to the development of the health equity strategy, and Metro North Health has committed to a minimum of four health equity specific community engagement activities a year. I look forward to working closely with the Metro North Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Leadership Team to host these activities which reconfirm our ongoing commitment to improving the way in which we care for, support and meaningfully engage with our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.

I extend a warm welcome to the 38 new Deadly Start trainees who recently commenced with Metro North. This is our sixth year driving this program, which has recently been expanded across the state, and now provides many more young people with practical on-the-job experience to help excel their future careers. What a great stepping stone for our young workforce.

With winter approaching, we are starting to see an increase in influenza in our community. Flu vaccination is an effective way to reduce your chances of catching and spreading flu amongst your family and friends. Because influenza is more than one strain of virus, the vaccine may not completely prevent you getting sick but it will significantly reduce the likelihood of becoming very ill and needing a hospital stay.

Queensland Health recommends an annual influenza vaccination for everyone over 6 months old. In Queensland, influenza vaccinations are available for free for everyone over 6 months old. You can find out more about the flu vaccinations and where to get them on the Queensland Government's vaccinations website: <https://www.vaccinate.initiatives.qld.gov.au/what-to-vaccinate-against/influenza>

I look forward to strengthening relationships, listening to, and learning from the community we serve to ensure we can provide high-quality person-centred care that is culturally responsive and contributes to the improved health and well-being of our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community.

Kind regards,

Adj. Prof. Jackie Hanson
Chief Executive,
Metro North Health



Julie Henderson, Anti-Racism Campaign Lead and Janita Adams, Cultural Capability Officer, proudly supporting the Metro North Health Anti-Racism Campaign agenda.

Anti-Racism Campaign planned for Metro North Health

Metro North Health has a zero tolerance towards racial discrimination within the hospitals and health services.

As part of the [health equity journey](#), Metro North Health are committed to actively eliminating racial discrimination and institutional racism within the service.

The [Metro North Health Equity Strategy](#), launched in July 2022, provides a pathway for cultural change and a key priority area of KPA 1.1A - Develop and implement an anti-racism campaign that incorporates existing and new legislation policies.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Executive Director, Sherry Holzapfel, said the campaign will be led by the voices of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff and community members and co-designed with key stakeholders.

"We are focusing on the key themes of what racism looks like, sounds like, and feels like for our people and community.

"The objectives of introducing the campaign are to achieve a zero-tolerance toward racism, to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultural Capability within the organisation and for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff and patients to feel culturally safe to report incidents of racism, and to feel supported when they are reporting.

"The goal is to eliminate racism and create a culture where staff feel safe to report incidences of racism/discrimination across our organisation," Sherry said.

Metro North Health Chief Executive, Jackie Hanson, said she grew up in Townsville in the 1970s and 80s and

has vivid memories of witnessing racism, unfair treatment, inequity, and violence against Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

"I wish I could say that is all in the past, but despite many action plans and programs to close the gap, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people still do not receive equitable treatment and care.

"Sadly, racism and inequity continue to negatively impact our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families and communities across all facets of their lives including their healthcare. This is unacceptable and unconscionable. Until we call out and name racism and bias, we will not get rid of it, and we will not close the gap in health outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

What is Anti-Racism?

"In a racist society, it is not enough to be non-racist; we must be anti-racist". Angela Davis, Author/Activist.

Anti-racism is more than being 'not racist'. Anti-racism involves actively fighting against racist policies, practices, culture, and ideas. Being anti-racist means making conscious decisions that challenge injustice and inequality and promote fairness. It can be helpful to think of anti-racism as a skill set. We can all develop and use this skill set to create a more equitable society.

When you have a robust anti-racism skill set, you can question and challenge the various ways racism impacts our society.

"As the Chief Executive of Metro North Health, I am grateful to have the opportunity to make a difference. Whilst I can never understand fully the emotional and physical pain and hurt experienced by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, I give my full commitment to sharing the ugly truth of racism in all forms," said Jackie Hanson.

Metro North Health staff had the opportunity to contribute through a variety of mediums including a staff survey, becoming a local ambassador for the campaign and attending an education session discussing the anti-racism policy and bystander education.

