

## MESSAGE FROM THE ED METRO NORTH MENTAL HEALTH

Metro North Health

Dr Kathryn Turner



Dear Staff,

We have recently learnt more about the research initiatives and innovative enhancements to the consumer experience occurring within The Prince Charles, Metro North Mental Health facility which I would like to share with you.

### **The Easy Health Project**

The Easy Health Project is a research project coordinated by the Mater Intellectual Disability and Autism Service in collaboration with Queensland Centre for Intellectual and Developmental Disability and University of Queensland.

In 2021, the Easy Health project was initiated following the Disability Royal Commission (2021) which identified the need for improved healthcare for people with intellectual or developmental disability.

The Prince Charles Hospital (TPCH) Mental Health Service agreed to participate in this research as a pilot site along with Wide Bay Mental Health Service, Mater Hospital, Queensland Health Mental Health and Alcohol and Other Drug Branch (MHAODB), and the Office of the Public Guardian. A key component of this research is the incorporation of external non-government organisations including Endeavour Foundation, Queensland Disability Network, and Indel-ability.

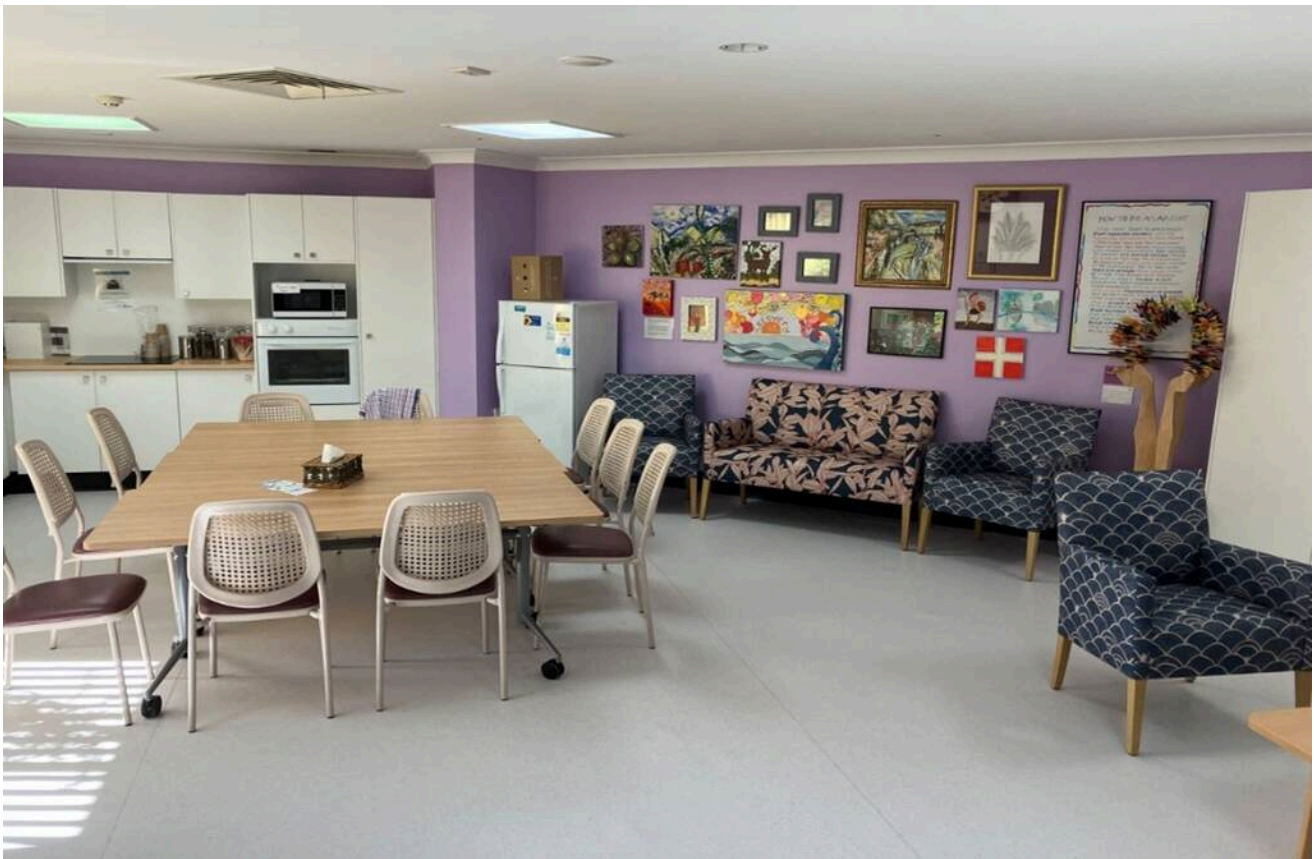
The Easy Health project aims to add to the academic literature and to provide online education resources targeted at improving the knowledge, confidence, and capacity of mainstream health clinicians, mental health clinicians and staff working with people with an intellectual or development disability.

### *Progress to date*

TPCH Mental Health Service committed to identifying up to five consumers with a diagnosis within the project criteria categories to be interviewed by the Easy Health Project team. They also committed to encouraging up to 50 staff members to complete the online training package including the pre and post survey and staff interviews.

As of 21 August 2023, 94 staff members had completed the online training with 11 staff registered for the program awaiting completion.

The pilot sites were provided with a financial incentive for participation in the project. TPCH utilised this funding to improve the acute inpatient units by remodelling the Wellness Room and purchasing sensory tools and activities for consumers to improve the inpatient experience.



*Photo of upgraded Wellness Room at TPCH*

### **Innovation Spotlight: Patient Flow Clinical Nurse Consultant, TPCH**

Patient flow and inpatient capacity remains a challenge, but we have been able to fund positions to support patient flow through the Better Care Together Plan. Commencing part time in Christmas 2022 before moving to full time in March 2023, TPCH developed a role with the aim of improving the co-ordination and facilitation of patient flow management between Metro North Mental Health services, TPCH and the wider Directorate.

The role enhances access to acute inpatient mental health beds, collaborates with the Nurse Navigators and Patient Flow roles within TPCH and across the directorate including with the Assistant Director Patient Flow Manager for mental health. Taking up the challenge of stepping into a new role and developing processes across TPCH Mental Health Service was Lonah Abuto.



Lonah embraced this role with enthusiasm and passion. Her in-depth understanding of the service has allowed her to instigate innovative and flexible ways to improve the flow of TPCCH Mental Health Service. Lonah has subsequently forged strong relationships, improving, and enhancing lines of communication with flow managers facility and directorate wide.

Lonah's ability to grow and develop her role has highlighted the benefits a patient flow role brings to the service. Lonah can respond to pressure points, reduce blockages, and reduce waiting times for consumers in the Emergency Department.

Outside of this challenging and complex role, Lonah enjoys spending time with her family, cooking, gardening, and listening to music. Lonah is also a passionate soccer supporter and has embraced the recent Women's World Cup.

Thank you Lonah.

Until next time,

Kathryn