

Metro North Health

Message from the

Executive Director Caboolture, Kilcoy and Woodford

Karlene Willcocks



Summary:

- Metro North Senior Executive Team Staff Forum
- CKW Research Symposium
- Wear it Purple Day
- New Neonatal Unit
- Farewell Karen Blake

Message feedback



Audience: All staff



Read time: 7 min



For: Information

Kia Ora CKW team,

This week, we had the privilege of welcoming the Metro North Senior Executive Team (SET) to Caboolture Hospital for a special staff forum. We had the chance to meet Nick Steele who is taking over as the interim Metro North Chief Executive while permanent recruitment is undertaken, and hear from Dr Liz Rushbrook who has been Acting Chief Executive as she discussed the Metro North Have Your Say Results and Strategic Plan 2024 – 2028.

It was to my disappointment that I could not be at the forum in person, but it was fabulous to see it was well attended in person and online, and to hear your questions to the SET team.

Thanks to SET members Acting Chief Finance Officer Hari Lyer, Acting Chief Allied Health Perry Judd, Chief Midwifery and Nursing Officer Alannah Geary, Chief People and Culture Officer Brett Bourke and Executive Director Clinical Governance Grant Carey-Ide, for taking the time to take questions from the audience and have frank conversations.

The Have Your Say survey highlighted that we put the value 'compassion' into our practice the most, which is a truly great result.

We are in the process of rolling out our results and I will host a CKW All Staff Forum in the



next few weeks to unpack our results, discuss responses to your feedback and outline our next steps. Keep an eye out for more details.

CKW Research Symposium

Also this week, I had the pleasure of attending the CKW Research Symposium, and wow, I just love research. Every time I attend, I learn what we “do, do” and “don’t do.” Working in a clinical directorate with a growing community and increasing demand for care, a directorate with the largest Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island population across Metro North, the focus for CKW is on safe and quality patient care, community trust and being a great place to work. Listening to everyone’s presentations on Wednesday certainly proved that we are on the right track and we are so lucky to have so many researchers to help better these focus areas. We will showcase some of the research presentations in future messages.

We were also privileged to hear Professor James Ward talk about his work of the Poche Centre for Indigenous Health. Professor Ward is an infectious diseases epidemiologist and a national leader in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander research. He is an inspiration to listen to, and we are lucky to be partnering with Professor Ward on an antiracism project at CKW focused on our emergency department and maternity services. Professor Ward challenged us to expand our research – Queensland is underrepresented in MRFF funded research, and to meaningfully include Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island people in the research – let’s accept and step up to that challenge.

A big thank you to Rebecca Engel and Steve Francia from The Common Good for their generous sponsorship, special guests Tania Crough and Professor James Ward. Special mention to our Director of Research Thuy Frakking and Julia Affleck from the Research Development Unit for their tireless work in putting this event and for putting the Research Report together, which you can read the [here](#).

Congratulations to everyone who presented on the day, especially the winners and highly commended:



Best research presentation: Thuy Frakking

Highly commended research presentation: Helen Edwards



Best quality improvement presentation: Dr Sarah Gaukroger



Highly commended quality improvement presentation: Dr Louise Purtell and Holly Mchenery-Wakelin



Best novice presentation: Dr Sarah Gaukroger

Wear it Purple Day

Wear It Purple Day was last Friday and is a national day of support and celebration for LGBTQIA+ young people. It is held each year on the last Friday in August to promote inclusivity, respect and a sense of belonging.

Watch a 60 second video with Jess Linnan and Parker Michaels, as we ask what wearing purple means to them. Watch the video [here](#).



New Neonatal Unit

Our new purpose-built Neonatal Unit will officially open on **Tuesday 14 October**, providing a peaceful and supportive environment for our littlest and most vulnerable patients and their families. The unit expands capacity to 15 cot spaces, including three isolation rooms and features modern design improvements such as switchable privacy glass, new medical equipment and dedicated family facilities including two carers' rooms with ensuites, a dining space and a welcoming reception area. This state-of-the-art space not only enhances clinical care but also prioritises the wellbeing and comfort of families and staff.

Congratulations to the CHRP team including Stephanie Webster and Michele Pilling A/NUM Neonatal Unit, for putting so much hard work into this project.





Farewell Karen Blake

Karen Blake will be hanging up her colourful socks and retiring from Queensland Health this week, after an outstanding career spanning more than four decades.

Karen commenced in 1977 at the Royal Brisbane and Women's Hospital before transferring to Caboolture Hospital in 1993, where she has served with

dedication as part of Patient Support Services. That is a total of 48 years of service!

