

Metro North Health

RESEARCH STRATEGY

2023–2027

TOGETHER WE DELIVER EXCEPTIONAL HEALTH OUTCOMES
THROUGH GLOBALLY RECOGNISED DISCOVERY AND TRANSLATION

Metro North
Health



Queensland
Government

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WELCOME



METRO NORTH HEALTH BOARD CHAIR AND CHIEF EXECUTIVE

Metro North Health provides vital healthcare services to over a million people in our local area as well as specialist services for the whole of Queensland. Cutting edge care requires a strong and supported research community to develop new treatments, and tools for early diagnosis and prevention of advanced disease.

Metro North Health has a thriving research culture, with thousands of staff engaged in research and quality improvement activities. Our research community includes people from all clinical fields, supported by technicians, scientists and administration. They are at all levels from people taking their first steps into research to those with well earned international reputations.

For every ‘overnight’ breakthrough, there are years, sometimes decades, of work to find solutions for complex problems. For many clinicians, research is a labour of love. Despite thousands of years of science and healthcare, the human body is in many ways still a mystery. It takes passion, commitment, and perseverance to seek out answers to complicated human health challenges day after day, year after year.

While the pursuit of knowledge may be its own reward, the true value of research is in better patient outcomes. We are committed to increasing the number of patients engaged in research across Metro North, to providing access to clinical trials and novel treatments.

The challenges of research aren’t only about cracking the mystery. Access to adequate funding, dedicated training, appropriate space, and supportive organisational systems are essential.

Since our first Research Strategy in 2017, we have seen a dedicated focus on supporting researchers through funding and development programs, training, and reward and recognition. One of the major achievements of the Research Strategy is implementing a rapid process for human research ethics approvals, allowing researchers to get to work faster and ultimately deliver results.

Research is not a solo pursuit. Discovery, innovation, and implementation is a team effort. We are proud of the extensive academic and industry partnerships Metro North researchers have built and continue to develop with universities, world-leading institutions and hospitals around the country and the world.

The Metro North Research Strategy acknowledges the vital role that researchers, and those who support and enable them, play in advancing healthcare and improving outcomes for Queensland and people around the world.

Jim McGowan AM

Board Chair, Metro North Health

Adjunct Assoc. Prof. Jackie Hanson

Chief Executive, Metro North Health



METRO NORTH HEALTH EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RESEARCH

Our achievements over the last five years reaffirm Metro North's resolve to forge a future where research is a core function of the health service, as much a part of delivering clinical services as the employment of excellent clinicians and the provision of operating theatres, beds, medicines and clinical support systems.

The achievements realised since the release of the Metro North Research Strategy 2017-2022 confirm Metro North's view of itself as a highly active participant and partner in healthcare innovation, rather than simply a consumer of cutting-edge products and services developed by others. The depth of this understanding and commitment to some extent sets Metro North apart. While for many of us this direction feels right and self-evident, it is worth taking a step back to revisit our 'Why?'.

There are undoubtedly many and varied personal reasons for undertaking health research and becoming a clinician researcher. For many it is the excitement of discovery, the ability to help people even outside one's own clinic or health service through publication, dissemination and implementation, or the ability for research questions to reframe and address seemingly intractable clinical problems. Can't find the answer in a textbook or journal? Find your own answers by constructing a research question!

However, a very substantial evidence base confirms that health services which are research active deliver better outcomes across all domains compared to those which are not. Patients attending research active health services receive higher quality care, experience lower mortality and report a better experience.

Importantly these benefits extend to all patients, regardless of whether they are research participants, and occur in all health care settings which are research active, regardless of size or case-mix. Research-rich health services are also better for staff, who are more likely to be satisfied, to join, and to stay.

Research will also help us address the challenges we see as we turn to the future. Efficiency and productivity gains are essential if we are to deliver the high-quality care that our communities deserve in the face of ever-mounting financial constraints. Research, or 'R&D' as it is termed in commercial settings, has helped deliver tremendous productivity gains across almost all industries, with healthcare arguably lagging behind.

Our Mission remains to deliver exceptional health outcomes through globally recognised discovery and translation, because the evidence very clearly tells us that a research rich health service environment will ensure that Metro North patients receive high quality, timely and cost-effective care. The 2023-2027 Metro North Research Strategy will ensure we realise this mission.

Professor Daniel Chambers

Metro North Executive Director Research

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

OUR VISION

Excellent healthcare, working together, strong and healthy communities.

OUR PURPOSE

Together with our community and partners, deliver services informed by research and innovation to improve the health outcomes of our community.

OUR VALUES

Our values and behaviours will hold us to account to our community and to ourselves.



Respect



Teamwork



Compassion



High performance



Integrity

OUR MISSION

Deliver exceptional health outcomes through globally recognised discovery and translation.

OUR ENABLERS

Our enablers provide a framework to deliver globally recognised excellence in research discovery and knowledge translation.



PATIENTS



PEOPLE



SYSTEMS



INFRASTRUCTURE



PARTNERS

OUR THEMES

Our themes will strategically position Metro North to maintain and build our research excellence, increase innovation and translation of our research outcomes and address emerging research challenges.



Career pathways



Clinical trials



Health equity



Precision medicine



Knowledge translation and commercialisation

THEMES



Career pathways

Retain, train and attract a world class research active workforce



Clinical trials

Access to cutting edge diagnostics, procedures, therapeutics and health services



Health equity

Research and innovation as the driver of improved health outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people



Precision medicine

Integrated digital platforms for seamless, personalised, efficient and high quality care



Knowledge translation and commercialisation

A supportive environment for the best ideas and rapid and effective implementation of new knowledge

ENABLERS



PATIENTS

We will partner with research participants, patients, consumers and communities to drive person-centred research priority setting, meaningful consumer engagement and co-design practices embedded in research systems to improve the relevance, quality and impact of our research.



PEOPLE

We will embed integrated research career pathways across Metro North that promote professional development and career progression, enabling us to retain and leverage the expertise of our highly skilled research workforce and recruit additional experienced staff with a passion for research.



SYSTEMS

We will develop integrated systems that are responsive to technological advances and use digital technologies to reimagine the cultural, organisational and operational research ecosystem in Metro North. Through digital transformation and the smart integration of digital technologies we will support innovation and rapid translation of research into practice.



INFRASTRUCTURE

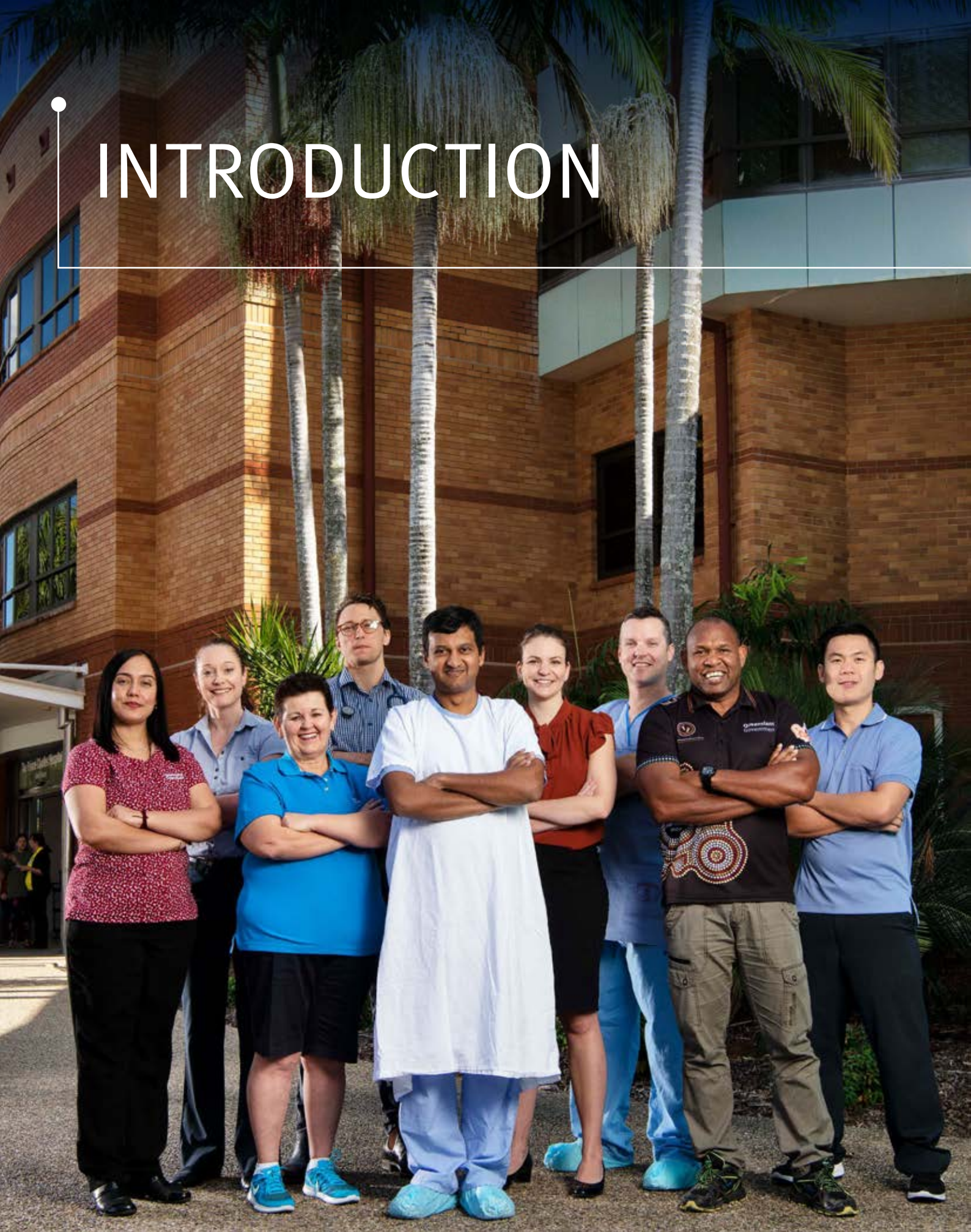
We will foster a seamless ecosystem of research infrastructure facilities and services made easily accessible through digital transformation and direct linkages between patient care and research.



