

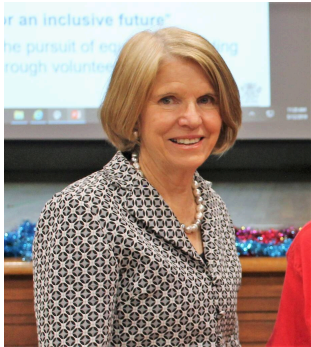
# Community and Oral Health Express

The official newsletter of the Community and Oral Health Directorate

Metro North Health

Autumn 2025

## Executive Director's message



Welcome to our first quarterly newsletter for 2025, which focuses on our amazing Community and Oral Health staff and the recent cyclone.

The year, has again started off very fast and by April I think a lot of staff were ready for a break during the school holidays.

In this edition of the Community and Oral Health Express, we also focus on the upcoming Hi 5 in 25 events and the great initiatives and improvements occurring across the directorate.

## Complex needs dentistry supports generations

It isn't a stretch of the imagination to say that the work of Metro North Oral Health Service's Stephen Moore is benefiting generations and changing lives.

Stephen, an Oral Health Therapist at Queensland Children's Hospital Oral Health Clinic and Oral Health Centre at Herston, has spent the past 25 years caring for children with complex medical needs and cleft palate conditions.

"After 25 years in the Cleft Lip and Palate Program, I now see former patients bringing in their own children to start their journey," he said.

[Read more about Stephen's work ...](#)



## Bringing safe care closer to home

There have been some great successes recently to enhance services to support the increased demand on our hospitals and improve the care people receive across the community and in their homes.

At Brighton, we introduced the Brighton Geriatric Evaluation and Management (GEM) Service after a successful trial. The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Nurse Navigator Service was introduced to support First Nations people with complex chronic disease and medical conditions who need help navigating health and community services.

The Community Palliative Care Under 65 Service was funded to support families and patients to come to terms with a terminal diagnosis, and to pass away at home if that is their wish.

We have also seen the permanent establishment of the Queensland Ambulance Service Falls Co-Response Program, which is now being rolled out statewide.

### **Oral health care supports at risk communities**

Oral health care has recently been the winner of some key enhancements recently, including the refinement of our new dental clinics with more general and special needs dentistry.

A 90-plus oral health treatment program for the elderly has been established to support dental health with more regular six-month appointments.

Kindergarten students and their families are also benefiting from free dental screening and education sessions at the Koobara Kindergarten and Pre-Prep Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Corporation.



We have improved access to dental care for patients in mental health services at The Prince Charles Hospital by introducing a priority referral pathway for eligible mental health patients on discharge from the inpatient mental health units.

### **Upcoming 'Hi5 in 25' events**

We have been taking FIVE to acknowledge our caring, connected and compassionate champions at our oral health and community sites as part of our 'Hi5 in 25!' visits over the past few months.

Following are list of upcoming 'Hi5 in 25!' visits:

**Cooinda House**  
**Wednesday, 21 May**  
**11.00 am - 12.00 noon**

**Chermside Community Health Centre**  
**Wednesday, 11 June**  
**10:00 - 11:00 am**

**North West Community Health Centre**  
**Thursday, 3 July**  
**10.00 - 11.00 am**



It only takes FIVE minutes to nominate a person for a fun Connecting Care Champion award. Please send a short 50-100 word nomination to [COH-Communications@health.qld.gov.au](mailto:COH-Communications@health.qld.gov.au).

### **CYCLONE WATCH**

#### **Keeping everyone calm and safe**

When Tropical Cyclone Alfred swept through Brisbane and South-East Queensland, enrolled nurse Lachy and the team at Brighton Health Campus worked tirelessly to keep residents safe, comfortable and reassured.

While the main impact came from strong winds and heavy rain, staff worked hard to prepare the facility, securing sandbags, removing decorations from walls and bringing in outdoor furniture and flower pots.

[Read more about our nursing response ...](#)



### **Food services show dedication under pressure**

The Brighton Health Campus Food Services team faced power outages and some tough weather conditions - but they never wavered.

Food Services team member Louise said: "We didn't have the plating line working, so we ended up with about ten people manually handling every tray down the line to get food out to the patients and residents."

With just one oven, every meal had to be carefully planned.

[Read more about the food services response ...](#)



### **Keeping patients stocked with medications**

Essential services such as Community Palliative Care continued through all conditions, with some of our teams having to adapt with the weather.

Clinical Nurse Albert said the uncertainty and magnitude of the cyclone had the team preparing for all challenges, including the chance they might not get to a patient's home.

"As part of the planning we ensured that all of our patients and their carers had ample stock of medications on hand to see them through the event and the weekend," he said.

