



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

April 2024

Better Together Medication Access
Are you of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Origin?

Better Together Medication Access will cover all out of pocket expenses for prescribed discharge medication for all self-identifying Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people discharging from a Metro North Hospital and Health Service.

Better Together Medication Access is only available through Metro North Hospital and Health Service Pharmacy Services.

How it works

- You will be asked "Are you of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Origin?". Health Service staff must ask you the question, we cannot assume upon appearance.
- If you identify, regardless of age, you will be eligible for Better Together Medication Access.
- Better Together Medication Access is Metro North Hospital and Health Service wide and will be available from 1 October 2020.
- Talk to Staff caring for you for more information.

Identifying you will receive support from culturally appropriate Indigenous Hospital Liaison Officers to our services including your journey and recovery back to community.



TPCH IHLO Mark Budd with Aboriginal patient Keith Carroll and TPCH Pharmacy Administration Officer Irene Russell

Better Together Medication Access Program leads the way to statewide co-payment medication subsidy

The success of the Metro North Health Better Together Medication Access (BTMA) Program has paved the way for a new statewide medication co-payment subsidy for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander patients.

From 25 January, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander consumers of Queensland Health (QH) will now have access to medications dispensed by QH public hospital pharmacies.

Hospital and Health Service's (HHS's) will waive, in full, co-payments for all medicines prescribed by Queensland Health prescribers on hospital prescriptions, when dispensed by hospital pharmacies, to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander patients:

- upon discharge, following an admitted episode of care, including presentation for emergency care; and
- whilst under the care or treatment of a Queensland Health specialist outpatient service, where the patient cannot readily access their medicines from a community pharmacy.

Continued page 4 >



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 3139 3235.

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, Chermiside Community Health Centre, 490 Hamilton Road, Chermiside QLD 4032.

Email to:

A_TSILT_MNHHS@health.qld.gov.au

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

Royal Brisbane and Women’s Hospital

Indigenous Hospital Liaison Officer Ph: 3646 4154 / 0428 861 888

After hours PH 3647 4183 / 0428 861 888

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 5157

Senior Health Worker Ph: 5316 5390

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: 0447 307 411

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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What’s inside April 2024

COVER

Better Together Medication Access Program leads the way to statewide co-payment medication subsidy	1
Contact Information.....	2
A word from the Executive Director	3
A word from the Chief Executive.....	4

OUT AND ABOUT

Celebrating National Close the Gap Day	6
The Sistas Shawl	7
Better Together Medication Access	7
Deadly Feet program.....	7
The Women’s Business Shared Pathway	7
The HOPE Program.....	8

Empowering women in their health journey.....	8
Yarning with Mob.....	9
Culturally safe yarns for women and families accessing Ngarrama	9
Special group booking at BreastScreen Queensland North Lakes clinic.....	10

IN FOCUS

Kam Biman Project	15
HOPE improving heart health	16
Metro North Health creating change	17
Deadly Feet Program travels to Cherbourg and Kingaroy	18
Word of the month	18

STAFF FEATURE

Kea Hill-Johnson, Administration Officer, Allied Health.....	20
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A word from the Executive Director



Sherry Holzapfel
Executive Director,
Aboriginal and Torres Strait
Islander Health

I recently had the opportunity to act in the Chief Nursing and Midwifery Officer role for three weeks and really enjoyed the chance to expand my knowledge and skillset while supporting the Nursing and Midwifery Professional stream, as well as contributing and sharing my extensive experience working within the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community and corporate healthcare space.

The Office of Nursing and Midwifery Services have some great opportunities and initiatives, ensuring our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities have an opportunity to pursue careers in nursing and midwifery. This is my background profession, and I am very passionate and supportive of any staff who have an interest in pursuing this amazing profession. If you have any questions, please reach out to the office of Metro North Nursing and Midwifery - MN_NursingandMidwifery@health.qld.gov.au.

In March, as part of National Close the Gap Day, Metro North Health celebrated some outstanding initiatives and programs happening across the health service working towards improving health equity of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

During the celebration morning tea it was great to hear about all the successful and remarkable work and achievements taking place, and the collaborative efforts of partnering organisations that have contributed to the success of these programs. You can read more about some of the programs and initiatives throughout this newsletter. Thank you to our partnering organisations who joined us in these celebrations.