PARTNERS

We will foster partnerships across Metro North and the broader healthcare and research sector, including state and federal governments, universities and other research organisations, industry and The Common Good and RBWH Foundations, with our researchers, clinicians, and the patients, research participants and consumers who are central to all that we do.

INTRODUCTION



Through the inaugural Metro North Research Strategy 2017-2022 we aimed to build a resilient research culture driven by person-centred research, supported and developed by highly skilled and engaged researchers, underpinned by systems that are easily navigated and demonstrate our research impact, that leverages our advanced infrastructure and services, and builds strong research partnerships.

Metro North Research was established as a clinical stream in 2016 to set a vision and strategic direction for research in Metro North. The Metro North Research Strategy was developed in consultation with researchers, research administrators and managers, hospital management and executives, academic partners and our patients. The Metro North Research Strategy 2017-2022 outlined our strategic intent to deliver globally recognised discovery and translation and exceptional health outcomes through the enablers - patients, people, partners, systems and infrastructure. It set strategic themes aimed at achieving excellence in diagnostics, therapeutics and health services research in order to focus priorities across the entire research continuum.

The strategy has delivered many tangible and highly visible benefits for our researchers, patients and Metro North Hospital and Health Service. The annual Metro North Research Excellence Awards and the Metro North Snapshot of Research continue to publicly acknowledge and celebrate our researchers and their excellent research and the Metro North Research Grants program has been a cornerstone of the research strategy.

The Metro North Clinician Research Fellowships have cemented Metro North's commitment to our early career and emerging clinician researchers and the inaugural Metro North Research Coordinator Grants demonstrated our commitment to our highly skilled research coordinator workforce, who enable high quality research and provide excellence in clinical trials management. The Metro North Collaborative Research Grants proudly recognises the value of collaboration and have actively enabled the development of our early career researcher workforce to undertake research alongside our key academic partners.

As one of Metro North's key strategic documents setting direction and priorities for the integration of research within our health service, the Metro North Research Strategy 2023-2027 represents an opportunity to leverage our progress and build upon our key achievements so far to set a collective vision for research excellence in Metro North and identify our strategic priorities planned for the years ahead.



PURPOSE



The Metro North Research Strategy 2023–2027 sets the strategic direction and vision for Metro North Research over the next five years. Setting a health service wide strategy for achieving research excellence provides the opportunity to set a collective vision for the future and equips us with the common language and framework to achieve our strategic priorities with our patients, people and partners.

This strategy is a key policy document that provides direction within Metro North on actions that will enable our researchers to maintain excellence, drive innovation and address emerging clinical challenges through research. It further provides a clear strategic foundation for more effective engagement with our partners and consumers. It continues the important trajectory of the previous Metro North Research Strategy 2017-2022 and reflects on the substantial contributions of Metro North research and our researchers to the broader health and medical research ecosystem.

The enablers set as a part of the 2017-2022 Metro North Research Strategy have driven operational and cultural change in Metro North across the last five years by identifying the key priorities needed to leverage opportunities available to us and bring about system wide enhancements. In order to reflect the current strategic context and ensure the enablers continue to provide a strong foundation for research in Metro North there is a need to update the themes to ensure our priorities continue to meet the evolving needs of research. It is equally important that Metro North understand our projected future health needs and the research required to respond to these.

The strategy themes are a launching point to discuss the priorities and actions needed to address these key research challenges and opportunities. The enablers identify the key priorities needed to leverage available opportunities and bring about system wide enhancements. Underpinning these strategic priorities are a set of actions or activities designed to achieve this desired end state.

In line with the Metro North purpose to "deliver services informed by research and innovation to improve the health outcomes of our community", the vision to deliver exceptional health outcomes through globally recognised discovery and translation remains as important as ever. By embracing precision medicine, cutting edge clinical trials and knowledge translation we can ensure research delivers exceptional health outcomes for our patients, health equity for our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community and integrated career pathways for our people.

OUR MISSION TO DELIVER
EXCEPTIONAL HEALTH OUTCOMES
THROUGH GLOBALLY RECOGNISED
DISCOVERY AND TRANSLATION
RESEARCH REMAINS AS
IMPORTANT AS EVER.



STRATEGIC CONTEXT



The Metro North Research Strategy 2023-2027 is one of Metro North's key documents setting direction and priorities to unite our efforts by providing a framework for the integration of research enablers and themes across our health service to deliver research excellence. It forms an important component of our local and state strategic priorities and recognises the interconnectedness and complexity of the health service strategic planning framework and the broader health and medical research sector.

Government priorities



Advancing Health 2026



System Outlook 2026

My health, Queensland's future: [Advancing Health 2026](#) sets the vision for Queensland's health system – By 2026 Queenslanders will be among the healthiest people in the world. The key directions are: Promoting wellbeing; Delivering healthcare; Connecting healthcare and Pursuing innovation. [Queensland Health's System Outlook to 2026](#) provides HHSs with direction to deliver on this vision by informing health service planning, funding and delivery by the Department of Health and Hospital and Health Services.

Hospital and health service strategic plan



The [Metro North Strategic Plan 2020-2024](#) sets the strategic direction for the health service and aligns to the priorities of the Queensland Government. The four objectives in the plan are: To always put people first; to improve health equity, access, quality, safety and health outcomes, to deliver value-based health services through a culture of research, education, learning and innovation and to be accountable for delivery of sustainable services, high performance and excellent patient outcomes. The strategic plan directs the strategy development and planning undertaken across Metro North Health.

Strategies



Health services



Safety and quality



Research



Clinical engagement



Consumer engagement



Digital Metro North Strategy

There are six headline strategies for Metro North Health focussing on key functions of Metro North Health. The strategies confirm the strategic directions and objectives of the relevant area and outlines the priority strategies required to achieve the desired outcomes. The Health Service Strategy focuses on health service delivery and links with the other Metro North Health strategies.



Plans

A range of Metro North Health plans provide further detail outlining the intended actions aimed at achieving the Metro North Health directions within a specified timeframe. The plans set out what needs to be done, when, how and by whom. Metro North Health plans include clinical service plans that articulate the actions required to implement the Health Service Strategy and enabling plans, for example, assets, workforce and ICT.

GOVERNMENT PRIORITIES

Health services across Australia are under more pressure than ever to meet health service demand within a constrained fiscal environment. Within Queensland, our Government is driving an agenda of improved performance and value based healthcare, which coupled with ongoing technological advances and digital transformation drives home the importance of a strategic approach to research to secure this future.

My health, Queensland's future: Advancing health 2026

The Strategy guides Queensland Government investment into health over the longer term and reorients our health system to be flexible and innovative in taking advantage of new technology, while improving health outcomes for the population at large. It outlines a vision that by 2026 Queenslanders will be among the healthiest people in the world by promoting wellbeing, delivering healthcare, connecting healthcare and pursuing innovation.

Queensland Advancing Health Research 2026: Healthier Queenslanders through research-informed healthcare

The Strategy guides Queensland Health's research investment decisions and actions to achieve the vision of healthier Queenslanders through research informed healthcare.

Making Tracks Together, Queensland's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders Health Equity Framework

Queensland Health and the Queensland Aboriginal and Islander Health Council (QAIHC) are placing First Nations peoples and voices at the centre of healthcare service design and delivery through Making Tracks Together - Queensland's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Equity Framework.

Amendments to the Hospital and Health Boards Act 2011 and the Hospital and Health Boards Regulation 2012 provide this pathway for cultural change and consists of five priority areas for inclusion in Hospital and Health Services health equity strategies:

- Actively eliminate racial discrimination and institutional racism within the service.
- Increasing access to healthcare services.
- Delivering sustainable, culturally safe and responsive healthcare services.
- Influencing the social, cultural and economic determinants of health.
- Working with First Nations peoples, communities and organisations to design, deliver, monitor and review health services.

Department of Health Strategic Plan 2021-2026 (2022 update)

The Strategic Plan envisions a world class health system for all Queenslanders by developing innovative approaches to administering public health legislation in response to changing external environments and risks and focusing on delivery of digital innovation, real-time data analytics and connected systems to address complex public health challenges.

It aims for interconnected system governance and partnerships with primary care, which drive co-designed models of care and care pathways to support Hospitals and Health Services, improving information access, connectivity and utilisation including through streamlined data governance arrangements. It prioritises strategic partnerships that deliver health priorities and system wide planning for alternative models of care and aims to engage HHS and partners to co-design system wide strategy and policy.

METRO NORTH HEALTH

The Metro North Strategic Plan 2020-2024 (2021) sets the strategic direction for the health service and aligns to the priorities of the Queensland Government. It sets a vision for excellent healthcare, working together, strong and healthy communities, and outlines our purpose that together with our community and partners we will deliver services informed by research and innovation to improve the health outcomes of our community.

The Metro North Strategic Plan 2020-2024 acknowledges the importance of research as a core objective of the plan. The Metro North Research Strategy directly supports the achievement of the plan's four key objectives:

- To always put people first
- To improve health equity, access, quality, safety and health outcomes
- To deliver value-based health services through a culture of research, education, learning and innovation
- To be accountable for delivery of sustainable services, high performance and excellent patient outcomes.

The Metro North outlook document MN32 *NextCare* outlines the vision and roadmap for the provision and delivery of world class healthcare by leveraging research, new technology and partnership opportunities to expand and drive healthcare into the future. It recognises the need to incorporate research throughout its key focus areas – clinical models, workforce, infrastructure and research innovation – to achieve its vision that innovative models of care, supported by cutting-edge technology and ground-breaking research will enable our staff to deliver high quality care and our health service to function with optimum efficiency. The Metro North Research Strategy has been updated to ensure that it continues to align with the refreshed MN32 vision that positions Metro North Health as a leading health service provider on the global stage.

