

Metro North Health

Message from the

ED Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health

Adj.Prof. Sherry Holzapfel



Adj. Prof. Sherry Holzapfel

March 2026

***Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people should be aware that this message contains the name of a deceased person. ***

Dear colleagues,

I would like to take a moment to acknowledge the recent passing of respected Turrbal Elder and Songwoman, Aunty Maroochy Barambah. Many of you joined in honouring her at a moving funeral service late last month, held against the backdrop of the mountains - a setting that reflected her deep connection to community and Country.

I understand it was a beautiful tribute to her life, with her daughter's performance offering a powerful reminder of the cultural strength Aunty Maroochy shared so generously throughout her lifetime. The strong turnout from Metro North staff spoke to the profound respect she held across our organisation.

As we remember her, we continue to carry forward her guidance, wisdom and legacy in the work we do each day.

As we move further into 2026, our Health Equity priorities are focused on early intervention and the wellbeing of children and young people. We know that lifelong health begins early through culturally led, coordinated and community-informed care. Strengthening support for families and ensuring young people have a voice in shaping the services that impact them is central to building stronger futures for our communities.

This month, we will host our first Health Equity Community Consultation of the year, in partnership with Children's Health Queensland. This is an important milestone, bringing our two Hospital and Health Services together to hear directly from community members about their experiences and priorities.

By collaborating in this way, we are taking meaningful steps toward a more streamlined, integrated system approach - strengthening our ability to deliver coordinated, culturally safe care for the children, young people and families who depend on our services.

The past few weeks have also been a valuable time for connection across our workforce. We welcomed the next generation of health professionals at the First Nations Cadetship Welcome Day, came together for our first Better Together Staff Gathering of the year at the Kallangur Community Hall on 4 March, and I had the opportunity to host my first Yarns with Sherry session at Caboolture Hospital. We also recognised National Employee Appreciation Day on 6 March, a moment to acknowledge the dedication and commitment shown across our teams every day.

I would also like to extend a warm welcome to all the new staff who have joined our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workforce. I look forward to working alongside you as we continue to strengthen this important space for our people.

To each of you, thank you. The cultural knowledge, care and advocacy you bring into our services every day makes a difference. Please continue

Stay Deadly, Sherry



Better Together Grapevine

Monthly Celebration Milestones

- 3 Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Enrolled Nurses progressing through Urapun Clinical School Program.
- 12 cadets shaping their careers through the First Nations Cadetship Program.
- 49 Social and Emotional Wellbeing visits across Metro North sites this year.

The impact might not always be loud, but it is powerful.

As we continue to strengthen the ways we recognise and celebrate our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workforce, we invite you to complete the survey below. Your feedback will help shape how staff and services are celebrated and acknowledged.

Staff Recognition Survey

EOI's are now open for Pathways to a PhD: Doing Research for Mob program

When

8 - 10 June 2026

Where

UQ Poche Centre
Toowong, QLD

Details

- All expenses paid
- Three-day program

Are you an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander person interested in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health research but unsure how to begin a PhD journey?

Our fully funded three-day Pathways Program will show you exactly what's involved, what support exists, and how to take your next step.

This program is designed to make the PhD pathway clear, culturally safe, and achievable.

Submit EOI





Sisters continue their health careers at Metro North Health

Metro North Health recently welcomed the next generation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health professionals at the First Nations Cadetship Welcome Day at The Prince Charles Hospital. The event marked an important milestone as cadets begin placements across our facilities, connecting with leaders, mentors and cultural support teams as they step into clinical environments.

Among those welcomed were Ngemba sisters Maddison and Taytum Wiggs, both in their second year at Australian Catholic University. Maddison is completing her Physiotherapy cadetship at Caboolture Hospital, while Taytum is undertaking her Midwifery cadetship at Redcliffe Hospital. Beginning their cadetship journey together has made the experience even more meaningful, allowing them to support one another as they navigate study and early career pathways.