Already in the short time this year I have seen significant achievements with the expansion of our Better Together Medication Access program being launched across the state, commencement of the statewide Indigenous Cadetship program originally formed within Metro North Health, rollout of the Heart Outreach Program for Health Equity (HOPE) in partnership with Moreton Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community Health Service and lots more.

Our first Health Equity Community event for 2024 will be held in April with Elders, Community, Metro North Health Executive, staff, and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff members attending. This event will provide an opportunity for community and key stakeholders to meet our new Metro North Health Board Members, getting to know them over a yarn and the chance to ask questions. I look forward to joining this gathering and catching up with everyone in attendance.

Bribie Island Satellite Hospital is set to open its doors around July, and with the new opening I have had many yarns with Elders and Community around the services on offer and the confusion regarding the term 'Hospital'. Our Communications Team have created some deadly flyers to explain the purpose of the Satellite Hospitals (enclosed).

All three of the satellite hospitals located at Caboolture, Kallangur, and Bribie Island, offer outpatient and community health services closer to home, and access to a Minor Illness and Injury Clinic providing urgent care options for people who don't need to attend an emergency department. It's important to note, they are not an Emergency Department, and depending on clinic service demand towards closure time, there may be the possibility that you will be redirected to a Hospital Emergency Department.

Each location has an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Hub which provides a culturally safe and dedicated space for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander patients and their families. This service accepts referrals and walk-ins. Staff working in the Health Hub include an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Nurse Navigator, Senior Health Worker, Community Engagement Officers (Male and Female), and an Administration Support Officer.

If at any time you need further information regarding the Satellite Hospitals or any of our programs and services, please don't hesitate to reach out to the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Leadership Team. We are here to help you and to make your health service journey culturally safe and responsive to your individual needs.

Until next time, stay safe and deadly.

Sherry Holzapfel

Executive Director of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health



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

A word from the Chief Executive

I am personally committed to ensuring health equity and access to culturally appropriate and supportive healthcare for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. As the Chief Executive of Australia’s largest public health service, I take this responsibility seriously but it’s not something we can achieve without talking with community to hear your experiences and know where we need to improve.

Metro North has a partnership with the Brisbane North Primary Health Network (PHN). One of the key projects we are doing together at the moment is a Local Area Needs Assessment (LANA) which identifies the health needs of the Brisbane North population. We are currently running a survey asking for community feedback on what health conditions you or your family have and what health services you need. That includes any cultural, language or social support you need too, so that you can access healthcare services.

If you live in Brisbane North, you can have your say and inform our Local Area Needs Assessment by completing the online survey at [Local Area Needs Assessment \(LANA\) 2024 | My voice Brisbane North PHN. The survey is open until 28 April 2024.](https://myvoice.brisbanenorthphn.org.au/local-area-needs-assessment-lana-2024)¹

Every Queensland Hospital and Health Service is developing a LANA with their local PHN, so if you don’t live within our catchment, I encourage you to contact your local PHN or hospital to find out how you can share your thoughts.

We are starting to see an increase in flu in our community. The flu jab is important to protect you and your family from getting very sick and maybe ending up in hospital.

Flu is a very serious illness. Kids, people with health problems, and older people can get very sick.

You can get a free flu jab for everyone in the family older than 6 months old. Find out more at <https://www.vaccinate.initiatives.qld.gov.au/what-to-vaccinate-against/influenza>

You can also get your yearly COVID-19 jab at the same time.

Kind regards,

Jackie Hanson

¹ <https://myvoice.brisbanenorthphn.org.au/local-area-needs-assessment-lana-2024>

Continued from page 1 >

The Metro North Health BTMA program was introduced in 2020, which initially covered discharge prescription medications, and has now expanded to include outpatient prescription medications.

The program has been associated with a 50 percent decrease in re-admission rates for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander consumers, at a minimal financial cost to the HHS.

