

Talk-About

The official newsletter of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Leadership Team

June 2022



Ngarrama Maternity Service enjoying the day at Nungeena with Aunty Minnie Mace

The strong women working within the Metro North Health Ngarrama Maternity Service are passionate about providing a culturally supportive and safe service to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander mums, bubs, dads and families during their pregnancy journey.

With new staff members joining the service, a cultural grounding day was organised to connect with country, each other, as well as learn and experience local women's business and birthing culture to assist and support them in their everyday roles.

Staff within the program include Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and non-Indigenous women from various professions including midwives, health workers, dieticians, social workers, and project officers, all working together to provide the best possible support and holistic healthcare for families throughout their pregnancy journey.

The women were blessed with a day out at Nungeena Aboriginal Corporation For Women's Business on Gubbi Gubbi Country at the Glass House Mountains where they visited the sacred birthing tree and fertility pond. Nungeena is located close to Mount Beerwah, the mother mountain of the Glass House Mountain group and the sacred historical birthing sites of Aboriginal people.

Everyone in attendance felt a strong spiritual connection while standing on such a significant sacred site. It inspired them to share their own personal stories and experiences while working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families in such a special time of their lives.

"Listening to women speak and share in a safe space is magical," said Jodi Dyer, Senior Project Officer of the Strong Start to Life Program.

"My highlight of the day was when we sat in a circle and every person took a turn to share a story using the speaking stick."

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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_TSIHU_MNHHS@health.qld.gov.au or phone (07) 3139 3231.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Leadership Team

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

Mail to:

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Leadership Team, Building 26, Chermshire Community Health Centre, 490 Hamilton Road, Chermshire QLD 4032.

Email to:

A_TSIHU_MNHHS@health.qld.gov.au
Alternatively, call and ask for our Safety and Quality Officer on 3647 9531.

Metro North Hospital and Health Service 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

Royal Brisbane and Women's Hospital

Indigenous Hospital Liaison Officer Ph: 3646 4154 / 0408 472 385

After hours Ph: 3646 5106 / 0408 472 385

The Prince Charles Hospital

Indigenous Hospital Liaison Officer Ph: 3139 5165 / 0436 690 306

After Hours Ph: 3139 6429 / 0429 897 982

Redcliffe Hospital

Indigenous Hospital Liaison Officer Ph: 3049 6791

After Hours Ph: 3049 9734

Caboolture/Kilcoy Hospital

Indigenous Hospital Liaison Office Ph: 5433 8249

After Hours Ph: 5316 5481

Surgical, Treatment and Rehabilitation Service (STARS):

Indigenous Hospital Liaison Office Ph: 3647 6044

Community Indigenous Primary Health Team

Indigenous Community Health Team Ph: 3631 7379

Indigenous Sexual Health Team

Clinical Nurse Consultant Ph: 3631 7379

Indigenous Mental Health

Professional Lead Ph: 3646 2695

Ngarrama Maternity Services

Caboolture Ph: 0439 732 970

Redcliffe Ph: 0407 251 890

Royal Brisbane and Women's Hospital Ph: 0428 404 875

Forensic Mental Health Service, Indigenous Mental Health Intervention Program

Forensic Mental Health Team Ph: 3234 0800



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A word from the Executive Director



Sherry Holzapfel
Executive Director,
Aboriginal and Torres
Strait Islander Health

Last month we had the opportunity to host our annual Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Showcase at the Royal Brisbane and Women's Hospital, for Queensland Health Deputy-Director General and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Chief Health Officer Haylene Grogan, and the Metro North Health Board and Executive Leadership team.

The showcase is an opportunity for staff within Metro North Health, and collaborative partners, to provide an overview and update of their initiatives in improving health outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Presentations included the Caboolture Hospital redevelopment project and Elders engagement, an overview of The Research Alliance for Urban Goori Health, the success of the Women's Business Pathway, and a program focused on supported discharge for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander patients. I encourage you to learn more about these initiatives on pages 13 to 15.

At the showcase, both Haylene and I had the honour of recognising the leads and executive sponsors and supporting staff for their outstanding commitment and leadership of the health equity agenda across Metro North Health. Congratulations to the following staff who received a 'Deadly Award':

- Metro North Health Chief Executive, Jackie Hanson



KPA1 (Actively eliminating racial discrimination and institutional racism within the service)

- Kirsty Leo, working group lead
- Ricko Abednego, working group lead
- Professor Peter Hopkins, executive sponsor
- Kumar Pasupathi, support / scribe



KPA2 (Increasing access to healthcare services)

- Christopher Henaway, working group
- Dr Sean Clark, executive sponsor
- Zarina Khan, support / scribe



KPA3 (Delivering sustainable, culturally safe and responsive healthcare services)

- Penny Dale, working group lead
- Helen Boocock, executive sponsor
- Madelyn Wells, support / scribe



KPA4 (Influencing the social, cultural and economic determinants of health)