Their journey into healthcare began with Metro North Health's Deadly Start traineeship while still at school, an experience that helped shape their decision to pursue careers in health. Their pathway is already inspiring others in their family, with their younger sister now interested in completing the Deadly Start traineeship and following a similar path into healthcare.



National Employee Appreciation Day

Today we celebrate our staff.

Thank you for your dedication, creativity, teamwork, and the passion you bring to everything you do. Your contributions make a real difference, and we're grateful for all that you do.

Take a moment to reflect on the impact you've made!

Better Together Staff Gathering - Celebrating Our Staff:

The recent Better Together staff gathering brought Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff together for a day of connection, reflection and shared learning. It was a valuable opportunity for staff from across Metro North Health to come together, yarn and strengthen relationships across services.

A highlight of the day was hearing from Aunty Phillipa and Uncle Russell, who shared powerful reflections on their experiences navigating racism and barriers within the healthcare system — both as a consumer and as a staff member. Their honesty and wisdom grounded the day and reminded us why the work we do to create culturally safe services matters so much.

We also heard updates and presentations from several teams across the service, celebrated the work happening in our spaces, and shared plenty of laughs during trivia. The day was expertly hosted by Lloyd, who kept the energy high as MC for the day. The gathering also included dedicated women's and men's yarning circles, where staff began planning this year's yarning group outings and opportunities to stay connected throughout the year.

Held around National Employee Appreciation Day, the gathering was a fitting reminder of the strength, leadership and care our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workforce brings to Metro North every day.



Accurate Indigenous Identification Training

Complete the face-to-face or online training and learn how to correctly and safely identify Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander consumers when presenting to our health care service.

Receive the tools to give you the confidence and knowledge to ask the question ***“Are you of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander origin?”*** and ensure services can provide clinically capable, culturally safe, and responsive care.

Now a mandatory requirement for all staff.

**MANDATORY
TRAINING
NOW
AVAILABLE**

How to register [Search](#) **‘Indigenous Identification’**  [on TMS](#)



Staff Profile - Deon Bird

Which community, Island or Country are you from?

I'm a proud Wakka Wakka man raised in Wondai in the South Burnett, with family connections extending to Nguburinji in the Gulf region and Wakaya in the Camowéal area. Culture and community have always been a strong foundation in my life.

What is your current role?

I am the Social and Emotional Wellbeing (SEWB) Officer at Metro North Health, working across sites to support our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workforce.

Why are you passionate about this work?

I'm particularly passionate about mental health, especially men's mental health. With more than 20 years' experience across education, health and employment, I've seen how important early support and strong relationships are. Creating safe spaces for honest conversations and ensuring our mob feel supported and culturally safe in the workplace is what motivates me.

Since starting in December 2025, just before Christmas, Deon has been making his way around sites, meeting staff and building connections. If you see him, stop for a yarn.