Patients that identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander origin upon admission to a Metro North Health hospital or facility are given the choice to opt-in to the BTMA program.

If they do so, their medication prescription can be taken to a Metro North Health pharmacy, where the medication is supplied with no out of pocket cost to the patient.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Executive Director, Sherry Holzapfel, said since the program was introduced, BTMA has been accessed 5700 times on discharge – an average of 5 discharges a day across Metro North Health.

“Over 18,000 medication items have been covered under BTMA. The program is a great example of how, through innovative, system enhancements and investments, we can have a profound impact on improving the long-term health outcomes of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

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

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

Further information regarding the Metro North Health BTMA program and supporting educational films can be accessed via <https://metronorth.health.qld.gov.au/better-together-van/healthcare-services>.



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



Scan the QR code or visit:
<https://www.linkedin.com/company/better-together-our-health-our-way>



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



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

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(L-R): A/ED Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Tess Symes, Chief Executive Jackie Hanson, A/Chief Nursing and Midwifery Officer Sherry Holzapfel, Senior Director of Chief First Nations Health Office Jess Oostenbroek, and former Board Chair Jim McGowan AM

Celebrating National Close the Gap Day

In celebration and acknowledgement of National Close the Gap Day (21 March 2024), Metro North Health held numerous events across the hospital and health service facilities during March.

As part of the celebrations a special gathering was held to acknowledge Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff, and the partnership organisations supporting Metro North's health equity journey.

Close the Gap Day is a day of action to pledge support for achieving Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health equity. It provides an opportunity to come together in workplaces, homes, and communities right across the country to share information—and most importantly to take meaningful action in support of achieving Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health equity.

Australian Bureau of Statistics 2020-2022 data shows there is still a significant life expectancy gap between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Indigenous Queenslanders, a gap of 7.4 years for males and 7.0 years for females.

A milestone in the Close the Gap journey for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Queenslanders was when legislative requirements passed by Queensland Parliament in 2020 and 2021 for Hospital and Health Services to develop and implement Health Equity Strategies.

Metro North Health Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff members and programs, Executive, and partnership organisations joined together at the special gathering for an opportunity to acknowledge Metro North Health staff and services paving the way towards health equity, creating system improvements, and introducing programs and initiatives that contribute towards closing the gap on life expectancy. There is such great work happening across Metro North Health. Every bit helps and makes an impact. Some of the recent highlights include:

Indigenous Cadetship program

In 2024 the state-wide Indigenous Cadetship program attracted a record 68 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander university students. The cadetship program offers students practical on the job skills development while completing their full-time tertiary studies for a bachelors qualification.

Clinical Cadetship positions are available in Nursing and Midwifery, Physiotherapy, Social Work, Speech Pathology, Occupational Therapy, Oral Health, Nutrition and Dietetics, Exercise Physiology, Psychology, Medical Imaging and Podiatry.

Corporate Services Cadetship positions will be available but not limited to Legal Services, Information Technology, Marketing and Communications, Finance, Public Health, and Human Resources.

Graduated cadet, Kiri Fabila



OUTandABOUT

The Sistas Shawl



The Sistas Shawl has been provided to 850 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women accessing BreastScreen clinics on the northside, providing a sense of safety and comfort when screening. (Read more about the Sistas Shawl on page 10).



Deadly Feet program

The Deadly Feet program continues to expand with the service recently visiting Cherbourg and Kingaroy to deliver clinics and improve community access to culturally safe multidisciplinary foot healthcare. (Read more about the Deadly Feet program on page 19).

Better Together Medication Access



The continued success and positive statistics of the Metro North Health Better Together Medication Access program has led to the introduction and development of a new Health Service Directive to provide a medication co-payment subsidy for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples who access Queensland public hospitals. Hospitals and Health Services will now waive, in full, co-payments for all medicines prescribed by Queensland Health prescribers on hospital prescriptions dispensed by hospital pharmacies to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander patients. (Full story on the front cover).

The Women's Business Shared Pathway



The Women's Business Shared Pathway operates in multiple locations across Metro North Health catchment including Morayfield, Deception Bay, Pine Rivers, and Nundah. Since 2020, 409 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women have accessed the service.