Metro North's Research Strategy is aligned to, and supports, the four key focus areas of the Metro North Health Service Strategy 2021-2026:

- Delivering person-centred, connected and integrated care
- Effective delivery of healthcare to address growing population health needs of the community
- Living healthy and well
- Responsive healthcare to meet the high health needs of identified groups.

Metro North is the largest public provider of health services in Australia, and is Queensland's largest health service, operating acute facilities at the Royal Brisbane and Women's Hospital (RBWH), The Prince Charles Hospital (TPCH), Redcliffe Hospital, Caboolture Hospital, and Kilcoy Hospital, as well as operating the Surgical, Treatment and Rehabilitation Service (STARS), Woodford Corrections Health, and Community and Oral Health.



RESEARCH STRATEGY

ENABLERS

Through the integration of our enablers and themes we aim to build a resilient research culture and create an environment where research is deeply embedded within our health service.

We will partner with consumers to drive person-centred research priority setting and improve the relevance, quality and impact of our research.

We will attract, retain, support and invest in a world-class workforce engaged with research in order to translate discoveries into improved treatments and services that tackle our most complex health challenges.

This will require research information, management and communication systems that are integrated, easily navigated, allow us to readily identify priorities, adapt and innovate, and capture metrics to demonstrate research impact.

This will require investment and sustainable management of facilities, equipment, resources and information and communication technology infrastructure necessary to perform research embedded as core business.

We will need to strategically leverage partnerships across Metro North, Queensland Health, government, primary care, academia, industry, philanthropic and other non-government-organisations to achieve mutual benefit from our collective strengths.



PATIENTS



PEOPLE



SYSTEMS



INFRASTRUCTURE



PARTNERS

PATIENTS



We will partner with research participants, patients, consumers and communities to drive person-centred research priority setting, meaningful consumer engagement and co-design practices embedded in our research systems to improve the relevance, quality and impact of our research.

The Collaborating in Health Strategy 2022-2024 outlines Metro North's commitment to strengthening the collective voice of consumers and communities in healthcare innovation, research and improvement through inclusive engagement, involvement and partnerships with consumers and local communities. In order to achieve this, we must support our research workforce to engage consumers and community organisations in designing innovation and research.

Working collaboratively with consumers to design and deliver research can provide valuable insights that inform and drive priorities and advice on the acceptability of research questions and strategic directions. The evolving dynamics of healthcare delivery and research requires a person-centred focus through incorporation of patient outcomes and priorities. Person-centred partnerships and care will demand that clinical research outcomes are measured not only by clinical endpoints but by measures reported from patient experiences and outcomes.

The expectations of the community are becoming increasingly clear; a health system that provides more choice, control and transparency. Consumers want increased access to digital health services and information in a way that is secure, yet easy to navigate. Digital transformation presents us with an opportunity to improve the patient experience in research, for example through dynamic consent. Dynamic consent has the potential to increase research participant choice, autonomy in decision-making opportunities for ongoing engagement. Dynamic consent also provides an opportunity for people to understand their contribution to research and how it supports knowledge discovery for better health outcomes, an important aspect of precision healthcare and learning health systems.

The Metro North Health Equity Strategy 2022-2025 describes our commitment to drive health equity, eliminate institutional racism across the public health system and achieve life expectancy parity for Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples by 2031. The pathway for cultural change is mapped out across five priority areas, of which working with First Nations peoples, communities and organisations to design, deliver, monitor and review health services is central to ensuring that we deliver equity of access to high quality person-centred healthcare that is culturally responsive, empowers self care and choice, and is designed to improve health and wellbeing.



PEOPLE



We will embed integrated research career pathways across Metro North that promote professional development and career progression for our research workforce, enabling us to retain and leverage the expertise of our highly skilled research workforce and recruit additional experienced staff with a passion for research.

Building a strong and sustainable workforce that is capable and committed to research, innovation and evidence-based practice is more important than ever as the efficiency and effectiveness of healthcare models continue to be challenged by ever tightening economic and social pressures and constantly changing demographics, disease patterns, diagnostic and treatment modalities. This brings to the fore a need for research active health services that value the contribution and insights of research trained staff.

The seamless adoption of new clinical interventions, models of care and evidence-based improvements requires research to be embedded within a learning health system. Research and education are vital to the current and future wellbeing, effectiveness and sustainability of the health system, with clinician researchers acting as a link between educators, academia, the broader health sector and government. While clinician researchers have always played an important role in the health system, their importance was highlighted during the COVID-19 pandemic, where clinician researchers were at the front line of the health response, providing evidence-based advice to local, state and federal governments.

Clinician researchers are optimally placed to provide insights into clinical practice and research, efficiently implement evidence-based, best practice care for their patients, and address clinically relevant problems through research.

A strong clinician researcher workforce where health professionals are engaged simultaneously in patient care and research is vital to the translation of research into practice and maximising research impact.

Planning for the future of Queensland's health system must include a plan for the clinician researcher workforce that will drive innovation and deliver better healthcare into the future through integration of research training with clinical training. An integrated approach to career development across the health sector, universities, research institutes, specialist colleges, nursing and allied health professional governing bodies, philanthropic organisations and industry is required.

The demand for a digitally skilled research workforce is increasing alongside the growing focus on digital transformation in healthcare. The retention of a skilled workforce with technical expertise and digital research skills that deliver best practice research data and software management are becoming increasingly important as progressively complex instrumentation and exponentially growing datasets necessitate collaboration between researchers and well-trained technical experts to best utilise research infrastructure and interpret results.



SYSTEMS



We will develop integrated systems that are responsive to technological advances and use digital technologies to reimagine the cultural, organisational and operational research ecosystem in Metro North. Through digital transformation and the smart integration of digital technologies we will support innovation and rapid translation of research into practice.

The process of using digital technologies to create or modify business processes, culture, and consumer experiences to meet changing business and market requirements is the reimagining of research business in the digital age. Healthcare costs are growing at an unsustainable rate, prompting an intense search for efficiency. Translational, clinical and health services research and implementation have important roles to play in identifying opportunities and strategies to increase efficiency and ensure sustainability of the overall health system.

The health challenges we face today are complex and interrelated, requiring bold thinking in the discovery and application of new knowledge. As a part of Metro North's ongoing commitment to achieving research excellence and impact we must prioritise strategic communication that rapidly promotes research outcomes and enables knowledge translation. The strategic dissemination of research findings is imperative to building our collective understanding and knowledge, supporting evidence-based practice, celebrating research excellence and identifying the research questions of the future.

Healthcare is increasingly reliant on data-driven technologies and digital innovation to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of our health systems and services. As we strive towards an integrated digital environment across Metro North it is vital that we embrace digital transformation and emerging technologies. Alignment with the Metro North Health Digital Strategy will enable us to leverage innovation and digital transformation to improve research administrative processes alongside improvements in service delivery and outcomes for our patients.

The systems that support and enable research design, approval and management in Metro North exist within a complex legislative, policy and regulatory environment. We have a significant opportunity to leverage digital transformation to improve our policies, processes and systems that enable and support researchers to navigate this complexity.

As we strive to improve our research systems we must recognise that one singular approach provided by standardised methods and processes does not always account for the cultural needs of the whole population. In order to provide care that meets the physical, cultural and psychological needs of our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander patients we must consider the way we design and deliver our research in order to achieve health equity and finally close the health gap.

Discovery and innovation requires a highly qualified and diverse research-capable workforce whose professional skills enable them to adapt to the evolving health and medical research landscape. As we strive to strengthen the research capabilities of our work force, we must leverage the collective skills and expertise of our people and partners to provide research education and training that is contemporary and relevant. We must diversify our communication channels in order to provide consistent and timely information, support and advice.



INFRASTRUCTURE



We will foster a seamless ecosystem of research infrastructure facilities and services made easily accessible through digital transformation and direct linkages between patient care and research. Research infrastructure plays a vital role in the health and medical research ecosystem, supporting critical research discoveries across the research pipeline that drive innovation and improve health and social outcomes for our patients and the community.

Improving health outcomes through novel medical products, platforms, technologies and practices requires strategic oversight of investment in research infrastructure capacity. Investing in the next generation of technologies, networks, services and facilities required to advance health and medical research will position Metro North at the cutting edge of healthcare.

Metro North has, and will continue to, align health service planning, workforce development, infrastructure, resourcing and delivery of services to transform, optimise and grow the health system. In order to effectively deliver healthcare for the growing healthcare needs of the community, we require a system with capacity and capable staff to deliver evidence-based care with the infrastructure necessary to meet service needs. Integrated research infrastructure will enable Metro North to deliver excellence in health and medical research.

Research infrastructure can be physical, like a phase 1 trial centre, a supercomputer or a microscope, or virtual like a data collection or a software platform. This includes smart monitoring devices and diagnostics, human imaging technologies, personalised implants, high value therapeutics, cutting-edge pharmaceutical and non-pharmaceutical treatments, digitally integrated products and platforms, integrated health datasets and health interventions.

Increasingly, researchers expect a seamless ecosystem of facilities and services with easily accessible interfaces, no separation between physical instrumentation, digital tools and the necessary supporting skills and expertise. They expect opportunities for clinicians to engage with scientists, engineers and others to lead clinically relevant discoveries across the clinical and research spectrum.

Increased collaboration, both within and between different research areas and with industry will require facilities to be multipurpose and serve many disciplines and industries.

Metro North must leverage a collaborative approach to maximise the impact of research infrastructure investments. Co-investment brings diversity of perspectives, increases creativity and capacity across the system and helps to deliver return on investment. Infrastructure investment provides the foundation for growing the expertise, facilities and services to support researchers.