Social and Emotional Wellbeing

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health

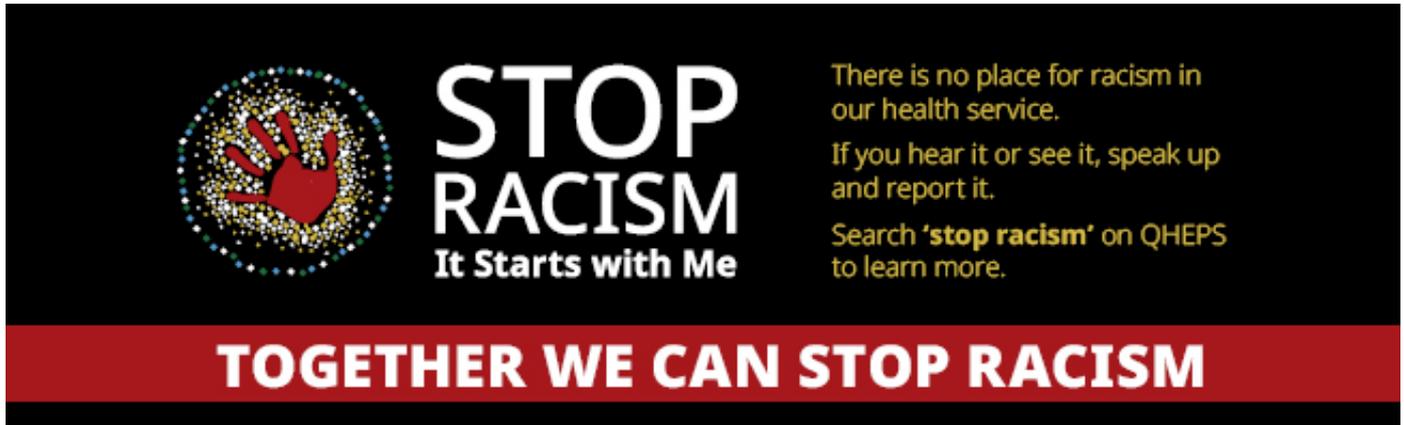


March 2026 Site Visits

Facility	March Dates	Time
The Prince Charles Hospital	12/03/26	1:00pm – 2:30pm
	27/03/26	10:00am – 11:30am
STARS	10/03/26	11:30am – 12:30pm
	23/03/26	2:30pm – 3:30pm
Royal Brisbane and Women's Hospital	10/03/26	9:00am – 11:30am
	23/03/26	1:00pm – 2:30pm
Kallangur Satellite Health Centre (Kalangoor)	11/03/26	10:30am – 11:30am
	25/03/26	9:30am – 10:30am
Bribie Island Satellite Health Centre (Yarun)	05/03/26	2:30pm – 3:30pm
	19/03/26	2:30pm – 3:30pm
	31/03/26	9:00am – 10:00am
Caboolture Hospital	05/03/26	11:00 am – 1:00pm
	19/03/26	11:00am – 1:00pm
	31/03/26	1:30pm – 3:30pm
Caboolture Satellite Health Centre (Kabul)	05/03/26	9:00am – 10:30am
	19/03/26	9:00am – 10:30am
	31/03/26	11:00am – 12:30pm
Redcliffe Hospital	03/03/26	9:00am – 10:30am
	17/03/26	1:30pm – 3:00pm
	30/03/26	11:00am – 12:30pm
Community and Oral Health (Brighton 19th Avenue)	03/03/26	11:00am – 12:30pm
	17/03/26	11:30am – 12:30pm
	30/03/26	1:30pm – 2:30pm
BIALA – City Community Health Centre	09/03/26	10:30am – 11:30am
	23/03/26	9:30am – 10:30am
Green Square	09/03/26	12:30pm – 1:30pm
	23/03/26	11:00am – 12:00pm

Nundah Community Health Centre	06/03/26	9:00am – 10:00am
	20/03/26	9:30am – 10:30am
Aspley Community Health Centre	03/03/26	2:00pm – 3:00pm
	17/03/26	10:00am – 11:00am

If you would like to make an appointment at one of the upcoming site visits, please email ATSILT_Wellness_Referrals@health.qld.gov.au.



The graphic features a circular logo on the left with a red handprint in the center, surrounded by a ring of colorful dots. To the right of the logo, the text reads "STOP RACISM It Starts with Me" in large, bold, white letters. Further right, in yellow text, it says "There is no place for racism in our health service. If you hear it or see it, speak up and report it. Search 'stop racism' on QHEPS to learn more." At the bottom, a red banner contains the white text "TOGETHER WE CAN STOP RACISM".

Anti-Racism Ambassador spotlight!

Meet Elizabeth!

Program Support Officer and Anti-Racism Ambassador at Metro North Health.

Elizabeth is a proud Quandamooka woman of Minjerribah, with family ties to the Noonuccal people and Irish heritage. She is a fifth-generation descendant of Junobin Gonzales, an apical Ancestor of the Noonuccal people, with her Aboriginal lineage tracing through the Enoch and Iselin family lines, and her Irish heritage through the Ryan family clans of southern Ireland.

Her story is grounded in strong family, culture and creativity. Her love of art began at a young age, inspired by her Uncle Ronnie, the first Aboriginal man to graduate from the Queensland College of Art, who encouraged her to see the value in her voice and perspective.