- Natasha White, working group lead
- Gillian Nasato, executive sponsor
- Mini Tyagi, support / scribe



KPA5 (Working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, communities, and organisations to design, deliver, monitor and review health services)

- Paul Drahm, working group lead
- Louise Oriti, executive sponsor
- Christine Petrie, support / scribe

If you would like to learn more about our health equity journey, I encourage you to visit our website for the most up to date information - <https://metronorth.health.qld.gov.au/health-equity>

During May we recognised Heart Week and the importance for our mob to pay attention to their heart health by booking a 20-minute Heart Health Check with their local GP. Many people have overlooked their health during the pandemic and heart checks reached a record low. Heart Health Checks are currently subsidised through Medicare and allow Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people aged 30+ to access a heart check through a GP. Those in the high-risk categories, including our community, are encouraged to act now.

Finally, plans are well underway for our virtual NAIDOC Week (3-10 July 2022) celebration. This will be our third year delivering a range of informative, engaging and educational films to our staff, patients and broader community on our diverse cultures. This year's theme, *Get Up! Stand Up! Show Up!* reminds us of the need for systemic change and to keep rallying around our mob, our Elders, our communities.

Until next time, stay safe and deadly.

Sherry Holzapfel
Executive Director, Aboriginal and
Torres Strait Islander Health

A word from the Chief Executive



Jackie Hanson
Chief Executive
Metro North Health

Metro North has done considerable consultation around our first Health Equity Strategy. The strategy addresses five Key Performance Areas:

- Eliminate racism – actively eliminating racial discrimination and institutional racism within the service
- Access – increasing access to healthcare services
- Culturally safe and responsive system – delivering sustainable, culturally safe and responsive healthcare services
- Social determinants of health – influence the social, cultural and economic determinants of health
- Working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples – Working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, communities, and organisations to design, deliver, monitor and review health services

The strategy will be launched on 4 July during NAIDOC Week. Already we have delivered a series of executive and manager workshops to familiarise staff with the health equity agenda and the real world challenges Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people experience when seeking healthcare.

Metro North has already made an early commitment to ensure no Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander patients waiting longer than clinically recommended for outpatient appointments and elective surgeries and procedures.

Across Metro North we continue to develop local Reconciliation Action Plans. Most recently, Royal Brisbane and Women's Hospital launched its first RAP during Reconciliation Week.

Metro North has also partnered with The University of Queensland and the Institute of Urban Indigenous Health for the Research Alliance for Urban Goori Health (RAUGH). RAUGH is an Australian first alliance which will accelerate Australia's progress towards closing the gap in life expectancy for urban Indigenous communities by ensuring the whole-of-health care system is responsive to the health and wellbeing needs of Indigenous peoples.

I look forward to updating you on the progress of these initiatives and our journey towards health equity across Metro North Health.

Regards,

Jackie.

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All staff had the opportunity to listen and yarn with local Elder Aunty Minnie Mace and share in some special story telling.

“Having an Elder speak and answer questions makes it even more special, and gives staff the awareness on when looking after our families, the importance of cultural safety,” said Tara Denaro, Clinical Nurse Consultant of the Strong Start to Life Program.

Ngarrama, meaning ‘Guardian Birth Spirit’ is a maternity service available to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families in their pregnancy journey who choose to birth at the

Royal Brisbane and Women's Hospital, Caboolture or Redcliffe Hospitals. They ensure all families receive culturally centred care and access to supportive services such as physiotherapy, dieticians, and lots more.

