

Metro North Health

# Message from the Executive Director Mental Health

Dr Kathryn Turner



Dear all

It is with great pleasure that I announce Penny Dale as Metro North Mental Health's (MNMH) inaugural Director of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health.

Some of you will already be familiar with Penny through her leadership of the Indigenous Mental Health Intervention Program (IMHIP) across three adult custodial settings in Queensland.

Penny's new role is not only a first for MNMH, but also the first time an identified, director-level role has been established in a Queensland Mental Health Alcohol and Other Drugs service.

The role will have oversight across MNMH and responsibility for the delivery of culturally safe services for our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander consumers.

Penny's unique qualifications to undertake this role are intertwined through her personal and professional life.

She is an Aboriginal woman from the Brisbane area through ancestral links from her great grandmother, grandmother and mother.

Her mother is a member of the Stolen Generation, and a close family member is also a consumer of mental health services.

Penny holds qualifications including a Masters of Social Work and Bachelor of Justice and has a passion for influencing social justice health outcomes and improving equity for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

She also has a wealth of experience in health, mental health and social justice fields, both in identified and mainstream positions, at the local, statewide and national level.

Penny views her new role at MNMH as an honour, a responsibility, a challenge and an opportunity.

"This is a game-changer and a genuine opportunity to represent my community and give them a voice within the sector."

"I feel a weight of responsibility to get this right and to ensure we're directing funding and delivering culturally safe services where they're needed most."

"We need to ensure we're collaborating with and co-designing services with communities and giving them a real voice in determining how their healthcare is delivered."

"I see this role as a big challenge but an even greater opportunity – I can't wait to get started in September."



“I’m also looking forward to meeting the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workforce within the service, learning more about the great work they’ve been doing and seeking their advice on areas of need.”

Please join me in congratulating Penny on her new role.

Kind regards

Kathryn