



Dear colleagues,

Yesterday, I had the privilege of attending the launch of the [Metro North Health Equity Strategy 2025–2028](#)—a significant milestone in our ongoing commitment to improving health outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

The event was attended by more than 300 people, including Metro North Chief Executive Jackie Hanson and Executive Director of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health, Sherry Holzapfel. They were joined by members of our workforce and Community Elders for the official launch.



Before we embark on this next phase of the strategy, I'd like to acknowledge the results achieved over the last three years at RBWH including:

- Recruiting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Workers for Kidney Health and the Emergency Trauma Centre.
- Establishing positive relationships with the Turrbal People - the Traditional Owners of the land where RBWH is located.
- Introduction of identification and other Cultural Capability training.

While these measures speak to our successes, there remains work to be done. The next stage of the Health Equity Strategy reaffirms our commitment to providing safe and accessible care for this community through four key strategic priorities:

- Zero experiences of racism in Metro North Health.
- Creating safe hospital and healthcare services for this community.
- Developing and enhancing culturally safe, co-designed models of care.
- Sustaining culturally safe and data driven equity.

Please take the time to read the strategy and consider how you can play a part in the journey toward health equity across access, outcomes and experience.

'Stop Racism. It Starts with Me'

Along with the launch of the new Health Equity strategy, yesterday also marked the start of a new Metro North anti-racism campaign, *'Stop Racism, It Starts with Me.'*

Co-designed with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff, patients, and community members, this campaign is part of our truth-telling journey, focusing on what racism looks like, sounds like and feels like for those who experience it.

The campaign asks us all to step up to challenge and stop racism in our healthcare facilities when we see it and to take steps to ensure incidents of racism are addressed.

The initial focus of the campaign is supporting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, with future phases supporting the culturally and linguistically diverse community and other racially affected communities working in and accessing our services.

I encourage you to head over to the [anti-racism QHEPS page](#) to learn more and watch the powerful short films that have been developed to help challenge racism and promote allyship.



Small changes, big impact

More bench space, extra hooks and disposable bins. These don't sound like big adjustments to make to bathrooms, but for people living with a stoma, they make a world of difference.

Last week, our Stoma Therapy Team opened the first modified bathroom at RBWH, which is set to make hospital visits simpler for patients living with a stoma.

Patient, Mel (pictured) lives with Crohn's Disease and was on hand for the opening of the modified bathroom. She said this is the first time she has seen a facility designed for someone like her and hopes it will be the start of more accessible spaces becoming available for people living with a stoma.

Look out for more modified bathrooms becoming available soon as we make our facilities more inclusive to allow these patients to have the privacy they need and the dignity they deserve when at our hospital.

Staff profile- Liz Lupschen

Today, I am pleased to profile one of our Stomal Therapy Team, Clinical Nurse Consultant, Liz Lupschen.

Across Australia, more than 50,000 people live with a stoma, and at RBWH, around 200 new stomas are formed each year. Liz and the team play a vital role supporting patients through this journey.

"We provide both inpatient and outpatient care to patients and their carers who are either preparing for or recovering from stoma-forming surgery," Liz said.

"Education is a critical part of what we do, helping patients and their loved ones adjust to life with a stoma."

Liz has been a stomal therapy nurse at RBWH for 19 years and brings not only expertise but compassion to her work.

"Throughout my career, I've met the most courageous people—individuals who have overcome some of the most challenging moments of their lives," she says.

"People invite you into a very private part of their world. With the right education, support, and appliances, we can significantly improve their quality of life and help them return to daily living after stoma formation."

"Being part of someone's journey is a privilege and being able to make it just a little bit easier means everything to me."

Outside of work, Liz describes this as her "kids' sport era," but still makes time to enjoy reading, gardening, and walking her beloved Rhodesian Ridgebacks, Frankie and Frida.



Thank you to Liz and all of our Stomal Therapy Team for the essential support and care they provide to this patient cohort.

A fresh approach to wellbeing

It's fair to say that the term 'Wellbeing' is currently having its moment. For every article written about it, there are others suggesting a different approach. At last week's Collaborative Forum, Staff Wellbeing Officer, Dr. Liz Crowe separated fact from fiction and provided practical tips fit for our healthcare context. Among those are accepting that stress, and sometimes even distress is part of our chosen careers and that we need to bring self awareness to the way we make decisions to manage that.

Importantly, Liz reminded us that wellbeing is complex and dynamic and a shared responsibility that exists at personal, team and organisational levels. It can't be achieved through only individual strategies, and it requires collective awareness and cultural change. Thank you to Liz for sharing her expertise. If you didn't make it to the forum, click [here](#) to watch the recording and learn more.

NAIDOC Week 2025

Next week is National NAIDOC Week for 2025. This year's theme is, '*The Next Generation: Strength, Vision and Legacy*', which celebrates the bright future ahead as young Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander leaders forge a vision for the future while remembering the legacy of their ancestors' achievements.



**THE NEXT
GENERATION:
STRENGTH,
VISION &
LEGACY**
6-13 JULY 2025

We are kicking off the week on Monday with a NAIDOC Week Market at the main entrance of the hospital from 10am, which will feature jewellery, coffee, artwork and more from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander providers. Then at 1pm, Songwoman Aunty Maroochy will conduct a Traditional Blessing in the ground floor atrium.

SET Staff Forum - Thursday 3 July

Metro North's Senior Executive Team (SET) are hosting a staff forum tomorrow at 11.30am in the Education Centre auditorium and on Teams. This is your opportunity to hear from Chief Executive, Jackie Hanson and other SET members and to ask your questions.

I encourage you to take the time to attend to learn about current Metro North priorities and what they mean for RBWH.

Winter Warmer

It's been cold and windy week in Brisbane, which seems like the perfect time for a Winter Warmer!

Team Royal would like to invite all RBWH staff to enjoy some soup, a bread roll and a sweet treat tomorrow from 10.30am to 2.30pm at the Level 6 outdoor area between the Ned Hanlon and Joyce Tweddell buildings.

I'll be on hand with other RBWH executives and leaders to serve the winter warmth and thank you all for your hard work and everything you do for our community.

Kind regards,

Louise Oriti

Executive Director,
Royal Brisbane and Women's Hospital

We respectfully acknowledge the Traditional Owners and Custodians of the land on which our facilities are built. We also pay respect and acknowledge Elders past, present and the future.

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