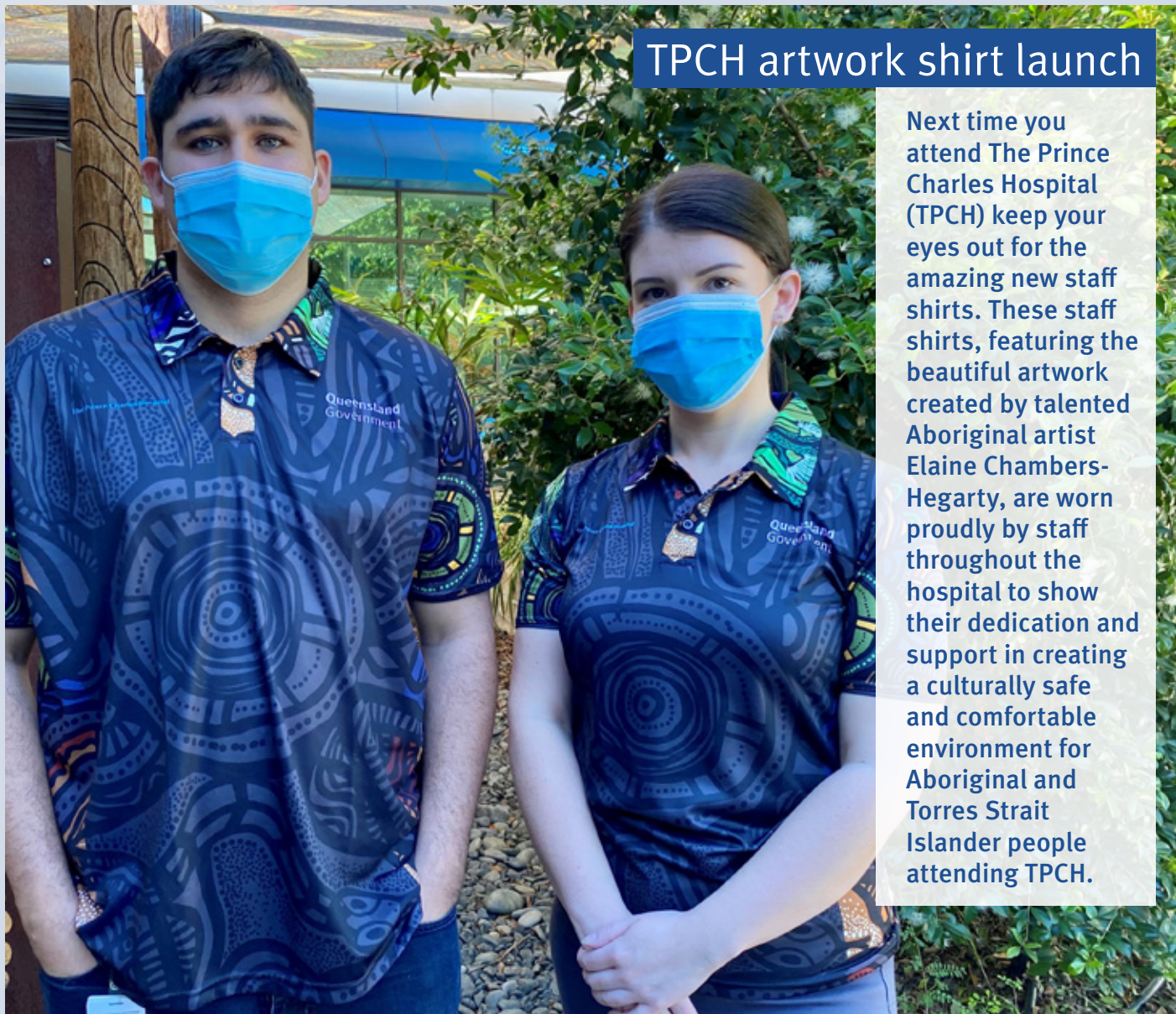
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families can access the Ngarrama Maternity Service through a GP referral. Just ask your GP to refer you to Ngarrama Maternity Service at your local Metro North Health Hospital. Ngarrama does accept self-referrals but GP referral is preferred. You can contact your local Ngarrama team on the following numbers.

Ngarrama Maternity Services:

Royals Brisbane and Women's Hospital:
0408 404 875

Redcliffe Hospital:
0407 251 890

Caboolture Hospital:
07 5433 8888



TPCH artwork shirt launch

Next time you attend The Prince Charles Hospital (TPCH) keep your eyes out for the amazing new staff shirts. These staff shirts, featuring the beautiful artwork created by talented Aboriginal artist Elaine Chambers-Hegarty, are worn proudly by staff throughout the hospital to show their dedication and support in creating a culturally safe and comfortable environment for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people attending TPCH.

(L-R) Sam Tochterman-Talbott, IHLO and Hannah Wilshire, Executive Services wearing the new TPCH staff shirt

STARS Close the Gap Day cultural activities

The Surgical, Treatment and Rehabilitation Service (STARS) held a staff quiz on Close the Gap Day (17 March) as an opportunity to share information and to take meaningful action in support of achieving health equity for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

STARS Close the Gap Day quiz winners, Kim Minniecon STARS Patient Experience and Consumer Liaison, and Medical Contracts Administrator, Amecka-Jane Evans, received a Better Together polo shirt for their efforts and contribution, which features the stunning artwork by Aboriginal artist Elaine Chambers-Hegarty.

The STARS Cultural Event Working Group and Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) Working Group are continuing to work hard to engage, educate and support staff on the importance of closing the gap in health outcomes and achieving health equity for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.



Ngarrama Community Event

On Thursday 7 April, staff from the Metro North Health Strong Start to Life team held a community engagement day at Sandgate Town Hall alongside Ngarrama Maternity Services staff members, to provide community members with the opportunity to share their Ngarrama experiences with one another, and ideas and suggestions as to how the Ngarrama Maternity Service can be improved.



Elders, mothers, families, and women of the Ngarrama service attended the community engagement day and joined in on an informal yarn around smoking cessation and the importance of attending antenatal visits during pregnancy.

Jarjums who attended the day were highly entertained with toys, books and keeping mum on her toes. There were even fun art activities for the adults to express their creativity whilst connecting to culture, by adding their own artistic touch to a large painting created by Clinical Nurse Consultant and Mununjali woman Tara Denaro.