Tailored sessions were coordinated through the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Leadership Team for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff within a culturally safe space, to share yarns, thoughts, knowledge, and input on the campaign development.

Community members were invited to share on the co-design through outreach opportunities and messages on the [Better Together - Our Health, Our Way](#) social media pages.

As a highly sensitive topic for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, supports are available to both staff and community members as they participate in these conversations.

To learn more about racism and discrimination, visit:

- It Stops With Me - Key Terms (<https://itstopswithme.humanrights.gov.au/commit-to-learning/key-terms>)
- Human Rights Commission - Discrimination Law (<https://humanrights.gov.au/our-work/employers/good-practice-good-business-factsheets>)
- Health Equity (<https://metronorth.health.qld.gov.au/health-equity>)
- Better Together Facebook - (<https://www.facebook.com/bettertogetherourhealthourway>)



OUTandABOUT

A Strong Start to a promising cadetship journey

Welcoming 2025 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cadets to Queensland Health.

Metro North Health recently welcomed 20 new Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander university students commencing their cadetship journey at hospital and health services across the State.

At a recent Cadetship Welcome Day, new cadets had an opportunity to meet with experienced professionals, and leaders from across the state in a warm, supportive, and culturally safe environment. The day was a celebration of connection, shared knowledge, and outlook on the exciting cadetship journey ahead in the healthcare sector.

Event attendees represented a diverse range of healthcare streams including Midwifery, Nursing, Allied Health, and Corporate Services, reflecting the broad scope and opportunities across the organisation.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff members from across Metro North Hospital and Health Service also joined the event, providing invaluable support, encouragement, and insight for the new cadets. Guests included Royal Brisbane and Women's Hospital Cultural Capability Officer, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Emotional Wellbeing Officer, the Director of Allied Health, a representative from the Metro North Health Board, and many more respected figures from across the sector.

One of the highlights of the day was a dynamic panel discussion featuring past and present cadets, health professional supervisors, and the Program Manager of the Statewide Cadetship Program, Lauren Williams. The panel provided cadets with firsthand insight into the pathways and opportunities ahead, as well as honest reflections and advice from those who've walked the journey before them.

The event also consisted of yarning circles, offering a culturally grounded and supportive space for open dialogue where Allied Health professionals, Nurses, and Midwives shared their stories, answered questions, and provided mentorship to the new cadets. These conversations fostered a sense of belonging, encouragement, and empowerment for those just beginning their cadetship journey.

"Days like the Welcome Day are so important for me to connect with our next cohort of students, listen to their triumphs and struggles to hear how we will be able to best support them. I walk away from days like that reinvigorated from all these new students who are breaking systemic barriers to be here, some are the first from their families to study at university and it's important to be grounded as to why this program is so important," said Lauren Williams, Program Manager for First Nations Training Pathway Program.

Overall, the Welcome Day was a powerful reminder of the importance of community, connection, and culturally responsive care in shaping the future of our health workforce. The First Nations Cadetship Program and health care staff shared their excitement to see the new cadets develop, succeed, and uphold excellence and leadership in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander healthcare.



Building Deadly Relationships

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff enjoying the gathering.

The Metro North Health Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Leadership Team (A&TSILT) have committed to hosting four Better Together Staff Gatherings each year. These gatherings aim to create a culturally safe space and platform where Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff and services can come together to build relationships, collaborate, and network.

The first Better Together Staff Gathering of 2025 was held on 13 February at Bray Hall Community Centre, bringing together 53 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff. It was a special day, marking the 17th anniversary of the National Apology to the Stolen Generations, delivered by former Prime Minister Kevin Rudd.