For Elizabeth, becoming an Anti-Racism Ambassador is about honouring those who came before her and helping to create change for those who come next.

“I owe it to my ancestors to do whatever I can, because they did so much for me to be where I am today. It’s my duty to them.”



BEYOND DIVERSITY WORKSHOP

The **BEYOND DIVERSITY** WORKSHOP is a powerful, personally transforming, two day staff workshop that helps participants understand the impact of race on their lives, their work, and the community they serve.

All staff are invited to attend!

How to register
- Search '**BEYOND DIVERSITY WORKSHOP**'
on TMS.

For more information, please call 3170 4467 or email: ATSILT_CapacityBuilding@health.qld.gov.au



Metro North
Health



Queensland
Government

Staff Shout Out - Will Muckan



A big shout-out to Will, our Cultural Capability Officer at Redcliffe Hospital.

Since starting last year, Will has quickly become a strong and trusted presence across the facility. With experience spanning DATSIP, Rio Tinto and Virgin Australia, he brings a broad perspective to his role, but it's his genuine care for community that really stands out.

Will is well connected across the hospital, always warm, approachable and ready for a yarn. You can hear the passion in his voice when he talks about strengthening cultural capability and supporting community.

“Will leads with heart. The way he speaks about community and cultural capability shows how deeply he cares, and that makes a real difference across the hospital.”

Thank you, Will, for the energy, warmth and leadership you bring to the role, it doesn't go unnoticed.

Jobs for Mob!

Metro North Health have multiple positions available for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to apply. For a list of current positions please see below:

Advertised position	Job link
Senior Workforce Development Officer, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Professions (Identified)	Senior Workforce Development Officer, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Professions (Identified) Brisbane Inner City, Flexible Queensland Health Careers
Workforce Development Officer, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Professions (Identified)	Workforce Development Officer, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Professions (Identified) Brisbane Inner City, Flexible Queensland Health Careers
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Senior Health Worker (Identified)	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Senior Health Worker (Identified) Brisbane—North Queensland Health Careers
Psychologist or Social Worker or Occupational Therapist - Senior (Identified)	Psychologist or Social Worker or Occupational Therapist - Senior (Identified) Brisbane—North Queensland Health Careers
Enrolled Nurse (Identified)	Enrolled Nurse (Identified) Brisbane—North Queensland Health Careers
Senior MH and Social & Emotional Wellbeing Clinician	Job search Employment and jobs Queensland Government
Community Engagement Officer	Community Engagement Officer Brisbane—North Queensland Health Careers

We need Identified mentors to support our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workforce



Mentoring is about nurturing and empowering others and creating meaningful connections that benefit not just the mentee, but also the mentor.

With the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Leadership Program kicking off soon, participants will be looking for a mentor.

Support our emerging leaders. Sign up today!




SEE ME. HEAR ME. RESPECT ME.