The community engagement day provided a safe place for all attendees to come along and have a yarn, which allowed the Strong Start to Life Team to gather lots of great information and suggestions that will contribute to improving the Metro North Health Ngarrama Maternity Service and ensure the service meets the needs of our community.



OUTandABOUT



Out and about with community

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community love the opportunity get together for a yarn, but regrettably the COVID-19 pandemic put a hold on a lot of community events.

Fortunately, with everyday life getting back to resembling some form of normality, events are starting to happen again.

With the first ever Murri Expo recently held in Moreton Bay by the Moreton Bay Murri Network, the Metro North Better Together Health Van team and

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health staff jumped at the chance to attend and get back out to connect with community.

The Expo, held in May at Morayfield, gave the team a chance to get out, meet with local community, showcase the great initiatives happening within Metro North Health, enjoy the activities and just have a well overdue yarn with everyone. The team saw many new faces as well as old, and as every community event goes, running into family they hadn't seen in a long time. There were a variety of 36 stalls in attendance on the day,

each stallholder a member of the Moreton Bay Murri Network, providing an opportunity to network with other local community groups and businesses, and check out the great initiatives happening for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in the Moreton Bay region.

Everyone had a great day and even a few lucky staff members won NRL footy tickets as part of the events Reconciliation competition.



OUTandABOUT

Visit to Jinibara Nation

Caboolture, Kilcoy and Woodford (CKW) Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) Committee members Rachel Bailey and Erin Flynn recently visited Jinibara Country with Elder Aunty Jacque Kina.

Aunty Jacque, who has strong family connections to Jinibara Nation and a deep understanding of her culture, delivered a traditional Jinibara welcome before sharing stories with Rachel and Erin about her culture, family and the natural landscape.

“The highlight for me was to hear Aunty Jacque’s stories about her Grandfather Gairabau, she read a poem to us about her grandfather,” said Rachel.

Rachel and Erin felt a part of something special, especially when Aunty Jacque

shared an audio recording of her Grandfather Gairabau telling stories and singing songs.

“I value the cultural knowledge and ways of knowing and doing that Aunty Jacque shared of Grandfather Gairabau. He could speak 10 languages, which is amazing,” said Rachel.

The CKW RAP committee felt very privileged to be part of this day with Aunty Jacque and her son. They visited several culturally significant sites to capture some local Aboriginal stories that will be woven throughout the CKW

Reconciliation Action Plan.

Speaking with Aunty Jacque has provided an opportunity for Rachel and Erin to reflect and gain further insight into local culture and give further meaning to the importance of performing an Acknowledgement of Country and recognising Elders past and present.

Rachel will now think about Grandfather Gairabau and all the knowledge he had and shared whenever she is participating in Acknowledgement of Country.



Building Cultural Connections

Metro North Chief Executive Jackie Hanson, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Executive Director Sherry Holzzapfel and staff from the Metro North Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Leadership Team had the privilege of recently meeting with Aboriginal Elders Aunty Maroochy Barambah and Aunty Denise Proud.

Aunty Maroochy is the Songwoman and Law-woman of the Turrbal Tribe. She is of Turrbal and Gubbi Gubbi ancestry with additional bloodline connections to Wakka Wakka, Kamilaroi and Birri Gubba Country.

Aunty Denise Proud is a respected Aboriginal Elder who was born and raised on Cherbourg. She has continued to contribute to the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community and has had a long career committed to working within the prisons delivering cultural and educational programs.

The meeting with Aunty Maroochy and Aunty Denise was part of a commitment to establish an ongoing relationship with the Traditional Owners across Metro North Health, spanning from the Brisbane River to north of Kilcoy.

Metro North Health is committed to providing equity of access to high quality health care services and building relationships based on inclusion with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and their communities.



(L-R) Chief Executive Jackie Hanson with Songwoman Aunty Maroochy, Aunty Denise Proud and Executive Director Sherry Holzzapfel

“Our goal is to ensure all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people accessing our health services receive high-quality person-centred care that is culturally responsive, empowers self-care and choice, and is designed to improve health and wellbeing.

“In this meeting we are reminded that we must build a relationship with all in our communities, including services and agencies,” said Acting Communications and Planning Manager, Ricko Abednego.



HEALTH EQUITY

Starts with Me



Let's work together to create health equity for our mob

“I commit to ensuring we receive equitable health services for our families.”

Aunty Denise Proud,
Aboriginal Elder

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health is everyone's business.

Visit our website <https://metronorth.health.qld.gov.au/health-equity> for further information



Be part of the conversation #ourhealthourway #forcommunity #BetterTogether - <https://www.facebook.com/BetterTogetherHealthVan>



Metro North Health in partnership with



Metro North Health



Queensland Government

IN FOCUS

RBWH engages student artists to create custom works

The clinical spaces within the Royal Brisbane and Women's Hospital (RBWH) Social Work Services have received a colourful overhaul, with the addition of five specifically created paintings by students at the Aboriginal and Islander Independent Community School, affectionately known as the 'Murri School'.