The program provides culturally safe, responsive, and targeted specialist gynaecology outpatient and surgical services to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women residing in the Metro North Health catchment.

OUTandABOUT

The HOPE Program

The Heart Outreach Program for Health Equity (HOPE) program is in week four of operations and has so far held 6 clinics for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander patients. HOPE reduced the Metro North Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cardiology waiting list by 11 patients with a further 20 patients due to be seen in the coming weeks. (Read more about the HOPE program on page 18).



Empowering women in their health journey

The Metro North Health Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Team at Community and Oral Health (COH) partnered with the Women's Business Shared Pathway team to host a Women's Health Expo in late January.

Joined by a number of Metro North Health services, attendees also had the opportunity to engage with external service providers on the day such as BreastScreen Queensland, Hearing Australia, Queensland Ambulance Service, Queensland Police Service, and Mob Link, just to name a few.

The event focused on creating an ideal environment for screening and education relating to all things Women's Business, which included fun activities for kids, and a free BBQ lunch.

Manager of COH Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health, Paul Drahm, said the Women's Health Expo provided opportunities to strengthen relationships and partnerships across Metro North Health with external partners delivering services for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women that support improved care coordination, collaboration, and engagement.

"It is equally important for men to ensure our daughters, sisters, mothers, cousin sisters, aunties, grandmothers and women in our community are supported and cared for in their health journey," said Paul.

The women's health expo provided Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women with the opportunity to connect with a range of support services in one central location to enable them to prioritise their health and wellbeing and put themselves first.

Metro North Health COH Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Manager, Paul Drahm and Women's Business Shared Pathway staff pictured alongside Chief Executive, Jackie Hanson at the Women's Health Expo





Yarning with Mob

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff from all areas and services across The Prince Charles Hospital (TPCH) recently got together at the first 'Yarning with Mob' morning tea, hosted by the new TPCH Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Services Manager, Kieran Costigan.

The morning tea, held on 23 February, provided staff the opportunity to connect with one another, have a yarn, share stories, and meet staff they might not otherwise get the chance to meet on a day-to-day basis.

Staff from the Metro North Health Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Leadership Team joined in on the morning tea to show support for this great initiative, and to continue building relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff across the health service.

"The morning tea was a great opportunity to connect with staff in an informal setting. The ongoing Yarning with Mob morning teas will assist in creating a safe space for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff in TPCH to stay connected and feel supported.

"Our team were able to connect with new staff that we hadn't met previously, and add them to the Metro North Health wide mailing list for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff. It's all about keeping our staff connected and letting them know there is support available if needed. It was a great event hosted by the team at TPCH," said Tamika, Support Officer, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Leadership Team.

The Yarning with Mob morning tea initiative will continue to take place across TPCH, with the hopes to attract more Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff who might like to get involved.

Culturally safe yarns for women and families accessing Ngarrama

The Metro North Health Strong Start to Life (STTL) team have created culturally safe spaces in Nundah and Deception Bay for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and families engaged with the Ngarrama Maternity Service, to access hands on support, pre and post birth.

Consultation with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elders led to the commencement of the Ngarrama Yarns, which have been taking place at Nundah Community Health Centre for the past 12-months, and a new location recently established in Deception Bay.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women, and women who are expecting an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander baby, can attend the Ngarrama Yarns along with their families to receive culturally safe support from health workers and midwives, and can be linked into additional support services if required.

The Ngarrama Yarns are spaces free from judgement, where attendees can ask questions freely to the group in relation to antenatal and postnatal support, birthing, breast feeding, sleeping, and tips on creating and maintaining healthy relationships, with bub and family after bub is born.

Women attending the Ngarrama Yarns have the opportunity to connect with other pregnant women and new mums, and participate in activities such as weaving, jewellery making, and painting. A dietitian and physiotherapist are available on the day to provide advice on healthy eating and pelvic health for women who are requiring additional support.

The yarns on the day are facilitated by the women and families, and a health worker, which empower the women to lead discussions and seek support in relation to any challenges they may be experiencing. By allowing the yarns to be led by attendees, this ensures that the women are receiving support that they need, which will equip them with knowledge and confidence they can lean on in the lead up to birth and after birth.