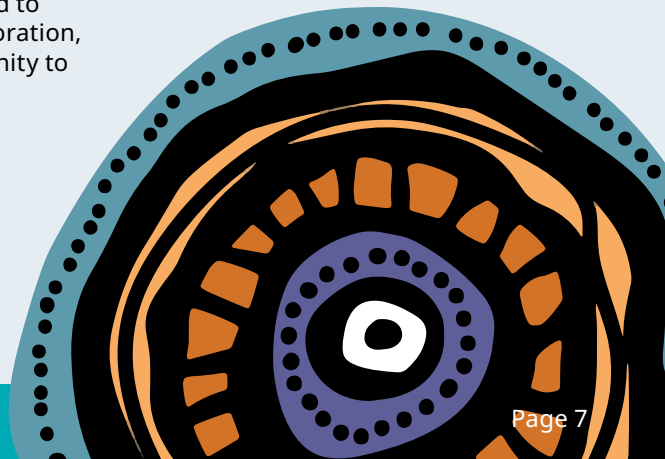
Staff from the A&TSILT began the gathering by taking a moment to acknowledge the significance of the National Apology Anniversary, and reflect on the work that still needs to be done to address the lasting effects of trauma, to create health equity and achieve life expectancy parity for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

The first gathering of the year focused on establishing and building relationships between Metro North Health Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff in a culturally safe, and relaxed environment.

Staff enjoyed opportunities to connect and network over a catered lunch and got involved in team building activities that aimed to foster teamwork and collaboration, making it a perfect opportunity to connect and unwind.

Along with all the activities, the gathering also provided Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff a chance to learn about the Metro North Health Anti-Racism Policy and Campaign currently in development. Staff were encouraged to provide feedback to help shape the campaign, ensuring the campaign resonates with them and their experiences.

Feedback received after the gathering tells us that staff enjoyed the opportunity to connect with colleagues in a culturally safe space and are looking forward to the three remaining Better Together staff gatherings planned throughout the year.



OUTandABOUT

Celebrating Close the Gap Day across our Satellite Health Centres



Aboriginal Elder cutting the cake alongside Caboolture Satellite Health Centre staff.

To mark National Close the Gap Day this year (20 March), the Metro North Health Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Leadership Team hosted a series of community gatherings at our three Satellite Health Centres.

These events took place across Bribie Island Satellite Health Centre (Yarun), Caboolture Satellite Health Centre (Kabul), and Kallangur Satellite Health Centre (Kalangoor). They were a chance to bring together staff and community members to share knowledge, strengthen connections, celebrate current initiatives being undertaken to improve health outcomes and enjoy a catered morning tea.

Special guest and proud Queensland Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Foundation (QATSIF) graduate and employee, Teagan attended each gathering to join in celebration.

During each event Teagan shared the important work that QATSIF is doing to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students through their high school years, and spoke personally about how the scholarship had a positive impact on her and her family's lives, helping her complete high school successfully.

At each gathering, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elders were invited to cut a special cake to honour this significant day and to celebrate the ongoing efforts across Metro North Health to improve the health and wellbeing outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.



Left: QATSIF graduate and employee, Teagan sharing how the scholarship supported her through high school.

Above: Bribie Island Satellite Health Centre staff cutting the cake alongside Elders.

OUTandABOUT

A bright future in healthcare is on the horizon for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students as the Deadly Start Program officially kicks off! In partnership with Queensland Health's Equity Strategy, this initiative provides culturally supportive pathways into careers in nursing, midwifery, oral health, and allied health.

Students begin their journey by completing a Certificate II in Health Support Services within six months. From there, those who progress will step into hospital-based traineeships, earning while they learn as they work towards a Certificate III in their chosen field. Not only will they gain hands-on experience, but they'll also be working towards their Queensland Certificate of Education, setting them up for long-term success.

Caboolture Hospital recently welcomed its newest Deadly Start students, who will be gaining practical experience one day a week for the next 12 months. Many have already expressed a passion for nursing, and this program is the perfect launchpad for their future careers.

A Deadly Future in Healthcare: Students Take Their First Steps

During orientation, students connected with a diverse range of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Services staff, including the Indigenous Hospital Liaison, Senior Health Workers, and Cultural Capability Officer. They explored key hospital areas, met with supervisors and managers, and took part in informal yarns about what it's really like to work in healthcare.

With many of these students calling our local community home, they are the future of our healthcare workforce. Let's welcome them with open arms, share our knowledge, and help make their journey one to remember!

 Deadly Start students being welcomed at Caboolture Hospital.





GATHER, REFLECT, CONNECT: Bribie's Healing Garden Blooms

Bribie Island Satellite Health Centre (Yarun) recently celebrated a meaningful milestone with the opening of its new Healing Garden on 31 March — a thoughtfully co-designed space with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community to encourage healing, storytelling, and connection.