The Acacia Ridge based high school's best and emerging student artists were mentored by local professional Aboriginal artist Colleen Sam while creating the custom designed artworks, based on community, family, and healing themes.

Director of Social Work Services Angela O'Malia said, "Art plays an important role in the social work experience, and it is exciting to have the new works on-site.

"The idea to engage with the Murri School was born out of a chat with our Indigenous Social Work Cadet Jeff Locke, who had strong connections with the school, and suggested we work together to create some specialised patient support artwork for display at our service.

"Jeff engaged the school and our department, and introduced the artist to work closely with, and mentor the students to bring the artwork to life."

Social Work Services have been considering ways to add to the cultural safety of their services and the culturally designed artwork will add to the 'feel safe and engage' approach.

"Art is a great medium and assists to put patients at ease and it can give them something else to focus on, making them feel more relaxed and comfortable while they are here," Angela said.



RBWH Director of Social Work Services Angela O'Malia and Cultural Capability Officer Geoff Binge welcoming the new artwork to the Social Work Services.

"The beauty of these paintings is that they tell a story - so if our patients can connect with artwork spiritually or emotionally, that can be very empowering."

RBWH Cultural Capability Officer, Geoff Binge, commended Social Work Services for following through with this great initiative to increase patient confidence and trust in our services through an increase in cultural safety.

Grade 9 student Brooklyn created the artwork "Women's Healing" alongside her classmate Jacqueline, touching on women's sacred role as mothers.

"I dedicate this painting to my big sister and my mum, as they each have lost a baby. I want them and other mothers to know that it is 'okay to not be okay' and I believe the babies are always with us and looking over us,"

Brooklyn said.

The newly acquired artwork is proudly displayed in the Social Work Services areas and in clinics throughout RBWH.

Health Equity Strategy workshop and update

Metro North Health held its third Health Equity workshop in April which provided Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff, Metro North Health Executive staff, partnering organisations, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elders and community members with the opportunity to continue the conversation and provide their feedback on the draft Metro North Health Equity Strategy.

Enjoyed by over 100 attendees, the day was an opportunity to come together again, and to share feedback and suggestions in response to the actions aligned to the five key performance areas within our Health Equity Strategy. Personal stories of strength, courage, and adversity, which will help shape our strategy, were shared bravely by attendees during multiple breakout sessions led by the Health Equity Leads within Metro North Health.

Those who attended the workshop were treated to the premiere of our bold new health equity campaign, Health Equity Starts with Me. The campaign features a commitment made by midwives, doctors, security officers, administration staff, health executives and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander consumers, many of whom were in attendance on the day.

Seeing Metro North Health Senior Executive staff sitting alongside Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elders and community members on the day was a true testament



to Metro North Health's commitment to closing the gap and achieving health equity for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. This gave community confidence that their voices were being heard at a high level, and that their voices, presence and lived experiences were valued.

The day ended on a high, with the draft Metro North Health Equity Strategy receiving fantastic praise from community members, reassuring us that we are on the right track. As we continue the journey of developing our very first, Metro North Health Equity Strategy, we will continue to look to our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elders and community members to ensure that the document we produce reflects the time, energy, wisdom, and knowledge they have so kindly shared us with, and ultimately that our strategy meets their needs and expectations.

2022  

NAIDOC VIRTUAL EVENT

Join us in a virtual celebration to celebrate National NAIDOC Week 2022 (3 – 10 July) across Metro North Health.





Learn about the history, culture and achievements of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people through a diverse and exciting schedule of films with First Nation businesses and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elders as we celebrate the national NAIDOC theme – Get Up, Stand Up, Show Up.

NAIDOC 2022 encourages the nation to Get Up, Stand Up and Show up for systemic change and to continue rallying for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. This year reminds us to celebrate the many heroes and champions who have driven and led change in our communities over generations.

HOW TO ACCESS THE FILMS

The films will be published daily throughout NAIDOC Week for everyone to enjoy and accessible via our website and facebook page:

-  metronorth.health.qld.gov.au/bettertogether-van
-  www.facebook.com/BetterTogetherHealthVan



GET UP!
STAND UP!
SHOW UP!
3-10 JULY 2022

Metro North Health



Queensland Government

IN FOCUS

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Showcase

On May 16 2022, Metro North Board Members, Executives and the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Leadership Team gathered with Deputy-Director General and Chief Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Officer Haylene Grogan to celebrate the programs and initiatives contributing to improved health outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples across Metro North Health.

Read on for a summary of the presentations.



Better Together Medication Access

The Better Together Medication Access (BTMA) program is a co-payment subsidy program launched in October 2020 to provide identified 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 Hospital 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 to the patient with no out of pocket cost.