Most fantastic is that Karen is full of smiles, energy in bounds, and so much positivity and joy about her work.

Thank you Karen for your years of service. We wish you all the very best for the next chapter of your life.

Child Protection Week (7 - 13 September)

Child protection is everyone's business. The responsibility lies with adults in keeping children safe from harm. Join a series of powerful presentations coordinated by the CKW Child Protection Unit, focused on youth violence prevention, family support and healing through community care, featuring experts in domestic and family violence, adolescent behaviours and trauma-informed care.

Adolescent to Parent Violence

Monday 8 September 2025 | 1pm – 2pm

Dr Dave Burck

[Join on Teams](#)

HALT Program – Working with Adolescents

Tuesday 9 September 2025 | 1pm - 2pm

Dave Kramar

[Join on Teams](#)

Supporting Survivors – Laurel Place Presentation

Thursday 11 September 2025 | 9am - 10.15am

Laurel Place Inc.

[Join on Teams](#)

Attend in person at the Caboolture Hospital Education Centre or online via Microsoft Teams.

RSVP to CPU-Caboolture@health.qld.gov.au



Caboolture (Kabul) Satellite Health Centre health check yarn clinic

The health check yarn clinic took place on Friday 29 August. The purpose of the clinic was to engage with community members and Elders, with health care checks provided by the Senior Health worker and Nurse Navigator and health education delivered by ATODs and a Dietitian. The clinic also helped community members become more familiar when attending the Caboolture Satellite Health Centre and promoted access to the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Services Team.

Feedback from the day was very positive, with community members saying they “feel like they know themselves better,” asking “can we do this every Friday,” and sharing that they “enjoyed the sessions and can take some advice from the dietitian to improve their diet.”



What's On - September

SEPTEMBER ————— '25

WHAT'S ON

- ★ CHILD PROTECTION WEEK 7 - 13 SEPT
 - ★ PROSTATE CANCER AWARENESS MONTH
 - ★ WORLD ALZHEIMER'S MONTH
 - ★ DEMENTIA ACTION WEEK 15 - 21 SEPT
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- ★ INDIGENOUS LITERACY DAY - WED 3 SEPT
 - ★ BRAVEHEARTS DAY - FRIDAY 6 SEPT
 - ★ WORLD SUICIDE PREVENTION DAY - WED 10 SEPT
 - ★ R U OK? DAY - THURS 11 SEPT
 - ★ WORLD PATIENT SAFETY DAY - WED 17 SEPT
 - ★ WORLD HEART DAY - MON 29 SEPT

CKW EVENTS

- CKW SET STAFF FORUM - THUR 4 SEPT
 - YARNING CIRCLE CSHC - FRI 5 SEPT
-
- CHILD PROTECTION WEEK - AUDITORIUM/TEAMS
- ADOLESCENT TO PARENT VIOLENCE: MON 8TH 1-2PM
 - HALT PROGRAM: TUES 9TH 1-2PM
 - SUPPORTING SURVIVORS: THUR 11TH 9-10:15AM
-
- CKW STAFF FORUM - WED 24 SEPT

Reflection

I reflect back on another big week at CKW and my pride of being part of this team. We are a directorate that really does achieve big things. We are managing significant community demand and growth as you all continue to achieve great things and care about our community. I really do feel positive about our future and how we will continue to grow to meet our community needs, so I encourage you all to lean in to work to meet our vision of:

1. Providing safe and quality patient care
2. Being trusted by our community
3. Being a great place to work.

I also want to acknowledge some of the community issues going on around us with protests and deaths of police at work. I know that these situations will be upsetting, disconcerting and in some cases, potentially traumatising to some of our team members. I ask you to look after yourselves and your colleagues, lead with kindness, say hello (and check in with others) and treat people as if they are visitors in your own home. These community events do not reflect our views here at CKW and we want our staff, patients and community to know they are safe here. My thoughts are with anyone directly affected by these events and I ask you all to be aware of the impacts that these events can have more broadly.

Quote of the day

"To be successful is to be helpful, caring and constructive to make everything and everyone you touch a little bit better."

Norman Vincent Peale



Got a question or suggestion for the CKW Executive Director?

EMAIL ASK KARLENE



Kind Regards

Karlene Willcocks
Executive Director,
Caboolture, Kilcoy and Woodford

Metro North Health



We uphold our commitment to health equity through our Values in Action
Respect | Integrity | Compassion | High Performance | Teamwork



Metro North Health acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the Land upon which we live, work and walk, and pay our respects to Elders both past and present.

Metro North Health's vision

Creating healthier futures together—where
innovation and research meets compassionate
care and community voices shape our services.



**Queensland
Government**

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