Technological developments continues to drive developments in clinical research, like gene sequencing and bioinformatics leading to the prominence, opportunities and challenges of whole genome sequencing as a clinical tool. Conventional medical specialities and techniques are likely to be irrevocably changed by technological developments. These developments must be underpinned by strategic infrastructure investments. Metro North must leverage the excellent research infrastructure available to drive clinical research that is at the forefront of medical science globally.

Exponential growth in data across the health and medical research sector will be a critical challenge over the coming years, highlighting the need for integration of computing and data infrastructure and the maintenance of a strong digital infrastructure ecosystem. An important driver for maintaining quality research output lies in the capacity to generate and analyse data, the digital skills of our researchers and the availability of computing resources, digital tools, ICT infrastructure, data governance frameworks and the expertise needed to make the best use of data.



PARTNERS



We will foster partnerships across Metro North and the broader healthcare and research sector, including state and federal governments, universities and other research organisations, industry, primary healthcare and The Common Good and RBWH Foundations, with our researchers, clinicians, and the patients, research participants and consumers who are central to all that we do.

Through research partnerships and collaboration Metro North has the opportunity to provide leadership and direction setting, particularly in new or emerging areas, strategic engagement in our areas of expertise, facilitate alignment with national priorities, and cost-effectiveness where research requires a financial scale and technical complexity that is beyond the individual reach of Metro North. Partnerships open up opportunities to reach beyond our own boundaries and conduct ground-breaking collaborative research.

Research is increasingly multidisciplinary as our researchers focus on investigating solutions to increasingly complex problems that are not easily solved by a single discipline. This requires linkages, interactions and collaboration within and across the health and medical research sector. Many times, research with the greatest impact is derived from collaboration across the science, technology, engineering and mathematics disciplines, alongside business, humanities, arts and the social sciences. Research in all disciplines is critical to achieving health outcomes, economic and social benefit and ensuring acceptance, uptake and adoption of research outcomes and new technologies. A future vision of a seamless research ecosystem for our researchers and patients will require an even greater level of collaboration.

Although improving, there are barriers which limit effective engagement and research translation within Metro North and with industry and our academic partners. Metro North must be more visible and accessible to industry, our partners and our community to ensure the mutual benefits from closer collaboration are further promoted. Successful research translation will require harmony across the legal, governance, business and commercialisation jurisdictions needed to achieve real impact. The business models around research management in Metro North will need to enable greater research impact and reach and recognise the importance of collaboration and partnership in achieving these aims.

The core principles that will drive successful research partnerships in Metro North are:

- EQUITY
- TRANSPARENCY
- SUSTAINABILITY
- CO-INVESTMENT

We have opportunity and responsibility across our organisation - Metro North facilities, services and professional disciplines – with Foundations, academic partners, universities, primary care and industry, to identify opportunity for equity of access to funding and research support through transparent application and award mechanisms. By embedding principles of sustainability and co-investment into research partnership opportunities we will create a research ecosystem that values research, and is more cost effective.

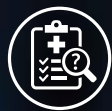


THEMES

The themes will guide the development, conduct and communication of research across Metro North. We will enable excellence in research through collaboration with our patients, people and partners, and strategically position ourselves to pursue and excel across five themes:



CAREER PATHWAYS



CLINICAL TRIALS



HEALTH EQUITY



PRECISION MEDICINE



KNOWLEDGE TRANSLATION
AND COMMERCIALISATION

By focusing on these themes Metro North will be strategically positioned to maintain and build our research excellence, increase innovation and translation of our research outcomes and address emerging research challenges.



CAREER PATHWAYS

Developing integrated research career pathways will allow us to retain, train and attract a world class research active workforce.

As Australia's largest public hospital and health service provider and leader in healthcare, research and clinical training and education, Metro North recognises that the foundation of any effective healthcare system is an engaged and productive, sustainable and agile workforce. As an organisation, Metro North values respect, integrity, compassion, high-performance, and teamwork – essential values for achieving excellence in research.

People development, leadership, talent management and succession planning are essential to addressing workforce challenges and maximising opportunities within Metro North. These considerations are no different for the research workforce. Front-line managers have been shown to have the biggest impact on employee's efficiency, productivity, job satisfaction and overall engagement. We must support development, retention and recruitment of leaders who deeply understand the value of research at all levels within the health service alongside a commitment to modelling the Metro North values.

We must invest in our current workforce to develop their capabilities to progress, learn, discover, teach, and translate new findings by embedding common components of successful international training and career pathway models for clinician researchers:

- **Mentoring** Establish long-term mentoring programs early in study and training
- **Organisational support** Implement supports to assist workplaces in supporting clinician researcher roles (research and clinical workplaces)
- **Central information point** Provide clear and centralised information on training programs and career pathway options
- **Research skill development** Establish research skills and research opportunities early in training
- **Advocacy** Advocate for clinician researchers within clinical and research workplace
- **Protected research time** Implement protected research time during training and throughout a research career.

As a health service we must provide opportunities for clinicians to develop and consolidate their research skills at any stage in their career. This will require collaboration across the health and academic sector to strive for consistency and equity of opportunity for our clinician researchers.

Clinical trials are essential to the high-quality healthcare we deliver in Metro North, as are the highly qualified and experienced clinical trials workforce who ensure excellence in all aspects of clinical trial management and activity. The clinical trials management ecosystem is complex and requires a breadth of knowledge and expertise that is not covered within base professional degrees. Recruitment and retention strategies that recognize the valuable contributions this workforce makes to clinical care and research must be integrated within professional workforce development structures.

Establishing integrated career pathways for this highly skilled workforce will address systemic inequities regarding professional development and career progression, provide a coordinated and consistent approach to recruitment and appointment practices, foster the development of streamlined efficiency and consistency in clinical trials management and governance, and position Metro North as a centre of excellence in clinical trials management.

WE MUST INVEST IN OUR CURRENT WORKFORCE TO DEVELOP THEIR CAPABILITIES TO PROGRESS, LEARN, DISCOVER, TEACH, AND TRANSLATE NEW FINDINGS BY EMBEDDING COMMON COMPONENTS OF SUCCESSFUL INTERNATIONAL TRAINING AND CAREER PATHWAY MODELS FOR CLINICIAN RESEARCHERS

Further, we must support our clinician researchers who are leading innovative designs and novel approaches to clinical trials that support effectiveness and fast-tracked translation of research into practice. These innovative trial design and analysis approaches, embedded qualitative research, health information technology (and associated data management, storage and governance), health economics and implementation science will enable us to deliver a more flexible, responsive and efficient health system by ensuring our patients and the clinicians who treat them not only have access to the latest medical advances, but are working together in partnership, are the innovators behind those advances.

WE MUST SUPPORT OUR CLINICIAN RESEARCHERS WHO ARE LEADING INNOVATIVE DESIGNS AND NOVEL APPROACHES TO CLINICAL TRIALS THAT SUPPORT EFFECTIVENESS AND FAST-TRACKED TRANSLATION OF RESEARCH INTO PRACTICE

The National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) found that clinician researcher careers were not well understood by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander clinicians due to a lack of clear information sources, limited knowledge of and connection to other clinician researchers, particularly Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander clinician researchers, and limited information about research and career opportunities and pathways.

Key barriers to practicing as a clinician researcher included challenges when conducting ethical research with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, participants' large and competing clinical and research workloads, and racist and discriminatory attitudes towards their research. In addition, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander clinician researchers faced additional and more complex compounding and intersectional barriers than non-indigenous clinician researchers, and females reported additional barriers compared to their male counterparts. It is important to have specific, tailored support and funding available for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander clinician researchers in recognition of the additional barriers they face, with support that is effective and culturally appropriate.





KEY PRIORITY

Retain, train and attract a world class research active workforce by investing in research career pathways that develop, acknowledge and celebrate our researchers.

Action	Work with Metro North professional disciplines, facilities and directorates, Queensland Health, academic partners, Foundations and professional colleges/training organisations to create an integrated research career support pathway that covers the pre-RHD, PhD, emerging, early and mid-career research stages, recognising the valuable contribution of research training to our health service.	
Outcomes	<p>Queensland Training for Research Active Clinicians (QTRAC)</p> <p>Increase our capacity to retain highly skilled clinician researchers by providing career support during and beyond a PhD</p> <p>Clinician researchers are able to continue clinical work during and post-PhD, thereby increasing the clinical relevance, utility and translation of their research.</p> <p>Integrated academic/research and clinical mentorship according to career stage and professional discipline</p> <p>Increased uptake of SARAS Scheme</p>	Enablers <ul style="list-style-type: none"> PEOPLE SYSTEMS PARTNERS

Figure 1 Queensland Training for Research Active Clinicians (QTRAC) Pathway

PROFESSIONAL STREAM	CAREER STAGE					
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Researchers Allied Health Medical Nursing and Midwifery	NOVICE	RESEARCH HIGHER DEGREE	EMERGING	EARLY CAREER	MID CAREER	ESTABLISHED
	Pre-RHD Scholarships	RHD Scholarships	Emerging Researcher Fellowships Up to 2 years post-RHD*	Early Career Fellowships Up to 5 years post-RHD*	Clinician Researcher Fellowships Up to 10 years post-RHD*	Conjoint Researcher Appointments Greater than 10 years post-RHD*
SUPPORTING BODIES QUEENSLAND HEALTH PHILANTHROPIC PARTNERS ACADEMIC PARTNERS PROFESSIONAL BODIES						

*or equivalent track record

Action	Establish a clinical trials workforce model that addresses the unique recruitment, appointment and professional development needs of clinical trials officers, coordinators and managers and provides acknowledgement and recognition of their essential contributions.	
Outcomes	<p>Clinical Trials Support Service</p> <p>Central repository of role descriptions for clinical trials workforce</p> <p>Streamlined recruitment and appointment processes</p> <p>Professional development, training and support pathways</p> <p>Metro North Research Excellence Awards support category criteria</p>	Enablers <ul style="list-style-type: none"> PEOPLE SYSTEMS PARTNERS