The project was co-designed with pharmacy services, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Leadership Team, Indigenous Hospital Liaison officers, IT teams, and communications and engagement, executive, finance and governance teams across Metro North Health.

Since the program commenced, 11,000 consumers have been offered BTMA and 7,400 medications supplied.

Assistant Director of Pharmacy at Redcliffe Hospital Ann Whitaker said the program has helped reduce the financial burden on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander patients and ensures medication is available on discharge.

“The program has also allowed Metro North Health to improve cultural capability and staff relationships, links to services upon discharge and created future collaboration opportunities,” Ann said.

Women’s Business Pathway

The Women’s Business Pathway is a shared service model between Metro North Health and the Institute for Urban Indigenous Health (IUIH) providing culturally appropriate gynaecology and specialist perinatal care to women who identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander origin.

Outpatient clinics are delivered at Nundah Community Health Centre and

Morayfield Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community Health Clinic. The Royal Brisbane and Women’s Hospital delivers gynaecology surgery access.

The Metro North Health service includes a multidisciplinary team inclusive of a Gynaecologist, Gynaecologist Nurse (Identified), Administration Officer (Identified), Physiotherapist and Dietitian.

Since the service commenced in 2020, there have been 1,000 outpatient appointments with a failure to attend rate of only 10% for gynaecology and 18% for allied health. This is a significant improvement of previous failure to attend rates of 51% for physiotherapy and 31% for dietetics prior to the pathway being introduced.

There are plans to expand the program including attaching an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Program Manager and Health Worker role to the service, and more clinics delivered in partnership with IUIH clinics in the Margate and Deception Bay areas.

Moving to supported discharge

In 2020, the Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care (ACSQHC) commissioned a systematic literature review - Understanding leave events for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and other Australians from health service organisations.

One of the key recommendations was to develop a culturally appropriate discharge model of care for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in collaboration with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities to enable appropriate healthcare in their community.

Localised Metro North Health data showed the need to address early discharge with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander patients who choose to discharge early is three times higher (3.25%) compared to the number of non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who discharge early at (1.17%).

The journey commenced two years ago, with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Leadership Team (A&TSILT)

guiding the project through a cultural lens and to develop true co-design to ensure better outcomes for discharge planning.

In November 2021, a workshop was held with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander nurse navigators, working groups and clinicians to genuinely co-design a new way of discharge planning.

“What we came up with was a different approach to move towards ‘Discharge with Support,’” said Michele Gardner, Executive Director of Metro North Clinical Governance, Safety, Quality and Risk.

“We felt collectively the current term ‘Discharge Against Medical Advice’ isn’t right and we would focus on follow-up and support for the patient to ensure each cultural group has their appropriate support and vulnerable patients as well.”

There are now plans in motion to introduce a ‘Discharge with Support’ policy and procedure across Metro North Health to ensure all patients are involved in decision making, aware of available treatment options in the community, potential risks of discharging early and follow-up from staff members.

“Metro North is committed to ensuring a safe and culturally appropriate process is in place to best manage the process of patients who choose to leave hospital before the completion of treatment,” Michele said.

Caboolture Hospital redevelopment

Caboolture is derived from words meaning place of the Kabul (carpet snake) and is home of the Gubbi Gubbi (also known as Kabi Kabi) peoples. First Nations people make up 3.7% of the Caboolture community, one of the highest populations of the Metro North service catchment.

The Queensland Government has committed \$399.5 million to expand Caboolture Hospital to include a 5 storey clinical services building and a multi-storey car park. Part of

the redevelopment to create a new modern healthcare facility is the refurbishment of existing spaces including the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Liaison Unit.

As part of the project, consultation and engagement has been undertaken with Traditional Owners, Elders and the community to ensure all voices have been heard during the design and build phase of the project.

“Our initial focus was to consult Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff to design the new Liaison Unit, to make sure the space provided the right environment for our staff to deliver culturally appropriate care and that they felt safe within that space,” Senior Engagement Officer, Erin Flynn said.

“If staff have that feeling within their work environment that will automatically come through to their patients, visitors, carers and families.”

As part of the engagement journey, building contractor Lendlease introduced a cultural awareness session as part of the site induction.

“We thank redevelopment and Lendlease for listening and drawing the perspectives of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community,” Cultural Capability Officer Elwyn Henaway said.

RAUGH

The Research Alliance for Urban Goori Health was established in 2021 to accelerate and transform Australia’s progress towards closing the gap in life expectancy for urban First Peoples in greater north Brisbane by ensuring the whole-of-health care system is responsive to the health and wellbeing needs of First Peoples.

The Alliance is a partnership between the Institute for Urban Indigenous Health (UIIH), Metro North Health and the UQ Poche Centre for Indigenous Health, and will lead world-class research and evaluation, and knowledge translation pursuits, alongside a focus on building research

capabilities and capacity within the health care system.