A yarning circle was held in commemoration of the opening, welcoming Elders, community members, health staff, and local representatives. It served as a powerful reminder of the value of culturally safe and welcoming spaces in healthcare.

Nestled among native plants and featuring smooth sandstone seating, a permanent yarning circle space offers a peaceful place for open conversations, quiet reflection, and community gatherings. Yarning circles hold a special place in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, where they are used to share stories, pass on knowledge, and strengthen relationships.

The celebration also highlighted the health centre's ongoing commitment to cultural inclusion and understanding. Local Elders played a key role in shaping the space, and their guidance was warmly acknowledged throughout the day.

This initiative forms part of a broader movement within Queensland Health to embed culturally safe practices into everyday care. By weaving cultural elements into the fabric of health services, these efforts help build stronger connections and support more holistic wellbeing.

Bribie Island Satellite Health Centre hopes the Healing Garden becomes a much-used and loved part of the grounds—not just by patients and families, but also by staff and the broader community—as a place to gather, reflect, and connect.



Mental Health and Wellbeing Support Services

13YARN

24/7 Crisis support for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

Phone: 13 92 76 | Website: www.13yarn.org.au/

Mob Link

An initiative of the Institute for Urban Indigenous Health.

Phone: 1800 254 354 | Website: www.iuih.org.au/our-services/mob-link/

Lifeline Australia

24/7 Telephone crisis support service in Australia.

Phone: 13 11 14 | Website: www.lifeline.org.au/

Beyond Blue

24/7 Support for Anxiety, Depression and Suicide Prevention.

Phone: 1300 22 4636 | Website: <https://www.beyondblue.org.au/>

R U OK?

National suicide prevention charity.

Website: www.ruok.org.au/

Black Dog Institute

Independent not-for-profit mental health research institute.

Website: www.blackdoginstitute.org.au/



This initiative is supported by the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Leadership Team, Metro North Health

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



Celebrating Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture, good news stories, jobs for mob, health initiatives and more!



This initiative is supported by the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Leadership Team

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A Deadly Start has Tiffany Making Strides

Proud Kamilaroi woman and Deadly Start trainee, Tiffany Colley, has come leaps and bounds since beginning her school-based traineeship with Metro North Health in January of last year.

The Deadly Start program offers Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander high school students in Year 11 and 12 the chance to gain hands-on workplace experience in a hospital setting, along with earning a Certificate II and III qualification in their chosen field.

After completing a Certificate II in Health Support Services over a six-month period, Tiffany advanced to an Assistant in Nursing traineeship at Ward 1B – Cardiology, at The Prince Charles Hospital, where she is now working towards completing a Certificate III in Health Services Assistance. During her one-day-a-week shift, Tiffany plays a vital role in supporting the nursing staff by restocking supplies, checking on patients, assisting patients with their breakfast orders, helping with patient showers, and assisting staff with various tasks throughout the day.

Tiffany feels well-supported in her role, with the nursing team providing consistent supervision and guidance. “All the nurses are nice, really, really nice. They are really supportive,” said Tiffany.

Starting her traineeship was a new and somewhat daunting experience for Tiffany, as it was her first time gaining work experience, entering a new workplace, and meeting many new people. However, after nine months in the program, she has noticed significant growth in herself. Tiffany has gained more confidence, improved her communication skills, and developed the self-assurance to tackle any task to the best of her ability, knowing that she has the full support of her colleagues and supervisors.



Tiffany getting ready to start her shift at The Prince Charles Hospital.

Tiffany’s passion for health was inspired by her great-great-grandmother on her father’s side. As her only great-great-granddaughter, Tiffany was gifted some of her nursing items, which hold great sentimental value to her. “My great-great grandmother worked as a nurse in New South Wales and was also a midwife. As I was her only great-great granddaughter, I got gifted her nursing badges and books, which are very valuable to me,” said Tiffany.

While initially torn between nursing and psychology, Tiffany gained clarity through her experience in the Deadly Start program, ultimately deciding that nursing is the path she wants to pursue. “When I first started at the hospital, I expected to see patients covered in blood, and staff delivering CPR often, but it’s not like that at all.