Action	Position Metro North as leaders in establishing high performing clinical departments with integrated clinical care, research, education and training by influencing the recruitment and selection, professional development and networking and training practices for senior leadership positions and executives in Metro North.	
Outcomes	<p>Selection Panels for senior leadership positions and executive appointments to include a research active member with experience and expertise in building research capability and capacity</p> <p>Metro North Researchers network published to assist selection panels</p> <p>Compendium of interview panel research questions</p> <p>Metro North Executive Leadership Program (ELP), Leadership Essentials, and #NextCare Health Conference promote the value of research within Metro North and the health sector, provide fundamental research training, and identify opportunities to support executives to undertake research higher degree training and best practice methods for obtaining a high functioning research active health service</p> <p>Education for managers to manage research programs and researchers</p>	Enablers <ul style="list-style-type: none"> PEOPLE SYSTEMS PARTNERS

Action	Work with our partners to enhance how we collectively leverage the skills and expertise of clinician researchers, reduce duplication of services and leverage our joint reputations to make the most of opportunities by establishing a partnership engagement framework for jointly funded positions in Metro North which sets best practice principles for conjoint arrangements and externally funded positions.	
Outcomes	<p>Partnership engagement framework for co-joint positions</p> <p>External Researchers Policy</p>	Enablers <ul style="list-style-type: none"> PEOPLE SYSTEMS PARTNERS

Action	Provide integrated training, education and support services for Metro North staff to develop data management and analytics capacity, including the provision of biostatistics services and support for database design and management using tools such as REDCap.	
Outcomes	<p>Research education framework</p> <p>Biostatistics Support Service</p> <p>Integrated data management and analytics education</p>	Enablers <ul style="list-style-type: none"> PEOPLE SYSTEMS PARTNERS

Strategic Alignment

MN32

Metro North Workforce Strategy

Metro North Allied Health Workforce Strategy

Metro North AH32

Nursing and Midwifery Research Framework, Office of Chief Nursing and Midwifery Officer

Advancing health service delivery through workforce: A strategy for Queensland 2017-2026

Clinical Trial Strategic Action Plan for increasing clinical trial activity 2022-2025, Queensland Health

National Clinical Trials Governance Framework

National Medical Workforce Strategy



CLINICAL TRIALS

Clinical trials will enable access to cutting edge diagnostics, procedures, therapeutics and clinical services for our patients and the community.

Clinical trials form an important component of the Australian healthcare system enabling the translation of biomedical advances to the bedside, ultimately improving treatment and patient outcomes and generating flow-on benefits to the community and our health system. Clinical trials are key to cementing new discoveries by bridging the gap between pure science and technology and patient care and outcomes. They are the source of new diagnostic procedures, new drugs, devices and vaccines, or the application of existing technology in novel ways to improve patient care and outcomes. Clinical trials provide robust evidence about the comparative effectiveness and cost-effectiveness of interventions, transforming healthcare and shaping decisions about health expenditure, which ultimately improves the health of the populations we serve.

Metro North has a very strong track record of conducting high quality clinical trials as part of local, national and international collaborative research projects. Increasingly, receiving clinical care as part of a clinical trial is standard practice. Metro North must prioritise patient awareness, engagement and centrality and embrace digital strategies to achieve efficiencies and enhanced participant recruitment.

The integration of the National Clinical Trials Governance Framework (NCTGF) by the Australian Commission for Safety and Quality in Health Care will add further assurance that all clinical trials are high quality, integrated into the provision of care, consumer focused and undertaken in a safe environment. Metro North must position itself to demonstrate integration of the framework into clinical practice by providing education and support for the investigators and clinical trials coordinators who will be required to support compliance and accreditation against this framework.

In order for Metro North to be on the cutting-edge of world-class healthcare and gain a national and global competitive advantage for attracting clinical trials, we must position ourselves as a first-tier destination for conducting clinical trials. Critical to our success, is ensuring that we develop, recognise and retain a highly skilled clinical trials workforce.

The valuable contributions of our clinical trial coordinators and managers to high quality research deserves recognition and acknowledgement, alongside integrated career and professional development pathways and provisions for job security and ongoing employment opportunities. Equally, we must identify, educate and support clinician-researchers to provide academic leadership, driving new and innovative clinical trials activity across their discipline.

A global reputation for clinical trials excellence has made Australia a go-to destination for investigators, contract research organisations and commercial entities so that the clinical trials sector is now one of the country's most important and valuable services exports. Metro North has an opportunity to leverage this global reputation and expand industry and investigator-initiated trial participation, which will ultimately support and drive innovations in clinical care.

CLINICAL TRIALS PROVIDE ROBUST EVIDENCE ABOUT THE COMPARATIVE EFFECTIVENESS AND COST-EFFECTIVENESS OF INTERVENTIONS, TRANSFORMING HEALTHCARE AND SHAPING DECISIONS ABOUT HEALTH EXPENDITURE, WHICH ULTIMATELY IMPROVES THE HEALTH OF THE POPULATIONS WE SERVE.

To achieve this we must actively demonstrate our readiness to meet regulatory requirements, the quality of our research workforce and infrastructure, and our timeframes for trial start-up and patient recruitment. Being at the forefront of these innovations in clinical trials designs and building our capability in precision healthcare in clinical trials will enable Metro North to capture a greater share of global clinical trials activity and grow the sector more rapidly.

This will enable us to contribute to the growing reputation of Metro North through high impact publications and support translation and commercialisation of Queensland grown intellectual property boosting the Queensland economy. Investment in digital tools and streamlined processes that make engaging in research with Metro North an easy undertaking are key to embracing the future challenges of an increasingly competitive research landscape. Infrastructure and resources that support the day to day functions and processes for initiating, conducting and monitoring research play a significant role in the efficiency of research and requires efficient, transparent and rigorous Human Research Ethics Committees, governance processes and the capacity to readily report to overarching bodies.

INVESTMENT IN DIGITAL TOOLS AND STREAMLINED PROCESSES THAT MAKE ENGAGING IN RESEARCH WITH METRO NORTH AN EASY UNDERTAKING ARE KEY TO EMBRACING THE FUTURE CHALLENGES OF AN INCREASINGLY COMPETITIVE RESEARCH LANDSCAPE.

Metro North will need to empower and educate potential investigators and emerging researchers to initiate clinical research, engage with funding agencies and optimise trial recruitment through utilisation of the ieMR and investment in a clinical trials management system. This will enable us to ensure standardised workflows across all of our facilities and services, helping to streamline and simplify common tasks for our people — which in turn enables them to spend more time with patients and key trial activities. The adoption of standardised processes will also enable the sharing of knowledge across sites who will learn and benefit from each other's experiences and create a sense of community.

Ensuring integration across our existing research and health service information technology infrastructure, like Ethical Review Manager (ERM) and corporate financial and patient management systems will provide interoperability that helps reduce duplication of tasks and maximises data quality and ensure that we realise improvements in trial start up times, patient recruitment, financial control and regulatory compliance over time.

Clinical trials within Australia's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities are typically focused on prevention, behaviour modification, non-drug and non-surgical research. There is currently limited industry involvement in indigenous community trials given the challenges of remoteness, the high burden of comorbidities, poor health literacy and a high turnover of clinicians and researchers. Adopting patient-centric approaches is critical to providing equitable access to clinical trials for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.










KEY PRIORITY

Innovative clinical trials will provide access to cutting edge diagnostics, procedures, therapeutics and health services for our patients and community

Action	Position Metro North as a global leader in clinical trials management by establishing a Metro North Clinical Trials Support Service underpinned by an innovative business model and integrated information management systems to deliver high quality, efficient and sustainable clinical trials.	
Outcomes	<p>Clinical Trials Support Service for all Metro North facilities utilising the core partnership principles of equity, transparency, sustainability and co-investment</p> <p>Clinical Trials Management System (CTMS) that is fully integrated with Queensland Health clinical, business and research systems</p> <p>Improved clinical trials financial management (revenue and billing)</p> <p>Clinical trials standard operating procedures, guidelines and training</p> <p>Intellectual Property and Commercialisation Committee</p>	Enablers <ul style="list-style-type: none">  PEOPLE  SYSTEMS  INFRASTRUCTURE

Action	Implementation of the National Clinical Trials Governance Framework (NCTGF) will enable integration of clinical trials with clinical care, streamlining of processes and robust governance systems to ensure that clinical trials in Metro North are conducted in a safe environment and in a high-quality manner for improved health outcomes for patients and the community.	
Outcomes	<p>Implementation of the National Clinical Trials Governance Framework</p> <p>Advanced clinical trials reporting capacity as per the NCTGF</p>	Enablers <ul style="list-style-type: none">  PEOPLE  SYSTEMS  PARTNERS

Action	Work collaboratively with our patients, consumers and researchers to establish virtual platforms that increase the visibility and opportunities for engagement with research, in particular clinical trials, being conducted in Metro North.	
Outcomes	<p>Metro North Clinical Trials website</p> <p>Clinical trials activity published as per NCTGF</p>	Enablers <ul style="list-style-type: none">  PATIENTS  INFRASTRUCTURE

Action	Ensure research infrastructure requirements are embedded as a core consideration from the concept, planning and design stages of infrastructure projects by developing strategic communication channels between the Metro North Research, Facility/Directorates, and Metro North Strategy, Planning and Infrastructure.	
Outcomes	<p>Clinical Trials Support Service</p> <p>Metro North Research infrastructure capability and capacity principles developed through effective leadership of master planned facility renewal and redevelopment.</p> <p>Queensland Cancer Centre Phase 1 Clinical Trial facility</p> <p>Manufacturing capability of CAR-T and other advanced therapy medical products</p>	<p>Enablers</p> <p> INFRASTRUCTURE</p>

Strategic Alignment

Consumer Engagement Strategy

Digital Metro North Strategy

MN32

Metro North Safety and Quality Strategy

Clinical Trial Strategic Action Plan for increasing clinical trial activity 2022-2025, Queensland Health

National Clinical Trials Governance Framework

Australian New Zealand Infrastructure Pipeline





HEALTH EQUITY

Research and innovation will be the driver of improved health outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

Taking the time to make sure every person who we care for in Metro North receives the best care for their individual needs is essential to delivering excellence in healthcare. Our standardised approaches and models of care provide efficiency and equal standard of care for most people, but they don't always account for the provision of equitable care in the best interests of individual needs. Equitable care recognises that one size doesn't fit all.

