



Dear Colleagues,

Last Friday night I attended the 10th Metro North Staff Excellence Awards at the Brisbane Convention and Exhibition Centre. It was a wonderful night with over 580 people in attendance, including the Honourable Tim Nicholls MP, Minister for Health and Ambulance Services and Dr David Rosengren, Director-General of Queensland Health.

I would like to offer my congratulations to everyone who received an award, including our Highly Commended recipients. STARS had ten finalists across seven different award categories which is an amazing effort from our comparatively small staff group.

Congratulations to:

Emerging Leaders

Highly Commended: 6A Nurses.



Excellence in Integrated Care

Highly Commended: Dancing Towards Health: Queensland Ballet and STARS Dance Rehab Partnership.



Excellence in Performance

Highly Commended: Dr Enoka Gonsalkorala.



Values in Action

Highly Commended, Raj Singh: STARSTRUCK Steppers - Bridging the gap.



STARS had a large contingent of staff in attendance at the awards - I hope you all enjoyed the wonderful food, live music and photo booth. Thanks everyone for making it such a fun night and for supporting your colleagues. You can see all the photos from the night on the [Metro North Community Facebook page](#).





Disability Action Week 24 November - 1 December

The theme for this Disability Action Week is 'Accessible communication: connect, include and empower'.

A few small changes can help us to more effectively communicate with someone with a disability.

Check out the following tips:

- [start a conversation about accessible information](#)
- [make images more accessible](#) – including by adding alt-text and image descriptions
- [develop websites](#) that are easier for everyone
- [create documents](#) that can be read by people with low-vision
- [host events](#) where everyone feel valued and welcome
- use [common accessibility symbols](#) in your communication so people know what options are available.

New training, a communication toolkit and more tips are available at www.qld.gov.au/daw.

Disability Action Week is a chance to reflect on our progress and look at what we can all do to build a more accessible and inclusive service. You can also refer to Metro North's [Disability Services Action Plan](#) and other resources for people with disability on the [Metro North People with disability website](#).

STARS Executive Leaders Program (ELP) graduates.

Congratulations to Tamsin Mahoney, Enoka Gonsalkorala and Vikram Joshi who recently graduated from the Metro North Executive Leaders Program. The program features individual developmental assessments, face-to-face workshops facilitated by healthcare experts with real-world experience, executive coaching and mentoring, networking events and inclusion in the ELP Alumni Program.

The program is a great initiative to identify, develop and retain our senior leaders.



Metro North Spinal Injuries business case update

Last week we met with the Systems Planning Branch (SPB) regarding the spinal injuries business case. SPB are currently developing an implementation for future spinal cord injury services for Horizon 1 (next 12-18 months). This will outline the initiatives and costings for the short-term delivery of the SCI service model which will be implemented through a phased approach. Horizon 1 will take into consideration the proposed STARS and Townsville spinal services. The implementation plan/costings will go up to the Director-General before Christmas.

National Safe Work Month competition winners

Last month to celebrate National Safe Work Month a number of competitions were held. A big thank-you to everyone who participated and helped facilitate our Metro North Safe Work Month activities. Here are the competition prize winners:

- Rehab Super Star Award Winner – Bibin Kurian, Patient Support Services - Site Coordinator
- Word Search Competition Winner – Danielle Angela Caruso, Dental Technician, Oral Health Centre
- Lolly Jar Competition Winner – Glenn McDonald, A/Facility Services Director, STARS Operation



STARS Pre-Higher Degree by Research (HDR) Grants Program

The STARS Research Committee are pleased to announce a new support initiative for STARS clinicians: the **STARS Pre-HDR Grants Program**. The program is a competitive funding program that provides support for STARS staff to further develop their research plan, methodology and supervision plans, with the goal of achieving HDR enrolment in the Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) or Master of Philosophy (MPhil) by 31st December 2025.