The Ngarrama Yarns have encouraged women to seek support in their journey when they wouldn't have felt comfortable to otherwise, and build trusting and supportive relationships with other women and families who attend the yarns.

Women accessing the Metro North Health Ngarrama Maternity Service can speak with their Ngarrama health worker or midwife for more information about the yarns, and how they can get involved.





Special group booking at BreastScreen Queensland North Lakes clinic

A special group booking, facilitated in partnership between BreastScreen Queensland (BSQ) Brisbane Northside Service and the Moreton Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community Health Service Strathpine clinic, took place in early March which provided six Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women with a culturally safe and supportive environment to attend for a breast screen at BSQ North Lakes clinic, and each receive a Sistas Shawl.

Since commencing in October 2022, the Sistas Shawl initiative has seen breast screening rates of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women residing in Brisbane North steadily rise.

Kelly, Rosalie, Christine, Vivienne, Barbara, and Lizetta attended the special group booking, and make up six of the 850 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women who have so far received a Sistas Shawl when attending for a breast screen at a BSQ Brisbane Northside Service clinic.

A breast screen is recommended every two years for those aged 50 – 74, with free screening also available for women in their 40s and those over 75 years. Regular screening and early detection remain important factors in improving survival rates for those diagnosed with breast cancer, so it is strongly encouraged to attend regular screens which take only 15 minutes to complete.

The ladies who recently attended the special group booking are proud to have their photo shared in the hopes that it will encourage more Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women to prioritise their health and wellbeing and book in for a free and quick breast screen.

Women who have screened previously have shared that the screen was not painful, however slight discomfort was experienced. The Sistas Shawl can be worn during the screen to provide a bit of modesty and a sense of cultural safety and comfort to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women when screening.

To book in for a free breast screen, visit <https://www.breastscreen.qld.gov.au> or call 13 20 50 to book an appointment.

Left to right: Kelly, Rosalie, Christine, Vivienne, Barbara, and Lizetta wearing their Sistas Shawl, pictured alongside BreastScreen Queensland Brisbane Northside Service Health Promotion Officer, Nadja





BreastScreen Queensland

*Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander
Women's Sistas Shawl*



**Get your
free Sistas
Shawl!**

Stay healthy and strong for your Mob

BreastScreen Queensland Brisbane Northside Service would like to invite Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women to book their free breast screen.

We offer breast screening to women aged 40 and over. Breast screening is most effective for women aged 50 to 74.

A Sistas Shawl will be given to women attending their breast screen, which can also be used as a privacy wrap. The Sistas Shawl aims to provide a sense of safety and comfort for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women.

Brisbane Northside Locations:

- Chermside
- Brisbane City
- Indooroopilly
- Keperra
- Redcliffe
- North Lakes

To find out more or to make an appointment
call us on **13 20 50** or go to
breastscreen.qld.gov.au



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Caboolture Satellite Hospital

15 Rowe Street, Caboolture QLD 4510
Phone: (07) 5433 7555

The **Caboolture Satellite Hospital** offers outpatient and community health services closer to home, and access to a Minor Illness and Injury Clinic providing free* urgent care options for people who don't need to go to an emergency department.

The Caboolture Satellite Hospital has free parking and is located near the Caboolture Train Station.

**Ensure you have your medicare card with you.*



Minor Injury and Illness Clinic (operating 8am to 10pm, 7 days a week)

Please note that this is not an Emergency Department. Community can access the Minor Injury and Illness Clinic by 'walk-in' for urgent care of illnesses and injuries that are not expected to be life-threatening, such as simple fractures, simple infections, toothache, minor burns, and minor head injuries with no loss of consciousness.

Depending on clinic service demand towards closure time, there may be the possibility that you will be redirected to a Hospital Emergency Department.

In a life-threatening emergency, call Triple Zero (000) or go to your nearest Hospital Emergency Department.