Through the Metro North Health Equity Strategy 2022-2025 Our Journey Towards Health Equity we have an opportunity to create a health service that:

- actively eliminates racial discrimination and institutional racism
- increases access to healthcare
- delivers sustainable, culturally safe and responsive care
- influences the social, cultural and economic determinants of health
- works with First Nations peoples, communities and organisations to deliver, monitor and review health services.

By actively working to create a healthcare system that provides care tailored to the individual needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people we hope to achieve equity for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, and finally close the health gap.

Metro North is committed to providing equity of access to high quality healthcare services and building relationships based on inclusion with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and their communities and remains committed to achieving life expectancy parity for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples by 2031.

Metro North's goal is to ensure all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples receive high quality person-centred care that is culturally responsive, empowers self-care and choice, and is designed to improve health and wellbeing.

A commitment to health equity requires reform, change and improvement across the entire health sector – and we know that research will be a key vehicle for driving this change. Metro North's commitment to health equity crosses the whole health system and will require working in partnership with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community Controlled Health Organisations and the Brisbane North Primary Health Network (PHN) and the Institute for Urban Indigenous Health (UIH).

If we want to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to access the care they need when they need it, we need to provide care that actually meets their needs, care that is physically, culturally and psychologically safe, and doesn't come with assumptions and unconscious racism.

The Metro North Health Equity Strategy outlines the steps we need to take to change the way we deliver healthcare, to achieve equity for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, and finally close the health gap. The intersection between the Metro North Health Equity Strategy and the Metro North Research Strategy provides an opportunity to examine the systems and structures that support and enable research in Metro North and implement reform that drives healthy equity. It will allow us to align research priorities with the vision of the health equity strategy by co-designing and delivering research with our First Nations communities. It will ensure that we develop workforce capacity to undertake culturally appropriate research and provide targeted opportunities for research support to our First Nations researchers.





The *Hospital and Health Boards (Health Equity Strategies) Amendment Regulation 2012* requires Hospital and Health Services to set out its actions and agreed key performance measures to improve Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples health and wellbeing outcomes including:



ELIMINATE RACISM

Actively eliminating racial discrimination and institutional racism within the service

Racism is a key structural determinant of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples health inequity. Institutional racism refers to the ways in which racist beliefs attitudes or values have arisen within, or are built into the operations and/or policies of an institution in such a way the discriminates against controls or oppresses, directly or indirectly, a certain group to limit their rights; causing and/or contributing to inherited disadvantage.

ACCESS

Increasing access to healthcare services

First Nations people continue to have lower access to health services than other Australians for a range of reasons including: experiences of racism within healthcare settings, barriers relating to cost, a lack of culturally respectful and culturally competent health services, lack of transport, and distance to services.

CULTURALLY SAFE AND RESPONSIVE SYSTEM

Delivering sustainable, culturally safe and responsive healthcare services

Growing the size, capacity and capability of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples public health sector workforce will improve the cultural capacity of the system, whilst also helping to address the social and economic determinants of health. This growth across all levels and employment levels will increase the cultural capability of service provision whilst also ensuring services have a representative and diverse workforce.

SOCIAL DETERMINANTS OF HEALTH

Influencing the social, cultural and economic determinants of health

Approximately one-third of the health gap for the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples is linked to the social determinants of health. Given many health inequities are created before patients reach healthcare services, it is critical that service providers work alongside and with other organisations to improve not only health outcomes but also the social, cultural and economic determinants of health.

WORKING WITH ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER PEOPLES





Working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, communities, and organisations to design, deliver, monitor and review health services

Improving and increasing the level of engagement with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, communities and organisations will enable improved effectiveness and health outcomes of programs, as well as increasing collaboration across the system enabling a better interface between primary and acute care.




KEY PRIORITY

Embed research practices that enable the creation of a healthcare system which provides physically, culturally, and psychologically safe care tailored to the individual needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

Action	Work with First Nations peoples, communities and organisations to build capacity for Metro North staff to design research that actively eliminates racial discrimination and institutional racism within our services, increases access to healthcare services, delivers sustainable, culturally safe and responsive healthcare services, and influences the social, cultural and economic determinants of health.	
Outcomes	<p>Human Research Ethics Applications (HREA) with targeted recruitment for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander populations</p> <p>Human Research Ethics Applications (HREA) with incidental recruitment for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander populations</p> <p>Guidance and resource documents, training and education developed to support culturally appropriate research in Metro North</p>	Enablers <ul style="list-style-type: none">  PATIENTS  PEOPLE  SYSTEMS  PARTNERS

Action	Work with our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workforce to build capacity to design and undertake research that actively eliminates racial discrimination and institutional racism within our services, increases access to healthcare services, delivers sustainable, culturally safe and responsive healthcare services, influences the social, cultural and economic determinants of health, and works with First Nations peoples, communities and organisations to deliver, monitor and review health services.	
Outcomes	<p>First Nations Research Training and Mentoring Program</p> <p>Guidance and resource documents, training and education developed to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff to undertake research in Metro North</p> <p>Recruitment of and collaboration with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander researchers</p> <p>HREC & SSA Applications submitted by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff</p>	Enablers <ul style="list-style-type: none">  PATIENTS  PEOPLE  SYSTEMS

Action	Work with First Nations peoples, communities and organisations to develop capacity for the ethical review and management of research within Metro North, in line with the NHMRC's Ethical conduct in research with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples and communities: Guidelines for researchers and stakeholders.	
Outcomes	<p>Metro North framework for responsible conduct of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander research.</p> <p>Governing documents, such as policies, operating procedures, guidelines and information resources to assist Metro North researchers to consider the ethical design and conduct of research with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.</p>	Enablers  PATIENTS

Action	Work together with First Nations peoples, communities and organisations to identify pathways for identified research higher degree training opportunities for Metro North staff who identify as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander.	
Outcomes	<p>QTRAC Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander positions</p> <p>Integrated research higher degree training pathway for Metro North Staff who identify as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander</p> <p>Targeted recruitment, training, mentoring and support pathways that recognise the unique needs, barriers and opportunities faced by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff.</p>	Enablers  PEOPLE  SYSTEMS  PARTNERS

Action	Work together with First Nations peoples, communities and organisations to create a Metro North Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander grants program.	
Outcomes	<p>Research Alliance for Urban Goori Health (RAUGH) Grant Rounds</p> <p>Targeted grant opportunities that address the key priorities outlined in the Metro North Health Equity Strategy</p> <p>Research capacity of Metro North staff is improved through collaboration</p>	Enablers  PEOPLE  SYSTEMS  PARTNERS

Strategic Alignment

Metro North Health Equity Strategy

Metro North Workforce Strategy

Metro North Consumer Engagement Strategy

NHMRC Road Map 3: A strategic framework for improving Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health through research.



PRECISION MEDICINE

Dramatic scientific and clinical advances mean that healthcare no longer needs to be delivered using a ‘one size fits all’ approach. It is now possible, through advances in diverse fields such as genomics, robotics, advanced manufacturing, transcriptomics, theranostics and imaging, among many others, to tailor care to the individual, by understanding disease from a truly human perspective.

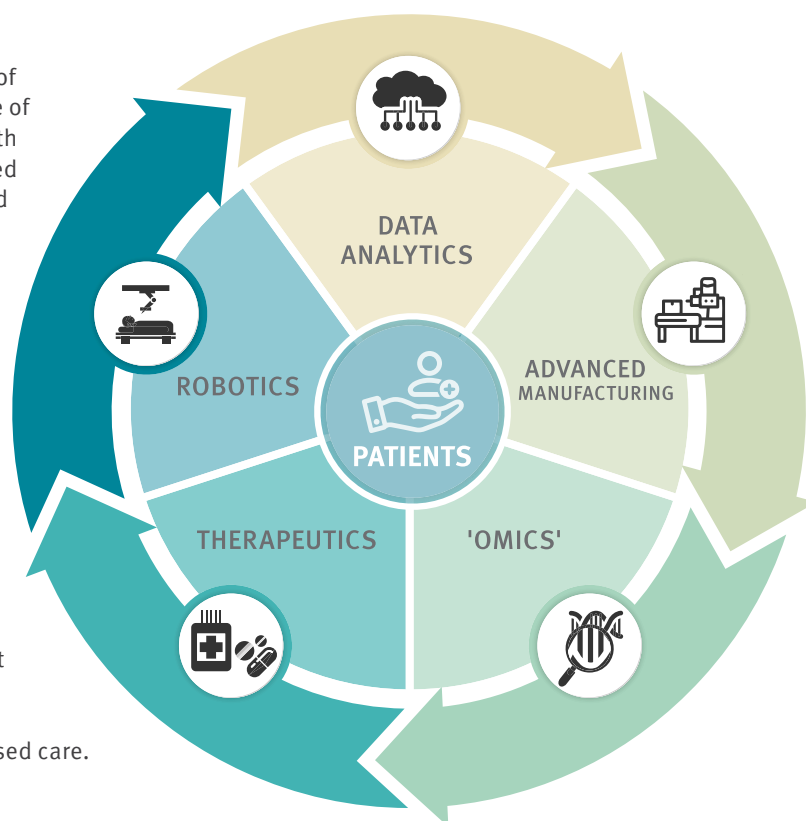
Precision medicine at its core deploys an array of decidedly inhuman technologies to foster truly humanistic healthcare. As these high-tech platforms will drive seamless, personalised, efficient and high-quality care across providers and settings, embracing and investing in emerging technologies is essential for Metro North to create Australia’s most integrated, efficient and effective health service by 2032, but also to create its most caring.