“Now that I have gained exposure through the Deadly Start program, I have found an interest in Orthopaedic Nursing, I think that will be really cool. I still find psychology fascinating, I just don’t think it’s for me,” Tiffany shared.

A particularly memorable moment during her traineeship was when she supported an Aboriginal woman who was receiving care on the ward.

The patient’s brother pulled Tiffany aside to express his gratitude, sharing how appreciative he was of Tiffany’s support and how comfortable his sister seemed around her.

This reinforced to Tiffany the powerful impact that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff have on the wellbeing and healing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander patients.

Tiffany describes the Deadly Start program as a stepping stone that will help her achieve her goal of becoming a nurse. “Now that I am a part of Deadly Start, I don’t feel the same pressure as I did before, as I now have a guaranteed pathway into further study.

“I didn’t think I was going to get the grades I needed to get into a good university to study nursing, so having the Deadly Start pathway has given me some relief, and has relieved some pressure,” Tiffany said.

After graduating high school, Tiffany plans to attend university next year to study nursing. She encourages other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander high school students to consider joining Deadly Start, as it offers a valuable opportunity to get a head start in their career.

We look forward to following Tiffany’s journey and watching her fulfill her dream of becoming an Orthopaedic Nurse.



Metro North Health Board Members driving change

Under legislative requirement passed by the Queensland Parliament in 2020 and 2021, amendments were made to the Hospital and Health Boards Act 2011 and the Hospital and Health Boards Regulation 2012, requiring Hospital and Health Services to co-develop and co-implement Health Equity Strategies.

A key outcome from the new legislation was the necessity to appoint an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Board Member to each of the 16 Queensland Hospital and Health Service Boards.

Metro North Health Hospital and Health Service have proudly appointed two Aboriginal Board Members to the governing Board.

Meet Adrian Carson AM and Dr Shae Spierings:

Adrian Carson AM

Adrian is a Cobble Cobble man from Queensland's Western Downs Region and is the Metro North Health Board Member and Chair of the Board First Nations Health Equity Committee which monitors the implementation of the Metro North Health Equity Strategy.

Adrian Carson joined Metro North Health in May 2017 and has nearly 30 years' experience in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health across government and non-government organisations. He was the former Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the Institute for Urban Indigenous Health and is a member of the Metro North Board Risk and Audit Committee.

He has served as CEO of Queensland Aboriginal and Islander Health Council (QAIHC), the peak body for the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community Controlled Health Sector in Queensland, and has previously worked with both the Queensland and Australian Governments. Adrian has held directorships on the National Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation (NACCHO), the QAIHC, Health Workforce Queensland and the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community Health Service Brisbane Ltd.

Adrian is focused on addressing disparities in health outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, advocating that "if we get it right for our First Nations mob we will see the benefits for all communities and peoples."

Dr Shea Spierings

Dr Shea, who is a proud Gangulu man born and raised on Darumbal country, joined the Metro North Board in April 2024 and is a member of the Board First Nations Health Equity Committee.

Shea is a Research Fellow specialising in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health at the University of Queensland, and is also the lead investigator and associate investigator across a series of projects funded by the Medical Research Futures Fund, Australian Research Council and the Lowitja Institute. Shea is the Chair for Country to Coast Queensland, which commissions the delivery of primary health services across the Sunshine Coast, Wide Bay and Central Queensland regions to service 900,000 people. He is also a member of the Metro North Board Safety and Quality Committee.

He has previously worked across a variety of sectors including the Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation Sector, Foreign Policy, Construction and Security. In 2015, he was appointed by the Australian Government to serve as the Australian Youth Delegate to the United Nations (UN).

For Shea, one of the most important functions of the First Nations Health Equity Committee is to work with Queensland Health and partners across all levels of the health system, to address the inequalities generated by the system itself.



Empowering Elders: New Healthy Ageing Clinic Delivers Vital Care



A new initiative is providing vital healthcare services for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elders in Brisbane's Northside. The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Healthy Ageing Clinic (HAC) has officially launched, offering specialised geriatric care in a culturally safe and supportive environment.