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IN FOCUS

Kam Biman Project

Congratulations to Aurora Hodges from the Indigenous Program of Experience in the Palliative Approach (IPEPA) and Ngiyani Wandabaa Sorry Business Consultant, Eliza Munro, who were the recipients of the Outstanding Achievement in Palliative Care for First Nations Communities award for the Kam Biman Project.

The Palliative Care in Queensland Awards Night, held in December 2023, was a special celebration, honouring the dedication and tireless efforts of individuals and organisations committed to providing compassionate end-of-life care.

Funded under the Metro North Health Better Together funding, the Kam Biman Project, which launched in December 2022, aims to provide warmth and comfort to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander patients accessing palliative and end of life care in a Metro North Health hospital, by providing them with a special blanket/cover.



Aurora Hodges, Principal Learning and Development Manager, Centre for Palliative Care Research and Education accepting the award, pictured alongside Dr. Anthony Herbert, President of Palliative Care QLD

Kam Biman covers are available in two designs, created by proud Kullilli, Koa, Wakka Wakka and Kabi Kabi artist Robin 'Goma' Conlon. Patients and families are encouraged to choose which design resonates and speaks to their heart or Spirit.

The 'Turtle' design depicts the turtle in the centre representing the person who is being cared for or who has returned to Spirit. Other turtles represent the family and wider community coming together to care for the person and to pay their respects.

The 'Orange' artwork depicts the centre circle as representing the person who is on the returning to Spirit journey and the family surrounding that person to provide care and support. The boomerangs on the outer represent the wider community and health staff coming together in support of the patient and family.

Once the patient has returned to Spirit, family are encouraged to keep the cover as a symbolic token of their loved one and may be used to provide love, warmth and comfort throughout the grieving and healing journey.

Congratulations again to Aurora and Eliza for being acknowledged and recognised for your hard work and dedication, and for the positive and powerful impact the Kam Biman Project is having on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander patients and families during difficult times.

Natasha White, Manager Systems and Performance and Aurora Hodges pictured alongside the Kam Biman covers at the project launch in 2022.



IN FOCUS



HOPE improving heart health

HOPE clinics are officially up and running. The Heart Outreach Program for Health Equity (HOPE) is a specialist outpatient cardiac clinic run through Metro North Health at Moreton Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community Health Services (MATSICHS) in Caboolture and Margate for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cardiology patients aged 16 years and over, with the aim to improve heart health.

In March the HOPE program had an official launch at MATSICHS Margate clinic with Metro North Health Chief Executive Jackie Hanson and Executives from Institute for Urban Indigenous Health (UIH) attending and signing a partnership agreement. The partnership agreement highlights the collaboration and success of the two organisations working together to increase access, reduce barriers and provide culturally safe and respectful care for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander patients.



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

Common barriers patients experience when attending clinic appointments are reduced through assistance from HOPE staff, including pre-appointment check-ins to assess wellness and discuss any difficulties patients are experiencing attending their appointment, as well as providing access to transport assistance.

Starting in early 2024, HOPE has already received over 50 referrals with the number growing quickly each week. Patients can access the program through GP or a Metro North Health treating team referral.

Feedback to the service has been very positive with patients strongly agreeing that the appointment met their expectations and that the staff were culturally appropriate and respectful.

Some comments received were:

'The doctor and nurse were extremely caring and respectful.'

'So polite, nice, patient and caring.'

'Everyone was very helpful, caring and friendly.'

Metro North Health creating change



Metro North Health paid tribute and acknowledged the 16 year anniversary of National Apology Day with staff events and yarning circles across facilities.

The significant and life changing actions caused by past government policies of forced child removal and assimilation continue to have long lasting effects and trauma on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

The grief, suffering and loss felt within the Stolen Generations and their families from these actions continues to create inter-generational trauma, leaving a ripple effect, contributing to the impact of the health and wellbeing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and so much more.

Through Metro North Health's commitment to improving health equity for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, the health service continues to host events highlighting and educating staff on key historical and cultural factors and practices to raise awareness.

During the National Apology Day events Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff, Executives, Traditional Owners, Elders and community came together to share in story-telling and reflect on the historical impacts and actions that affected generations of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, especially the Stolen Generations, and how the health service can work together in partnership with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in reconciliation to create a service where community receive culturally appropriate care - 'Our Health-Our Way'.