UQ Poche Centre Director Professor James Ward said RAUGH is well placed to support Metro North Health in achieving the objectives of the Metro North Health Equity strategy to generate evidence-base to inform new models of care, programs and services and evaluate the effectiveness of existing shared services, programs and initiatives.

“RAUGH will support Metro North and UIIH to provide evidence-based outcomes to enable integrated and culturally appropriate health care to First Peoples of Queensland across the primary, secondary and tertiary health care systems,” Professor Ward said.

Health Equity engagement and co-design program

As part of the development of the Metro North Health Equity Strategy, a comprehensive engagement and co-design program was developed to ensure Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander voices were front and centre.

Metro North Health has hosted multiple workshops to engage and consult with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community Elders, community members, staff members and partners.

Acting Communications and Planning Manager and Lead for KPA 1 ‘Actively eliminating racial discrimination and institutional racism within the service’, Ricko Abednego said the co-design journey ensured Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people were at the decision-making table.

“We need our people to be more present in Metro North Health, in particular with planning, as well with our prescribed stakeholders,” Ricko said.

“The main thing we have tried to do with this process is have people be together, be able to contribute and all perspectives considered to empower each other.”

The face-to-face engagement

program is supported with ongoing opportunities for feedback and continuous service improvements through the Metro North Health Equity online yarning hub - <https://metronorth.health.qld.gov.au/health-equity/yarning-hub>

The Prince Charles Hospital Heart and Lung Stream

Professor Peter Hopkins, Executive Director of the Heart and Lung Stream, delivered a presentation around collaboration with First Nations staff and patients to provide guidance and direction with the initiatives from the Heart and Lung Stream.

A key measure was forming a First Nations Advisory Council, 'Tago magul yadeni' (Tamaya) which means 'Together the thinkers advance' in the Turrbal language. The council is co-chaired by Professor Hopkins and a patient, who meet regularly with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Leadership Team and working group chairs to progress health initiatives.

"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 First Nations peoples," Professor Hopkins said.

"When you have a person waiting for a long period of time on the wait list, and from looking at medical literature, you increase the risk of disengagement. There is also experience of institutional racism from our patients and lack of case management, a lack of culturally appropriate care and issues regarding transport and parking," Professor Hopkins said.

"We want to eliminate waitlists all together for First Nations patients and when the referral comes in, you see the patient. For our major tertiary and quaternary hospitals, we are very close to achieving that goal for First Nations patients on waitlists in respiratory medicine."

Other exciting developments included

a connecting to country digital model, a culturally appropriate exercise program for heart and lung rehabilitation patients and a virtual pulmonary rehabilitation program.

Deadly Start

Deadly Start School Based Traineeship Program is now going into their fourth intake of students, with the pilot program commencing in 2019. Over 40 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander year 11 students have joined the 2022 Deadly Start program from various schools around Brisbane to undertake traineeships in various streams across Metro North Health facilities, including Nursing, Allied Health, Dental, Administration, Patient Support Services and Food Services. The students will be placed throughout The Royal Brisbane and Women's Hospital, The Prince Charles Hospital, Redcliffe Hospital, Caboolture Hospital and Community and Oral Health facilities with the hope to increase the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workforce in the future.

The next cohort of trainees will begin their placement in July 2022 after completing their 6-month studies of Certificate II in Health Support Services. At the end of their 12-month traineeship placement within Metro North Health the students will gain their Certificate III qualification in their chosen field with the support of the Deadly Start Team who are with the students every step of the way.

This year will be the first year training will be overseen within Metro North Health and not through a group training organisation which is an exciting opportunity and all students will be onboarded as Metro North employees to complete their placement one day a week for 12 months as paid employment within the health service.

As part of the Deadly Start and Indigenous Cadetship program, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cadetships and apprenticeships are offered in allied health, nursing and trade services. Two apprentices are currently completing their electrical

and plumbing placements, with an aim to expand the program in the future.

Previous Deadly Start trainee student Kelise Beetson completed her nursing traineeship in June 2021 at Caboolture Hospital Day Procedure Unit and is looking forward to her future in health care.

"I decided I wanted to go to university during my Cert III training. The Deadly Start program helped me get into university because I was not on an ATAR pathway. I am the first person on my dad's side to go to uni. In the future I am hoping to be a registered nurse to give back to my community," Kelise said.

Kelise is now on a university scholarship to complete her Bachelor of Nursing whilst working with Metro North Health as an Assistant in Nursing at Caboolture Hospital.

"Deadly Start is deadly by giving students a chance to grow and have futures they may never thought have been possible," said Kelise.



IDENTIFICATION:

IT'S YOUR RIGHT TO A

HEALTHIER LIFE

RECEIVE THE RIGHT HEALTH CARE AND SERVICES

**Are you of
Aboriginal and/
or Torres Strait
Islander origin?**

- ✓ Receive culturally appropriate care and support
- ✓ Receive the right health care and services
- ✓ Health Service staff must ask you the question
- ✓ Metro North Hospital and Health Service are here to help with your health care journey

Further information visit our website

www.metro-north.health.qld.gov.au/better-together-van

or Facebook page @BetterTogetherHealthVan

STAFF PROFILE

WORD OF THE MONTH

“Bulualum”

is Pelican in Turrbal/Turubul language.