Funded by Qld Dementia and Frailty Network and delivered in partnership between Moreton Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community Health Service (MATSICHS) and Metro North Health, the clinic is dedicated to supporting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people aged 50 and over, as well as their immediate family members. With a focus on complex and chronic conditions associated with ageing, HAC aims to enhance the quality of life for older patients through personalised, culturally informed healthcare.

The clinic provides a range of essential geriatric services, including cognitive and functional assessments, restorative care, dementia diagnosis and management, falls risk assessment, and medication reviews.

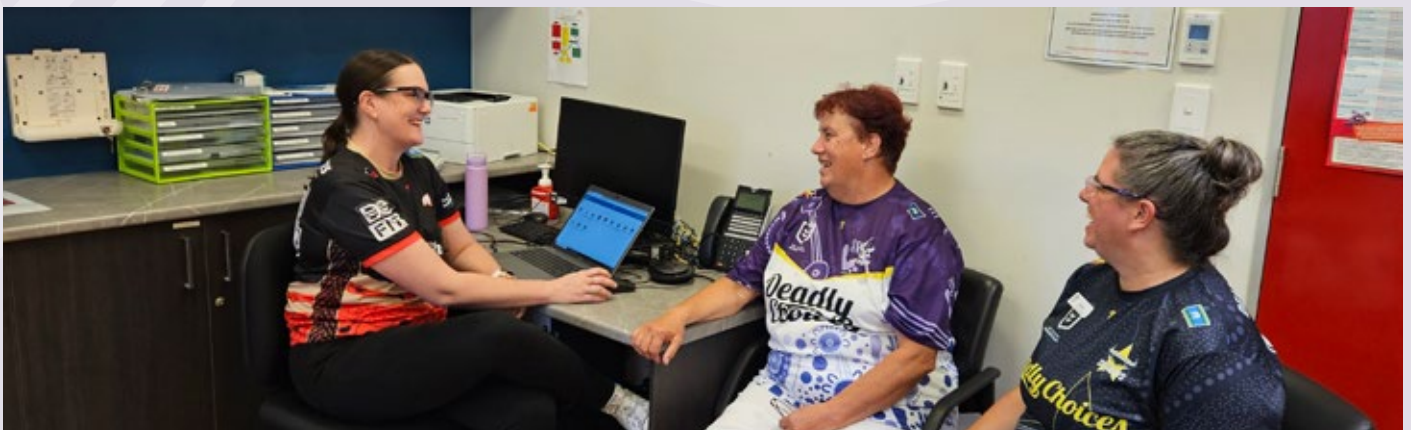
By addressing these key areas, HAC ensures patients receive comprehensive care tailored to their unique needs.

Accessible via GP referral to Metro North Hospital and Health Geriatric Services, HAC operates

every Tuesday from 9am to 4:30pm, alternating between the MATSICHS Caboolture and MATSICHS Strathpine clinics.

This initiative represents a significant step towards ensuring Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elders receive the specialised care they deserve, close to home.

For more information, contact Redcliffe Hospital on (07) 3049 9755 or MATSICHS Caboolture on (07) 5428 5855.



Nujum Jawa Crisis Stabilisation Unit

Breaking the Stigma: Metro North Health's Nujum Jawa Crisis Stabilisation Unit

Mental health crises can happen to anyone, and having the right support at the right time can make all the difference. The Nujum Jawa Crisis Stabilisation Unit (CSU), located at The Prince Charles Hospital campus, provides a dedicated therapeutic space for individuals aged 16 years and older experiencing a mental health crisis. Operating 24/7, the CSU offers an alternative to the Emergency Department, providing intensive, evidence-based support in a safe and welcoming environment.

What is the Nujum Jawa Crisis Stabilisation Unit?

The unit offers two stabilisation services:

- Short-term care (up to 23 hours): Designed to resolve crisis symptoms in a comfortable setting, this service connects individuals with community-based support, such as social services, peer support, and counselling.
- Short-stay unit (up to 72 hours): Provides intensive, specialist care through the Short Stay Pathway (SSP) multidisciplinary team, offering tailored interventions to support recovery.