As an organisation, Metro North Health recognises that to make a difference in health outcomes, now is an opportunity to create change with each and every staff member having a profound and positive impact within their role.

"A commitment to health equity requires reform, change and improvement across the entire health system. It cannot be a continuation of the status quo or business as usual. Now is the time to be bold and brave because all parts of the health system needs to do better.

"Driving change our way means Metro North Health works closely and extensively with community Elders, community members and prescribed stakeholders within our catchment area as well as all other Hospital and Health Services (HHSs') across Queensland.

"Our vision for Metro North Health is creating a healthcare system that is responsible for addressing health inequities. To do this we must successfully bring together the consumers, health providers and health services as we strive to make health equity our everyday business.

"We understand our community wants to provide input in different ways and we will provide choices ranging from written feedback, bringing everyone together in forums and provide opportunities to have yarns.

"This requires significant cultural change within the organisation - something that takes time, vision and strategic action to improve health and wellbeing outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples," captured from Metro North Health Equity Strategy*.

[*www.metronorth.health.qld.gov.au/health-equity](http://www.metronorth.health.qld.gov.au/health-equity)

IN FOCUS



Deadly Feet Program travels to Cherbourg and Kingaroy



The Deadly Feet Program recently travelled to Cherbourg and Kingaroy in the Better Together Health Van to deliver outreach clinics to the local community.

The visit was organised in collaboration with Cherbourg Regional Aboriginal and Islander Community Controlled Health Services (CRAICCHS) and Kingaroy, as well as the Darling Downs Health Equity and allied health teams.

A total of 15 community members were screened at Cherbourg with 7 referred, and 8 in Kingaroy with 3 referred. The patients referred into Deadly Feet will be reviewed in early May.

Former Cherbourg Aboriginal Shire Council Mayor, Elvie Sandow also made a special appearance at the clinic, meeting the team and participating in a foot health check.

Deadly Feet Vascular Outreach Program Clinical Nurse Consultant, Annette Redhead, said there was a positive energy about the purpose of the program as well as the team commitment to returning every 8 weeks.



“We’d like to extend a big thank you to everyone for their guidance, support and extensive promotion of Deadly Feet to the local community. This made both events a huge success.

“We look forward to continuing our work together to improve community access to culturally safe multidisciplinary foot healthcare,” Annette said.



WORD OF THE MONTH

“Girrangunydyjiy”

(Gear-a-gun-gee) is Green Frog in Yidiny language.

Yidiny is the name of one of the languages spoken in the Cairns region extending to Gordonvale and along the tablelands to Kairi. The language was spoken and understood by Aboriginal groups in the region, including neighbouring groups of Djabugay, Dyirbal and Yalanji.

Yidiny is also written as Yidinji, Yidinj, Idindji, Yettingie, Mulgrave River dialect, etc. AIATSIS have identified Dyirbal as the standardised spelling and assigned it Language Code Y117 which is used by many collecting institutions in their catalogue descriptions.

Your foot health, Closer to home



Deadly Feet is a specialist outreach service for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. We provide culturally safe care closer to home.

We can help you look after your feet, and help your feet stay healthy.

We can help you stay healthy if you have any of the following:

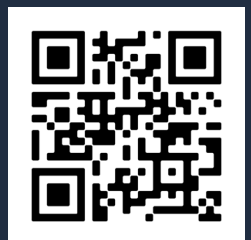
- ✓ Have any concerns about your feet
- ✓ Have sore legs when you walk
- ✓ Have diabetes
- ✓ Have kidney problems
- ✓ Smoke, or used to smoke.