Metro North has been an early adopter of precision approaches to a diverse range of diseases. At the micro scale, Metro North clinicians and researchers have deployed ‘omics’ approaches to the diagnosis and management of diseases as diverse as cancer, lung fibrosis, endometriosis, haematological disorders and COVID-19.

On a macro scale Metro North is a leader in imaging, theranostics, robotics and additive manufacturing. The development of a Metro North Precision Medicine Network offers an opportunity to further accelerate the adoption of new diagnostic, therapeutic and health services modalities to improve health outcomes for individuals. Patient care will be revolutionised as detailed clinical, demographic and phenotypic information is used to inform personalised care.

These advances will be particularly relevant to cancer treatments, enabling clinicians and scientists to work closely together so patients have access to cutting edge treatments as soon as they are available in facilities such as the Queensland Cancer Centre.

Acquisition of data and digitisation of healthcare facilitates a precision medicine approach at both a population and personal level. Whilst there are many challenges in linking clinical, health service and research data, this will be a vital aspect of the success of our strategy. As we focus on the enormous potential of linking experimental data, imaging data, biological material (biobanks) and associated ‘omic’ data. The integration of these datasets with clinical systems will enable clinician researchers to answer complex questions so that technology and our capacity for data linkage will be amongst the biggest enablers for improved patient care, communication and health outcomes research.





As real-time data analytics and research become a part of the Metro North strategic imperative our transition to a digitised healthcare environment will enable more networked and connected care across clinical teams and lead to more individualised, person-centred care and real time decision making. In turn, integrated digital solutions will inform machine learning and artificial intelligence and facilitate a move away from the current “break-fix” model to a more cost effective and safer “predict-prevent” model of patient care.

The ieMR will form the bedrock of our digital health system and allow the digitisation of clinical and administrative workflows. The digital transformation of patient care will allow us to adopt and implement more precise, effective and personalised diagnostics, therapeutics and clinical services, while constantly evaluating the health impact and cost-effectiveness of these new approaches. Informatics afforded by an ieMR and other digital health data sources will also provide researchers with a rich source of patient data to inform the development of research questions, evaluate care delivery, improve capability for clinical trial feasibility assessments and reporting on clinical trial participation, support patient recruitment to research studies, and unlock commercial potential by providing clinical data that spans the continuum of clinical practice from hospital to community.

Data and biobanking are critical for the provision of an ‘omics’ enabled health service and for shifting the system towards precision healthcare. Appropriate infrastructure such as cloud services for receiving and storing genomic and transcriptomic sequencing data will be as critical as the quality and standardisation of sample collection and sequencing.

At the same time, the supporting dynamic consent, governance, technical, ethical and regulatory standards and processes must be co-designed with clinicians and the community. Privacy and confidentiality approaches that govern the collection, use, disclosure and management of such data must be either developed or updated to reflect the modern era.

Meeting modern health challenges requires increasingly specialised skills and expertise across disciplines. Our ability to reimagine healthcare will rely on our capacity to keep pace with technological advances and continuously improve quality, safety and efficiency across the health service.






The establishment of a MetroNorth Precision Medicine Network will foster ideas and collaborations within a vibrant ecosystem of likeminded clinicians and researchers, all of whom are committed to making tomorrow’s healthcare a reality for patients today.

MEETING MODERN RESEARCH CHALLENGES REQUIRES INCREASINGLY SPECIALIZED SKILLS AND EXPERTISE ACROSS DISCIPLINES. INCREASING THE TRANSLATION OF ‘OMICS’ RESEARCH INTO CLINICAL CARE IS CRITICAL TO THE GROWTH OF PRECISION HEALTH IN QUEENSLAND.





KEY PRIORITY

Patient care will be integrated with digital platforms and cutting edge next generation technologies for seamless, personalised, efficient and high quality care.

Action	Development of a Metro North Precision Medicine Network that provides a direct interface between patient care and research through the integration of high impact discoveries with digital technologies.	
Outcomes	<p><i>Metro North Precision Medicine Network</i></p> <p>New bioinformatics tools and innovative workflows to accelerate data analysis and curation</p> <p>Streamlining of 'omics' services, facilitating scaling in line with clinical capacity to meet increasing demand</p> <p>Ability to interrogate our clinical data repository (digital phenobank) to facilitate world class research</p> <p>Our people will have access to the expertise and advanced services necessary to undertake research using next generation technologies</p>	<p>Enablers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">  PATIENTS  PEOPLE  SYSTEMS  INFRASTRUCTURE  PARTNERS

Action	Advocacy at a local, state and national level for legislative reform that facilitates healthcare advances through streamlined access to data for research, innovation, precision medicine and digital transformation enabling digitisation of healthcare to rapidly transform the way we do research, driving forward our priorities for health access, equity and quality.	
Outcomes	<p>Streamlined process for authorisation of data access for research</p> <p>Public Health Act (PHA) Approval processing times</p> <p>Advocacy for legislative reform</p>	<p>Enablers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">  SYSTEMS  PARTNERS

Action	Establish evidence-based best practice systems and processes for dynamic consent in Metro North and facilitate the implementation of dynamic consent opportunities for Metro North Researchers through digital transformation so that our patients are aware of and can actively engage with research in Metro North	
Outcomes	<p>Consistent application of dynamic consent principles</p> <p>Increased research participation and engagement</p>	<p>Enablers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">  PATIENTS  PEOPLE  SYSTEMS  INFRASTRUCTURE

Strategic Alignment

Metro North Health Service Strategy
 Digital Metro North Strategy
 Metro North Consumer Engagement Strategy
 Department of Health Strategic Plan 2021-2026 (2022 Update)

MN32
 eHealth Queensland Digital Genomics Strategy
 The Future of Genomics in Queensland, A policy position for the advancement of genomics within the health system 2021-2026



KNOWLEDGE TRANSLATION

A focus on knowledge translation and commercialisation will provide a supportive environment for the creation of new ideas and rapid and effective implementation of new knowledge.

Knowledge translation is a dynamic and iterative process that includes the synthesis, dissemination and exchange of knowledge and information to improve health outcomes, provide more effective and efficient healthcare services, and strengthen the healthcare system. The application of knowledge and information generated through research into clinical care and health service delivery is essential to improving patient outcomes and the care we provide.

The challenges faced by the world today are complex and interrelated, requiring bold thinking and the discovery and application of new knowledge. As a part of Metro North's ongoing commitment to achieving research excellence and impact, the themes provide a focal point for cross-disciplinary research that will ensure our research and innovation responds effectively to current and future local, national and global challenges. The final theme of knowledge translation will close the loop on everything we do.

We must leverage the opportunities provided through digital transformation and the strategic investment in clinical trials and precision medicine to ensure the evidence and knowledge generated through research is applied by our people and partners for the benefit of our patients.

For our patients this translates to co-design and active engagement in research, for our people this means evidence based practice and effective health services underpinned by quality evidence, and for our partners this means the dissemination and application of knowledge throughout the community.

To build a culture of knowledge translation in Metro North, we must embrace innovation and strive for excellence in knowledge creation, implementation and evaluation. This will require partnership across the organisation to tackle the complexity of the healthcare system and integrate principles and processes that enable knowledge translation.

It will require acknowledgement of the cultural determinants of innovation, the key policy and system drivers of change, and the importance of shared responsibility and action across our patients, people and partners.

Applying improvement science in clinical care delivery can improve systems, processes and ultimately outcomes, and while clinical trials are the gold standard for determining effective treatments, implementation and efficiencies can be driven by embedding best practice improvement and implementation strategies, health economic and cost-effectiveness analysis practices to maximise impact. We must embed knowledge translation within the systems and infrastructure that facilitate the design, review and approval, management and communication of research in Metro North.

The strategic utilisation of Patient Reported Measures (outcome measures (PROMs), and experience measures (PREMs)) can ensure the patient perspective is at the centre of knowledge translation, innovation, implementation and evaluations by recognising and acknowledging the unique experience of the individual and ensures that we value diversity in perspectives. As we strive towards health equity for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, the application of knowledge translation practices and culture that ensure we deliver equity of access to high-quality person-centred healthcare that is culturally responsive, empowers self care and choice, and is designed to improve health and wellbeing will be essential.


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KEY PRIORITY

Knowledge translation will provide a supportive environment for the creation of new ideas and rapid and effective implementation of new knowledge and commercialisation.