How to Access the Service

Admission to Nujum Jawa CSU is by referral only. Referrals can be made by:

- Queensland Ambulance Service
- Queensland Police Service
- The Prince Charles Hospital Emergency Department
- Metro North Mental Health
- MHCaall service – 1300 642 255

However, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have a dedicated referral pathway and do not require a formal referral — community can walk up to the front door and receive immediate support.

Community-Led, Culturally Safe Care

The CSU was shaped by the voices of community members, Elders, and carers, ensuring it truly reflects what is needed in times of crisis. During development, two dedicated yarning days gathered insights into crisis intervention, early support, and aftercare. This feedback directly informed the CSU's approach to care.

The unit also builds health literacy and resilience within the community. Peer workers lead activities like walking groups, ensuring that healing extends beyond the walls of the unit. Strong referral pathways mean ongoing support doesn't stop when someone leaves—we walk alongside you beyond crisis care, connecting you with the services you need.

Breaking the Stigma

Mental health support should be accessible and stigma-free. The Nujum Jawa Crisis Stabilisation Unit is committed to fostering a safe and welcoming space for all. If you or someone you know is in crisis, don't hesitate to reach out. Help is available when you need it most.

"Boey"

"Boey" is
Coconut Tree
in Kala Lagaw
Ya language.

Kala Lagaw Ya (also written as Kalaw Lagaw Ya) is the traditional language owned by the Western and Central islands of the Torres Strait. It is linguistically connected to the Aboriginal languages of the Australian mainland and has four distinct regional dialects derived from this language:

- Mabuyag – The dialect of Mabuiag, Badu and St Paul's Village.
- Kalaw Kawaw Ya – The dialect of the top western islands of Saibai, Dauan and Malu Ki'ai.
- Kawrareg – The dialect of the south western islands of Kubin, Kaiwalagal, Muralag (Prince of Wales), Nurupai (Horn), Giralag (Friday), Waiben (Thursday Island), Keriri (Hammond), Maurura (Wednesday), Moa (Banks). It is also known as Kawalgau Ya.
- Kulalgau Ya – The dialect of the central islands of Aurid (Aureed), Damut (Dalrymple), Iama (Yam or Turtle-backed), Masig (Yorke), Mauar (Rennell), Naghir (Mt Earnest), Poruma (Coconut) and Warraber (Sue).

Bringing Heart Health to the Community: The HOPE Initiative

Access to culturally safe healthcare is essential for improving heart health outcomes within Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. The Heart Outreach Program for Health Equity (HOPE) is a collaborative initiative between Metro North Health, the Royal Brisbane and Women's Hospital (RBWH), The Prince Charles Hospital (TPCH), and the Institute for Urban Indigenous Health (IUIH). HOPE aims to provide specialised cardiac care close to home, ensuring patients feel supported in a familiar environment.

Bringing Cardiac Care to Community

HOPE offers cardiac assessments and consultations for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander patients who either have pre-existing heart conditions or are experiencing symptoms that may require further investigation. By delivering services within IUIH clinics, the program helps overcome barriers to hospital-based care, ensuring patients receive culturally appropriate support.

Currently, HOPE operates at:

- Margate IUIH
- Caboolture IUIH
- Strathpine IUIH

Providing care in community settings allows patients to access essential heart health services in a place where they feel safe and comfortable.

Supporting Heart Health in Community

Cardiac investigations available through HOPE include Holter and event monitoring, echocardiograms, electrocardiograms (ECG), and ambulatory blood pressure monitoring. These services help detect and manage heart conditions, supporting better long-term health outcomes for patients.

Heart disease remains a significant concern for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, often linked with conditions such as diabetes, high blood pressure, and high cholesterol. If you have concerns about your heart health or are experiencing symptoms, speak with your local GP. HOPE ensures you can receive the care you need in a culturally safe and accessible way.

Prioritise your heart health today—talk to your GP about accessing HOPE services close to home.

My healthcare rights

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have the right to:



Access

- Healthcare services and treatment that meets your needs
- You and your family have the right to get healthcare that meets your/their needs

Safety

- You and your family have the right to get safe and high quality healthcare
- Care in a space that is culturally safe and respectful

Respect

- You and your family have the right to get respect when using a health service
- Your Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander culture and identity is recognised and respected

Partnership

- You and your family have the right to yarn and be involved in your/their own healthcare
- Family is great support, and if you wish, make sure you include family in on the yarn with healthcare providers
- You have the right to choose who you want involved in your care planning



If you need help, ask to speak to the Indigenous Health Liaison Officer.