Turrbal is the name of the language spoken in the Brisbane area north to the Sunshine Coast.



A Day in the Life of: Theresa (Tess) Symes

Assistant Director of Nursing, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Leadership Team

Q1. Who is your mob and where are you from?

I am a Torres Strait and South Sea Islander woman with local family connection to the Sunshine Coast region where I was born and continue to live.

Q2. What is your role within Metro North Health?

I have recently commenced in my new role as the Assistant Director of Nursing within the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Leader Team.

Q3. How long have you worked in health, and what was your previous role?

Prior to coming into my current position, I was in the permanent position of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Nurse Navigator with the Sunshine Coast Hospital and Health Service, based out of Nambour Hospital. In that role I worked across the whole of the Sunshine Coast and Gympie regions. From August last year until the end of February this year, I was fortunate enough to be seconded to North Coast Aboriginal Corporation for Community Health (NCACCH) to project lead and manage the opening of the new Aboriginal Medical Service in Gympie.

Q4. Who or what inspired you to pursue a career in health?

My career in health started 15 years ago in Aged Care and since then I have continued study to go on and complete a Bachelor of Nursing. I am passionate about working with our mob in community and being able to increase access and improve services to ensure that we see changes that expand from our babies to our Elders.

Q5. Why do think achieving Health Equity for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people is important?

Achieving health equity has been a long time coming for our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. Health equity means that there is going to be transparency and our communities will have a voice that can be heard. It means that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people get to have input into how our healthcare is being provided.

In addition to this, it also provides cultural awareness education to non-Indigenous staff and community members in understanding our cultures and walking alongside us instead of trying to lead us.

Q6. What do you like to do outside of work?

When I am not at work, I enjoy spending time with my family and being outdoors camping and gardening.



COVID-19 vaccines approved for children aged 5 to 11 years

Children aged 5 to 11 are eligible for Australia's COVID-19 vaccination program.

Australia's leading scientists and experts from the Australian Technical Advisory Group on Immunisation (ATAGI) and the Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) have approved two vaccines for children in Australia.

The Comirnaty (Pfizer) vaccine is approved for children aged 5 years and over. The Spikevax (Moderna) vaccine is approved for children aged 6 years and over.

Children aged 5 to 11 years will receive a smaller dose of the vaccine than people aged 12 and over. If a child turns 12 years of age in between their 2 doses, they can receive the larger dose for the second vaccination. Children aged 5 to 11 years should get two doses of the vaccine, eight weeks apart.

Although most children and young people who get COVID-19 have a mild illness, some can still get very sick. Children can also transmit the virus to others, including older family members who are at a higher risk of getting very sick. Ensuring children are up to date with their COVID-19 vaccinations reduces these risks.

Children who are severely immunocompromised are recommended to receive a third primary dose of the COVID-19 vaccine, 2 months after their second dose. Children who are severely immunocompromised are at a much higher risk of getting very sick and dying from COVID-19. A third dose increases their protection.

If children have been infected with COVID-19, it is recommended that they wait 3 months before receiving their next COVID-19 vaccine dose. Waiting 3 months between infection and vaccination is likely to provide more protection from the virus for longer.

Children are able to receive vaccinations at doctors' clinics, Aboriginal health services and participating pharmacies. It is safe for children to receive their COVID-19 vaccine at the same time as other vaccines, such as the flu vaccine.

Get the facts: have a yarn to your local health care worker about an appointment today, or book now using the [COVID-19 Vaccine Clinic Finder](#).



STAY STRONGER

LIVE LONGER

**DO YOUR BOWEL
SCREEN TEST TODAY**

GET IT

People aged 50 to 74 will receive a kit in the mail.

DO IT

The test is free and will take just a few minutes at different times. So don't put it off until later – get it done.

POST IT

Return the kit in the mail using the envelope provided. You don't need stamps or to pay for postage.

DONE

The results will be sent to you and your doctor within two weeks.



Supported by the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Leadership Team, Metro North Hospital and Health Service



**Queensland
Government**



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.

How to access the Van?

Visit our website for up-to-date locations of the Van
metronorth.health.qld.gov.au/better-together-van

Follow our Facebook Page @ BetterTogetherHealthVan for information on locations, upcoming events, important health information and community stories.

Make a booking

If you would like to request the Van visits your community or event, contact the Metro North Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Leadership Team to make a booking on (07) 3139 6621 or email Bettersogetherhealthvan@health.qld.gov.au

The service is owned and operated by Metro North Health. The Better Together Health Van will be utilised as an extension of Metro North Health in creating engagement activities and developing partnerships and relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander consumers, families and community organisations.

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) 3139 3235.



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