[Read more about the Community Palliative Care Service response ...](#)

### **Putting a hand up to truck in the linen**

Brendan and the team at the Brighton Health Campus stepped up to keep things running, ensuring patients and staff had the essentials they needed.

When the weather and road conditions made linen deliveries uncertain, Brendan didn't hesitate to take action and put his hand up to drive the linen truck.

"We had no linen trolleys, so I spoke to Gary, and I told them, I'll do it! Not a problem, let's go!" Brendan said.

[Read more about our operational response ...](#)



## **BEMS staff deploy 1,000 sandbags**

The Building, Engineering and Maintenance team knew they had a massive job ahead with preparation beginning days before the cyclone made landfall.

More than 1,000 sandbags were deployed to protect buildings and critical areas, with trades like plumbers, electricians, carpenters and plasterers all pitching in.

[Read more about our brilliant BEMS team ...](#)

## **GREAT NEWS STORIES**

### **Coming together as a community - COH Yarning Circle**

A Yarning Circle is an important process that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people use to learn, share, build respectful and caring relationships, pass on cultural knowledge through narrative and come together as a community.

Community and Oral Health's yarning circle is Metro North's longest running of its kind and is coordinated by the amazing Indigenous Health Services team.

"Yarning Circles help identify gaps, shape recommendations and influence health priorities, policies and practices in COH," Paul said.

[Read more about the COH Yarning Circle ...](#)



### **Rural and remote nurses lead walk-in clinic**

Perri was one of the first nurses to work in the Brisbane City Nurse-led Walk-in Clinic when it opened.

"We are all nurses with an extended scope of practice to assist the community with many different ailments," Perri said.

While she works in the heart of the city now, Perri worked for many years as a nurse in regional and rural Queensland and says it's a great way for nurses to gain a wide range of clinical experience.

[Read more about Perri ...](#)



### **Not all heroes wear capes**

When Tropical Cyclone Alfred was on its way, Ross had to remove the handcrafted wooden flowers that once brightened Brighton's trees.

But, instead of letting them go to waste, he saw an opportunity to bring smiles to the community and spread a little joy.

Made from pine and repurposed materials, the flowers are hand-painted by members of the Sandgate Men's Shed and usually hang in clusters of three or four.

[Find out more about the Men's Shed and Ross ...](#)

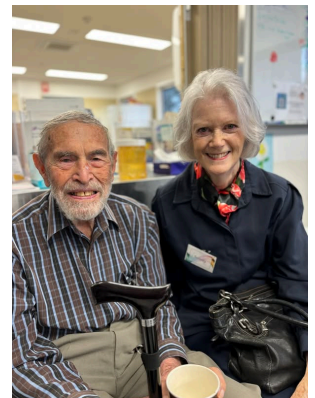


## Dementia Choir bringing joy and great connections

*"Since we joined the Bright' N' Sparks Dementia Choir at the start of last year, we haven't missed a session. It's perfect because it combines singing with being social."*

*"My husband Neil has dementia, which is why we joined, the music is so good for your brain. We go to choir together because it's something we both enjoy. Music helps Neil feel connected."*

Quote from Belinda, Brighton Sparks choir participant, alongside her husband Neil.



## Best Autumn Compliment - Brighton GEM Service

*"I was 16 when I started working at the RBWH as a nurse cadet. As soon as I started, I knew this was the job for me. I really loved being able to help others. That's the one thing I really miss now, the dementia has taken away my ability to care for others and all the skills I gained working as a nurse I have forgotten."*

*"When I arrived at the Brighton GEMS ward, I noticed how the staff were so caring towards the patients and the way they carried out their duties, was reminiscent of the way I would work. Having a caring nature and wanting to do the job, makes all the difference to the patient."*

*"And, I now know what it feels like on the receiving end of this type of care. I wish I could still do the job; it was a way of life for me."*

*"I love it here at Brighton, the staff are beautiful and it reminds me of when I was a nurse. When I leave my room, I sometimes get lost on my way back, so one of the nurses said to me why don't I stick one of your drawings up on the door, which is a good idea."*

*"Sometimes I look at the nurses and think I could do that; however, I know that I can't anymore. I really like to watch the staff work, as it reminds of what my life was like before I had dementia."*

## FAST FACTS

Our Post Acute Care Service continues to support early discharges of elderly patients from hospital and to accommodate referrals from GPs, with more than 70,000 appointments in the community each year.

More than 12,500 people were provided with specialist wound care appointments after hospital surgery last year at our four wound clinics at Chermside, Keperra, Caboolture and North Lakes.



# Do you have a great story for Community and Oral Health?

CLICK HERE  TO EMAIL US TODAY



## Catch the latest in the **NEWSROOM** Metro North Health

Metro North Health acknowledges the traditional custodians of the land, and pays respect to Elders, past, present and future.



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