IMPROVING HEALTHCARE FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITY



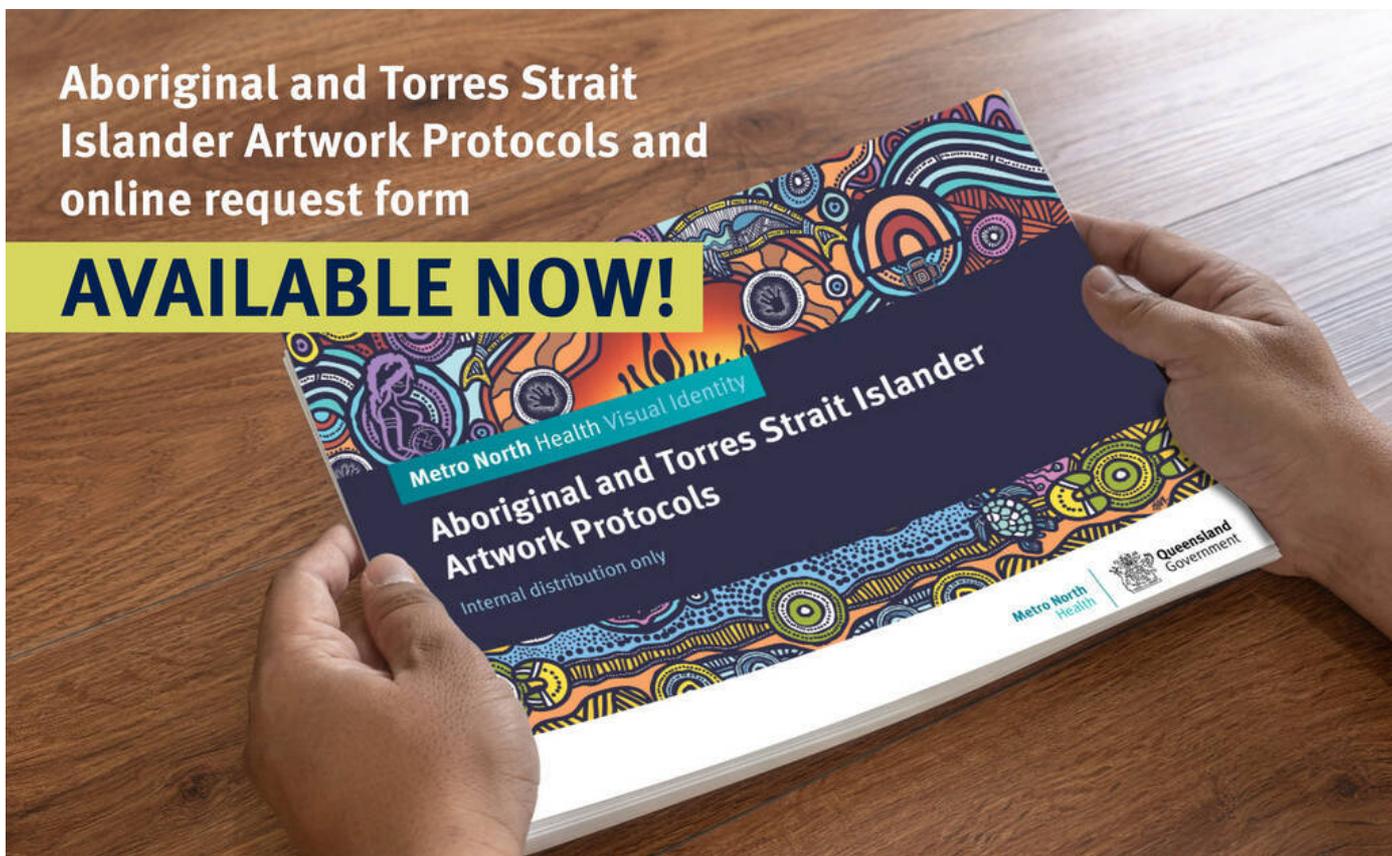


Metro North Disability Resources for Staff

Metro North Health values people of all abilities and their right for equitable access to quality health services. Committed to recognising and respecting the vital contribution of people with disability as both consumers and part of the Metro North Health workforce, Metro Norths goal is to create a diverse and

inclusive workplace that provides equal opportunities and supports and harnesses the unique talents and perspectives of employees with disabilities.

[View staff resources online](#)



[Protocols](#)

[Artwork Request Form](#)

Better Together Health Van now available for bookings!

We are now accepting bookings from Metro North Health services keen to utilise the Better Together Health Van for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities within the Metro North Health catchment area through:

- **Improved access**
- **Opportunistic screening measures**
- **Health promotion**
- **Engagement activities**

The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Leadership Team are available to assist you by connecting your service with the local community.



If you would like to book the BTHV for an upcoming event, please contact the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Leadership Team

Metro North
Health



Queensland
Government

[Book Here](#)



Better Together - Our Health, Our Way



The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Leadership Team (A&TSILT) acknowledges the Traditional Owners of the land on which our services are located, the Jinibara, Kabi Kabi, Turrbal and Yagara peoples, and pays respects to Elders both past and present.

Produced by the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Leadership Team,
Metro North Health

Metro North
Health



Queensland
Government