Funding will be available in the first round (1 July 2024 to 30 June 2025), with an indicative individual award of \$5,000 to \$10,000. Applications are encouraged from all professions (nursing, medical, and allied health) and are due **5pm Sunday 15 December 2024**.

The Research Committee anticipates a second round of funding in the next financial year for both the HDR and the pre-HDR schemes with applications opening around March 2025, with outcomes known by end June 2025.

Please see the [grant guidelines and application form](#). If you have any questions on the scheme, please

contact Dr Susan Sullivan (STARS Education and Research Alliance Manager) on: stars_educationandresearch@health.qld.gov.au.

Good bye and good luck to Alan

Today we farewelled Alan Bateman after nearly 34 years with Queensland Health, 18 years of those with the Rehabilitation and Engineering Centre. After starting his career in a family orthotics business, Alan moved to the Orthotics and Prosthetics department at the Royal Brisbane. He joined the REC team in 2006, enjoying the collaborative nature of the work and being able to directly experience how modifications could improve a patient's quality of life.

Alan's self-taught upholstery skills has been a great benefit to patients, improving the turn-round time and allowing patients to get their seating back the same day.

Alan has been an integral part of REC and will be very missed by his team and the broader STARS group.



I would like to thank Alan for the dedication he has shown to the Queensland disabled community throughout his career.

Some last words from Oliver Mason, Rehabilitation Engineering Director.

"Alan has been a constant source of support, always available to lend a hand or fashion a solution to a complex problem. Alan's warm, approachable manner made him an excellent teacher, supporting students from multiple universities looking to start a career in health. Alan has been a big part of what makes the Rehab. Engineering team feel like a family."

You can read more about Alan's [career and retirement plans here](#).

Christmas Staff Breakfast

This coming **Wednesday 4 December 6.30-8.30am** we are holding our annual Christmas Staff breakfast. All staff from STARS, the Oral Health Centre and our partners CSIRO, UQ and Cushman and Wakefield are invited to join us. There will be a selection of breakfast muffins and croissants available, including vegetarian and gluten free options. I hope you can join us for this end of year celebration.

STARS Christmas Decorating Competition

If you haven't already registered your area for the Christmas Decorating Competition [you can do so here](#). There are two themes to choose from this year: Aussie Christmas or STARS Circus, or maybe you could try combining the two!

The RBWH Foundation have kindly provided the prize, a beautiful Christmas hamper so get decorating! Judging will take place on Tuesday 10 December.



Christmas Bake Sales

There are several Christmas bake sales happening next week as part of the RBWH Foundation's Battle of the Wards Bake Off. Come to Level 3 and buy a yummy treat, while supporting the Foundation.

Dietetics and Food Services Team

Monday 2 December

Level 3 Food Court

10.30am -1.30pm

STARS Level 7 Team
Tuesday 3 December
Level 3 Food Court
10am-12.30pm

Pay cut offs over Christmas

A bit of housekeeping for the upcoming Christmas break around payroll forms. Staff are requested to submit forms in a timely manner throughout December so they can be approved and actioned in time for the last pay day of the year.

Please note that this last pay day will occur on **Tuesday 31 December**, instead of Wednesday 1 January 2025, due to the New Year's Day public holiday.

The payroll form submission cut-off time is **1pm Monday 23 December**. For more information, head to the payroll assistance [Christmas period page](#).

Patient compliment

Finally, a lovely compliment from a 6B patient who wanted to highlight the amazing service that STARS provided. It is not every day that someone refers to spending time in hospital as fortuitous!

"I recently had the good fortune of spending two nights in Ward 6B following surgery. I find it difficult to find words to convey just how impressed I was with the STARS hospital, right from the moment of check-in to the time that I was discharged. World class treatment from a world class hospital, every step of the way. The staff in Ward 6B were amazing - every single one of them. There was not a single member of staff, from nursing to cleaning to food services, that I could find fault with. Each and every one went out of their way to provide quality personal and attentive service."

Kind regards

Dale Dally-Watkins