Information

- You have the right to get information about your health to make informed decisions and give consent
- Get information about your health. This includes cost, wait times and services
- If you don't understand any information, make sure you ask for help so the information you are getting about your health is clear and easy to understand
- Get as much information before you give consent or say yes to any treatment, test or procedure
- You must be informed about every aspect of the healthcare that is being provided to you, for e.g. what is involved in a procedure or test, what happens after, what is done to ensure your safety and importantly be told if something goes wrong with your healthcare

Privacy

- Healthcare staff must respect you and your family's privacy
- Healthcare staff must keep your information safe and confidential

Give Feedback

- You and your family have the right to give feedback
- This can be a complaint or a compliment
- Healthcare staff must listen to what you have said and address your concerns in a respectful, open and timely way
- Feedback from you and your family helps to make the healthcare better for other families in our community. We all work better together to keep ourselves, our family and our community all healthy and deadly

This resource was adapted from the second edition of the Australian Charter of Healthcare Rights.

These rights apply to all people in all places where health care is provided in Australia. The Charter describes what you, or someone you care for, can expect when receiving health care.

For more information: safetyandquality.gov.au/your-rights

Adapted from The Australian Charter of Healthcare Rights, developed by the Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care (ACSQHC). ACSQHC: Sydney 2019.



Supported by the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Leadership team.

**Metro North
Health**



**Queensland
Government**

STAFF PROFILE

A Day in the life of: **Eileen Moore**

Nurse Navigator, Aboriginal and Torres
Strait Islander Health Services

Caboolture Satellite Health Centre (Kabul)



Q1. Who's your mob and where are you from?

Gooreng Gooreng Country (North of the Burnett River Bundaberg, Gin Gin, and Gladstone regions).

Q2. What does a typical day look like for you in your role?

At Caboolture Satellite Health Centre I support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander patient's that come through the Minor Injuries and Illness Clinic and offer cultural support.

For patients that I am unable to see, I follow up with a phone call after their visit and provide any clinical guidance and link them with support that they may require. We know that health is far greater than the reason for a presentation, so we hope to capture any need for further assistance, support or navigation through health and social wellbeing.

On a weekly basis I have the privilege of being involved in community events, yarning circles, and attending other community-controlled organisations. From here, our community reach out to access services and initiate referrals as well.

Q3. Who or what inspired you to pursue a career in health?

Going through high school I didn't know what I wanted to do when I finished. It was my math's teacher who said, 'my wife's a nurse, I think you would make a good nurse' and that was the path I then took. I hope to be that inspiration for our young ones coming through, or that we engage with in community.

Q4. What do you look forward to in your role?

I look forward to sharing my knowledge with the team, building on my knowledge and resources in this space, growing our connection to Country and Elders in the area, and continuing our journey to health equity.

Q5. What do you like to do outside of work?

I like to live a spontaneous life, make the most of the weekends or even a mid-week dinner with friends or family. Having that village around you is the best part of my life and raising my children to have the same support.





Metro North Health

Better Together Health Van

The Better Together Health Van is a free community service for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people living on the North Side of Brisbane (from Brisbane River to Kilcoy), providing access to:

- Health promotion and education
- Opportunistic health screening
- An avenue to yarn with a health care provider to provide feedback on hospital experience and healthcare journey
- Opportunity to co-design healthcare services for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples
- Access to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health workers and supporting health staff.

Follow us on social media

Follow us for information on locations, upcoming events, important health information and community stories.



@bettertogetherourhealthourway



@ourhealthourway



@better-together-our-health-our-way



If you would like more information, or to request the Better Together Health Van visits your community or event, contact the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Leadership Team to seek availability via phone 0439 475 437 or email Bettertogetherhealthvan@health.qld.gov.au

We welcome your feedback, contributions, story ideas and details on any upcoming events.

Please contact the Manager, Communications at the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Leadership Team on A_TSIHU_MNHHS@health.qld.gov.au or phone (07) 3170 4460



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