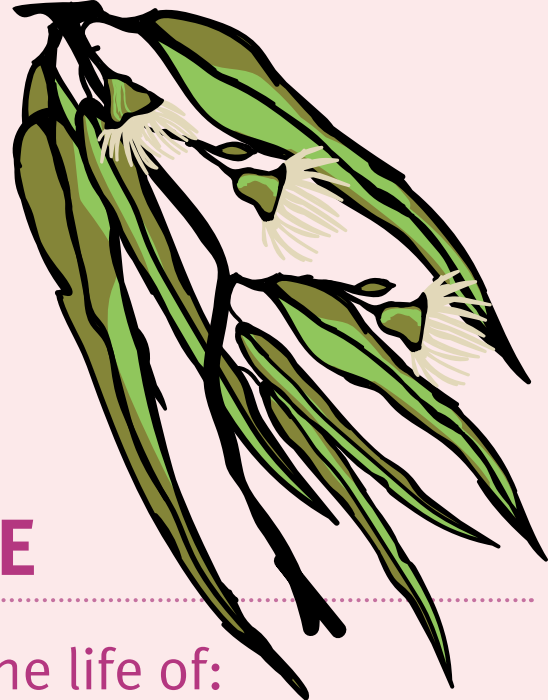


Get in touch with us for more information

For more information, have a chat with your nurse, doctor, or Indigenous Hospital Liaison Officer.

You can also scan the QR code, call or email the team to see if you're eligible to take part: (07) 3647 1500 or MNVOP@health.qld.gov.au





STAFF PROFILE

A Day in the life of: **Kea Hill-Johnson**

Administration Officer,
Allied Health
The Prince Charles Hospital

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

I am from the Kalkadoon Tribe from Mount Isa.

Q2. What is your role and how long have you been in your role?

I am an Administration Officer in Allied Health, working at The Prince Charles Hospital (TPCH). I have been in my current role for 4 years.

Q3. Where did you work prior to your current role?

Before working in my current role, I worked in Medical Records at TPCH since 2019. Before starting with Queensland Health in 2019, I worked in hospitality.

Q4. What has been a highlight for you in your current role?

Working with the Allied Health clinical teams has been the highlight for me. It feels like I am in my dream job right now.

Q5. What do you enjoy most about working for Metro North Health?

What I like most about working at Metro North Health is having the ability to learn more and try new roles to improve my skills and better my career.

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

Outside of work, I am interested in health and wellness and spend my spare time lifting weights or going outside to run around in the sun. I also enjoy watching funny dog videos on the internet.



Kallangur Satellite Hospital

9 Stoker Way, Kallangur QLD 4503
Phone: (07) 3285 0000

The **Kallangur Satellite Hospital** offers outpatient and community health services closer to home, and access to a Minor Illness and Injury Clinic providing free* urgent care options for people who don't need to go to an emergency department.

The Kallangur Satellite Hospital has free parking and is located near the Kallangur Train Station.

**Ensure you have your medicare card with you.*



Minor Injury and Illness Clinic (operating 8am to 10pm, 7 days a week)

Please note that this is not an Emergency Department. Community can access the Minor Injury and Illness Clinic by 'walk-in' for urgent care of illnesses and injuries that are not expected to be life-threatening, such as simple fractures, simple infections, toothache, minor burns, and minor head injuries with no loss of consciousness.

Depending on clinic service demand towards closure time, there may be the possibility that you will be redirected to a Hospital Emergency Department.

In a life-threatening emergency, call Triple Zero (000) or go to your nearest Hospital Emergency Department.

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Better Together Medication Access

Are you of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Origin?

Better Together Medication Access will cover all out-of-pocket expenses for prescribed discharge and outpatient prescriptions, for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people seen by a Metro North Health service.

Better Together Medication Access is only available through Metro North Health Pharmacy Services.

**NOW
INCLUDES
OUTPATIENT
MEDICATIONS**

How it works



You will be asked 'Are you of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Origin?'. Health Service staff must ask you the question, we cannot assume upon appearance.



If you identify, regardless of age, you will be eligible for Better Together Medication Access.



If you decided to opt-in, your medication prescription can be taken to a Metro North Health pharmacy, where your medication is supplied with no out of pocket cost.



Talk to Staff caring for you for more information.

By identifying you will receive support from culturally appropriate services including our Indigenous Hospital Liaison Officers to assist your healthcare journey and recovery back to community.

For further information, contact your local Metro North Health Pharmacy Team.

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Health**



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Government**

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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Page 20