Action	Work collaboratively with Metro North Engage to implement the Collaborating in Health Strategy 2022-2024 in partnership with consumers and researchers to ensure consumer and community engagement is embedded in research systems across Metro North.	
Outcomes	<p>Consumer engagement included in application and assessment criteria for Metro North Research Grants</p> <p>Consumer engagement included in Metro North Research education and training framework</p> <p>Consumer engagement resources and materials available from Metro North Research website(s)</p> <p>Consumer engagement included in support materials and evaluation for Metro North Research Grants and funding/support programs</p>	Enablers <ul style="list-style-type: none">  PATIENTS  PEOPLE  SYSTEMS  PARTNERS

Action	Establish integrated education and training across clinical, professional and research groups, clinical care (evidence based clinical care services) and research (implement, evaluate, research and translate) models to ensure Metro North has a unified approach to excellence in patient care, research, education and knowledge translation training to enable new ways of delivering cutting-edge, research based, clinical care.	
Outcomes	<p>Metro North Research education and training framework published on the Metro North Research website(s)</p> <p>Research education and training framework and grant opportunities available to all Metro North staff including clinicians, business managers and support services.</p> <p>Knowledge Translation and Implementation Science training</p> <p>Research Integrity – replication, reproducible, robust, reliable</p>	Enablers <ul style="list-style-type: none">  PATIENTS  PEOPLE  SYSTEMS

Action	Develop a cloud-enabled data analytics solution that provides comprehensive research activity and outputs monitoring and reporting enabling Metro North Research and our researchers to readily demonstrate research impact.	
Outcomes	<p>Research activity and outputs minimum dataset to include:</p> <p>Publication [DOI], Citations, Grant Applications / Grants Awarded, Research Higher Degrees (RHDs) [staff/students], Clinical Trials Activity [trials/participation/revenue/type], Patents</p> <p>Metro North Researcher profiles/register</p> <p>Metro North Researchers maintain ORCIDiS</p>	Enablers <ul style="list-style-type: none">  PEOPLE  SYSTEMS  INFRASTRUCTURE

Action	We will recognise, acknowledge and celebrate the achievements of Metro North researchers across all facilities, streams and services, and facilitate innovative knowledge translation communication strategies that share research excellence with the wider health and medical research community.	
Outcomes	Research Excellence Awards Snapshot of Research Metro North Research Matters Research Symposium / Forums / Conferences	Enablers  PEOPLE  SYSTEMS  PARTNERS

Action	The Metro North Human Research Ethics Committee's (HRECs) will be streamlined with consistent processes that enable researchers to submit applications easily within Metro North, and Research Governance processes will be optimised to enable implementation of the NCTGF.	
Outcomes	Consistent and streamlined HREC processes across Metro North Consistent and streamlined Research Governance processes across Metro North Metro North Research website publishes clear policy, procedures and guidelines for Ethics and Governance	Enablers  SYSTEMS

Action	Work collaboratively with our academic partners and foundations to strategically align priorities for grant and funding initiatives, including Collaborative Research Grants and QTRAC Pathway support to deliver mutual benefit and maximise opportunities for our researchers	
Outcomes	Collaborative Research Grants program designed to support all stages of research across all facilities in Metro North QTRAC Pathway available for clinician researchers with co-contributions and equitable opportunities across Metro North, academic partners and foundations	Enablers  PEOPLE  SYSTEMS  PARTNERS

Strategic Alignment

Metro North Consumer Engagement Strategy
Metro North Workforce Strategy
Metro North Health Service Strategic Plan

Metro North Health Service Strategy
Metro North Health Digital Strategy
Metro North Workforce Strategy

IMPLEMENTATION

The Metro North Research Strategy 2023–2027 sets the strategic direction and vision for Metro North Research over the next five years and will ensure we collectively deliver on our plan to position Metro North as a health service where research is embedded as core practice and drives forward a culture of excellence, innovation and sustainability.

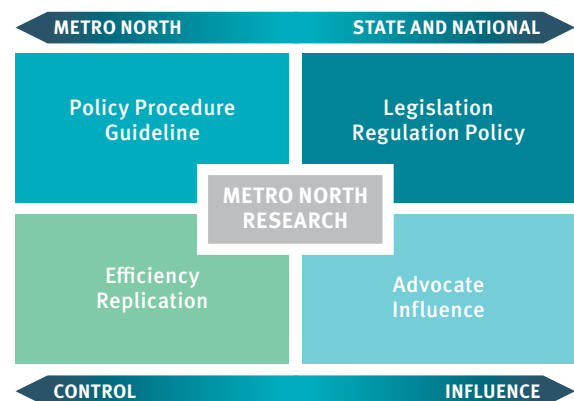
The Strategy provides the framework by which Metro North Research will work with our patients, people and partners to develop and implement strategic action plans. The Strategy themes outline the key research challenges and opportunities as a launching point to discuss the priorities and actions needed to address these challenges. The enablers identify the key priorities needed to leverage the opportunities available to us in order to bring about system wide enhancements. Underpinning these strategic priorities are a set of actions or activities designed to achieve our desired future state.

How we achieve this vision will invariably require collaboration, negotiation and flexibility in our approach. In order to set strategic research priorities, it is necessary to acknowledge the shared levels of responsibility and recognise Metro North Health exists within a larger ecosystem, much of which sits outside of our control or sphere of direct influence.

- Consumers
- Researchers
- Metro North
- The Common Good
- RBWH Foundation
- Queensland Government
- Federal Government
- Primary Healthcare Sector
- Academic Partners
- Industry

Where our strategic priorities require action or change at a system-wide or legislative level, Metro North Research are committed to providing advocacy and influence for the collective interests of Metro North patients and people. This requires clear channels for the communication of insights and direction that can affect change, and a recognition that without a unified voice the issues that sit outside our control will also remain outside our sphere of influence.

Where our strategic priorities require action or change at a health service level Metro North Research are committed to leveraging existing knowledge and expertise in order to streamline administrative processes, duplicate and replicate, rather than reinvent the wheel. This requires local support and practical solutions championed by Metro North staff.



We have a joint responsibility to work collaboratively with our patients, people and partners to demonstrate how we assign and take action on these responsibilities, for example developing local recruitment pathways, clinical trial activity related to clinical priorities, mentoring networks, and grants capacity building activities.

The additional resourcing and up-front costs to support the Metro North Research Strategy 2023–2027 are anticipated to deliver additional downstream benefits and reduced costs associated with earlier translation and adoption of evidence and research into clinical practice.

EVALUATION

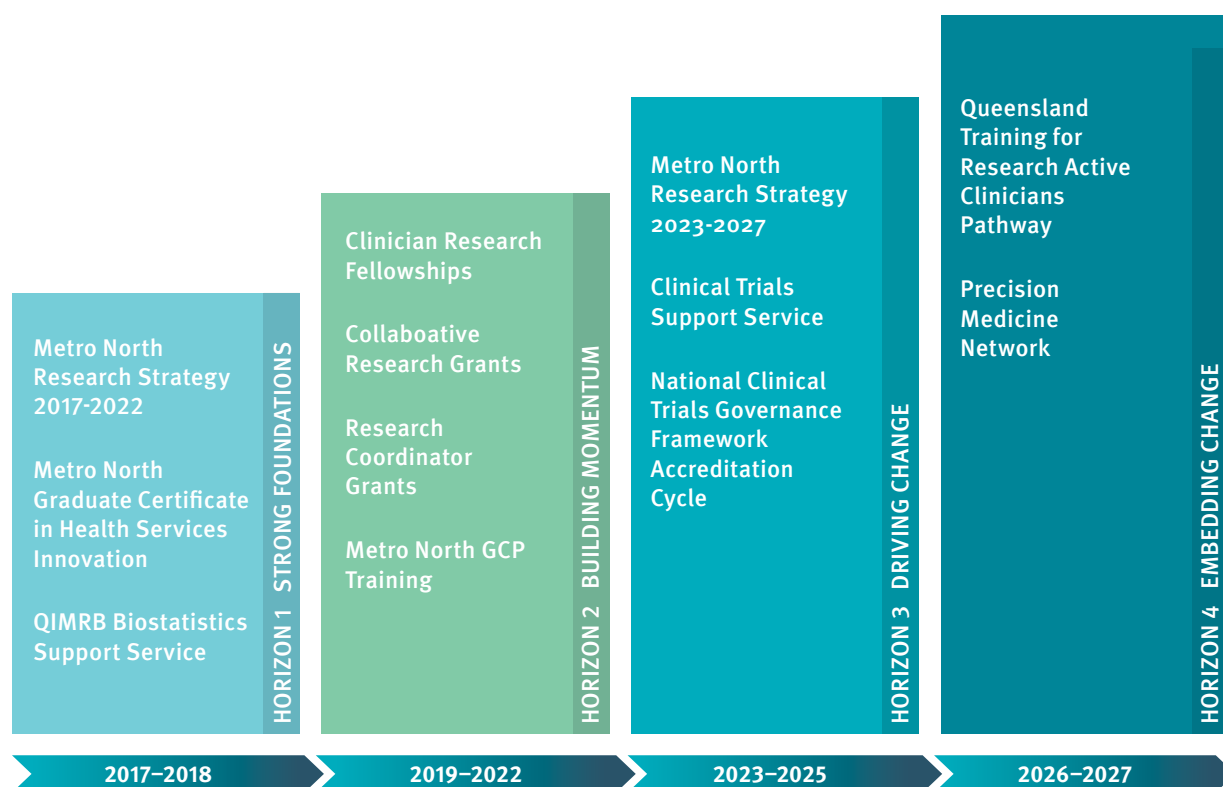
The Metro North Research Strategy 2017-2022 laid the foundations for embedding research as core practice in Metro North and provided the framework for priority setting moving forwards. Building on the momentum established through implementation of the inaugural strategy, this Metro North Research Strategy 2023-2027 is designed to drive forward and embed change through the key priorities.

The timeline for change is framed across four horizons and necessitates progress reviews to ensure continued alignment with local, national and international priorities and trends in health and medical research.

Horizon 3 Driving Change represents the release of the Metro North Research Strategy 2022-2026. It builds on the lessons learned through implementation of the inaugural research strategy and establishment of some of the key initiatives.

Horizon 4 Embedding change will realise the culmination of our efforts to prepare Metro North for the upcoming National Clinical Trials Governance Framework Accreditation cycle and embed research training withing professional development for our clinicians. Progress review at this point will ensure preparedness and alignment with strategic priorities.

Evaluation of this strategy will be structured around the key priorities and actions outlined under the themes. Where the actions have shared responsibilities Metro North Research with work with our patients, people and partners to undertake scoping works and context assessments, identify key responsibilities and actions for all parties in order to set thorough implementation and evaluation project governance documentation.





Metro North
Health



Queensland
Government